

BIKRAM

by

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Based On A Story

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UTA

INT. RESORT

Completely grey screen: a birds eye view of an empty conference center.

Sound is magnified and crisp. When SARAH BAUGHN, an extraordinarily fit brunette in her mid 20s, enters, wearing a bright pink leotard and holding a yoga mat, we hear the THUD of each and every step.

She unrolls her mat, sits, and reclines: CORPSE POSE.

When Sarah blinks, our screen mimics her closing eyes, transitioning to BLACK.

Sometimes, when her eyes open, we return to our birds eye view. Each time, the conference center is slightly more full.

A svelte EAST ASIAN WOMAN (mid-30s) enters, or a six-pack bearing WHITE MAN (early 20s), a skinny but muscular BLONDE WOMAN (early 40s). They stretch gently, or take a sip of bottled water, and then they join Sarah on their backs.

Eventually, the room is packed tightly and neatly: rows and rows of mats cover every inch of the screen, a sea of TAUT, limber, light-skinned and barely-clothed bodies upon them.

Other times, the screen's blackness opens to a close up of a body part: an outstretched palm, fingers GRASPING for the backs of heels, a furrowed brow, a set of toes REACHING into view from behind rock-solid calves.

Beads of sweat roll down tightened skin as we hear a FORCED inhale, the strain of a STRETCHING torso, a SHARP exhale, a grunt, a moan, an exaggerated sigh.

We can feel the PAIN, exertion, struggle.

A return to birds eye view. Plastic bottles have fogged up in the 40% humidity. Towels are soaked in sweat from the 105° heat.

And at once, a COLLAPSE, as the bodies return to their mats in unison. The crowd is again in corpse pose, bodies outstretched on the floor.

Their fatigue is palpable. What we feel is not relief, it is exhaustion. SURRENDER. And, knowing there is more to come, DREAD.

Eyes close again, the screen fades to BLACK.

And then, we hear a male voice. It is calm but BELLOWING, soothing but forceful. A light Indian accent. Every syllable is enunciated.

He sounds natural, but deliberate.

BIKRAM

**Let. Me. Help. You.**

We are zoomed in tightly on the face of BIKRAM CHOUDHURY against a bright yellow, saffron-colored background. Bikram is in his mid-60s, though he looks decades younger than his years.

In contrast to the contorted bodies and faces we've seen, Bikram wears an expression of Buddhist serenity. He does not smile, but the edges of his mouth curl naturally upward; he is utterly at peace.

BIKRAM

You have been trapped in an illusion:  
the tricks of the mind that you think  
are reality. But I am here to free  
you, to help you see things as they  
truly are. You have been asleep for  
too long.

Our "eyes" close for the last time as screen fades to black.

BIKRAM

It is time to wake up.

TITLE CARD: "BIKRAM"

INT. DRESSING ROOM - THE MERV GRIFFIN SHOW - DAY

Text reads: "1985"

A MAKEUP ARTIST and HAIR ARTIST (both white women) stand over a chair, where RAJASHREE CHOUDHURY (20) sits.

After a few finishing touches, they part, revealing Rajashree's face in the mirror. Rajashree exudes a profound sense of calmness, of strength, of intelligence. She's stunning.

But she looks horrible. Her hair is styled in a garish '80s blowout. Her foundation is too light, her blush too bright, the lip and eye colors all wrong for her skin tone. The makeup & hair artists look at each other, shrug, and exit.

Rajashree, now alone, looks up at the TV set mounted in the corner of the room. MERV GRIFFIN sits behind his desk.

MERV (ON TV)  
So please welcome Bikram Choudhury,  
The Yoga Guru to the Stars, and one of  
those stars, Miss Juliet Prowse.

Bikram (30s) emerges onto the set wearing a black robe,  
JULIET behind him in a black leotard.

We hear the sound of applause from the TV. Then (PRE-LAP) the  
more natural sound of applause on set.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

We see the backs of the heads of an entirely white audience.  
Above them hangs a bright red light. It reads: APPLAUSE.

Bikram and Juliet shake Merv's hand and wave to the crowd  
before taking seats on the couch--Bikram in lotus pose. The  
APPLAUSE sign goes off, the clapping fades.

MERV  
Well, we were chatting backstage, and  
you certainly have a remarkable story,  
Bikram. Truly remarkable.

BIKRAM  
That's right.

MERV  
Can you share that story with us now?

BIKRAM  
Well, my story begins in India.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - THE MERV GRIFFIN SHOW (CONTINUOUS)

Rajashree stares up at the TV, like she's prompting Bikram.

RAJASHREE  
...like the story of Western  
civilization.

BIKRAM (ON TV)  
Calcutta, to be exact.

Rajashree, frustrated, slams her hand on the dresser.

BIKRAM

I had a comfortable upbringing. In a typical middle class home...

EXT. INDIA - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Late 1940s shots of India: rolling hills in the rural countryside, beggars on the streets of Calcutta, crowds gathered along the Ganges.

We hear a few strums of the sitar, beating thuds on the tabla. A white male voice sings "OM," then more voices join in. (A familiar soundtrack in American yoga classes: notably white imitations of traditional Indian music and chants.)

EXT. CHOUDHURY HOME (FLASHBACK)

It is, as Bikram described it, a typical middle class Calcutta home.

BIKRAM

At first, it was normal. An ordinary upbringing.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME (FLASHBACK)

Six mats lie on the ground, and six CHILDREN (ages 6 months-13 years) lie upon them.

Open sores and scabs cover their skin. They STRUGGLE to breathe. We hear their wails and cries. Except for...

A YOUNG BIKRAM (age 4) holds his feet in his hands in HAPPY BABY pose. He rocks back and forth. He is calm. A young yogi.

BIKRAM (V.O.)

Then, a smallpox epidemic struck. I caught the disease, as did all of my siblings. My sister, my brother, the baby, all dead.

MERV (V.O.)

Horrible, horrible.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

BIKRAM

It was, horrible. Very very horrible. My mother went mad with grief, and I was sent away to school, to study at the Bishnu Ghosh mission.

MERV  
Bish-new-go?

BIKRAM  
Bishnu Ghosh. In India he is a very  
famous guru.

EXT. BISHNU GHOSH MISSION - BOMBAY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

BISHNU GHOSH, a very famous guru, greets young Bikram (age 5)  
and his FATHER. His father clasps his hands together.

FATHER  
Namaste

BISHNU  
Namaste

Bishnu guides them on a tour of the mission grounds.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
Soon, Bishnu became *my* guru.

Bishnu enters a gymnasium, where he proudly showcases a group  
of older boys struggling to perform balancing asanas of  
medium difficulty for Bikram's father.

They turn to Bikram and are astonished to find him in an  
unwavering headstand. Perfect form.

INT. AUDITORIUM (FLASHBACK)

A banner reads "All-India Yoga Asana Championship". A line of  
grown men on stage, along with 13-YEAR-OLD BIKRAM.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
I became the youngest yoga champion  
ever at 13.

Each adult performs an impressive routine.

But Bikram's execution is flawless, a clear cut above them.

A judge places a gold medal around Bikram's neck, and Bishnu  
clasps his hand and hoists it in the air.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - THE MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

Backstage, Rajashree digs through her bag and pulls out a  
pack of tissues and a bottle of cold cream.

BIKRAM (ON TV)  
And then after that: the international  
champion for three years running!

At this, Rajashree looks up at the screen.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW (CONTINUOUS)

MERV  
And your wife is also a yoga champion?

BIKRAM  
That's right a five-time yoga  
champion! The only one who can  
challenge me.

JULIET  
Well, if she's a *five-time* champ...

MERV  
Then not just challenge, beat!

