

REPENTANCE

Written by

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Based on a collection of true events

From the life of Vishal Munsif

FADE IN:

INT. MANSION/DINING HALL - NIGHT

Gothic-Victorian architecture. Dimly lit. Fancy pillars, ornate walls. A large family portrait hung above a fireplace. An old grandfather clock TICKING in the corner.

The room is massive, though mostly empty, with a single dining table in the center. The table seem puny amidst the sheer scale of the room.

Seated around the table are seven individuals of varying age and gender.

The seven sit and eat in silence. Not a word or glance given. As if each person were the only one in the room. Only the occasional CLINK of utensils and glassware alerts them to each others' presence.

The TICKING of the clock continues monotonously in the background.

AHAAN (18), a young, scrawny kid whose messy attire is somewhere between street punk and gamer addict, is the first to finish. He wipes his mouth and tosses his napkin on top of his plate.

He stands up and leaves the room. No one pays heed to his movements.

INT. MANSION/HALLWAY - NIGHT

Portraits line the walls. Old men and women, whose eyes appear to follow Ahaan as he walks down the hallway.

The wooden floors CREAK with every step he takes, but Ahaan is not fazed in the slightest. His gait is slow, dream-like. His eyes fixated on a door with a large 1 on it.

He reaches the door. Without looking down, his hand grasps the handle and swings it open.

Bright white light radiates out, engulfing Ahaan as we:

CUT TO WHITE.

FADE IN:

INT. AHAAN'S APARTMENT/AHAAN'S ROOM - DAY

Various movie posters decorate the walls. The room itself is a huge mess, with clothes, papers, and various knick-knacks strewn across the desk, bed, and floor.

Ahaan lays in bed, asleep.

A hard KNOCK on the door.

DARPAN (O.S.)
Ahaan. Time to get up.

AHAAN
(muffled)
Mmm.

He shifts under the covers.

More KNOCKING. LOUDER this time.

DARPAN (O.S.)
Ahaan!

Ahaan stretches and rubs his eyes.

AHAAN
What?

DARPAN (O.S.)
It's two in the afternoon.

AHAAN
Mmm. Okay.

Ahaan pulls the covers over himself and turns away from the door.

He settles into his new position as the door swings open to reveal DARPAN (40s), Ahaan's fuming, balding father, who holds a large wooden spoon in his hand.

Darpan begins mercilessly beating Ahaan.

DARPAN
(in between hits)
What--part--of--get--up--do--you--
not--under--stand.

AHAAN
Ow! Ow! Stop it! Stop!

Darpan finishes with a SMACK to the forehead and storms out of the room.

Ahaan massages his body as he gets out of bed.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
 (under his breath)
 Cocksucker.

He starts undressing. His body is full of bruises.

INT. AHAAN'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - DAY

Ahaan stumbles into the kitchen. A cold plate of eggs and toast sits on the table.

He plops down in front of the food and begins eating.

Darpan appears from behind the counter.

 DARPAN
 What is it with you never doing
 what I ask the first time I ask it?

Ahaan doesn't answer.

 DARPAN (CONT'D)
 Answer me.

Silence.

Darpan raises the spoon again. Ahaan flinches.

 AHAAN
 I don't know.

 DARPAN
 You better start making it a habit.

He tosses the spoon into the sink.

Ahaan goes back to eating as Darpan leave to the living room.

Ahaan pulls out his phone.

INSERT: PHONE

A new message from Sahil: "Usual spot?"

END INSERT.

Ahaan looks up at Darpan, who sits on the couch watching TV. He flips him off then turns back down to his phone.

INSERT: PHONE

Ahaan types a single-word reply: "Yea."

END INSERT.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Atop the green floored roof are a pair of lawn chairs and small table. Empty cases, beer bottles, and cigarette butts are strewn across the ground.

SAHIL (18), an almost exact doppelganger of Ahaan, waves him over. In his other hand is a fresh 6-pack of Kingfisher. The two boys fist bump and Sahil hands Ahaan a bottle.

They crack their beers open and recline on the chairs. In front of them, the vast Mumbai cityscape.

SAHIL
Your dad again?

He gestures to the bruise on Ahaan's forehead.

AHAAN
Yeah.

SAHIL
Why don't you stop him?

AHAAN
Trying to stop him only makes it worse. He gets even more pissed.

SAHIL
Maybe stop doing things to piss him off in the first place then.

He takes a swig.

