

DAUGHTER VS THE SWINDLERS

Written by

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FADE IN

EXT: ST. GEORGE YACHT CLUB - SUNSET

SUPER: ST. GEORGE YACHT CLUB - BEIRUT - 1996

MISHKA, late 20s, blond, thin, beautiful tying off the main sale on a small 28 foot sail boat in the St. George Beirut port. She throws the sheets/ropes to the waiting dockhand.

1996 bombed out Beirut buildings surround area. Mishka jumps off the boat.

MISHKA

You finish up. I'm late for my party.

EXT: DRIVE THROUGH 1996 BEIRUT - SUNSET

Mishka jumps in a nearby Range Rover. Drives through the still destroyed Martyrs Sq area, through Ashrafieh and begins climb up a completely empty road of pine forests.

She stops at a Syrian army checkpoint. She comes to a rolling stop as she rolls down the window and throws the 15 year old guard a pack of cigarettes and nods.

The road continues for a few turns until she pulls into the driveway of a compound with 2 houses. 1 is half finished and bears bullet holes and a hole on the unfinished 2nd floor. The other is finished.

She pulls up in front of the finished house and a Sri Lankan maid starts unloading bags from La Cigale while Mishka rushes in house which has very spare furnishings. Some from 1970s.

MISHKA (cont'd)

I'm so late Suzy. I'm so late.

EXT. VILLA GARDEN/BALCONY - NIGHT

Several dozen drunk young adults dance near a firepit to mid-90s Eurotrash music.

Mishka and LINA, the sexy professor, younger than Mishka down vodka shots.

JOHNNY, the concierge, impossibly handsome, with rippling muscles feeds the firepit.

The music changes to Arabic and WALID, sporting a long handlebar mustache, leads a drunken dabke.

Young Syrian soldiers watch from a station up the hill facing the balcony.

A distant phone rings and rings. The maid Suzy appears on the balcony and keeps motioning to Mishka who is drunk.

Finally Suzy goes into the dancing crowd and pulls Mishka arm.

SUZY

Miss Mishka. Your father is on the phone.

Mishka drunkenly walks to the landline phone in the front hallway. The phone crackles with a bad connection.

MISHKA

Dad. Dad. Is something wrong?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOUSTON SKYSCRAPER OFFICE WITH SKYLINE - DAY

TONY, Mishka's father, handsome, distinguished in an expensive suit with Texas details like belt buckle and tie pin.

TONY

I just got word they are going to bomb the airport.

MISHKA

Again? When?

TONY

Within the week. You should come home.

MISHKA

Home? I am home.

TONY

Your ticket is already at the airport.

INT. VILLA HALLWAY AND LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONT.)

Mishka slowly and sadly hangs up the phone. She sits sadly for a moment before her face shows resolve. She gets up and walks to a large upholstered chair which is on wheels, throws herself with momentum into the chair which glides across the marble floor until she stops it.

3 men sit croached around a small black and white TV watching a soccer game with 1 holding the antenna.

MISHKA

Can 1 of you boys take me to the airport tomorrow?

EXT. MISHKA'S HOUSE

Stately Houston brick house

SUPER: 20 YEARS LATER. 2006. HOUSTON, TEXAS.

INT. MISHKA'S HOUSE - SUNSET

Family photos line the hallway in Beirut, Houston and a Mexican hacienda.

In the kitchen, EDU, 14, blond, sits at a granite island using a misting nebulizer mask for asthma.

GONZO and ALEX, 9-year-old twins—one blond, one dark—wrestle in the kitchen-den area.

FRANCISCO, their father, 50, handsome, slightly overweight with a heavy Mexican accent. He watches soccer on a massive screen.

He throws his hands up in frustration at a missed goal, oblivious to the chaos around him.

MISHKA, now late 40s wears a business suit and Hermes scarf.

The kitchen calendar covers a wall 3x4 ft with colored squares. "JIDDE DOCTOR" MISHKA FLIGHT TO BEIRUT. MISHKA and JIDDE FLIGHT TO HOUSTON FROM BEIRUT.

Mishka turns off the nebulizer and hands EDU a Kleenex. He blows his nose; eyes still fixed on the board.

MISHKA

Grandma will take you to the doctor.

EDU

You're missing my playoff game. Again.

MISHKA

I'm sorry.

Mishka to a desk in the corner, sits down and opens the drawer full of Lebanese documents and currency. She takes some.

The phone rings and she talks while walking towards the door. Her family follow her.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TONY IN THE VILLA LIVING ROOM ON A CELL PHONE

The same Villa living room now opulently furnished. Family pictures everywhere.

TONY

Hi baby. Are you on your way?

MISHKA

Dad. I've got all the doctor appointments lined up. Are you packed?

As they walk out of the kitchen, Mishka taps on the calendar and points at Francisco. GONZO ORTHODONTIST. Franny smirks.

TONY

Thanks. Everything is ready for the party.

Mishka puts him on speaker phone.

MISHKA

Boys Jidde is on the phone.

EDU

Jidde - did you get the soccer jerseys?

TONY

Yes. Yes. I have them. I wouldn't forget.

EDU

See you next week. You can see me where one at my soccer game.

TONY

Can't wait.

JANEY, Mishka's mother, aging glamorous mother wearing a Chanel suit arrives. arrives.

She is followed by a man in tennis clothes. Franny gives the man a dirty look. The children rush to hug their grandmother and high five the man.

MISHKA

Mom just walked in.  
Mom - Dad's on the phone.

JANEY

Tony. Why don't you just have your party here?

TONY

See you tomorrow.

Mishka hangs up and whispers close to her mother's ear.

MISHKA

PLEEEEEASE don't bring your toyboys to the house.

JANEY

(whispering)  
Don't worry, he'll be gone before your father comes home.

(Audibly) )  
When is the plumber is coming?

Exasperated, Mishka uses her knuckle to knock on a pink calendar card that says PLUMBER.

MISHKA

Friday. For the 100th time, your color is Bright Pink.

JANEY

(Silently)  
Check the board. It's all on the board.

(Audibly.)  
Lighten up daughter. Lighten up.

The family all walk toward the front door where a black limousine is waiting. Franny shrugs. In the hallway, Franny holds Mishka arm and keeps her from going through the door.

FRANCISCO

For the record, I don't think you should be going to a warzone just for a birthday party.

MISHKA

I've been planning this party for months. Now you tell me?

They walk towards the car.

EXT. DRIVEWAY OF MISHKA'S HOUSTON HOME SUNSET

Janey holds Mishka very tightly and whispers in her ear.

JANEY

You don't have to take care of everything all the time. Have fun at the party. See your friends. Be safe.

MISHKA

Mom, If I lightened up, your guest bathroom would be broken forever.

Franny and Mishka kiss politely. She hugs the children. Franny holds the black car door open for Mishka.

FRANCISCO

5 days and 5 days only.

Mishka pulls away in a luxury Black Large SUV as Mishka's phone rings as she pulls out of the driveway. As she drives through the streets of Houston Mishka falls asleep.

EXT. SAILBOATS RACING AROUND A MARK

Mishka dreams of a sailboat race where she is sitting legs hanging off the side on the foredeck. Several yachts almost collide as they turn around the mark. Mishka pushes against a yacht about to crush her and her teammates. She gets soaked by a wave and smiles.

EXT. BEIRUT STREETS FROM AIRPORT TO VILLA - DAY

Mishka seamlessly goes from the streets of Houston in the luxury Black SUV to the streets of Beirut in a very similar car that her friend drives.

LINA, 7-8 years younger than Mishka, dark, dressed in very conservative yet tight and sexy clothes with stilletos.

Lina speeds through traffic in a sporty Mercedes, steering with her knee while applying mascara in the rearview mirror. She narrowly avoids several accidents. Outside, the road from the airport is lined with massive posters of Nasrallah and Iranian leaders until they get close to downtown.

LINA

Is everything ready for the party?  
Can I do anything to help?

MISHKA

The stupid office manager keeps interfering. I'm going up there tonight to fix everything.

The Mercedes glides past Martyrs Square. Lina very narrowly avoids another accident. She rolls down the window and jokingly and sweetly apologizes flirtatiously in Arabic. The Mercedes glides past Martyr's Square and near St. George.

MISHKA (cont'd)

My family is worried about me coming to but they don't realize my primary risk is your driving. Let me drive.

Lina abruptly pulls near St. George.

LINA

Do you ever sail in Texas?

MISHKA

I can't even remember the last time.

Mishka now drives just as recklessly. The car speeds past same road as opening but it's 2016.

LINA

How's your sister?

MISHKA

Collete? She's Collete. Same. I think she has another man since I was last here.

They enter the electric gates of the compound which is finished, landscaped and now a grand villa. Two large dogs bark furiously from the garden where opening party was .

MISHKA (cont'd)

Lets free the dogs.

LINA

Do they have their rabies shots?

Johnny, same concierge, older, rushes to greet them.

JOHNNY

(ARABIC)

Welcome Home Miss Mishka. I put a vodka in the freezer.

MISHKA  
 (ARABIC)  
 You know I don't drink anymore.

JOHNNY  
 (ARABIC)  
 I can't remember. It's wrong.

MISHKA  
 (ARABIC)  
 Does your daughter like her new school?

Johnny takes Mishka's briefcase from her and carries her suitcase towards the second house. The women follow him but enter a different door to a library.

JOHNNY  
 (ARABIC)  
 We don't know how to thank you.

MISHKA  
 (ARABIC)  
 Thank Lina. I just pay the tuition. .

INT. THE VILLA LIBRARY - DAY

TONY, late 70s, handsome but gaunt, sits in a sumptuous library. He wears Ferragamo loafers, a dress shirt, and a beige V-neck sweater. Despite his elegance, he looks pale and frail. He wears a Longhorns pin. Around him sit his siblings:

JOUJOU, a few years older than Mishka, wears jeans, a polo shirt, and a Carhartt-style jacket. His hands are stained with ink. He looks like a laborer — they are in stark contrast to Tony.

The walls are lined with icons and oil paintings; massive pedestals hold open books nearly four feet tall. Arabic coffee, labne, and cucumbers are laid out on a low table in front of an ornate inlaid pearl Syrian desk. Tony walks to the door just as MISHKA and LINA enter.

TONY  
 My banana girl here? Just in time to join the family manooshi. I thought you were arriving tonight.

Tony and Mishka move to embrace, but TAKLA suddenly steps in, pushing Tony aside and smothering MISHKA with kisses.

TAKLA, Tony's sister, is hunched from severe osteoporosis. She wears a black dress, stockings, and shoes.

TAKLA

(ARABIC)

Thanks be to God for returning our beloved Mishka to us. My darling, my sweetheart, my little girl. God Bless you. God Bless you.

Mishka pushes her away.

TONY

(ARABIC)

Ya sister, leave her alone. Let her breathe.

He hugs Mishka tightly and kisses her once like an American.

TONY (cont'd)

What are you doing here early? Johnny and I were going to pick you up tonight.

MISHKA

Dad, you don't look so good.

TONY

I'm okay. You're just in time for my new shipment of books.

TAKLA

(ARABIC)

Eat. Eat. Eat. Manooshi! It's good. Eat. Eat.

Lina and Joujou do not greet each other but nod.

LINA

(ARABIC)

Ya tante. I haven't had a bit of manooshi in over 10 years. 1 bite and 10 kilos would immediately blossom on my hips before your very eyes.

Lina takes a cucumber from Tony's plate and chews it with relish. She laughs.

LINA (cont'd)

(ARABIC)

Even better than manooshi.

TONY (TO LINA)

Where have you been lately? With your pretend husband? .

LINA

I'm good. You know what you always say...He's my husband and I love him. Don't hold that against me.

NISRIN - late 30s, her fake breasts spill from a low-cut, clingy shirt, tight leather pants and high heels. She looks like a cheap escort. She carries a tray of Arabic coffee.

Lina and Mishka freeze, exchanging astonished looks. Nisrin sets the tray on the table as Tony keeps talking, oblivious.

TONY

I have amazing new bible.

NISRIN

Welcome. Can I offer you some coffee?

Awkward silence as Lina and Mishka start at Nisrin and each other and back again. The family keeps eating as if nothing is wrong. They are clearly accustomed to her presence.

MISHKA

No, thank you.

LINA

I'm late. I'll see you later for party prep.

NISRIN

Everything for party is already ready.

Silence and awkwardness. Tension so high the siblings stop eating. Lina bolts to her car.

MISHKA

I'm going there after dinner.

NISRIN

Ciao Ciao Tony I will see you tomorrow. Call me.

Nisrin blows an air kiss to Tony, winks at JouJou and walks out. Joujou checks to see if anyone is looking at him and nods quietly.

Tony brings MISHKA a large, ornate BIBLE its cover adorned with a golden inlaid image of ST. GEORGE slaying the dragon. As they speak, he hovers over her, gently turning the pages.

TONY

Look at this masterpiece! Even your mother would be impressed.

MISHKA

Why is the office manager here?

TONY

We were just reviewing some final details for the party tomorrow.

MISHKA

You don't look so good. I'm glad you're going to see the doctors.

TONY

About that.

MISHKA

About what?

TONY

I'm not going back to Houston.

MISHKA

Dad, YOU asked me to set up doctors, YOU asked for a party and YOU asked if we could travel home together.

TONY

I'm sorry.

MISHKA

Sorry? I can't just fly halfway across the world for a party. I have 3 children. Sick children who are waiting for you.

There is silence for a moment. Mishka slams the precious book shut and throws it on his desk.

TONY

Don't blasphemy.

JOUJOU

Once almost a priest, always ALMOST a priest.

Mishka storms out of the library. Takla shakes her finger at Tony, scolding him silently, then shuffles after Mishka still clutching the uneaten manooshi.

TAKLA  
(ARABIC)  
Mishka, Mishka, habibte. Come eat.

JOUJOU  
(ARABIC)  
Are you coming to the village?

TONY  
(ARABIC)  
Only if she comes.

JOUJOU  
(ARABIC)  
She'll be fine in a minute. But just in case, give me a check for \$20,000 for the contractor.

Tony sits behind his desk and pulls out a checkbook.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF VILLA - DAY

Joujou walks outside the villa gates where Nisrin is waiting in a Jeep. Joujou looks around furtively as he approaches the car.

NISRIN  
(ARABIC)  
Ill give you your cut from the bible tomorrow.

JOUJOU  
(ARABIC)  
Make the fake invoices good. Mishka will be looking at every penny.

Nisrin nods silently and drives down the mountain. Joujou heads back inside.

INT. A BALLROOM - NIGHT

A ballroom with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking Beirut. Round tables fill the space with vastly different types of people. Tony's relatives, colleagues, Gulf Arabs.

Tony sits at table next to the dance floor next to Nisrin.

Mishka sits on the opposite side of the dance floor with her friends and TANYA - Mishka's former office manager - tight headdress, even tighter dress, high heels, and bright blue contact lenses that make her eyes look unreal.

MOHAMMAD (mid-30s), Nisrin's brother, is a bearded man with visible neck and arm tattoos, stands near a pedestal.

On the dance floor, Joujou begins a formally choreographed tango with Nisrin as Walid arrives at the table.

WALID

There's my wild party girl! I still can't believe you are married with 3 boys.

MISHKA

I'm luckier than I deserve.

WALID

Franny is the lucky one. Is he here or are you finally ready to run away with me?

TANYA

Go sit at the main table. You are the hostess.

MISHKA

I'm not talking to him.

LINA

She offered us coffee at the house.

TANYA

Coffee? Who is she to serve you coffee in your own house? Go sit there otherwise it looks like SHE is the hostess.

MISHKA

I don't care. I'm not going.

The tango ends. Behind the dance floor, a massive video screen descends.

Mohammed stands and presents a sitting with a huge, elaborate DAMASCENE SWORD. He speaks inaudibly.

Tony smiles politely and sets the sword down on the table. He is only paying attention to the screen.

LINA

Who is that? Her brother?

WALID

The girl is one thing but the brother is a whole other thing. It's really bad if the whole family is moving in on him. Move home. Protect him.

MISHKA

Don't worry about him. There's ALWAYS been an office manager.

TANYA

Hey. Hey. I used to be the office manager.

MISHKA

For me not him.

Walid twirls his mustache and shakes his head.

WALID

Bring your kids and your Latin lover and come home. He's too old to be alone.

MISHKA

Franny says there is a war an hour south of the airport and none of us should be here including me. I'm taking Tony to see Dr. Layla on Monday. It's all I can do.