INT. DRESSING ROOM - THE MERV GRIFFIN SHOW (CONTINUOUS)

Rajashree doesn't react to this. Instead, she frantically  
scrubs her face with her cold cream-drenched tissues, a fresh  
streak of clownish makeup off with each pass.

INT. BISHNU GHOSH GYM - WEIGHT ROOM (FLASHBACK)

18-YEAR-OLD BIKRAM sits down-- wriggling under the 380-pound  
weight he is about to bench press.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
You see, for me, I have a short  
attention span. Always on to the next  
thing, on to the next thing. So, I  
began to train as a weight-lifter. I  
was headed for the Olympics.

A pair of SPOTTERS stands above him. One attempts to lift too  
early, without warning, and the weight comes CRASHING down.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

BIKRAM  
And boom! Crushed! They told me I  
would never walk again. That they must  
amputate my leg.

(Beat)  
It was a dark time for me. Very, very  
(MORE)

BIKRAM (CONT'D)  
dark. I even contemplated suicide.

INT. BISHNU GHOSH MISSION (FLASHBACK)

A long line of maimed, ill visitors crowd line outside the door of Bishnu's clinic seeking his guidance.

Inside, Bishnu's ASSISTANTS (Indian males, late teens/early 20s) attempt to force Bikram's legs into a cross-legged pose.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
But yoga healed me.

We hear Bikram's blood-curdling scream, as the bandage on his knee BLOODIES from exertion. Bishnu instructs them to continue.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

MERV  
And so that is why you decided to become a healer?

BIKRAM  
Yes, with my yoga, I can heal anybody.

INT. BISHNU'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK)

Bikram demonstrates his 26-pose sequence for Bishnu.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
You see, we used to prescribe an individual sequence for each patient. But I developed a cure-all: a standing series, then corpse pose-- in the middle of the series, not at the end-- and then the seated postures.

Bikram kneels on the ground and breathes rapid short, sharp exhailes.

BIKRAM  
And you close with pranayama.

BISHNU  
The same sequence?



INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

BIKRAM

The same 26-posture sequence. Can heal any patient. Can solve any problem.

JULIET

You look skeptical, Merv.

MERV

I am, a little bit.

BIKRAM

At first, my guru was skeptical, too.

INT. BISHNU'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK)

The line outside Bishnu's office shortens; Bikram's class size grows.

BIKRAM (V.O.)

Until he saw the results.

Soon, the duo are healing patients together, instructing large classes in Bikram's technique.

After class, throngs crowd around Bikram to thank him. Once the room has cleared, Bishnu falls weeping at Bikram's feet.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

BIKRAM

You see, my guru had always considered it his destiny, his mission, to take yoga outside of India. To bring it around the entire globe. But he could not do it.

(Beat)

And here, I had discovered, I had delivered to him, the most perfect, the most pure form of yoga. And he saw it was so perfect, so pure that it could, that it would, spread. That I would bring yoga to the whole world. That he would carry out his destiny through me, through my Bikram yoga.

MERV

So it was then that you came to America?

INT. DRESSING ROOM - THE MERV GRIFFIN SHOW (CONTINUOUS)

BIKRAM (ON TV)  
No no, not yet.

RAJASHREE  
(In unison)  
First, America came to me.

BIKRAM (ON TV)  
(In unison)  
First, America came to me.

INT. MOVIE THEATER (FLASHBACK)

Large crowds flock to the latest Bollywood offerings. Bikram instead goes to see a Hollywood film: IRMA LA DOUCE.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
It was around that time that I met  
Shirley Maclaine.

Inside the theater, the screen lights up his captivated face in the dark. He stares at the image of Shirley's face above.

EXT. BOMBAY MANSION (FLASHBACK)

Dusk. Lavish party on the Bombay beach. Bikram approaches DEV ANAND (mid 40s), who stands with SHIRLEY MACLAINE (30s).

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
We met at a party hosted by my friend  
Dev Anand. A Bollywood actor, very  
famous in India.

Dev introduces the two, who shake hands. Later at night, Bikram and Shirley stroll along the beach.

SHIRLEY  
Oh, it's such a vibrant country. So  
many colors! So full of life! I think  
I might move here for good.

BIKRAM  
No! We all have a duty, a karma yoga.  
Mine is to heal people through yoga.  
Yours is to sing, dance, entertain.  
You won't find the truth in India. You  
must return to Hollywood.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

MERV

Because if you want to find the truth,  
the place to look is Hollywood.

BIKRAM

Well, she agreed to return only if I  
promised to one day come to America,  
to bring the truth to you.

(Beat)

I wanted to fulfill my promise right  
away, but Bishnu had other plans for  
me.

(Beat)

And this is very important. The first,  
most fundamental lesson of yoga: when  
your guru tells you to do something,  
you must obey him.

INT. HOTEL (FLASHBACK)

Bikram enters a fancy hotel lobby and is immediately whisked  
away by Secret Service AGENTS who guide him to a room.

BIKRAM (V.O.)

Bishnu sent me to Japan, to spread the  
teachings of yoga. First to the Far  
East, and then to work my way around.

(Beat)

That was when I discovered the perfect  
temperature for my classes: 105°.

MERV (V.O.)

One hundred and five degrees!

BIKRAM (V.O.)

And 40% humidity. I developed an even  
bigger following. And one day I got a  
call, summoning me to Hawaii.

The agents nod at the others guarding the door and show  
Bikram in. They enter to find an ailing RICHARD NIXON, who  
lies in his bed groaning in pain.

MERV (V.O.)

Richard Nixon!?! Did you cure him?

Bikram fills the tub with warm water and bath salts.

Nixon enters in his robe, bearing the Seal of the President,

assisted by two agents, towering over the yogi.

Bikram, unintimidated, gestures toward the tub. Nixon shrugs.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
Piece of cake!

NIXON  
What the hell.

Nixon's robe falls as he climbs on in. Bikram reaches into the water and the agents hurriedly exit the room.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - THE MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

Rajashree takes off her robe to reveal a bright, white leotard. Her hair is now pulled back into a tight bun.

MERV (ON TV)  
That's a sight I'd like to see--  
actually, on second thought...

From the television, we hear the laughter of a crowd.

EXT. TARMAC (FLASHBACK)

Bikram shakes hands with Nixon at the airport as REPORTERS gather around. Nixon hands him an envelope before boarding.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
When I arrived back in Tokyo, I had  
good and bad news waiting for me.

Bikram stares after the photographers as they disperse.

INT. TOKYO APARTMENT (FLASHBACK)

Bikram sits on his bed forlornly.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
My guru Bishnu had died.

MERV (V.O.)  
And the good news?

Bikram feels around in his pocket and retrieves the envelope. He opens it to find a GREENCARD bearing his picture and name.

BIKRAM (V.O.)  
It was now my turn, my time, to become  
a guru.

INT. LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (FLASHBACK)

Bikram enters to find a throng of white HARE KRISHNA CULT MEMBERS wearing their saffron robes, heads shaved, shuffling through the airport. One clasps his hands and bows.

CULT MEMBER

Namaste

Bikram, baffled, instinctively bows back.

BIKRAM

Namaste

EXT. YOGA STUDIO - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Bikram stands outside the building as PAINTERS work.

PAINTER

Bikram? B-I-C-K...?

BIKRAM

No C. B-I-K... B-I-K-R-A-M

The exterior of the yoga studio now reads: "BIKRAM"

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

Rajashree stands alone on a stage, barefoot in the dark, waiting for her cue. To her side, Merv and his guests continue to chat.

MERV

And your practice is now frequented by celebrities, no?

BIKRAM

Oh yes, many stars, many stars.