AHAAN
Everything I do pisses him off.

SAHIL
I dunno. I bet if you just did what he told you to do, you'd be fine.

AHAAN
Fuck that I ain't some slave bitch. He wants me to do something he better ask nicely. Which he doesn't. So fuck it.

Ahaan down the rest of his beer and tosses the bottle at a hand-painted target on the other side of the roof.

It shatters on impact. A large pile of glass shards cover the area below the target.

He grabs another.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

Second I can I'm moving out of this shithole.

SAHIL

That makes two of us.

AHAAN

Bro just imagine. Having your own place with maids to do everything for you. Never even having to lift a foot if you didn't want to. That's the life.

SAHIL

Yeah, but you gotta work your ass off to get there.

AHAAN

Once I'm out of school, with my degree, I'll get a good job. Lots of benefits and an easy workplace. I'll save a ton and retire when I'm 35. Then the rest of my life I can relax and do whatever the fuck I want.

SAHIL

If only it were that easy.

AHAAN

It is. Just watch me.

Ahaan's phone buzzes. He checks it.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

Fuck.

SAHIL

What is it?

AHAAN

My dad wants me to come home.

SAHIL

Right now?

AHAAN

Yup.

SAHIL

Why?

AHAAN

I don't know. Just more of his bullshit probably.

Ahaan sets his half-drunk bottle down on the table.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

It should be fast. Save that for me. I'll be back in a bit.

SAHIL

Have fun.

AHAAN

Fuck you.

Ahaan flips him off and heads toward the door.

A moment later, the door slams shut with a THUD.

INT. AHAAN'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Darpan sits on the couch. Ahaan takes his shoes off as he walks inside.

DARPAN

Ahaan.

AHAAN

Yeah, yeah, I'm here. What?

DARPAN

I need you to go take care of Grandma Nirmala tonight.

AHAAN

Why? What about mom? I can't tonight. I have a thing with--

DARPAN

--Your mom was in an accident. She's at the hospital right now. Been there since this morning.

Ahaan freezes.

AHAAN

What? What happened? How come you're telling me this now?

DARPAN

If you'd woken up on time you would have known. She's fine. Just fell down the stairs. But the doctors want to be sure there's nothing wrong.

AHAAN

How did she fall?

DARPAN

You know how old that apartment complex is. Probably slipped on a broken step or something.

(beat)

So you're gonna be the one to take care of Nirmala while your mother is getting treated.

AHAAN

But I--

DARPAN

--No buts. Start packing your stuff. We're leaving in thirty.

Ahaan GROANS.

He pulls out his phone and texts Sahil.

INERT: PHONE

"Nevermind. Just finish mine too."

END INSERT.

INT. AHAAN'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ahaan lays across the sofa, tossing a baseball up and down. An empty bag of chips and half-eaten bowl of popcorn are on the coffee table.

A backpack rests at the base of the couch.

Darpan walks in from the kitchen.

DARPAN

Time to go.

Ahaan takes his time getting up and grabbing his backpack. He slips on a pair of shoes and heads out the door.

Darpan looks at the mess left behind in disgust.

EXT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/PARKING LOT - DAY

The lot is run down, a few cars are parked sporadically throughout the area.

The front entrance to the apartment complex is shabby and worn. Graffiti covers the cracked glass doors and various articles of trash are caught in the bushes surrounding.

Darpan drives up to the entrance.

DARPAN

We're here.

He smacks a sleeping Ahaan awake.

AHAAN

Nngh.

Ahaan undoes his seatbelt and slings his backpack over his shoulder as he gets out of the car.

DARPAN

Don't forget. Grandma Nirmala needs to take her meds at 9 'o clock. And you have to help her bathe. Your mother said there should be a blue scrubber in the bathroom you can use. And be gentle. She's old.

AHAAN

(without looking back)

Yeah, I got it.

DARPAN

Ahaan.

He turns.

AHAAN

What?

DARPAN

Don't be lazy.

Ahaan rolls his eyes and walks up, into the building.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/STAIRCASE - DAY

Ahaan recoils at the smell of the building. The paint on the wall is cracked and peeling.

The rotten wooden stairs CREAK with every step.

A rat runs past Ahaan's feet, causing him to stumble backwards, almost losing his footing.

 AHAAN
 Fucking hell.

He continues making his way up to the fourth floor.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Ahaan makes his way down the hall, looking for Nirmala's apartment. More trash lines the ground outside most of the other doors.

