



JOURNEY TO MOUNT KAILASH

Subhuti Anand

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A Play by Subhuti Anand

Scene One.

A camp site in a jungle game reserve, a half-day's drive from Kathmandu. A man and a woman are drinking tea, late in the evening, sitting cozily together. She is Terrie, a western-born restaurant owner in Kathmandu. He is Sean, a good-looking western guy who says he is a tourist.

Background: They met a few days ago in Kathmandu and are having a love affair. Terrie is trying to be casual about it, but she is falling in love. Sean is friendly, relaxed, in control, knowing this woman has fallen for him.

Sean (laughing at the memory): Well, all I can say is: I never want to get that close to a rhino again – Jesus, that was scary!

Terrie (also enjoying the memory): We were perfectly safe on the elephant.

Sean: On your side, maybe, but the rhino was practically underneath me! He could have jabbed his horn right into my leg (they both laugh). I didn't even know you had rhinos in Nepal...

Terrie: You didn't?

Sean: No, I thought this country was all mountains, snow leopards and Tibetan prayer wheels.

Terrie: People don't get killed by rhinos in this country, Sean. Bears are much more dangerous.

Sean: You have bears, too?

Terrie (nodding): Lots of them. There's a forest, northwest of here... two years ago, a French couple met a mother bear with cubs. She jumped on the man and tore out his throat, killed him in an instant.

Sean: Jesus! What happened to the woman?

Terrie: Nothing. The mother bear ignored her and just ambled away with her cubs.

Sean (smiling): I didn't know females could be so dangerous to the male species.

Terrie (smiling back): Only when they feel threatened. Anyway, a couple of days later she had a complete nervous breakdown.

Sean: The bear?

Terrie (laughing and hitting him) The woman.

Sean uses the opportunity to embrace Terrie and gives her a long kiss. She melts into him, clearly loving it. As they take a break, Terrie sees something on the ground.

Terrie: Hey, you dropped your passport (picks it up). An Irish passport? You don't sound Irish, Sean.

Sean (taking the passport rather hastily): I'm not.

Terrie: So, why the Irish name and passport?

Sean: It's a long story... and I'd say we've done enough talking for now, don't you?
(caresses her).

Terrie (enjoys the embrace, then looks at him with love and also a tinge of sadness):
Do you really have to leave for Mumbai tomorrow, Sean?

Sean: Yes.

Terrie (wanting him to stay longer): Couldn't you stay a few more days? I know some beautiful places....

Sean: Terrie, I have to go.

Terrie (sadly): So this is our last night together.

Sean: Yes -- for now. (kissing her) My tent or yours?

Terrie doesn't answer. She simply lets her love for Sean show, and embraces him lovingly.

Scene Two

Inside a police office in Kathmandu.

Inspector Sharma is talking on the telephone to a government Minister. He is eating shit and he clearly doesn't like it.

Sharma: Yes sir, of course, sir.... I do understand the importance of the case...

(pause) Yes sir, I know His Majesty is upset... Of course, sir, but... (pause) sir, if you will forgive me, I feel the Minister is being overly simplistic about this... As I said before, sir, there are some promising leads but the investigation is taking time... Yes sir, I do understand the implications... Good day, sir.

He puts down the phone, waits for a moment, then angrily kicks the desk.

I'm surprised he didn't ask me to go to the palace and kiss the Royal backside!

Enter a female police officer called Usha.

Sharma (snaps) Yes, Usha, what is it?

Usha (offering a note): Message from the task force, sir.

Sharma takes the note and reads it. His mood lightens a little.

Sharma: Now this may just save my neck.

Usha: Sir?

Sharma (*rising from his chair, suddenly becoming a man of action*): Radio them immediately. Tell them I'm on my way.

Usha: Yes sir.

Sharma (*pushing her out of the room and following him*) Hurry, woman, hurry!

Scene Three

Inside Terrie's restaurant in Kathmandu. Pasang, the waiter, is serving Gopi, a western woman, who is sitting by herself at a table.

Gopi: Waiter!

Pasang: Yes, madam.

Gopi: Take these French Fries back to the kitchen and make them hot.

Pasang (looking at the plate): Not hot, madam?

Gopi: Not even close.

Pasang: Okay, sorry madam.

Enter Jeff, a western man, outdoor type, who is obviously a regular customer.

Jeff: 'Afternoon, Pasang.

Pasang: Good afternoon, Mr. Jeff.

Jeff: Is Terrie home?

Pasang: Upstairs, sir. Usual drink, sir?

Jeff (sitting at a table): Beer, yes. Thanks, Pasang.

Enter Terrie and Sean.

Terrie: How big is it?

Sean: Not so big... look (*brings a Buddha statue out of a bag*).

Terrie: How much does it weigh?

Sean: About two-and-a-half kilos (*gives it to her*)

Terrie (*playfully suspicious*): What's it made of -- gold?

Sean (*laughs*): Then it would weigh a ton. No, it's some kind of lacquered hardwood -- that's what the guy told me.

Terrie: No export license required? I'm not going to get busted at the airport for taking a religious antique out of the country?

Sean: It's not that old. Look, Terrie, it's fine if you don't want to bring it. It's just that I'm already overweight...

Terrie (wanting to please): No, no, I'll bring it. Like I said, I have to fly to Mumbai before the end of the month to do some import stuff. And... (*revealing her true motive*) it's a nice excuse to see you again.

Sean: I'd want that anyway. Really, you don't have to bring it for me.

Terrie (*stands the Buddha statue on the restaurant bar and puts her arms around Sean*): Don't say it again or I'll change my mind (*intimate hug*).

Sean: I have to go now, Terrie.

Terrie: See you in Mumbai.

Sean: Okay, and... (*holding her and giving her a sincere look*) thanks for everything. *They hug.*

Terrie: Bye Sean.

Sean: Bye.

Exit Sean.

Gopi: Waiter!

Pasang: Yes, madam?

Gopi: Where are my French Fries? I want to eat them today, not tomorrow.

Pasang: I'll check if they're ready, madam.

Gopi: And bring me a filter coffee -- *hot* coffee, okay?

Pasang: Yes, madam.

Gopi: And please take away this ashtray, that's the second time I've asked.

Pasang: Yes madam.

Terrie (coming over): Is there a problem?

Gopi: If not getting good service is a problem, yes there is.

Terrie: I'm surprised. Pasang is our best waiter.

Gopi: The main problem is your kitchen. Your chef needs basic training in making Fast, Fresh, French Fries.

Terrie: I'll see what I can do.

She turns towards the kitchen.

Jeff (*who has been sitting at a table, watching all this*): So... can this be, at long last love, for the Queen of Kathmandu?

Terrie: Jeff! For Chrissake, I didn't even notice you.

Jeff (meaningfully): You were busy.

Terrie: How was your Kachenjunga tour?

Jeff: Cold, miserable... full of German school teachers.

Terrie (*laughing*): The tour guide's nightmare.

Jeff: Really, it's true. They are the most arrogant bunch you can imagine. Two or three of them spent the entire trek telling me how they could organize it better... Ziss map is nicht correct... Ve should not be going ziss vay... Ve should be going zat vay!

Terrie (*giving him a friendly kiss*): Good to have you back, Jeff. I was beginning to miss you.

Jeff: It didn't look like you were missing anything to me.

Terrie: What?

Jeff: The hunk... the new boyfriend.

Terrie: Oh, yes, he's gorgeous, isn't he?

Jeff: Gorgeous... already? How come you never say things like that about me?

Terrie: Because we're friends. We don't have... that kind of thing... going on.

Jeff: Who knows? "That kind of thing" could start any moment.

Terrie: Are you really jealous, Jeff?

Jeff: Of course not. I just don't understand how a woman can feel more about someone she's just met than someone she's known for years.

Terrie: That's the difference between friendship and love. You're my friend, he's my lover.

Jeff: There's something very unfair about it.

Terrie: I know... but tell the truth, you old bachelor -- you're more in love with your hiking boots than me.

Jeff: That's probably true. And speaking of which...

Terrie: Yes?

Jeff (suddenly very enthusiastic): Terrie, I've got a terrific trek coming up... this time I really want you to come along.

Terrie: You know how I feel about trekking.

Jeff: This is different. (*dramatic pause*) I'm going to Kailash.

Terrie (*she knows what this means to him*): Kailash... the holy mountain... in Tibet?

Jeff (*grinning from ear to ear*): Uh-huh.

Terrie: So you finally got the permits.

Jeff. Yes. Terrie, it's going to be incredible: 12 days trekking through West Nepal, through beautiful territory. No tourists. No toilet paper trail like around Annapurna. Nobody trying to rip you off. We travel light -- hire horses to carry tents and supplies. Then over Simicot Pass, into Tibet, pick up the jeeps at the border, two days leisurely drive to Lake Mansarovara, next day to Kailash.

Terrie: I can't believe the Chinese are going to let you do it. Simicot's been closed for years.

Jeff: It was just a question of finding the right guy in Beijing. And Terrie, listen to this: we time the trip so we can do the pilgrim's walk around Kailash exactly on the Buddha Full Moon... (*pause*)

Terrie (not getting it): So?

Jeff: So we get to see the legend: 500 enlightened masters meditating together so that Gautam Siddhartha can descend from Nirvana and speak to humanity again.

Terrie (laughing): You don't believe that stuff?

Jeff: No, I don't, not literally. But spiritually -- there must be something in it, some special vibe around the mountain at that time.

Terrie: That's what I'm afraid of.

Jeff: What does that mean?

Terrie: You know what the Hindus say about Kailash: *Prasthanā Sankalpo Eva Parivartayati Jeevanam*... "to decide to go is to decide to change your life".

Jeff: So?

Terrie: I don't want to change my life. I've got a good thing going here: great restaurant, nice customers, everybody knows me...

Jeff: You mean you don't want to be infected with divine discontent and become a spiritual gypsy, forever searching for enlightenment?

Terrie: Something like that.

Jeff: Well, I've managed to resist it all these years. I'm sure you can.... (*pause*)

Terrie, this trip... it may never happen again. Who knows how long the Chinese will

let Simicot stay open? A small border incident and... wham, the gates close for another ten years. Then the only way to Kailash is from Lhasa or Kathmandu -- a week's drive in a Land Cruiser over the world's worst roads, being smashed around like a bean in a vibrator... (they both laugh at this image) Terrie, you've got to come. I need you -- to protect me from the Germans.

Terrie (laughs): And how much is this spiritual pilgrimage going to cost me?

Jeff: For you my friend, cost price... 2,500 US.

Terrie: Such a deal. (pause) Okay, Jeff, count me in.

Jeff (rising): That's great! Terrie, you surprise me. I was certain you'd say no.

Terrie: Maybe I have an ulterior motive. Maybe if I stay close to you long enough you'll stop running away from me.

Jeff: You liar, you're not after me. I can read the signs, Terrie. You're hooked on this guy.

Terrie: Is it that obvious?

Jeff: Like a neon sign at midnight.

Terrie: Oh god!

Jeff: Was it that good?

Terrie: Incredible. I mean... Jesus, what a lover.

Jeff: Damn, I *am* jealous!

Terrie: Now you're the one who's lying. If I made a serious move toward you, you'd run away.

Jeff: It's not personal Terrie. I run way from all women.

Terrie: I know - you and every man I've ever met. Always jumping on a plane or disappearing around a mountain.

Jeff: You have a point. Tomorrow I fly to Hamburg.

Terrie: You see?

Jeff: I have to sign the contract for the Kailash trek. I'll be back in a few days. Don't change your mind, okay?

Terrie: I won't.

Jeff (nodding toward the statue): And don't get stuck in Mumbai with whatisname.

Pasang enters with Jeff's beer.

Terrie: Here's your beer. Sit down and quit harassing me.

Jeff sits in a corner.

Gopi: Waiter!

Pasang: Yes madam.

Gopi: Give me the bill, I can't wait any longer for this goddamned food.

Pasang: Yes madam, sorry madam.

Gopi: So am I.

Terrie: Oh, I'm sorry. Let me check what's happening in the kitchen.

Gopi: Don't bother. I'm out of this dump. Just give me the bill.

Pasang offers the bill.

Pasang: Here, madam.