INT. YOGA STUDIO (FLASHBACK)

The same set up as the resort in the opening scene but on a miniature scale: a small room covered in grey carpet.

While the class lies in savasana, Shirley attempts to exit, her empty water bottle in her hand. Bikram SNAPS:

BIKRAM

You! Where do you think you're going!

Shirley laughs nervously and points to her water bottle.

BIKRAM

No water yet! You complete my exercises, you get water. No water breaks here! To get to heaven, you must go through hell!

Shirley returns to her mat and class resumes.

When class is over, Shirley approaches Bikram. Most dawdle, hanging back. They've got front row seats to the fight.

SHIRLEY

Bikram, that was...

(Beat)

Remarkable. Simply remarkable.

BIKRAM (V.O.)

They come to my class because I treat them like everybody else.

The next day, Shirley saunters in with her pals: MARTIN SHEEN, RAQUEL WELCH, FRANCIS and a young BROOKE SHIELDS.

BIKRAM (V.O.)

At first, I didn't ask for a dime to attend my classes.

The other students gape as Shirley performs loud intros for their benefit, collecting money on Bikram's behalf.

SHIRLEY

Bikram, I'd like you to meet my friends: Martin Sheen, Raquel Welch, Francis Shields, and his daughter, Brooke.

BIKRAM (V.O.)

But Shirley explained that here, in America, if you don't charge money, no one will ever respect you.

INT. AUDITORIUM (FLASHBACK)

Bikram is led to a front row, reserved seat. On stage, a banner reads "All-India Yoga Asana Championship."

BIKRAM (V.O.)

But, of course, one wants someone to share all of this with.

Bikram watches casually, clearly distracted, until the 19-

year-old RAJASHREE CHOUDHURY takes the stage. She's captivating, and he's captivated.

When she is crowned champion, she looks directly at him. Breaking the stoic persona of a yogi, she smiles, and holds his gaze. He smiles in return.

PRE-LAP: Uproarious applause.

INT. SET - MERV GRIFFIN SHOW

BIKRAM

And now I've arrived here.

MERV

You haven't just arrived. You've *arrived*.

(To audience)

Didn't I tell you that was an exceptional story?

Audience applauds politely.

MERV

Well, now that we've heard all about you and your life, which really centers around yoga, I suppose many-- well, most--of our viewers are thinking, "Well, this 'yoga' thing sounds interesting. What exactly is yoga?"

BIKRAM

Show, not tell!

MERV

That's right! Here to demonstrate some postures for us is Bikram's wife, the lovely Rajashree Choudhury.

BLINDING bright lights as the spotlight above Rajashree turns on. She exudes youthful radiance.

Rajashree performs an advanced yoga routine, as Merv turns to Bikram.

MERV

(Aside)

I can see why you fell in love.

The crowd is mesmerized, and when she completes her routine,

holding her hands together, bowing to the audience, the APPLAUSE light flickers on, and she's greeted with genuine, thundering applause.

MERV

Marvelous, marvelous.

BIKRAM

She's one of the best in the world.

MERV

And she's how old?

BIKRAM

Twenty.

Merv whistles and raises his eyebrows suggestively. At his welcoming gesture, Rajashree crosses the stage and joins Bikram and Juliet on the couch.

MERV

Lucky man. A very lucky man. And you two have been married what, a year?

BIKRAM

Yes, a year.

RAJASHREE

And one quarter.

The crowd (and Merv and Juliet) erupt into laughter.

MERV

Ra-ja-

RAJASHREE

Ra-ja-shree.

MERV

(Feigning difficulty)

Ra-ja-shree.

(He gestures toward her)

And in a little white leotard! How does it feel to be out of your big black robe! What do they call them?

JULIET

A burqa?

MERV

A burqa! How does it feel to be out of  
(MORE)



MERV (CONT'D)  
your burqa! We don't make you wear  
those here in America.

Rajashree is deeply confused.

BIKRAM  
No, no, in India women don't wear  
those. You're thinking of the Arabs?

JULIET  
Of Saudi...

BIKRAM  
Yes, of Saudi Arabia...

MERV  
So Indians, are they into exercise?

BIKRAM  
Men we do like, play soccer on the  
sidewalk. But not like every woman go  
to gymnastics, we don't have all these  
things. Women are too busy taking care  
of their husband and children, cooking  
and cleaning the house.

MERV  
They don't want to hear that, I hate  
to warn you, here.

RAJASHREE  
I'm not sure we much care for it  
there, either, Merv.

Rajashree gently places her hand over Bikram's closed fist.

BIKRAM  
See! That's why I married Rajashree.  
(Beat)  
Like I said, the only one who can  
challenge me.

INT. CAR - MERCEDES BENZ

(One of the more modest models. A nice car, but not a \*nice\*  
car. A tiny idol of Ganesh rests on the interior hood.)

RAJASHREE  
"Pure and perfect yoga" played well.  
The alliteration. It's catchy.

RAJASHREE (CONT'D)

(Pause.)

You didn't use the "Western  
civilization" line.

Bikram looks at her quizzically.

RAJASHREE

The line we rehearsed: "My story  
begins in India..."

(Wait)

"...Like the story of Western  
civilization."

Bikram's expression is blank.

BIKRAM

India isn't the West.

RAJASHREE

Well that's the idea, isn't it? That  
India is the world's oldest living  
civilization. That it was, up until  
recently, a British colony for  
thousands of years, and so if you want  
to understand the origins and ascent  
of the-

Bikram waves his hand dismissively.

BIKRAM

Bah!

RAJASHREE

Besides, Westerners think "Western  
civilization" and "civilization" are  
the same thing.

BIKRAM

Americans don't-

RAJASHREE

Americans especially!

BIKRAM

Americans don't want to hear that.  
They want to hear "The West is the  
best! America is the best!"

As they pull into the driveway, Rajashree turns to unlock the  
back door.

RAJASHREE

Well, that's probably true...

Bikram exits the car and walks away empty-handed while Rajashree struggles to gather all of their belongings from the back seat.

Bikram turns to face her.

BIKRAM

Do you know why?

RAJASHREE

(To herself)

Maybe "modern." "Like the story of modern civilization."

We pan out to see Rajashree and Bikram's home. A comfortably upper-middle class house. Of course, that means something different in 1980s Los Angeles than in 1940s Calcutta.

BIKRAM

Because it is.

INT. BIKRAM YOGA STUDIO

Rajashree sits at the reception desk. She can see into the classroom, where a group of WORKMEN construct a platform at the front of the room, and mount mirrored panels on the wall.

To her right is the wall of fame: pictures of Bikram with various celebrities.

Bikram enters in a hurry and sees the workmen.

BIKRAM

Het! You said they would be done by morning!

RAJASHREE

I said they would work through the morning so the reporter would catch them. It's good to show that we're renovating, constantly improving.

Bikram now spots a tiny idol of Ganesh on the desk. He places it carelessly behind the counter, out of sight to everyone but Rajashree.

BIKRAM

No, no. You cannot have this. They do  
(MORE)

BIKRAM (CONT'D)  
not worship fake idols in this  
country.

Bikram straightens out a crooked frame on his altar to  
celebrity.

Martin Sheen enters the studio. With him, the reporter  
RODERICK MANN and a PHOTOGRAPHER. Bikram bounds toward them.

MARTIN  
Bikram, I'd like you to meet my  
friend.

RODERICK  
Roderick Mann, I'm a reporter for the  
LA Times, I'm writing a profile on  
Martin here.

Martin moves to introduce Roderick to Rajashree but Bikram  
excitedly interjects.