He steps over what looks to be an old soda spill and arrives in front of Room 406.

Ahaan pulls out a key and unlocks the door.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

The room is furnished sparsely. A pair of mismatched velvet chairs and an old, dusty TV. A short lamp sits in the corner.

Despite it being daytime, the apartment is rather dark.

The living room and kitchen are separated only by a small counter.

NIRMALA (70s), thin and frail as a skeleton, sits sleeping in one of the chairs, her hands folded over her lap and head tilted to one side.

Ahaan keeps his shoes as he walks in, tossing his bag on the empty chair and walking straight to the kitchen.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He opens the pantry to find some old snacks and dried goods. Pulling one box out he flips it over to read the label.

 AHAAN
 Good before...2008. No thanks.

He tosses the box on the ground near the trash can and rummages through the rest of the pantry's contents, emptying them onto the kitchen floor.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
 Nope. No. No. Nope. Nothing.
 (standing up)
 (MORE)

AHAAN (CONT'D)
Absolutely nothing. What the hell
does she eat?

Ahaan turns to the fridge and opens it. A few containers of leftovers and pair of soda cans.

He grabs a leftover container and opens it.

The rotten moldy stench makes him GAG immediately. Inside looks like a four-month-old science experiment gone wrong.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
I'm gonna be sick.

He tosses the container in the trash can and steps back into the living room, still GAGGING.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ahaan COUGHS a few more times as he tries to inhale fresh air.

He finally looks up to see Nirmala staring at him from her seat.

 AHAAN
 (jumping back)
Oh shit!

He takes a second to catch his breath.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
Grandma Nirmala you scared me. I
thought you were asleep.

 NIRMALA
 (slurred)
Ahaan? Is you?

Nirmala's speech is slow, difficult to understand on account of her lack of teeth.

 AHAAN
Yeah. It's me.

Nirmala's eyes brighten and she flashes a toothless smile.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
My dad told me to come take care of
you while my mom is in the
hospital. So here I am.

Nirmala nods.

AHAAN (CONT'D)
Do you have any food here? I'm sure
my mom left food right?

No response from Nirmala.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
 (gesturing)
Food?

Still nothing.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
Grandma Nirmala?

A soft SNORE.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
You've gotta be kidding me.

Ahaan pulls out his phone.

INSERT: PHONE

He tries to open a browser window, but the phone shows "No
Signal."

END INSERT.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
This is so fucking dumb.

He looks back at Nirmala.

A beat.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
She'll be fine sleeping right?

His stomach GROWLS.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
Whatever. I'll only be gone a
second.

He quickly opens the door and leaves.

A moment passes, and the lamp flickers for a brief second.

The sound of a door CREAKING.

Nirmala's eyes suddenly shoot wide open and her pupils roll
back into her head. Her body convulses then goes stiff.

EXT. PIZZA RESTAURANT - DAY

A quaint little pizza parlor. A few other customers sit at tables around the restaurant.

Ahaan finishes scarfing down the last slice of a full-sized pizza.

He takes one last swig of his drink as he gets up and goes to throw the trash out. He shoves the pizza box in the bin and tries to toss the cup, but the lid pops off and lands on the floor.

Ahaan ignores it and leaves.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ahaan kicks a can as he makes his way back to the apartment.

AHAAN

This place is disgusting. Someone should really clean it up.

He reaches Nirmala's door. Pulling out the key, he stops and looks back at the ground behind him.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

I could've sworn there was a coffee spill there. Huh. Maybe not.

He shrugs it off and goes inside.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nirmala is still sitting in the chair, eyes closed. It looks like she hasn't moved since Ahaan left.

He walks over to the kitchen.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

All of the boxes Ahaan pulled from the pantry are gone and the trash bin is empty.

AHAAN

Did she take out the trash while I was gone?

(peering over)

It looks like she hasn't even moved. Weird.

(MORE)

AHAAN (CONT'D)
 (beat)
 Whatever.

Ahaan checks the time on his phone.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
 Oh shit.

He hurries back into the living room.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ahaan crouches in front of Nirmala's chair.

 AHAAN
 Grandma Nirmala.

He shakes her gently.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
 Grandma Nirmala.

Her eyes slowly open.

 NIRMALA
 Darpan?

 AHAAN
 No, Ahaan. Your grandson. It's time
 for you to take your meds. And I'm
 gonna help you bathe, alright?

 NIRMALA
 Ahaan. Okay.

