

OUR LITTLE CHAMPION

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

A red-bricked apartment building sits on a busy street. The trees around it are bare with brown leaves scattered on the ground.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING

A phone alarm blares and ESHA SINGH, 18, is fast asleep on her bed. The noise bothers everyone except her. DIVYA SINGH, 36, walks into Esha's room. There are clothes thrown everywhere. Her laptop is left open on her bed, and there is an empty plate with breadcrumbs sitting on her desk. Divya sighs.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Esha! Get up!

Esha rolls around in her sleep. Divya walks to Esha's bedside.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
(In Hindi)
Esha! Let's go. School is in 30.

ESHA
Five more minutes. Please

DIVYA
(in Hindi)
Ok, five minutes - then you are up.

Esha turns around and falls right back asleep.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Another alarm, this time with a different tune starts going off.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Esha! Up now!

Esha slowly gets up and trudges to the bathroom.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

RAJ SINGH, 38, sits at the dining table eating breakfast. Divya finishes packing up lunch for the two of them.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Divya slips the lunch into Esha's bag.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Divya takes a seat with her chai. A fried egg is sitting on a plate in front of an empty chair. Their living room is stacked with Spelling Bee trophies and pictures of Esha with Jimmy Kimmel, and Conan.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha picks up her laptop off her bed and shoves it into her backpack. She grabs a pair of pants, and a basic shirt and throws on a hoodie.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha stands at the table.

RAJ

Let's try to make it to school on time today.

ESHA

It doesn't matter. They are used to it.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)
Breakfast?

Esha looks at the eggs.

ESHA

Hmm, not today. I'm running late.

Divya sighs.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)
Ok, get to school safe.

Esha grabs her keys and heads out.

Divya slides the plate with the egg over to Raj.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING BIKE RACK - MORNING

Esha heads to the bike rack and unlocks her bike, and starts biking over to school.

EXT. STREETS - MORNING

Esha zooms on the sidewalk, swerving through different people. She stops at a stoplight with a crossing guard, ANGELA, 56.

ANGELA
Hey girl, running late again?

ESHA
You know it.

Angela laughs.

ESHA (CONT'D)
How has your weekend been?

ANGELA
Not too bad, the usual.

ESHA
I get you.

The walks sign lights up. Angela walks to the center of the road as Esha zooms by.

ESHA (CONT'D)
Have a great day!

EXT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Esha bikes up to the bike rack. There is barely any room on the rack. Esha looks around and shoves her bike in between some bikes, and locks it up.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Esha walks to the desk to get a late pass. MS. MILLER, 37, looks up at Esha and writes her a pass with her name and time, and hands it to Esha.

ESHA
Thank you!

INT. SCIENCE CLASSROOM - MORNING

Esha walks to class, MS. WOODLAND, 34, is in front going over some slides.

MS. WOODLAND
Who said 8:00?

STUDENT 1, 16, raises their hand. Esha laughs as she takes her seat.

ESHA
Hey, this is the earliest in a while.

Esha opens up her notebook and begins taking notes.

INT. SCIENCE CLASSROOM - LATER

Ms. Woodland hands back the quizzes from last class. Esha turns her quiz around and sees a 85. She sighs and puts the quiz in her folder.

INT. LUNCHROOM - AFTERNOON

Esha sits alone and takes lunch out of her bag. She opens it up and begins eating. Esha receives a notification and pulls out her phone to check. It's a snap from LIAM, 18. Esha takes a quick picture of her face and sends it back. AVA, 17, and BRITTANY, 18 join her at the table.

AVA
Oo who are you snapping?

ESHA
Don't worry about it.

Brittany eyes her.

BRITTANY
Ava, it's probably Liam.

Ava rolls her eyes.

AVA
It still shocks me that you guys are together.

ESHA
I don't know it just kind of works you know?

BRITTANY

No I don't know, but you do you.

Ava picks around at her school lunch.

AVA

You are so lucky your mom packs you lunch every morning.

BRITTANY

I know right, we are stuck with this shitty school food and you get home-cooked food every day.

ESHA

Yeah, I could never whatever... that is.

BRITTANY

Honestly, I can't even tell. It's supposed to be sloppy joes... I think.

Brittany takes a bite.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)

It's not that bad... It tastes like a sloppy joe...?

Ava plays with her food and ends up just eating the apple.

AVA

How you are feeling about track?

ESHA

Eh, I just want to get the final season over with.

BRITTANY

If you don't want to, don't do it.

ESHA

Sunk cost fallacy, I already put three years in, what's another year at this point, and it will look good for colleges.

AVA

Says the person failing calc right now.

ESHA

Hey hey, I have the rest of the year to bring it up. I'll be fine. It always ends up working out.

BRITTANY

If you say so.

INT. FIELD HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Dozens of students crowd around COACH GALE, 29.

COACH GALE

Hello everyone! Welcome to the first practice of the season! Excited to get to know some new faces, love seeing the old faces. Mile warm up - 8 laps around the track, and then stretches. At your own pace.

Everyone goes off running. Esha is struggling in the middle of the pack, running with no purpose.

EXT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - EVENING

Esha unlocks her bike as the sun sets behind her.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - EVENING

Esha throws her backpack on the ground, and collapses on her bed.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Divya walks into Esha's room and sees her asleep. She opens her bag and takes her lunch containers out.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Divya rolls the rotis, as the pressure cooker sits on the stove letting out steam. Raj walks into the house and drops off his backpack in the kitchen. Divya takes the lunch containers out and puts them in the sink. Raj makes his way to the living room and turns the TV on.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Divya sets the dining room table, as Raj watches TV.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM

Divya opens the door.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Esha wake up. Dinner's ready.

Esha gets up and drags her feet to dinner.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha takes a seat at the table, with an empty chair next to her, that once was filled. In front of her is a plate of bhindi, roti, rice, and daal, and she starts eating.

RAJ
(In Hindi)
How was everyone's day?

ESHA
Same old same old.

DIVYA
Same here.

ESHA
What about you, how's work?

RAJ
(In Hindi)
Richard is leaving us soon, and someone is going to take over his position. I have talked to Eric about it, and I think that it's going to be me.

ESHA
Oh wow, that's very exciting!
Congrats dad!

RAJ
(In Hindi)
It hasn't happened yet, but I have a good feeling about this. I've been here for over a decade, it's about time.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
That's such good news! Let's
celebrate.

Divya walks out of the dining room and comes back with some Indian sweets.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
(In Hindi)
I made gullab jammun today. Good
reason to eat it.

Divya serves everyone and they munch down the sweet dish.

INT. RAJ'S WORK - MORNING

Raj enters the meeting room with the rest of his colleagues, PETER, 31, JACKSON, 39, CHAD, 34, RICHARD, 48, and his boss ERIC, 54.

ERIC
Thank you all for coming here! We
have some exciting news to share
with everyone. As you know Richard
will be leaving us at the end of
the month, and we have decided who
will be taking over his position!

Raj grabs onto the sides of his chair.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Congrats to Chad! I know he has
been here for a short while, but
that short while has been
extraordinary and we can't wait to
see what he does in this position!

Raj loosens his grip. Everyone claps. Chad is shocked.

CHAD
Oh wow! What an honor thank you!

Raj zones out, not registering what is happening around him.

INT. RAJ'S WORK - LATER

Raj walks back to his desk in disbelief. He sits down and stares at his laptop, and eventually opens up a spreadsheet and begins working.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

MR. EDWARDS, 45, stands in front of the classroom ready to hand out tests.

MR. EDWARDS

Ok class, you guys have 50 minutes for the test. Please come up to me if you have any questions.

Mr. Edwards hands out all the tests face down.

MR. EDWARDS (CONT'D)

And you can begin!

Esha flips over the test and reads the first question. Skip. Reads the second question. Skip. The third question. Skip. She eventually gets into a flow and begins answering question. Time is running out and she rushes the last couple.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - LATER

Mr. Edwards walks back up to the front of class.

MR. EDWARDS

Time's up! Please turn your tests in, and I will have these graded by the end of the week.

Esha waits until everyone has handed in their test, and walks up to Mr. Edwards.

ESHA

Hey, Mr. Edwards, can we still correct our answers for partial credit?

MR. EDWARDS

I'll decide that based on how everyone else does, but most probably yes.

ESHA

Thanks! Have a great day.

Esha walks out.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Divya and Esha sit and drink chai at the table.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Do you want to come to the library
with me today?

ESHA
I have a lot of work to finish.
Maybe next time.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
It's been so long. They all miss
you.

ESHA
I will come visit. I promise. Just
not today.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
I'll be back at 8.

Divya packs her backpack and heads out to catch the bus.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Esha takes her phone out and texts Liam.

"Coast is clear come over."

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - LATER

Esha gets a notification.

"Here"

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Esha lets Liam in. He gives her a big hug, and they walk into
the apartment.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liam starts kissing Esha. Esha pulls away.

ESHA
Woah woah, no hello?

Liam smirks.

LIAM

Hello.

Liam goes back to kissing her. Esha pulls back.

ESHA

How was your day?

LIAM

Better now that I'm with you

Esha smiles and goes back to kissing Liam. Liam starts taking her top off. Esha takes his shirt off. Liam moves his hand down and starts fingering her. Esha sighs.

LIAM (CONT'D)

You like that?

ESHA

Yeah...

Esha pretends to moan.

ESHA (CONT'D)

Oh so good?

Liam continues to go harder. Esha takes his hand away.

ESHA (CONT'D)

Let's focus on you for a second.

Esha begins giving him a handjob. Liam moans with pleasure.

INT. LIBRARY - WORLD LANGUAGE SECTION - EVENING

Divya waves to KELLY, 32, and takes a seat at the table. MARCO LOMBARDI, 27, comes in and takes a seat next to Divya. Soon most of the table is filled.

KELLY

Hello everyone! Welcome to the first class of the year! I see many familiar faces and some new ones. Let's go around and say our names, where we are from, and a little bit about yourself if you can! I'll start. My name is Kelly, and I am from New York but I was born in Georgia. I am studying to be a teacher and I volunteer here at the library!