Mishka stands up.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Don't worry. It will be clear I'm the hostess.

Miska runs up to the podium and taps the microphone.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Welcome everyone. Tony and my mother and I and all our family back in Houston want to thank you for joining us in celebrating Tony's 29th birthday. Again.

Tony laughs and so do many in the audience.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JANEY'S LIVING ROOM ON SCREEN

Janey, Franny and the children sit on a long silk sofa. Portraits in silver frames on a table behind them.

ALL OF THEM  
Happy Birthday Jidde

JANEY  
(Blows a kiss)  
Happy 29th darling. Again.

They all wave together and smile. Mishka waves back and fiddles with a remote control.

The screen changes and COLETTE, Mishka's sister stands on a stage in a concert hall. She wears a spangled cowboy hat, a matching suede vest and pants, all studded with rhinestones.

COLETTE  
This ones for you, Dad.

Collete launches into a lively country song about Texas.

TONY  
My favorite!

Mishka, Lina and Tanya rush to drag Tony onto the dance floor, surrounding him in a playful dance as Collete sings on the screen. Tony weakly dances our of rhythm and smiles happily as they girls dance and clap in a tight circle around him. Im Mohammed, Mohammed, and Nisrin stand off to the side, arms folded, watching.

IM MOHAMMED  
(ARABIC)  
I told you to cancel her flight.

NISRIN  
(ARABIC)  
I did. She took a new one.

MOHAMMED  
(ARABIC)  
What if he goes to Houston?

NISRIN  
(ARABIC)  
I've been switching his medication.  
He's too dizzy to fly.

EXT. VILLA BALCONY - DAY

Tony and Mishka sit on the balcony. Dogs yap in garden. Breakfast and laptop on table. Large velvet jewelry boxes for Antique ottoman necklaces and bracelets open on table.

Beyond the garden, a wide valley of pine trees stretches out untouched, no buildings in sight. Tony tosses dogs pieces of bread.

Mishka holds several papers with accounts on them. She circles a few items and gives the paper to Tony who puts on his glasses to read.

MISHKA

(text to Dr. Layla)

Will you be here on time?

DR. LAYLA

15 minutes give or take.

LAPTOP SCREEN: Mishka cancel's Tony's part of her flight to Houston that is leaving that night. CANCELLED confirmed.

Mishka gets up and stands next to the fence watching the dogs.

EXT. VILLA GARDEN DAY

SCREEN READS:(18 YEARS AGO)

A young Mishka, Francisco, Lina and Walid having drinks on the balcony. Mishka shows Lina and Walid her huge diamond engagement ring.

SCREEN READS: (10 YEARS AGO)

Mishka, Francisco and Tony sit on the balcony. Edu plays with dogs. Tony tries to hold two toddlers on his lap. GONZO holds his neck and won't let go.

SCREEN READS:(2 YEARS AGO)

The small group disappears and is replaced by Mishka, Francisco and the younger children playing with a soccer ball. Tony stands in the middle of the yard with his hands on his hips and awkwardly tries to join them. The boys play in custom made soccer jerseys that say Team Nassar.

They fade out.

Mishka still faces the garden. Her back to Tony.

MISHKA  
Shes 40 years younger than you.

TONY  
Do you find it so hard to believe  
that a young woman would find me  
charming?

MISHKA  
I could technically be her mother.

TONY  
I've been separated for 20 years. I'm  
entitled to a relationship.

MISHKA  
Make a settlement on Mom and do  
whatever the hell you want.

Silence. Tony sips his coffee.

MISHKA (cont'd)  
Dad, Your grandsons barely know you.

TONY  
I have to listen to my body and  
listen to the birds - right here.

MISHKA  
If you want to relax why don't you go  
do a business deal. You must be  
really sick.

Tony hands back the papers

TONY  
You've been taking care of the  
accounts for 30 years. I don't need  
to see them. Just tell me how much  
you've spent.

MISHKA  
(To herself - quietly)  
30 years. It's been even longer than  
that even.

Pause. She shakes her head.

Not looking at accounts has gotten  
you in a lot of trouble over the  
years. Trouble I've had to fix.

TONY

You take care of it. You always do.

Mishka sighs in resignation.

Tony walks to the balcony railing and throws more bread to the dogs in the lower garden. Mishka follows.

She pauses, noticing a section of the GARDEN WALL crumbling stones loose, the structure beginning to give way.

MISHKA

Have you seen this?

TONY

Yeah, The municipality put a sign for the people not to park below.

MISHKA

The house foundation might collapse.

TONY

If it really becomes a problem, someone will tell me

Joujou comes to the balcony door.

JOUJOU

Nisrin is here.

TONY

You can come out here. We are waiting for Dr. Layla.

Nisrin and JouJou sit at the balcony table.

MISHKA

(looking only at JouJou.)

Since he is not coming to Houston to see doctors Dr. Layla has arranged several appointments with specialists at the American University Hospital. Tanya will take him.

JOUJOU

(rubbing hands together)

Tanya! Ooh la la.

NISRIN

I always take him to the doctor.

Mishka struggles to compose herself. Joujou stares at her anticipating an explosion.

MISHKA  
(Arabic/English  
screaming)

Shame. Shame on you JouJou. He cant get on an airplane? The original Million Mile Man cant get on an airplane? Are you insane?

NISRIN  
Tony is in perfect health. Only 1 blood marker is out of range.

MISHKA  
This is a family matter and doesn't concern you.

NISRIN  
You show up for a day and you think you can give orders? Go Home and leave us alone.

Tony stirs out of his trance-like state. Mishka stands.

MISHKA  
THIS is my home. I would advise you not to come between me and my father. YOU should leave.

TONY  
That's enough.

Mishka storms out of the house and gets into her car. Tony rushes after her. Mishka struggles to get the keys in the ignition. She begins to cry. The driver window is open.

TONY (cont'd)  
Come back inside. Let's talk.

Mishka backs up down the driveway and screeches the tires.

EXT. VILLA MOUNTAIN ROAD

Mishka cries driving away from Villa. She passes Dr. Layla and Tanya and pulls over.

DR. LAYLA  
Whats wrong?

Mishka begins to sob in Tanya's arms.

TANYA

Oh my God whats happened?

Mishka turns to anger.

MISHKA

That woman is giving me orders.  
Tony's staying here. My mother and  
husband are going to kill me.

DR. LAYLA

Don't you worry about a thing. We'll  
take good care of him.

MISHKA

I'm sorry. I never cry. Never.

TANYA

It's normal Beirut does that.

EXT. VILLA BALCONY

Johnny brings Tanya and Dr. Layla to the balcony table.

Nisrin intimidated by Dr. Layla's white coat walks into the  
house. JouJou stands up to greet Dr. Layla.

TANYA

(ARABIC)

Tony Nassar, you naughty boy, why  
don't you just go home with Mishka?

TONY

(ARABIC)

Ah Josie, twice in 1 week! And the  
beautiful Dr. Layla. I am a lucky  
man.

TANYA

(ARABIC)

You're lucky for a only few months. I  
am moving to Canada.

TONY

Canada? That's a shame. Who wants to  
go to Canada?

TANYA

(ARABIC)

My husbands family. Everyone.

He opens tries to hand Tanya one of the open jewelry boxes.

TANYA (ARABIC)  
 Tony Nassar, You know very well I  
 never accept gifts.

Tony moves the open box in front of Dr. Layla.

TONY  
 And you?

Dr. Layla looks stern.

DR. LAYLA  
 Lets talk about your bloodwork Mr.  
 Tony.

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE DRIVEWAY

Mishka waves Johnny over.

MISHKA (ARABIC)  
 Johnny, Whats going on with the wall?

JOHNNY (ARABIC)  
 The tree roots are breaking the wall  
 up. I've told him about it at least  
 20 times Miss Mishka.

Mishka shakes her head. She starts taking hundreds out of  
 her pocket and hands them to Johnny.

MISHKA  
 (ARABIC)  
 You're supposed to tell me about  
 foundational walls falling down. Fix  
 the fucking wall.

INT. VILLA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tony sits hunched over his phone, on a WhatsApp video call.  
 He's in pajamas and slippers, hair uncombed, looking pale  
 and worn.

INTERCUT: PICTURE OF A BRICK HOUSE LARGER THAN MISHKA'S  
 HOUSE IN HOUSTON TONY'S HOUSE

ON SCREEN: JANEY'S HOUSE - HOUSTON

INT. JANEY'S LIVING ROOM - HOUSTON

Janey sits in a regal, formal living room - damask silk cushions, elegant furniture, and walls adorned with paintings by famous Lebanese artists. Collete sits next to her.

JANEY

Why are you up so late? Where's Mishka?

TONY

I slept and woke up. She's at the airport. I'm anxious and waiting for her flight to leave.

JANEY

You mean the flight you were supposed to be on with her.

Tony wavers a little.

TONY

I have to listen to my body.

Tony wavers even more and then falls down with the phone in his hand. Janey sees him fall into the sofa.

COLLETE

Dad! Dad!

INT. BLUE NOTE BAR - NIGHT

Mishka and Lina sit at the empty bar where bartender silently puts glasses of vodka and lemon in front of them. Waiters put chairs on table and clean floor.

Mishka's eyes are bloodshot. She is on her phone. Mishka looks shell-shocked. Lina is also on her phone.

MISHKA

And I was worried he might have diabetes like his father and brothers. Not a death sentence.

SCREEN: MISHKA'S PHONE

United flight CANCELLED.

TEXT TO FRANCISCO

I just left the hospital. I'm at Blue Note. Cancelled flight. Not coming home without him.

TEXT TO LARRY

My father diagnosed with terminal cancer. I am staying in Beirut.

TEXT TO ASSSITANT

Reschedule my week. I am not returning tomorrow.

TEXT TO COLLETE

Give me your flight details asap. We gotta get him home. Bring all the private plane info with you.

Mishka puts the phone down and drinks some vodka.

LINA

Nisrin listed herself as his only relative? In Lebanon? Where he has dozens ... maybe hundreds of people they could call?

MISHKA

Yep.

(Pause)

There is some kind of barbiturate in his system.

LINA

That bitch been drugging him?

Mishka nods and drinks her vodka.

LINA (cont'd)

She should go to jail.

LINA (cont'd)

Let's go visit St. Charbel and pray for a miracle.

MISHKA

If we have time before we leave.

Mishka nods and drinks her vodka.

LINA

At least Drunk Mishka is back.

EXT. AMERICAN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL CANCER BUILDING

SCREEN: AMERICAN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL ONCOLOGY

INT. HOSPITAL ONCOLOGY WAITING ROOM - DAY

Colette is dressed in a rhinestone jacket. Mishka is a suit. The waiting room is packed. Every seat is taken. People pace, lean against walls, and cluster near the entrance. Patients in wheelchairs line the hallway by the elevator.

A PA SYSTEM crackles with announcements, calling patients like airline boarding groups. A nurse blocks a group from entering the doctor's office area. It is controlled chaos.

On two sofa benches facing each other:

Tony sits slumped, looking ashen, playing Candy Crush on his old phone, oblivious to the chaos. Nisrin side on 1 side next to him and Colette on the other. Mishka sits beside Colette. Across from them, the brother Mohammed and Im Mohammed.

They're squeezed tightly together, shoulder to shoulder with other families and patients.

COLETTE

I had to move back in with Mom.

MISHKA

Sorry.

COLETTE

Yeah. Well, that's what happens when you get married in Vegas.

MISHKA

Is this number 3 or 4?

COLLETE

Are we counting palimony?

They laugh and fall silent. We hear the noises of the waiting room. Everyone is on edge.

IM MOHAMMED

Your father is seeing the best doctor in all of the Middle East. Even royalty come from the Gulf to see him.

Im Mohammed motions towards a few woman not far away wearing full abayas/chador. The sisters look puzzled.

COLLETE

Excuse me Madam, but who are you?

IM MOHAMMED

Who am I? Who are you? I am the one who had to bring Tony pajamas last time he was in the hospital here because no one takes care of the poor man.

Colette and Mishka stare at each other. Then back to her then over to their father – still hunched, eyes glued to his phone. Their corner of the waiting room falls silent and people stare at them. Mishka fuming opens her mouth but Nisrin interrupts.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Mama, mama. Take it easy.

(in English)

Mishka, Colette, may I present my mother, and my brother, Mohammed.

Im Mohammed gets up, grunts in disgust, pulls her jacket close and walks away. Nisrin and Mohammed follow her. Colette turns to her father and whispers.

COLETTE

Dad, why is Nisrin's family here?

Tony continues to play a simple video game on his phone which makes little sounds. Tony does not look up from his game.

TONY

I think it would obvious that they are interested in my health. Be nice to them.

Colette just looks puzzled and stares at Mishka.

COLETTE

Dad. I know all the best divorce lawyers in Houston personally.

TONY

The same lawyers who have left you penniless? No Thank you. There will be no divorce.

Collete whispers to Mishka.

COLETTE

(Whispering to Mishka)

We gotta get the fuck out of here.  
All 3 of us. Houston. Now.

MISHKA

I've been trying and failing since  
I got here. We gotta get home.

COLETTE

Never fear Big Sister. Your Little  
Sister is here. Texas resolve is  
here. Fuck Them. We are leaving.

Colette pulls a silver flask from her embellished vest – a rearing cowboy embossed on the front. She takes a swig, then hands it to Mishka. Mishka takes a large swig. Mishka checks her pockets for cash, then walks away. As she disappears into the crowd, a TEENAGE GIRL with a headscarf approaches Colette.

TEENAGE GIRL

Can I get a selfie?

Colette nods, striking a pose. The entire waiting room watches, transfixed. From across the room, near the hallway, IM MOHAMMED watches too – still, observant.

IM MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Now there's two of them?

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Tony is dying. Did you really expect  
no one to show up? We're lucky his  
wife isn't here.

IM MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

The fact that he still has a wife is  
your fault, isn't it? You are good  
for nothing.

EXT. THE VILLA DRIVEWAY - DAY

Mishka and Collete drive through Villa gates. Another Jeep is already parked in the driveway. Front door is locked. They exchange puzzled looks.

MISHKA

The door is never locked.

Mishka rings the doorbell.

Mohammad opens the door and blocks the door. The two start to walk inside but he doesn't move out of the way.

MOHAMMAD

Go back to Houston.

MISHKA

This is my house.

MOHAMMAD

You are mistaken. We are Tony's real family and this is our house. Go back to Houston.

COLETTE

(Shouting loudly)

Dad! Dad! Are you in there? Where are you?

MOHAMMAD

Staying here could be very very bad for your health. It could even be bad for his health.

(ARABIC )

Tony, do you want to go for a little drive?

Tony appears bedraggled and disoriented. He is wearing pajamas. Mohammed immediately moves aside.

TONY

(ARABIC)

Yallah. Let's go.

Tony gets into the car on the passenger side, wearing his pajamas, clutching a teddy bear. Mohammed holds the door open for Tony and elbows Collete aside who is holding Tony's arm. Tony gets in.

COLETTE

Dad. Get out of the car.

MOHAMMAD

(sweetly in Arabic)

Come Tony, let's go for a little drive.

Collete keeps clinging to the car door. Mohammed starts backing out of the driveway and Collete throws herself in the backseat but the backdoor isn't closed.

Mohammed drives faster. Tony is completely oblivious to everything. Collete swings the backdoor closed.

COLLETE

Stop the car. Let us out.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN ROAD ABOVE THE VILLA - DAY

Mohammad drives way to fast up the mountain road with the wheels screeching. He drives close to the edge and we see how easily the car could go over into the very tall/deep mountain ravine. There are no guardrails at all.

Mohammed leans over and tries to open the back seat door next to Collete shoving her to the over side of the car. He gets the door open and maneuvers the car to try to get Collete to fall out. This goes on for several curves where they struggle with Tony oblivious.

COLLETE

What the fuck are you doing? Stop the car. Stop the car. Are you really going to kill 2 Americans?

Mohammed tries to push Collete again but winds up punching Tony in the Shoulder hard. Tony arouses at the punch. He turns to Mohammed.

TONY

(ARABIC)

What the fuck are you doing? Stop the fucking car.

Mohammed abruptly pulls the car to the side of the road. Tony holds his shoulder and grimaces. Collete gets out of the car and opens the front door where Tony is sitting.

COLLETE

Dad are you okay? Get out of the car.

