

Brown and Out

by

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FADE IN:

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

The face of ESHAN, a twentysomething Indian-American, fills the screen. Eshan appears to be extremely panicked.

ESHAN
IF WE LEAVE NOW, WE'RE ALL GOING
TO DIE!

A beat. Eshan gains composure and looks downward. We pull back to see that Eshan is reading from a script. He's an actor on his way to an audition. Alone in the elevator, he's reciting lines out loud. Eshan takes a mental pause and tries another reading.

ESHAN (CONT'D)
(alternate delivery)
If we leave now, we're all going
to die!

The elevator stops and the door opens. Eshan clears his throat and walks out. He approaches the RECEPTIONIST with confident ease.

ESHAN
Hey, good morning! I'm Eshan Bay,
going to be reading for the part
of Vikram.

RECEPTIONIST
Sure! I just need you to sign in
here, and good luck! (hands him a
clipboard)

Eshan checks in and hands the clipboard back to the receptionist. He turns to scan the waiting room. It's nearly empty, but he spies a cute girl, CHARLOTTE, reading a script and casually sits down a few seats away from her. Eshan pretends to dig into his script, sneaking glances at the girl. He grabs an opening to talk to her.

ESHAN
Pretty good script, huh?

CHARLOTTE

Oh, yeah! Absolutely riveting.

A beat. The two burst out laughing.

CHARLOTTE

It's such a piece of shit...

ESHAN

I could barely make it to the end.

CHARLOTTE

Thank god I didn't have to. I get stabbed by the mutant pygmy like 60 pages in.

ESHAN

Yeah, can you believe the Indian guy outlives a white girl?

CHARLOTTE

What is the world coming to...

ESHAN

You know, maybe we shouldn't dump on this script. It's a landmark document in minority progression.

CHARLOTTE

Fuckin' Emancipation Proclamation right here.

ESHAN

"I have a dream ... that someday white girls will be brutally murdered on film before the token minority." (shifts to a seat closer to a laughing CHARLOTTE, handshake ready). I'm Eshan, by the way.

CHARLOTTE

(shakes his hand)

Charlotte. Nice to meet you.

ESHAN

Likewise. So... I hope this doesn't offend you, but "Charlotte's Web" is like my favorite book of all time.

CHARLOTTE

That's not offensive at all. It's a damn good book.

ESHAN

Well good. Also, I should mention, my aunt lives in Charlotte. And Good Charlotte was totally my favorite band in middle school.

CHARLOTTE

Hmmm. I always preferred Charlotte Church.

ESHAN

She's OK. But you know who's really great, that Charlotte Moss.

CHARLOTTE

Huh, I've never heard of her. What's she been in?

ESHAN

I have no idea, actually. You look like a "Moss," so I took a shot in the dark that it was your last name.

CHARLOTTE

Not quite. Cute try, though. Do I really look like a "Moss"?

ESHAN

In a sense. My train of thought was, you're beautiful, models are

beautiful, Kate Moss is a model,
boom, "Moss".

Charlotte laughs. She finds all this blatant flirtation
very charming.

ESHAN (CONT'D)

Anyways, who are you reading for?
Wait, let me guess. You said
death by mutant pygmy, right?
Must be trying out for Gina ...
(flips to front of script with
cast descriptions) "A charming,
attractive, strawberry-blonde
Rachel-McAdams type."

Eshan scans Charlotte, who clearly isn't
strawberry-blonde.

ESHAN

Well, two out of three ain't bad.

CHARLOTTE

(rolls eyes)
It's called hair dye.

ESHAN

Oh I know. I'm still waiting on
the charming.

CHARLOTTE

Wow, does being a dick to
strangers always work out for
you?

ESHAN

Nah, only about 80% of the time.

CHARLOTTE

(laughs)
Anyways, (she scans Eshan) you
must be here for ... Kyle, the
"blue-eyed, sexy, Adonis-like
male lead". Wait, that can't be
right. I meant to say Vikram, the

"geeky, mild, Indian best friend".

ESHAN

Oof. Brutal, but I deserved that. Hey, they do sell skin-whitening cream in India though! Maybe I should come back and read for ...

Eshan's flirtation is cut off by the figure that has appeared in the waiting room entrance. Eshan slumps in his chair, resigned.

ESHAN

Fuck me. Not again.

CHARLOTTE

What's wrong?

ESHAN

Him. (indicates to entrance).

The camera spins and does an exaggerated zoom onto KRIS, a twentysomething up-and-coming Indian actor. Kris smiles and nods towards Eshan.

ESHAN (CONT'D)

Kris Patel. My nemesis. The Joker to my Batman. Iago to my Othello.

CHARLOTTE

Team Rocket to your Ash Ketchum?

ESHAN

Yeah, exactly! (does a double take, suspends despondency) That was amazing, by the way (resumes despondency). That son of a bitch has booked every single part I've been up for in the past year. There was the 7-Eleven clerk...