Kelly gestures to the person to her right, ERIC KIM, 35, a Korean man dressed in a plaid shirt.

ERIC

Hello. I Eric, I come from Korea,
and I uh... take care of Korean
store downtown.

KELLY

Nice to meet you, Eric!

Next up is SANDRA GOMEZ, 36.

SANDRA

My name is Sandra, and I am from
the Mexico. For the work... I
clean.

KELLY

Nice to see you again Sandra!

Divya is up next.

DIVYA

Hello, my name is Divya... I am
from India... I am mother.

KELLY

Good to see you again Divya!

SANDRA

Uh...

Sandra points to Divya's head.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Blood?

Divya gets startled.

DIVYA

Blood, blood! Where?

She starts looking all over her body.

Sandra points to her forehead, where her sindhoor lies. Divya sighs and laughs.

She touches her head, and the powder comes off on her finger.

DIVYA (CONT'D)

Sindhoor.

ERIC
What is that?

DIVYA
Uh... Shaddi... for wedding. It shows I have husband.

SANDRA
Oh, like a wedding ring!

DIVYA
Yes, but on the head.

KELLY
Very good job explaining Divya, and thank you for sharing with us! Last but not least, Marco finish us off!

MARCO
Hello, everyone! I am Marco, and I'm from Italy, and I work as a haircutter.

KELLY
Wonderful! Amazing to meet all of you. To start off we are going to take a short test. Don't worry about doing good, I just want to see where people are so I can plan our classes.

Kelly hands out a packet and pencil to everyone.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Take all the time you need.

Divya opens her packet and starts. She goes through the packet answering some questions and leaving some questions blank.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha is still stroking Liam.

LIAM
Tighter. Faster.

Esha complies, going along with the motion.

Eventually Liam finishes all over himself.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Fuck Esha. That was great.

Esha hands him some tissues as they clean up. Liam cuddles up to her.

LIAM (CONT'D)
How did I get such a hot girl like you.

ESHA
(playfully)
I wonder that too.

Liam laughs. Esha checks her phone.

ESHA (CONT'D)
Fuck you have to leave now! My mom is going to be back any minute. Go go go!

Liam frantically gets up. He starts putting his clothes on.

The front door starts opening.

ESHA (CONT'D)
SHIT she's back. Ok stay here. I'm going to go out ant talk to her.

LIAM
My shoes! They are outside.

ESHA
I know! Fuck I hope she doesn't notice.

DIVYA (O.S.)
Esha! I'm home betu!

Esha walks outside her room.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Divya is putting her bag away. Esha walks up to her.

DIVYA
Hello betu!

ESHA
Hi mummi. I just woke up like ten minutes ago.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Ok. I am going to maki roti and rice. Do you want any fruit.

ESHA

Not right now. I think I am going to go for a run. Track has started, and I haven't practiced for a while.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Ok, be safe. Dinner will be ready when you are back.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha puts on her running shoes. She opens her door to make sure the coast is clear.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Esha opens the front door, and quickly signals Liam to come out. He grabs his shoes from the front door and they both exit.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Esha and Liam run outside until they are out of view of Esha's apartment.

ESHA

Holy shit that was close.

LIAM

I thought I was done for.

ESHA

It's fine it worked out.

LIAM

I'm so scared of your mom.

ESHA

She's not scary. She just doesn't want me to date... especially not a white boy, but what can I do. There are only white boys here.

LIAM

Hey we aren't that bad.

ESHA

You aren't bad at all.

Esha gives Liam a kiss.

 ESHA (CONT'D)
I'll walk you half way, and then
walk back. So it seems like I went
on my run.

Esha and Liam walk off together.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The Singh family sits and eats their dinner. Raj plays with his food.

 ESHA
I had a really hard test today -

 RAJ
I am sure you did well on it.

 ESHA
Yeah... I think I did too.

 DIVYA
(In Hindi)
So was work good?

Raj shakes his head.

 RAJ
(In Hindi)
Chad got the job.

 ESHA
What the fuck?

 DIVYA
Esha! Language!

 ESHA
Why? Didn't he just join like two
years ago?

 RAJ
Yeah... but he has been doing good
work.

 ESHA
And you haven't? That's such
bullshit.

DIVYA

Esha! Language! (In Hindi) I'm not going to ask again.

ESHA

Are you not mad about this?

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

I am, but there is not much we can do. We have to keep our heads down and work.

ESHA

No! Dad, you deserve that promotion. You work harder than any dude named Chad, that's for sure. He probably used his frat connections to get that job and does the bare minimum and, then gets praised for it. Mediocre white men go so far, it's infuriating.

RAJ

That's not nice to say, Esha. He works hard.

ESHA

You have to work 10X harder to get the same stuff he does and it's ridiculous. Why aren't you upset?

RAJ

I am! But these things happen. It's the price we pay to be here.

ESHA

That's bullshit! You don't deserve less because you immigrated here.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Esha. Enough! Please use proper language.

Esha sighs.

ESHA

I hope Chad gets caught doing some white-collar crime and the company regrets their decision, knowing they had a better option right in front of them.

Raj laughs a little.

RAJ

Please don't pray for my company's downfall. I need this job to pay for your schooling.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Mr. Edwards starts handing back the tests.

MR. EDWARDS

Great job, class! The class average was a 80, with the curve. I know this was a hard test, so you all should be proud of yourself.

Mr. Edwards hands Esha her test face down. She flips it over and sees a 83, her curved score. Esha groans.

MR. EDWARDS (CONT'D)

Please speak to me after class if you want to talk about your grade.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - LATER

Esha walks up to Mr. Edwards with the test in her hand.

ESHA

Mr. Edwards, are test corrections still on the table?

MR. EDWARDS

Yes of course! Please get them in by the end of next week and you should be good. But if I remember correctly you didn't do too bad. You were above average right?

ESHA

Yeah, but it still isn't good enough.

MR. EDWARDS

Don't be too hard on yourself Esha. You did well.

ESHA

Thank you, Mr. Edwards! I really appreciate it. I'll have the test corrections in.

Esha leaves the classroom.

INT. FIELD HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Students run around the track, practice hurdles, and long jump. Esha sits on the bleachers tying up her laces. Ava and Brittany show up behind her.

AVA

Want to ditch and get ice cream?

ESHA

Oh my god yes. Let me just tell Coach.

Esha walks up to Coach Gale holding her stomach and grimacing in pain.

ESHA (CONT'D)

Coach, I'm having real bad stomach cramps, girl problems, you know. Can I leave practice early?

Coach Gale looks uncomfortable.

COACH GALE

Oh of course, please take care of yourself.

Esha walks back to her friends.

BRITTANY

Isn't that the same excuse you used last week?

ESHA

There have been times Coach must think I am bleeding for a month straight based on how often I use this excuse.

The girls laugh and head out of the field house.

EXT. DAIRY QUEEN - LATE AFTERNOON

The girls are sitting in Ava's car eating Blizzards.

BRITTANY

So my parents came back and Elise was still naked in my bed.

ESHA

Oh my god, what??

BRITTANY

She hid in my closet as I tried to quickly put my clothes on, and then went out, talked to them, and went right back into my room.

AVA

Elise was in the closet the entire time?

BRITTANY

Both literally and figuratively.

The girls laugh.

AVA

What about you Esha, anything going on with Liam?

ESHA

Eh, not really... He wants to have sex, and I want to as well - but like not with him. I can't explain it. I get myself off all the time, but when I'm with him it just feels like a chore. I don't know why. I like him... but I feel like my vagina doesn't?

BRITTANY

So, when are you going to listen to it?

ESHA

Aren't you supposed to listen to your heart? Or even better, your brain?

BRITTANY

No, dude. Vagina's are all knowing.

ESHA

Isn't that what guy's say? Don't they get in trouble for thinking with their dick? What do they say...

AVA

That they listen with the wrong head.

ESHA

Exactly!

BRITTANY

Don't compare penises and vaginas. That's insulting. One is a beautiful, powerful, sensual, organ, that is capable of bringing life into this world, the other is a dangler around and gets hurt at the smallest of touches.

The girls laugh.

ESHA

Hmm. I'll give it some time and see. How's that.

BRITTANY

Fair enough. But I'm telling you girl, when a vagina knows, you will know.

The girls continue eating their ice cream.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Esha is sitting on her bed doing work. Divya knocks on her door.

DIVYA

Esha?

ESHA

Yes?

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Do you want to come to the library today?

Esha ponders for a second.

ESHA

Actually, yeah. I'll go today.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Really? Let's go, the bus will be here soon.

Esha puts her laptop in her bag and follows her mom out the door.

INT. LIBRARY - WORLD LANGUAGE SECTION - EVENING

The class takes a seat. Marco shows up late with a plate of cannolis.

MARCO
Hello, new friends! I made
cannolis!

KELLY
Oh, how kind! Thank you, Marco.

Marco places the plate down in the middle of the table and the class digs in.

ERIC
Wow, Marco. These very good.

SANDRA
I agree.

Divya looks at the cannoli, and slowly takes a bite. Her eyes widen.

DIVYA
Never before I have eaten something
like this!

Marco laughs.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
Like barfi, but better! I don't
know how it can be better than
barfi.

The class laughs.

KELLY
What a great start to class. So
today we are going to practice
conversation, so please pair up and
talk about your life!

Marco and Divya pair up.

MARCO
Italy is where I was born. I come
here 8 months before. What about
you?

DIVYA
I am born in India, and come here
14 years ago.

MARCO
Oh long time here!

DIVYA
Yes, long time.

MARCO
Do you have any kids?

Divya hesitates.

DIVYA
I have 2 kids. One son, and one
daughter. What about you?

MARCO
Not yet, but in the future. My
partner and I are waiting for
more... uh... stable.

DIVYA
Yes. I understand. Raising kids
very difficult with little money.