Collete again tries to pull Tony from the car.

TONY

(ARABIC)

You know I don't like fast driving. Let's go home

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

As you like.

TONY

Cici, get back in the car. Let's go.

COLLETE

I'm walking.

Collete turns and starts walking down the mountain. Mohammed follows her in the car while Tony pleads with her to get back in the car. Collete ignores them and calls Mishka.

EXT. THE VILLA DRIVEWAY - DAY

Mishka in driveway on phone.

MISHKA

Hi Walid. Can you send protection?  
Now? Someone with a gun.

WALID

Of course, habibte. You can't stay up  
there without a man. It wasn't safe  
20 years ago and it's less safe now.

Mishka dials Tanya.

MISHKA

Hi Tanya. Can you come over tonight?

Mishka hangs up and goes to wait for Collete in the street. She mutters to herself, shakes her head and begins to tear up.

MISHKA (cont'd)

This is worse than the Israelis.

INT. THE VILLA LIBRARY - NIGHT

MISHKA, COLETTE, JOHNNY, LINA, and Tanya sit scattered around the library heated by a gas-powered heater. LINA sits apart from the group, texting furiously. A gas-powered heater blares between two of them, humming loudly.

On the desk, several bankers boxes are stacked. COLETTE rifles through them, grunting, picking up papers, glancing at them, then placing them back.

MISHKA

Colette - God only knows what  
horrible secrets you don't want to  
know are in there.

Colette gives her the finger. Mishka turns to Johnny.

MISHKA (cont'd)

(ARABIC)

Why didn't you tell me about Nisrin and her family?

JOHNNY

(ARABIC)

I'm scared of Mohammad. He just got out of jail last year and I think that I think Nisrin and her family are using a famous witch from their village in the South to control him.

TANYA

(ARABIC)

Okay thats enough. Stop Talking and go do something useful. Go get me some candy from the house.

(ENGLISH)

Drugs are their witchcraft and they will be ours.

MISHKA

How can we drug him?

TANYA

All those years in America have made you soft. You crush up the pills sprinkle it in his labne and off you go to Houston.

Colette continues sorting through the papers, setting some aside. She pulls one out and hands it to Mishka.

Mishka glances at it - her face turns white.

MISHKA

Maybe we should just leave him here. and go home.

COLLETE

Now that they've tried to throw me from a moving car, I'm not going anywhere.

PIERRE enters - the new bodyguard. Tall, built like a statue, his super-tight T-shirt stretches over bulging muscles beneath a sleek, fashionable leather coat.

He begins to greet the room. Before he can finish, Colette perks up, grabs his arm, and sidles up next to him, all smiles.

COLETTE

Oh honey, thank you for coming so quickly.

Colette begins pulling Pierre out of the room. Tanya puts her hand up like a stop sign.

TANYA

WAIT. Go to Pharmacie Akikas and get 2 bottles of Klonopin. That should get him on the plane.

PIERRE

(ARABIC)

At your service.

COLETTE

I'll go with you.

As Pierre, Johnny and Colette leave, Tony walks in in his pajamas, robe and slippers.

TONY

What's this? A party? And I wasn't invited? All my girls in one place and you leave me up in my room all alone?

Tanya starts sweetly, then turns stern, flirting with a simpering, fake anger.

TANYA

(ARABIC)

Shame on you Tony Nassar A successful, intelligent man like you leaving the best surgeons in the world waiting for you in Houston? C'mon lets go back to the house where its warm.

TONY (ARABIC)

Ya habibte, I just can't face the transatlantic trip.

Tanya takes TONY's arm and gently leads him toward the door. MISHKA and LINA rise to follow, but Tanya subtly motions behind her back - \*don't follow\*. They watch as she and Tony exit.

INTERCUT: JANEY ON ENLARGED WHAT'S APP SCREEN

As JANEY speaks, LINA walks over to the movable bar, her eyes scanning the bottles.

JANEY

What's going on? He should be back by now. Everything's ready. Surgeon is ready.

MISHKA

I'm trying.

JANEY

Give him some drugs and get him home. Kidnap him if you have to. Get Home.

Janey hangs up. Lina hands Mishka a vodka shot glass.

MISHKA

The Queen Mother has spoken. He has to come home.

LINA

There's no ice.

INT. LARGE APARTMENT IN BEIRUT - NIGHT

Nisrin, Mohammed and Im Mohammed sit in a living room in which the furniture is fading; a dining room table is off to a corner. A nighttime cityscape of Beirut visible out the window with possibly the Ferris wheel on Roache in the background.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Mishka hired a bodyguard. He has a gun.

IM MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Get him alone and away from his daughters. He should never go back to America.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

His best chance to stay alive is in America. I can't take money from him if he dies here in surgery.

IM MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

You must get as much money as you can BEFORE surgery. If you hadn't overdressed him, his daughter would have left and maybe not come back.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Mama. He's been part of the family for years. I want him to live.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Mama. He is of no use to us dead.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

He's been good to us.

IM MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

The man has pancreatic cancer.

(PAUSE)

He is going to die soon either here or there. And unlike your father, Tony Nassar is not going to leave me penniless.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

TONY is slumped in an airport wheelchair, fast asleep. His head hangs low, chin nearly touching his chest.

A WHEELCHAIR ATTENDANT pushes him forward, leading the way from the AIR FRANCE FIRST CLASS check-in area toward the first SECURITY checkpoint.

COLETTE and MISHKA follow closely behind, silent and watchful. At the far end of the hall, JOHNNY and PIERRE wait, eyes scanning the crowd.

SECURITY GUARD

(ARABIC)

What's wrong with him?

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

He's sick. We are taking him home to America for surgery.

The security guard leans over and begins to shout in Tony's ear growing louder and louder he repeats the question.

SECURITY GUARD

(ARABIC)

Sir, What's your name?

SECURITY GUARD (cont'd)

Sir, What's your name? What's your name?

Tony finally begins to stir. Lifts his head, looks around. Takes in where he is.

TONY

(ARABIC)

Take your hands off me. Get away from you. What the fuck are you doing? Fuck off.

(IN ENGLISH )

I thought we were going for an MRI? What the hell are we doing in the airport?

The line behind them is growing and now the entire airport area watching them.

SECURITY GUARD

(ARABIC)

Take your father home.

MISHKA and COLETTE move the wheelchair to the side while the line of people continues to watch them. MISHKA leans into TONY's face and shaking her finger.

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

Shame on you. Shame on you.

(ENGLISH)

You have no right to stay here and choose to die.

TONY

You girls tried to kidnap me? What's wrong with you.

COLLETE

Mom gave orders.

Tony shakes his head. The entire airport hallway watches them.

TONY

I'll go. I'll go. I promise I'll go. I just have a few things to take care of first.

COLLETE

What things Dad? What possible things?

TONY

Things. What if I never come back? What if I don't make it out of surgery?

MISHKA

If that's what you're worried about we'll go see the lawyer.

EXT. AIRPORT DROP OFF AREA - DAY

Colette wheels Tony to Johnny and Pierre.

PIERRE

I'm glad you weren't arrested.

Johnny takes him back to the car.

INT. AIRPORT SECURITY SCANNERS - DAY

Colette returns to Mishka sitting near the security.

MISHKA

I feel sick. This is a nightmare. I think I'm going to throw up.

Mishka begins to silently heave. Collete hands her a bottle of water and hands her an airline vomit bag from her purse.

While Collete talks, Mishka opens the bag and holds it open alternating from holding her mouth against the bag and taking sips of water.

COLETTE

Just to recap. Dad has a secret mistress and a secret family who he has been secretly supporting. We have a bodyguard - not because we are in Lebanon where another war is about to break out BUT because Dad's mistresses brother tried to kill me. and oh yeah. Dad has pancreatic cancer and refuses to get on an airplane to have surgery at the best cancer hospital in the world and is talking about dying here with the secret family.

Silence.

What nightmare?

MISHKA

Exactly.

Silence.

MISHKA (cont'd)

I should be with my children not playing games with a whore.

COLETTE

Go. Go Home. Go to your children. You can still make the flight. I'll bring him back.

MISHKA

I'm not leaving you here with only a bodyguard. You haven't been here in 25 years and never lived here to begin with.

COLETTE

I can take care of it.

MISHKA

Why do you have a vomit bag in your purse?

Colette rests her hand on Mishka's, giving it a firm, silent squeeze. From across the plaza, a YOUNG WOMAN in a fitted headscarf spots them and hurries over, waving her phone like a flag.

YOUNG WOMAN

(beaming)

Colette! Collete! Can I grab a selfie?

She stops short, angling her phone — but Mishka's in the shot. Without a word, Mishka side steps, her eyes rolling skyward.

EXT. ZEITUNEY BAY, BEIRUT - DAY

Tony, Collete, Mishka and Pierre walk from the parking lot down the seaside mall covered with restaurants. Waiting for them at the other end are Nisrin and her brother Muhammed. Collete and Pierre walk slowly and Tony and Mishka move ahead of them.

MISHKA

Dad, we've got to go to the hospital and pick up the MRI disc before they close.

TONY

What about lunch?

MISHKA

No lunch. The doctors in Houston need the MRI disc.

TONY

Say hello to Nisrin first and be nice. Very nice.

COLLETE

Why should we be nice? Her brother tried to kill me?

TONY

Be NICE.

Mishka and Tony greet Nisrin and Muhammad. Mishka is smiling and effusive. Kisses both of them 3 times. Collete and Pierre catch up. Tony and Nisrin walk ahead of the 4 of them. The 4 walk behind them. Im Mohammed watches from 1 of the restaurants.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Who are you? Where are you from?

PIERRE

(ARABIC)

I'm an old friend of the family. Who are you? I never heard Tony mention you. Did you just meet him?

Pierre and Muhammad trade a handshake that goes on a bit too long. They lock eyes and hands for a long time almost going into an arm wrestle. Their vests open and we see both of them are carrying handguns. Mishka puts her hands on both of their arms and Collete gently pulls on Pierre's arm.

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

Boys. That's enough boys. Enough.

The men drop their hands to their sides. Collete pulls Pierre closer to her. Mishka whispers close to Mohammed's ear.

MISHKA (cont'd)

You were right to tell us to go to Houston. We are all going home, as a family. To Houston. Together.

MOHAMMED

Tony told us that didn't work out so well for you yesterday at the airport, did it.

Mohammed smiles ominously and runs to catch up with Nisrin and Tony.

MISHKA

So, what do you think?

PIERRE

He must be well connected to be wearing that particular gun out in the open.

COLLETE

I'm hungry. How about pancakes? Otherwise known as crepes?

Mishka stops. Looks at the brand new skyscrapers. The beautiful port with longing. She remembers her boat at St. George.

EXT. ST. GEORGE YACHT CLUB - 1996

SCREEN: ST. GEORGE YACHT CLUB 1996

Mishka sits on her boat surveying the destroyed St. George and city quietly smoking a cigarette. She drinks in the city, the mountains. Smiles. Leans back and smokes.

EXT. ZEITUNEY BAY, BEIRUT - DAY

Mishka, Collete, Pierre walk away from the restaurants.

MISHKA

I used to love this city. I still do.

Mohammed, Nisrin and Tony enter restaurant. A WAITER appears instantly with a grin that's all teeth and theater. As the group chats, Im Mohammed begins pantomiming wildly to steer the conversation.

WAITER

(ARABIC)

Welcome, welcome! Mr. Antoine. Right this way! Should I bring your usual?

TONY

(ARABIC)

I'm happy to see you my old friend. Yes, plain chicken and boiled potato would be perfect.

Muhammed motions the waiter over and speaks quietly to him while Nisrin moves closer to Tony and puts his hand next to her face. Nisrin tears up, her voice escalating with her tears.

NISRIN

(ARABIC fake crying)

Are you really going to go to Houston? I don't know what I will do if anything happens to you there. Stay here so we can take care of you?

TONY

(ARABIC)

Habibte don't cry. I will be back soon.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Tony, I must speak the truth. Nisrin has given you the best years of her life and yet you are still married to another woman. Where does that leave her if anything, God Forbid, should happen to you when you are in America.

Nisrin begins to cry. She looks genuinely heart-broken.

TONY

(ARABIC)

You mean if I die? I have been very generous, to her. Didn't I pay for that?

Tony points to Nisrin's nose.

INSERT: Picture of Nisrin's face prior shown.

TONY (cont'd)

And those?

Tony points to Nisrin's breasts.

INSERT: Picture of Nisrin with small breasts shown.

TONY (cont'd)  
Don't forget the condo in Cyprus.

INSERT: Nice Building on the beach in Cyprus.

MOHAMMED  
(ARABIC)  
Keep your word. Marry my sister or  
pay up.

Tony's face darkens and becomes menacing.

TONY  
(angrily)  
I am Maronite. There will be no  
divorce.

Nisrin cries harder and blows her nose like a foghorn.

NISRIN  
(ARABIC)  
Don't bother him, ya Mohammed.  
Can't you see he is sick and needs  
to save all his strength for his  
health?

Tony's demeanor abruptly changes.

TONY  
(ARABIC)  
Don't cry habibte. Everything will be  
alright.

Tony reaches into his coat and pulls out a thick stack of checkbooks. He flips one open, clicks his pen, and begins to write. He tears out the first check, hands it over — already opening the next checkbook. Across the room, Im Mohammed exhales, shoulders dropping in visible relief.

TONY (cont'd)  
(ARABIC)  
Let me be perfectly clear that these  
checks are only to be cashed in the  
event of my death in the US. If I  
make it out of surgery, I expect you  
to rip these up.

INT. MISHKA'S BEIRUT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mishka lies fully clothed on top of her bed, scrolling through her phone.

From the other side of the wall - muffled laughter, the scrape of furniture shifting.

Then - THUMP. THUMP. THUMP. The unmistakable rhythm of a bed hitting the wall. Repeated. Steady.

Mishka freezes, eyes narrowing. She sighs. Her phone buzzes.

INTERCUT:

EXT. SOCCER FIELD IN HOUSTON

SCREEN: RIVER OAKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Francisco holds up a WHATS APP VIDEO SCREEN. Edu plays soccer. Almost scores a goal.

MISHKA

I'm so sorry I'm not there. This sucks.

FRANCISCO

We miss you. You've never been gone this long before. How are you holding up? When are you coming home.

MISHKA

I have no idea. He hasn't set a date. I have no idea what I'm supposed to do. Collete said she would stay here with Pierre but that is ridiculous.

FRANCISCO

No more ridiculous than you being there with a bodyguard.

MISHKA

She doesn't speak a word of Arabic.

FRANCISCO

Why won't he come home now?

MISHKA

He says he has things to do. He thinks he's going to die in surgery.

FRANCISCO

What is he doing?

MISHKA

He's completely shut us out. I have no idea what's happening. I'm scared.

Remember who you are. You are my wife. You are their mother.

Francisco turns the camera to where the twins are cheering the game down the field.

Mishka's eyes water. They watch the game. Edu scores a goal.

MISHKA (cont'd)

WooHoo!

FRANCISCO

Do you think he wants to die?

MISHKA

How could you say such a thing?

The THUMP THUMP THUMP gets louder. Mishka sits up in bed and her face turns to anger.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Collete and her boytoy are driving me nuts. I'm going to BlueNote.

INT. BLUE NOTE BAR WITH LIVE BAND - NIGHT

Lina and LINA'S HUSBAND sit at the bar, voices low but sharp - a heated argument in full swing.

Across the room, the group from Tony's birthday party - Walid and the others - crowd around a table near the band. Pitchers of margaritas, snacks clutter the table. A few couples sway on a small dance floor in front of the stage.

The door swings open. Mishka enters. Lina's Husband spots Mishka - his chair scrapes back violently as he stands, shoving the barstool aside. Lina grabs his arm. He yanks his arm free and storms toward Mishka red-faced, fists clenched.

At the table, Walid sees it unfold. He's on his feet in an instant, weaving through the crowd toward Mishka.

LINA'S HUSBAND

(ARABIC)

Don't you know it's against God to interfere between a man and his wife?

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

You should go. This bar doesn't allow dogs.

Lina's husband grabs Lina's arm and starts roughly pulling her towards the outer door.

LINA'S HUSBAND

(ARABIC)

Let's go outside. Now.

Walid removes the husband's hand from Lina's arm and puts his arm around Lina's husband neck very tightly and starts moving him toward the outer door.

WALID

(ARABIC)

Yes, let's go outside and have a little talk.