FLASHBACK - INT. AUDITION ROOM

Eshan stands alone with a script in hand.

ESHAN
(stereotypically Indian)
No public restrooms!

END FLASHBACK

ESHAN (CONT'D)
Clumsy terrorist #2...

FLASHBACK - INT. AUDITION ROOM

(Repeat previous shot)

ESHAN
(stereotypically Arab)
Press the red button to arm the
bomb, and the green button
disarms to disarm. Oh wait, it's
the...

END FLASHBACK

ESHAN (CONT'D)
Oversexed Dothraki warrior...

FLASHBACK - INT. AUDITION ROOM

(Repeat shot)

ESHAN
(Speaks Dothraki)
Horses aren't the only things I'm
good at riding, Khaleesi.

END FLASHBACK

ESHAN (CONT'D)
And gay Indian best friend...

FLASHBACK - INT. AUDITION ROOM

(Repeat frame)

ESHAN
(stereotypically flamboyant)
I'd like to meet him in a gas

station bathroom...

END FLASHBACK

ESHAN

I've seen him act. He's a total scrub! I don't know what I'm doing wrong. What does he have that I don't?

CHARLOTTE

(teasing)

You mean besides that square jaw, chiseled body, dreamy eyes, supernova smile...

ESHAN

How is this helping?

CHARLOTTE

Look, quit being a sissy! Everyone goes through funks. Struggling is part of the process.

ESHAN

That's what I keep telling myself.

Kris has finished checking in and approaches where Eshan and Charlotte are sitting, with the swagger of a budding superstar.

KRIS

Eshan Bay! Good to see ya buddy.

ESHAN

Hey Kris.

KRIS

Seriously, great to see you. What is it, four in a row now? I swear you're my good luck charm, man. Hey, let me rub your belly.

ESHAN

Nah man...

KRIS

C'mon! Let me rub your belly for good luck.

Kris attempts to rub Eshan's belly, who puts up a fight.

ESHAN

Seriously dude, quit it.

KRIS

Haha just messin' around bro.

Kris finally halts his tomfoolery as he has shifted his attention to Charlotte, who is disgusted by his antics.

KRIS

Hey, I'm Kris, by the way. (holds out hand to Charlotte)

CHARLOTTE

(rejects it flatly) Charlotte.

Undeterred, Kris plops down in the seat between Eshan and Charlotte.

KRIS

You're wondering, where you recognize me from, right? I see it in your eyes ... Well, you might have heard of a little show called "*Game of Thrones*" ...

CHARLOTTE

I only listen to the audiobooks.

KRIS

Ok, I see, I see. Well, that's more credits than this guy can speak for, am I right Eshan?

Kris tussles Eshan's hair.

CHARLOTTE

We were actually in the middle of something...

KRIS

Oh my bad, my bad!

Kris gets up and walks to another seat, pointing finger guns.

KRIS (CONT'D)

Good luck to you guys. Charlotte, hope to see you around.

Kris takes a seat across the room. Eshan looks more upset than ever.

CHARLOTTE

Nice friend you've got...

ESHAN

Friend? I had one class with the guy a couple years ago and I haven't been able to shake him since.

Charlotte senses Eshan's gloom.

CHARLOTTE

Do you really need me to give you a motivational speech?

ESHAN

I think I would like that...

CHARLOTTE

Alright, chin up. Look at me.
(Eshan looks at her). Smile.
(Eshan forces a smile). Get in the zone, walk in there, kill it, and hey, if you do well, I'll let you buy me dinner tonight. Is that enough motivation?

ESHAN

(beaming) Plenty.

The audition room door opens and the CASTING DIRECTOR
peeks out.

CASTING DIRECTOR
(struggling to pronounce)
Eh...esh..

ESHAN
Eshan. I'm here.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Right, sorry. You'll be reading
with Charlotte.

ESHAN
(turns to Charlotte, grinning)
Let's do it.

Eshan rises to his feet, revitalized and self-assured. As
he and Charlotte walk towards the room, he spies Kris
(in slow motion) pantomiming a blow-job in a taunting
manner. The image burns in his mind. Eshan and Charlotte
enter the audition and the door shuts behind them.

A SUBTITLE appears:

"15 minutes later."

The door opens. Eshan and Charlotte exit. Eshan is eager
for an assessment of his performance.

ESHAN
Well??

CHARLOTTE
I like Thai food.

Eshan is smitten.

ESHAN
You know, I don't normally do
this but ... I'm going to expand my
search to two dollars signs on

Yelp tonight. Just for you.

CHARLOTTE

I'm the luckiest girl in the world.

Eshan puts his arm out for Charlotte. She takes it and they walk towards the exit, where Kris is sitting.

ESHAN

Kris, they asked me to send you in.