INT. LIBRARY - CHILDREN'S SECTION - EVENING

Esha walks into the children's section. To her right, she sees the front page of an old newspaper pinned to the wall with a photo of her holding a trophy. "Holliston Library's very own wins national spelling bee!" GRACIE, 67, sits at the main desk.

GRACIE
Oh look who it is!

Gracie hobbles out of her desk and goes to hug Esha.

ESHA
Hello, Ms. Gracie.

GRACIE
It's been too long! How are you
doing?

ESHA
I'm doing well, school is a lot of
work.

GRACIE

I'm sure. It's so good to see you.

Gracie gives Esha one more squeeze.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Come sit, tell me what life has been like. I'm sure you are up to so much!

Esha takes a seat next to Gracie.

ESHA

Well, I'm in the middle of college apps right now. It's very stressful.

GRACIE

Nothing our Esha can't handle.

ESHA

Yeah... and...

Esha takes a pause.

ESHA (CONT'D)

Actually, I think that is it for now, and just getting through school, and finishing up my last season of track.

GRACIE

Oh that sounds great, Esha. I'm so happy to hear all this.

ESHA

Thank you. Ms. Gracie.

Esha smiles a genuine smile for the first time in a while.

GRACIE

How's Ajay doing?

Esha's smile wavers.

ESHA

He is good. I haven't heard from him in a while. I think he is liking college.

GRACIE

Oh, that's amazing. He always was such a quiet peaceful boy, but get him talking about space and he wouldn't stop.

Gracie laughs.

ESHA

Yeah, I miss him.

GRACIE

I'm sure you do.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Have you been reading anything interesting?

Esha thinks for a second.

ESHA

Not really for pleasure, but I have to read a lot for classes. I really enjoyed Brave New World.

GRACIE

That is a great book!

ESHA

Yeah I really really liked the beginning, but the ending was kind of lackluster.

GRACIE

Hmm, interesting you say that. Why?

Esha and Gracie continue talking.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATE EVENING

Divya and Esha arrive back from the library and help set the table. Raj is sitting in the living room waiting for them. They take seats and begin serving themselves.

RAJ

How was everything today?

DIVYA

Good good, class was fun.

RAJ

What about you Esha?

ESHA

Yeah, it was good to be back and talk to Gracie. I haven't seen her in a while. We talked about classes and books and Ajay.

Beat.

Divya looks over to Esha. Raj continues eating.

RAJ

Yeah so how are classes going?

ESHA

They're fine. Nothing too special. Just trying to keep my grades up for applications.

RAJ

Good, good. We expect nothing less from our little champion.

Esha winces at that word and continues to silently eat.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - LATER

Esha takes her phone out and texts, AJAY, 21.

"Gracie brought you up today"

Her phone immediately buzzes back.

Ajay: "oh how I miss her"

Esha: "Can I call?"

Ajay: "Is it safe for you?"

Esha calls her brother.

ESHA

So, how are you doing?

AJAY (FILTERED)

Eh could be better, you?

ESHA

Same, just trying to finish up college apps.

AJAY (FILTERED)

Oh! How's that going?

ESHA

Bruh, I'm struggling. I could not handle last year. It was too much. I don't have like any energy left.

AJAY (FILTERED)

Yeah, I don't know why you signed up for that many APs. I told you it would be too much.

ESHA

You know I have to... I can't not...

AJAY (FILTERED)

I know... Hey, I guess that's the good thing about being the fuck up. No one expects anything out of you.

ESHA

Bhaiya, you're not a fuck up. You go to fucking Columbia.

AJAY (FILTERED)

Try telling our parents that Ms. Champion.

ESHA

You know I hate that nick-name, and don't drag mom into this. She never said anything.

AJAY (FILTERED)

That's the point. She never said anything.

ESHA

She's getting better I promise... It's just... You know how dad can get.

AJAY (FILTERED)

When I hear from her, I'll believe it. For now, she's in the same boat as Raj.

DIVYA (O.S.)

Esha! Come say hi to your nani.

ESHA

Shit I have to go.

AJAY (FILTERED)

Take care dude. You know.

ESHA

I know.

Esha ends the call and heads out.

INT. COLLEGE DORM - SAME

Ajay turns his phone off. On his bed, NICK, 22, is shirtless on his phone.

AJAY

Sorry that was Esha.

NICK

You're so good. How is she doing?

AJAY

Good, she's in the middle of applying to colleges so we will see how that goes.

NICK

Ah, I remember those times... soo.. How are your parents?

AJAY

I don't know and I don't care.

NICK

How was your astro exam today?

Ajay smiles.

AJAY

Oh it went so well! I am so excited about what we are learning in the next couple of weeks! It's all about...

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Esha opens up her laptop and types away.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Mr. Edwards is standing in front of the class.

MR. EDWARDS

Last call for test corrections.

Esha's eyes widen. She rummages through her backpack and doesn't find her test. She starts panicking. Students around her walk up and hand Mr. Edwards their corrections. Esha slumps in her chair in defeat.

MR. EDWARDS (CONT'D)
Thank you all! I will get these
grades in asap.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Divya gets ready to leave.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Divya stops by to ask if she wants to come to the library and sees Esha sleeping.

DIVYA
Betu?

Esha groans.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
(In Hindi)
I am going to class ok. Text me if
you need anything.

Esha groans again.

Divya heads out.

INT. LIBRARY - WORLD LANGUAGE SECTION - EVENING

The class is chatting with each other waiting for class to start.

KELLY
Hello class! Today we will be doing
reading comprehension. We are going
to read an article about the
forgotten woman of the Eiffel
tower, and then talk about it!

Kelly hands out the article and the class starts reading.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha gets up from her nap and checks her phone. She responds to some messages.

ESHA
 (Yelling)
MUMMI!!

No response.

 ESHA (CONT'D)
MUMMI!!

Esha takes out her phone and texts Liam to come over.

INT. LIBRARY - WORLD LANGUAGE SECTION - LATER

The class finishes reading the article.

 KELLY
So what did we think about it?

 ERIC
It was very interesting. I didn't
know any of this.

 SANDRA
Yes, and very sad also.

 KELLY
I agree. Women tend to be written
out of history.

 MARCO
This happens to my people as well.

 ERIC
The Italians?

 MARCO
No the gay community. We also can
be forgotten.

The class goes silent for a bit. Divya shifts uncomfortably
in her seat.

 KELLY
You're very right, Marco. The LGBT
community also tends to get written
out.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liam and Esha are making out on her bed. He starts pushing
her head down. Esha resists a little. She uses her hands
instead. Liam tries pushing her head down again.

ESHA

I'll get there. Let me do it at my own pace.

LIAM

You're pace can be really slow sometimes Esha.

Esha sighs and slowly starts going down. She reaches the penis and takes a pause. She puts it in her mouth and starts performing oral sex. Liam moans. Esha gets more into it and goes at her own pace. Liam puts his hands on her head and starts moving it. Esha tries to pull out but his grip is too strong. He starts moving it faster and harder. Esha is losing control. Tears start coming out of her eyes, suddenly the tip hits something the back of her throat. Esha's eyes widen as she realizes what is about to happen. Her lunch starts coming up. Vomit is all over Liam and Esha.

LIAM (CONT'D)

What the fuck Esha?

Esha is panicking trying to clean everything up. She hands Liam some tissues.

LIAM (CONT'D)

This is fucking gross. I can't believe this happened.

Esha runs out and grabs some water. She brings some water to help clean. Liam takes it and cleans himself up. He puts his clothes on.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Uh I think we should like take a break...

ESHA

Because of that?

LIAM

Not just that, but like...

Esha starts crying.

ESHA

I'll get better I promise. I just need my own pace.

LIAM

We are graduating soon anyway. I don't see the point of this.

ESHA
But... What?

 LIAM
I'm sorry.

Liam leaves Esha's room. Esha is sitting with vomit on her face, and all around her.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Esha's eyes are puffy as she strips her sheets.

INT. LIBRARY - WORLD LANGUAGE SECTION - LATER

As class ends Divya walks up to Marco.

 DIVYA
Marco... I have question.

 MARCO
Yes?

 DIVYA
My son also... gay

 MARCO
Oh wow!

 DIVYA
What do I do?

 MARCO
What do you mean?

 DIVYA
I don't know what to do.

 MARCO
Nothing. You continue with same
stuff. He is still your son.

 DIVYA
My husband don't talk to him
anymore.

Marco's smile disappears.

 MARCO
Ohh. I see. Do you?

DIVYA

Not so much. I want to. He is still my son.

MARCO

Then talk to him.

DIVYA

I just...

MARCO

I know, it's hard. But we are people too. I am people too.

DIVYA

Thank you Marco. I will try.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The Singh family is sitting eating dinner.

RAJ

Did you see there was a letter for you?

ESHA

Oh really, what for?

Esha walks over to the shelf and shuffles through the letters until she sees her name.

RAJ

It's from Scripps.

Esha opens the envelope.

ESHA

"Dear Esha Singh, We hope you have been doing well. We want to extend an invitation to our 90th annual spelling bee. This is a landmark year and we would love to have past winners be present. Please let us know if you are able to make it, and we can arrange you and your family's travels."

DIVYA

So exciting!

RAJ

Wow, 90 years! You are part of history, beta. This will be so fun.

ESHA
I don't know if I can make the dates, I might have a meet that weekend.

RAJ
You can miss a meet. You aren't even good at track. We are going.

Esha sighs and puts the letter down on the dining table, as Raj and Divya look over it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Divya sits watching an Indian drama on her tablet, while Esha is on her phone next to her.

DIVYA
Beta?

ESHA
Yes Mummi?

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Don't tell your dad about this ok.

ESHA
About what?

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Can you help me write a text to Ajay?

Esha perks up.

ESHA
(In Hindi)
You want to talk to Ajay?

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
He is my son. I don't think he did anything wrong.

ESHA
(In Hindi)
Then why didn't you say anything Mummi?

DIVYA
 (In Hindi)
 Esha... It isn't that easy.

Esha scoots over to Divya and Divya takes her phone out.

ESHA
 (In Hindi)
 What do you want to say to him?