BIKRAM  
Ah, Martin! He's a good person, a  
decent human being, one of the best  
men I've ever met in my life. He's  
unique. Fantastic. A dynamite person.

RODERICK  
But you only see him in class? For 90  
minutes a day?

BIKRAM  
An hour and a half in my yoga class is  
more than 50 years of testing  
somebody.

RAJASHREE  
(to Roderick)  
You'll see, you'll see.  
(Beat)  
Feel free to use the space to sit and  
chat while Bikram prepares.

BIKRAM  
Yes, of course. Sit, sit.

Bikram, somewhat reluctantly, enters the classroom while  
Roderick places a tape recorder between Martin and himself.

As the two talk, the workmen wrap up and leave, and students

start to trickle in.

MARTIN

The idea is to give your body pain voluntarily, so you cannot give anyone else pain.

(Beat)

Back in the day, I wanted to be a big star, have all that power and shit.

RODERICK

And then came Gandhi?

MARTIN

And then came Gandhi. 1980.

EXT. INDIA - DAY (FLASHBACK)

1980-1981

The same faux-traditional Indian music plays. We zoom in on our same shots of India from before. Indian women, men, and children all interact playfully and openly with the camera. They know they're being filmed. We know they're being filmed. They relish it.

MARTIN (V.O.)

India's an extraordinary country. Every sense is assaulted, even your sense of justice. You begin to understand that there really is just one family of man. It inspired me to return to my faith.

INT. BIKRAM YOGA STUDIO

Rajashree interjects.

RAJASHREE

It's the birthplace of modern civilization.

MARTIN

Exactly! Of Western civilization. Christ, you know, was a guru. Some say he spent his missing years in India. But he returned to Jerusalem so he could unite East and West. He saw the great good in the East, great good in the West, and potential for great evil in both.

It looks as though class is about to begin. Martin and Roderick both rise.

MARTIN

You ready?

RODERICK

I think I can handle a light stretch.

Martin and Rajashree exchange a knowing glance as Roderick saunters into class.

LATER

The windows and glass doors of the studio are fogged up with humidity. Roderick emerges and makes desperate eye contact with Rajashree. She instinctively holds out a trash can as he vomits. She rubs his back maternally and giggles affectionately.

Once Roderick comes up for air, he laughs, too.

LATER

The two sit in the lobby, watching the ongoing class as the fog gradually fades.

Roderick sips from a cup of ice water. The photographer snaps pictures, occasionally pausing to defog his lens.

RAJASHREE

It happens to many people their first class. Especially if it's with Bikram.

RODERICK

Even you?

RAJASHREE

I've never actually taken a class from Bikram. Gosh, I can't remember the last time I took a class from anyone.

RODERICK

Really? You only teach?

Rajashree nods.

RAJASHREE

I was supposed to teach this afternoon, actually, but Bikram heard you two were coming.

RODERICK

Ah, so he's a sadist.

As the students perform a backbend, Bikram straddles a female student and, without warning, forcefully pulls her shoulders, driving her back into an even deeper arch. She grimaces, and he pulls her further still, until she's looking up at his face. They make eye contact-- she hesitates, then smiles.

RAJASHREE

Could I potentially...run something by you?

RODERICK

Of course.

RAJASHREE

I'm thinking of putting together a book. Outlining Bikram's yoga program. Pictures of our famous clientele demonstrating different postures.

RODERICK

"The wellness routine of the celebrities..."

RAJASHREE

"...Now in your very own hands."

RODERICK

With a picture of Bikram on the cover.  
"The Yoga Guru to the Stars."

Rajashree looks down.

RAJASHREE

Exactly, right.

RODERICK

It could work.

Roderick looks at Bikram. He stands on the platform, his arms outstretched by his sides in a Christ-like pose.

RODERICK

After all, it's a nation of masochists.

Rajashree gestures at the wall.

RAJASHREE  
Especially the celebrities.

Roderick laughs heartily. Class wraps up and people start to trickle out.

RODERICK  
Well, I suppose I should maintain  
what's left of my journalistic  
dignity.

Roderick returns to the classroom, notepad in hand, to shake Bikram's. Rajashree smiles as he eyes her in the background.

INT. BIKRAM YOGA STUDIO - LATER

Martin enters carrying a copy of the LA Times. He hands it to Rajashree, the paper open to this profile. Among the pictures: a shot of him in class, Bikram teaching.

MARTIN  
Thanks again for doing that.

Rajashree eagerly scans the article.

RAJASHREE  
(Distracted)  
Don't be silly. It was our pleasure.

MARTIN  
Well, he said some wonderful things  
about the studio and practice, and  
Bikram is quoted.

Rajashree places the paper down, disappointed.

RAJASHREE  
Oh, is he?

MARTIN  
And you've got another picture for the  
wall in there!  
(Beat)  
Is something the matter?

RAJASHREE  
Oh no, no. It's lovely.

Martin pays for the class and Rajashree rises to teach.



RAJASHREE

This is beautiful. Thank you, Martin.

Rajashree looks up longingly at the wall.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO

As she described, Rajashree leads a photo shoot with Bikram's famous clientele demonstrating postures. Brooke in half-moon pose, Shirley in eagle, Martin in awkward pose, etc.

Rajashree plays an active role in the shoot: moving lights, consulting with the photographer, and offering hands-on adjustments to the stars.

Raquel Welch enters.

RAJASHREE

We were thinking of placing you in standing bow pose. Some call it "dancer."

RAQUEL

Oh, "dancer"! How fitting. I love it!

Raquel gamely enters the posture after Rajashree demonstrates. Rajashree adjusts her form, but Raquel is also a natural model, posing perfectly for the camera.

The final shot of the day: Rajashree and Bikram, the former in front of the latter, in parallel side angle poses.

EXT. CHOUDHURY HOME

A new, bigger home than the one we saw last. This one is decidedly lower-upper class.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME

Upstairs in her home office, Rajashree looks at mock ups for the book cover: "Bikram's Beginning Yoga Class" with the shot of the couple underneath.

RAJASHREE

(Into phone)

Yes, I think the brighter blue background makes us, it, pop.

Bikram stands at the foot of the stairs shouting up to her.

BIKRAM  
Rajashree! Rajashree!

RAJASHREE  
(Into phone)  
Yes, especially with our skin tones.

Bikram's voice approaches the door.

BIKRAM  
Rajashree! Rajashree!

Bikram bursts in.

RAJASHREE  
Okay, great. I'm looking forward to  
seeing those changes. Thank you.

She hangs up.

CUT TO

Rajashree follows Bikram down the stairs.

RAJASHREE  
I'm just saying, when I'm on the phone  
with the publisher, perhaps it isn't  
as important to...

The two enter the living room, where the TV is already on,  
and set to The Merv Griffin Show. The guest is Raquel Welch.

BIKRAM  
You see, it's almost over.

RAJASHREE  
Well, next time I'll just tell our  
book publisher that-

BIKRAM  
Shh! Shhhh! You must listen.  
(Gesturing at TV)  
This is America! I am trying to teach  
you about America.

RAJASHREE  
Okay, okay. I'll learn about America.

MERV (ON TV)  
Well, Raquel, thanks so much for being  
here.

RAQUEL (ON TV)  
Don't forget about the book!

MERV (ON TV)  
Ah, yes, the book!

Merv holds up a copy of Raquel Welch's book. "Raquel: The Raquel Welch Total Beauty and Fitness Program." Raquel adorns the cover, performing a perfect standing bow asana, wearing a high-cut white leotard.

Bikram is flabbergasted. Rajashree calm.

RAJASHREE  
Well, America.

She reaches behind the couch for the phone.

RAJASHREE  
What's your attorney's number?

BIKRAM  
What?