Lina's husband flinches and looks a little scared. Walid pushes him out the door. Mishka watches with disgust and Lina fights tears.

LINA

He said No. Never. No divorce.

MISHKA

Fuck him, the dog. The lawyer we use from Texas is coming over tomorrow. Maybe he can help.

Lina shakes her downcast head. Her voice breaks.

LINA

No one can help.

The bartender brings two iced glasses of vodka and a little carafe of squeezed lemon. Mishka pours some lemon into both of the glasses and hands one to Lina.

MISHKA

Vodka helps. C'mon.

Mishka pulls Lina toward the table of friends.

A roar of laughter and cheers erupts as they're welcomed with open arms. Mishka goes straight to the dance floor.

Three women from the table jump up and join her, forming a loose circle. The music shifts – from Western pop to a pulsing Lebanese rhythm. The crowd erupts.

Walid bursts in from outside, linking arms with the other men. They leap into a dabke, feet stomping in sync. Walid takes the lead, his steps bold and infectious. The dance floor erupts around him – clapping, stomping, laughter.

The entire bar rises, joins in the dancing. Mishka dances with abandon. She is happy. She is having fun.

Walid grabs her hand

WALID

There's my party girl! Finally.

Mishka's phone is ringing and ringing. She finally hears it and leaves the dance to look at her phone. Collete has rung 10 times. Mishka rings back.

INTERCUT: VILLA LIVING ROOM

Collete above Tony who sits on the sofa rubbing his head. Pierre holds an ice pack on Tony's head.

COLLETE

Dad fell in the bathroom. He hit his head on the sink.

(whispering)

I think I gave him too much.

Mishka looks at her friends dancing sadly. Lina motions with her hands? What's wrong?

MISHKA

I'm on my way home.

Mishka picks up her purse. Waves goodbye. Sad. Resigned.

MISHKA (cont'd)

See what happens when I take a few hours off? It's not allowed.

EXT. BEIRUT SKYSCRAPER

SCREEN: TONY'S OFFICE - BEIRUT

## INT. TONY'S OFFICE IN BEIRUT - DAY

A sleek, glass-walled office with a wall of sleek closets. Mohammed lifts boxes and Nisrin opens each top motioning Mohammed to put in a pile on Tony's desk which has many pictures of his daughters and grandchildren and Janey. As Nisrin examines papers, Mohammed shoves papers through a paper shredder, collects the papers into plastic bags, pours water on the papers and makes a pile of garbage bags near the door.

They work quickly and silently. Nisrin looks at a list in her hand and checks off each bank. Bank Audi, Bank Pharaoun, Bank de la Mediterranee. She finishes and the two walk out of the office.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Where the garbage shoot? Shouldn't we hurry?

NISRIN

I'm the office manager.

They both shove garbage bags into a hallway garbage shoot. They finish and grin.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Checks in hand. Bank statements destroyed. Thank God for banking secrecy. We're free and clear.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Not quite. He keeps records at the house.

## EXT. VILLA DRIVEWAY - DAY

Colette and Mishka lean against a parked car in the driveway. Pierre sits silently near them. Up on the balcony, HABIB and LINA sit at a small table, deep in conversation. Mishka keeps messily eating fruit and spitting the seeds out into the driveway.

HABIB, lawyer, is dressed like a Texan caricature - cowboy boots, faded jeans, a UT Austin T-shirt under a sleek designer blazer, and a Longhorns lapel pin gleaming on his chest.

In the yard, Johnny waters the plants with care. He plucks a gardenia, walks it over to Mishka. Mishka takes it, inhales deeply, and tucks it behind her ear.

The front door creaks open. Three sleazy, poorly dressed men slink out of the house. Their eyes dart nervously as they pass Colette and Mishka.

The women don't flinch – they stare them down, unblinking.

The men avert their gaze and scurry off.

MISHKA

(Arabic)

Johnny, who are those men?

JOHNNY

(Arabic)

Local land brokers. Your father has sold them pieces in the valley before.

MISHKA

He's selling land? He has even more secrets?

Mishka keeps messily eating fruit and spitting the seeds out into the driveway.

COLLETE

Speaking of secrets. What's this?  
It's got a Texas Stamp.

Collette hands Mishka a paper. It is a Muslim marriage certificate in Arabic. It has been stamped by the State of Texas.

SCREEN: Tony Nassar in marriage to Nisrin.

Mishka goes pale. Wide-eyed.

MISHKA

He married Nisrin.

The sisters stare at the paper and each other.

MISHKA (cont'd)

What the fuck? This is 8 years ago. I guess this is why he didn't leave in 2006/2007?

COLLETE

He's just playing games so he can not feel guilty about being an adulterer.  
(MORE)

COLLETE (cont'd)

He's still married in the US for sure but what about here? or maybe just to get Nisrin off his back?

MISHKA

I don't know. If he converted to Islam he can click his heels 3 times and spin around and they would be divorced. But he'd never convert.

COLLETE

Just like he'd never be taken in by a whore 40 years younger than him?

MISHKA

Show it to the lawyer.

The sisters walk to the balcony.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Well, Habib. Can you help Lina get divorced?

HABIB

Not me but I know someone who works with the Greek Orthodox patriarch who might be able to help.

Collete hands Habib the paper.

COLLETE

What is this?

HABIB

This is bad. Very bad.

They all see Tony walking towards them.

HABIB (CONT)

(whispering)

I will immediately check to make sure your parents are still married.

Tony walks out from the balcony door to the table. Habib jumps up to meet Tony.

TONY

Habib. My fellow friend from Texas. Did you only come to have me sign papers or to say goodbye.

They kiss 3 times and Tony gestures to the land.

TONY (cont'd)  
 Can you imagine that this is the only  
 green space left in all of Beirut?

The walk to the balcony edge.

All those lawsuits saved me from  
 selling during hard times. You never  
 know how things work out.

MISHKA  
 Dad, who were are those men?

TONY  
 They are the last of the affairs I  
 needed to get in order. Now, I'm  
 ready to go to Houston.

HABIB  
 Mr. Tony, Please first can you sign  
 these Power of Attorney and these  
 papers for me and then get on the  
 plane anytime wih my blessings for  
 your continued good health.

TONY  
 Later Habib, Later. Come see my  
 beautiful books. There is nothing  
 like it in all of Lebanon.

Girls, can you make sure your mother  
 meets us at the airport?

COLETTE  
 (sarcastically)  
 You want Mom to pick us up at the  
 airport? You're not serious?

TONY  
 (annoyed)  
 Yes, Your Mother. Janey, The  
 Debutante. The Russian Princess.

MISHKA  
 We're ready to go to St. Charbel as  
 soon as you are.

Tony and Habib walk off to the library.

LINA  
 He talks a lot.

MISHKA

Yes. But he's trustworthy.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Why don't we send Pierre to talk to your husband? Sign some papers.

LINA

Pierre won't always be here. What if he goes after my parents. I can't risk it.

MISHKA

Dog. Fucking dog.

Mishka kicks a branch in the driveway. Mishka and Collete gesture to Lina motioning her to come with them with their fingers pressed against their lips in the silent sign. Lina follows.

INT. TONY'S HOME OFFICE

The sisters walk through the house to the bedroom area and Tony's home office where there is a huge desk with piles of papers. A large computer screen. Drawers everywhere.

The sisters motion Lina again to be silent. Mishka hands Lina the paper and the 3 start rapidly and silently looking through his drawers.

COLLETE

I don't read Arabic. I don't know what I'm looking for.

MISHKA

His IDs or another certificate. We have to make sure he is still Christian.

Collete opens a bank of closets behind which are shelves with bankers boxes and files stuffed with paper from floor to ceiling.

COLLETE

Jesus. I don't know which one of them is a worse hoarder.

MISHKA

Those are our personal bank records.  
It's a pain to get records even from  
your own accounts because of banking  
secrecy.

COLLETE

God help anyone who has to organize  
those.

Lina holds up an old ID.

LINA

This is 5 years old. He's still  
Christian. But Habib should check  
while you're gone.

EXT. ST. CHARBEL MONASTERY - DAY

Tony, Mishka, Collete and Lina walk from the parking lot to  
the body of St. Charbel in the basement. The site is crowded  
with all sects of Lebanese people including young and old  
women wearing headscarfs. The 4 of them kneel at the body as  
they pray they begin to tear up moved by the power of St.  
Charbel. As they stand, Mishka hugs her father.

MISHKA

Don't be scared, Dad. St. Charbel  
will take care of you in surgery.

INT. BEIRUT AIRPORT DEPARTURES - NIGHT

Pierre pushes Tony through the airport in a wheelchair. They  
hold their boarding passes. He turns the wheelchair over to  
Collete as they reach security. He kisses her hand.

PIERRE

I will miss you my beautiful Collete.

Tony and Mishka roll their eyes. The Security Guard examines  
their passports and papers.

SECURITY GUARD

(ARABIC)

Back again sir?

TONY

(ARABIC)

Of course, I'm back. My wonderful  
daughters are taking me to Houston  
for surgery.

SECURITY GUARD

(ARABIC)

You are a lucky man to have such daughters. I'm glad I didn't arrest them. God preserve your health.

Tony and the security guard laugh.

EXT. LARGE BRICK HOUSE IN HOUSTON WITH GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

SCREEN: MISHKA'S HOUSTON HOUSE.

INT. MISHKA'S KITCHEN

Mishka embraces Francisco and clasps his neck. She cries and they kiss and hug.

FRANNY

It's okay. You're home. You're home.

MISHKA

I thought I'd never be home again.

FRANNY

Did you forget who you were again?

Mishka nods. The children run down the stairs and hug their parents' legs and waist.

CHILDREN

Mommy's home. Mommy's home.

FRANNY

These are your children. You are their mother. You are my wife. You're safe now. We are your real family now Mamita. We love you. You're home.

Mishka bends down to return the hugs. Tears up.

MISHKA

Last one in the pool is a rotten egg.

All of them run upstairs.

EXT. MISHKA'S HOUSE BACKYARD POOL.

Kids jump in water as Mishka throws ball from the water to each one to catch as they jump in a familiar game.

FRANCISCO  
I'm keeping score.

Francisco cannonballs into the pool as the boys jump and they all laugh as Mishka chokes some water.

EXT. LARGE HOUSE WITH GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

SCREEN: JANEY AND TONY'S HOUSE - HOUSTON

INT. TONY'S BEDROOM HOUSTON

Tony sits upright in a king-sized bed in a room with heavy drapes and lined with books like a library. The headboard and bed blocks shelves.

Edu and Gonzo are in the bed on either side of Tony. Edu sits in a huge leather armchair near the bed. All 4 of them watch cartoons and guffaw at Tom and Jerry or Bugs Bunny

Mishka walks in.

MISHKA  
C'mon guys. It's time for bed. You have school in the morning and Jidde has to go to the doctor.

TONY  
(Authoritatively)  
Hey. You don't interrupt in the middle of an episode.

Edu, Gonzo and Alex are surprised and delighted to see their mother being yelled at. They look back and forth between the two.

Mishka goes to Edu and motions him to move in the chair and squeezes in beside him.

Tony smirks in satisfaction and they all turn to the cartoon.

It's a happy moment.

EXT. LARGE HOUSE WITH GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

SCREEN: MEANWHILE AT MISHKA'S HOUSE

## INT. MISHKA KITCHEN

Francisco sits in the kitchen den watching a soccer game screaming in Spanish at the TV. The phone rings as The Mexican announcer screams GOOOOAAAAAAL. Franny ignores the ringing phone. Jumps up and down in happiness.

The phone keeps ringing.

FRANCISCO  
Putá Madre! Quién carajo está  
llamando?

Franny goes to the landline phone on the kitchen wall. Picks up as he watches the game.

FRANCISCO (cont'd)  
Quen es?

INTERCUT:

## INT. NISRIN'S BEIRUT APARTMENT

Mohammed stands pacing. Keeps hitting the green button on this cellphone. Nisrin and Im Mohammed sit on the sofa watching him.

MOHAMMED  
Hello. Can I talk to Tony Nassar?

Francisco is immediately suspicious.

FRANCISCO  
Who is this?

MOHAMMED  
I am his friend.

FRANCISCO  
What's your name?

MOHAMMED  
Mohammed. I am calling to wish him  
good luck in his surgery tomorrow.

FRANCISCO  
You have the wrong number. Don't ever  
call here again.

Francisco hangs up violently.

FRANCISCO (cont'd)  
 Now these fucks are calling my house?  
 I don't think so.

The phone rings again. Francisco ignores and goes back to his game. The phone keeps ringing. He goes back to the phone.

FRANCISCO (cont'd)  
 Who is calling?

NISRIN  
 Hello. My name is Nisrin. I am Tony Nassar's office manager. Can I speak to him please?

FRANCISCO  
 Puta Madre. You have the wrong number. Don't ever ever call my house. Ever.

Francisco hangs up again and keeps swearing in Spanish.

EXT. SCREEN: MD ANDERSON BUILDING IN HOUSTON

SCREEN: MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER, HOUSTON TEXAS

INT. MD ANDERSON HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Mishka, Colette, Janey and Francisco sit in a row of plastic chairs, the sterile hallway humming with fluorescent light and distant beeping.

No one speaks. Just the occasional shift of weight, the tapping of a foot, the silent exchange of worried glances.

JANEY  
 Girls. Thank you for getting him home. Thank you. He has the best chance he can have now.

Janey continues to rub her hands together. Down the hall, a SURGEON in scrubs approaches Janey who stand. The others notice - they rise in unison, tense, expectant. The surgeon stops in front of Janey. A beat of silence.

SURGEON  
 Mrs. Nassar? The surgery went as well as it could.

(MORE)

SURGEON (cont'd)

There was a little piece of tumor I was unable to extract but if he is able to complete chemo, it might give him another year, maybe 18 months, to live.

Janey tears in her eyes, hugs him.

JANEY

Thank you doctor. God Bless You.

SURGEON

You can come with me.

They follow the surgeon through the hallway to a private recovery area. Tony is lying unconscious in a hospital bed surrounded by curtains. The 4 of them surround him and join hands in a circle surrounding him, close their eyes and Janey leads a prayer. Tony begins to stir and slowly opens his eyes.

JANEY

Hail Mary Full of Grace...

TONY

Where am I? Am I dead? Am I in heaven?

They all begin to smile and laugh Tony looks confused.

INT. MISHKA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark. Still. Suddenly - BUZZ. BUZZ. BUZZ. A cellphone vibrates on the nightstand, its screen lighting up the room in pulses.

ON SCREEN - WHATSAPP CALL: BANQUE AUDI - BANKER PIERRE

Mishka jolts awake, gasping - breath ragged, eyes wide. Francisco groans.

Mishka grabs her phone and answers struggling to catch her breath.

INTERCUT:

EXT. BANK AUDI BRANCH- DAY

INT. BANK AUDI BRANCH MANAGER OFFICE

BANKER EDWARD sits with Nisrin and Mohammed across from his desk.

MISHKA

Hello.

BANKER EDWARD

Hello Mishka. This is Edward from Bank Audi. Your father's office manager is here with a check, and I must confirm the check with your father.

MISHKA

Edward, he had surgery yesterday. Talk to me. I'm on the accounts.

BANKER EDWARD

He took you off all the accounts. His office manager is here with a check for \$1 million dollars. If I can't speak to him, I must cash it.

Huge grins on Nisrin and Mohammed's faces. The bank manager shaking his head leaves them in the office while he walks out.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Now to Bank of Beirut.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dim overhead lights cast long shadows. The corridor is quiet, almost eerie. Colette walks slowly, her heels soft against the linoleum. Her face is calm, unreadable. She reaches Tony's hospital room, gently pushes the door open, and steps inside.

INT. TONY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT CONTINUOUS

Collete enters Tony's private hospital room. Stands at the foot of his bed and dials. Eyes fixed to Tony groaning and attached to many wires, machines beeping.

ON SCREEN - WHATSAPP CALLING: AHMAD - BANK OF BEIRUT

INTERCUT:

EXT. BANK OF BEIRUT BRANCH

INT. BANK OF BEIRUT BRANCH MANAGER OFFICE

COLETTE

Ahmad. This is Colette Nassar. Dad, Dad. Ahmad at Bank of Beirut urgently needs to talk to you.

Tony stirs in pain and does not wake up.

BANKER AHMAD

(ARABIC)

Hello Antoine. I have your office manager here. She has a check for \$1 million dollars. Do you authorize this check?