DIVYA
 (In Hindi)
 I just want to see how he's doing.

Divya pulls up WhatsApp. She types "How are you beta"

DIVYA (CONT'D)
 (In Hindi)
 Is this good?

ESHA
 (In Hindi)
 Yes, hit send.

INT. COLLEGE DORM - CONTINUOUS

Ajay's phone buzzes. He looks over and sees a message from "Mom" He smiles. He quickly responds.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - LATER

Esha's phone buzzes. It's a text from Ajay.

"Safe to call?"

She dials Ajay.

AJAY (FILTERED)
 So I got a text from mom today. Do you know anything about that?

ESHA
 No, she actually asked me to help her send you the text, I was very surprised and happy.

AJAY (FILTERED)
 You didn't make her send it?

ESHA
 No, she wanted to.

AJAY (FILTERED)
Oh wow, that's really good to hear.

ESHA
She's getting better I promise. She just doesn't know how to go about it all because of dad.

AJAY (FILTERED)
I know, Raj can be a lot. I just wish he would take time to listen, and be a little more open-minded.

ESHA
It's hard for him. He isn't used to it all.

AJAY (FILTERED)
That doesn't excuse it, I know it's hard. But he can at least make an effort, look at mom she is making an effort. Why can't he?

ESHA
You have a point. Just be a little patient with them. They want what's best for us.

AJAY (FILTERED)
At what cost though?

There is a moment of silence between them.

ESHA
I've been wondering the same thing recently.

AJAY (FILTERED)
Esha, take care of yourself ok. Remember to do that, and don't listen to everything they say.

ESHA
I know, it's just hard not to.

AJAY (FILTERED)
Trust me, I know.

They laugh.

ESHA
Bhaiya... I had a really uh... how I...

AJAY (FILTERED)

Yes?

ESHA

It's kind of embarrassing...

AJAY (FILTERED)

One second Esha. - I'm on the phone with my sister! Be there in a second! - Ok, I have to head out, but good speaking to you. Thanks for helping mom out, I appreciate it.

Esha sighs.

ESHA

Of course, anytime bhaiya.

The phone call ends, and Esha goes back on her laptop.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATE EVENING

Raj finishes up some work. He gets an email notification from Columbia.

"Spring Term Tuition Due"

He sighs. He opens the email and goes to the link. He puts his bank info in and calls it a night.

INT. COLLEGE DORM - MOMENTS LATER

Ajay gets an email notification.

"Spring Term Bill Update."

He opens it and sees that he has been paid. He opens his messages with his dad to thank him, only to see the same message from last semester with no response. He leaves the messages and goes back in Instagram.

INT. FIELD HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

After a long workout, the students head to their locker rooms. Esha walks to the corner and steps on the scale. She looks down at the number smiles and steps off.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Esha takes a seat at the dining room table, as everything is already set.

RAJ
Esha...

ESHA
Yes?

RAJ
Have you heard back from any colleges yet?

ESHA
About what?

RAJ
Any acceptances?

ESHA
Not yet, I am still waiting.

RAJ
Did you not apply early?

ESHA
I tried to, but I couldn't finish my essays in time. I wasn't happy with anything that I wrote.

RAJ
Esha, what will this look like. You should have applied early.

ESHA
Why do you care what this looks like? That doesn't matter!

RAJ
Yes it does! What will people say when they hear that our daughter didn't get in anywhere early. Let alone apply. What an embarrassment. Get this up before the bee, Esha.

ESHA
I will. I just -

RAJ
Do you need a tutor? We can get you a writing tutor, that's ok. Just let us know.

ESHA
I can handle it, I will figure it out.

RAJ
Good, that is what I like to hear from our little champion.

Esha winces at the word.

ESHA
Dad, please don't call me that.

RAJ
Why? You are our little champion.

ESHA
I was...

RAJ
No, you still are! That was just the start. You'll figure it out.

Esha sighs.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

As students filter out Esha walks up to Mr. Edwards.

ESHA
I know my performance in class isn't as good as it should be.

MR. EDWARDS
What do you mean as it should be, you're struggling a little that's ok. Also last time I checked your grade is a B, that's not bad Esha.

ESHA
I can't have a B Mr. Edwards. My parents would be so upset by that.

MR. EDWARDS
They are your grades Esha.

ESHA
It is a reflection of them. I need to get it up. Is there anything I can do?

MR. EDWARDS

I have after-school sessions, why don't you stop by some of those, and I can give you some extra credit.

ESHA

Really? Thank you so much!

MR. EDWARDS

Esha, as long as you put the effort in and try that's all I care about. Failure is normal. You know I failed two of my math classes in college, and I'm still here teaching math.

ESHA

You failed classes?

MR. EDWARDS

Yeah, and then I took them again and learned. Nothing wrong with failing, don't be scared of it, it only makes you a stronger person.

ESHA

Thank you, Mr. Edwards, I think I really needed to hear that.

MR. EDWARDS

I know senior year can be tough on people. Take care of yourself ok, and goodness get those test corrections in.

Esha laughs.

ESHA

Will do! Have a great weekend Mr. Edwards.

MR. EDWARDS

You too, Esha!

INT. DINING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

The Singh family is standing with their suitcases.

ESHA

The flight isn't for 5 hours. Why are we leaving now?

RAJ

One hour to get there, also just in case we hit traffic don't want to be late.

ESHA

That still leaves 3 more hours for a domestic flight.

RAJ

Security always takes forever.

Esha sighs.

RAJ (CONT'D)

You packed everything?

ESHA

Yes.

RAJ

I have printed the boarding passes. I have our passports and our green cards.

ESHA

You know they have boarding passes on our phones now, right?

RAJ

What if it dies, or there is no internet. We always print Esha.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Before we go! Eat a spoon of yogurt and sugar.

They all eat a spoon of yogurt. Divya quickly hurries to the sink and washes the bowl.

DIVYA (CONT'D)

(In Hindi)

Ok good to go. I have packed snacks.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The Singh family car zooms down the interstate, with no traffic in sight.

INT. AIRPORT - MORNING

The Singh family arrives at the bustling airport. Raj is holding onto all their IDs and boarding passes. They walk up to the desk to check-in. Raj hands the attendant their IDs and boarding passes.

INT. AIRPORT - SECURITY LINE

The Singh family gets through a short line of security, without any hassles.

INT. AIRPORT - LATER

The Singh family sits down waiting for their flight.

ESHA

Dad our gate isn't even open yet!
This is the plane boarding before
ours.

RAJ

That means we are on time.

Esha shakes her head in disbelief.

ESHA

What am I going to do for the next
two and a half hours?

RAJ

I think studying for mathematics
might be a good idea.

Esha rolls her eyes and takes her phone out and begins scrolling through Instagram.

INT. AIRPORT - LATER

The Singh family is all doing their own thing. Divya is knitting. Raj is reading a book, and Esha is on her laptop.

ESHA

Mummi I'm hungry. Can we...

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

I brought puri and potatoes. Eat
up.

Esha sighs and eats what she has been given.

INT. PLANE - LATER

The Singh family boards the plane and gets situated in their seats.

EXT. AIRPORT - MOMENTS LATER

The plane takes off.

INT. CALIFORNIA AIRPORT - LATE AFTERNOON

The Singh family walks off the plane and picks up their luggage.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

The Singh family gets situated in their hotel room.

ESHA

They are having an event for
Spelling Bee Alumni, I'm going to
head down.

DIVYA

Ok have fun, beta.

Esha leaves the room.

RAJ

(In Hindi)

Remember the first time we came
here.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Esha was so young, only 9 years
old. Everyone all together. So much
fun.

Raj pauses.

RAJ

(In Hindi)

Yeah... This is even better now.
Coming back with a champion.

INT. EVENT HALL - LATER

Esha walks up to the front desk, where FRANCINE, 52, sits.

FRANCINE
Name please?

ESHA
Esha Singh.

FRANCINE
Ohh Esha! So good to see you again.
All you winners look the same, it's
tough to keep track of you all.

ESHA
Haha yeah...

Francine checks her off the list and hands her a name tag.

FRANCINE
Have a great time!

Esha walks away from the table and wanders around the event hall. She walks up to the snack table. ROHIT MAHAJAN, 18, walks up to her.

ROHIT
Well well well if it isn't the
spelling bee's darling, Esha Singh.

Esha turns around and her eyes widen.

ESHA
Oh funny seeing you here. When was
the last time I saw you?

Beat.

ESHA (CONT'D)
Oh, that's right, when you lost to
me, right?

Rohit chuckles.

ROHIT
R-E-D-E-M-P-T-I-O-N. I did come
back to win the next year, hence
why I am here.

ESHA
Yeah, because I wasn't there to
beat you.

ROHIT
Because you weren't there to
distract me.

Esha feels the blood rush up to her cheeks.

 ESHA
Yeah ok silly boy, you're being
very G-A-R-R-U-L-I-T-Y.

Rohit smirks at her.

 ROHIT
Are we bringing out the spelling
bee words now?

 ESHA
Just had to remind you of your
place, which was 2nd right?

Rohit laughs.

 ROHIT
So how has life been without the
spelling bee?

 ESHA
Honestly, kind of tough.

 ROHIT
Aw really, I'm sorry to hear that.

 ESHA
It's ok. It do be like that
sometimes. What about you?

 ROHIT
Now I feel bad about what I was
going to say.

 ESHA
No no, say it!

 ROHIT
Well, it's been pretty good. I
can't really complain.

 ESHA
I'm really glad to hear that!

They both walk around, munching on their snacks.

 ESHA (CONT'D)
This blows. I hate everyone here.

 ROHIT
Want to ditch? I have a fake, I can
get us some alcohol.

ESHA
Oo, who knew Rohit was such a bad
boy.

Rohit and Esha leave the event hall.

INT. HOTEL PATIO - LATE NIGHT

Esha and Rohit pass around a bottle of vodka, taking swigs
out of the bottle.

 ESHA
Who would have thought we would end
up here.

 ROHIT
I mean I always had a little thing
for you.