RAJASHREE  
Your lawyer? What's his number?

BIKRAM  
I don't have a lawyer.

Now Rajashree is flabbergasted.

RAJASHREE  
You don't. Have. A lawyer.

BIKRAM  
Lawyers are thieves! All they do is take your money!

RAJASHREE  
I just assumed that when you started your business...

BIKRAM  
Here, give me the phone. I know who to call.

Bikram stands, dials, paces, as Rajashree sits with the bridge of her nose between her fingers.

RAJASHREE

How did you trademark the...? Does it mean you never protected the...?

BIKRAM

(Into phone)

Martin! Are you watching the TV? Did you see what this--OK OK call me back.

RAJASHREE

(To self)

Oh, Bikram. What are we going to do? What can we do...

INT. LOS ANGELES BOOKSTORE

Raquel holds a book signing. A LINE of fans waits to have her sign their copies as photographers snap pictures.

Bikram angrily stands at the front of the line. Rajashree is off to the side.

BIKRAM

(Slams book down on table)

It is my program exactly! The precise same twenty-six postures as my class. My book.

RAQUEL

Bikram, dear, would you step aside, please?

Raquel reaches around him to grab the book of the next fan in line.

RAQUEL

What's your name, sweetheart?

FAN

It's Jody, but it's for my mom. Her name is Laurette.

RAQUEL

Two t-s?

The fan nods and Raquel proceeds to sign her book. Rajashree watches the entire spectacle.

RAQUEL

Now come on, Bikram, I gave you a very nice acknowledgment.

BIKRAM

Yes, I saw your acknowledgment. You named me right after Chat.

Camera pans to Raquel's dog, tied to the table beside her.

RAQUEL

Well, Bikram, Chat is very important to me.

(Turns to BOOKSTORE CLERK)

Actually, that reminds me, would you get him a bowl of water, darling?

The clerk nods and walks off.

RAQUEL

Listen, Bikram, I'm not sure what you want from me. I mean no one can own yoga, it's in the public domain.

Another fan hands her book to Raquel.

FAN 2

Do we pay here?

RAQUEL

No, dear, at the register.

Raquel signs the book and the fan walks toward the cashier to pay.

BIKRAM

Well, we'll see about that.

Bikram nods toward Rajashree, who flips through Raquel's book. She reads the cover caption on the front flap: "Dancer Pose." She makes eye contact with Raquel, and looks genuinely disappointed, hurt.

A fleeting flicker of guilt on Raquel's face before she turns to her next fan.

RAQUEL

Hello, darling, what's your name?

Rajashree turns back one last time before leaving, the flashes of the cameras reflecting in her eyes.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE

A dissatisfied Bikram and Rajashree sit across from a LAWYER,

who is professional but not especially warm or polite.

BIKRAM

It's nothing! They're offering me pennies.

LAWYER

Those aren't pennies, first of all, it's a hefty sum to most people.

BIKRAM

I am not most people.

LAWYER

Well, you're not Raquel Welch.

BIKRAM

And what does that mean?

LAWYER

Listen, Bikram, I mean, you're well-known in some circles, and no one is denying that you've created a very impactful program here, an impressive operation, really, but compared to her, you're no one.

BIKRAM

I am not no one! I am Bikram!

Rajashree gestures toward the book on the table, Raquel's book.

RAJASHREE

And it's *Bikram* yoga...

LAWYER

Yes, of course, I don't mean he's, I don't mean you're *\*literally\** no one. I just mean that you aren't a brand.

RAJASHREE

A "brand"? Of course he's not a brand. He's a person.

LAWYER

Well, Raquel Welch is both.

INT. BIKRAM YOGA STUDIO

A different, far larger studio. Surround sound speakers in

the classroom.

Bikram enters, Rajashree sits at the front desk. He drops a pile of crudely-made pamphlets on it and picks up his mic-ed headset, now a part of his uniform.

RAJASHREE

What's this?

She picks up the top one: it reads "BEVERLY HILLS BIKRAM"

BIKRAM

The new prices. For the new brand.

STUDENTS start to trickle in, starting with two attractive young white WOMEN. Clearly regulars, they exchange familiar nods, and then cash, with Rajashree. Still, Bikram introduces himself.

BIKRAM

Welcome. Welcome to Beverly Hills  
Bikram.

They clearly find this slightly odd, but smile anyway, before placing their hands together and bowing.

WOMEN

Namaste

BIKRAM

Yes, yes. Namaste, namaste.

Rajashree, having watched the exchange, looks at the idol of Ganesh and smiles to herself as she crosses out the words on the pamphlet and scribbles something down: "The Yoga College of India."

LATER

It's night; the studio is empty. Rajashree is alone, tidying up, although we sense she's just playing busy.

As she cleans, she talks to herself, rehearsing emphatically, at times gesticulating wildly.

RAJASHREE

"The Yoga College of India"

(Beat)

He won't like it. He likes Beverly  
Hills Bikram... what can I  
do...flattery?

RAJASHREE (CONT'D)

(Beat)

"We have lots of capital now...Capital from opening the new studios, the successful new studios. Soon, with so many different locations...we'll need a bigger brand, one that can encompass all of them, and a headquarters..."

(Beat)

"And of course you'll have your own office. The corner office."

(Beat)

Maybe instead I say "We need a large umbrella brand. And that's where the Yoga College of India comes in."

(Beat)

And then, I can play with the Bishnu thing, hit him with the...

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME

Bikram sits at the kitchen table, a mix of skeptical and disinterested.

RAJASHREE

It will be like the Bishnu Ghosh Mission.

At this, Bikram perks up. Rajashree takes notice.

RAJASHREE

Yes, like the Bishnu Ghosh Mission. Except your mission instead. Better, bolder than anything Bishnu could have dreamed. For a better, bolder guru.

Rajashree leans back. We can see from her satisfied expression that Bikram has been convinced.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ

Rajashree shows Bikram around. She leads him to his office: the biggest office, the corner office. On the wall behind his desk, Rajashree has arranged all of his framed magazine covers and press clippings. He sits in the chair and smiles to himself, pleased and proud. He serenely closes his eyes.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - YOGA COLLEGE

Rajashree now sits with a group of ACCOUNTANTS and MARKETING PROFESSIONALS.



MARKETER

We see that you're in a handful of new states now--Oregon, Nevada, and Arizona.

RAJASHREE

And those studios are doing well.

ACCOUNTANT

Still, we aren't sure the rate of growth you're aiming for here is reasonable.

She looks at a spread sheet, and a red number in parentheses.

RAJASHREE

Can you walk me through this? What is this figure?

ACCOUNTANT

That's your projected customer acquisition cost.

Rajashree looks confused, but she isn't going to ask him to explain further. A marketer picks up on this.

MARKETER

It's the amount of advertising spend you'll have to accumulate to acquire a single new customer.

RAJASHREE

Advertising...

Rajashree leans back and thinks.

INT. YOGA STUDIO - ARIZONA

Sarah Baughn in a crowded yoga class. Her male TEACHER stands above her.

TEACHER

Are you okay with hands on adjustments?

Sarah nods, and he pushes her deeper into the pose.

TEACHER

Is this ok?

SARAH

Yep.

The teacher pushes her further. Her body is pliable.

TEACHER

(To Sarah)

And you said this was your first  
class?

A clear standout, Sarah nods and smiles humbly.

TEACHER

Keep this up, you'll be on the cover  
of Yoga Journal in no time.

MUSIC VIDEO

ALANIS MORISSETTE's "Thank U India" plays.

Alanis walks down BUSY STREETS, through a GROCERY STORE,  
rides a CITY BUS, all completely naked, her long, dark,  
flowing hair covering her breasts.