Kris appears to be a bit perturbed by Charlotte's rejection. His cockiness is diminished. Eshan winks at him and walks out with Charlotte.

ESHAN

I'm glad you thought I did well. I had to read my scene with this chick and she was *really* dragging me down.

Charlotte gives Eshan a blank stare. She's not having it.

ESHAN

Three dollar signs? Three dollar signs.

INT. BAR, NIGHT

About a week has passed. Eshan and Charlotte have been on a few dates now. Charlotte was cast in the film, and they are out celebrating. Eshan raises his glass for a toast.

ESHAN

To Charlotte. May your death scene be as gruesome and bloody as you are beautiful.

CHARLOTTE

(laughs)

Cheers.

Glasses are clinked. A beat. Eshan is hunched over and

looks perturbed. Charlotte senses tension in the air.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Are you sure you're OK?

ESHAN

Yes. I'm fine, I promise. You only heard back a few days ago! I'm not worried about it.

CHARLOTTE

You're a good actor, but you're not *that* good.

ESHAN

Is it that obvious?

CHARLOTTE

Uh-huh.

ESHAN

I mean, yeah. I'm really worried. I'm trying to be happy for you, but I honestly don't know what I'm going to do if I don't get this part.

CHARLOTTE

But you *will*! There was magic in that audition room. And look, worst case scenario, you don't get it and you avoid having this piece of shit as a permanent stain on your IMDB profile. You want to be like Al Pacino, right? He didn't start making shitty movies until the *end* of his career.

ESHAN

They don't have IMDB profiles for people who've only done Off-Off-Broadway plays. I'm already 25 and have absolutely nothing going on.

CHARLOTTE

You're right. You're definitely not on a date with a pretty girl.

ESHAN

I didn't mean it like that...

CHARLOTTE

Well, you're right about it not going on for much longer if you keep up this sad-sack Charlie Brown schtick.

ESHAN

That's not a bad analogy. I'm Charlie Brown, Kris is Lucy, and he keeps pulling the damn football away.

Charlotte notices a group of people walking into the bar. Among them is Kris.

CHARLOTTE

Speak of the Lucy, and he shall appear...

Eshan turns around to see Kris, who is brimming with enthusiasm and a little tipsy.

ESHAN

This fuckin' guy...

Kris sees Eshan and Charlotte and proceeds to merrily approach them.

KRIS

What up what up what up! Eshan and Charlotte, the Beast and the Harlot!

Kris plops down next to Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

What do you think that word

means?

KRIS

(unsure)

Harlot? Beau... beautiful...
beautiful princess.

ESHAN

Spot on! Hey, do you mind if I
use that in a pickup line
sometime?

KRIS

Ahhh I dunno man, don't want you
stepping on my toes. Should've
thought of it first!

ESHAN

Man, you gotta teach me your
ways!

KRIS

You know it's all about being in
the moment, going with your gut.
I see a pretty girl I say the
first thing that comes in my
head. Charlotte. Harlot. Rhymes.
You gotta train yourself, master
the craft. My trick? I've been
freestyling a lot. You guys want
to hear some? Eshan, drop a beat.

ESHAN

I'm good.

KRIS

That's cool, I got some dope
beats on my phone.

Kris pulls out his phone and plays a generic hip-hop
beat.

KRIS

(ad lib freestyle mocking Eshan)
His name is Eshan / dick size of
a prawn / I seen this boy's

acting / makes me wanna yawn /
anytime a chick sees his dick /
she's Gone, baby gone.

CHARLOTTE
(cuts him off)
Aaand we're good.

ESHAN
There sure was a lot of talk
about my dick.

KRIS
I can't control what I say. My
mouth is merely a portal for the
words and ideas that flow through
my subconscious. I finally know
how Drake feels.

CHARLOTTE
Well, it's been an absolute
pleasure to see you again, thanks
for dropping by..

KRIS
For real for real, it's been
tight. Charlotte, I'll see you
soon on set. 5 a.m. calls yo,
early as FUCK!

CHARLOTTE
What are you talking about?

KRIS
Oh you didn't hear? I got the
part! You're lookin' at Vikram,
son. Eshan, sorry buddy. Better
luck next time.

Eshan looks like he's taken a sledgehammer to the gut.

ESHAN
That's cool man, congrats...

KRIS

Yeah you know, you know. Director said he loved my take on the material. Little Meisner, little method. Add it all up and BAM. Can't stop the rock.

ESHAN

(putting on a cheery face)
Wow, yeah. Back to the drawing board I guess.

KRIS

Aight peace out, lovebirds. Bout to do some shots with my boys!

Kris gets up and walks back to his crew of friends.

KRIS (CONT'D)

(in the tune of the LMFAO song)
Shots, shots, shots, shots shots!
Everybody!

Eshan is paralyzed with disappointment.