 ESHA
Shut up. That's stupid.

 ROHIT
But I'm serious. I mean it sucked
to lose, but it made it more ok
that it was to you.

Esha tries to stop her smile. She scoots closer to Rohit.

 ESHA
I mean it did feel good beating
you, but it will feel even better
doing this.

Esha and Rohit lean in for a kiss. They stop and look at each
other, smile, and continue going. Esha gets on top of Rohit,
straddling him. They begin making out.

 ESHA (CONT'D)
Woah, let's head somewhere that
isn't this public.

 ROHIT
Agreed.

Esha and Rohit enter the hotel lobby, giggling the entire
time.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They walk around eventually finding an empty supply closet
and stumble in.

INT. HOTEL SUPPLY CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Esha and Rohit can't keep their hands off each other.

 ESHA
You know what I'm going to do to
you?

 ROHIT
Say it... no spell it.

 ESHA
F-E-L-L-A-T-I-O

 ROHIT
Fucking hell you're so hot.

Esha slowly kisses down Rohit's body. Rohit sits back and let's Esha do her thing.

INT. HOTEL SUPPLY CLOSET - MOMENTS LATER

Rohit brings Esha's head up.

 ROHIT
Wait, before I finish. It's your
turn.

Rohit starts kissing down her body as he spells.

 ROHIT (CONT'D)
C-U-N-N-I-L-I-N-G-U-S

Esha arches as back as Rohit goes down on her. She moans in pleasure.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Esha pops a breath mint in her mouth and tries to sneak back into her hotel room.

 DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Why so late?

 ESHA
I was out catching up with old
spelling bee friends.

 DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Aw ok that is nice. How were they?

ESHA

(In Hindi)

Mummi I had so much fun. We talked about all our memories from growing up. There aren't many kids who get this experience so it was nice to talk to them.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Good. Now go to bed. Long day ahead.

INT. BANQUET HALL - MORNING

The Singh family walks into the banquet hall. It is adorned with flowers and a massive stage. The Spelling Bee officials are walking around talking it up to past champions. There is a bee mascot walking near the photo booth.

ESHA

Wow, they really went all out for this.

Esha looks around trying to find Rohit. She eventually finds him and his family, PREETI, 39, and ABHISHEK, 42, by the drink station.

ESHA (CONT'D)

Do we want some drinks?

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Yes let's go get drinks.

The Singh family makes their way to the drink table.

ABHISHEK

Oh, look it's Esha!

ESHA

Hello Uncle, how are you?

ABHISHEK

I've been well. Good to see you all after all these years.

RAJ

Yes it's been so long.

ABHISHEK

How have you guys been?

RAJ
Very good, how about you.

ABHISHEK
Oh, exceptional! Our son is headed to Harvard next fall. We are so proud of him. He got in early so no worries anymore.

Esha widens her eyes and looks at Rohit. Rohit looks at his feet.

RAJ
Wow congratulations, man. That is very impressive.

ABHISHEK
What about Esha, where is she headed?

RAJ
We are still waiting to hear back from schools, but I hope she stays in Massachusetts as well.

ABHISHEK
I'm sure you do, and I'm sure she will. Our champions always do well.

Esha winces at that word.

RAJ
Let's go take a picture of all of us with the bee.

Esha and Rohit laugh. The two families head over to the photo booth and take turns taking photos with the bee. Esha and Rohit can barely keep it together.

Esha and Rohit step away.

ESHA
What is up with the bee?

ROHIT
I know it's ridiculous. But I kind of like it.

ESHA
You weirdo... You didn't tell me you were going to Harvard??

ROHIT
I didn't want to make a big deal
out of it.

ESHA
Dude that's amazing. I'm so happy
for you!!

Rohit smiles.

ROHIT
Thanks, hopefully you can join me?

ESHA
I don't know, man. I don't think I
will get in.

ROHIT
You never know! And even if you
don't it isn't the end of the
world.

ESHA
Yeah try telling my parents that.

ROHIT
Oh trust me I know.

Esha looks into his eyes.

ROHIT (CONT'D)
You know you are amazing no matter
what, right? You wowed me since you
were nine and you threw your fruit
punch at the girl.

ESHA
She told me I smelled like curry.
She deserved it.

ROHIT
She 100% deserved it.

Esha laughs a genuine laugh for the first time in a while.

ROHIT (CONT'D)
I remember thinking, don't fuck
with that girl. She will put you in
your place.

Esha laughs.

ESHA

It seems like I've been put in my place currently.

ROHIT

It's seems like a cool place since I'm here.

ESHA

Hey, you are bringing down the coolness points - don't forget that. I mean you won the spelling bee, what a nerd.

ROHIT

So did you!

ESHA

Yeah, but it's cool when I do it.

Rohit laughs.

Divya walks up to Esha.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Let's go take a seat at our table. The ceremony is starting.

Esha waves bye to Rohit and heads back to her family.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Esha's phone buzzes. It's a message from Rohit.

"Want to finish the bottle from last night?"

Esha responds, "Fuck yes, patio in 30?"

Rohit: "cya there!"

Esha runs to her backpack and looks for a razor. She hops in the shower, contorting her body in many different ways to try to shave every nook and cranny.

She hops out of the shower and gets ready.

ESHA

Mummi! I am going to hang out with some of the other kids. Text me if you are worried ok. I might be out late.

DIVYA
Ok stay safe betu. (In Hindi) Do
you have the hotel room card?

ESHA
Yes! See you later.

Esha speeds out of her hotel room.

EXT. HOTEL PATIO - LATER

Rohit is waiting with the remaining vodka and a little bouquet of flowers. Esha's heart skips a beat.

ESHA
That's really corny.

ROHIT
I know you like it.

ESHA
Shut up.

ROHIT
I stole it from the banquet hall.

ESHA
Wait, really? That's even better. I
love that.

Rohit gives her a big hug.

ROHIT
I really like you, you know.

ESHA
Woah woah calm down, it's been two
days,

ROHIT
And a crush that's been festering
for the past 6 years or so...

ESHA
It's a stupid crush.

ROHIT
Oh yeah, is that why you dressed up
for this?

ESHA
Hey, this is about you, not me.

Rohit passes the bottle to Esha.

ROHIT
After you, madame.

Esha takes a swig.

EXT. HOTEL PATIO - LATER

Rohit and Esha are clearly very tipsy and are laughing their hearts out.

ESHA
Rohit, I think that I like you
too...

ROHIT
I'm sorry, what did you say.

ESHA
Don't make me say it again.

Rohit leans in and kisses her,

ROHIT
Oh, I already knew that. You
wouldn't have done what you did
last time if you didn't

ESHA
There is more where that came from.

Rohit raises his eyebrows.

ROHIT
Oh really?

ESHA
F-O-R-N-I-C-A-T-E

Esha spells it out as she gently strokes Rohit's arms.

ROHIT
We need to leave this patio
immediately, otherwise, bad things
are gonna happen.

Esha and Rohit interlock fingers and run into the hotel.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Esha and Rohit run down the hallway checking for open rooms. Every single room is locked.

ROHIT
Same place as last time?

ESHA
Do you think we are fucking in a supply closet? I'm horny, but not that horny. Let's check the banquet hall.

INT. BANQUET HALL - CONTINUOUS

Esha and Rohit turn the door handle to find the door open. The decorations from earlier in the day are still set up, along with the bee costume. They look over at the bee costume and burst out laughing.

ESHA
Put it on!

ROHIT
No way. You first.

Esha walks up to the costume and puts the head on. Rohit takes a picture.

ROHIT (CONT'D)
Let me get a selfie with the bee!

Esha poses.

ESHA
Your turn!

ROHIT
No way I'm getting into that thing.

ESHA
Yeah you're not getting out of this.

Esha passes him the head and he puts it on. Esha takes a photo. He takes the head off and they take a selfie. Esha puts the head back on him and makes him dance. The door starts to open, a SECURITY GUARD, walks in.

SECURITY GUARD
Hey you aren't supposed to be in here!

Rohit and Esha panic.

 ESHA
 Shit, run Rohit!

Esha grabs their shirts. Esha and Rohit, with the bee head still on start running.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Esha and Rohit take a pause. Esha looks up and bursts into laughter. Rohit takes the head off.

 ROHIT
 Holy fuck.

 ESHA
 You ran away with the head on!
 You're insane Rohit.

Rohit leans in and gives Esha a kiss.

 ESHA (CONT'D)
 Oh that's right. Can we continue
 where we left off?

 ROHIT
 Where? We aren't doing the supple
 closet again.

Esha and Rohit walk around the hallway. They come across an empty open room calling their name. Rohit eyes Esha. Esha is one step ahead already entering the room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rohit and Esha are making out on the bed. The bee head is sitting on the table watching. Things are hot and heavy.

 ESHA
 Do you?

 ROHIT
 Do you?

 ESHA
 I don't have a condom...

 ROHIT
 Neither do I...

ESHA
It should be fine right? What are
the chances anything will happen.

ROHIT
Are you sure?

ESHA
Yeah, just pull out.

Rohit tries to enter.

ESHA (CONT'D)
Ow!

ROHIT
Are you ok?

ESHA
Yeah, just can you try a different
angle?

ROHIT
Sure.

Rohit moves around and tries a new position.

ESHA
Ow owww!

Rohit grabs a pillow.

ESHA (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

ROHIT
I saw this online.

Rohit places the pillow underneath Esha's back. He tries to
enter again, this time it works.

ESHA
Holy shit.

Rohit moans.

ROHIT
Oh my god, you're so wet.

Esha smiles. Rohit slowly moves in and out. It starts getting
faster and harder. Esha wraps her legs around Rohit, she digs
her nails into his arms.

ESHA

ROHIT!!

Rohit starts going faster.

ROHIT

I'm going to cum.

He suddenly pulls out, and finishes all over her. Rohit collapses next to Esha.

ROHIT (CONT'D)

Holy shit that was amazing.

Rohit gets up and grabs some toilet paper from the bathroom and starts cleaning the cum off of her chest.