ALANIS

Thank you India/ Thank you terror/  
Thank you disillusionment

We cut away, but the song continues.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - YOGA COLLEGE

Rajashree stands at the head of the table, with a small staff  
gathered around.

Behind her, a map of the US. A few scattered red pins on the  
West Coast, with many more blue ones all over.

RAJASHREE

The red pins are locations that are  
currently open, and the blue ones are  
locations we hope to have open within  
the next few months.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - KITCHEN

Rajashree sits at the dinner table with Bikram, explaining...

BIKRAM

Teacher training?

RAJASHREE

Yes. We need more teachers anyway, to keep up with the rate of growth. It will be like a typical yoga retreat. The attendees will pay to come learn from us. From you. Except in exchange, we will certify them, allow them to open their own studios. So we can maintain control of the process.

She pulls out a spreadsheet and a pen.

RAJASHREE

See, I've run the numbers.

She crosses out the customer acquisition cost and turns it into a positive number, circling it.

INT. GENERIC RESORT

Bikram and Rajashree lead a series of classes and lectures to students/ aspiring teachers. The crowd eats out of their hands.

LATER

At the head of the room, a Yoga College SUIT explains the franchise agreement to the gathered, scantily-clad yogis as Rajashree and Bikram hover in the corner.

A student raises his hand and asks an inaudible question. The suit nods and points to a section of the contract.

SUIT

Yes, as you can see in Clause 3b that is the franchise fee, which is separate from the teacher training fee which you paid to be here and learn from Bikram and Rajashree.

Rajashree nudges Bikram, who steps forward.

BIKRAM

Yes, by attending this training, as my students, you have all become my family. My children.

(Beat)

I even invite you back to my room tonight, to come watch movies with me.

The class applauds, genuinely thrilled by the invitation.

## INT. HOTEL ROOM

Bikram and a group of devotees sit up late at night watching films. Not the Hollywood films which Bikram used to see in theaters. Now, Bollywood movies.

But Bikram does not look at the screen. Instead, his eyes flit around the room at the women who surround him. On some, his gaze lingers.

## MUSIC VIDEO

People walk right past Alanis, unfazed by her nudity, but occasionally a passerby stops to place a hand on her bare shoulder, stomach, or face.

## INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ

Bikram shows around a REPORTER and her CAMERA CREW. He now wears his hair in a bun, his new signature look.

The reporter touches his bun playfully as Rajashree emerges from her office carrying a large trophy: the Bishnu Ghosh cup.

The cameras swivel away from Bikram and toward her.

## REPORTER

Ah, yes, I've heard you're spearheading an effort of your own, that you're starting an international yoga competition?

Bikram positions himself by her side.

## REPORTER

Doesn't that violate the spirit of yoga?

## BIKRAM

Bah! You know, in India, the birthplace of yoga, we have held yoga competitions for decades! I was the youngest champion, I won the contest 5 times.

## REPORTER

And just how old are you?

## BIKRAM

Sixty years old!

REPORTER

My goodness, you don't look it at all!

BIKRAM

You see, it is my yoga.

REPORTER

Well, the plastic surgeons of Beverly Hills must want your head.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - YOGA COLLEGE

On the map, more blue pins turn red, and the blue pins multiply and spread.

EXT. YOGA STUDIO - ARIZONA

After class, Sarah's teacher chases after her in the parking lot, making a proposition of sorts. She beams and they excitedly shake hands.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Various BIKRAM STUDIO OWNERS, all white, in separate towns and settings:

-- a young married couple shops for groceries

-- a middle-aged man approaches his studio

-- a middle-aged woman pulls up to her home

RANDOM MEN dressed completely INCONSPICUOUSLY approach the studio owners--

RM1

Excuse me, are you Bill and Sandy McAuley?

RM2

Are you Jimmy Barkan?

All nod/say yes/confirm.

Each RANDOM MAN hands a document to each studio owner.

RM1

You've been served.

RM2

You've been served.

The woman retrieves a letter from her mailbox, and opens it to reveal a CEASE AND DESIST.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ - RAJASHREE'S OFFICE

Rajashree sits behind her desk, smiling with satisfaction.

MUSIC VIDEO

In the closing shot of the "Thank U India" video, Alanis stands alone at the center of an empty city road.

EXT. CHOUDHURY HOME

We are straight up in the upper class now. A McMansion. A crystal white, sparkling Bentley is parked outside.

JOSHUA KURLANTZICK (white male reporter. Bespectacled, he is in his early 30s, but exudes a boyishness) approaches the door with a PHOTOGRAPHER.

He rings the doorbell and Rajashree answers.

JOSHUA

Hi, I'm Joshua Kurlantzick. With Mother Jones magazine. We spoke on the phone.

RAJASHREE

Yes, yes, please. Come in, come in.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME

Bikram sits in the living room talking with Joshua while the photographer snaps photos. Rajashree enters holding a tray of tea and pours some for Joshua before taking a seat.

When Bikram speaks, Rajashree is attentive and aware. When Rajashree speaks, Bikram is disengaged and checked out.

JOSHUA

So that's the complaint I've heard most often. That it's a \$5500 teacher training fee, and then an ongoing franchise fee...

RAJASHREE

The "teacher training fee" is an all-expenses paid, intensive program at a luxury resort. Participants get vital instruction, they're offered business  
(MORE)

RAJASHREE (CONT'D)

training to ensure their later success, and they form a community. That community is living: being listed on our web site, getting to teach the Bikram program and use the Bikram name. That link is ongoing, it's concrete, it's consequential. That's what the franchise fee is for. It's good for the studio owners, too. Most of them--the vast majority--are on our side with this. You should talk to some of them.

JOSHUA

Still, \$5500? That seems a little steep, no?

RAJASHREE

Do you know what the going rate is for a yoga retreat?

JOSHUA

I can't say I do, no.

Rajashree laughs warmly.

RAJASHREE

You know, when Bikram and I came to this country, people didn't even know what yoga was! Now there's some awareness, but not enough.

Rajashree turns to Bikram, looking natural. A long pause; Bikram missed his cue. Rajashree smiles at Joshua and then gives Bikram a nod.

BIKRAM

Yes, yes. Not enough. I want Bikram to be everywhere, like McDonalds!

RAJASHREE

And if I opened up a McDonalds, decided to stop paying my franchise fee, but wanted to continue to use the same techniques and equipment, the same name, what would happen?

JOSHUA

I'd imagine you'd get sued.

Rajashree smiles and shrugs. Joshua looks at her with genuine respect. She's smart and savvy. She's good at this.

RAJASHREE

And that's what's happening here. The Bikram name is worth something.

Bikram removes his slipper and holds it up illustratively.

BIKRAM

Bikram yoga is so big: this is a bathroom slipper you buy for \$2 in Kmart. But you put "Bikram" on it, and it'll sell for \$35! In a second.

JOSHUA

So you're also merchandising the "Bikram" name? Using it as a marketing tool? Profiting off of it?

RAJASHREE

If we were, it'd be our right.

BIKRAM

It's my name.

RAJASHREE

(at same time)

It's our brand.

Brief, uncomfortable pause.

JOSHUA

I spoke with Hillari Dowdle, the editor-in-chief of Yoga Journal. Hillari says that, unlike what you teach, "Yoga is a vast and limitless path for personal transformation. The practice is not a one-size-fits-all prescription."

(Beat)

She says you're "playing a Western game with an Eastern tradition."

At this last line, Rajashree flinches.

RAJASHREE

Well, I'm not surprised to hear Hillari say that.



JOSHUA

You're not?

