

The Visitors¹

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The Setting

The play takes place in the bedroom of an Indo-Fijian couple, Vishwa and Manju Singh.

The Characters

- Vishwa Singh - An Indo-Fijian man in his late thirties
- Manjula (Manju) - His wife, (also an Indo-Fijian) in her early thirties
- Man 1 - An indigenous Fijian in his mid twenties
- Man 2 - An indigenous Fijian in his mid to late twenties

When the play opens the stage is in total darkness. Outside the sound of dogs barking is heard and this fades into the distance and replaced by the sound of crickets, very loud then ending abruptly. For a moment nothing happens, just silence. Dogs bark again. Then silence. In the darkness, Manju sits up in bed. She gets out of bed and goes to the bathroom off stage. The dogs begin barking again then silence. Offstage the sound of the toilet flush is heard. Manju enters the bedroom and switches on a light by the dressing table. There are some sounds offstage, of the door being shaken. Manju listens. Manju wakes Vishwa.

Manju: Vishwa. Vishwa? Get up, I think someone is outside.

Vishwa: (Sleepily). What?

Manju: Someone is outside. Just go and check.

Offstage there is the sound of a child having a bad dream. Manju leaves to go and tend to the child. Vishwa gets up, still drowsy. He stands up and slowly walks out. Manju enters and gets into bed. Vishwa enters shortly and also gets into bed.

¹ The Visitors was premiered in American Samoa in 2008 during the 10th South Pacific Festival of Arts. The play is being published here for the first time.

Vishwa: Nothing there.

Manju: You looked properly?

Vishwa: Yes.

Manju: Turn the light off.

Vishwa: (*Getting out of bed again and goes to the dresser*). Why you didn't turn it off? (*He turns the light off and gets into bed. Just as he gets into bed the mobile phone rings.*)

Vishwa: That's your phone.

Manju: It's in my bag.

Vishwa: Leave it. It'll be a missed call.

Manju: It might be an important call.

Vishwa: It's late no one will call you at this time.

Manju gets out of bed and goes to the dresser where her bag is. The phone stops ringing. She takes the phone and in its light checks to see who called.

Vishwa: Who is it?

Manju: Private number.

Vishwa: Must be wrong number.

Manju turns on the light and gives a startled cry and drops the phone, terrified. Vishwa who has his back to Manju turns and is too stunned to speak. Two Fijian men stand there in front of the couple. Vishwa has gotten out of bed and remains standing beside it.

Man 1: Stay where you are, don't move

Mr Singh: Who are you. . . what you want?

Man 2: (Quietly). Just be calm

Vishwa: What you want?

Man 1: Go to the bed. . . you both.

Manju: Please you can take whatever we have here, I have some money in my bag, you can take it, please just leave us alone.

Man 1: I said for you both to go to the bed.

Manju and Vishwa move to the bed and sit down. Man 2 goes to the dresser and begins rummaging through the drawers. He pulls out each drawer and throws the content to the floor. Man 1 has removed a knife

from inside his shirt. Suddenly Man 2 stops what he's doing. For a brief moment there is silence.

- Man 2: Where's the rest?
 Vishwa: That's all.
 Man 2: There must be more!
 Vishwa: Manju?
 Manju: That's all I have.
 Man 1: Liar!
 Man 2: Tell us.
 Vishwa: What you want?
 Man 2: Your children in the other room. . .
 Manju: *(She gets up with the intention of running to the children's room, but Vishwa stops her)*. Let go!
 Man 1: Where you going?
 Manju: To my children!
 Man 1: You not go anywhere.
 Manju: But I want to see my children.
 Man 2: Where's the rest?
 Manju: There is no more, that's all I have in that box.
 Man 2: You think we fools?
 Vishwa: Please sir, you can take whatever you want in the house, take everything, but please just leave us alone, don't hurt us.
 Man 2: I hate it when people plead! You people are good at it!
 Man 1: You think we don't know what's going on?
 Vishwa: I don't know what you mean.
 Man 2: You think we bloody fools, eh?
 Vishwa: I'm telling the truth
 Man 2: Don't fuck with us!
 Man 1: You not telling the truth.
 Manju: Excuse me sir, please, I want to see my children, please!
 Man 2: Don't worry, my friend's in there keeping an eye on them.

- Manju: There's more of you?
 Man 1: Very smart.
 Man 2: We don't have time so just tell us where you hiding it.
 Vishwa: I'm telling you honestly, I don't know what you talking about.
 Man 2: *(He back slaps Vishwa)*. Don't fuck around!
 Manju: Please don't do this.
 Man 2: You *(Pointing at Manju)*. Move to that side of the bed. *(Manju moves to the opposite side of the bed)*. Some more.
 Man 1: You know what we want, eh?
 Manju: You can search the whole house and you'll find nothing.
 Man 1: We don't have time.
 Man 2: Tie them up.
 Manju: No, please!
 Vishwa: Why you have to tie us up for?
Man 1 opens the small black bag he has with him and brings out some cord/string. He gives some to Man 2 who takes it. Man 1 goes to Manju and just as he is about to grab her hands she jumps up and tries to run to the exit but Man 1 is too fast and grabs her from behind. Vishwa tries to run to her defence but Man 2 puts the knife to his neck and yanks him back. Man 2 has taken Vishwa's hands and begins to put them behind his back. He pulls Vishwa to his feet and makes him sit on the chair at the foot of the bed. He then ties his feet. Man 1 cursing all the while grabs Manju's hands and also ties them behind her back. Then he ties her feet. From the black bag he pulls out a small bandage and gags her mouth. He is talking all the while.
 Man 1: Stupid bitch! You think you can run away, huh?
 Vishwa: You don't have to talk like that to my wife, who you think you are?
 Man 2: Shut the fuck up!
 Vishwa: What you guys want?
 Man 2: Your name is Vishwa Singh and you know what we want. The quicker you tell us where you hiding the stuff the better it will be for you.
 Vishwa: You mistaking me for somebody else.

Man 2: This address is 74 Jakeway Avenue and your phone number is 3315320, right? Your mobile number is triple nine, seven, six, ninety nine.

Vishwa stares at the man in disbelief. Man 2 returns the look and smiles.

Man 2: There's more, don't worry.

Vishwa: All that information in the telephone book.

Man 2: Who's Saleshni?

Vishwa: I don't know.

Man 1: (*Turning to Manju*). That's the woman your husband's fucking.

Vishwa: You're a liar!

Man 2: Don't try and pretend, okay? You wanna be difficult, fine. We gonna start with our children's room. Don't try anything. Just remember, we right next door.

Man 1: I'm gonna be back soon.

As both men are about to exit, Manju makes a sound to draw the attention of the two men. They stop and stare at her.

Vishwa: She's trying to say something.

Man 2 goes and pulls the gag out of Manju's mouth.

Manju: Please, I want to see my children. Don't leave me here, they need me.

Man 2: Talk to your husband.

Manju: I want to see my children.

Man 1: You not going anywhere. If your husband will talk then we'll go right after we get what we want.

Manju: There's some mistake, we don't have what you want. All we have is what you see.

Vishwa: She's telling the truth.

Man 1: Bullshit! (He exits).

Man 2: Don't try anything stupid. (He exits).

Vishwa: Where's the mobile?

Manju: I don't know.

Vishwa: We need to find it quickly.

Manju: (Looking around). It's there on the floor.