CHARLOTTE

I'm so sorry.

ESHAN

I feel sick.

CHARLOTTE

Like I said, don't sweat it. The movie is so ...

ESHAN

Bad, I know. It doesn't matter. Look, I really appreciate your support but... I think I'm going to take off.

CHARLOTTE

Alright, just give me a few seconds and we can...

ESHAN

Kinda want to be alone right now.
I'll see you.

Eshan grabs his coat and sulks out of the bar, leaving a concerned Charlotte behind.

EXT. STREETS OF NYC - NIGHT

Eshan stumbles onto the street in a spiral of manic frustration.

JUMP CUTS:

Eshan pulls out a packet of cigarettes. A bunch of them spill out onto the street.

Eshan takes out his lighter, struggles to spark a flame. He smashes the lighter against the wall.

Eshan ambles around shady streets in a daze.

He begins to hallucinate.

Hallucination #1: repeat Kris's blow job pantomime from the audition room.

Hallucination #2:
Charlotte has her arms draped around Kris.

CHARLOTTE

Sorry Eshan, he's just more
successful than you ... and he has
a bigger dick.

Hallucination #3:
Eshan is squatted on a dirty curb, dressed like a homeless person. He is approached by Kris, who is wearing a tuxedo and carrying an armful of awards.

KRIS

Hey buddy. Here you go - you need
this more than me.

Kris hands Eshan one of his many Oscars.

KRIS

Cash 4 Gold that shit or something.

The hallucinations end, and Eshan continues to wander the streets. He is approached by a BUM.

BUM
Hey man, got a cigarette?

Eshan completely snaps and begins screaming at him.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ESHAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Eshan wakes up screaming, sweating in his bed. He gets up and shakes himself off. Eshan spies something in his room and it causes him to storm out of his room, inspired.

Camera pans to his inspiration - a poster of "Taxi Driver".

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

*Scene is a reverse homage to the "Pulp Fiction" shot of Butch choosing through weapons at the redneck store.

A small revolver is seen behind a display case. PAWN STORE CLERK is leaning against the case.

ESHAN
Can I see that?

The clerk pulls the revolver out of the case and hands it to him. Eshan holds the revolver and plays around with it (fake shooting, etc.) Eshan spies a knife from the corner of his eye. Eshan drops the gun and picks up the knife, tinkering with it instead. Next, Eshan sees nunchunks on the wall and plays around with them. Finally, he sees a Nerf gun among other kids' toys and picks it up. This is the one.

INT. ESHAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

A shot of Kris's IMDB profile picture tacked on the wall. A Nerf gun bullet is shot onscreen and sticks to Kris's face.

Pull back to see Eshan holding the Nerf gun with action-hero swagger.

ESHAN

This brown is taking you down.

Charlotte is sitting impatiently on Eshan's bed.

CHARLOTTE

Alright, you hit the target. Can we start now?

A wider shot of the area surrounding Kris's picture. Darts are scattered across the ground and are stuck to the wall around the picture, missing badly. Eshan has been trying this for a while.

ESHAN

I've always wanted to do that. Thanks for indulging me. How was that catchphrase, by the way? It was either that or "I'm about to perform your Bris, Kris".

CHARLOTTE

It was ... good.

Eshan tosses the gun aside.

ESHAN

So, Charlotte. You must be wondering why I called you here today.

CHARLOTTE

It's a toss-up between demonstrating your nonexistent Nerf Gun skills and ... apologizing for abandoning me last night.

ESHAN

Well, yes. I'm very sorry about that. I was just in a really bad place.

CHARLOTTE

It's ok, I was just ...

ESHAN

*More importantly, I've finally cracked the solution! The solution to all my problems. For so long, I've been debased, defaced, castrated and forced to prance around like a Eunuch in the court of these casting despots. All in the name of what? A bit part in a crappy horror movie that all of fifteen people watch because they get drunk and click the wrong stream on Netflix? Not anymore. No more letting Kris Patel stamp out my soul like the ashes of a cigarette stub. No more slogging through the muck of third-rate parts with a glimmer of hope that someday, just someday I'll finally land a great performance. You see, last night I realized, the great performance is *never going to come*. Because it's up to me. *I have to to create it myself!* And honey, I'm about to show you my masterpiece. It's the lead role in what I like to call, "The Desolation of Kris Patel", colon, "A Movement in Three Parts".*

CHARLOTTE

Um...

ESHAN

Let me finish. We start with Phase One, which will be known as "Light Trolling". Here is where we shatter the facade of Kris's public persona ...

Charlotte has raised her hand in the air.

ESHAN

The floor is not open for questions.

Charlotte continues to raise her hand. Eshan stares her down. The two lock in a brief staring contest before Eshan relents.

ESHAN (CONT'D)

Alright fine! What is it?

CHARLOTTE

Do you realize that this all sounds ... completely insane?