RAJASHREE

No, not at all. Did you know Hillari has a new book out? "The Detox Prescription: How Anyone Can Use Yoga to Eliminate the Toxins Within." So, no. I'm not surprised to hear her say that. We're her competition.

(Beat)

She isn't, of course, ours.

JOSHUA

Speaking of competition, your Bikram International Yoga Competition seems to be going well.

RAJASHREE

(Proud)

Of course, there's a marketing component to it. Inspiring more people to join the practice, inspiring sporadic attendees to become everyday yogis. You know, create some buzz.

(Beat)

But the thing with Bikram yoga is that it really does help people. It really does make them healthier, happier, improve their lives. So the bigger we become, the more good we can do.

(Beat)

That's why we're pursuing this litigation. Because a franchise is the only way to ensure quality.

BIKRAM

I don't want to deal with this headache! In India, nobody sues anybody. I am suffering greatly from all this talk of law and justice and courts. But my yoga helps people. I am suffering now to ease suffering later. I am sacrificing myself for my students.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ - BIKRAM'S OFFICE

Bikram is seated at his desk. Rajashree storms in holding a copy of Mother Jones magazine. She angrily slams it down in front of him.

RAJASHREE  
It's a hit piece.

Bikram picks up the magazine.

RAJASHREE  
Page 27.

As Bikram flips through the pages, Rajashree continues.

RAJASHREE  
He doesn't quote me at all, he doesn't  
quote a single favorable studio  
owner...

Bikram finds the article: "THE MONEY POSE." The backdrop is a picture of Bikram, smiling and leaning on the hood of his Bentley. He reads the pullquote out loud:

BIKRAM  
"I want Bikram to be everywhere, like  
McDonalds!" Great picture! Have this  
framed.

Bikram hands the magazine back to Rajashree. Next to this picture of Bikram is a shot of the young white married couple we saw being subpoenaed earlier. They hold hands, their blue eyes wide. They look innocent, frightened.

RAJASHREE  
He doesn't mention Hillari's book.  
Instead he quotes a "classical yogi,"  
a man named "Dharmanindi Sarasvati,"  
who claims that  
(Reading from article)  
"It's the culmination of  
commercialization, he says. In India,  
disciples did not pay to learn from  
masters."  
(to Bikram)  
Have you seen this guy?

Bikram shakes his head and shrugs. Rajashree walks around the desk and pulls up Dharmanindi's website on the computer.

A white man, he wears a saffron robe, a shaved head, and a bright red dot on his forehead. "The Guru," the header reads.

RAJASHREE  
(Reading further)  
"Speaking with a heavy Indian accent,  
(MORE)

RAJASHREE (CONT'D)

he waves a plastic flip flop in my face." Sure, mention your accent, but not the fact that "Dharmanindi" is aggressively Caucasian and charges \$75 to attend his lectures on "cultivating an authentic personality."

Bikram takes the magazine from her.

BIKRAM

The car looks good. The house. Very nice.

RAJASHREE

That's the point! He's saying we're too rich.

BIKRAM

In America? There's no such thing as too rich.

RAJASHREE

Maybe not if you look like Dharmanindi Sarasvati.

Rajashree storms out.

INT. RESORT

Rajashree guides MINAKSHI JAFABODDEN, an Indian attorney in her late twenties, through a teacher training. Minakshi flips through a contract.

As they walk by, Sarah Baughn is signing in. She looks at Rajashree the way students once looked at Shirley Maclaine, trying to be discreet, but failing.

Rajashree nods, clasps her hands together.

RAJASHREE

Namaste

Sarah is thrilled. Rajashree continues to talk to Minakshi.

MINAKSHI

Your contract is crystal clear. Legally, you aren't going to have any trouble enforcing it.

RAJASHREE  
It's not just that.

She hands Minakshi a copy of Mother Jones. Minakshi flips right to page 27.

MINAKSHI  
I read it. If you're going to have any problems, it's here.

Minakshi holds up the magazine as she delivers the line. Rajashree stops her gently and stands to face her.

RAJASHREE  
Bikram is a--  
(Beat)  
Minakshi, there are many lawyers who I could have hired here. Many who are eager to work with us now. But I sought you out because I need someone who I can trust. Fully. I want us to both take on this challenge together, to both learn together.  
(Beat)  
I know this isn't an easy decision for you. That you're a single mother with a young daughter.

Minakshi seems a little surprised that Rajashree knows this.

RAJASHREE  
But that is exactly why I want you on board. The immigration paperwork, housing. We have resources. I have resources. I want to use them to help you. Please. Let me help you.

INT. JAFABODDEN HOME

A somewhat modest home, but when Minakshi enters with ALIX (six), holding their luggage, her daughter is in awe. Minakshi tries to play it cool, but she is clearly thrilled.

ALIX  
We get to live here!

MINAKSHI  
We get to live here.

ALIX  
All this is ours!?!

MINAKSHI  
That's right.

ALIX  
Wowowowowow.

Minakshi reaches down and hugs her daughter's face.

MINAKSHI  
(Playfully)  
Wowowowowow.

Minakshi grabs her daughter's hand as they explore the rest of the home.

ALIX  
Mommy, what's your new job? What do you do?

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ - RAJASHREE'S OFFICE

Minakshi and Rajashree sit in Rajashree's office laughing like old friends.

RAJASHREE  
And then he turns to me, and he says  
"So, how does it feel to be out of  
your burqa?"

MINAKSHI  
No!

RAJASHREE  
Yes! I had no idea what he was even  
talking about.

MINAKSHI  
(Laughing)  
Oh my god, that's spectacular.

RAJASHREE  
Juliet Prowse stepped in- "err, I  
think you mean Saudi Arabia, Merv?"  
God and I'd been here, what, 9 months?  
And Juliet Prowse was taking blocks  
for me on national television.

MINAKSHI  
Surreal.

RAJASHREE

It was amazing. Well, in any event,  
I'm sure your first television  
appearance will fare better.

MINAKSHI

Maybe I should ring up Juliet Prowse  
and see if she's available instead.

The two laugh merrily.

MINAKSHI

I think, though, the key here is to  
keep it simple. Shut down any line of  
questioning about "copyrighting yoga."

RAJASHREE

"Of course we don't want to copyright  
yoga. That's ridiculous." Emphasize  
that what we're talking about here is  
a specific sequence.

MINAKSHI

Exactly! Just like choreography. It's  
a specific sequence and specific  
instructions on how to do them. That  
isn't just "yoga." It's not like  
Bikram's 26 poses were handed down  
from on high.

RAJASHREE

Is there something to the idea that  
this is his creation, his invention?

MINAKSHI

Oh, yes, I love that. It's his  
invention, his idea, and now he's just  
trying to protect it.

RAJASHREE

Right, his idea. He came to this  
country with nothing but an idea...

MINAKSHI

People will love that. An immigrant  
success story.

RAJASHREE

The American dream.

## MORNING SHOW BROADCAST

A group of all-white HOSTS.

## ANCHOR 1

Can you copyright yoga? The powers  
that be have brought down their gavels  
and the answer is, apparently, yes.

## ANCHOR 2

That's right, Bikram Choudhury of the  
eponymous Bikram Yoga franchise was  
vindicated in court yesterday, as the  
judge determined that anyone using the  
Bikram yoga name is, in fact,  
obligated to pay him franchise fees or  
to stop using the term in their  
advertising and marketing materials.

## ANCHOR 3

Have you seen this guy?  
(Holds up a picture of Bikram)  
He drives a bunch of luxury cars,  
lives in this huge house.  
(Speaks in a fake, exaggerated  
accent)  
I am Bikram! I drive five Mercedes!

All anchors erupt in giggles.