Tony doesn't move. Colette screams in his face.

COLETTE

Dad, Dad. Ahmad at Bank of Beirut is going to cash a check for \$1 million. He is giving the office manager Nisrin a million dollars.

Tony stirs without opening his eyes. He groans.

COLLETE

Ahmad. He can't speak. I have his POA. Do not cash the check.

AHMAD

I'm very sorry Ms. Nassar but the POA is not registered at the bank. I am obliged to cash the check since your father did not say no.

Collete sits next to her father's bed. Slumps.

COLLETE

Son of a bitch.

She pulls out her phone still bent over.

COLLETE (cont'd)

(Text to Mishka: )

It didn't work. She took the money.

INT. MISHKA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mishka is staring at her phone in the dark. She lays down. Whispers to herself.

MISHKA

What the fuck Dad. What the fuck?

FRANCISCO

What's wrong?

MISHKA

The whore is taking all his money even while he's here.

FRANCISCO

That is what whores do Mamita. They take money.

MISHKA

I thought if we got him here he would be safe.

FRANCISCO

He is safe. He just survived the most difficult surgery that exists.

MISHKA

You know what I mean. Safe from them.

FRANCISCO

He's alive. That's all that matters.

Silence.

You take care of people's money for a living. You will take care of this. Just do it. But do it in the morning.

Francisco embraces her and immediately begins to snore in her ear. Mishka stares at the ceiling.

MISHKA

Easy for you to say. Your parents are sane.

EXT. SCREEN: MD ANDERSON BUILDING IN HOUSTON

SCREEN: MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER - HOUSTON

INT. MD ANDERSON HOSPITAL GUEST AND VISITOR ATRIUM - DAY

A vast, sunlit space with potted trees where hospital patients sit with their families. Tony sits in a wheelchair with an expensive robe over his hospital gown. Janey and Mishka sit on each side of him. The children at his feet.

Tony holds up his phone, showing the children photos.

TONY

(laughing)

And here - this is me feeding a giraffe in Kenya. Look at that tongue!

The kids giggle.

TONY (cont'd)

And then - don't tell your grandmother - I climbed over the fence.

Janey rolls her eyes. The grandchildren gasp, delighted.

TONY (cont'd)

The giraffe came and ate out of my hand and out of nowhere came 3 safari rangers, grabbed me and threw me back over the fence. Mr. Nassar, Mr. Nassar, the giraffe will kill you.

The children point and laugh. Collete enters the visiting room and Mishka meets her in a corner of the room.

COLETTE

So that was a total fail. He and Mom are going to be penniless and homeless if this keeps up so that means I'll be homeless too.

MISHKA

I've been there 3 times in the past year. Its your turn. Lina will take care of the deeds while you travel. and you take care of the banks with your Power of Attorney.

EXT. VILLA - DAY

To the music of Pink Panther or theme to Mission Impossible.

EXT. VILLA DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Johnny opens the Villa gates for Lina's Mercedes.

INT. VILLA - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Lina strides in. Johnny follows, unsure. Lina video calls Mishka who directs Lina room by room.

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

Johnny go get some vegetables from  
the garden and a bouquet of gardenias  
for DOCTOR LINA.

Johnny nods and exits. Lina opens drawers, checks pill bottles, scans labels. Silent. Focused. Lina opens file cabinets, flipping through folders, checking the closet lined with neatly stacked papers. Mishka watches.

MISHKA (cont'd)

They must be in the safe.

INT. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lina enters dining room and approaches a large safe tucked in the corner.

LINA

(whispering into  
phone)

Is this it? How will I open it.

MISHKA

Try it.

Lina opens the safe doors easily and immediately sees the oversized papers. Inside: a pile of deeds.

LINA

Got it.

She grabs them, folds them into her oversized purse and heads to her car.

LINA (cont'd)

Mission Accomplished. God help you  
when Tony finds out his deeds and  
money are gone.

MISHKA

If we can keep him here, he will  
never find out.

EXT. BEIRUT AIRPORT

Plane lands. Colette is first to walk down plane stairs. At the bottom of the stairs wait Pierre with special staff and a Range Rover. Pierre drives the car. The security guards ask for a selfie.

SERIES OF BANKS MONTAGE- DAY

EXT. BANK AUDI BRANCH

SCREEN: BANK AUDI 9:15 AM.

INT. BANK AUDI BRANCH MANAGER OFFICE

SCREEN: BANK AUDI 9:15 AM.

Colette and Habib sit across from the Bank Manager. Pierre stands outside the bank manager's offices. Habib presents The Power of Attorney in Arabic.

SCREEN: COLLETE NASSAR - POWER OF ATTORNEY GRANTED BY TONY NASSAR

HABIB

This gives her full authority over  
these accounts.

BANK MANAGER

Agreed.

The manager types in Antoine Nassar's name. A large balance flashes on screen. Colette gives a tight nod.

COLETTE

Transfer. All of it to Mishka and I's  
joint account.

SCREEN: TRANSFER CONFIRMED. BALANCE \$0.

EXT. BANK MEDITERRANEE

SCREEN: BANK MEDITERRANEE 10:30

INT. BANK MEDITERRANEE BRANCH MANAGER OFFICE

Collete and Habib sit at the desk of the branch manager.  
Pierre outside the office.

SCREEN: TRANSFER CONFIRMED. BALANCE \$0.

EXT. SAFRA BANK

SCREEN: SAFRA BANK 12:30PM

INT. SAFRA BANK BRANCH MANAGER OFFICE

Collete and Habib sit at the desk of the branch manager.  
Pierre outside the office.

SCREEN: TRANSFER CONFIRMED. BALANCE \$0.

EXT. HABTOOR HOTEL ENTRANCE

INT. HABTOOR HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Pierre and Colette in bed. He's asleep. She whispers into  
her phone where Mishka is on a WhatsApp video call.

COLETTE

It is done. I took every penny.  
I have the deeds Lina took.  
Mom and Dad are safe.

MISHKA

Dad keeps asking for you.

COLETTE

Remind him I'm in Nashville fighting  
my alimony payments. I am doing that  
next week.

Pierre turns around in his sleep and throws his arm over  
Colette.

COLETTE (cont'd)

I gotta go.

EXT. LARGE BRICK HOUSE WITH GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

SCREEN: MISHKA'S HOUSE HOUSTON

INT. MISHKA'S KITCHEN IN HOUSTON - DAY

Mishka stands in front of a large corkboard, carefully pinning up a series of purple-colored cards. Each one is labeled in bold marker: "DAD -

CHEMO SESSIONS"

The board is layered with other cards - names, times, activities - a chaotic but earnest attempt at order.

Edu and the Twins stand behind her, staring blankly at the board. Mishka points to different cards, explaining.

MISHKA

Okay, so this is you - soccer on Tuesdays. And here - tennis. And here's when I take Grandpa to the hospital.

Mishka turns back to the board, still talking - not realizing she's lost them.

MISHKA (cont'd)

I won't be at the soccer game, but I will be at the school concert, and I'll meet you in Mexico.

One of the twins rolls their eyes. The other shrugs. The three drift over to the kitchen island, plop down, and pull out their phones.

Francisco walks in and kisses his children and high fives them.

FRANCISCO

Mamita, who are you talking to?

Mishka shrugs, sits at the kitchen island and opens her laptop; typing concentrating. Ignoring the family.

EXT. BIGGER BRICK HOUSE IN HOUSTON WITH GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

SCREEN: JANEY & TONY'S HOUSE HOUSTON

INT. TONY'S BEDROOM

The phone keeps buzzing and buzzing NISRIN Tony blocks the call repeatedly. Janey enters the door carryin a cup of tea and Fig Newtons. She puts them on the nightstand and bustles around the room plumping cushions, closing the drapes and turning off lights.

JANEY

Who keeps calling you at this hour?  
Turn off that phone and get some  
sleep?

Tony unsuccessfully tries to turn off the phone and then buries it under the big pillows where we can still hear the buzzing.

JANEY (cont'd)

Are you in pain? Can I get you  
anything, darling?

Tony smiles sweetly.

TONY

I haven't had Fig Newtons in years.  
Thank you.

Janey sighs.

JANEY

Call me if you need anything.

As soon as Janey leaves the room, Tony checks his phone. Nisrin has left a series of texts. Each in it's own bubble.

NISRIN

(TEXTS)

Is anything wrong?  
Are you okay?  
Why don't you answer?  
I am so worried about you?  
When are you coming back?  
Thank God you are okay after the  
surgery.  
We have everything you need here.  
Come home.

Call me.  
Call me.  
Call me.

TONY

(TEXTS)

I can't talk now. I'm in pain.  
(MORE)

TONY (cont'd)  
Going to sleep.

Collete knocks on door as she opens it at the same time. She leans inside. Tony hurriedly buries the phone again. It starts buzzing.

COLLETE  
Dad. I'm home from Nashville. It's  
good you are here.

She goes to kiss him while the phone keeps buzzing.

TONY  
Good night baby. I love you.

Collete leaves. Tony pulls out the phone. More texts from Nisrin fill the screen. He turns the phone off and sighs. Groans as he tries to move in his bed.

INT. MISHKA'S KITCHEN

Collete and Mishka sit on opposite ends of the sofa drinking large cups of tea.

MISHKA  
Nisrin is calling him constantly.  
Like constantly. Franny answered our  
phone and Mohammed was on the line.  
Then Nisrin called?

COLLETE  
How did that go?

MISHKA  
He cursed at him in Spanish and  
English and told him never to dial  
the number again. Mostly Spanish.

COLLETE  
Put a madre!

The sisters curse in Spanish making fun of Francisco as they laugh and laugh.

COLLETE (cont'd)  
When should we tell Dad?

MISHKA  
Maybe if we tell him what she did,  
he's just stay here.

COLLETE

That seems highly unlikely. Stay with Mom?

MISHKA

I'm afraid to tell him.

COLLETE

He's addicted to her. Like it's super fucked up. Fucking bitch.

MISHKA

Stupid old man.

COLLETE

We could just give the money to Mom and walk away. That would be best.

MISHKA

He would beat her down relentlessly. She would wind up giving it back.

COLLETE

You don't think if we told her about Nisrin she would hold firm?

MISHKA

We can't risk it can we?

COLLETE

So we go back to our lives and wait. As long as you are paying all the bills he won't know anything. You are paying right?

Mishka nods silently. Looks sad. Wipes her mouth from the liquor. Francisco joins them.

FRANCISCO

When he finds out, he is going to fight you and fight you hard. Whatever you do - you can not give him back a penny. She will take every penny he has and we can't afford to support them.

MISHKA

Understood. I'll add it to the list. No money to the whore.

MONTAGE

## INT. MISHKA'S OFFICE

Mishka sits at her desk with the Houston skyline in the background. An assistant walks in and puts a file on her desk. Mishka keeps staring at her double computer screen of charts and financial markets.

## EXT. SOCCER FIELD IN HOUSTON

Tony, Janey, Franny, Edu sit on school stadium seating watching Gonzo and Alex play soccer. It is a warm day. Tony wears a coat and hat.

The coach gives Alex a yellow card. Francisco jumps off the seats and runs to the side of the field screaming.

FRANCISCO  
Your blind. You don't know what  
you're doing. Your blind.

## EXT. POOL AT MISHKA'S HOUSE

Family plays the same jumping game. Janey and Tony watch from the patio table. A Phillipino male nurse come to Tony and hands him some pills and covers him with a blanket.

## INT. MISHKA'S KITCHEN

Mishka stands alone at her kitchen calender rearranging cards. Goes to the laptop on the island and double checks the laptop against the calender on the wall.

MISHKA  
Fuck. I did it again?

She begins to rearrange the cards and checks the laptop. Shakes her head in self-disgust.

MISHKA (cont'd)  
How many things can I miss in 1 week?  
I can't be in 3 places at once.

Then she stops. Stands perfectly still. Looks at the calender. Backs away. Looks at the entire wall.

MISHKA (cont'd)  
This is insanity.

Francisco walks in.

FRANCISCO

Are you talking to your calender  
again?

MISHKA

How did this happen?

FRANCISCO

Let me show you.

He kisses her neck and leads her out of the kitchen.

INT. RIVER OAKS COUNTRY CLUB - DAY

A long table is set under a striped awning, overlooking tennis courts. Mishka's family, Collete, Janey and a few friends fill the seats. An extravagant Sunday buffet is inside behind them. In the background, on the wall shelves are lined with Tony and Janey Nassar's championship trophies. A few with Mishka and Colette's names sit off to the side. Friends pass by the table, offering hugs and greetings before moving on. A WAITER appears, carrying a large birthday cake with ten candles. Friends, family and the waiters gather.

EVERYONE

(singing)

Happy birthday to you...

The Twins beam as the cake is set down. They blow out the candles to cheers and applause. The twins run off with their tennis coach, Janey's lover, with their rackets in hand.

The table quiets.

SPLIT SCREEN: WITH NISRIN AND MOHAMMED SITTING NEXT TO EACH OTHER.

Mohammed texts and Nisrin looks over his shoulder.

NISRIN

(TEXTS)

When are you coming back.  
I miss you so so much.  
Thank God you are feeling better.  
Do you love me?  
I love you so much there are no  
words.

TONY

(TEXTS)

Call me later. I cant talk now, I am with my family. Of course I love you.

NISRIN

(TEXTS)

I am your family. I am the only one who loves you. We all love you.

Thank God for your good health.

The screen closes back to Tony who hastily closes the screen as he realizes Mishka is watching him. They watch the boys disappear onto the courts.

TONY

I always did like it here.

MISHKA

Me too.

TONY

But I want to get back to the birds on my balcony in Beirut.

EXT. MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL, HOUSTON

SCREEN: MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL - HOUSTON

INT. EXAM ROOM

TONY sits on the edge of an exam table, wearing a medical smock, legs dangling slightly. A curtain divides the space. On the other side, MISHKA waits in a plastic chair, hands clasped tightly in her lap. She stares at the floor, listening to the faint rustle of paper and movement behind the curtain.

TONY

Tell me the truth, Doc. How long do I have?

DOCTOR

(ARABIC)

Only God can answer that but according to the data we have you are doing great. Your surgical wound is healed and you completed the first rounds of chemo.

TONY

How long doc?

DOCTOR

A year. Give or take.

TONY

(ARABIC)

I miss the birds and the smell of diesel and my own bed. I love my children and my grandchildren, but home is home.

DOCTOR

You can finish chemo in Beirut but remember what I told you when we first met at the American University Hospital. Pancreatic cancer affects your thinking more than any other cancer. Are you sure you want to leave Houston and your family?

TONY

Thank you doctor. Thank you. I really want to go back to Beirut.

The doctor and Mishka move to the other side of the curtain while Tony gets dressed.

MISHKA

I thought we agreed he would stay here for treatment.

DOCTOR

Ethically, I just can't keep him here anymore. He has the right to choose where to die.

Tony opens the curtain impeccably dressed in his pants high on his waist. Tony sees Mishka distressed.

TONY

(ARABIC)

What's wrong? What's going on? Is something wrong? Doc, are you lying to me?

DOCTOR

(ARABIC)

No Tony, all is good. I'll see you in Beirut.

Tony is beaming He stands up, grabs the doctor, shakes his hand heartily and won't let go. Mishka is silent and stone-faced.

TONY

Where is your mother? I want her to learn the good news.

Janey is in the hallway listening outside. She walks down the hallway, takes a deep breath and enters a door called Gynecological Oncology.

MISHKA

You want us to be happy that you're leaving all of us to go die in Beirut alone?

TONY

Don't be so melodramatic.

INT. RIVER OAKS COUNTRY CLUB - DAY

Tony sits at the head of the table, regal and relaxed. Mishka, Janey, Collete, Francisco and the children are in tennis clothes.

The twins dart back and forth from the table - grabbing napkins, dropping forks, whispering urgent requests.

One twin tugs on Mishka's arm, insistent.

GONZO

Mom. Mom. Mom. Come on.

MISHKA

Try your Aunt.

Gonzo runs to Colette who is sitting with JANEY and pulls her toward the restaurant window.

FRANCISCO, also in tennis gear, answers his phone and walks away mid-conversation.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Don't leave, Dad. If you go back we may never see each other again.

TONY

It's going to be okay baby, I promise.

MISHKA

Dad, it's not going to be okay.

Tony leans forward and takes holds both her hands.