Vishwa: Can you get it?

Manju: Who's Saleshni?

Vishwa: Try and reach for the phone.

Manju: Who's Saleshni?

Vishwa: There's no Saleshni.

Manju: Don't lie!

Vishwa: Manju, our life is in danger and all you can think of is Saleshni? What's more important? They are making up stories. Don't believe anything they say.

Manju is sitting at the edge of the bed. She struggles up to the head and tries to use her feet to reach the mobile phone. With her feet she drags it back to the edge of the bed where Vishwa is sitting. She kicks it slowly towards Vishwa. Using his toes he dials. He slips to the floor and puts his ears against the phone. Suddenly there is a loud yell from Man 2 as he jumps into the room. He picks up the phone turns it off and puts it in his pocket and very suddenly kicks Vishwa in the stomach. Manju stands and he pushes her onto the bed. For a moment she lies there, quite vulnerable. He stares at her. Vishwa in some pain, tries to sit up.

Man 2: Why don't you listen? (Pause). You think you so fucken smart?

Man 1 enters. He goes and unties Manju's hands and legs.

Man 1: Your daughter is crying.

Manju springs up and is about to run when Man 2 hold of her.

Man 2: Slowly. . . slowly, okay?

Man 1: Remember I'm right behind you, try anything stupid and I'll fuck you in front of your daughter.

Manju exits with Man 1. Man 2 remains standing staring at Vishwa. He pretends to kick again and Vishwa cringes. The man laughs. He pulls out a packet of cigarettes from his pockets and lights one. He offers Vishwa one. He shakes his head.

Vishwa: Please don't smoke in here.

Man 1 ignores him and smokes anyway.

Vishwa: Didn't you hear me?

Man 2 continues to ignore him.

Vishwa: Why you doing this?

Man 2: You.

Vishwa: I've done nothing to you.

Man 2: How you know you done nothing to me?

Vishwa: I don't know you.

Man 2: That's the problem.

Vishwa stares at him. There is a long, somewhat strained silence. Man 2 continues to smoke.

Vishwa: Why you doing this to us?

Man 2: You should ask yourself that question?

Vishwa: I don't know what's going on.

Silence

Vishwa: This all you do, just steal?

Man 2: Don't use that word. This is a job.

Vishwa: You don't know what a real job is!

The man moves very swiftly and hauls Vishwa up by the scruff of his collar and throws him onto the bed and is about to punch him, but changes his mind. He puts his hand around Vishwa's neck and slowly tightens his grip. The two men stare at each other. Man 2 lets go with a sudden push. Vishwa stares as the man turns his back and walks away, still smoking. Man 2 speaks slowly.

Man 2: Just because you go to work at eight and knock off at five, you think you doing real work?

Vishwa: Just take what you see here and leave us alone. Please!

Man 2: And leave you alone, so you can be comfortable and happy again?

Vishwa: You know a lot.

Man 2: Smart, you mean?

Vishwa doesn't reply just looks at the man.

Man 2: Then why you just never say, you sound smart? You think I'm dumb? Hah? That's what you all think, eh?

Vishwa: No.

Man 2: I know what you thinking.

Vishwa: You a mind reader?

Man 2: (Smiles sarcastically). It's written all over your face. You hate us, eh? (Vishwa makes no reply). Don't wanna talk? You upset? Don't like the way I talk to you? (Vishwa remains silent). Fine.

Manju and Man 1 enter. He goes to the bed and picks up the string and bandage.

Man 1: Sit down. (Manju sits on the bed and he ties her hands and feet)

Manju: Why you have to do this?

Man 1: (To Vishwa). Where's the key to the cupboard?

Vishwa: What cupboard?

Man 1: You have only one cupboard that's locked. (To Manju). Where's that key?

Manju: I don't keep that key.

Man 1: (To Vishwa). Where is it? (Vishwa stares at Man 1. For a moment the two men stare at each other). What the fuck you looking at? Where is it?

Vishwa: I don't have it with me.

Man 1: Then show me where it is.

Vishwa: I have to show you

Man 1: Secrets, eh? (He clicks his tongue).

Man 1 goes and unties Vishwa's feet. Vishwa stands up. Taking his arm, Man 1 walks out with him. Manju tries to avoid looking at Man 2 who stares at her. She looks away. He walks over to the bed and stares at her, taking in her body and face. Manju begins to get very uncomfortable. After a while he speaks.

Man 2: How long you been married?

She remains silent

Man 2: I asked you a question, have the courtesy to reply.

Manju: (Slowly). I don't want to talk about my marriage.

Man 2: What's your name?

Manju: Why do you want to know?

Man 2: Hey, I'm trying to be friendly.
 Manju: (She stares at him for a moment). Manjula.
 Man 2: You Muslim or Hindu? (Manju remains silent). Your husband is Hindu?

She nods.

Man 2: But you Christian right?

Manju: Yes.

Manju stares at him a moment then turns away.

Man 2: You two had arranged marriage?

Manju: No.

Man 2: So how long you been married?

Manju: Excuse me, I don't really know you and I am not comfortable to talk about my marriage with a stranger.

Man 2: What's your job?

Manju: You tell me!

Very quietly but in a tone that is not happy with her answer, he runs his finger from her face slowly down her neck to her breast and down to her stomach.

Man 2: You be nice now. Don't use that tone with me. You know I can give you something your husband can't give you. Be a good girl now otherwise you have to take off your panties. (He chuckles).

A long pause. Man 1 brings Vishwa back. He ties him up. He exchanges glances with his counterpart then exits. Man 2 moves towards Manju and stands in front of her for a moment staring. He walks to where the clothes from the drawers are lying strewn on the floor. He picks up a couple of her panties and bra and walks to the bed. She watches him closely. He holds up one of her panties and slowly smells it. He smiles at her. She avoids his gaze. Vishwa looks on helplessly.

Man 2: So what's your job?

Manju: (Quietly). I'm a school teacher.

Man 2: You went to university?

Manju: Yes.

Man 2: I went to university too. (Manju looks at him and he stares

back at her and smiles). You don't believe me, eh?

Manju: What does it matter what I believe.

Man 2: You not like other Indian women I know.

Manju: You don't know me and you don't know anything about Indian women.

Man 2: I know more than you. They're all the same.

Manju: And I can say all Fijian men the same.

Man 2: (Gives a slight laugh). You got a quick mouth, smart to talk, eh? (Manju remains silent). I don't think you grew up here.

Manju remains silent.

Man 2: You not very friendly?

Manju: You break into my house and you expect me to be friendly?

Vishwa: Please don't do this, please!

Man 2: Do what?

Man 1 enters. For a moment he stands looking at Vishwa. Vishwa avoids his gaze.

Man 2: Do what? Hah? You tell me.

Vishwa: Please don't do anything to my wife.

Man 2: You want me to do something to her? You want me to do to her what you do to Saleshni?

Vishwa: I don't know what you talking about.

There is a pause and Man 1 and 2 look at each other. Man 1 walks to Vishwa and pulls his head back by his hair

Man 1: Why you keep ten thousand dollars locked in a cupboard when you know it can be stolen?

Vishwa looks at him and says nothing.

Vishwa: I don't know what you talking about.

Man 1: That's the same thing you told us before and look what we found!

Man 2: So there's no gold and jewellery?

Vishwa: There's nothing I'm telling you!