Gopi: This is wrong. You can't charge me for the fries or the dessert -- or the coffee.

Terrie (getting quietly angry): Look, why don't you just leave. I'll take care of the bill.

Gopi: Suit yourself.

Gopi, starts to leave, then sees the statue. She picks it up.

Gopi (to Terrie): This is a nice piece. Is it for sale?

Terrie (not wanting her to touch it, but too polite to say anything): No, it is not.

Gopi: Is it authentic?

Terrie: I have no idea. (Gopi continues to handle it) Please put it down -- it's personal.

Gopi continues to hold it. Suddenly Inspector Sharma bursts in holding a pistol, followed by Usha, who is also armed.

Sharma: Everybody stay where you are! Nobody move!

Terrie (scared): What's happening?

Sharma (*pointing gun at Terrie*): Hands up! (*Terrie raises her hands*) And you! (*to Gopi, who, still holding the statue, slowly raises her arms*).

Sharma looks at the Buddha statue in Gopi's hands and takes it from her.

Inspector (*to Gopi*): Is this yours?

Gopi: No.

Terrie: I'm taking care of it, for a friend.

The inspector turns it upside down and looks at the bottom.

Inspector (*holding out his hand to Usha*): Give me a knife.

Usha gives him a knife. He cuts deeply into the bottom, a piece of wood falls away, and the inspector brings out small plastic bag. He unwraps it and reveals a large, jewel-studded brooch with a massive ruby in the centre.

Inspector: Nice friend you have... (*pause*) Anything to say?

Terrie is astonished and speechless.

Inspector (*to Usha*): Take them away.

Gopi: I suppose it won't help to say I was just here for lunch?

Inspector: Don't waste my time. Move!

Exit police with Terrie and Gopi. Note: Jeff says nothing, stays in his corner unobserved until the scene has ended.

Scene Four.

A hotel room in Mumbai.

Sean is still in his travel clothes, talking with a woman called Kirsten, who is wrapped around with a towel, having just come out of the shower.

Kirsten: You idiot! I can't believe you left it there!

Sean: I had to.

Kirsten: Why?

Sean: They found out too soon! They cordoned off the airport. They were searching every passenger on every flight – every bag had to be opened. I kept waiting for things to cool down, but they just kept getting hotter.

Kirsten: The statue was sealed. They couldn't have guessed what was inside.

Sean: They would have taken it apart with a chainsaw. Look, I know what I'm doing.

Kirsten (*sarcastically*): Yeah, right. Leaving half a million dollars' worth of jewelry in a bar in Kathmandu, what a fabulous idea!

Sean: This chick is going to bring it. Trust me.

Kirsten (*sarcastically*): Trust you. (sighs) I don't have much choice do I? Jesus, what a fucking mess.

Scene Five.

A jail cell in a Kathmandu police station.

Terrie and Gopi are sharing a cell.

Terrie (*trying to attract attention by shouting and banging vigorously with a tin mug on the bars*): Hey! Hey! I want to see the inspector. Somebody tell the inspector I want to see him. You hear me? I want to see him right now!

Gopi: Take it easy, sister.

Terrie (still shouting): I know the law in this country! I have a lawyer! I have government connections! Tell the inspector I want to see him!

Gopi: Shouting won't help.

Terrie (surprised): What?

Gopi: Shouting won't help. What time is it?

Terrie (checking her watch): Two-thirty.

Gopi: It's siesta time. If this jail is anything like the rest of Kathmandu you won't see action around here until four-thirty or five.

Terrie: I'm not going to wait that long to get out of here. Hey! Heeeey! Is anybody there?

Gopi: I'm the one who should be shouting, not you.

Terrie: How do you figure that?

Gopi: I'm the innocent bystander. I was just having lunch in your restaurant.

Terrie: You think I'm *not* innocent?

Gopi: How should I know? You were very nervous when I picked up the statue.

Terrie (angrily): That's because it belonged to a friend.

Gopi: As the inspector said -- nice friend.

Terrie: That goddamned inspector. He can't treat me like this.

Gopi: You're wrong sister. If that piece of jewelry is what I think it is, he can keep you here for years and nobody's going to raise a whisper.

Terrie: But I had nothing to do with it.

Gopi: Yeah, sure.

Terrie: It's the truth.

Gopi: Truth, as the Buddha said, can be defined as "that which works," and screaming your head off doesn't work in a Kathmandu jail.

Terrie (angrily): How come you're so bloody calm? Are you used to being in jail? Are you some kind of criminal?

Gopi: That's right. Make an enemy out of me, too. That's really going to help.

Terrie: What's your idea then?

Gopi (moves across the jail and holds her hands, and says slowly and deliberately): Shut the fuck up... calm down... sit down... and wait.

Terrie hesitates for a moment, then reluctantly sits down.

Scene Six.

Inspector Sharma's office.

A bottle of Johnny Walker Black Label is on the table. Sharma is drinking and listening to the radio.

Radio: ...in his speech this morning, King Bhirendra said he would welcome a change to a more democratic political system for Nepal, including political parties, national elections and a constitutional monarchy. Meanwhile, government officials in Kathmandu have introduced tough new penalties for anyone convicted of smuggling antiques out of the country. The new laws are a direct result of the recent loss of one of Nepal's most precious artifacts – a seventeenth century jewel belonging to King Bhirendra's personal collection. In New Delhi, talks are under way...

Sharma hits a button, shutting off the radio.

Sharma (*slightly drunk, raising his glass in a sarcastic toast*): A toast! A toast to Inspector Sharma, preserver of the nation's artifacts! Hip-hip-hoo-bloody-ray!

Scene Seven.

The jail.

There is a moment of quiet, but Terrie is in turmoil. She cannot stay silent for long.

Terrie: So what do you suggest? I mean, what do you think we should do? How do we get out of here? This inspector will agree to see us... he has to see us, doesn't he? He has to let me talk with a lawyer -- that's my right isn't it?

Gopi: Slow down. First things first. What's your name?

Terrie: Terrie... Terrie Rostock.

Gopi: I'm Gopi... Gopi Myerson.

Terrie: Look, Gopi, I think we should both demand to contact our lawyers at once, take a really tough stand, wave the big stick, threaten to call our ambassadors if he doesn't let us go immediately.

Gopi: Uh-uh. I don't think that's a good idea.

Terrie: *And* I've got good connections with officials in the Commerce Department.

Gopi (laughs sarcastically): The Commerce Department! Whoa! Big time! Terrie, are you playing dumb, or do you really have no idea what we're up against?

Terrie: What do you mean?

Gopi: You stole the Royal Rock honey -- you hit the fucking jackpot.

Terrie: What are you talking about?

Gopi: Okay, just for a moment -- just for the moment, mind you -- I'm going to assume you're as innocent as I am. Did you ever hear of Clive of India?

Terrie: No.

Gopi: Robert Clive. One of the great servants of the British Empire -- in other words a soldier of fortune, an officially sanctioned pirate. He looted India.

Terrie: So?

Gopi: After he defeated the Nawab of Bengal in a battle outside Calcutta... in 1757 I think it was... Clive grabbed everything he could lay his hands on: crown jewels, diamonds, rubies, rings, seals, necklaces...

Terrie: So...?

Gopi: Most of Clive's loot went back to England, but one valuable piece, a *jigha*, a turban ornament that Clive plucked from the Nawab's head on the battlefield, stayed with the British in India. It changed hands several times until in 1906 another British adventurer called Sir Howard Trent gifted it to the King of Nepal in exchange for trading rights. It became the pride of the Royal Nepalese collection.

Terrie: How do you know all this?

Gopi: Because I read the papers. The *jigha*, affectionately known as the Royal Rock, was stolen from the King's collection a couple of weeks ago. There was a huge stink, a massive investigation, but nothing was found -- until today.

Terrie: Oh god!

Gopi: I can't believe you didn't hear about it. It was on CNN for days.

Terrie: Well, I didn't okay? I don't have TV, okay?

Gopi: You've been living in Kathmandu for what... ten years?

Terrie: Twelve.

Gopi: Twelve years... in what? Some kind of magic bubble? You're acting like you just got off the plane. Everything about your story is weird.

Terrie (shouting): I'm innocent, okay? Innocent!

Gopi: Shouting at me isn't going to help.

Terrie (calming down a bit, with effort): So... what's your idea? What do you say we should do?

Gopi: Start thinking how you can help the inspector.

Terrie: How?

Gopi: Come up with some names, some dates...

Terrie: Be an informer?

Gopi: Something like that.

Terrie: I'm not part of a crime ring.

Gopi: Maybe you can *invent* a crime ring.

Terrie: What are you talking about? Look, I'm *not* a criminal! Can't you understand? You seem to know more about being a criminal than I do -- maybe *you* put the Royal Rock in the statue; you were holding it long enough.

Gopi: God you're stupid.

Terrie: No, I'm not! (covers her face with her hands and sobs)... I'm not!

Gopi (*takes her hands and says slowly, intensely and forcefully*): Terrie, listen. If you really, truly, honest-to-god, want to get out of here, then use what intelligence you have and put yourself in the inspector's place. He's had the heat of the whole government on his ass for weeks to find the Rock. Now he's got it, and he's got you and he's got me -- conveniently caught red-handed -- to display to the king and the world's media as big-time antique smugglers. And there's no way he's going to let us go until we come up with some replacements. Do you get it?

Terrie: What kind of justice is that?

Gopi: We're not talking justice, sister. We're talking crime, punishment – and politics.

Scene Eight.

The hotel room in Mumbai. Sean is in a t-shirt and shorts. Kirsten is in some kind of slip, with no pants or skirt.

Kirsten: You fell in love with her, didn't you?

Sean (wearily): Jesus, Kirsten, give it up.

Kirsten: Didn't you?

Sean: No I didn't, so help me God! Now please... give it up.

Pause.

Kirsten: Or she fell in love with you. That's more like it. That's why you know she's going to bring the statue, because you charmed her into bed and she fell madly in love with you.

Sean: Keep going, it's better than watching soap operas on TV.

Kirsten (*comes close to him, grabs his shirt and says fiercely*): Listen, you stupid prick. I may be just another a jealous woman whose getting in your hair, but I'm also

in this deal with you as equal partner for half a million bucks and I need to know what's going on, okay?

Pause. Sean looks at her.

Kirsten (insisting): Okay?

Sean (acknowledging her right): Okay.

Kirsten (softer): Okay. So please, Sean, tell me exactly what happened.

Sean (hesitantly at first): There's not much to tell. The museum security guards were paid off, so the break-in was easy, but someone tripped the alarm as I left – maybe it was a double-cross. Anyway, I got away, but I didn't have time to reach the airport.

Kirsten: Then?

Sean: I holed up in my hotel room, but I didn't feel safe. The cops were closing in – I could feel it, like something crawling on the back. It was spooky.

Kirsten: So?

Sean: So I'd been talking to Terrie, this woman.

Kirsten: How'd you meet her?

Sean: I was eating breakfast in her restaurant.

Kirsten: Her restaurant? She owns it?

Sean: Right.

Kirsten: What's it called?

Sean: The Blue Horizon.

Kirsten: Never heard of it. Go on.

Sean: She was easy to talk to, she seemed lonely. I came back that night for dinner and we talked some more. Afterwards she invited me for a drink in her apartment upstairs, one thing led to another... you know how it goes.

Kirsten (sarcastic and softening a little): Yeah, Sean, I do know how it goes. You showed her your big magic wand and she thought her prayers to heaven had been answered.

Sean (grinning sheepishly): Something like that. Then we went on safari for a few days...

Kirsten (sarcastic and jealous): A honeymoon in the jungle, how sweet...

Sean: Well, it got me out of Kathmandu – away from the heat. Anyway, she agreed to bring the statue...

Kirsten: Is she beautiful?

Sean (getting some of his confidence back): Do you think, as my business partner, you need to know that?

Kirsten (softening a bit more): That would be nice... to be only your business partner.

Sean (moving in on her): Are you sure about that?

Kirsten (softly surrendering): Asshole.

They embrace and kiss.

Scene Nine

Inspector Sharma's office.

Terrie is being interviewed.

Terrie: Sean. He said his name is Sean and he had an Irish passport.