Ahaan helps Nirmala up and escorts her to the bathroom.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

He quickly leaves and returns with a glass of water.

 AHAAN
 Here. For your pills.

Nirmala points to a pill case on the bathroom counter. Ahaan grabs it and dumps out the contents into Nirmala's hand.

She tries to take them all at once. She begins to CHOKE.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
 Grandma Nirmala!

He tries to help her swallow with more water. Her CHOKING gets worse and Ahaan starts to panic.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
What do I do?

Nirmala bends over, still COUGHING and CHOKING.

Ahaan resorts to hitting her on the back.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
Sorry!

He hits her again and this time she manages to swallow. She sits back up, a pained expression on her face.

Ahaan breathes a SIGH of relief.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
You should know better than to take them all at once.

 NIRMALA
Nnngh.

 AHAAN
Okay. Let me get the water started.

He turns on the bath and lets the water run without checking the temperature.

As it fills the tub, Ahaan helps Nirmala undress. Her bony, wrinkled skin flakes and peels in areas, and a few dark, black spots cover parts of her body.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Ew.

Nirmala dips one foot into the tub.

She tenses and pulls her foot back out.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

 NIRMALA
C-cold.

 AHAAN
The water?

Nirmala nods.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

Oh, I didn't realize it wasn't--
shit. Now what? I don't want to
drain it and waste all of this
water. Is it really that cold?

Another nod.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)

You can't just use the water? Only
this time. Next time I promise I'll
make sure it's warm.

 NIRMALA

O-okay.

She gets into the tub and Ahaan starts to wash her. He soaps
her hair and body and rinses using a small bucket.

Nirmala shivers each time Ahaan pours the cold water over
her.

 AHAAN

Hang in there a little longer
Grandma Nirmala. I'm almost done.

He douses her one last time, then begins drying her with a
towel.

Nirmala steps out of the tub, still shivering, as Ahaan
continues to pat her down.

 NIRMALA

Clean.

 AHAAN

What was that? Give me a second
Grandma Nirmala. Let me finish
drying you so you can put some
clothes on.

 NIRMALA

Clean.

 AHAAN

Yes. Yes. You're clean now.

Nirmala shakes her head and points to the mess in and around
the tub. Soaps, scrubber, buckets. The dirty water in the
tub.

 NIRMALA

Clean.

AHAAN

Those are the things I cleaned you with.

She shakes her head again but Ahaan doesn't pay her any attention. He dresses her and walks her out to her bedroom.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/NIRMALA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Like the living room, very minimal. A bed, small nightstand, and another old TV.

Ahaan turns on the bedroom lamp. Nirmala sits on the bed, her hands quivering.

AHAAN

Are you still cold? Here, wrap this around you.

He hands her a blanket and turns the TV on to a soap opera.

He double checks once more to make sure she looks comfortable before exiting the room.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ahaan stretches and YAWNS.

AHAAN

Can't believe mom does this every day. Just hire a maid. Fuck.

He plops down on the chair.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

Ah shit the bathroom stuff.

He gets right back up and goes back to the bathroom.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The soaps, scrubber, and buckets are still by the tub, but the water inside is gone.

AHAAN

Did I already drain the water? I must've, right?

He stares at the tub as he tries to remember.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

No. I didn't.

 (beat)

Did I?

Ahaan checks the tub, but aside from it being empty, nothing seems out of the ordinary.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)

Maybe it drains itself?

He shrugs it off and tosses all of the soaps and scrubber into a bucket and sets it on top of the toilet.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)

Good enough.

He flicks the light switch and exits the bathroom.

Two beady red dots linger in the mirror for a second before vanishing.

 FADE TO:

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ahaan relaxes in a chair watching sports and eating a bag of chips. He wipes his hand on the side of the chair.

At his feet is a plastic convenience store bag with more snacks and an energy drink.

Ahaan pours the last crumbs into his mouth, spilling some onto the floor. He crumples up the bag and chucks it toward the kitchen trash bin, missing badly.

He turns the TV off and grabs his phone and a jacket from his backpack. He flicks off the light and leaves the apartment.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

There are more folding chairs this time. Sahil and Ahaan are joined by two other friends, ROHAN (18) and FARAJ (18), who bear a striking resemblance to the iconic Sesame Street duo, Bert and Ernie.

Two cases of beer sit by their feet and all four hold bottles in their hands.

They LAUGH and JOKE with each other.