ESHAN

Insane? You want to talk about insane? Insane is doing something over and over again and expecting a different result. Insane would be hustling at shit audition after shit audition only for Kris to smack his balls in my face anyways.

CHARLOTTE

Here's a crazy idea: Instead of "destroying Kris's life" or whatever the hell you're doing, why don't you spend that time on your acting? Honing your skills. Preparing your ass off for the next opportunity.

ESHAN

Charlotte, my dear, you have to understand that my destiny has been realized. I must destroy Kris if I'm ever to succeed as an actor. As the prophecy long ago foretold, "Neither can live while the other survives".

CHARLOTTE

You're not going to sway me by quoting Harry Potter. If you're really going down this road, I don't know if I can support you anymore. Just because Kris is a dick doesn't mean he deserves to have his life ruined.

ESHAN

So you're taking his side? I can't believe this!

CHARLOTTE

NO. There are no sides. This is all in your head!

ESHAN

Charlotte. I need to know. Are you with me or against me?

CHARLOTTE

Eshan... please.

ESHAN

There's no going back. With me?
Or against me?

Charlotte shakes her head and walks out of the bedroom.

ESHAN

Don't you get it? Neither can
live while the other survives!
THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE!

The frame freezes. A SUBTITLE appears:

"PHASE ONE: Light Trolling"

Fade to black. Another SUBTITLE appears:

"Eight Days Later..."

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - DAY

Kris is sprawled across his mattress, sleeping. Kris's

alarm goes off, waking him up. The first thing he does is check his phone - Kris has several missed calls, texts and voicemails left by JASON, his manager.

KRIS

What the ...

Kris calls Jason. A pissed-off Jason picks up very quickly.

KRIS

Hey, what's going on? Did someone die?

JASON

No, but your fucking career is about to be dead.

KRIS

What the hell are you talking about?

JASON

What the hell do you think I'm talking about? Your little meltdown on Twitter last night. Delete your account, for Christ's sake, before it gets worse.

KRIS

Jason, I don't even *have* a Twitter.

JASON

You're not "@frenchkris"? The account has your name and picture.

KRIS

It's not me! I swear to God. Somebody is just fucking with me.

JASON

And you're positive you weren't cracked out on cocaine or

anything last night.

KRIS

I mean I was, but that's besides the point. I don't have a Twitter!

JASON

Alright, alright, I believe you. I mean, this stuff is pretty extreme, even for you. But in my defense, "frenchkris" is totally something you would call yourself.

KRIS

Oh for sure! That's actually really clever.

JASON

And this is explains why you haven't been favoriting my tweets about my son being born.

KRIS

Yeah, whatever ... I need to take a look at this. I'll call you back.

Kris logs onto his laptop and does a search for "@frenchkris". He finds the profile and begins to read the tweets out loud.

KRIS

"Seriously where is Obama's birth certificate #Benghazi" ... "It's a sad day when an AMERICAN doesn't win Miss America" ... "I love shitting my pants!" ... Who comes up with this shit?

INT. ESHAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Eshan is sitting at his laptop. He's typing with a diabolical smile.

ESHAN

"George Clooney was the best
Batman of all time
#nodisrespectoChristianBale"

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kris is back on the phone with Jason.

KRIS

Yeah, it's me. Look, I don't know
what's going on. Somebody's just
trolling me. Can we call the
Twitter Police or whatever? Can
you just take care of it for me?
I gotta run to set. Ok, thanks.
Later.

Kris hangs up the phone.

EXT. KRIS'S BUILDING - LATER

Kris exits his apartment building in a relative hurry. He
notices flyers posted all around the entrance loudly
announcing a party. Kris picks up a flyer and begins to
read it out loud.

KRIS

"PARTY TONIGHT. KEG. SHOTS. LOUD
MUSIC. SPECIAL SURPRISES (drugs).
1304 Water Street, Apartment
#5E..." NO! No No No NO NO NO...

This is Kris's address. Kris rips the flyer off the wall
and crumples it up. He finds more on the building and
also takes them down. Kris runs down the stoop, only to
reveal that flyers for the "party" at his apartment have
posted along the entire street. Kris screams in despair
and begins to rip them all down.

The frame freezes. A SUBTITLE appears:

"PHASE TWO: Heavy Trolling"

INT. BAR - NEXT EVENING

Kris is sitting gloomily at a booth with an as-yet
unidentified companion.

KRIS

Thanks for meeting me, man. I can't believe this is happening to you too.

His companion is Eshan.

ESHAN

Yeah, Kevin told me that some guy set up a fake account for you too. Happened to me last week. Posted a bunch of insane bullshit.

KRIS

Do you think it's the same guy?

ESHAN

Has to be.

KRIS

You didn't get fucked with that fake party though, right?

ESHAN

Nah man, thank god. What even happened?