ESHA

Wow, I was not expecting it to be that good.

ROHIT

Looks like the bee over there got a good show.

They laugh.

Once Esha is clean Rohit cuddles up to her, and kisses her cheek.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Esha and Rohit are putting their clothes on.

ROHIT

Is your first time supposed to be that good?

ESHA

That was your first time?

ROHIT

Yeah... Is that a bad thing?

ESHA

Oh no, it was actually mine too, I mean I've done other things just not all the way.

ROHIT

Really? I would not expect that.

ESHA
The dudes at my high school suck.

ROHIT
Most dudes do.

ESHA
This isn't the end, right?

ROHIT
No, I wouldn't do that to you.

ESHA
Promise?

ROHIT
P-R-O-M-I-S-E

Esha smiles.

ROHIT (CONT'D)
Can I walk you back to your hotel
room?

ESHA
One floor below, I don't want my
parents hearing a dude's voice.

ROHIT
Very fair.

Rohit and Esha leave the hotel room, leaving the bee head
there.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Esha and Rohit hug goodbye.

ROHIT
Hope to see you soon!

ESHA
Me too.

ROHIT
Good night.

ESHA
Good night.

Esha can't stop smiling as she walks up the stairs to her
floor.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She quietly enters her room and gets under the covers. The smile is still there on her face, and she can't seem to get rid of it.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - AFTERNOON

Esha, Ava, and Brittany eat lunch.

ESHA

And then! A security guard came in and we ran out of the hall with our shirts off.

AVA

Holy shit what?!

BRITTANY

Esha! I can't believe these words are coming out of your mouth. Who are you?

AVA

Yeah who knew spelling bee nerds went this hard?

ESHA

Oh, he went hard all right!

AVA

ESHA!

They all laugh.

ESHA

I get sex now. Like I see why people do it.

AVA

Right? Isn't it great?

BRITTANY

Ava! Tell Esha the exciting news!

Esha raises her eyebrows.

ESHA

What's up?

AVA

I have the house free this weekend!

BRITTANY
You know what that means!

AVA
Time to throw down!

ESHA
This will be fun!

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Mr. Edwards stands in front of a small group of students.

MR. EDWARDS
Hello, everyone, welcome to our
afterschool review session! We will
be going over integrals today and
any questions you have on them!

Esha sits with her notebook out and raises her hand.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The Singh family finished their dinner and are talking.

ESHA
Mummi I have a sleepover at Ava's
house today. We have a math test
and wanted to study and figured we
can also hang out a little is that
ok.

Divya sighs and looks at Raj.

DIVYA
Ok go.

Esha lights up.

ESHA
Thank you mummi! I'll be back
tomorrow morning.

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - AVA'S ROOM - LATER

Esha walks into Ava's room in sweats. She takes them off and
underneath it she has a mini skirt, and a crop top.

AVA
Ooo looking good!

ESHA
 Thank you! I borrowed it from
 Brittany.

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MONTAGE

The three girls set up for the party. They move any delicate objects into the closet. They set up speakers. They put out snacks. They write little notes to the neighbors, with cookies attached, letting them know to text them in case they have any complaints, they put all the alcohol out.

 AVA
 We did that!

Brittany pours out three shots.

 BRITTANY
 Cheers to the best friends I could
 ask for.

They clink their glasses and down their first round of shots.

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT - LATER

Teens are crowding the rooms, as music blares around them. Esha, Ava, and Brittany are ready to do a round of shots.

 ESHA
 To senior year!

 AVA
 Cheers!

They clink their shot glasses and down some cheap vodka. Brittany walks over to the dining room table where beer pong is happening.

Esha pours herself a shot of tequila.

 ESHA
 Tequila! T-E-Q-U-I-L-A Tequila!!

Her friends cheer. Esha takes another shot.

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Esha calls Rohit. He doesn't answer. She leaves him a voicemail.

ESHA

Helloooo. I am so horny right now,
and am missing you and your dick so
much. I can't stop thinking about
that night - holy shit Rohit that
was....

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Esha stumbles around the living room eventually falling into
the couch. A group of teens, FRANCO, 18, RILEY, 16, AUGUST,
18, and KIM, 17.

FRANCO

Hey, spelling bee champion, how do
you spell LIGMA?

Esha takes a pause, not recognizing that word.

ESHA

Can you use it in a sentence,
please?

FRANCO

Ligma balls!

Everyone laughs around them.

ESHA

Hey hey. I want redemption. Give me
an actual word.

Riley looks up a long word.

RILEY

Ok ok, here we go. Spell fewtrils?

ESHA

Definition please.

RILEY

Things of little value. "The
beachcomber gathered fewtrils from
the sand, ever optimistic that
someone, at a garage sale
somewhere, would want to buy them."

ESHA

Oh, like Franco's dick?

People laugh around her.

ESHA (CONT'D)
Ok hmm F-E-W-T-R-I-L...L-S

August mimics the sound of a bell.

AUGUST
Oof, unfortunately, that is
incorrect. You added an extra L.

RILEY
Looks like the spelling bee
champion is no more.

Esha immediately snaps.

ESHA
Oh really? I'm sorry did you win
the spelling bee at 11? No, I don't
think so, go on spell clinquant...
Go.

Ava sees the commotion and walks over to Esha.

AVA
Let's go get some water.

She walks Esha over to the sink and hands her a glass of
water.

AVA (CONT'D)
Drink this.

Esha chugs the water and Ava makes her take a seat.

AVA (CONT'D)
No more alcohol for you tonight,
ok.

Esha nods her head and slumps onto the chair.

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Esha wakes up. Ava is already up on her phone. Esha groans.

ESHA
My head hurts really badly.

AVA
Yeah, you went pretty hard last
night.

ESHA
Oh god, did I start spelling again?

Ava laughs.

AVA
Yes.

ESHA
Ugh, I hate when I do that.

Brittany pops up from the ground.

BRITTANY
You kept spelling tequila whenever
you took a shot of tequila.

ESHA
Oh god.

Brittany and Ava laugh.

AVA
Nerd alert!

Esha checks her phone, she sees a missed call and a message
from Rohit.

"lol looks like you had a fun night last night. I miss you
too <3"

She smiles.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Esha is typing away on her laptop.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
I am going to the library, want to
join?

ESHA
Hmm. Yes. I can talk to Gracie for
a bit.

Esha and Divya head out.

INT. LIBRARY - WORLD LANGUAGE SECTION

Divya sits down next to Marco.

DIVYA
I text my son.

Marco's eyes light up.

MARCO
Really? Did he text back?

DIVYA
Yes!

MARCO
That is good!

DIVYA
Thank you Marco, for helping me.

MARCO
Welcome Divya.

KELLY
Today we are starting off with -

INT. LIBRARY - CHILDREN'S SECTION

Esha walks up to Gracie.

GRACIE
What have I done to be so lucky to see Esha twice in the past couple months.

Esha laughs.

ESHA
I just wanted to come by and say thanks. The spelling bee had an event for past alumni recently and it reminded me of all the drills and practices we did here. Without your help I couldn't have won, so thank you.

GRACIE
Aw honey. You always had it in you. I was happy to help.

ESHA
I'm sorry I stopped coming as often as I used to, school started taking up a lot of my time, and I just lost a lot of my energy.

GRACIE
You don't have to apologize, sweetie.

(MORE)

GRACIE (CONT'D)

I'm sure it has been a really tough time, but you know Holliston Library has your back! We always have.

ESHA

I know, thanks Ms. Gracie.

GRACIE

I am just happy to see you!

Esha and Gracie hug.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA

Esha, Brittany, and Ava sit at their lunch table.

AVA

Today is the day! Are you nervous?

ESHA

No shit I'm nervous. I feel like the fate of my future will be decided in the next couple of hours.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Divya and Esha are drinking chai at the table.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Are you coming to the library today?

ESHA

Not today, it's Ivy day.

DIVYA

Aw good luck, betu. You can do it.

ESHA

Thank you, Mummi.

DIVYA

Our little champion.

Divya grabs Esha's cheeks.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
(In Hindi)
We will celebrate when everyone is
home.

Divya heads out to her ESL class.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - EVENING

Esha is anxiously checking the time, it's almost 7pm. Her phone buzzes, it's a text from Rohit.

"Good luck today! No matter what happens you are still amazing ok." Esha smiles and quickly puts her phone away.

She is constantly refreshing her inbox until she sees the emails.

"Your application portal has been updated."

Esha opens the emails and opens the seven portal links. One by one she checks the update.

"After careful consideration, we regret to inform you..."

Next tab.

"The Committee on Admission has completed its meetings, and I am sorry to inform you..."

Next tab.

"The Admission Committee has completed its evaluation of this year's candidates and I am genuinely sorry..."

Esha crumbles. She slams her computer shut. Her phone buzzes, and it's a text from Ava.

"Any update??"

She ignores these texts.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha picks up her spelling bee trophy. She throws it in the trash and leaves her apartment.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Divya walks into the kitchen and sees the massive trophy in the trashcan. Her eyes widen.

DIVYA

Esha!

She runs to her room and finds it empty.

DIVYA (CONT'D)

Esha!

Divya frantically takes her phone out and texts Esha.

EXT. CEDAR HILLS PARK - CONTINUOUS

Esha is sitting on the swings crying. Her phone buzzes, it's a text from her mom.

"Where are you"

Esha turns her phone off and continues to swing slowly as tears continue to stream down her face.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Divya calls Esha, and it goes straight to voicemail. Divya starts crying and calls Raj.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

I can't find Esha anywhere. She isn't responding to my calls or texts.

RAJ (FILTERED)

(In Hindi)

Slow down what happened.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Esha is gone. Please come home.

RAJ (FILTERED)

(In Hindi)

Ok, on my way.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Raj and Divya are pacing around the table, which has a celebratory cake on it.

RAJ

(In Hindi)

Where is she??

DIVYA
 (In Hindi)
 I don't know!

RAJ
 (In Hindi)
 You saw her last! Why is the trophy
 in the trash? What happened?