Sharma: Is Sean his first name or family name?

Terrie: First name.

Sharma: What is his family name?

Terrie: I can't remember. I saw the name only for a couple of seconds, when I picked up his passport -- it was Irish, too, I think.

Sharma: And you say that this man, Sean, whom you had known only for a few days, left the statue with you, with half a million dollars' worth of jewelry inside?

Terrie: Yes.

Sharma: And flew to Mumbai?

Terrie: Yes.

Sharma: Expecting you to turn up with the statue in ten days' time?

Terrie: That's right.

Sharma: And you had no idea what was inside the statue?

Terrie: Of course not.

Sharma: Do you have an address for him in Mumbai?

Terrie: No.

Sharma: A phone number?

Terrie: No.

Sharma: How were you going to contact him?

Terrie: He said he would call me.

Sharma: Not much of a story, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: It's the truth.

Sharma: So you say. (pause, then, with innuendo) Did you have sex with this man?

Terrie: What?

Sharma: Did you have sex with him?

Terrie (indignant): I don't think that's any of your business, inspector.

Sharma: Well, it might explain why a woman who claims to be a law-abiding citizen of Kathmandu suddenly agrees to help a smuggler.

Terrie: I didn't agree to help him! (getting up as if to leave) Look, this is getting really ugly.

Sharma: You can leave whenever you like. Your cell is waiting.

Terrie (angrily): You're enjoying this! You...

Sharma: Be careful what you say to me, Miss Rostock.

Terrie bites her lip, says nothing, slowly sits down.

Pause. Then Sharma gets up and asks questions while walking slowly around the room.

Sharma: Was there a romantic relationship between you and this man Sean?

Terrie: Yes.

Sharma: How long had the affair been going on, prior to your arrest?

Terrie: Six or seven days.

Sharma: You met him every night?

Terrie: Yes.

Sharma: You made love with him every night?

Terrie: Yes.

Sharma: You slept with this man every night for a week and yet you don't know his last name?

Terrie: Yes.

Sharma: Is it usual for you to meet men in this way and have affairs with them?

Terrie (fighting for control): No, inspector, it is not.

Sharma is now standing close to Terrie, to the side and slightly behind her.

Sharma (slight change of tone and resting one hand on her shoulder): If I were to agree to help you, in exchange for certain favors from you... what would you say to me?

Terrie is frozen, shocked. Sharma eyes her speculatively, in silence, waiting.

Terrie (slowly but firmly): Do you have any other questions, inspector?

Sharma (removes his hand and returns to his normal tone of questioning): This man Sean, did he say where he had been, before entering Nepal?

Terrie: No.

Sharma: Did he say where he was going?

Terrie: I told you, Mumbai.

Sharma: After Mumbai?

Terrie: I don't know.

Sharma: When you were arrested, why did you not immediately tell me he had just left for Mumbai? We might have caught him at the airport.

Terrie: I was in shock. I thought it must be a mistake. I could not believe that... that he could do this... to me.

Sharma: What about your accomplice?

Terrie: Who?

Sharma: Miss Myerson -- the woman known as Gopi.

Terrie: She is entirely innocent. She happened to be in my restaurant for lunch, and was admiring the statue when you came in.

Sharma: I see. Anything else you want to tell me?

Terrie is silent for a moment, struggling to think clearly.

Terrie: There's one thing that might help. The way Sean spoke... it wasn't Irish. That means he could be using a stolen passport. Why don't you check with Interpol... see if an Irish passport has been stolen somewhere?

Sharma: Stolen *somewhere*? Anywhere in the world? Any Irish passport? You think I'm going to bother Interpol with such a vague request? Give me the family name, then I can check.

Terrie: I told you, I can't remember.

Sharma: Then we have nothing more to discuss. Good day to you, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: When can I see a lawyer?

Sharma: When your memory improves.

Terrie (angrily): In any civilized, democratic country you would be *forced* to let me see a lawyer!

Sharma (unfazed by her outburst): If this country was democratic, Miss Rostock, I would be elected president and you would still be in trouble. You may leave.

Scene Ten

Somewhere in Hamburg.

Jeff is sitting with a laptop on his knees and is writing an email to Terrie. He reads it aloud as he does so.

Jeff: Hi Terrie. Greetings from the Fatherland. Do you know what it's like to be in a country populated entirely by German school teachers? There seem to be millions of them. I attract them on buses, U-Bhans, even in restaurants. And when I tell them I lead tours in the Himalayas they all want to come with me! I swear to god it's true. Seriously, though, the Hamburg travel agency says the trip to Kailash is booked out, so I may actually make money for a change. Maybe you should run around the block a few times to get your cute butt in shape for the trek. See you soon. Love, Jeff.

(Jeff's tone changes from light and superficial to something more deep and sincere)

PS That remark you made about me running away from you. It stays with me, Terrie. I know you've got the hots for this other guy, and I know we decided a long time ago to be just friends, but still... maybe I don't want to run any more. That's all I can say. PPS And I am jealous. Damn!

Scene Eleven.

The jail cell. Gopi is talking with Usha, a Nepalese policewoman and slowly establishing a rapport with her. Terrie is absent.

Gopi: Okay, Usha, here's the deal. You take note to Blue Horizon Restaurant. You give note to waiter Pasang. He will bring food to back entrance of jail three times a day. Then you bring food to us -- breakfast, lunch, dinner. Okay?

Usha (objecting): Inspector Sharma will not allow.

Gopi: Inspector Sharma will not know.

Usha: There will be trouble.

Gopi: No trouble, Usha. No problem. Just food -- food for western people. Otherwise we get very sick.

Usha: Much trouble for me.

Gopi: We will pay you... (Usha looks interested). We don't have money now, but when we have money, we will pay you. Okay?

Usha: It is not permitted. I go now.

Exits.

Gopi (raising her voice as Usha leaves) Think about it, okay? (disappointed, saying to herself in a low tone) Fuck!

Enter Terrie.

Terrie (tense, angry and indignant): I am not going to shit in that toilet!

Gopi: Well, you can't hold on forever.

Terrie: Have you seen it?

Gopi: Of course.

Terrie: It's disgusting.

Gopi: It sure is. But I'm more worried about the food and the water. Eating and drinking in this place – rice, dhal and a daily dose of amoebas – that's what's going to make us sick.

Terrie: Don't foreigners get special treatment?

Gopi: Not inside this particular government guest house – no.

Terrie: I'm not going to put up with it. I'm going to file a written complaint with my embassy. They *cannot* treat me like this. They *have* to allow me to see a lawyer....

Gopi (irritated): For Christ's sake, stop whining! You think because you're a Westerner you've got diplomatic immunity? You think because you're white everyone in this jail is going to bow down like your waiters and say "Yes, madam, no madam?" They can do what the fuck they want. If you go on like this you're gonna drive me nuts.

Terrie (angrily): But I'm innocent!

Gopi (also angry): That's got nothing to do with it! Innocent or guilty -- you're in jail! You're a prisoner! Get used to it!

Terrie: I won't! I can't! (suddenly bursts into tears, rushes into Gopi's arms and totally breaks down) I'm innocent, really, Gopi! I didn't do anything, I didn't...

Gopi (a bit uncomfortable with Terrie's vulnerability but comforting her): It's okay, sister, take it easy.

Terrie (sobbing): Oh god, Gopi, Sharma was horrible! His questions... it was like being raped!

Gopi: Take it easy.

Terrie: I think he wants to... to...

Gopi: Shag you?

Terrie nods helplessly: You've got to help me, Gopi, please!

Gopi: Sure, sure. But you need to be practical. You can't keep on shouting and protesting. It won't do any good.

Terrie (like a small child): Okay, okay. So what do we do about it?

Gopi: About what?

Terrie: About the toilet.

Gopi (laughing): Oh right. The toilet. That's certainly being practical. Okay, you really want to know? Nothing. Not right now. Right now, you have to dump your load in that filthy, stinking, bug-infested toilet. So put some steel in your backbone, go back there, take your pants down and shit. You think you can do that for me, Terrie?

Terry makes a big effort to pull herself together and nods, then exits.

Gopi (calling after her): And while you're sitting on the john, see if you can figure out a way to get your hands on some rupees! We need money for baksheesh... urgently!

Scene Twelve.

Somewhere in Hamburg. Jeff is sitting with a laptop on his knees and writing an email to Terrie.

Jeff: Hi Terrie. Guten morgen aus Deutschland. Did you get my email? I was expecting to hear from you, but maybe you've run off into the jungle with another handsome tourist. There was visa trouble at the Chinese embassy -- I had to go to Berlin to sort it out. Typical bureaucratic mess. Chinese officials here can't even fart without permission from Beijing. Anyway, it should be straightened out in a few days, then I'm out of here. Keep running round the block, sweetheart. Love, Jeff.

PS I was talking to Gertrud at the travel agency about our relationship -- about you and me. She says all this "let's-be-friends" stuff is bullshit and that the truth is I'm afraid of women. She says she's a part-time relationship counselor and has offered to give me a private session, but I think she's attracted to me and wants a date, and that makes me nervous. Does that prove she's right about me? What do you think? Write me an email. I want to hear from you. And tell me you've gotten over this guy in Mumbai and have decided to stay in Kathmandu and marry me... (stops, frowns, shakes his head in disbelief) Jesus, what am I writing? I must be going nuts.

Scene Thirteen

The jail cell. The two women are both slightly stoned and Gopi is rolling another joint.

Gopi: Are you ready?

Terrie (sucking at the stub of the joint in her hand): This joint is finished, Gopi.

Gopi: I'm rolling another. Are you ready?

Terrie: Sure.

Gopi: Sure you're sure?

Terrie: Sure I'm sure I'm sure.

Gopi: Okay, here we go. Let's see: O'Riley, O'Hara, O'Rourke...

Terrie: I don't think it began with "O" at all.

Gopi: Okay, okay, but let me get warmed up... how else am I going to tune into the Irish collective?

Terrie: Sorry.

Gopi: O'Riley, O'Hara, O'Rourke... O'Connor, O'Sullivan, O'Flattery...

Terrie (laughing): O'Flattery! That's not a name.

Gopi (smiling): It is now. Take another hit, you're still too tense (holding out the joint for Terrie). You need a relaxed, rambling mind for this kind of work.

Terrie (takes a hit): I'm getting stoned.

Gopi: Correction: you're not getting stoned... you *are* stoned. Now, where was I? O'Flattery, O'Mahoney, O'Michael... O'Kelly... Kelly? How about Kelly?

Terrie: No.

Gopi: Kelly, Collins, Kirkpatrick...

Terrie: Kirkpatrick? Sounds Scottish.

Gopi: Will you stop interrupting me? And pass the joint.

Terrie (handing her the joint): Did you get Usha to bring this?

Gopi: Golden rule of dope dealing: never reveal the name of your supplier. But if there's one thing you can get anywhere in Nepal it's weed. Now then... where was I? O'Michael, O'Reardon.... Rafferty... Murphy... Malone...

Terrie: That sounds more like it.

Gopi: Murphy?

Terrie: No, but I think it might start with "M."

Gopi: Murphy, Malone, Muldoon, McGee, McGill, McDermot...

Terrie: It's starting to sound Scottish again.

Gopi: Don't narrow me down. (pause) You see? Now I can't think of a single Irish name beginning with "M." You broke my stream of unconsciousness.

Terrie: You mean consciousness.

Gopi: I mean what I say. Consciousness is a relative term. My guru explained it to me many times: the human mind works through a continuous process of unconscious association.

Terrie: Okay, okay, keep going.

Gopi (pause): Can't. I've gone blank. Not a name in my head. Let's sing an Irish song.

Terrie: I don't know any.

Gopi: Sure you do. How about *Molly Malone*?

Terrie: Yes, but I've forgotten... how does it go?

Gopi (sings, and Terrie joins in the chorus):

In Dublin's fair city,
Where the girls are so pretty
I first set my eyes on sweet Molly Malone.
As she wheeled her wheelbarrow
Through streets broad and narrow
Crying cockles and muscles
Alive, alive-oh.
Alive, alive-oh, alive, alive-oh,
Crying cockles and muscles,
Alive, alive-oh.