TONY

I really am sorry that I am leaving you with such a big mess. Remember you must take care of those boys of yours, your mother and sister.

Mishka tears up and walks out to balcony overlooking the tennis courts. Janey follows her after silently shaking her finger in Tony's face. Janey puts her arm around Mishka. She brushes hairs blowing in Mishka's face.

JANEY

You've been asking him to stay home since you could talk. He's leaving.

MISHKA

This time for good.

JANEY

You couldn't stop him when you were a child. You can't stop him now. Let him go.

Mishka is still. Janey moves Mishka's hair from her face. Mishka is sorrowful.

MISHKA

I know.

The young tennis instructor comes bounding up the stairs and Janey walks away.

Back at the table. Francisco returns.

FRANCISCO

Hey Tony, Mishka and Colette asked me to tell you what happened while you were in surgery. Your office manager tried to cash \$1,000,000 checks worth in total \$6,000,000 at different banks.

TONY

Those checks were only to be cashed if I died. That fucking bitch.

FRANCISCO

Well, she tried to cash them while you were in surgery. Multiple times.

(MORE)

FRANCISCO (cont'd)  
Mishka and Collete used their Powers  
of Attorney to take all your money  
and land.

TONY  
Did Janey ask for this?

FRANCISCO  
No. She has no idea.

TONY  
Janey has no idea?

FRANCISCO  
Who among us has the courage to tell  
Janey you are giving millions of  
dollars to your office manager?  
You tell Janey.

Tony's face turns black. He struggles to contain himself.

FRANCISCO (cont'd)  
One more thing Tony before you go  
back to Beirut. I love Janey like my  
own mother and I want you to know  
that if worst comes to worst Janey  
could move in with us but we couldn't  
begin to support her or your  
lifestyles.

TONY  
My wife dependent on you? Never.

FRANCISCO  
Half the year we are paying her bills  
anyway but you have been reimbursing  
us. If that were to stop, I can't  
cover it.

Tony's grips his heart.

TONY  
She cashed the checks?  
Bitch. Fucking Bitch.

Wide-eyed he stares at Francisco and collapses. Janey is  
outside with the tennis instructor and sees Tony collapsing.

JANEY  
(to the tennis instructor)  
Go get the club doctor. Run.

Janey rushes over to Tony who looks like he is having a heart attack. Janey kneels down next to him.

JANEY (cont'd)  
What's wrong darling?

Janey looks up at Francisco quizzically.

JANEY (cont'd)  
The doctor is coming. What happened?

FRANCISCO  
I have no idea. We were talking and he suddenly collapsed.

INT. MISHKA'S KITCHEN

Mishka sits alone in the kitchen den. She keeps checking her watch. Goes to the window and looks through the blinds. Wrings her hands, paces in front of the TV where Gone with The Wind plays silently.

Mishka sits down. Checks the Air France app refreshing over and over.

SCREEN: HOUSTON PARIS BEIRUT FLIGHT - ON TIME

She hears a car in the driveway and goes to the window again. Looks at her watch again. Collete gets out of the car.

Collete walks into the kitchen and Mishka flings herself into Collete's arms.

MISHKA  
I'm sorry. I just couldn't do it.

COLLETE  
It's okay. You didn't have to go.

MISHKA  
Is he gone?

COLLETE  
I put him in the wheelchair and they took him to the First Class lounge.

MISHKA  
We're probably never going to see him again.

COLLETE

It's what he wanted. He wants to die alone.

Silence.

At least we got a few months with him.

MISHKA

I don't think I've ever spent this much time with him before. Ever.

COLLETE

Yeah. And I was actually in the house with him and Mom. Disaster.

MISHKA

It was weird having him around and now he is gone. Forever.

Silence

Do you think he'll ever talk to us again?

COLLETE

He's so fucked up. Probably. It'll be awhile.

MISHKA

He doesn't have awhile.

COLLETE

We had to do it. What would we do if Mom had no money. If Nisrin took the houses?

Collete pulls out her silver flask and hands it to Mishka. Mishka nods no and gestures to the alcohol bottles on the bookshelves.

MISHKA

It doesn't help.

COLLETE

Then you're not trying hard enough. Drink more.

MISHKA

I can't believe he left.

She takes Collete's flask.

EXT. VILLA AND DRIVEWAY - BEIRUT

SCREEN: TONY'S HOUSE - BEIRUT

INT. VILLA LIVING ROOM -DAY

Tony and Habib sit around the coffee table. Tony 'S voice is hoarse and weak but he keeps trying to scream.

TONY

She's not going to get 1 penny. Not 1 single penny.

HABIB

The money is in her trust. We can't take it out.

TONY

I'll take it out. I'll sue them in both countries.

HABIB

Mr. Nassar your daughters are just trying to protect you and their mother.

TONY

Protect! Protect me? From What? From who?

HABIB

Nisrin was ready to put you on the street.

HABIB (cont'd)

They want to sue your office manager and will pay all your expenses.

TONY

Me? An Allowance? From my own money?

Johnny enters the room.

JOHNNY

(ARABIC)

Mr. Antoine. The nurse is at the door.

TONY

(ARABIC)

I will sue Nisrin. I will sue them.  
Tell my daughters if they try to come  
to Beirut. they will be arrested at  
the airport.

HABIB

You don't mean that. Talk to them.  
You are lucky to have daughters who  
love you and your wife so much.

TONY

If they come here they will go  
straight to jail.

Habib walks out.

JOHNNY

(ARABIC)

Mr. Antoine. May I present Nurse  
Hoda.

NURSE HODA is standing in the hallway. She is a beautiful  
middle-aged woman dressed in a nurses uniform with nurse  
shoes. She wears glasses and her hair up.

Tony gets up with great effort and walks to the balcony  
shaking his head muttering under his breath over and over.

TONY

(ARABIC)

\$6 Million dollars. \$6 Million  
dollars. Fucking bitch.

Johnny comes to the balcony.

JOHNNY

(ARABIC)

Mr. Antoine. I gave the suitcase full  
of medicine to the Nurse.

TONY

(ARABIC)

Fuck the nurse. Fuck the medicine.  
Fuck Mishka. Fuck Nisrin.

Nurse Hoda takes the suitcase from Johnny and the two of  
them walk towards the bedrooms.

TONY (cont'd)  
(to himself)  
Did Mishka have to send me a fat  
nurse?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM IN MISHKA'S OFFICE - DAY

Mishka, Colette and Larry sit near the head of a long conference table. Papers, laptops, and coffee cups are scattered in front of them. On the opposite wall, a large screen glows with a video call.

INTERCUT:

INT. VILLA LIVING ROOM - DAY

A laptop is on the coffee table on top a stack of antique books

Tony sits wrapped in a fur-lined Bedouin robe over his dress shirt and slacks. He looks gaunt and drawn.

Habib sits next to him and a small, wiry man, both watching the screen intently.

INT. BACK TO CONFERENCE ROOM

Larry slides a stack of documents in Arabic with English translations across the table toward Colette and Mishka.

The sisters begin to sign papers on tabs.

LARRY  
\$10 wired back to Beirut. \$5 stays in the trust. Deeds are returned except for the 4 houses. It's a good deal Mr. Nassar. If you were divorcing it would be Half and Half.

HABIB  
Mr. Nassar, that wasn't so hard, was it? It was easy peasy, right?

Habib gives Tony the pen. He scowls and signs the papers as Habib turns the pages. Habib gives the document to the notary who stamps and signs every signature.

TONY  
I hope you girls are satisfied.

MISHKA  
Sure Dad this has been just great.

COLLETE

Dad, where did you plan on living  
when Nisrin kicked you out of the  
house?

Mishka stands up to the video controls in the center of the  
conference table and clicks the screen off. Both screens go  
blank.

MISHKA

I hope I'm not that much of an  
asshole when I am dying.

EXT. MISHKA'S HOUSE

SCREEN: MISHKA'S HOUSE - HOUSTON

INT. MISHKA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Janey sits at the kitchen island with a large cup of coffee  
in front of her. She is dressed in Chanel as always but  
looks white and sick. Mishka stands opposite her in front of  
the calendar. She hands Janey a few papers.

MISHKA

So that's the current bank balance in  
the trust.

JANEY

You and your sister are lying about  
something. There's no way he would do  
this.

MISHKA

He knows his health is not good.

JANEY

He was here for 6 months and had  
doctors telling him that everyday. He  
didn't care. What did you do?

Mishka taps the board.

MISHKA

You ready for surgery next week?

EXT. VILLA BALCONY - DAY

Nurse Hoda carries a tray of coffee to the balcony and leaves it on the table. Tony is wrapped up in his leather Arab robe and slippers in the sunshine. She then answers a video call at the front door. It is JouJou.

JOUJOU

(ARABIC)

Is he awake?

NURSE HODA

(ARABIC)

I'm sorry sir. He is resting.

Nurse Hoda walks back to the balcony, serves the coffee and brings it to Tony.

TONY

(ARABIC)

I don't want to see anyone. Except my wife and my daughters and my grandsons.

Nurse Hoda nods and rubs his arm.

NURSE HODA

(ARABIC)

Do you want to go home? I talk to her Mishka everyday. They want you to come home.

TONY

(ARABIC)

They betrayed me.

They sip their coffee in silence. Tony silently asks for more sugar. Johnny comes around the corner.

JOHNNY

(ARABIC)

Iztez Antoine, Another chunk of the wall fell in the street. Can I have money to fix it?

TONY

(ARABIC)

Fuck off you and this fucking wall.

EXT. MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL, HOUSTON

Mishka and Colette silently walk side by side down a quiet sidewalk in front of the MD Anderson Cancer Center tears streaming down their faces.

Mishka's phone buzzes in her hand.

ON SCREEN - WHATSAPP VIDEO CALL: DAD

Mishka stops walking. Colette turns to her.

MISHKA

It's Dad. I'm not answering. You answer.

COLETTE

He's calling you not me.

Mishka answers.

INTERCUT:

INT. VILLA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tony is in pajamas looking very haggard. Nurse Hoda sits in a straight-backed chair at the edge of the room. Tony holds a wedding picture of him and Janey. They are young. Happy.

MISHKA

Hello.

TONY

How did the surgery go? What did the doctor say? Are you at the hospital?

MISHKA

You just spent weeks threatening to have us arrested and refusing to give Mom a penny and now you want to know how she is? Make up your mind.

Colette shakes her head and takes the phone from Mishka.

COLETTE

She's worse than you Dad. She's worse than you. The cancer is spread everywhere. Everywhere.

Tony hangs up and starts to cry hysterically and inconsolably. Nurse Hoda comes to him, holds him, and rocks him like a baby.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING IN DOWNTOWN BEIRUT.

SCREEN: NISRIN'S APARTMENT - BEIRUT

INT. LIVING ROOM WITH BEIRUT BUILDINGS OUTSIDE WINDOW -  
NIGHT

Nisrin, Mohammed and Im Mohammed huddle over a legal  
document in Arabic.

SCREEN: TONY NASSAR, OWNER VS. NISRIN SAIDA OFFICE MANAGER -  
ABUSE OF FINANCIAL FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY.

FIDUCIARY ABUSE

WIRE TRANSFER FRAUD

EMBEZZLEMENT

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

All your scheming didn't account for  
me winding up in jail did it? You  
don't even care do you?

IM MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

You will fix this before the court  
date. You have 3 months.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

And if he dies before the court date?

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Then his daughters inherit the  
business and this lawsuit and then I  
go to jail.

EXT. MD ANDERSON HOSPITAL, HOUSTON

SCREEN: MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER, HOUSTON

INT. PRIVATE HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

JANEY sits upright in her hospital bed, regal in an expensive silk hospital bedgown, delicate lace trim framing her neckline. Her hair is perfect.

The door opens. A handsome ORDERLY in crisp uniform enters, carrying a plastic hospital ice bucket with a chilled champagne bottle and a tray of plastic cups. He sets the tray beside her bed with care, then pulls a small bag from his pocket - fresh strawberries. He begins rinsing them at the sink, his muscles flexing with every movement. Janey watches amused - and clearly enjoying the view. Just then, the door opens again. Mishka and Colette step in, carrying a large blooming gardenia bush. Janey nods to the orderly and he pops the champagne, pours and hands the cups to the women as they talk.

MISHKA

Mom, Did you understand what the surgeon said?

JANEY

Of course, I did. The cancer is everywhere. But the great news is... I didn't die in surgery. I'm here to enjoy another day. And Enjoy I will.

The 3 laugh and clink plastic glasses.

MISHKA

Only you Mom. Only you.

EXT. VILLA DRIVEWAY AND HOUSE

SCREEN: TONY'S HOUSE

INT. VILLA LIBRARY - NIGHT

TONY sits slouched in the chair; a large ancient book cradled in his lap. He wears a heavy suede, fur-lined Arab robe over a dress shirt and slacks. Slippers on his feet. His glasses perch low on his nose. He looks haggard, thinner, his face drawn and pale. The library door stands open. NISRIN enters. She wears a tight, form-fitting dress, her cleavage prominent, stilettos clicking softly on the floor. Tony looks up - and gasps. His eyes widen. He appears afraid. Nisrin pauses in the doorway, her silhouette framed by the hallway light. The door remains open.

TONY

(ARABIC)

How did you get in here? Isn't all the money you stole enough? What do you want now?

Nisrin purs, approaching very slowly.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Now now Antoine. You don't really want to drag me into court, do you? I thought we could make peace.

TONY

(ARABIC)

Make Peace? You stole from me while I was in surgery trying to save my life. Get out.

She begins to pull off the shoulders of her spandex type dress revealing a beautiful lace bra. She talks slowly as she undresses in a quiet strip tease.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

After all the good times we've had together you really want to put me in jail?

What about our trip to Cyprus? Or Moscow? Or Lagos?  
All our years together.

Is that what you want? Drop the lawsuit.

Nisrin pushes her breasts into TONY's face and begins to give a lap dance with her hips.

NISRIN (cont'd)

(ARABIC)

Call the lawyer now. Tell him not to file the suit.

TONY

(ARABIC)

Now?

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Right Now. I'll do it for you.

She picks up his phone call and goes to lawyer NABIL Whats app.

NISRIN (cont'd)  
 (ARABIC)  
 Leave him a voice note.

TONY  
 (records )  
 Hi Nabil. I changed my mind. Drop all charges against Nisrin.

Tony puts the phone down. The room dims. Heavy breathing. The sound of shifting fabric. Tony moans again. The overhead light snaps on. Takla stands in the doorway and Nurse Hoda stands behind her.

TAKLA  
 (ARABIC)  
 AHHH! AHHHH! My eyes are burning! By the Holy Mother of God!

She clutches her chest, gasping.

TAKLA (cont'd)  
 (ARABIC)  
 Get out of here, you devil! Get out! Devil, devil, devil-get away from my brother!

EXT: HOUSTON SKYSCRAPER

SCREEN: MISHKA'S OFFICE, HOUSTON

INT. MISHKA'S HOUSTON OFFICE - DAY

A sleek, glass-walled conference room. LARRY is mid-pitch, animated, gesturing toward a screen filled with charts. Several CLIENTS nod along, taking notes. Mishka's phone BUZZES on the table. She flips it over without looking. BUZZ. BUZZ. BUZZ. She ignores it again. And again. Larry glances at her, annoyed, but keeps going.

LARRY  
 And if we restructure the portfolio before Q3, we can-

Mishka finally picks up the phone and steps out of the room.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

EXT. VILLA GATES - DAY INTERCUT WITH:

Nurse Hoda is standing in the street outside the gates of the Villa while Mohammed loads bankers boxes into the back of his Jeep.

MISHKA

Nurse Hoda? What's wrong? Is Tony okay?

Nurse Hoda angles her phone video camera so Mishka can see.

NURSE HODA

(crying hysterical  
ARABIC)

Nisrin and Mohammed told me to get out. I just gave him morphine. He shouldn't be alone.

MISHKA

Wait for them to leave and go back to Tony. I gotta go.

Mishak calls Walid. But the screen of the conference room and the Villa remain open.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Nisrin and Mohammed are at the house stealing all Tony's papers. Can I have Pierre back?

WALID

Of course, he shouldn't have left. I keep telling you every single person in this country is a crook.

MISHKA

Not everyone Hayete. Not you. Not me. Not Lina. Not Josie. That's four. I'll see you next week.

The screen closes on Mishka. Nisrin stands next to Mohammed watching him load the boxes.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Well, that's it. All the evidence is gone. Mission Accomplished.