KRIS

I thought I took down all the flyers, but people were buzzing my apartment all night, trying to come up. I swear all of them were homeless. Slept like shit, got chewed out on set today.

ESHAN

Rough dude. Whoever's behind this is a total nutjob.

KRIS

I know right? We gotta nail this motherfucker. Who do you think it is? It's gotta be a brown actor right? That's the only thing we

have in common. Probably trying to sabotage us.

ESHAN

We can run through the list. There's not too many out there.

KRIS

Alright, let's do it. Dev Patel?

ESHAN

Dev Patel. The star of "Slumdog Millionaire" and "The Newsroom". You think he's trolling us. I hate to break it to you, but he's out of our league.

KRIS

Ok, you're right, never mind. What about Kal Penn?

ESHAN

What did I just say? We have to think smaller!

KRIS

Aziz Ansari?!?

ESHAN

Smaller in *fame*, not size. Hold up, let's get another round of drinks before we continue.

CUT TO:

Hours later. Eshan and Kris are still at the bar. Kris is nearly blackout drunk, Eshan is pretending to be.

KRIS

Alright, so we've narrowed it down to three suspects ... Abhishek Bachchan, Saif Ali Khan, and Akshay... Akshay... what was it?

ESHAN

Akshay Kumar.

KRIS

And you're sure these guys are around New York? I've never heard of any of them before.

ESHAN

Positive. I took classes with all of them at Tisch, and I've seen them at our auditions before.

KRIS

Sons of bitches! Well, that's some good shit. We'll continue our detective work tomorrow.

ESHAN

Look at us. A couple of *Encyclopedia Browns*.

KRIS

My god. That was the funniest thing I've ever heard. I could lean over and kiss you right now.

ESHAN

Please don't.

KRIS

You're a good man, Eshan. Nay! A great man. That's why I have to admit something. Don't hate me for saying this, but at first ... I thought it was you.

ESHAN

You thought who was who?

KRIS

I thought it was you! The motherfucker who's been messing with me!

ESHAN

You thought it was me?! I thought it was you!

KRIS

Balderdash! Why would I ever do that to you?

ESHAN

Because you're always fucking with me! Messing with my hair. Touching my belly. Rubbing in the fact that you're way more successful than me.

KRIS

Eshan! Eshan, Eshan, Eshan. Don't you get it? Don't you get why I fuck with you?

ESHAN

Please enlighten me.

KRIS

I'm scared of you, dawg. You're such a good fucking actor. Better than I'll ever be.

ESHAN

Get outta here.

KRIS

Seriously bro. I don't even know how I get these parts instead of you. I'm not even in the same league. Every part I get is a blessing, especially knowing that you're my competition.

Eshan is genuinely touched. The quest for vengeance takes a momentary pause.

KRIS (CONT'D)

But hey, I'm sure there's an actor out there doing dinner theater in Queens that's

technically better than DeNiro.
Sometimes you just don't get
lucky. So don't feel bad if
that's your destiny. We can't all
be movie stars.

The quest resumes.

ESHAN

It's getting late. Let's get one
more drink and call it a night.

Eshan calls the bartender over.

ESHAN (CONT'D)

Can I get a red wine? And Kris,
for you?

KRIS

Red wine?? Jesus, when did you
grow a vagina? I ought to take
all your man cards from you.

ESHAN

And a water.

The bartender pours the red wine and a water. Kris raises
his glass for a toast.

KRIS

Eshan - cheers to solving crimes.
Solving crimes and freestyling
rhymes. That should be our motto.

Kris and Eshan clink glasses and take a drink. Eshan
spills his wine all over Kris's shirt, making it look
like an accident.

ESHAN

Oh no! I'm so sorry dude.

KRIS

Shit! Goddammit. This is my
favorite shirt!

ESHAN

I'm so, so sorry. Hey let's get out of here so we can clean it up.

KRIS

Man, fuck red wine. Fuck Twitter. Fuck those brown motherfuckers, Smurf Ali Kong, and Harold Kumar or whatever the fuck their names are. And fuck this bar! Your gin TASTES LIKE WATER!

ESHAN

Alright, we need to leave.

EXT. KRIS'S APARTMENT BUILDING- NIGHT

Eshan brings Kris back to his apartment. Kris is barely able to walk.

KRIS

Thanks bro. Hey ... how'd you know where I live anyways?

ESHAN

You told me at the bar dude. How fucked up are you?

KRIS

Did I? Shit. I drank way too much. But dude, thanks for walking me back.

Eshan lingers for a few moments.

KRIS (CONT'D)

What, are you trying to come upstairs with me? You would, you gaylord. Come here.

Kris gives Eshan a bro-hug. During the hug, Eshan slips his hand into Kris's pocket and steals his cell phone.

ESHAN

I'll take a raincheck. Night,

Kris.

KRIS

Night, Eshan.