DIVYA
 (In Hindi)
 I went to class and came back and
 she was gone.

RAJ
 (In Hindi)
 Our calls are going straight to
 voicemail. What do we do?

DIVYA
 (In Hindi)
 Maybe Ajay knows.

Raj takes a second to think about this.

RAJ
 (In Hindi)
 No, we aren't doing that. Just
 wait. That is all we can do. She
 can be anywhere.

Raj and Divya slump down onto chairs. Raj's head is in his hands as Divya softly cries next to him.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Esha walks into the apartment at 3:18am. Her parents are sitting barely awake at the table. Esha's eyes are all puffy, she makes eye contact with her parents and heads straight to her room, and closes her door.

RAJ
 (In Hindi)
 She's back I can go to bed. We will
 deal with this tomorrow.

Divya shuffles towards Esha's room. She knocks on her door. Esha doesn't respond.

DIVYA
 Beta...

Still no response. Divya places her hand on the door.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
 (In Hindi)
 Esha... Beta... Is everything ok?

No response.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
 (In Hindi)
 Esha we are here for you. You know
 that right. No matter what.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha is balled up on her bed still crying, shaking her head.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Divya knocks on her door. No response. She opens the door to find her Esha gone.

Her phone buzzes, it's a text from Esha.

"Already left to school. Don't worry."

Divya exhales, letting go of the tension she was holding on to.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Students pack into the cafeteria. Ava and Brittany drop their mouths when they see Esha. Esha sees kids wearing college merch of schools they got into, causing tears to well up.

AVA
 Esha? In school before 8am?
 Brittany pinch me, I must be
 dreaming.

ESHA
 I don't believe it either.

Brittany and Ava give Esha a massive hug.

BRITTANY
 It's ok. You know that it doesn't
 define you right.

ESHA
 Try telling my parents that.

AVA

It doesn't matter what they think.

ESHA

You guys don't get it. I have no idea how to face them about this. They call me their little champion, how can I be their little champion if I can't even get into Cornell?

Ava and Brittany look at each other.

BRITTANY

You got into really good schools Esha, what about Smith?

ESHA

I don't want to go to school with a bunch of lesbians, are you kidding me. I'd rather go to a state school.

Ava laughs.

AVA

She has a point.

BRITTANY

Hey there, what's wrong with lesbians?

ESHA

Nothing, I just want some dick.

BRITTANY

You know what, fair enough.

The bell beeps.

AVA

Just get through class. We will see you at lunch ok.

Esha gives them both one more hug.

ESHA

Thanks guys.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - SCIENCE CLASSROOM - MORNING

Esha walks into class and takes a seat. Ms. Woodland does a double-take.

MS. WOODLAND
Is that Esha Singh I see? On-time?
Did God answer my prayers?

ESHA
Very funny, Ms. Woodland.

MS. WOODLAND
It's good to have you here.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Esha pulls her phone out and texts Rohit.

"Look's like I won't be joining you at Harvard next year. :("

Immediately her phone starts ringing.

ESHA
Hello?

ROHIT (FILTERED)
How are you feeling?

ESHA
I'm feeling fine, just disappointed
in myself.

ROHIT (FILTERED)
Understandable, but getting into an
Ivy League school isn't end all be
all. We talked about this remember,
it doesn't define you.

Esha's voice wavers.

ESHA
I... I don't know how to tell my
parents. I don't think it will go
over well. I can't face them.

ROHIT (FILTERED)
I know it's going to be hard. They
are going to take a while to
understand. They always do.

ESHA
I don't know if I have it in me to
deal with it all.

ROHIT (FILTERED)
Esha, you 100% do. You have always had it in you. You just have to find it.

ESHA
Rohit... You... You don't think any less of me right?

ROHIT (FILTERED)
No why would I think that?

ESHA
Because of all this.

ROHIT (FILTERED)
Esha this doesn't define you. Also, it's such a crapshoot, like you can't beat yourself up over this.

ESHA
Thank you, Rohit. I still don't know why you like me but thank you.

ROHIT (FILTERED)
Just look in the mirror and you'll realize why I do.

ESHA
Shut up. You're silly. Ok, I have to go talk to my parents. Wish me luck.

ROHIT (FILTERED)
You got this!

Esha ends the call.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Esha takes a seat at the table, with the rest of her family.

ESHA
I'm sure you know that I didn't get into any of the schools that you wanted, based on yesterday.

RAJ
Yes... Esha... What am I going to say to people?

ESHA
Why does that matter?

RAJ

We sacrificed so much for you, and you can't even get into Cornell? What does that show?

ESHA

Dad! I tried! It just didn't work out, and I have other options, what about Wellesley. It's nearby, Hillary Clinton went to it. Or Northeastern? Boston College?

RAJ

No one knows what Wellesley is Esha. And Hillary Clinton didn't even win, so what does that say. I can't believe that both our children are such failures.

ESHA

Why don't you say the same to yourself? You haven't gotten promoted in how long? You're telling me to try harder. I am!

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

Esha! Enough!

ESHA

You're defending him? What happened to being here for us, no matter what. That's such bullshit. You to, spending over ten years here and can't even speak a sentence in English.

RAJ

Esha! Don't speak to your mother that way.

ESHA

Why don't you guys try to see it from our side? We are trying! Ajay did everything you asked him to do, he's at Columbia and you still don't talk to him, why because HE LIKES GUYS?

RAJ

This isn't about him. Why do you always have to bring him up?

ESHA

Because he is my brother? And I miss him, and he is still a part of this family.

RAJ

You're the only person who misses him.

Esha looks at Divya.

ESHA

Do you agree with him? You like all this?

Esha hastily gets out of her chair, with food still left on her plate, and walks back to her room.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - LATER

Esha texts Ajay.

"I fucking hate them."

INT. DORM PARTY - CONTINUOUS

Ajay sees the message, his eyes widen and he steps out and gives Esha a call.

AJAY

Is everything ok?

Ajay is seen nodding as Esha goes on and on about their dining room conversation, and how she feels so bad.

AJAY (CONT'D)

Esha, they can be very challenging. Just wait until you are out, and it will get better. You are strong. Just hold on for a little longer Esha.

INT. ESHA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Esha cries into the phone.

ESHA

I'm trying, but they make it so difficult bhaiya, how did you do it?

AJAY (FILTERED)

It wasn't easy. There were some very dark moments, Esha, but I promise it gets better. I am here for you. You are so close, Esha. Focus on the fun stuff for the next couple of months, prom, hanging out with your friends, graduation, and whatever summer plans you have. One day at a time. You got this ok.

ESHA

You're right, I got this. I'll be ok.

AJAY (FILTERED)

Hell yeah you will be. You're not a champion, you're a fucking phoenix who will rise again after being shot down. That is the most beautiful and best part, but it's gonna take a lot out of you. So just text me whenever you need it ok.

ESHA

Thank you, bhaiya.

Esha ends the call and stares at her black phone screen.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA

Esha, Ava, and Brittany sit around their table.

AVA

How did the talk with your parents go?

ESHA

Honestly not good. My dad was very upset with me.

BRITTANY

Fuck that. College is not end all be all. He needs to get over himself.

ESHA

He can't though. He cares more about what other people think and how he is perceived rather than the well-being of his kids.

AVA

It's not like Wellesley is a bad school.

ESHA

I know! It's just that the Indian community can be really judgmental, and I don't want my parents to pay for my actions like they are doing right now. Everyone is going to think they didn't do a good job raising me because I didn't end up somewhere great.

AVA

Bro fuck that mentality.

ESHA

Ava, you don't get it. I can't go against a 1600-year-old culture. It is ingrained in them, it's like in their genes.

BRITTANY

Then why isn't it in your genes?

Esha takes a second.

ESHA

Growing up here really is really different, you guys. They aren't used to this world, and they are trying, it's just really hard for them to rewrite all that they know. I just wish that my dad would try to see it from our side. My mom is trying, you know she texted Ajay the other day.

AVA

Really? How long has it been?

ESHA

Almost three years.

BRITTANY

See there are signs of improvement.

ESHA

I know that's what he said. It's just not easy.

AVA

No more thinking about this. This is our senior year and we need to make the most out of it! We only have a couple months left.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Mr. Edwards hands out a quiz.

MR. EDWARDS

We have a short quiz today, reviewing what we went over in the past couple of classes. You have the next thirty minutes.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The Singh family quietly eats dinner at the table. Raj's phone rings. Raj answers.

RAJ

How are you doing man?

Beat.

RAJ (CONT'D)

That's so good to hear.

Beat.

RAJ (CONT'D)

Esha? She is still deciding between some schools, she wants the liberal arts education you know.

Esha shakes her head and continues eating silently.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CALC CLASSROOM

Mr. Edwards hands the quizzes back to the students. Esha sees her grade, 92. She smiles.

EXT. WELLESLEY COLLEGE - MORNING

Esha arrives on campus for admitted student's day. She walks around taking in the beautiful buildings. She walks into the welcome center and checks in, SONIA, 20 is sitting at the desk.

SONIA

Hello! Nice to meet you! My name is Sonia. Can I get your name to check you in?

ESHA

Esha Singh.

Sonia checks her in.

SONIA

Can I ask a weird question?

ESHA

Yes?

SONIA

Did you happen to win the spelling bee or am I mixing that up with someone else?

Esha laughs.

ESHA

Yes that was me! How do you know?

SONIA

My brother also did a lot of spelling bees growing up, and I am pretty sure we were at the one you won. You beat him.

Esha chuckles.

ESHA

2011?

SONIA

Yup.

ESHA

I am very surprised you remember me.

SONIA

I have a pretty strong memory. Welcome to Wellesley, we are so excited to have you!

ESHA

Thank you Sonia!

SONIA

Wellesley would be really lucky if you chose to come here. It's a great school and you seem like a really cool person.

ESHA

Thank you, that means a lot.

Esha takes her welcome bag and looks at the itinerary.