Man 1: You are a liar!

Vishwa: You have the money why don't you go now.

Man 1: (Gives him back slap). Hey, don't you fucken talk like that okay? You don't tell us when to go.

Man 2: You want to play hard to get, then we will play with you.

Manju: Please leave him alone!

Man 2: There is more than ten thousand dollars in this house. You have all that cash and you have all the gold and jewellery hidden somewhere. Why you want to have so much?

Vishwa: I worked hard for that ten thousand dollars.
The two men look at Vishwa then look at each and smile. There is a pause.

Man 2: That's the fun of this kind of job, we take what people have worked hard for.

Vishwa: Please take the money and go.

Man 2: It must hurt eh, that you are losing ten thousand dollars.

Vishwa: It's only money.

Man 2: Hah, only money! Who the fuck is talking here! Very easy for you to say that now, especially when that money is not yours! (Changes tone). For you people, money means everything.

Vishwa: That's what people like to believe.

Man 2: And we believe what we see.

Vishwa: Making money is not a crime

Man 2: (A cunning smile). That's true, but the way you people make money, it's very suspicious.

Vishwa: What you mean?

Man 2: You know what I mean. (Vishwa remains silent). So where you hide the stuff?

Vishwa: There is no gold! I don't have any gold!

Man 2: Don't raise your voice.

Vishwa: I can raise my voice, this is my house and I want you to get the fuck out!

Man 1: *(Walks over to Vishwa and pulls him up roughly by the collar and punches him in the stomach. Manju makes an attempt to*

move and is about to scream when Man 2 puts her hand around her neck. Man 2 pulls Vishwa up). I don't give a fuck that this is your house! Understand? (Vishwa does not reply). Do you understand? (Still no response from Vishwa). You will repeat after me, 'I understand'.

Vishwa: (Slowly). I understand.

Man 1: (Turning to Manju). And as for your bitch here, you try and make any noise I will beat the daylight out of you!

Man 1 pushes him back into his seat. Manju looks on helpless.

Man 1: Don't try and act tough with me 'cause I might do something that you will regret.

Man 2: (Turning to Manju). Now lady, I want you to tell me where your husband is hiding the gold.

Manju: There is no gold.

Man 1: Why you lying for, ah? You not scared?

Manju: You think I'm gonna risk my family's life and my life, for gold?

Man 1: Yes, because that's what you people only care for, money and your gold.

Vishwa: She's telling the truth.

Man 1: Shut the fuck up, I'm not talking to you! Okay, here's the deal. We gonna leave you two so you can make a decision. When we come back you either tell us where the gold is or else.

Manju: We don't have any gold. We have nothing in the house, no money and no gold. What you see is what we have.

(Pause).

Man 2: Your husband didn't tell us that he had ten thousand dollars hidden. I have the money right here. He lied and you lied. *(Suddenly raises his voice)* You think us fucken stupid? I don't have time for this bullshit! *(To Vishwa)*. I can slit your throat and you can say goodbye to Australia and your children won't have any father around to watch them grow up! Think about that.

Vishwa: I know you people.

Man 2: What do you know about us people, ah? What the fuck do you

know? You know fuck all! (He stares at them for a moment then both men exit. For a moment there is silence).

Vishwa: The kids?

Manju: Why you didn't you tell me about the money?

Vishwa: I asked you about the kids.

Manju: You put our life in danger.

Vishwa: They've got the money.

Manju: So maybe there is gold too?

Vishwa: There is no gold.

Manju: What's going on?

Vishwa: Nothing is going on.

Manju: You so arrogant.

Vishwa: I asked about the kids.

Manju: They asleep.

Vishwa: Who's in there with them?

Manju: There're two more men in there.

Vishwa: What we gonna do?

Manju: Tell them where the gold is.

Vishwa: There is no gold, how many times I'm gonna say it? They just trying to intimidate us.

Manju: You never said anything about the money.

Vishwa: That was different. I thought they'll just take what they see and leave.

Manju: Well they know more than me what's in this house.

Vishwa: I don't need that right now.

Manju: None of us need this right now.

Vishwa: I was going to tell you later. I didn't want to get you worried knowing all this money in the house.

Manju: Why didn't you just tell them where the money was?

Vishwa: And make it easy for them?

Manju: Now they don't trust you.

Vishwa: They can search the whole house and they won't find anything.

Manju: Ten thousand dollars is a lot of money. Where did it all come from?

Vishwa: You know sometimes I have to bring money home and take it to the bank next day.

Manju: I really want to believe you.

Vishwa: You just have to trust me.

Manju: What about all that jewellery?

Vishwa: You have to trust me, there's nothing

For a brief moment they remain silent

Vishwa: The kids are okay?

Manju: They sleeping.

Vishwa: I hope they don't do anything to them.

Manju: We have to do something.

Vishwa: Like what?

Manju: Just tell them that we don't have any gold.

Vishwa: You didn't hear me? I already told them that!

Manju: We have to try again.

Vishwa remains silent. Manju looks at him but he looks away.

Manju: Why won't you tell me?

Vishwa: Why you interested in what I do?

Manju: I'm always interested in what you do.

Vishwa: That's what you say.

Manju: I just want to know is where that money came from?

Vishwa: It's nothing to do with you.

Manju: It doesn't matter to you that these men might do something to me and the kids?

Vishwa remains silent

Manju: Who is Saleshni?

Vishwa: She is a woman I have sex with.

This is not quite the answer Manju expected. She is somewhat taken aback. She looks at him and remains silent.

- Vishwa: That's what you want to hear, right?
- Manju: I didn't know.
- Vishwa: Why should you know? Men don't tell their wives who they sleeping with?
- Manju: Why get married then?
- Vishwa: Don't confuse marriage with sex.
- Manju: What about when you and . . . (She is unable to complete her sentence).
- Vishwa: When do you and me have sex? We have sex so we can produce children. You don't like sex, for you sex is dirty. So we sleep together just to make babies. How you think I feel, huh? When I want to have sex, you don't want to, so I have to look elsewhere.

The two men enter the bedroom. Man 2 has a bottle of whisky and a glass in his hand.

- Man 2: What's the verdict?
- Manju: We don't have any gold. The only gold we have is my jewellery and you can take all that.
- Man 1: We taking it anyway.
- Manju: You have to believe us.
- Man 2: Why your husband not saying anything?

Man 1 goes and pulls her up

- Vishwa: Where you taking her?
- Manju: (Struggling). Leave me alone!
- Vishwa: Don't touch her!

Manju lets out a scream. Man 1 turns and gives her a backslap. She falls to the ground. Vishwa makes an attempt to get up and do something but Man 2 is standing beside him pinning him to the chair.

Vishwa: You bastard! Leave her alone.

Man 1 walks away and for a brief moment Manju remains lying on the floor. Man 2 then goes unties the rope on her legs, takes hold of her arm and pulls her up.

Man 1: (Going to Manju). It's up to you, talk or else. . .

Man 2: You wanna be difficult, we can do the same.

Manju is escorted out by Man 1. Man 2 takes out a packet of cigarettes and lights one. He offers Vishwa a cigarette who declines by shaking his head. He pours himself some whiskey.

Man 2: You mind if I have a drink? (*Vishwa only stares at him*). You want one? (*Vishwa remains silent*). You live well. Don't worry, I won't drink it all.

Vishwa just looks on.