MOHAMMED

(ARABIC)

Not yet. I want the Villas. Now you work on the idiot lawyer who thinks he's from Texas.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

As opposed to my Texan boss who thinks he is Lebanese?

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY CONTINUOUS

INT. MISHKAS HOUSTON OFFICE - DAY

Mishka walks past the meeting she stepped out of and into her own office. She stares out the window and shakes her head.

EXT. SAILBOAT RACE

Same scene of Mishka in a race on the foredeck plays.

Mishka's assistant interrupts her daydream by tapping her shoulder and handing her a coffee.

ASSISTANT

You look like you could use this.  
Larry is on his way in.

Mishka chugs the coffee pointing at the cup signals for more from the assistant as Larry walks in and closes the door.

LARRY

I get it. I really do. Your parents are sick. But this has got to stop. Do you want to take a sabbatical or extended time off?

MISHKA

Am I or am I not still bringing in large amounts of money to this firm?

Larry sighs.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Look, we've been friends for decades but I pull in far more than my fair share of funds in this place and only I will decide when I leave or take time off or even walk out of meetings. If you don't like it I'll take some time off and take my clients with me.

LARRY

Jeez. I was just trying to help.

Larry walks out. Mishka fingers a little sailboat on her desk. Turning it around and around staring at it until the assistant comes in with another coffee that Mishka chugs.

Mishka checks her phone.

WHATS APP FROM DR. LAYLA

If you want to say goodbye. You should come soon. Now soon.

WHATSAPP FROM MISHKA TO HABIB

Did you remove my name from the airport?

HABIB

(Whatsapp)

It's removed. Come anytime you like. You will not be arrested.

Mishka sits at her desk. Pensive. Looking out the window. She picks up the little sailboat on her desk. Fondles it. Kisses it. Puts it in her purse.

EXT. VILLA BALCONY - DAY

Pierre sits in a chair, soaking in the sun, silent and still. On the outdoor sofa, Mishka lies curled on her side, one hand draped over her face. She shifts restlessly back and forth. Her luggage from Houston rests beside her. The balcony door creaks open. JouJou steps out, pulls a chair directly in front of her.

JOUJOU

Mishka we have to talk about the house in the mountains.

MISHKA

(sleepily)

Joujou? Are you insane? I'm trying to sleep.

JOUJOU

We have to talk now.

MISHKA

You mean the house you got Tony to spend half a million dollars on and then gave him access to the basement that floods? That house? Get out.

JOUJOU

Me get out? I am the only one whose been taking care of him.

MISHKA

You're the one who never told us about Nisrin. Get out.

Mishka sits up with effort then stands up, so she is over Joujou. Pierre stands up and moves inside the balcony door. Joujou leaves.

Mishka walks to Tony's bedroom. Nurse Hoda is in a pair of short shorts and her bra. She is in bed with Tony and cradling him like a baby singing a song. An IV has been hooked up to a coat hanger stand. Talka and 2 other women are sitting in the room next to the bed praying quietly.

Mishka sits on the bed.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Dad. Dad. It's Mishka.

Tony groans and Nurse Hoda shakes her head.

Mishka sits for a minute staring at the women praying on their rosaries.

Mishka sees Dr. Layla is standing outside in the hallway. The women see Dr. Layla and file past her continuing to pray in the bedroom hallway.

MISHKA (cont'd)

Welcome doctor, welcome. I'm so glad you came.

They embrace.

DR. LAYLA

Wait for me in the living room.

Dr. Layla and Nurse Hoda come out to the living room. Pierre now sits inside the living room silently in a chair near the entrance.

DR. LAYLA (cont'd)

(ARABIC)

I know taking care of Mr. Antoine has been challenging but you have been overdosing him on morphine I didn't prescribe. Where did you get the morphine?

NURSE HODA

(ARABIC)

I've been a nurse for 20 years. I know where to get morphine. He was suffering too much.

DR. LAYLA

You have my phone number.

DR. LAYLA (cont'd)

(ARABIC)

He's having bad bad hallucinations. He doesn't even know his own daughter.

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

It's time for you to go rest. I'll pay you while you're resting.

NURSE HODA

(ARABIC)

Is it because I'm fat?

DR. LAYLA

(ARABIC)

On your way out, tell the nurse in my car to come in when you pass him.

Nurse Hoda slinks out of the room backwards tears streaming down her face.

DR. LAYLA (cont'd)

I'm removing his medications. He doesn't need them anymore.

They embrace. Dr. Layla leaves. Mishka lays on the sofa.

PIERRE

How is Colette? Does she ever talk about me? Do you think she would want to see me again?

Mishka groans and rolls over and puts the sofa cushion over her head.

INT. VILLA KITCHEN - DAY

Mishka walks into the kitchen. She is holding a gardenia.

Tony is being fed like a baby by a male nurse in an impeccable uniform. Tony is dressed in Bermudas, with Ferragamo shoes and a white sleeveless undershirt.

Tony is surprised and joyful.

TONY

Ah. My little banana girl. What a great surprise.

MISHKA

I've been here for 5 days, Dad.

Tony sits down, sorrowfully. He takes the gardenia from Mishka and puts it behind his ear.

TONY

5 days?

MISHKA

5 days.

TONY

People will be coming after you because they will think you are a stupid American girl. Don't trust anyone. My brother, my lawyer, least of all. I have left a huge mess and I am sorry.

MISHKA

Okay Dad. I promise to not trust anyone.

TONY

How could you girls do this to me?

MISHKA

You would have done exactly the same thing Dad. I forgive you. Do you forgive me?

Tony laughs.

TONY

I forgive you. You did what you thought was right. That's my little banana girl. The only man in the family.

EXT. MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL, HOUSTON

SCREEN: MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL

INT. MD ANDERSON - PRIVATE CHEMO ROOM - DAY

Somber music plays. Colette and Mishka sit on either side of Janey, who is hooked to an IV. Her silk headscarf is perfectly tied but she looks very pale and gaunt. The room is quiet except for the soft beeping of machines.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. - VILLA DRIVEWAY - DAY

A different BODYGUARD sits in a plastic chair outside the villa, unmoving.

Lina's car pulls up. She jumps out and rushes inside.

INT. VILLA - TONY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tony lies in bed, eyes closed, breathing shallow. Around him: JouJou, Takla, two UNKNOWN WOMEN, a NURSE, and a PRIEST who quietly exits. The women pray softly. Takla wails, rocking back and forth. Lina kneels beside the bed, takes Tony's hand gently. She pulls out her phone and dials.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MD ANDERSON PRIVATE CHEMO ROOM

Mishka's phone lights up: WHATSAPP VIDEO CALL - LINA.

Lina holds the phone next to Tony. Colette holds the phone next to Janey, who can barely whisper. Janey is dressed well but has a robe over her clothes and wears a designer scarf over her bald head.

JANEY

I love you, Tony. I have always loved you and I know you love me too. We will be together soon.

Colette cries. Mishka and Janey sit stone faced staring at each other.

INT. TONY'S BEDROOM - VILLA - DAY

The screen returns to Tony's bedroom. Tony lies still, his breathing deep and labored. His head shifts slightly to one side. Dr. Layla enters quietly checks his pulse, then gently lifts his hands and folds them over his chest. She takes the rosary from Takla's trembling hands and places it between Tony's fingers. Takla begins to wail louder, her cries echoing through the room. She throws herself to the foot of the bed, sobbing uncontrollably. Lina and Dr. Layla walk to Villa driveway and JouJou follows.

DR. LAYLA

(ARABIC)

The rules are the rules. I will call you after I receive permission from his daughters to release the body.

JOUJOU

(ARABIC)

I am his brother and I am in charge.

Dr. Layla walks away from Joujou and goes to her car. Layla and Lina embrace. Lina cries in her arms.

DR. LAYLA

(ARABIC)

There is not another Tony in all of Lebanon. I will miss him.

Dr. Layla leaves.

LINA

(ARABIC)

You're going to bury Tony without the girls? They can't get here for the day after tomorrow.

JouJou shrugs. He is wearing mismatched socks.

JOUJOU

(ARABIC)

Oh well. They don't live here.

INT. MD ANDERSON PRIVATE CHEMO ROOM

PIERRE

I heard you were hiring security for  
your upcoming tour.

Still crying, Colette jumps into Pierre's arms wrapping her legs around his waist. He spins her around. Janey and Mishka roll eyes at each other.

JANEY

Here we go again.

EXT. LARGE HOUSE WITH GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

SCREEN: MISHKA'S HOUSE - HOUSTON

INT. MISHKA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mishka stands in front of her elaborately color-coded calendar board. She begins removing the purple-colored cards from the board that are labeled "Dad". Francisco is beside her. He takes her hand and pulls her to the sofa in the adjoining den.

MISHKA

JouJou is going ahead with the burial without us. It's a disgrace. Tony knows everyone in the entire country and he's going to be buried alone.

Francisco bows his head and shakes it.

MISHKA CONT...

It's so sad. He chose to die alone. I don't want to die alone.

FRANCISCO

Mamita. Your life is nothing like your father's.

Silence.

For starters, as far as I know, you and I haven't been having long term affairs with other people.

MISHKA

Tony supported JouJou his entire life and JouJou is repaying him by burying him alone. Without us.

Silence.

MISHKA (cont'd)  
I don't want to wind up like him.

FRANCISCO  
We will have a mass here. You will honor him here. In Houston.

They embrace and Mishka cries.

FRANCISCO (cont'd)  
We have a good life. Be here. Be in Houston. Be with me and the kids. Forget about Beirut. Habib will take care of everything.

EXT. MISHKA MONTAGE - HIGH SCHOOL FIELD VIGNETTE 1:

While music plays..First image is Mishka, Edu and Alex on a stadium bench with a poster in her hand that says "#57 GONZO". The crowd roars. Gonzo.

EDU/ALEX  
Go Gonzo. Go.

Mishka's phone rings and rings. She looks and it says Larry. She stops the call, mutes her phone and puts it in her pocket.

EXT. MISHKA MONTAGE - GONZALEZ FARM - DAY VIGNETTE 2:

Mishka, Francisco, Janey in her chemo scarf, Edu, Gonzo and Alex walk slowly on horses under an arch that says RANCH GONZALEZ a huge stucco house lays in the background.

INT. MISHKA MONTAGE - MISHKA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT - VIGNETTE 3

Mishka sits alone and looks up the Galveston Yacht Club Racing Schedule. She looks at the full calender on the kitchen wall loaded with kids activities, doctors, her mother's treatment and travel plans. She shakes her head and closes the laptop. walks out and turns off the light.

EXT. BEIRUT SKYSCRAPER

SCREEN: LAWYER HABIB'S OFFICE

INT. HABIB'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Habib sits behind his desk which is a huge old style desk grand desk piled high with piles of papers. Law books on shelves in the background and heavy ornate curtains with covering a window behind him.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MISHKA'S OFFICE - DAY

Mishka sits behind her desk with her phone on speaker.

HABIB

Your father never grandfathered the houses onto the map so the first thing I'll need is \$57,000 for the engineering plans, \$50,000 to bribe the ministry for your taxes and another \$50,000 in fees for me.

MISHKA

How long will it take?

HABIB

Not too long. How's your Mom?

MISHKA

Not good. Not worse.

HABIB

You just take care of your mother. I am your brother here and I will take care of everything. Easy Peasy.

MISHKA

You're the best.

Mishka hangs up. reviews sheet of accounts showing wire transfers to Habib totaling \$350,000. She makes check marks next to the amounts and writes COPY to Janey and Colette.

INT. HABIB'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Nisrin sits next to Habib holding up a paper with the numbers of 57,000 - 50,000 and 50,000.

He pulls her to his lap she straddles him and begins to undo his belt.

NISRIN

Easy Peasy. Easy Peasy. I like the way that sounds.

EXT. LAND REGISTRY BUILDING A HUGE SIGN IN ARABIC HANGS OVER CLOSED GLASS DOORS

SCREEN: LAND REGISTRY EAST BEIRUT - CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

EXT. ENTRANCE TO LAND REGISTRY NEAR THE CLOSED DOORS

Nisrin walks as quickly in her tall stilleto heels towards THE CLERN middle aged poorly dressed man who is standing outside the doors smoking a cigarette. A garbage can near him.

Nisrin slows as she nears the clerk staring him intently, He nods at her. Nisrin pretends to throw a Starbucks bag in the garbage can but misses on purpose and the bag drops in front of the clerk.

CLERK

(ARABIC)

Don't worry beautiful. I will gladly throw that out for you.

Nisrin flirtatiously and sweetly still walking slowly as he gazes down her cleavage.

NISRIN

(ARABIC)

Thank you for your service.

The clerk pics up the bag and goes inside the closed door.

INT. LAND REGISTRY BUILDING HALLWAY

The clerk glances quickly inside the Starbucks bag which is full of \$20 bills. He walks quickly toward a desk and grabs a stack of handwritten folders marked "ANTOINE NASSAR."

He walks down a dimly lit hallway lined with ancient filing cabinets and broken office furniture, stops at the end where a tall metal shelf in Arabic says: "NEVER BE REGISTERED."

SCREEN: Never to be registered.

The clerk places the folders inside.

EXT. MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL, HOUSTON

SCREEN: MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL

INT. A CHEMO WARD - DAY

A very handsome doctor comes to Janey, Mishka and Colette in the chemo ward where Janey is hooked to an IV.

DOCTOR

I just looked at your numbers and to be honest this path is not working.

Janey nods her head.

COLETTE

What are you gonna do, darling?

DOCTOR

I'm doing everything I can as if she is my own mother.

Like I wanted her to be.

I can perform an experimental surgery but with no guarantee that it's going to help.

COLETTE

Mom, what do you want to do?

JANEY

I'll do it.

DOCTOR

and just to be clear, insurance won't cover any of these off-protocol procedures.

COLETTE

Mom, do you agree?

Janey nods.

Darling, just take care of it.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM IN MISHKA'S OFFICE - DAY

Colette and Mishka sit at the head of a conference table in Mishka's office.

At the far end is a huge screen on a wall and Mishka's friend, Walid, is seen in an office at a conference table sitting next to another distinguished looking man.

WALID

Mishka, hayete, I keep telling you everyone in Lebanon is a thief  
It is said

(ARABIC)

An empty house is full of thieves.

(ENGLISH)

or when the cat's away the mice will play and play they did. My lawyer will explain.

WALID'S LAWYER

We conducted an audit of your father's estate. Your father sold most of his land just before he died.

WALID

The money from the sales never hit his bank accounts. Nisrin must have taken it directly.

WALID'S LAWYER

The land that remains are the ones you protected before he died.

MISHKA

What's the damage?

WALID'S LAWYER

About \$10 million. But that is not the bad news.

MISHKA/COLETTE

\$10 million US DOLLARS? Gone?

WALID'S LAWYER

Gone.

COLLETE

How will we pay for Mom's treatment?

Collete and Mishka just stare at each other; they shake their heads and compose themselves and look back at the screen.

MISHKA

What's the bad news?

WALID'S LAWYER

Your lawyer, Habib, has not started the probate of your father.

MISHKA/COLETTE

What? What does that mean?

WALID'S LAWYER

It means he took your money and did no work. Your father's death hasn't even been filed to the authorities.

MISHKA

That son of a bitch.

WALID

You're going to have to hire someone else. In person. Mishka - call me later.

Walid hangs up and the screen goes blank. The sisters look at each other.

COLETTE

I got to go on tour next month.

MISHKA

You're always taking off and leaving me here alone to take care of everything.

COLETTE

C'mon that's not fair. You have always taken care of the family's finances. Mom's. Dad's. Mine. That's what you do.

MISHKA

Did. Did. That's what I used to do. I don't want to do it anymore.

COLETTE

What do I know about money except how to give it to men? Be honest, you wouldn't trust me to be in charge. You would lose your mind if I took control. Just hire someone else.

MISHKA

That's easy for you to say. Hire someone else? Like Magic? Who do I hire? Who can we trust?

COLETTE

You know the whore has to be banging Habib, right? Are you going to let her take our land?

MISHKA

Fuuuuuuuck.

EXT. VILLA ROAD - DAY

Lina is driving up the villa road. She calls Mishka. Mishka stays on the phone as a little face in the corner of the screen.

LINA

Hey, I know you are coming next week but I'm driving near the Villa. Do you want me to stop by?