FARAJ
So you're saying you had to wash
and scrub your crusty grandma's
saggy old tiddies?

AHAAN
Pretty much yeah.

ROHAN
Her coochie too?

AHAAN
Don't remind me.

SAHIL
Bro that's fucking nasty. Bet it
was all dried up down there huh.

AHAAN
Yo can we stop talking 'bout my
grandma? I've already almost puked
like four times today.

ROHAN
You mean seeing them boobies didn't
turn you on? Betcha that was the
first time you touched a pair
wasn't it.

AHAAN
Fuck you.

He chucks an empty bottle at Rohan, who dodges. The bottle
smashes against the rooftop.

The gang LAUGHS.

SAHIL
No, no, there was that one rich
girl back in middle school
remember? What was her name? She
and Ahaan got caught behind the gym
that one time.

ROHAN
Meera?

SAHIL
No, she was a grade or two under I
think.

FARAJ
Trisha?

SAHIL
Yeah, Trisha!

ROHAN
Bro she was as flat as a cutting board there was nothing to touch. She's still flat I think. Bitch must've not hit puberty yet.

AHAAN
How do you know?

ROHAN
Follow her on Insta. Duh. Just because she's flat doesn't mean I wouldn't tap if I had the chance. She got a nice face. Decent butt. Makes up for the breasts.

FARAJ
Or lack thereof.

SAHIL
Faraj, you can't talk. You've been single your whole life. Only pair of lips you've ever kissed are your mom's.

Faraj's face goes red. He smashes his beer bottle on the ground and grabs Sahil by the collar.

FARAJ
Say that again.

AHAAN
Yo, guys, c'mon. Chill.

Faraj lets Sahil go and flips him off. He grabs a new bottle and moves to the other side.

The others sit back down and they all enjoy their beers in silence for a while.

FARAJ
So, what? You have to go back to your grandma's creepy apartment after this?

AHAAN
Yup.

SAHIL
That sucks. How long you stuck there?

AHAAN

Dunno to be honest. Until my mom's out of the hospital I guess.

SAHIL

Well if you need anything you can always call.

AHAAN

No signal in the apartment.

ROHAN

What the hell kind of shithole does your grandma live in that doesn't have signal?

AHAAN

You don't wanna know.

FARAJ

Good luck I guess.

ROHAN

Yeah, least you have granny to keep you company. I'm sure you two can cuddle together.

AHAAN

You know what Rohan?

SAHIL

Just be careful though. I've heard stories about those old apartment complexes. Ghosts and demons and shit.

FARAJ

Big spook.

AHAAN

Yeah, don't sweat it. I'll be fine. Thanks though.

An uneasy moment of silence, followed by a soft WOOING sound behind Sahil.

He leaps from his seat to see Rohan, crouched, LAUGHING hysterically.

ROHAN

Gottem!

Sahil rolls up his sleeve and bops Rohan on the head with his beer, knocking Rohan out.

FARAJ

To be fair he kinda deserved it.

Ahaan checks his phone.

AHAAN

I gotta go. Need to give my grandma her meds again.

SAHIL

Oh shit, okay. We'll clean this mess up and take care of Rohan then.

AHAAN

Alright. See you guys.

Ahaan starts to make his way toward the staircase door.

FARAJ

See ya.

SAHIL

(calling out)

Don't forget what I said about old apartments. Shit might get weird at night. Find a place with signal and call me if you need to!

AHAAN

Yeah, yeah.

The door slams shut behind Ahaan with a THUD.

SAHIL

I warned him.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark, almost pitch black. The only source of light coming from what little filters through the window.

The door CREAKS open as Ahaan walks in.

He uses the flashlight on his phone to see where he's going.

The light quickly passes over the kitchen, and the same red beady eyes glisten behind the counter for a second.

Ahaan stops and shines the light toward the kitchen again. The eyes are gone.

AHAAN
Must've been my imagination.

Ahaan quickly turns on the lamp near the chair and goes to fetch Nirmala.

A moment later, Ahaan emerges from the bedroom with Nirmala and sets her down in the chair.

He goes into the kitchen and grabs the pills and a glass for water.

As he pours the water, he notices the counter has been wiped and cleaned.

He checks the cabinets and sees they've been dusted as well.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
Grandma Nirmala, did you clean the
kitchen when I was gone?

 NIRMALA
Mmmm.

 AHAAN
Was that a yes?

 NIRMALA
Mmm.