Kris stumbles to his building door and opens it after several attempts, all while brokenly repeating his freestyle about Eshan.

KRIS

His name is Eshan / dick like a
prawn / makes me gone / yawn baby
yawn

Kris swings the door open and enters. We see the door swing to a close, but at the very last second, a foot stops the door from closing shut.

INT. KRIS'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Kris is sprawled across his mattress, still wearing his wine stained-shirt from the night before. His alarm goes off and he gradually rises, hangover raging. Kris looks down and sees the stain on his shirt, which he was too drunk to remember.

KRIS

Fuck.

INT. KRIS'S LAUNDRY ROOM - LATER

Kris enters an empty laundry room with a modest set of machines, carrying a mesh sack with his laundry. He puts his clothes in the washer. Before leaving, he remembers the stained shirt he's still wearing, takes it off and throws it into the washer. Kris exits the room. As soon as he's gone, Eshan appears from behind a crevasse, glowering with menace.

The frame freezes. A SUBTITLE appears:

"PHASE THREE: The Desolation of Kris"

INT. KRIS'S LAUNDRY ROOM - LATER

Kris returns to the laundry room to put his clothes in the drier. He opens the washer he had put his clothes in. It's empty. Kris checks the other machines. They are also

empty. Kris loses his shit.

KRIS
Shit Shit Shit SHIT!

Kris begins to punch the machines in a rage of fury.

INT. ESHAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Eshan takes out Kris's phone and places it onto his desk. He tries turning it on - there's a four-digit passcode lock.

ESHAN
Dammit.

Eshan ponders for a moment before coming to a quick realization. The punches in the code.

ESHAN
6 - 9 - 6 - 9

The phone unlocks.

ESHAN
Your predictability has led to
your downfall, my friend.

Eshan scrolls through Kris's emails - an email titled "TMW Call Sheet - Day 3" catches his attention.

ESHAN
And here we go.

INT. JASON'S OFFICE - LATER

Kris bursts into Jason's office, on the warpath. He's wearing pajama pants and a battered, cutoff t-shirt.

KRIS
We have to talk.

JASON
What's the matter? And we've
talked about the dress code at my
office. It's smart casual.

KRIS
Clothes? You want to talk about
my clothes?

Kris begins to take off his shirt and pajama pants,
stripping to his underwear.

KRIS (CONT'D)
FUCK YOUR DRESS CODE.

He throws his pants at Jason.

KRIS (CONT'D)
I just had my all my clothes
stolen, I don't know where my
cell phone is, I was made to look
like a racist sociopath on the
Internet, and my apartment came
under assault by a bunch of winos
like it was motherfucking Helm's
Deep! And you want to talk about
your *dress code*?

JASON
OK, I need you to calm down. I
got your phone right here. Eshan
dropped it off a few hours ago.
He said you left it at the bar
last night.

Jason pulls Kris's phone out of a drawer and hands it to
him.

KRIS
How about that.

JASON
As for your other woes - let's
settle about them some other
time. Don't you have to be on set
today?

KRIS
Oh yeah, shit!

Kris rapidly scans through his emails on his phone. He finds an email with the subject: "TMW Call Sheet - Day 4".

KRIS (CONT'D)
1304 Tenth Street. 10 a.m. call.
I gotta go!

Kris runs out of the office. A beat. He runs back in and grabs his clothes from the ground.

KRIS (CONT'D)
Thanks Jason!

EXT. NYC STREETS - LATER

Kris arrives, out of breath at the presumed filming location. There's no semblance of a film set anywhere.

KRIS
1304 Tenth ... this should be it.

Kris does another scan. There's nobody in the area except for a bum. He takes out his phone and dials someone on the crew.

KRIS (CONT'D)
Drew ... yeah? I'm at the set,
where is everyone? Am I early?
What?? The call sheet said ... Hold
on.

In the middle of the phone conversation, Kris gets a better look at the bum. He is wearing a distinctive shirt with a large red wine stain.

KRIS (CONT'D)
Let me call you back.

Kris approaches the bum wearing his shirt.

KRIS (CONT'D)
Hey. Buddy. Where'd you get that
shirt?

BUM

Your mother's underwear drawer.
Wait, no, that doesn't make
sense. Why would it be in there?
Let me try again.

KRIS

HEY. I'm not fucking around.
That's *my* shirt. Why do you have
it?

BUM

You know, I just can't get enough
of shirts with giant stains ...

Kris gives up and begins to search through the bum's
belongings.

BUM (CONT'D)

Hey! Get out of there!

Kris finds his other clothes in the bum's stash. He
begins seething with fury.

KRIS

Answers, now. I promise you, this
is one Kris you don't want to
cross...

EXT. FILM SET - LATER

Charlotte is sitting alone at the set, reading her
script. She checks her watch every few minutes
impatiently - the shoot has been delayed a few hours. The
DIRECTOR approaches her.