Man 2: Yeah, it's really good. (*Changing his tone*). Okay, we gotta talk, be open with me. (*Pause*). For the last time where is the gold and the jewellery?

Vishwa: For the last time, there is no gold and there is no jewellery. Why don't you believe me?

Man 2: Because you are a liar! You think I don't know what's going on, ah?

Vishwa: You don't know anything!

Man 2: I have ten thousand dollars and I know a lot more than you right now.

Vishwa: How do you know all this?

Man 2: It's none of your fucking business.

Vishwa: You wasting your time, you have the wrong house.

Man 2: You have been a businessman for most of your life, you've worked hard to buy this house and you have invested your money well. You have a beautiful wife and for your fun and enjoyment you have a mistress and for more fun and some kinky sex you pick the poofers from the street corner. There is one you always take. I know him.

Vishwa stares at the man in disbelief.

Man 2: (Quietly). Don't fuck with me.

Vishwa: You don't know what you talking about.

Man 2: Vishwa, I know more about you than you know of yourself.

Vishwa: You think you know so much?

Man 2: Your business is doing well. Just before the 2000 coup you sold your three houses and got all your money to Australia. You already got one apartment block on rent, and you have

another house waiting for you to move in when you migrate.

Vishwa just glares at the man.

Man 2: Brisbane right? That's where you gonna go to, eh? You want me to tell you which suburb in Brisbane you got your house?

Vishwa: How many times I'm gonna tell you, I don't know what you talking about.

Man 2: You know you're a good actor, you should go to Bollywood (he does a bit of a jiggle/dance).

Vishwa: This is all a joke to you, huh? You don't know what hard work is. You just break into one house, beat those fucking Indians and take their money and valuables, it's okay, they only Indians they not human beings!

Man 2: You break my heart. I don't give a flying fuck how you feel or what you think. I'm here to do a job, that's all I care about. Now the where the fuck is the gold?

Vishwa: You're wasting your time.

The man gets up swiftly, grabs hold of Vishwa and pushes him down on to the bed, grabs a pillow and smothers Vishwa with it. Vishwa's hands are tied behind him making it difficult to do anything. He struggles. The man has the pillow down very hard on his face. After a while he removes the pillow and pulls Vishwa up who is still trying to get his breath back. For a moment all is quiet. Man 1 and Manju enter. Man 1 is eating rice and curry from a large bowl. Manju runs to Vishwa but Man 2 yanks her back.

Man 2: (To Man 1). Tie her up. Take him, see if you can get something out of him.

Man 1 puts his bowl on the dressing table and ties Manju up.

Manju: No please, don't!

Man 1: Our patience is running out.

Manju: What you want us to do, we're telling the truth!

Man 1: Your truth is different from my truth.

Manju: No, you don't understand the meaning of truth!

Man 1: Shut up, bitch! (He lifts his hand to hit her but stops halfway. She looks defiantly at him). You talk too much! (He pulls Vishwa up, grabs the bowl of rice and curry and they exit to-

gether).

Man 2 goes to the DVD player. He picks up a CD, takes a look at it and puts it on. The music plays for a short while then he changes the CD to another song. The song plays for a while before he stops it. Manju has been watching him all the while. For a moment there is silence, then a sound is heard offstage, as if someone is being beaten up.

Manju: Please stop that!

Man 2: What?

Manju: Tell him to stop it!

Man 2 goes back again to the sound system and selects another CD, a Bollywood type of music. He turns the volume loud. Manju screams. Man 2 walks to her and places his hands around her neck and slowly tightens his grip. She stops and begins to choke. He removes her hands. The music is still playing. After a while he goes to the stereo and turns the music off)

Man 2: (Very calmly). Don't try that again.

Manju: (Recovering). I'm sorry sir. Please, sir why don't you take what you have and take anything else but just go and leave us alone.

Man 2: If what I'm looking for is here then I'll go, if not I will slit your husband's throat in front of you and your children, then I will slit your children's throat and you can watch them. Understand, bitch?

There is quite a long pause. Man 2 stares at her and she averts his gaze. He drinks and smokes.

Manju: Why are you like this?

Man 2: The gold is here, I know.

Manju: How you know?

Man 2: I just know.

Manju: You know a lot.

Man 2: How long you been married?

Manju: Twelve years.

Man 2: That's a long time.

Manju: You married?

Man 2: Why you want to know?

- Manju: Just asking.
 Man 2: Why you got married?
 Manju: I had no choice.
 Man 2: Your mother and father still alive?
 Manju: Yes.
 Man 2: Where they live?
 Manju: They live in. . . (Pause, she looks at him, not sure she should be giving that information). They live in Canada with my brother.
 Man 2: They migrated?
 Manju: My whole family has migrated.
 Man 2: What about you?

There is a sudden sound of someone knocking at the door. Man 1 walks in with Vishwa who has been roughed up. There is a small cut to his face and blood showing. He walks with a slight pain, to his chest. The knocking continues and Man 1 looks at Man 2

- Man 2: (Addressing Man 1). Check from the window.
 Man 1: (He hurries out and returns almost instantly). It's a Fijian man.
 Man 2: Who's that?
 Manju: Might be my neighbour.
 Man 2: Untie her. You gonna go to the door and tell that man everything is fine. Don't try and give any signal because my man here is gonna be watching you from outside. You try anything and you'll be sorry. Remember I got your children and your husband. Now get out there! (To Man 1). Go out the back and watch from outside. (Man 1 is out in a flash while Manju takes a while before she leaves. Meanwhile the knocking continues).
 Vishwa: You won't get away with this.
 Man 2: If you depending on our super efficient police, sorry to disappoint you, they're underpaid and overworked and justice is not part of their vocabulary. Anything can be done for a price, you should know that.

There is a pause as they wait

- Vishwa: He can hear me if I shout.
 Man 2: Then shout. (Pause). What's wrong? Afraid?

There is a slight pause before Manju returns. She sits down and covers her face with her hands and sobs quietly. A few moments later Man 1 comes running in.

- Man 2: What he wanted?
 Manju: He heard my screaming.
 Man 2: What did you say?
 Manju: Said I was having an argument with my husband.
 Man 2: And he believed you.
 Manju: He did.
 Man 2: Good.
 Manju: He's not stupid, you know.
 Man 2: Tie her up.

Man 1 goes and ties Manju's hands and legs.

- Manju: Have you found what you looking for?
 Man 1: No, but we getting there.
 Manju: You don't know when to give up, eh?
 Man 1: It's too easy to give up. (He exits)
 Vishwa: You've done this many times before?
 Man 2: Why?
 Vishwa: Just asking.
 Man 2: And you think I'm gonna fucking tell you?

Man 2 turns around and stares at Vishwa. He has one hand on the volume dial of the stereo. He slowly turns up the volume until the music is very loud, leaves it for a moment then turns it down slowly then abruptly turns it off.

- Vishwa: (Pause). What your men doing?
 Man 2: Searching for the treasure. You see, we have a map and we are following the instructions.

Vishwa tries not to be alarmed. But there is a sense of uneasiness creeping into him. Occasionally his eyes dart towards the doorway as if expecting something to happen.

- Man 2: Why don't you go to Australia? Over there you won't have anything to complain about.

Vishwa: If I had my way I'd go tomorrow!

Man 2: Hey, you the man, the one in charge, when you say move, everyone should move! What's wrong with you?