The last few lines convey a sadness, followed by silence.

Terrie (suddenly a bit more sober): It's not working, Gopi.

Gopi: Give it time. We can start over... it's sure to pop up sooner or later.

Terrie (getting scared again): It's no use. I'll never remember the name.

Gopi: Sure you will.

Terrie (panicking): We're going to be stuck here for months and months, maybe for years.

Gopi: Hey, I told you -- no freaking out!

Terrie: I can't help it!

Gopi (impatient): Yes, you can, goddamnit!

Terrie (starting to cry): I'm sorry Gopi, I'm not as strong as you are.

Gopi (takes her in her arms): I know, I know. (pause) Look, I don't want you to think I'm coming on to you, or anything, but would it help if we cuddle a bit?

Terrie nods in gratitude.

Gopi: Come here (they lie down). Get cosy. Okay? Better now?

Terrie: Yes. (softly) Gopi. I'm scared.

Gopi: I know. But there's one thing I've learned about life, sister: whether you're in jail or out, it's never as bad -- or as good -- as you think it is.

Slow fade on the lights. Quietness in the cell. It seems that both women are asleep. Suddenly Terrie sits up.

Terrie: Maguire.

Gopi: What?

Terrie: Maguire. I think it was Maguire. Sean Maguire.

Gopi: How'd you get that?

Terrie: I don't know. I was drifting off to sleep and it just popped into my head.

Gopi: Maguire. You're sure?

Terrie: Not absolutely. But... I think that was the name I saw on the passport.

Gopi: Okay, sister. So tomorrow, when you're no longer stoned, ask for an interview with Sharma.

(they lie down in silence together)

Terrie: Gopi?

Gopi: Yes?

Terrie: Supposing he wants to... you know...

Gopi: Shag you?

Terrie nods. They both sit up.

Gopi: Hmmm. It's a bitch... I mean... if you say 'no' we're fucked, because he'll make life hell for us... and if you say 'yes' you're fucked, because he'll... fuck you.

Terrie: I don't want to be *fucked*, Gopi — not by him, not by anybody (she shudders).

Gopi (assertively): You need to compromise. Make a deal. Give him something... enough to turn him on and get him off.

Terrie: Like what?

Gopi: Do I have to spell it out? Okay (sitting up). You look him straight in the eye and say: "Inspector Sharma, I'm not going to fuck you, or suck your cock, but I'll take my clothes off and you can play with my body until you come."

Terrie: Yuk! Gross! I can't do it!

Gopi: Terrie, five thousand Nepalese girls are sold into the sex trade every year — mostly by their own families. If they can survive sexual abuse, then by god so can you.

Terrie: But how can a woman stand it — to be touched like that?

Gopi: Any hooker will tell you: shut off your feelings, detach your mind from your body and think of the money — or, in your case, think of how great it's gonna be when we get out of here. Now, can we get some sleep? (She kisses Terrie on the mouth and says softly) Pleasant dreams, sister.

Scene Fourteen

The Mumbai hotel room.

Sean is half asleep on the bed. Kirsten is smoking a cigarette. Both are in states of undress.

Kirsten: We could have been in Amsterdam by now... paid off and ready to party.

Sean (softly): Oh no, here we go again.

Kirsten: We could have been in fucking Hawaii, lying on some beach...

Sean: Kirsten, honey, go to sleep.

Kirsten: On a beach, with half a million bucks, and nothing to do but spend it. Jesus, what a dumb thing to do.

Sean, props herself up, looks at him.

Sean: Look, we don't need to do this. It's 3:15 in the morning and we don't need to start tearing each other apart, okay?

Kirsten: What if she doesn't come?

Sean: She'll come.

Kirsten: She could do anything with that statue.

Sean: She won't.

Kirsten: How do you know?

Sean: Because she's a lonely, 40-something woman who's madly in love with me.

Kirsten: Maybe you should call her.

Sean: Not yet. Let her to worry a little, maybe think I've forgotten about her. Then she'll be more eager to please me.

Kirsten: You asshole.

Sean: Well, it's true, isn't it?

Kirsten: So... she's in love with you, but you're not in love with her?

Sean: Right.

Kirsten: You're sure?

Sean: Sure I'm sure.

Kirsten: Then why have we stopped making love?

Sean: We haven't stopped making love, for chrissake. We did it yesterday afternoon.

Kirsten: It wasn't the same. Something's changed Sean.

Sean: Nothing's changed.

Kirsten: Then why aren't you holding me, like you used to?

Sean: I am holding you... (pulls her toward him)... come here and shut up.

(They start making love).

Scene Fifteen.

The jail cell.

Gopi is lying down on her bed, reading a book. Terrie is thinking.

Terrie: I just don't understand how he could do a thing like that.

Gopi: Sharma? It's his job to be an asshole.

Terrie: No. Sean.

Gopi: Set you up like that, you mean?

Terrie: Not just that. Betray my trust. Betray my love. We seemed to be so close. We were having such a good time

Gopi: So you're still the innocent victim, huh?

Terrie: Well, it's true... isn't it?

Gopi: Not the way I see it.

Terrie: How do you see it?

Gopi: I don't know if you're ready to hear it, sister.

Terrie: Try me.

Gopi (puts down her book): You were in La-La Land. You were running some big romantic number on this guy.

Terrie: It was not a big romantic number. It was a love affair. I'm allowed to have love affairs, aren't I? -- everyone else seems to.

Gopi: How long since you had a real love affair - before Sean?

Terrie: Umm... too long.

Gopi: Right. So you were hungry, weren't you? Longing for love. Lonely. Worried that life was passing you by...

Terrie: Maybe.

Gopi: Maybe schmay-be. Am I right, or not?

Terrie (sighs): You're right.

Gopi: Week after week, month after month, nobody is sending you flowers and although you're putting on your best "I'm okay" act for your customers your little heart is quietly crying. Then one day, this tall, dark, handsome stranger walks into your restaurant and bingo! Lights, camera, action... Rhett Butler arrives to rescue Scarlett O'Hara from her middle age crisis.

Terrie (angrily): I am not middle aged!

Gopi: Suit yourself.

Terrie: Let's just forget the whole thing -- I don't want to discuss it.

Gopi: Fine with me.

Pause.

Terrie: You're saying I shouldn't have fallen for Sean?

Gopi: I'm not saying that. How can you *not* fall for someone? It just happens.

Terrie: You're saying I shouldn't have made love to him?

Gopi: I'm not saying that, either.

Terrie: Then?

Gopi: I'm saying that when some strange guy sails into your life, shags you silly for a week and then gives you a statue to run through customs, it's time for alarm bells to start ringing in your head.

Terrie: You're saying I got carried away?

Gopi: I'd say so. I mean, this is Kathmandu for chrissake. There could have been anything in that statue -- smack, crack, coke, brown sugar -- anything.

Pause.

Terrie: You have a point.

Gopi: Okay. Meditate over it.

Pause.

Terrie: Gopi?

Gopi: Hmm?

Terrie: How come you don't talk about yourself?

Gopi: Hmm?

Terrie: I just realized that you know a lot about me, and I know nothing about you.

Gopi: What do you want to know?

Terrie: Everything. Tell me the story of your life -- you're American aren't you?

Gopi: Canadian. Born in Toronto, grew up, got married, divorced, sold my house, traveled the world, went for lunch in the wrong restaurant in Kathmandu and got myself arrested and jailed... end of story. Okay?

Pause.

Terrie: Gopi?

Gopi: What now?

Terrie: How come I get the feeling you're hiding something from me?

Gopi: Jesus, what is this? The inquisition?

Enter Usha.

Gopi: Yes, Usha?

Usha: Inspector Sharma will see you, Miss Rostock.

Gopi: Here you go, sister. (Terrie starts to leave). And don't forget. If he starts to come on to you, be super-clear about what you'll do and what you won't do... chances are he'll take what he can get.

Terrie (scared): Gopi...

Gopi: What?

Terrie (reaching out): Give me a hug.

They hug.

Terrie: I wish I had your strength.

Gopi: You can do this. Remember, think like a hooker: no feelings, all business.

Terrie leaves.

Gopi (after she's gone, mutters a kind of blessing): And may all the protective goddesses of Nepal, Tibet and India smile down upon you, sweetheart.

Scene Sixteen.

Hamburg. Jeff is writing another email.

Jeff: Hi Terrie, Wie geht es dir, mein fraulein? How come you're not replying to my emails? Are *you* running away from *me* now? Do you think that if we both run away far enough we'll meet on the other side of the planet? Gertrud, the woman at the travel agency, invited me to dinner last night and after the tiramasu she practically threw herself at me. I decided to stay the night, as a sort of discipline -- instead of running out the door -- but I can't say I enjoyed it much. Too sweaty and smelly for my taste. And in the middle of the night I was dreaming of walking around Kailash with you. What's wrong with me?

PS The Chinese Embassy, after much hesitation, under orders from Beijing, have graciously decided not to fuck-up my trip, which is very decent of them. I've got the permits in my hands... finally! I fly to Delhi on Friday and I'll be in Kathmandu a couple of days later. Looking forward to seeing you. Love, Jeff.

Scene Seventeen.

Sharma's office.

Sharma (on the telephone): Thank you, sir, yes. ...that's very kind of him... A press conference? I have no objection... Tomorrow or the day after? I'll wait for your call, sir... thank you.

Enter Usha and Terrie.

Sharma (not looking at Terrie, perhaps writing in a ledger or studying a report): You may sit down.

Terrie sits.

Sharma: You have something to tell me?

Terrie: Yes, I have remembered the family name of the man who left the statue at my restaurant.

Sharma says nothing.

Terrie: It's Maguire, Sean Maguire.

Sharma (still not looking at her): You're sure of that?

Terrie: Yes.

Sharma: Very well, I'll check it.

Terrie: You'll contact Interpol?

Sharma: Yes. It may take some time...

Terrie: And don't forget to check the airlines. He flew from Kathmandu to Mumbai... his name should be on a flight list somewhere...

The phone rings.

Sharma: Yes sir... tomorrow at five o'clock? That will suit my schedule. At the ministry? Yes, of course... I'll send you a copy of the press statement in the morning by eleven. Yes, and a copy to the palace. Thank you, sir. Good day. (puts phone down, sees Terrie is still sitting there). That will be all, Miss Rostock.

Terrie (suspecting that this press statement is about her): Inspector Sharma, am I to understand that you are to hold a press conference tomorrow?

Sharma: That is not your concern.

Terrie: Is it about the Royal Rock?

Sharma: I am not obliged to answer your questions. Usha... (he nods that she should take Terrie away).

Terrie: One moment, please, inspector. Surely, you must realize that if you publicize the recovery of the Rock then any chance of catching Sean Maguire will be gone. He

will read about your press conference in the Mumbai newspapers. He will simply vanish.

Sharma: The decision is not mine. It is entirely out of my hands. Now...

Terrie: Inspector, please, look at me for a moment. Look at me! (finally, he makes eye contact). I know that my arrest is very convenient - for everyone. I know that all kinds of pressures are on you. But I beg you to consider, for just one moment, the possibility that I am who I say I am: a restaurant owner who, perhaps very foolishly, got carried away in a love affair with a stranger who took advantage of her. I don't ask you to believe in my innocence, but I do ask for a chance to prove it. Please, postpone your press conference, if only for a few days until you hear from Interpol.

Pause.

Sharma: Why should I help you?

Terrie (astonished): What?

Sharma: Why should I waste my time? I have everything I need to make my superiors happy. I have the jewel, I have you, so why should I help you?

Terrie: Because... because you believe in justice.

Sharma: And suppose I don't believe in justice?

Terrie: What?

Sharma: Suppose I don't care about your legal, democratic, human rights. Why should I help you?

Terrie: (desperately searching for a reason) Because... (with a flash of intuition) because you don't like being pressured by a bunch of fat-assed politicians who don't care about you or me, who are just trying to look good for the king and the television cameras.

Sharma (suddenly breaks into a smile): Ha! That's right! That is the right answer! (gets up and walks around, laughing to himself) Haha! You are a shrewd judge of character, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: I'm just trying to get out of here, inspector.

Sharma: Still, postponement of the press conference may not be possible.

Terrie: Why not?