 AHAAN
Uh, okay.

He brings over the water and pills.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
One at a time this time.

He hands her the pills and the water, turning away to switch off the flashlight on his phone.

Nirmala takes them all at once again. She CHOKES, getting Ahaan's attention.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
I said one at a time!

He pats her back and helps her swallow again.

Nirmala's eyes are bloodshot as she falls back into the chair.

AHAAN (CONT'D)
Fuck. Why didn't you listen?
 (beat)
Let's just get you to bed. C'mon.

He helps her up and into the bedroom.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/NIRMALA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ahaan lays Nirmala down in bed.

As soon as her head touches the pillow, she start to COUGH violently.

 AHAAN
What is it? What's wrong?

Thick, black blood spews from her mouth onto the sheets and the ground next to her as she continues to COUGH.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
Oh fuck!

Ahaan panics as he runs and grabs a towel, trying to clean up as much of the blood as he can.

The COUGHING slowly subsides and Ahaan breathes a SIGH of relief.

 NIRMALA
Bad. Blood.

 AHAAN
Yeah, I know there's blood everywhere. I'm sorry. I cleaned as much as I could. I'll take care of the rest in the morning.

 NIRMALA
Blood. Bad.

 AHAAN
C'mon Grandma, just try to go to sleep. I promise I'll help you in the morning.

He tries wiping away a bit more of the blood and tucks Nirmala in.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)
Good night.

He flicks off the light and shuts the door.

NIRMALA
(softly)
Blood. Clean.

The small nightlamp suddenly flickers dimly, illuminating the area of the ground covered in blood.

The bloodstains begin to seep into the ground, as if being sucked into the carpet itself.

The light goes out and the same, read beady eyes appear underneath Nirmala's bed. They linger for a moment and disappear once more into the darkness.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ahaan sets his phone next to him and pulls a blanket over himself.

He tosses and turns, trying to find a comfortable position on the worn bed.

Giving up, he sits upright and looks toward the door.

He looks at his phone.

INSERT PHONE:

The time reads 1:03 AM.

END INSERT.

Ahaan GROANS.

He sets his phone back down.

AHAAN
I'm sure she's fine.

He lays back down and pulls the covers over again.

FADE TO:

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/NIRMALA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nirmala sleeps facing the ceiling, as if lying in a coffin.

A sharp HISSING noise under her bed causes Nirmala's eyes to suddenly shoot open.

Her pupils rolls back into her head, leaving only the white of her eyes.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ahaan SNORES softly. The blanket has been kicked off the bed and Ahaan's phone is nowhere to be seen.

The desk lamp next to him CLICKS on, casting a harsh light onto Ahaan's face.

He rolls over, knocking his head into the nightstand.

AHAAN

Ow.

He winces in pain and rubs his eyes.

Ahaan opens them to come face-to-face with Nirmala, who stands inches away, leaning over his bed.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

(screaming)

Oh fucking shit!

Ahaan leaps up and back.

AHAAN (CONT'D)

Grandma Nirmala what are you doing here? Go back to sleep!

Nirmala's eyes are normal, but stricken with fear.

NIRMALA

It's here. The demon is here. All because of you. You fed her. You shouldn't have fed her.

Despite an unnerved quiver, her voice is clear and coherent.

AHAAN

What are you talking about? What demon? How are you speaking so well all of a sudden? What's going on?

NIRMALA

You fed her. But she is still hungry. She wants more. More!

The light in the room flickers wildly.

Nirmala SHRIEKS as her fragile body begins to contort and twist. Her arms and legs bending and convulsing in unnatural angles as her eyes roll back again, turning black this time.

AHAAN

Grandma Nirmala? Grandma Nirmala!

Ahaan starts to WHIMPER as he backs away into the corner of the room.

Nirmala's body continues to twist and writhe as it transforms into a distended, blackened figure.

Her pupils turn a familiar beady red and the rest of her eyes blend into the same black as her skin.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)

 Please! Stop!

He frantically searches for his phone, but can't find it anywhere.

 NIRMALA

 Looking for this?

Nirmala's voice is distorted, as if two people were speaking at once.

She opens her mouth and regurgitates Ahaan's phone, her neck and mouth stretching to extreme proportions to do so.

 NIRMALA-PRETA

 (double-voice)

 Hello Ahaan.

Ahaan shakes uncontrollably.

 AHAAN

 W-who are you?

 NIRMALA-PRETA

 You don't recognize me? It's your
 dear Grandma Nirmala.