Vishwa: My wife doesn't want to go.

Man 2: After tonight she will change her mind.

Vishwa: She will.

Man 2: Why you don't wanna migrate?

Manju: Because this where I want to live.

Vishwa: This country is not the same as it was before

Man 2: Just because things have changed doesn't mean people should leave.

Vishwa: It's gone from good to bad, that's the difference.

Man 2: (He spits this line out). People who migrate are cowards, they don't have the courage to stay and fight it out!

Vishwa: And who wants to fight it out? Why fight when you know you on the losing side? No matter what we say, we will never be taken seriously because in the end we will never be accepted, we are still visitors, never mind the work our girit ancestors did to build this country.

Man 2: Oh cut the fucking girit crap! You people never try to make an effort to learn about our culture, instead you think of us as lazy good for nothing natives, who don't know how to manage our time and money.

Vishwa: And you think we Indians are pushy, rude, cunning and money face, eh?

Man 2: You hit the nail right on the head.

Manju: It doesn't matter that Indians helped build this country.

Man 2: Stop feeling sorry for yourself.

Manju: You don't care.

Man 2: I don't give a fuck. You people still own a lot of the business and shops and supermarkets, you have money while we struggle to make it.

Manju: We can never do anything right no matter how hard we try.

Man 2: That's just it, you never try! You people should all migrate and

leave us to govern ourselves, that way we won't have any more problems and no more coups.

Manju: The coups were not carried out by Indians.

There is a pause as the conversation comes to an abrupt halt. Man 2 looks from Manju to Vishwa then back to Manju.

Man 2: What do you people want, ah?

Manju: We want to live in peace.

Man 2: That's not easy.

Manju: Why?

Man 2: Because it means making sacrifices.

Manju: I have worked hard for this country and people like you not gonna make me leave.

Man 2: Very moving, I just wanna cry!

Vishwa: She doesn't know what she's talking about.

Man 1 walks in and Vishwa searches his face without trying to be conspicuous.

Man 1: Where's your car key?

Vishwa: Why?

Man 1: You don't ask the questions.

Vishwa: It's my car.

Man 1: You lucky, we not supposed to harm you.

Vishwa: Somebody sent you?

Man 2: The devil!

Man 1 notices the keys on the dressing table and takes them. He then grabs hold of Vishwa and yanks him up. They exit. Man 2 goes to the stereo and picks up another CD, looks at it and puts it into the player. It is 'Isa Lei' by Ry Cooder. The music will play to the end. He looks at Manju but she looks away. He exits. Manju is left alone and looks tired and for a very brief moment it seems as if she is going to break down and cry. But she pulls herself up and sits up straight. She seems to have some pain in her back because she grimaces when she moves. She sits there alone as the music plays. After a brief moment Man 1 enters. He appears angry and seems likely to do something violent. Manju senses this and looks away, eventually shifting her gaze to the floor. He pushes her down on the

bed then he moves to where he had dropped her panty and bra. He picks it up and moves towards Manju. He moves close to Manju and holds the bra in front of her then squeezes it. He takes the panty and runs his hand through it, then smells it and taking the bottom centre of the panty he puts it in his mouth. He sits on the side of the bed and begins to slowly rub her legs. The music continues playing. He stands up and takes the panty and rubs it against his crotch. He stares at Manju who keeps looking away, terrified. She slowly looks up. He remains where he is and returns her gaze.

Man 1: You ever dream of having sex with another man?

Manju only stares at him.

Man 1: I used to have sex with this Indian woman. She was married but her husband wasn't good in bed. She liked Fijian men. You know why? I like the smell of masala.

Manju continues to stare at the man with a look of disgust creeping in.

Man 1: Why your husband have to lie for, ah?

Manju doesn't reply. She just stares at the man then looks away, somewhat dejected and suddenly quite tired.

Man 1: You know what your husband do? He ever tell you? (Still no reply from Manju). What, you don't wanna talk to me now? What's wrong with you?

Manju: Your mother still alive?

Man 1: Why you ask for?

Manju: Just asking.

Man 1: Yeah.

Manju: She know what you doing?

Man 1: You leave my mother out of this!

Manju: What you think your mother will say to you if she finds out the kind of thing you do?

Man 1: I told you to leave my mother out of this!

Manju: She will be ashamed.

Man 1: What's your fucken business? You know nothing about me, okay? You want me to fuck you, hah? (Manju does not reply. Pause)

Manju: Can I ask you one thing?

Man 1: No! You don't ask the questions. Shut the fuck up!

Manju: Why you hate us.

Man 1 walks up to her and puts his hand to her mouth and tries to twist it.

Man 1: What you think we should love you? We should like you? You must be crazy. There is nothing to like about you people.

Man 1 removes his hand and looks at her. There is stunned look on her face.

Man 1: You want me to feel sorry for you?

Manju: I just don't know why you doing this.

Man 1: Talk to your husband. People like him give you Indians a bad name.

Manju: What have we done to you, that you hate us so much?

Man 2 and Vishwa enter. Vishwa looks quite shaken and from his appearance he seems to have been physically abused. He is pushed into the chair he previously occupied. Manju can only look at him, concerned but helpless. Man 2 and 1 exchange looks and Man 1 moves closer to Vishwa.

Man 2: (To Vishwa). You think you really got us, eh? You think we not gonna find it, huh? (To Manju). You lucky to have a man like him, always providing for his family, in fact he is providing a lot for his family. (Not taking is eyes off Vishwa). You know if we right we gonna find jewellery and gold worth a lot of money, maybe two hundred thousand dollars, maybe more. (Manju has not taken her eyes off her husband. She stares at him. He returns her stare but eventually turning his head away)

Vishwa: Who you working for?

Man 2: Boy you don't give up eh? You tough man, you tough.

Vishwa: Who send you?

Man 2: What's it to you?

Vishwa: You will pay for this.

Man 2: Hey, we not in the movies, you shouldn't talk like that.

Vishwa: Somebody set you up.

Man 2: Now you talking like we in the mafia or what! Relax, we nearly there, soon we'll be gone.

Vishwa: You think you smart; you think you know everything about

how we do business, ah? Let me tell you, you know nothing, that's why you people can't make it because you haven't got what it takes.

Man 2: You underestimate us.

Vishwa: What more do you want, huh? You've got it, what difference does it make whether I told the truth or not. Why don't you just take it all and get the fuck out of my house!

Man 1 suddenly grabs hold of Vishwa's hair and jerks Vishwa's head back. He grimaces at the pain. Manju only stares in horror.

Man 2: Your house? Your house? Your arse! (Emphasising each word). This is my land! You hear? This house is nothing, if not for this land! So don't tell me to get out of this house, because I'll throw you and your family out of it, you hear?

Vishwa: You think I'm scared, huh? Go ahead throw us out!

Man 2: Brave talk from a prick! Trying to put up a show in front of the wife.

Vishwa: This is what you are good at, with your friends around, you want to show off your macho. . .

Before he can finish Man 1 gives him a swift back slap. Vishwa falls from the impact of the slap. Man 1 kicks him a couple of times while he lies there. Manju tries to get up but she is unable to..

Man 2: Bloody heathen!

Manju: Leave him alone!

Man 1 takes two pieces of cloth from the black bag. He goes and picks up Vishwa and puts him back in his chair. When he finishes he goes to Manju and does the same. He then exits. Man 2 meanwhile takes the mobile out of his pocket and dials a number and waits a moment before he begins talking. He exits.