Sharma (coming to her and putting his hand on her shoulder): I need a more... cooperative attitude from you, Miss Rostock, a much more cooperative attitude.

Terrie says nothing, just looks up at Sharma.

Sharma (surprised that she does not protest): Do you understand me?

Terrie (calmly): I think so, yes.

She continues to look at Sharma with a neutral expression.

Sharma: Come into the other room. It is more private.

Terrie says nothing, but immediately gets up and exits, already unbuttoning her shirt, with Sharma hastily following her in astonishment.

Scene Eighteen.

The hotel room in Mumbai.

Kirsten: What are you thinking about?

Sean: Hmm? Nothing.

Kirsten: I know you're thinking about something.

Sean: I was just thinking about the jewel... the history of it.

Kirsten: Don't lie to me, Sean.

Sean: I'm not lying.

Kirsten: You don't give a shit about history.

Sean (wearily): Okay, you obviously know more about me than I do, so you tell me what I was thinking about.

Kirsten: You were thinking about Terrie.

Sean: Jesus Christ!

Kirsten: Well, it's true, isn't it?

Pause.

Sean (sighs wearily): Yes, it's true.

Kirsten: God, why do I have to always drag it out of you?

Sean: Why do you bother? What does it matter if I'm thinking about some chick?

Kirsten: This isn't just some chick, is it? She's affecting you. I'm not stupid Sean, I can feel it.

Sean: I give up. I don't know what to say.

Kirsten: Just be honest for once. You like her, don't you?

Sean: Like, sure.

Kirsten: You want to see her again, don't you?

Sean: I want to get the statue.

Kirsten: Stop being evasive. You want to see her, don't you? (*Sean says nothing*). Why? What's she got...?

Sean: ...That you haven't? Okay... you really want to know? Well, she melts in my arms like a woman made for passion. She's wide open... a dynamite fuck... and she's got the cutest ass in the whole of Asia. Okay? Honest enough, or do you want more?

Kirsten (*trying to slap his face*): You bastard!

Sean catches her hand and holds her so that she has to look at him.

Sean: But I tell you one thing, Kirsten. I don't back out on business deals. I don't betray my partners. I'm in this with you until it's over. I swear it. Okay? (*at first there is no reaction from Kirsten*) Okay?

Kirsten (*slowly*): Okay.

Sean: Tomorrow I meet with Harry. He needs to know what's happening. Now let's get out of here and get something to eat.

Scene Nineteen.

The jail cell.

Gopi is sitting on her bed reading the local paper. Terrie comes back. Gopi stands up and they look at each other for a moment, then Terrie throws herself into Gopi's arms, but she's not sobbing or freaking out. Gopi gently pushes her away a little, holding her arms and looking at her.

Gopi: Well?

Terrie: You were right, Gopi!

Gopi: Right about what?

Terrie: He went for the compromise.

Gopi (impatient): What happened? Tell me!

Terrie: I'm going to be blunt, okay? (Gopi nods). So I said exactly what you said: no fucking, no sucking. Then, before he could object, I took off all my clothes and stood right in front of him, waiting. He was gobsmacked. He just looked at me. Then he ran his hands over me for a while, which was icky, but I kept it together. Then he dropped his pants and rubbed himself on my belly until he came.

Gopi: Jesus! And then?

Terrie: Then he gave me a rag to clean myself and left the room. I got dressed and then Usha came in and brought me back.

Gopi: And you're okay?

Terrie: I guess so. I wasn't afraid. Sharma seemed... well... kind of embarrassed... almost pathetic.

Gopi (smiling): I'm proud of you, sister (hugs her). You did good!

Terrie: It's funny. If I'd been weeping and pleading, I think Sharma would have enjoyed it more. But I stayed calm and spoiled his party.

Gopi: Right, because you were in charge and he wasn't – men hate that.

Terrie: One moment he's this incredibly powerful guy holding my fate in his hands; next moment, he's like a little boy jerking off in the toilet. I don't think he'll do it again.

Gopi: Don't be so sure... he might, once he understands how you tricked him out of his fun. So tell me, what were you thinking, while he was rubbing himself up and down on you and getting off?

Terrie (tenderly): I was thinking of you, Gopi. I could never, ever, have pulled off something like this without you. Thanks.

They hug.

Scene Twenty.

Jeff in Hamburg.

Jeff: Hi Terrie, I'm in trouble. Gertrud has caught hold of me. We sleep together every night. I've never had so much sex in all my life, but I figure I need it because I spent so many years *thinking* about sex and hardly any time *doing* it. Are you jealous? You needn't be. The more I make love with Gertrud the more I feel... you... in my heart. How weird is that? Anyway, I called the Chinese Embassy and said, "Hey, Mista Chew-man-Fou, you wantee Kailashee permits backee?" No, sorry... racist joke... just kidding. Everything's fine. I fly to Delhi tonight. I'm on my way back. See you soon. Love, Jeff. PS Remember that Hindu saying you told me... about Kailash? "To decide to go is to decide to change your life"? Well, I don't know if you realize it, but ever since you said 'yes, I'll come' you've gone completely off the radar screen. What's the big mystery?

Scene Twenty-one.

The jail. Terrie is lying on her bed curled up in pain. Gopi enters, coming back from the toilet and holding her stomach.

Gopi: Oh god, I've got the shits!

Terrie (looking up, but not getting up): Me too. Christ, my stomach is killing me!

Gopi: When I squatted on the toilet, it was like a river coming out of me – nothing solid at all.

Terrie: I know.

Gopi: Terrie, we need rupees. With rupees, we can bribe Usha, we can buy clean, bottled water, we can get real food... Without rupees, we'll shit our insides out until we die.

Terrie slowly sits up.

Terrie: I have money in the bank.

Gopi (shakes her head): No good. They'll never let you go there.

Terrie: Well, I do have *some* cash – about 50,000 rupees, stashed in a hidden compartment in my bed frame, in my room, above the restaurant.

Gopi: How do we get it?

Terrie: I think Pasang knows about it. He never said anything, but I have a feeling – he knows.

Gopi: Okay, so this is what we do: we offer Usha 500 rupees to take a note to Pasang, asking him to send us 10,000, no, better make it 20,000, in an envelope with Usha back to us.

Terrie: You think it will work?

Gopi: Well, either Pasang will run off with the money, or Usha will grab it, or a miracle happens and we get the money. But what choice do we have?

Terrie (getting off her bed and holding her stomach): Oh fuck... cramps again! I have to go to the bathroom.

Gopi: That's your answer: if we don't get clean food and water soon, we're going to end up on a government-sponsored funeral pyre.

Terrie exits.

Gopi (calling loudly): Usha! Usha come here!

Enter Usha.

Usha: Yes, Madam?

Gopi (starting to write a note): Usha, I'm going to make you rich. Just wait two minutes while I write this note. You take it to Terrie's restaurant, okay? And you get 500 rupees.

Usha: Not allowed, Madam.

Gopi (still writing): Yes, I know... Not allowed. But you can do it. I know you can.

Usha: Big problem for me.

Gopi: No problem for you. No one will know. (mime acting, brings a finger to her mouth in a 'ssshh' gesture) Secret! Just you and me... secret! 500 rupees for you, just for you... only for you... and more rupees later.

Usha (hesitates): Okay, I will do... for you only.

Gopi stops and breathes a big sigh of relief.

Gopi: Thank you. Here (gives her the note) give to waiter called Pasang.

Usha turns to leave.

Gopi: May Laxmi, goddess of wealth and fortune, smile on you and your family for the rest of your days. (muttering and holding her stomach) And for god's sake hurry.

Scene Twenty-two.

Jeff at the airport.

Jeff: Hi again, this time from the airport. Gertrud came to see me off. She was crying in my arms last night, which was extremely embarrassing for me. I mean, she wants me, I want you, and you want whatisname.... Doesn't anybody ever get what they want? Anyway, Gertrud gave me a long lecture about relationships over breakfast. She says that women want love and men want sex. So women give sex to get love, and men give love to get sex. But when I think of you, I don't think about sex at all. So I must be really in love with you... don't you think? Okay, well, I need to go to the departure gate. See you soon, Jeff.

Scene Twenty-three.

Gopi is reading a magazine. Terrie is nervous and can't sit still.

Terrie: What's taking Sharma so long?

Gopi: It's only been three days since you gave him the name.

Terrie: How long does it take to send a message to Interpol, for Chrissake?

Gopi: I don't know, I've never done it.

Terrie: Ha, ha. Very funny. But he must have checked the airlines by now.

Gopi: Relax.

Terrie: If you say that word one more time I'll kill you.

Gopi: Okay, so don't relax.

Terrie: Is it so easy for you, to be in prison?

Gopi: Well, you have to admit, it's a lot better since we got the money. Bottled water... (she holds up a bottle)... decent meals from your restaurant... and drugs from the pharmacy to kill the amoebas – that's what saved us.

Terrie (sarcastically): So, no more shits and now everything's fine for you, right? We can stay here for the rest of our lives and that's okay with you?

Gopi: According to my guru, we're all in prison anyway.

Terrie: How's that?

Gopi: The prison of illusions and desires that keeps us chained to the Wheel of Karma.

Terrie: Well I prefer the illusion of my restaurant to the illusion of this cell.

Gopi: That's a very good point.

Terrie: What's the name of your guru?

Gopi: Baba.

Terrie: That's his whole name? Baba?

Gopi: Baba, Babaji. That's what everyone calls him. His real name is about ten meters long... great saint, holy lord, world teacher, servant of god... all in Sanskrit of course.

Terrie: Where does Baba hang out?

Gopi: Rishikesh.

(Pause)

Terrie: Do you think Sharma actually sent the message? Or do you think he's just trying to wear me down -- get me so frantic I'll agree to anything – even plead guilty?

Gopi: Terrie, you're driving me crazy.

Terrie: I can't help it.

Gopi: Try a little meditation.

Terrie: You want to convert me?

Gopi (sarcastic): Yeah, I get spiritual brownie points for every new devotee who gives Baba a blowjob.

Terrie (laughs): Okay. Let's do it.

Gopi: You don't do it, Terrie. It's a non-doing.

Terrie: Okay, let's non-do it, then.

Gopi: Sit like this.

She sits cross-legged, hands folded in her lap, eyes closed.

Terrie: Okay... what's this meditation called?

Gopi: Vipassana.

Terrie: Baba invented it?

Gopi: No, it's been around for thousands of years. Can we continue?

Terrie: Okay, now what?

Gopi: Start to breathe through your nose.

Terrie: How else would I breathe?

Gopi: Through your mouth, stupid.

Terrie (giggling): Ooops! Sorry... okay.

Gopi: As you breathe, become aware of the air as it moves through your nostrils. Notice how it's cool on the way in, and warm on the way out.

Terry: Okay.

(Silence for a few moments)

Terrie: Now what?

Gopi: Now nothing. You just sit, watching your breath.

(silence)

Terrie: What about the thoughts in my head?

Gopi: You watch them, too.

(Silence)

Terrie: All of them?

Gopi: Yup.

(Silence)

Terrie: Do you think I should send a note to Sharma reminding him about Interpol?

Gopi: Terrie! You're hopeless.

Terrie: I'm sorry... I don't think this is going to work. (Passionately) I just want to get out of here, Gopi!

Gopi: I know, but how is becoming a neurotic wreck going to help?

Terrie (angrily): At least I haven't given up, like you have!

Gopi (hurt): That's a lousy thing to say.

Terrie (embraces her apologetically): I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you, Gopi.

Gopi: And it's not true. I'm doing everything I can to get us out of here. I'm just not freaking out all the time like you.

Terrie: I know, I know... I'm sorry! You've been such a friend to me, Gopi... Oh shit, what am I going to do? I'm going nuts.

Gopi: This calls for drastic measures... Dynamic Meditation.

Terrie: What's that?

Gopi: You'll see. Are you up for it? Or do I have to apply for a new cell mate?

Terrie: Okay. Is this another non-doing?

Gopi: No, it's a major doing.

Terrie: Is it from Baba?

Gopi: No, some other baba.

Terrie: Is it dangerous?