DIRECTOR

Hey Charlotte, you can go home.
We're wrapping early today.

CHARLOTTE

Why, what's going on? We barely
shot anything today.

DIRECTOR

You can thank Kris Patel.

CHARLOTTE

Oh dear. What hilarious hijinks
ensued this time?

DIRECTOR

Apparently he's in jail for
assaulting a homeless man.

CHARLOTTE

Wait, seriously?

DIRECTOR

Yeah, I don't know all the
details, but I've had it with his
prima donna shit.

CHARLOTTE

At least win a couple awards
before you start getting violent,
right?

DIRECTOR

Yup, well, he's out of chances.
We're going to replace him. It's
early enough that reshoots won't
be too bad. And luckily, casting
already has someone in mind.

INT. ESHAN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Eshan is sitting patiently and quietly in a chair. His
phone is laid carefully on a table next to him. After a
few beats, it begins to ring. Eshan was waiting for this
moment. He casually answers the phone.

ESHAN

Hello? This is him. Oh, hi, how
are you? Great, great. Oh, you
do? Hold on a sec, let me check
my calendar.

Eshan holds the phone against his chest for a few
seconds.

ESHAN

Yeah, I should be able to make it

work. Tomorrow? Sure, I'll be there. Great. Great. Yup, thanks for the opportunity. No, no, thank you! Ok. Bye now.

Eshan calmly hangs up the phone. His face shows the joy of ultimate triumph.

INT. ESHAN'S BATHROOM - NEXT MORNING

Eshan is grooming himself in his mirror. He dials Charlotte while continuing to shave, brush his eyebrows, etc. Charlotte picks up.

CHARLOTTE

Hi.

ESHAN

Hey. Thanks for picking up.

CHARLOTTE

Talk fast, I have to head to set.

ESHAN

Yeah, about that...

CHARLOTTE

Oh great. You're taking over for Kris, aren't you? Just my luck, replacing one psycho with another.

ESHAN

Charlotte, c'mon, I'm really sorry. It was a rough time - the rejections kept piling up and I went a little cookoo. But I've learned an important lesson from all this. See, shit is going to happen in your life, no matter what you do, no matter how hard you try. What defines your life is not the shit you encounter, but how you react to that shit. And I reacted poorly. Really, really poorly. I lost myself.

More importantly, I squandered a relationship with an amazing girl. And for that, I'm eternally sorry.

CHARLOTTE

Wow. That was definitely a lot more pensive and heartfelt than I expected.

ESHAN

Thanks. I actually had to rehearse all that a couple times out loud.

CHARLOTTE

Ever the actor. But what about all that stuff about destroying Kris? Did you have anything to do with his meltdown?

ESHAN

I promise I didn't. I gave up that quest soon after you walked out my door. Kris is just an unstable guy. I heard the homeless guy just asked Kris for a cigarette and Kris went apeshit.

CHARLOTTE

Sounds like him. OK fine, I forgive you. But we're not getting back together or anything. I just want to be friendly if we're going to be working together.

ESHAN

That's all I'm asking. So, see you on set?

CHARLOTTE

See you on set.

EXT. FILM SET - DAY

Eshan shows up to the shoot. He's extremely pleased with himself. Charlotte is already at the set, waiting. Eshan gives her a warm embrace.

ESHAN

Big day. So good to see you.

CHARLOTTE

Didn't I say everything was going to work out? I'm just glad you didn't lose your soul in the process.

ESHAN

Don't worry. I didn't.

Eshan and Charlotte are approached by the Director.

DIRECTOR

Eshan, thanks again for stepping in. I really appreciate it.

ESHAN

Hey, no problem. Unlike the last guy, I can promise that I'll never come to set on a coke high. Pot maybe, but never coke.

DIRECTOR

Ah, the life of an artist. OK, we're going to do a quick run-through with just you two before we shoot. Let's get you comfortable, Eshan.

ESHAN

Yeah, let's do it.

DIRECTOR

We'll start from the top of page 47. Ready?

Eshan and Charlotte get into position.

DIRECTOR

Action.

CHARLOTTE

We have to get out of here!

ESHAN

If we leave here, we're all going to die!

DIRECTOR

Cut. Let's stop there. Eshan, I'm looking for a little more ... *flavor* in the delivery. Can we try again?

ESHAN

Sure, sure. I got this.

Eshan takes a second to think. He adopts a tough-guy accent.

ESHAN

If we leave here, we're all going to die!

DIRECTOR

Cut. Sorry to stop again. That was good, but ... we're looking for something closer to what Kris was doing. More ... ethnic.

Eshan takes another second to think, before realizing what is going on. He adopts an exaggerated, stereotypical Indian accent.

ESHAN

If we leave here, we're all going to die!

DIRECTOR

Perfect.

ROLL CREDITS