Vishwa: We have to get out of this fucking country.

Manju: That's all you can think about right now?

Vishwa: What else is there to think about? I don't want to hear any smart arguments and sentimental bullshit about not leaving. Tomorrow we begin preparations. (There is no reply from Manju. For moment he says nothing, then very slowly he speaks) This is not the land we grew up in. We don't belong here anymore.

Manju: Foreigners dream of coming to this part of the world, to live in this paradise, and here we are trying our best to get out.

Vishwa: What you talking about? We are the foreigners!

Manju: It's too easy Vishwa, just to go. What about all those people who don't have any chance at all.

Vishwa: That's not our problem, they maybe Indians but we don't know them and there's nothing we can do.

Manju: It's not only about Indians.

Vishwa: Are you mad? You don't know what you talking about! This is stupid. I don't want to hear anything more, okay? My mind is made up, that's it!

Manju: You already made up your mind never thinking of anybody else.

Vishwa: Yes, I know what's best! Can't you see? This country is falling apart, it's going to the dogs.

Manju stares at him as Man 1 and 2 enter. Man 2 is carrying what looks like a police club. For a moment there is silence as the couple stare at him. Manju turns away but Vishwa doesn't. Man 2 continues to stare at Vishwa and begins to move closer, not taking his eyes off him. Vishwa begins to suspect that something is afoot. He returns the gaze with defiance.

Man 2: What you get out of this?

Vishwa: I don't know what you mean?

Man 2: You know, don't try and bullshit me.

Manju: What is going on?

Man 2: Ask your husband.

She looks at him enquiringly. He averts her look. Man 2 continues to look at him not changing the expression on his face.

Man 1: You have it all worked out, eh?

Vishwa: You talking in riddles.

Man 2 is by this time standing right by Vishwa. He takes his hand and puts it around Vishwa's neck and slowly begins to tighten it.

Man 2: Just think, if you died now, you won't enjoy the wealth you have accumulated.

Vishwa is struggling to breathe as Man 2's hands squeeze his neck. Slowly he lets go. He goes to the stereo and plays the same music as before. Silence

Man 2: Why you want to leave this country?

Again there is no reply

Man 2: Where did you grow up?

Manju: Why you want to know about us? Why all this questions? You tell us about yourself!

Man 2: My life is not important to you.

Manju: Then there is no reason for you to ask us about our life.

Man 2: I'm trying to be friendly here.

Manju: We both come from the western side.

Vishwa: You don't have to tell him anything. These people don't care to know, it means nothing to them.

Man 2: You want me to tell you about my history, the arrival of my ancestors?

Vishwa: I already know that.

Man 2: Then shut the fuck up!

Pause

Man 2: It's all about you people, huh? The hardships, the suffering, nowhere to live, the struggle, always the focus on you people.

Vishwa: That's not true.

Man 2: What you people really want?

Manju: Just to be left in peace.

Man 1: You people don't belong here.

Vishwa: Where did you grow up?

Man 2: What's it to you?

Vishwa: You call this your country?

Man 2: Bloody right it is!

Vishwa: Then where did you grow up?

Man 1: None of your business.

Vishwa: How much do you know of your country?

Man 2: You don't ask the questions.

Manju: Why you still here? You have everything you want

Man 2: (To Man 1). Where's the mobile?

Man 1: You've got it.

Man 2 feels his pockets and pulls out the mobile. He exits to make his phone call. There is a pause before Vishwa speaks.

Vishwa: What you know about your county?

Man 1: What the fuck you talking about? You crazy or what?

Vishwa: This not fair, you force us to talk and you won't say anything about yourself.

Man 1: This is a beautiful country.

Vishwa: What's beautiful about it?

Man 1: Our culture, the people. . . the sea. . . and nature. . .

Vishwa: They all say that.

Man 1: (To Vishwa). What about you, what do you know about this country?

Vishwa: Why ask me that?

Man 1: Because.

Vishwa: You tell me I am only a visitor, so what do I know?

Manju: Why can't you people please go?

Man 1: Why?

Manju: Because I'm tired and I'm worried about my kids.

Man 1: Don't worry, they okay. (To Vishwa). You ask the question first.

Man 2 enters

Vishwa: Because you say I am a visitor. So if this is your country I want you tell me what you know.

Man 1: But I told you already!

Vishwa: What you told me is what the tourists say. You should tell me what you feel about this country.

Man 2: You talking too much, you know that? Who gives a fuck what this country is about, hah? Who cares? Why you trying to be smart and ask us about our own country?

Vishwa: Because you don't know.
 Man 2: What does it matter? Don't try and start acting like a smart arse when we know what you're up to.
 Vishwa: What you talking about?
 Man 2: Who you trying to fool?
 Vishwa: I'm not trying to fool anyone. You the one trying to make a fool out of us. You ask questions about our life. What is it to you. You've got what you wanted, so why don't you go?
 Man 2: Because I have a point to score with you.
 Vishwa: We not playing a game here.
 Man 2: I don't like people to fuck me around.
 Vishwa: You don't know anything about this country.
 Man 1: Don't change the subject.
 Manju: Vishwa, just leave it, what's the point?
 Man 2: You think you could've hidden the jewellery? Not even your wife here knew you was hiding it in the house.
 Vishwa: Now you accusing me of lying to my wife.
 Man 2: You've lied many times to your wife and she knows it.
 Vishwa: You don't know anything, you don't even know anything about this country.
 Man 1: All this talk about this country is shit! Who cares about this country? Why should you care, ah?
 Vishwa: Because it's my life!
 Man 2: If you cared about this country you won't be leaving.
 Manju: How you know we leaving?
 Man 2: I know.
 Manju: You seem to know a lot.
 Man 1: We know a lot more than you do.
 Man 2: You're a liar! You know that, you tell lies.
 Vishwa: Everyone lies, this whole country is a lie!
 Manju: Why do you keep saying my husband is lying?
 Vishwa: It's a shame, you know that you don't know anything about

your country, I bet you haven't even visited any of the towns or been or to the islands to see what it's like.
 Man 1: Doesn't matter whether I travel or not. I don't need to because I know what it's like, I feel it as I walk and the pulse of the land vibrates through my body and we are one, in the vanua it's the spirit that binds us together. That is something you will never understand.
 Vishwa: There are other people who feel the same way about the land, same way you do, you know. Don't make it sound so special. Just because you arrived here first you think you own it?
 Man 2: What's that saying, finders keep it.
 Man 1: We came from Africa.
 Manju: That's not true.
 Man 1: It's been written down, it is our history.
 Manju: That's the story some missionary wrote in an essay competition and was printed in the newspapers and everyone believed it. The scientific evidence shows that you came from Asia.
 Man 2: What the fuck do you know?
 Manju: I teach history that's what I am led to believe.
 Man 1: Trying to discredit, that's what you want to do, huh?
 Manju: If you study the scientific evidence it will reveal all to you.
 Man 2: I don't believe in scientific evidence, I believe in God.
 Man 1: Next thing you gonna say, that Darwin's theory is right, that we are descendant from the apes.
 Vishwa: Yes! You and me, we are descendants from the apes!
 Man 2: Maybe you, but I was made in the image of God. (Turning to Manju). Your husband has been deceiving you.
Manju looks at Vishwa who is staring intently at Man 2. There is silence for a moment as each of the characters are caught in their own thoughts about each other.
 Vishwa: You don't know who you are.
 Man 2: He's been hiding jewellery worth many thousands of dollars. Did you know that?