Gopi: Very. Now quit asking questions. Stand up. Feet apart, like this. Shoulders relaxed. Okay... now, we're going to do deep, fast, chaotic breathing through the nose, like this... (demonstrates vigorous breathing)...

Terrie (watching in astonishment): Are you kidding me?

Gopi: Come on! Don't think about it. Do it!

Terrie: Okay, okay...

They both start to breathe noisily.

Terrie: Wait, wait! How do you do that?

Gopi: Do what?

Terrie: Breathe like that? I can't to do it.

Gopi: You emphasize the exhale. Look, er, think of an old steam train, slowly puffing out of a station... like this... (makes a few slow, deep exhales, Terrie copies her and together they gradually speed up into fast, deep, chaotic breathing, emphasizing the exhale).

Gopi (after a short time): Okay, now, throw out your tension, like this... make faces... growl... shout... kill people... go crazy...

Terrie follows her, really getting into it.

Gopi (after a short time): Okay, now, jumping... in the air... arms raised... landing on your heels... shouting "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!"

Terrie follows her. They both "Hoo!" loudly for a while. Inspector Sharma rushes in.

Sharma: Stop!

They freeze.

Gopi: Very good, inspector. How did you know that was the next stage of the meditation?

Sharma: Meditation? Is that what you call it?

Gopi: It's a technique devised by one of India's holy men.

Sharma: I can't allow it. You're making too much noise.

Gopi: We can do it silently.... (seeing his hesitation) It's good for prisoners, inspector, especially westerners. It helps them relax and be quiet - afterwards, I mean.

Inspector: Very well, but no further disturbance. Is that understood?

Gopi: Yes, inspector.

Sharma turns to go.

Terrie (calling after him): Did you send the message to Interpol?

Sharma (not looking back): Yes.

Terrie: Any reply?

Sharma: No (exits).

Terrie: Shit. (calling) How about the airlines?

No answer.

Scene Twenty- four.

Harry, a European in his 40s or 50s, is sitting in a bar in Mumbai. Sean enters.

Harry: Sean! Over here.

Sean (shakes his hand): How's life, pal?

Harry: Have you got it?

Sean: You don't waste time, do you?

Harry: You got it or not?

Sean: Yes and no.

Harry: Meaning...?

Sean: I've got it, but I don't have it.

Harry: How come?

Sean: I had to leave it in Kathmandu.

Harry: That's no good to my client.

Sean: It was unavoidable. The heat was too much. I couldn't risk carrying it myself. The security at the airport was worse than...

Harry: Spare me the details, okay? I'm not here to shed tears over the challenging life of a jewel thief. I'm here to facilitate a deal. My man is waiting in the Sheraton.

We bring the Rock, he gives us the money, I take my ten percent then you do what the fuck you like with the rest of your life. Okay?

Sean: It's going to happen, Harry -- just give me a little time.

Harry: How long?

Sean: Five days -- max.

Harry: I'll see what I can do.

Sean: Thanks. You're still at the same number, right?

Harry (*getting up*): Right. Call once, hang up, call again immediately and ask for Rahul.

Sean (*short laugh*): Rahul! You like to play spook, don't you?

Harry: I like to be careful.

Sean: I'll call you.

Harry: Five days... (drawing the flat of his hand across his own throat like a knife) – max!

Exits.

Scene Twenty-five.

The jail cell.

Terrie and Gopi are doing Dynamic, third stage, jumping up and down, saying “Hoo! Hoo!” softly.

Gopi: Stop!

They freeze. After a while, Gopi opens her eyes, looks at Terrie (who is totally into the meditation) and then quietly goes to her bunk, sits down and starts reading a magazine. She looks up at Terrie a couple of times, expecting her to become restless, but she doesn't.

Gopi: You're definitely getting it.

Terrie opens her eyes.

Terrie: What?

Gopi: The knack. How to meditate.

Terrie: Really?

Gopi: Yeah, sit down, your silence is making me nervous.

Terrie laughs. She sits down, picks up a magazine, then loses interest and puts it down. She is calmer, but feels more vulnerable.

Terrie: Gopi.

Gopi: Hmm?

Terrie: I feel different.

Gopi: That's good... right?

Terrie: I think so. I feel calmer, but I also feel... kinda raw, like someone has peeled off a layer of my skin.

Gopi: I know what you mean. That's why I prefer Vipassana, I'm more in control.

Terrie: But that doesn't work for me.

Gopi (patiently, like a school teacher): Right... I *know*. That's why we're jumping up and down like idiots, doing Dynamic.

Terrie: Maybe I should do more of it.

Gopi: No! That's excessive. Remember, Buddha taught the Middle Way: a little meditation, a little worrying -- you've got to keep a balance.

Terrie (laughs): Okay. Well, shall we worry about your problems or my problems?

Gopi: They're the same, aren't they?

Terrie: What kind of problems do you have, Gopi?

Gopi: Outside of here, you mean?

Terrie: Yes.

Gopi: Men and money, what else is there?

Terrie: You always have a slick answer, don't you? All neatly packaged so you don't actually have to say anything – anything real, I mean.

Gopi: Terrie, what is this?

Terrie: An invitation to meaningfully communicate with me.

Gopi: You're in a very strange mood today.

Terrie: Actually, I'm in a very good mood, for a change. I just want to know who I'm sharing a cell with.

Gopi: Back off, sister. I don't have to tell you anything.

Terrie: It's comfortable for you to play the helper, isn't it? Part therapist, part wise woman, part guru... you've been a real godsend to me, that's for sure. But am I getting the real Gopi, or some role you've adopted to suit the circumstances?

Gopi: You figure it out and let me know.

Terrie: There, you see what I mean? No opening. No way through your defences. No contact.

Gopi: Terrie, do me a favor, leave me alone.

Terrie: Okay. Sure. I don't want to invade your privacy. I'd just appreciate someone less formal than a professional counselor for a room-mate.

Gopi: You're too much! Talk about something else.

Terrie: Okay. How long's it been?

Gopi: Since when?

Terrie: Since Sharma sent the message to Interpol, of course.

Gopi: Seven days.

Terrie: The reply should have come by now, shouldn't it?

Gopi: Today's Sunday. Nothing's going to happen today.

Terrie: So... no point in worrying. Shall we meditate?

Gopi: No! Let's have coffee. Look, it's 8:30, where the hell is Usha with our breakfast?

Terrie: It's such a relief to have decent food again.

Enter Usha.

Usha: Inspector Sharma will see you, Miss Rostock.

Terrie and Gopi look at each other.

Gopi: Good luck, sister. And if he starts to get sleazy...

Terrie: I know, behave like a hooker.

Terrie starts to leave, feeling confident, but Gopi grabs her arm and stops her.

Gopi (more intense now): Terrie, wait! (pause) Listen, it may not be so easy this time. He may want to go further... I mean, you may have to fuck him.

Terrie (shocked): What makes you think so?

Gopi: Sharma's no dummie. He's probably realized he got short-changed last time. Here... take this (she pulls a condom packet out of her jeans pocket). I asked Usha to buy them at the pharmacy.

Terrie: Gopi, I can't do this!

Gopi: Maybe you don't have to – that's Plan A. Okay? But if he insists, you need to have a Plan B.

Terrie: But... but...

Gopi: But nothing. Listen, this is important: a couple of years ago, I shared a hotel room in Delhi with a young woman... she was from Latvia... she couldn't've been more than 20 years old. We became friendly and she told me what she was doing... turning tricks... working as an escort in a call girl network. I was intrigued... she seemed so easy with it, so I asked her: "Don't you feel used by all these men?" You know what she said?

Terrie (shakes her head): Tell me.

Gopi: She said "No, I feel *I'm* using *them*". You get it? That's the hooker mindset. That's how you deal with Sharma: whatever he does, he's not using you... you're using him, to get what you want, okay?

Terrie nods, shakily.

Gopi (putting her hands on Terrie's shoulders to give her support): Stay in control, don't show your fear, okay? (pause) Okay?

Terrie nods: Okay.

Gopi: A few more tips: if he's horny, you'll have to put the condom on him yourself, because he won't want to bother. You know how to do that, right?

Terrie nods.

Gopi: Okay, if he fucks you, turn around and do it doggy style... men come quicker that way – with luck it'll be over in seconds. Or, if you really don't want him inside you, go down on him for a blow job – chances are he'll come even quicker. Okay?

Terrie nods, shakily.

Usha: Inspector is waiting, madam.

Gopi (gently pushes Terrie away): Remember...

Terrie: I know... think like a whore... no feelings, all business.

Terrie exits with the police woman. Gopi stands watching her go, then raises both hands and crosses her fingers.

Gopi: Good luck, sister.

Scene Twenty-six.

Mumbai.

Sean and Kirsten are together.

Kirsten: Now it's time.

Sean: Yeah, I'll call today.

Kirsten: Call her now.

Sean: It's only 8:30.

Kirsten: So?

Sean: Mornings start late for restaurant owners. I'll call in a couple of hours.

Kirsten: I forgot you know her personal habits.

Sean: Spare me the sarcasm, okay?

Kirsten: I don't feel good about this, Sean.

Sean: That message has been clearly and repeatedly conveyed to me, nonstop, 24-7. (slowly) You do not like what's going down here. Fine. I got it. What else is new?

Kirsten: I had a dream... a nightmare more like it.

Sean: What happened?

Kirsten: You went back to Kathmandu, fell in love with Terrie and ran off with her.

Sean (laughing): Did we take the Royal Rock to a public auction in New York?

Kirsten: I don't know.

Sean: Maybe we mailed it to you first.

Kirsten: It's not funny, Sean.

Sean: It *is* funny. It's fucking hilarious. How many times do I have to say it? Maybe I like Terrie, maybe we had a good time together, but the deal comes first and...

(slowly and deliberately, for emphasis) ...you and I have a deal.

Kirsten: Are you sure?

Sean: Sure I'm sure. Now let's go for a walk on the beach. This place is driving us crazy.

Scene Twenty-seven.

Inspector Sharma's office.

Enter Terrie, with Usha, who then leaves the room.

Sharma: Sit down, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: Thank you, inspector.

Sharma (looking through his papers): We received a cable from Interpol last night... (finds the paper) according to a report filed by the Spanish police, an Irish passport in the name of Sean Maguire was stolen in Barcelona from a vacationing tourist, last August.

Terrie (delighted): That's it! That's him! And did you check with the airlines?

Sharma: We did. A passenger under the name of S. Maguire flew Royal Nepal from Kathmandu to Mumbai on the day of your arrest.

Terrie: You see, inspector, I was telling the truth. I'm innocent. It was set up.

Sharma: Not so fast, Miss Rostock. These facts do not establish your innocence. The man could simply be your accomplice. You could be informing on him to save yourself - and he could be anywhere in the world by now.

Terrie: I don't think so, inspector.

Sharma: Why not?

Terrie: Because he hasn't heard that I've been arrested. You didn't hold the press conference, did you?

Sharma: No, not yet.

Terrie: So he's still expecting me to come to Mumbai with the statue.

Sharma: But I'm not going to let you go. I can't risk losing you.

Terrie: I know, inspector, but I think there's a chance I can persuade Sean -- or whoever he is -- to come here.

Sharma: How?

Terrie: Sean said he would call, to tell me where to meet him in Mumbai -- that's what we arranged. I'll tell him I can't come -- I'm tied up, too busy... and... (hesitates, a little embarrassed) and I'll pretend I want to see him again. I'll tell him I miss him. I'll ask him to come here, spend some time with me, pick up the statue.

Sharma: You think that will work?

Terrie: I don't know. It seems like my only chance.

Sharma: You are a resourceful woman, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: I'm an innocent woman, inspector.

Sharma: That is yet to be determined. When is Sean Maguire likely to call?

Terrie: He could call any time. He'll call the restaurant. I can have my staff say I'm out and that he should call back in a couple of hours. They can send a message to us here. Then we can go and wait for the call.

Sharma: You must try and keep him talking, so I can have the call traced.

Terrie: I'll do my best.

Sharma: Very well. (gets up, comes around the desk to Terrie, changes tone) This will require close cooperation between us, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: I know... in the other room. (stands up and nods towards the other room)

Shall we go?

She leaves before he can reply, so he has to follow her.

Scene Twenty-eight.