MISHKA

Sure. If you have time. Johnny hasn't been answering my calls.

LINA

I'm about to be there. Just stay on the phone.

The Villa gates are wide open and there is laundry drying outside the villa.

LINA (cont'd)

That's really odd. There is laundry on the balcony and trees on the ground.

Fallen trees dot the garden.

Lina steps out, dressed in a skin-tight dress and towering stiletto heels. She walks to the front door and rings the bell. No answer.

Lina circles to the balcony. The door is ajar.

INT. VILLA - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lina steps inside. A massive high-definition TV plays a Turkish sitcom the sound muted.

LINA

Hello? Anyone here?

LINA (cont'd)  
 (whispering to Mishka)  
 Someone is living here.

Lina walks towards the bedrooms with Mishka watching. Nisrin suddenly appears from a bedroom. Her mother comes quickly behind her with a slapping a folded men's belt against the palm of her hand. The women freeze.

IM MOHAMMED (ARABIC)  
 What are you doing here? Get out of my house. I'm going to call the police.

LINA  
 Your house? This is Mishka's house. Call the police. I want them to come immediately.

She turns the phone screen to show MISHKA to the woman.

MISHKA  
 (Arabic)  
 Get out of my house. Charamet. Get out.

INT. VILLA - BEDROOM, HALLWAY, LIVING ROOM CONTINUOUS

Lina turns to leave, heels clicking as she heads for the front door. Nisrin runs ahead of her and locks the front door and Im Mohammed comes up from behind whipping the belt with the metal side. Lina stumbles in her stilettos, catches herself.

LINA  
 Are you insane? What are you doing?

Im Mohammed whips the belt-metal buckle first—striking Lina's arm. Lina yelps, raises her arms to shield herself Im Mohammed hits her below the arm and on her back. Lina stumbles and then lunges forward shoving Im Mohammed as Nisrin stands with her back to the front door terrified.

Lina runs toward the balcony door - screaming.

LINA (cont'd)  
 Help! Somebody help me!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MISHKA'S OFFICE - HOUSTON

Mishka, on a video call, watches in horror. She hangs up and calls Johnny.

MISHKA

Oh my God—Johnny! Pick up! Pick up!

INT. VILLA - BEDROOM HALLWAY / LIVING ROOM -  
CONTINUOUS

IM MOHAMMED (ARABIC)

Wait until my son Mohammed comes home. He will kill you. You have invaded our house.

Lina makes it through the balcony door just as Johnny appears with keys in his hand. Johnny scoops Lina into his arms.

JOHNNY

(ARABIC)

That's enough. Stop it.

Im Mohammed stands on the balcony watching Johnny carry Lina to her car. Her dress is torn, her makeup smeared. A black eye is forming; welts begin to stripe the backs of her arms and shoulders. Nisrin joins her mother and they stare at each other.

INT. CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Johnny drives down the mountain road, murmuring to himself in Arabic—too soft to hear clearly. Lina sits in the passenger seat, inspecting her injuries in the visor mirror. Her hands tremble. Both their phones begin to ring MISHKA calling again and again. Then again. And again. They don't answer. The car winds down the mountain, the ringing echoing between them. They pull up in front of the police station. Displaced people with tents etc are in the parking lot.

EXT. BEIRUT STREETS - DAY

Mishka sits in the back seat of a Range Rover with a driver coming from the airport on her usual route. The streets are packed with displaced persons from Southern Lebanon in every tiny space on every sidewalk, parking lot and empty buildings. Cars loaded up with possessions are stopped on the side of the road filled with people resting inside.

Only as they ascend the mountain do the displaced stop lining the streets and are only in empty buildings.

EXT. VILLA BALCONY - DAY

Lina and Mishka sit in plastic chairs on the balcony.

The balcony wall is completely crumbled in the corner showing a clear deterioration from the beginning of movie.

At the side of the driveway stand 2 police officers. The sun is setting. A team of 3 locksmiths are scurrying around changing locks and the sound of multiple drills is in the air.

In addition to the locksmiths, 2 workers are removing cameras from all over the grounds and piling them in front of the police officers. The workers keep dropping the items and breaking them as they stumble over the tree trunks and branches that have been cut down and that are spread around the property

The two women sit silently and watch the intense amount of activity.

Policeman #1 hands 1 of the workers his car keys.

POLICEMAN #1

(ARABIC)

Those cameras are all evidence. Put them into my trunk.

Pause.

You were going to lose the house for sure. Squatters never leave.

LINA

(ARABIC)

Officer Boulos is from Kousba. Like me. People from Kousba get things done.

The policeman #1 turns to yell at the worker for breaking one of the cameras and lights.

MISHKA

I will never ever forgive myself for asking you to stop by the house. Never. Ever.

LINA

Thank God I passed by and thank God I got beat up and thank God Boulos was at the police station. If I hadn't showed up and gotten beat up you would never ever have gotten them out. Never. You would lose this place.

Mishka gestures at the buildings down below. Where there was only a pine tree forest in the earlier scenes an entire neighborhood has risen.

MISHKA

This place isn't worth a single hair on your head.

A police car pulls up. A young police officer gets out and rushes to kiss Lina.

LINA AND BOULOUS

Kousba.

He then goes to the squad car and pulls Johnny out of the back and in front of Mishka. Johnny is bedraggled and won't make eye contact.

OFFICER BOULOS

(ARABIC)

It's a formality but I need to interview you. Did you give him permission to lease the Villa?

Boulos takes out a small notepad and waits. Mishka takes a piece of paper from her pocket and reads from it.

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

I did not give him permission to lease the Villa.

OFFICER BOULOS

(ARABIC)

Okay. That's all we need.

Mishka stands up and stands very close to Johnny's face.

MISHKA

Even the trees, Johnny? The trees? That we planted together?

Mishka goes to Lina and picks up her shirt showing the bruises and butts running down her side and her back.

Lina tries to pull her shirt down. The tussle but Mishka manages to show her bruises.

MISHKA (cont'd)  
You did that you piece of shit.

Mishka walks up to Johnny and slaps him hard. The policemen lead Johnny to the car while the women watch. Mishka goes to the gardenia plant, picks one and gives it to Lina. Her hands are shaking.

MISHKA (cont'd)  
And now. To war.

INT. A CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Mishka, Lina, Tanya and Walid sit on one side of a long conference table. One after another a series of lawyers come into the room and they say the same exact thing until their speeches merge together possibly in a rendition of 3 blind mice. As each lawyer speaks, the 3 of them roll eyes, or laugh or smirk or smile and gesticulate to each other. All the lawyers wear suits differently; 1 fat, 1 thing, 1 younger.

LAWYER #1/#2/#3  
Of course, I know Habib. I know him and his family. You know the situation here has been very difficult with the explosion and the banking crisis and the political crisis, the lack of government, the absence of electricity, the curtailed employee hours and the closure of the registry in charge. Perhaps that is why Maitre Habib never filed. I can work with him to get it done. It should take a few weeks maximum.

The lawyers merge and become 1. Mishka, Lina and Walid shake their heads to clear the vision and the lawyers disappear.

WALID  
That's enough thieves for 1 day.

MISHKA  
I don't think I have the stomach to give someone else Power of Attorney again.

LINA  
I'm hungry.

INT. BLUE NOTE - DAY

Lina and Mishka sit at a mostly empty Blue Note having lunch. Tanya walks in without a headscarf dressed in her usual labels clad dark but with long curls cascading down her back and sits at the bar.

LINA

What a day. I never knew so many crooks and losers existed.

MISHKA

The family Nassar is always ready with the latest batch of crooks and losers.

Mishka sees Tanya and keeps staring. She goes to her. They embrace. Eyes water a little.

MISHKA (cont'd)

I almost didnt recognize you. I thought you were in Canada. Come join us.

The women walk to the table.

TANYA

You are the only person in the planet who doesn't use social media. He divorced me and left with a young Canadian girl. I came back a few months ago.

LINA/MISHKA

I never liked him.

They laugh.

TANYA

Did you ever finally completely get rid of Tony's office manager?

LINA

You mean she who shall never be named? I wish.

TANYA

What? Is she still causing you trouble after all these years? Just because I was in Canada doesn't mean I couldn't have helped.

MISHKA

We could really use your help.

TANYA

Only if you promise to start using social media.

MISHKA

I can't do it because every time I open insta or twitter I see horrific images of what they are doing.

TANYA

I'll set it up correctly for you. Now, Tell me everything.

The 3 women talk animatedly with lots of gesticulations.

TANYA (cont'd)

The registry was never closed. only to the general public.

Mishka and Lina see Tanya woman turn into Wonder Woman.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER DOWNTOWN BEIRUT

SCREEN: HABIB'S OFFICE

INT. HABIB'S OFFICE - DAY

Mishka and Habib stand at the entrance hall of his baroque fancy office 2 bankers boxes in her arms. He pushes the elevator button.

MISHKA

(Sadly)

You were our friend. Since college.

HABIB

(very politely and formally)

I am your friend. I am your brother. If there is anything I can ever do for you, call on me.

MISHKA

Well, brother - you will never take my land. Never.

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM IN THE REGISTRY - DAY

The registrar building with the Big Sign "Closed Until Further Notice".

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Mishka, Lina, and Amal and a young CLERK step inside a decrepit elevator and watch the floors go -1, -2, -3, -4.

Amal hands the clerk wad of U.S. cash.

The group walks down a long, dim hallway lit by flickering bulbs buzzing some of the lights are out. They pass rusted filing cabinets, broken chairs, and exposed pipes.

INT. ARCHIVE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter a cavernous room with floor-to-ceiling metal shelves packed with bankers boxes.

The clerk weaves through the aisles, stops at one marked with faded tape. He pulls down several boxes and sets them on a beat-up metal table.

The women sigh in unison. They roll up their sleeves.

Each grabs a box and begins to dig through the dusty files. The clerk joins them, flipping through papers with practiced speed.

LINA

(ARABIC)

We've been here every day all week.  
Are you sure the files are still  
here? What if they were destroyed?

CLERK

(ARABIC)

No way. They could be misplaced, they  
could be stalled, they could be  
stolen, but destroyed? No.

AMAL

(ARABIC)

I think I found something.

She hands the paper to the CLERK, and he smiles.

CLERK

(ARABIC)

See, what did I just tell you. Family  
Nassar.

LINA

The only drama lasting longer was  
waiting for my divorce.

CLERK

(ARABIC)

Now I can begin the work. Let me show you.

The clerk takes the handwritten file which is a stack of papers some decades old and holds it like a baby.

INT. REGISTRY - DAY CONTINUOUS

In sped up time, the woman follow him back through the dark corridor . The elevator smashed with people ascends to the 9th floor where chaos reigns. Time slows. Hoards of people gather outside the government employees desks which are behind glass windows where they jockey for attention. Metal shelves of huge scrolls and leather bound hand written books are behind every glass enclosure. Each person holds hand-written papers up high begging for attention.

CLERK

(ARABIC)

Ladies I will leave you here. Iztez Amal, I will call you next week.

MISHKA

(ARABIC)

Any idea how long it will take?

CLERK

(ARABIC)

I don't know. A year - two years if we are lucky and the registry stays open and the employees out of jail?

The women look at the hoards of people waiting for the elevator, then at the extremely rusty spiral staircase outside the elevator corridor and head towards the stairs.

INT. COFFEE SHOP OUTSIDE LAND REGISTRY - DAY

Habib enters the same coffee shop where Nisrin is waiting in a very seductive outfit and sits across from her. He looks nervous.

HABIB (ARABIC)

It's over. The Nassar files have been moved back into processing.

Nisrin looks scared and angry and unbelieving all at the same time one after another. She clenches and unclenches the money and her teeth.

NISRIN  
 (ARABIC)  
 Just a minor setback, right?

HABIB  
 (ARABIC)  
 It's over. The orders came from the very top. Don't contact me ever again. My wife has been monitoring my phone.

He pushes back his chair and walks out.

Nisrin follows him. She kicks a cat and a garbage can and hurts her foot in her stilettos. Jumping on 1 foot she hops over to the Jeep.

NISRIN  
 (ARABIC)  
 All the hard work I've put in on my back all these years? Fuck Bint Tony.

Mohammed and Im Mohammad are sitting in the car. He rolls down the window as she hops over.

MOHAMMED  
 (ARABIC)  
 What's wrong? What did you fuck up now?

NISRIN  
 (ARABIC)  
 What did I do? I did everything. Everything. How about if you go sleep with some old men for a change.

Nisrin hops away from the Jeep barefoot carrying her stilettos.

EXT. BRICK HOUSE WITH GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

SCREEN: MISHKA'S HOUSE

INT. MISHKAS KITCHEN - NIGHT

The house decorated in Christmas lights Lina and Mishka come into the kitchen with the 3 boys who are carting large suitcases. Lina hugs them. They come inside to the kitchen. Lina looks at the board and fakes a heart attack. Francisco comes from the TV soccer game to greet Lina.

LINA  
What the fuck is this?

Lina puts her hand on Mishkas forehead to see if she has fever. Mishka laughs hysterically. Lina grabs Francisco by the hand and brings him to the board.

LINA (cont'd)  
What the fuck is this calendar?  
Frannie. What have you done to my friend?

FRANCISCO  
(Laughing)  
She did that all by herself.

LINA  
The only thing fun on here is CONGO.  
Are those dancing lessons?

MISHKA  
Congo is a client based in the Congo.

LINA  
Thats it. If Congo is not dancing  
then Im taking you home to Beirut.  
Boys, Im taking your mother away.  
Look at this calendar. Its broken.  
Shes broken.

The boys roar in laughter. Lina begins to pick up cards from the calender. Mishka joins her. The boys pull a few off and then all of them just continue laughing they plop on the sofa. The TV plays the movie The Awkward Truth where Irene Dunne is dancing with Ralph Bellamy and Cary Grant is laughing at them. The boys flip the channel to soccer.

INT. MISHKAS KITCHEN CONT.

Mishka and Lina sit at the Kitchen Island alone.

MISHKA  
Can I see it? Do you have it here?

Lina smiles with sadness, open her backpack, pulls out an envelope and hands Mishka the paper. Her eyes begin to water. The paper reads in ARABIC GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH GRANTS ANNULMENT. The women hug and cry.

## EXT. HIGH SCHOOL GROUNDS

River Oaks HS Graduation Ceremony. Parents and families on the bleachers and chairs facing the small graduating class wearing their caps and gowns. Mishka, Lina, the children, Franny, Collete, Pierre and some people who look like Franny's parents etc.

## HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

And now I am pleased to present your class valedictorian.

Edu comes to the podium. Mishka, Lina, the children, Franny, Collete, Pierre and some people who look like Franny's parents etc all stand and claps crazily shouting

Yay. Edu. Edu.

## EXT. GATES OF UT AUSTIN

Francisco cries at the gates of UT Texas Austin as Edu waves goodbye while Mishka stands frozen. A very weak Janey embraces a group of her sorority sisters in uniform inside the walls behind them. Everyone waves good bye to Edu. Janey hugs her sorority sisters and weepily.

## JANEY

Have you ever seen a more handsome young man? He's a chip off the old block.

## IMAGE: GALVESTON YACHT CLUB

## EXT. SCENE OF SAILING AT THE GALVESTON YACHT CLUB

Mishka is in the cabin flying a gib. She is wet. Happy. Francisco waits for her on the dock. The boat nears the dock. He holds out his hand and supports her as she jumps off the boat. He kisses her hand. They hug.

## EXT. ST. GEORGE YACHT CLUB

Mishka, Lina, Francisco and children descend off a boat at the slick fancy yacht club surrounded by the modern skyscrapers.

Edu jumps in the water off the dock.

Mishka jumps after him.

EXT. VILLA BALCONY - DAY

A chef and servers circulate on the Villa balcony. There is a fire BBQ in the corner. Jasmine and bougainvillea cover the rebuilt wall.

The entire cast of the film sit at tables with their adult children arriving and greeting each other.

The group settles in and raise arak glasses in a toast to Amal.

A roller suitcase is open next to the fire and inside is the entire contents of Mishka's crazy Houston calendar.

Mishka takes a huge pile of colored note cards and throws them in the fire. She keeps doing throwing more cards. Lina starts to help her.

The group cheers the burning cards. The villa recedes slowly to the empty kitchen in Houston. Where the calendar was is an empty black chalkboard with a big heart and arrow that reads "Frannie + Mishka Forever".

FADE OUT