Manju remains silent. She continues to look at Vishwa.

Vishwa: You and people like you don't care about this country.
 Man 1: Why should we care when this country doesn't give a fuck about us?
 Vishwa: Why don't you ask your chiefs?
 Man 1: Don't be disrespectful.
 Man 2: It's okay for you to abuse us and tell us off but we can't do the same to you? We not allowed to question you?
 Man 1: We are the taukei, the owners, you do not question us.
 Vishwa: What do you feel about your country, ah? Tell me!
 Man 2: I am not telling you anything! Shut the fuck up or I'll shut you up!
 Vishwa: You think I'm scared? No! What can you do to me? Beat me up, kill me? Huh? Go ahead! You, you want me and you want my wife to tell you stories about our life, now you tell us your story. Tell us so we can understand, so we can know about you.
 Man 2: Tough guy, huh? Let me tell you tough guy, why should I tell you my story.
 Vishwa: Because you have no story.
 Man 2: What you want me to tell you?
 Vishwa: Anything, about your life, where you grew up who you related to, anything!
 Man 2: I told you already, my life is nothing to you.
 Vishwa: And our life is nothing to you too.
 Manju: There is nothing to talk about, so why don't you just go.
 Man 2: You need to know about your husband.
 Manju: (Begging). I don't want to know. I just want you to please go. Take whatever you want, but just go.
 Vishwa: No! Let this man say what he has to tell us!
 Manju: I don't want to hear anything. This is all just stupid talk and it's not going anywhere.
 Man 2: Don't you have any shame?
 Vishwa: I should ask you should that.

Man 2: Where were you when the coup happened in 2000?
 Vishwa: What is this, an interrogation?
 Man 1: Just answer the question?
 Vishwa: I don't have to answer anything!
 Man 2: You're one of the suppliers, eh?
 Manju: Please! I do not want to hear anything about what happened. We just want to carry on with our lives. I don't want to be reminded.
 Vishwa: Accusing me in front of my wife.
 Man 2: There are a lot of things you have done that. . .
 Vishwa: You don't know anything I have done
 Man 2: You been dealing in stolen jewellery.
 Vishwa: You don't appreciate the beauty of this country because you have not seen any of it.
 Man 2: You buy jewellery that's been stolen. And what you do? You melt the gold and you reuse the stones or you sell it. You pay peanuts for the jewellery and that's why now, more and more you see guys on the streets selling the stuff themselves. All the good and expensive jewellery you take to Australia and sell it there for a high price and you put the money in your Australian account, huh?
 Vishwa: You believe a story like that? Who told you that lie?
 Man 1: Then explain the money and the jewellery we just found?
Vishwa remains silent. Man 2 glares at him expecting Vishwa to say something.
 Manju: Why you doing this?
 Man 2: (At Vishwa). People like you are scum, you know? You don't give a fuck about anybody. We get a bad name because we do your dirty work. We get shit money from people like you but you make the bucks, you just use us!
 Vishwa: Business is not charity. Don't preach to me about using you people. You don't know what the fuck you talking about!
Man 2 moves swiftly to Vishwa and grabs him by the neck.
 Man 2: Who you think you are to talk to me like that, hah? This is my

country! It belongs to us. You people never seem to understand that.

Manju: No we never understand that, because there is nothing to understand. This is my country too whether you like or not. You have to live with that!

Man 1: Don't you start, you only a woman, remember that.

Manju: You expect me to be quiet? Your friend wants to strangle my husband and you think I'm not gonna say anything?

Man 2: (*Letting go*). You know what your husband is? You know what he does?

Manju: He's still my husband.

Man 2: Your loyalty breaks my heart.

Manju: Just now you said I am only a woman. Isn't it a woman's role to stand by her husband?

Man 1: Not when he fucks around.

Manju is about to say something, but stops short. She suddenly looks tired and vulnerable. She turns away from the men.

Man 2: Your husband doesn't know that we been watching him for a long time. He's been playing around, placing his bets here and there. One bet with this woman Saleshni, another bet with another woman, and one more bet with woman number three. You know how to fuck around, eh?

Manju seems stunned and she's trying hard not to show it. Vishwa smiles calmly and looks at both men.

Vishwa: I have to give it to you guys, you go all the way, you wanna take everything and then you want to fuck up my life. Well I'm not gonna let you. My wife doesn't believe a word you say.

Man 1: Excuse me lady you know a woman by the name of Sheila?

Manju: Yes.

Man 1: Sheila is your good friend, and she works in the garment factory and she always come and baby-sits for you, right?

Vishwa: Don't listen to them Manju, they are lying, just trying to make trouble.

Man 1: And you know another lady. . .

Manju: Stop! Please, I don't want to hear anymore.

Man 2: You afraid of the truth?

Vishwa: Truth? You don't know anything about truth.

Man 2: Your husband is sleeping with three different women; he buys them gifts and gives them stolen jewellery to hide.

Man 1: (*To Man 2*). And who does the break in?

Man 2: Guess?

Man 1: They pay some guys to do it.

Man 2: And what they do after that?

Man 1: (*Pointing at Vishwa*). Ask him.

Vishwa: You think you'll get away with this?

Man 2: Never double cross your friends Vishwa Singh. Next time you might not be so lucky. You lucky you not one Chinese, otherwise your wife get a shock your body arrive in one suitcase!

Vishwa: One day you'll get caught and justice will be served.

Man 2: Justice is a foreign word.

Man 1: It is only for those who pay for it.

Man 2: We want to thank you for supporting the cause.

Man 1: You helped a lot.

Manju: What cause you talking about?

Man 2: You don't know?

Manju: Know what?

Man 2: (*To Vishwa*) Shall I tell? Your wife will be ashamed of you if I told.

Vishwa: I have nothing to hide.

Man 2: The people involved were very happy that people like you helped out for the cause, supplying food and supplying grog. It was good to see you giving back.

The mobile rings. Man 2 answers it.

Man 2: Hello? About time! Okay, we're ready. We have to go. (*to Man 1*) They waiting outside.

Man 1 exits. Man 2 goes to Manju and unties the cord. She remains still. He does not go to Vishwa, instead he just looks at him. He turns around

and walks out without looking back. For a moment neither of them moves. Manju stands up slowly and goes to untie Vishwa. She then walks out. Vishwa still remains seated. He doesn't move, just stays very still looking straight ahead of him. Manju enters the bedroom and looks around. She goes and sits on the bed. They remain in that position until the music ends. Manju then stands and goes and turns the music off.

Vishwa: The kids?

Manju: They're okay. They're sleeping

Manju: We have to call the police.

Vishwa: And make it worse.

Manju: We have to report it.

Vishwa: It's not going to make any difference. Everything is destroyed.

Manju turns and looks at him, long and hard.

Manju: What?

Vishwa: You gonna make up your mind now?

Manju: I don't know.

Vishwa: Our whole life was in danger tonight and still you say, you don't know.

Manju: I'm tired.

Vishwa: You can't keep avoiding it, sooner or later you have to make up your mind, and I'm telling you now I'm not gonna wait around.

Manju: Why is it so easy for you and not for me?