Nirmala-Preta lets out a maniacal LAUGH.

 AHAAN

 G-go away!

 NIRMALA-PRETA

 Now why would I do that? After all
 you've done for me.

More LAUGHTER as Nirmala-Preta leaps forward, onto the bed. Her arms multiply, four, then six, as her body becomes more and more distorted.

Ahaan trembles in the corner of the room. Frozen in fear.

Nirmala climbs the side of the wall and sticks to the ceiling, her head rotating a full 180 degrees to face Ahaan.

NIRMALA
(giggling)
Oh my sweet, little Ahaan.

AHAAN
Who-who are you?

NIRMALA-PRETA
Who am I?

She drops from the ceiling and lands in front of Ahaan, flashing a horrifying, wide smile. Her teeth are perfectly white and razor-sharp.

A meter-long tongue rolls out of her mouth and coils itself around Ahaan.

NIRMALA-PRETA (CONT'D)
So delicious.
(beat)
I am Preta, child. The Eternal Devourer. I feast on that which has been left behind. On the refuse of those too lazy to dispose of it. And you, Ahaan. I have not met someone like you in a long time.

Ahaan squeezes his eyes shut as Nirmala-Preta's tongue crosses over his face, leaving behind a foul-smelling saliva.

NIRMALA-PRETA (CONT'D)
You reek of laziness. Everywhere you go, you leave behind a trail.

She LAUGHS again.

NIRMALA-PRETA (CONT'D)
And do you want to know the only thing more delectable than a mess that's been left behind?

Ahaan GULPS.

NIRMALA-PRETA (CONT'D)
The one who left it.

Nirmala-Preta withdraws her tongue and steps back into the shadows, CACKLING and GIGGLING hysterically.

Ahaan SCREAMS and runs for the door.

He grabs the handle and swings the door open.

A wave of trash pours into the bedroom from the other side, knocking Ahaan to his feet and burying him.

AHAAN

Help! Help! Someone help me!

He tries to crawl out from under the pile.

He manages to get his arms and chest out. Then his legs. Then his feet.

Before he can react, Nirmala-Preta's long tongue wraps around him again and yanks him back under into her waiting maw.

He SCREAMS.

CUT TO:

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ahaan shoots up, wide awake and sweating bullets. He looks around the room in a panic.

The desk light is off. His phone is still where he left it.

Ahaan breathes a SIGH of relief.

AHAAN

It was just a dream.

He gets up and makes his way to the bathroom.

INT. NIRMALA'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

He flicks on the light and takes a piss.

The FLUSH of the toilet a moment later as he turns on the water to wash his unusually coarse hands.

AHAAN

Huh?

He looks down. His arms and hands have become wrinkled and blackened. He looks back up into the mirror. A familiar pair of beady red eyes stares back at him.

Ahaan SCREAMS again as we:

CUT TO:

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Ahaan still SCREAMING, handcuffed to a hospital bed. He struggles against the bindings as a NURSE attends to him.

DR. JENYA PURI (40s) stands behind her.

AHAAN

Stay away! Stay away from me!

NURSE

Ahaan please, you need to calm down. Everything is okay.

AHAAN

Help! Someone save me!

Ahaan continues to CRY OUT.

The Nurse injects a sedative into an IV attached to his arm.

Ahaan slowly quiets down and falls unconscious.

The Nurse checks his vitals.

JENYA

What have we got here?

NURSE

Poor boy got stuck in here after police found out he accidentally killed his grandmother when he was supposed to be taking care of her. She choked to death taking her medication. He felt guilty about the whole thing and went crazy I guess. According to his father he used to be super lazy. Now all he does is clean.

(beat)

Saves us the trouble of hiring a janitor or maid though I guess.

JENYA

How unfortunate. A shame how one mistake can cost you everything.

Jenya holds Ahaan's cheek in her hand.

NURSE

This way please, Dr. Puri.

Jenya makes her way to the door, turning back to get one last look at Ahaan before exiting.

FADE TO:

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Ahaan mops the floor diligently. He makes sure to not leave even a single spot untouched. An assortment of other cleaning supplies rest on his bed.

 AHAAN

 Clean. Clean. Must be clean.

He MUMBLES in a sing-song voice.

 AHAAN (CONT'D)

 Clean. Clean. It was just a dream.

He GIGGLES to himself.

Jenya watches him through the window.

FADE TO BLACK.