Mumbai.

Sean is on the phone.

Sean: Hello, Blue Horizon? I'd like to speak with Terrie, please... What? I can't hear... okay, well... when will she be back? ...Can you tell her that I'll call this afternoon, around three o'clock? ...My name is Sean, Sean Maguire... Yes. Thanks.

Scene Twenty-nine.

The jail cell. Gopi is waiting nervously. She's worried about Terrie. Usha escorts Terrie into the cell. Gopi immediately goes over to her. Terrie embraces her. Usha leaves.

Gopi: Are you okay, sister?

Terrie nods bravely.

Terrie: Can I cry now?

Gopi holds her. Terrie rest her head on her shoulder, but not for long. She looks up at Gopi and wipes a tear from her eye.

Gopi: Was it bad?

Terrie: Not my favorite way of passing the morning.

Gopi: What happened?

Terrie: You were right. He wanted more.

Gopi: Did he fuck you?

Terrie shakes her head.

Terrie: Blow job. It was pretty disgusting.

Gopi: Shit.

Terrie: But you were right, Gopi. He came immediately.

Gopi: And he wanted you to swallow...?

Terrie nods.

Terrie: Yes, but he didn't know about Plan C (she holds the crumpled ball of paper in her hands) I discreetly spat his emissions into a piece of toilet paper!

They both giggle at Terrie's resourcefulness. She throws the paper ball into a corner, then takes a deep breath, as if centering herself.

Terrie: Now the good news: Sharma's agreed to allow me to try and trap Sean. Then comes the hard part...

Gopi (with a grin): I'd say you just did the hard part (meaning the blow job).

Terrie (smiling): Yeah, right! The *next* hard part! I try and persuade Sean to come to Kathmandu and pick up the statue.

Gopi: It's going to work, Terrie, I can feel it.

Terrie; You really think so?

Gopi: No question.

Terrie: Gopi, I'm scared. What if he doesn't come? We'll be stuck here and I'll have to do it again with Sharma. Sooner or later he's going to want... everything. I don't think I can stand it....

Gopi (reassuring, like a big sister): Next time, I'll go instead of you... and kick the bastard in the nuts!

Terrie (smiles): Thanks.

Gopi: But that's not gonna happen because Sean *will* come. He *has* to come, goddamit!

Terrie: Do you believe in karma, Gopi?

Gopi: I guess so, why?

Terrie: Do you think it was my karma to get thrown in jail, so I could learn something... about myself?

Gopi: The way I see it, you can learn from anything, anytime, anywhere.

Terrie: So... what do you think I can learn here?

Gopi: Either to collapse and be a victim, or become stronger, more centered, more conscious... how's that sound?

Terrie: You really are a wise woman, aren't you?

Gopi: Not wise enough to avoid being stuck in here (Sees Sharma coming) Uh-oh, Terrie... this could be it.

Enter Inspector Sharma.

Sharma: Miss Rostock, please come with me.

Terrie: Where are we going?

Sharma: To your restaurant. The call will come at three o'clock.

Both exit.

Scene Thirty.

Somewhere in Delhi.

Jeff (writing an email): Hi Terrie, Namaste mataji! I'm in Delhi. And I have terrible news. The Kailash tour party is made up entirely of Bavarian school teachers. You see? You have to come with me, or I won't survive. They'll bury me in Tibet. And when Gautam the Buddha descends on the Full Moon night at Kailash the Germans will spend the whole time telling him how to re-write the Dhammapada. Have mercy on an old friend. Don't change your mind about coming to Kailash, Love, Jeff.

(*pause*) PS, I miss you... PPS, I miss you a lot. PPPS Gertrud is asking to come to Kailash as well. I don't think that's such a good idea... do you?

Scene Thirty-one.

Terrie's restaurant.

Sharma and Terrie are sitting by the phone. Nobody speaks. Time passes.

Sharma (looking at his watch): I think, if this person was going to call, he would have done so by now.

Terrie: What time is it?

Sharma: Five o'clock. (*rising*) I have other matters to attend to, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: Can't you allow me to stay here a bit longer?

Sharma: That is impossible.

Terrie: You could order a policeman to stay with me.

Sharma: I cannot spare a single man. We must go, Miss Rostock.

Terrie rises, they start to leave. The phone rings.

Pasang (*picks up the phone*): Blue Horizon, good afternoon... Just a moment. For you madam.

Sharma (*to Terrie*): Switch on the intercom, so I can hear.

Terrie hits the button on the squawk box.

Terrie: Hello?

Sean: Terrie?

Terrie: Sean! Honey, it's good to hear you.

Sean: Yeah, you, too, Terrie. How's everything?

Terrie: Well, to be honest, I'm a bit stressed-out...

Sean: How come?

Terrie: I've been trying to get away but... Listen, honey, I'm sorry but I'm not going to make it to Mumbai.

Sean: What's wrong?

Terrie: I'm up to my neck in all kinds of bureaucratic bullshit.

Sean: It's not about the statue, is it?

Terrie: The statue? (laughs) Hell no, it's the restaurant. A couple of government health officials dropped in a few days ago, worked my place over and came up with a list of violations as long as my arm. They want to shut me down. Can you believe it?

Sean: That's bad luck.

Terrie: It's nothing to do with luck, Sean. It's a set up. Some local restaurant owner thinks I'm too popular with the tourists so he baksheeshes his pals in the health department to make trouble. So I'm on the phone for hours, talking to this official, that official, sitting all day in government offices and getting nowhere. It's so complicated I can't even figure out who to bribe.

Sean: That's too bad. But you still have the statue, don't you?

Terrie: Sitting right here on the bar where you left it, and you know what? The customers really like it... I've had so many offers for it, you wouldn't believe.

Sean: I'm happy about that, but I need it here.

Terrie: I know, honey, but listen, I have a great idea. Why don't you fly up here for a few days, stay at my place and then take the statue back with you?

Sean: I'd love to, Terrie, but I'm also tied up -- waiting on a couple of business deals.

Terrie: Sean, what do I have to do to see you again? Threaten to throw your precious statue in the river?

Sean (nervous laugh): Hey, don't do that, Terrie. It cost me a lot of money.

Terrie: Okay, but wouldn't you like to come? Just for a couple of days? Look, I'll split the airfare with you. That's fair, isn't it? You can stay with me... it won't cost you a dime. Didn't we have fun, last time? Pleeeeeease honey...

Sean (hesitates): Okay, Terrie, I'm coming. But it's got to be a fast trip. I can't stay more than three days at the outside.

Terrie: Oh, Sean, that's wonderful. I'm so happy. When can you make it?

Sean: Let me think... With luck, I'll be knocking on your door around five o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

Terrie: I'll be waiting. Oh Sean, I'm really looking forward to it.

Sean: Me, too. Bye Terrie.

Terrie: Bye honey.

She waits until Sean has hung up, then slowly puts the phone down, feeling shaky.

Terrie: He must have heard the anxiety in my voice.

Sharma: You sounded quite convincing to me, Miss Rostock.

Terrie: Inspector, one thing is obvious from the call, isn't it...? That Sean Maguire and I are not accomplices?

Sharma: So it would appear.

Terrie: So if he does come for the statue, and you arrest him, I'm off the hook...no longer a suspect? And Gopi, too?

Sharma: I cannot make an official statement to that effect, but unofficially... yes, I would release you both.

Terrie: Okay, let's hope the gods are smiling on Terrie Rostock.

Sharma: Let us also hope that, in the case of Mr Maguire, greed overcomes fear.

Scene Thirty-two.

Mumbai.

Sean is just finishing packing a small bag.

Kirsten: So you're going, then?

Sean: Sure, what else?

Kirsten: I could go. She might give me a hard time, but in the end she'd have to give me the statue.

Sean: Too messy. It's better I go.

Kirsten: You want to see her again, don't you?

Sean: Kirsten, this is strictly business.

Kirsten: But you'll stay with her?

Sean: Of course.

Kirsten: And make love with her?

Sean: Kirsten, don't *do* this. Terrie and I are not going to run off together, okay? This is Sean Maguire, international criminal, back to his old self and ready for action.

We're talking about half a million bucks here - enough for both of us to kick back and do what we want for years. And if I have to screw some dumb broad for a couple of nights to get the Rock, it's all in the line of duty... (kisses her goodbye).

He starts to leave.

Kirsten: Sean...

Sean: What?

Kirsten (softly): Don't go. It's not the woman. I have a really bad feeling -- that if you go I'll never see you again.

Sean: Anything else to say to me? (*Silence*) See you in three days (he draws the flat of his hand across his own throat like a knife) – max!

Sean exits.

Scene Thirty-three.

The jail cell.

Gopi is sitting alone. Terrie walks in. She has changed her clothes and is looking good.

Terrie: How do I look?

Gopi: Terrific. He'll die for you.

Terrie: It's not too much?

Gopi: No, it's fine.

Terrie: Gopi, if it all works out, Sharma has agreed to let us go.

Gopi: That's great.

Terrie (emotional): I'm so grateful to you, Gopi. I don't think I would have made it without you.

Enter Usha.

Usha: We go now, madam.

Terrie hugs Gopi, then starts to leave.

Gopi (hesitantly): Terrie...

Terrie: Yes?

Gopi (exposing her own insecurity for the first time): Don't forget me, okay?

Terrie (puzzled): Forget you... how?

Gopi: Don't leave me alone here....

Terrie (realizing what Gopi is saying, takes her by the shoulders and looks into her eyes): Are you kidding me? *Leave you here?*

Gopi: You've your strength back now... I can feel it. You're gonna make it. It's weird, I know, but somehow that makes me shaky.

Terrie (embracing her): Oh Gopi, I love you!

Gopi (holding back tears): There's so much I haven't told you... my life's a mess... I've been hiding, like you said.

Terrie: Hiding what?

Gopi (forces herself to say it): Why... why do you think I can coach you so well... to protect yourself... like a hooker?

Terrie: Oh my god, that wasn't some call girl from Latvia in Delhi! It was you!

Gopi nods.

Gopi: I've been working the Far East for three years... mostly Japan and Hong Kong. The money's good, but there's always a downside. I shut off... to friends, to lovers, to just about everyone. I got some serious habits... not just weed... uppers, downers, crank, skag.... Then one miserable night in Delhi, after being shagged for

hours by two fat American businessmen, I overdosed on crystal meth and woke up in intensive care. When they let me out, I came here, to Kathmandu, to sort out my life.

Terrie: Why didn't you tell me?

Gopi: One of us had to be strong. You couldn't, so it had to be me, but it's all fake.

Terrie: I don't care.

Gopi: You're not mad at me?

Terrie: Of course not.

Gopi: I just don't want to be left here, Terrie. Not by myself.

Enter Sharma.

Sharma: Miss Rostock, we must leave, immediately.

Terrie (making a sudden decision): Inspector, I need Gopi to come with me.

Sharma: Why is that necessary?

Terrie (hurriedly): I'm nervous and I'm a bad actress. There's every chance Sean Maguire will see through me. I need Gopi's support. Please Inspector, it will really, really help me.

Sharma: Oh very well. We're wasting time. Come!

Terrie is delighted. Gopi is surprised. They exit with Sharma.

Scene Thirty-four.

Somewhere in Kathmandu.

Jeff is in his apartment, with a bunch of roses in his hand. He is rehearsing in front of a mirror.

Jeff (offering the roses to an imaginary woman): Terrie, I love you and I want to marry you (shakes his head and makes a face of disgust). Naaah... it's such a cliché. (tries a more casual approach) Terrie, let's do this, let's get hitched, okay? (unsatisfied, he tries again) Terrie, I'm here... to stay... no more running away; here, have some roses (doesn't like this last bit and repeats it, incredulously)... "*have some roses*"? What, are you offering her a cup of coffee? Don't *talk* about the roses... *give* her the roses. Terrie (offering the roses) let's not waste any more time... let's move in together right now. (seems more satisfied with this). That's better. Not great, but better. (he starts to walk off stage) Terrie, would you like to marry a complete dickhead who doesn't know the first thing about proposing to a woman....

Scene Thirty-five.

Final scene.

The restaurant. Everything looks normal: Gopi is sitting in a corner, eating a plate of French Fries. Terrie is sitting in the middle. Pasang is coming and going. After a few moments, Sean enters the restaurant.