Vishwa: Because I am tired of it all.

Manju: Tired of it all or tired of what you been doing and want to escape?

Vishwa: This not the time to talk about it.

Manju: You have brought it on yourself. You disgust me you know. You know what they call people like you?

Vishwa: I don't want to know and I don't need this shit from you!

Manju: It's true then. You and people like you, our own kind supporting something that is wrong.

Vishwa: This is an evil place and we have to leave, no question about it.

Manju: You don't understand.

Vishwa: Now you are definitely sounding like one of them!

Manju: We were born here.

Vishwa: So what? Don't be so bloody selfish! What about the children?

Manju: It's always about the children, we always use the children.

Vishwa: You want them to grow up in a country where they are denied the right to be recognised for who they are, to have the right to be what they want to be?

Manju: It's not any easier in another country.

Vishwa: But they have that right.

Manju: That's what we're all led to believe, the grass is always greener on the other side.

Vishwa: Greener than it is here, that's for sure!

The two men walk in again. The couple are startled.

Man 2: Sorry to disturb you but I want the keys to your car?

Vishwa: Why?

Man 2: Because we want to go to the moon that's why? Hurry!

Vishwa points to the dresser and Man 2 finds the car key in a bowl. He retrieves it. Manju just stares at the man as if to say, 'do you care?'

Man 2: Okay, let's go. (They exit).

There is disbelief. Manju and Vishwa aren't quite sure what is going to happen next. The reappearance of the two men was an unexpected surprise and their feeling of relief disappeared in a shot. They were both on their guard and even now as the two men leave, there is still a sense of uneasiness and anxiety. They hear the door opening and shutting. The couple remain quiet, still. There's still a feeling of uncertainty. As much as they want to believe it, they are still not really sure the men have left. Manju is just about to get up when Man 1 jumps out in front of her. Man 2 is behind him with a smirk on his face. He lights a cigarette.

Man 1: (Laughing and pointing at the look on the couple's faces). Hah, you thought we gone, huh? You should the look your faces! (He laughs). Okay now we really going.

He exits. Man 2 for a moment remains where he is and slowly walks towards the couple. He looks at them a while before he speaks.

Man 2: You want to know what my story is (Pause). You want to know about my history? (Pause). I don't know my history. They never teach me that, they just expect me to know it. But there's no time to learn it, because I have to live and one thing I can tell you, my history is not feeding me, my history is not looking after me. I don't hate you guys, I just have to do what I have to do. It's hard to see that in my own country, I am nothing, that people like you are better off than me.

Vishwa: It's called hard work.

Man 2: This is hard work. You think what you have been doing is hard work? You think I don't know hard work? What is hard work to you huh? Not everybody is like you. Because we live in the city everybody has to work hard to survive but, not everybody can make it. What happen when you work hard all day, all week and in the end you got nothing to show for it? You live in this country all your life and you know fuck all. All you want is to get the hell out of here because the natives have gone wild. (Pause). You want to know my story? Which one? I have many stories and I don't think you wanna know any of them. Some are like broken records and some you don't wanna hear because you won't understand and some you just leave alone, so there's no need for me to tell you. When I leave here now there won't be any memory of this. I erase the past because there is no point to remember it. I am who I am. I am who they tell me to be.

He turns and walks out. The door shuts behind him. Manju and Vishwa remain where they are. After a while the sound of a car engine starts up then pulls out and drives away. For a brief moment everything is quiet before Manju speaks.

Manju: It had to take what happened here tonight, for me to know what you have been doing.

Vishwa: You don't know what I've been doing.

Manju: Maybe it's good not to know.

Vishwa: You want to believe a bunch of thugs?

Manju: No, I don't want to believe them, I want to believe you.

Silence.

Vishwa: All you need to know is that I did what I had to do, for our sa-

ke and the sake of the children and for our survival. If we're gonna go and live comfortably overseas than we need to make sure we are comfortable.

Manju looks at him, long and hard.

Vishwa: Right now we should be planning to get the hell out of his country, instead you want to believe the word of thieves and thugs!

Manju: All I know is that something has been going on and you have not been honest with me.

Vishwa: Since when did you start questioning me? You are my wife, you understand that? You are my wife!

Manju: Your wife? I am just here to make you look normal.

Vishwa: You are responsible for that, you made that choice not me, so don't start now.

Manju looks at him then turns away and surveys the room.

Vishwa: I don't care what you think, you still my wife. Tomorrow we begin preparation. We're selling everything and the sooner we sell the quicker we get out! That's final, we leaving!

Manju remains silent.

Vishwa: You're stupid! You know that, bloody stupid. Most people would give anything to migrate; any Indian woman would give their right arm to get out of here. But you, no, you persist to stay here.

Manju: I would rather be in a country I know, a country where I know I have friends and family than be in some suburb living alone in obscurity.

Vishwa: Fine. You wanna talk big and sound smart, that's okay because you can stay by yourself. I'm taking the kids and you can stay.

Manju: The kids should grow up here and when they are old enough they can make their own decision.

Vishwa: You really don't get it, eh? There's a rage going on in this country and soon something is gonna explode and we, you and me our children and all the others, we are in the way, we are in the firing line. If you think I'm gonna stay here and let anything happen to me or my children, then you need to get your brain checked! They don't want us here anymore; they want us

to get out!

Manju remains silent. For a moment neither of them says anything.

Manju: Is it that easy to forget history?

Vishwa: History is the past, we are living in the present.

Manju: It is easy to forget that without the struggle, the suffering and hard work of our ancestors, you and I would not be where we are today.

Vishwa: Our ancestors would want us to have a better life that's for sure. That way they know that everything they have done has not been in vain!

Manju remains silent.

Vishwa: You can argue all you want to, Manju, but it is not going to convince me. And if you want to have a fight over the kids, then so be it.

Manju: If you want your history to be dragged out into the open, then that's fine by me too.

Vishwa: You think you tough, eh? You want a fight, fine, we'll see.

Manju: Then why don't you call the police?

Vishwa: What they gonna do, investigate? They'll turn around and say it's our fault. I have no faith in the police. They do more damage than good.

Manju: You should still report it.

Vishwa: *(Looks at her, hard and long).* You not afraid, huh?

Manju: After tonight, no, I'm not afraid anymore, I'm just angry.

Vishwa: So what's your anger gonna do for you?

Manju: This is where I belong. No matter what anyone says I have a right to be here.

Vishwa: You have the right, yes, but they don't want you!

Manju: That's okay, because in Australia and New Zealand, and America and Canada, they don't want us too we just force ourselves there.

Vishwa: But it's safe there.

Manju: You keep saying that.

Vishwa: Because it's the fact. (Pause). Manju, you think I wanna leave this country? (Pause). I have to be realistic. They don't want us so we should just get the fuck out of here. Leave them. And we are not responsible for all the other poor Indians who can't get away, we have our destiny to fulfil that's what's important.

Manju: So we just go and reinvent ourselves in a new country, a new identity a new way of living. . .

Vishwa: In the end it doesn't matter, it doesn't mean anything anymore.

Manju: Fine words from a man whose life is so crooked.

Vishwa: Want to know something? You have been part of this crooked life, and whether you like or not, you can't take it back. What I did, I did for you and the kids and I don't regret. You make a choice just make sure it's the right one.

Vishwa exits leaving Manju alone. She remains where she is as the lights fade to black.

THE END