MONTAGE

Esha walks into a classroom and sits in a class, looking around in amazement. She goes to the dining hall and eats food. She talks to STUDENTS.

INT. WELLESLEY BOOKSTORE - LATER

Esha walks into the book store and looks around. She walks up and buys a hat, smiling as she puts it on.

INT. LIBRARY - CHILDREN'S SECTION - EVENING

Esha walks up to Gracie, with a box of cookies.

ESHA

Hey Ms. Gracie!

GRACIE

Hello Esha! How are you?

ESHA

I'm doing well. I just wanted to stop by and give you a little update on what's been going on.

GRACIE

I am so excited to hear!

ESHA

I'm going to go to Wellesley next fall!

GRACIE

Esha! That's amazing, and close by!

ESHA

Yeah I figured you would be happy about that, I can still stop by and say hi.

GRACIE

I would love that. I'm so proud of you. You are going to do so well there. It's an amazing place.

ESHA

Yeah I went to the admitted students and I loved it! The campus is so beautiful and the students were so kind and open. I am very excited to go.

GRACIE

Aw that's great. I'm really happy for you, Esha.

ESHA

Thank you, Ms. Gracie, thank you, for all your help throughout the years.

Gracie gives Esha a big hug.

GRACIE

I can't wait to see your journey unfold.

INT. HOLLISTON HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - AFTERNOON

Esha, Ava and Brittany eat their lunch.

ESHA

Guys... My period still isn't here.

AVA

What??

ESHA

It's been like two months.

AVA

Holy shit. We need to get you a pregnancy test.

BRITTANY

What a straight problem to have. Sucks to suck, LITERALLY.

Brittany laughs.

AVA

Now's not the time for jokes. We need to do something.

BRITTANY
Ok then get up. We are cutting and getting a test.

ESHA
Right now?

BRITTANY
Right now.

The girls get up and leave the cafeteria.

INT. AVA'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ava drives down the streets and pulls into the first Walgreens.

ESHA
My mom monitors my purchases. What if she finds out what this is?

BRITTANY
I'll go buy it.

Brittany leaves the car and goes inside Walgreens.

INT. AVA'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Brittany is back with a pregnancy test.

BRITTANY
They said they don't have any bathroom.

AVA
There was a McDonald's a block away. Let's go there.

INT. MCDONALD'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The girls are waiting for the test result.

ESHA
Thank you, guys for being here.

AVA
Of course, we always have your back.

Brittany's phone timer goes off.

BRITTANY
Ok time's up. What does it say?

ESHA
It says its negative.

BRITTANY
You are in the clear!

ESHA
What if it is a false negative?

AVA
Do you want to do another one?

ESHA
Should I?

BRITTANY
You are fine. Honestly, it is probably a stress thing. You have been so on edge the past couple months that it has been messing with your hormones.

ESHA
That would make sense, but what if it isn't that.

BRITTANY
Then I'm excited to be an aunt!

Ava punches Brittany's arm.

AVA
Hey, not now.

Ava turns to Esha.

AVA (CONT'D)
It's going to be ok. Don't worry. The test says negative. We should believe it.

ESHA
You're right. I can't keep worrying.

BRITTANY
Atta girl. Let's celebrate with some fries!

The girls walk out of the bathroom.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Esha walks into the living room with graduation tickets in her hand.

ESHA

I have three graduation tickets for us.

RAJ

Esha. No. We aren't doing this. We only need two.

ESHA

Yes we are. He is coming.

RAJ

If he is going, I'm not going to go. I do not want to be seen with him.

ESHA

Fine don't come to your daughter's graduation. I'd rather him there than you anyway.

Divya stays silent.

ESHA (CONT'D)

Mom are you going to come.

Raj looks at Divya. Divya looks at both of them.

DIVYA

I will go.

Esha is taken back.

RAJ

Really?

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

He is my son, and I am not going to miss my daughter's graduation.

Divya takes one ticket.

INT. RAJ'S WORK - AFTERNOON

Raj works at his desk. Chad walks up to him.

CHAD

Hey I have a question.

RAJ

Yes?

CHAD

I was going over these reports and don't get this figure. Where did it come from?

Raj looks over the reports.

RAJ

This is from a project we did a couple years ago. Every so often we will get some revenue from it, but it's so obscure.

CHAD

Oh I see. What was the project about?

RAJ

We invested in a small company that creates this very niche, yet expensive product.

CHAD

What did this product do?

RAJ

It was used by doctors to help with intestine surgery. Recently they updated the product so you might be seeing them more often.

CHAD

Oh wow, that's fascinating. My mom might find this interesting.

RAJ

Why?

CHAD

She's a doctor and loves keeping up with all the new advancements. She really wanted me to become a doctor, but I didn't do too well in school.

RAJ

Really? But you're here.

CHAD

Yeah, it took me a while to find my footing. I dropped out of college, moved around, and eventually went back to community college. I did some schooling, kept working and got here. Life can be hard you know, but you get into the rhythm eventually.

RAJ

Oh wow. How did your parents feel about all this.

CHAD

Oh they weren't big fans at all. We fought a lot growing up. I actually stopped talking to them for a while.

RAJ

Really?

CHAD

Yeah when I dropped out, they did not take that well, and I just couldn't handle them. So I moved out, and did stuff on my own. Eventually we found our way back to each other when my dad died.

RAJ

I'm sorry.

CHAD

It's all good. Thank you for your condolences. I regret not talking to him, and my mom tells me he always wished he reached out as well. Just never got around to it...

RAJ

Chad...

CHAD

Yeah wild story right, but we live and we learn. Anyways thanks for your help. I'll look into this company.

Chad leaves. Raj sits there pondering.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - EARLY EVENING

Robed seniors cover the fields, excited to end this chapter of their lives. Esha is standing with her Ava and Brittany taking pictures.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD PARKING LOT - SAME

Ajay gets out of his uber.

AJAY

Thank you! Have a great day!

Ajay looks around him. Divya spots him from her car. She gets up and makes her way over to him.

DIVYA

Beta?

Ajay turns around and faces his mother.

AJAY

(In Hindi)

Mummi! How are you?

Divya has tears in her eyes and gives Ajay a big hug.

DIVYA

(in Hindi)

Please forgive me Ajay. This is all very new for me, I am trying, I just need some time and your patience.

AJAY

(in Hindi)

Of course mummi. I know it is a very different world.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

I met a gay man in my ESL class, and I talked to him about you.

AJAY

(In Hindi)

Aw mummi.

DIVYA

(In Hindi)

He helped me understand. I am sorry I wasn't there for you.

AJAY
 (In Hindi)
 It's ok mummi. You are here now.
 That is all that matters... Where
 is -

DIVYA
 (In Hindi)
 He didn't come.

Ajay's face falls.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
 (In Hindi)
 He will come around, he will just
 need more time. I will talk to him
 ok.

AJAY
 (In Hindi)
 Thank you mummi.

DIVYA
 (In Hindi)
 Let's go take our seats.

Ajay and Divya head to the bleachers and take a seat.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - CONTINUOUS

The graduates walk down with Pomp and Circumstance being played by the band. Esha looks around and spots her mom and Ajay sitting on the bleachers. A huge smile erupts across her face. The students take their seats.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

The principal announces names as students walk across the stage.

PRINCIPAL
 E-Sha Singh

Esha shakes her head and walks up onto the stage. She whispers something into the principal's ear.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)
 Apologies Esha Singh.

Esha walks across the stage as Ajay and Divya cheer for her.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - LATER

Esha runs up to Ajay and tackles him with a big hug.

ESHA
I've missed you so much bhaiya.

AJAY
I missed you too!

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Good job, betu. That was a
wonderful ceremony.

AJAY
Let's get a picture!

Esha waves Ava over.

ESHA
Ava can you take a picture of all
of us.

Esha hands Ava her phone and she takes a couple photos.

INT. WELLESLEY COLLEGE DORM - AFTERNOON

Esha, Raj, and Divya move-in boxes to Esha's dorm room, where one half is already decorated.

RAJ
At least this is close by.

DIVYA
(In Hindi)
Shush. Esha. This is a great school
and we are so proud of you.

Raj looks around and sees a rainbow flag, and rolls his eyes.

DIVYA (CONT'D)
(In Hindi)
You know you can learn about them.
There is nothing wrong with them.

Raj stays silent.

RAJ
That is everything. We are going to
head back to our hotel room, and
will see you tomorrow morning?

ESHA

Ok. Thank you for helping me move in.

DIVYA

Stay safe betu, and have a fun night.

ESHA

Thank you, mummi.

Esha hugs her mother goodbye. Raj pats her on the back and leaves.

Esha calls Ajay.

ESHA (CONT'D)

I am all moved in!

AJAY (FILTERED)

Yay! That's so exciting! Are you ready for the next chapter of your life?

ESHA

You know it! Thank you, bhaiya, for all your help.

AJAY (FILTERED)

Esha, that was all you. You are such a strong person, you got through all that and I am so excited for the next couple of years. College is a blast. Make the most out of it, because you aren't going to get these years back.

ESHA

I will. Please come up and visit!

AJAY (FILTERED)

100%! You should come down to the city! I can take you out and you can meet Nick.

ESHA

Nick?? How long has this been going on?

AJAY (FILTERED)

A couple months... maybe almost a year...

ESHA

And I find out about this now??

AJAY (FILTERED)

Just come down and meet him, he's great.

ESHA

I'm looking forward to it, bhaiya.
Talk to you soon.

AJAY (FILTERED)

Bye!

Esha ends the call and looks around her dorm room taking it in. On her desk is a photo frame with a picture of Ajay, Divya, and her, from graduation.

EXT. WELLESLEY COLLEGE DORM - CONTINUOUS

Raj and Divya are walking out towards their car. Raj types on his phone, "How to talk to gay son."

INT. WELLESLEY COLLEGE DORM - LATER

Esha jumps onto her bed and texts Rohit.

"Looks like I'm not too far from you."

Rohit texts back: "I know it's so exciting! Can't wait to see you soon."

Esha lays down on her bed and smiles.

FADE OUT.