Sean: Hi Terrie, I made it!

Terrie: Sean! It's good to see you.

They embrace. Sean holds Terrie for a long time. He is still attracted to her and pleased to see her, so he wants to make the most of this reunion. Terrie is insecure, not quite knowing how to handle the situation – feeling Sean's affection for her and yet knowing she has a job to do. After a while, Sean leans back a little from the embrace, turns Terrie's face towards his own.

Sean (softly): Hi.

Terrie (responding): Hi Sean.

He kisses her fully on the lips. She allows it, but is not comfortable with it and breaks it off as soon as she can without appearing to be cold towards him.

Terrie: So you're here at last (she points towards the statue). Your little friend has been waiting for you.

Sean (still being very physical with her): Business later, okay? Let's take a stroll up to your room.

Terrie (enjoying his caresses, but determined to stay on track): Not so fast, please Sean. I need to meet you all over again. Let's sit down and have a cup of coffee.

Sean (still caressing her): Nope, I don't want to waste a moment of these three days. Come on, let's go.

It's getting difficult for Terrie. Sean is practically undressing her in the restaurant. But now she gently pushes him away.

Terrie: No, Sean. Please. A woman needs time, let's sit down.

Reluctantly, Sean sits at the table with Terrie.

Sean: You're still open, I see.

Terrie: What?

Sean: The health inspectors?

Terrie: Health inspectors...?

Sean: Yes, didn't they try to shut you down?

Terrie (*remembers her excuse*) Oh, right! The *health* inspectors! My god, that was such a hassle but it's okay now.

Sean: Good. Missed me?

Terrie (sincerely): Yes, Sean, very much. Something to drink -- beer?

Sean: Coffee, thanks.

Terrie: Pasang! Coffee over here. (to Sean) Something to eat?

Sean: Sure. Make it the usual.

Terrie (puzzled) Usual?

Sean: Come on, Terrie. Has it been so long? I always ate your Himalayan Omelet with French fries.

Terrie: Oh right! I'm sorry, Sean. Pasang -- Himalayan with a side order of fries.

Pasang: Yes, madam.

Sean: How is everything, Terrie?

Terrie: Fine, Sean, fine.

Sean: Are you sure?

Terrie: Yes, why?

Sean: You seem nervous.

Terrie: Do I? Well, so would you be...

Sean: What is it?

Terrie (hesitates): You should have told me, Sean.

Sean: About what?

Terrie: About what was in the statue.

Pause.

Sean: So you know.

Terrie: Yes.

Sean: Have you told anyone?

Terrie: No.

Sean (relieved): Good, that's good, Terrie, thanks.

Terrie: Sean, I need to know... why did you give the statue to me?

Sean: I had no choice, Terrie... really. I had to give it to you because...

Jeff enters the restaurant, with a loud flourish.

Jeff: Ta-daaaaa!

Terrie (jumping up): Oh! Jeff, you scared me!

Jeff: Happy to see me?

Terrie: No... I mean, yes... But you can't be here now! You have to leave!

Jeff: My God, I've come all the way from Berlin to see you and this is my reception?

(seeing Sean for the first time) Oh no, is it because of Romeo, here?

Terrie (desperately): Jeff, get out... please! You're ruining everything!

Jeff: Ruining what? Jesus... are you planning a wedding or something... (nodding to where Sharma is hiding) and who's the guy hiding behind the curtain?

Terrie (realizing the trap has been revealed): Oh no!

Sharma (emerging from concealment): Miss Rostock, why are you sending this man away? Are you trying to protect him?

Terrie (to Sharma): No, inspector, he's just a friend... he doesn't know anything!

Sean (understanding he is in a trap): I'll come back another time (hurriedly exits).

Terrie (despairingly to Sharma): That's him!

Sharma (calling out): Usha, stop him!

Jeff (to Terrie): What's going on? Are you in trouble?

Sean reappears with Usha who is holding a gun on him.

Terrie (pointing at Sean): This is Sean Maguire. This is the man who gave me the statue.

Sean (acting innocent and spreading his hands): Statue? What are you talking about?

Sharma (walking over to Sean): Is your name Sean Maguire?

Sean: No, it's Anderson. Hugo Anderson... (reaching into his jacket) here's my passport... I'm Swedish.

Sharma (looking at it): But just now you answered to the name of Sean.

Sean: It's a nickname. I use it sometimes.

Sharma: I'll have this passport checked (nodding towards Terrie): You are acquainted with Miss Rostock.

Sean: Casually. I eat here sometimes.

Sharma (indicating the statue): Does this statue belong to you?

Sean (acting puzzled): That? I never saw it before.

Terrie (a pleading note in her voice): Sean, they think I stole the Royal Rock. They're going to put me in jail for a long, long time if you don't admit what you did.

Sean (still acting well): Why are you saying this to me? I hardly know you.

Sharma begins a rapid interrogation, hoping to expose Sean and trap him, but Sean fields his questions easily and confidently...

Sharma: I heard the phone call you made to Miss Rostock from Mumbai. It appears you had knowledge of the statue and were, at the very least, an accomplice in the theft of the Rock.

Sean: I think you're confusing me with someone else – I made no call.

Sharma: Did you just come from Mumbai?

Sean: Yes.

Sharma: What work do you do there?

Sean: I'm a consultant for European companies outsourcing in India.

Sharma: Why have you come to Nepal?

Sean: I came to arrange a trek – to Everest Base Camp – for a group of colleagues.

Sharma: Then why come here, to this restaurant?

Sean: Why not? I was hungry. I needed to eat something.

Sharma: When you came in here, why did you say 'Terrie, I made it'?

Sean: The last meal I ate here was so good, I promised I'd come back for another.

Sharma (disbelieving but running out of questions): You seem to have all the answers Mister...

Sean: Anderson. Can I go now?

Terrie (cracking under the strain): I knew it wouldn't work! You're too clever for me, Sean!

Gopi (standing up): Just a moment! (to Sharma) May I say something, inspector?

Sharma nods.

Gopi: Perhaps you didn't notice at the time, Sean Maguire, or whoever you are, but I was here, in this restaurant, the day you gave that statue to Terrie. I heard you ask her to bring it to Mumbai. I can testify in court that your request came as a surprise to her and she had no idea what the statue contained.

Sean (sneering): Two women ganging up on one man to save themselves. Not much of a case, wouldn't you say, Inspector?

Jeff (calmly stepping forward): One a moment. I think you've all forgotten... I, too, was in this restaurant at the time. I saw this man ask Miss Rostock to take the statue and I will swear to it in court.

There is silence for a moment, as everyone realizes the case is shifting in Terrie's favor.

Pasang (quietly): Me also, Inspector. I also saw. Miss Rostock is telling truth.

Sean (nervous now, but taking refuge in bravado): Well, what a nice arrangement you've cooked up here. You tried to set a trap for me... it didn't work... and now all you've got left is conspiracy... A poor bunch of liars trying to rescue one guilty woman by making me the fall guy.

Terrie (breaking down in tears): It's not true, Sean! You know it...

Gopi (angrily): You're the liar!

Sean (sneering): Prove it!

Jeff: We will, don't worry!

Sharma (holding up a hand the silence and says loudly): Be quiet, all of you!

Jeff (muttering to Sean): Asshole!

Sharma (louder): Silence!

There is complete silence. Sharma walks slowly forward, taking centre stage, pondering over the situation.

Sharma: Let me speak frankly with you. I have retrieved the Royal Rock. That was my priority... to save my neck and – if you will forgive the crudeness of the expression – to cover my ass. Now I need someone to blame, some criminal to exhibit before the king, the public and the international press.

Gopi: You could just let us go... you have the Rock.

Sharma: Ha! I am not a saint, young lady. I am a police officer. My reputation is on the line.

Sean (slowly, softly, carefully choosing his words): How about a donation, inspector... a very large donation... to the charity of your choice?

Sharma (scrutinizing him): Mmm? I don't think I heard you, Mr Anderson. Would you care to repeat your statement a little louder, so we can all hear?

Sean, realizing Sharma is unbribable, stays silent.

Terrie (helplessly): Then what are you going to do, inspector?

Sharma (pause): I am a citizen of Nepal, a servant of King. And one thing we Nepalese hear from your Western Governments all the time is how great it is to be a democracy. They go on telling us: kingdoms are out of fashion, out of date, for the history books. Democracy is the only civilized form of government.

Gopi: So?

Sharma: You are all Westerners, so you must believe in these great democratic principles. Am I correct?

Nobody else says anything.

Sharma (repeats, more forcefully): Am I correct?

Gopi (shrugs): I guess so.

Sharma: So we will conduct a democratic election. Here, in this restaurant. I give you one vote each. Now... those who believe Mr Anderson to be guilty, kindly raise your hands (Terrie, Gopi, Jeff and Pasang all raise their hands). Thank you. Those who believe Miss Rostock to be guilty, raise your hands...

Sean slowly starts to raise his hand, but then seeing the situation, that he is outvoted, drops his hand.

Sharma (to Sean): Mr Anderson, I note that you have been elected, by a clear majority of four votes to zero, to be my official victim. Shall we go?

Sean (genuinely shocked by the inspector's attitude): You've got to be kidding! This isn't justice!

Sharma: No indeed, Mr Anderson, it is democracy at work. And somehow I have the feeling that in this case democracy and justice go hand-in-hand. How rare an event is that? Usha, take him away.

Usha starts to lead Sean away.

Terrie: Inspector (they pause). May I have a word with Sean?

Sharma: You may, but be quick.

Terrie comes forward, so does Sean. They form a little island of privacy in the centre of the stage.

Terrie (with heartfelt sadness): I don't want you to go to jail, Sean, but I have no choice. It's either you or me.

Sean (touched by her feelings for him): I know. Don't worry, I'll figure something out. If Sharma won't take a bribe I'll find someone higher up who will (pause). Guess you think I'm a real asshole, huh?

Terrie (smiling) Yes. But... (searching for something positive to say) I know you didn't intend for me to be caught with the statue.

Sean (takes her hands and says softly): We had a good time together, you and me.

Terrie (tenderly): We did.

Sharma (interrupting): That's enough. We must go.

Sean (half-joking): Wait for me, Terrie?

Terrie (laughing in disbelief at his cheekiness): What? No! I'm done with hopeless romance.

Sharma (coming forward): This way, Mr Anderson. (Usha leads him out). Miss Rostock, you and Miss Myerson are at liberty. I will require additional statements from you both – and one from you sir (to Jeff) – and you (to Pasang) and you may be called to give evidence at Mr Anderson' trial, is that clear?

Terrie: Yes, Inspector... And thank you.

Sharma (touched by Terrie's courage): You are brave woman, Miss Rostock. I won't forget you.

He offers her his hand and she takes it.

Terrie (smiling ruefully): I certainly won't forget you, Inspector.

Exit the Inspector, Sean Maguire and Usha.

There is stunned silence in the restaurant. Jeff, Gopi and Terrie look at each other.

Jeff (slowly, with a kind of wonder): What the fuck happened?

They all laugh in relief from the tension. Terrie embraces Gopi.

Jeff (after a pause): Terrie, I came back...

Gopi (finishing his sentence for him):... to take her to Kailash, I know.

Jeff: No... (Coming forward and taking Terrie's hands in his) I came back to tell you I love you. I want to be with you.

Terrie (wiping her tears, she is very emotional, happy and relieved): Oh Jeff, that's nice... more than nice... But... I think I'm in love with Gopi.

Gopi (tenderly): Oh Terrie, that's nice... (gives a little laugh) More than nice... But I think I'm in love with Inspector Sharma.

Terrie and Jeff (shocked): WHAT?

Gopi waits for a second, then laughs: I'm joking! I don't know who I'm in love with, apart from myself, of course!

Jeff (confused): Well, what happens now? How do we work this out?

Terrie: The solution is simple. I mean, it's obvious, isn't it?

The other two look at her expectantly.

Jeff and Gopi: It is?

Terrie: Yes (she pauses for one second, then, taking their hands and raising them up, says loudly and joyfully): We all go to Kailash!

Jeff and Gopi: Yay!

End