## INT. RAJASHREE'S OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

Minakshi and Rajashree watch the scene on TV. Rajashree hurls  
her remote at the screen. (It's plastic, and bounces back.)  
She laughs wryly to herself.

## ANCHOR 1 (ON TV)

Hey he said here he only likes cars  
for the "engineering" problem.  
(With put-upon self-importance)  
He likes to fix them the way he likes  
to fix the human body.

## ANCHOR 2 (ON TV)

He can fix a Ford! He doesn't need to  
fix a Benz!

Minakshi picks up the remote and shuts off the TV.

## RAJASHREE

I always thought there was a point  
(MORE)

RAJASHREE (CONT'D)  
where...if we finally...

(Beat)  
There's no success in this country for  
anyone other than them. There's money,  
maybe. But success? No such thing.

MINAKSHI  
I know, it's awful. Horrible.  
Insulting.  
(Beat)  
I mean it's been, what, 20 years since  
Bikram would be caught dead in a Benz.

Rajashree looks up at Minakshi and laughs. She picks up a  
pair of keys on her desk.

RAJASHREE  
Care for a spin in the Rolls?

MINAKSHI  
You don't want to prep for the London  
interview first?

Rajashree stands, covers her watering eyes with a pair of  
designer sunglasses, and smiles.

RAJASHREE  
Fuck 'em.

She exits the office, Minakshi behind her.

INT. TOWN HALL - LONDON

Rajashree walks through the site of the International Yoga  
Competition with a REPORTER (American white male in his 30s)  
for the Wall Street Journal.

Unlike before, she wears traditional Indian attire, a scarf  
wrapped around her hair. For the first time, a red dot on her  
forehead.

Various yogis are practicing intently; others are merely  
spectators. Again, Rajashree enjoys a CELEBRITY STATUS in the  
crowd. People nod with recognition in her direction, but are  
too intimidated to approach her.

REPORTER  
But what about those who would say  
that competition goes against the  
spirit of yoga?



RAJASHREE

Ah, the spirit of yoga. I know it very well.

She clasps her hands together when a SPECTATOR crosses her path and makes eye contact.

RAJASHREE

(to Spectator)

Namaste.

(to Reporter)

Tell me, do you practice?

REPORTER

Yoga? Only occasionally. I'm more of a runner, myself, to be honest.

RAJASHREE

Perfect! Perfection. Then you know that during the Olympics--we hope, you know, to make yoga an Olympic sport one day soon-- during the Olympics, they organize the runners by heat. The fastest sprinters run only against the fastest sprinters.

(Beat)

What do you suspect would happen if you placed the slowest runner in the fastest heat?

REPORTER

He'd pick up his pace a little, I'd imagine.

RAJASHREE

A lot! He'd pick up his pace by a lot.

REPORTER

I suppose that's why long-distance running has always appealed to me most. It's just me against the pavement.

RAJASHREE

Ah, yes. And have you ever arrived at your front door after a long run and thought to yourself, "Thank God I am here. I'm completely spent. Totally exhausted. I couldn't run another step"?

REPORTER

Of course. On my last run, in fact.  
This morning, before I arrived here.

RAJASHREE

Our methods at Bikram, they are  
ancient. And proven. But, in some  
ways, they are unorthodox. They are  
not, so to speak, traditional.

Rajashree pauses to offer an adjustment to an aspiring  
champion: *gentle, but firm.*

RAJASHREE

(Still speaking to reporter)

When we placed the wall of mirrors at  
the front of our classrooms, many said  
it was a distraction. That it  
encouraged a superficial practice, one  
void of true introspection.

Rajashree stands up and continues to weave through the crowd.

INT. COMPETITION STAGE

We see shots from the competition: as each body takes the  
stage, it contorts itself into an IMPOSSIBLE position, each  
more FANTASTICAL and TWISTED than the last.

RAJASHREE (V.O.)

But what happens over the course of a  
90-minute class? First, yes, you look  
to the person on your left. And then,  
absolutely, you look to your right.

Sarah Baughn COLLAPSES out of a pose, tumbling forward onto  
her face. Rajashree climbs upon the stage to console the  
tearful and SHAKEN competitor with a warm embrace.

The crowd goes wild with APPLAUSE.

RAJASHREE (V.O.)

But after a while, you have nowhere  
else to look. You must lock eyes with  
your own reflection. And what do you  
see then? "Ah, in poorna-salabhasana,  
locust pose, my left arm dips below my  
right. Ah, in tree posture, tadasana,  
I do not properly lock my standing  
leg." Perhaps I am in the pose  
perfectly, but perhaps I am straining  
(MORE)

RAJASHREE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
to hold it. And perhaps I wear that  
strain upon my face.

Now, we see COMPETITOR X close their eyes, the picture of  
grace and ease in a mind-bending posture.

RAJASHREE (V.O.)  
We all harbor illusions-- delusions,  
really-- of grandeur. About others,  
about ourselves. Even the illusions we  
cling to about others, they are really  
about ourselves. Bikram calls his  
class his "torture chamber," but the  
physical element, that is easy. What  
is not easy is meeting your own gaze.  
The hardest thing in the world is  
looking in the mirror.

INT. TOWN HALL - LONDON

Rajashree turns to the Reporter. She delivers the next lines  
gently, but with CONVICTION. She is *firm*.

RAJASHREE  
You could have run another step this  
morning. You could have run another  
kilometer. Easily you could have! If  
only someone were chasing you.

INT. COMPETITION STAGE

Rajashree holds the hand of COMPETITOR W, their arms raised  
in the air. In the other hand, Competitor W hoists the Bishnu  
Ghosh cup above their head. TRIUMPH.

INT. TOWN HALL - LONDON

RAJASHREE  
The body, you see, is far, far weaker  
than the mind.

The reporter seems genuinely swayed. He smiles respectfully,  
with reflection.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - FOYER

Minakshi and Rajashree stroll toward the door, arm in arm.  
ALIX (now 8) playfully skips ahead.

MINAKSHI

Really marvelous, spectacular job.  
Really. It's the best press coverage  
we've ever gotten. Very well done.

RAJASHREE

I think there's something to this idea  
of looking in the mirror. Looking at  
your own reflection. Critiquing  
yourself...improving...we can tie it  
into the brand in a bigger way. I  
almost have it.

MINAKSHI

You'll get there.

(Beat)

Pleasure, as always, thanks for the  
lovely meal.

Minakshi pulls a wrapped present out of her bag and hands it  
to Rajashree.

MINAKSHI

And this is for you.

RAJASHREE

Oh, you didn't have to do that! Thank  
you, thank you.

Minakshi and Rajashree warmly embrace.

RAJASHREE

"Striving," maybe? A sense of  
striving...

MINAKSHI

We'll keep iterating. It's a process.

ALIX

Bye, Auntie!

(Shouts upstairs)

Bye Uncle!

Rajashree squats in front of Alix.

RAJASHREE

Not so fast!

Alix assumes that Rajashree wants a hug, and happily abides,  
much to Rajashree's delight.

RAJASHREE

Here, I have something for you, too.

She pulls an envelope out of her jacket pocket.

RAJASHREE

This is a present for you.

(Looks at Rajashree)

And your mother.

Rajashree hands the envelope to Alix.

MINAKSHI

Oh, my! Lucky me!

RAJASHREE

But don't open it until you get home,  
okay?

She winks at Alix, who holds the envelope carefully, taking this duty very seriously. Rajashree playfully ruffles her hair, and the two are on their way.

Rajashree walks back toward the kitchen and unwraps the gift: a framed, flattering photograph of her, bindi and all, hands clasped together, in the Wall Street Journal. "The Phenomenal Popularity of Yoga," the headline reads. Underneath it, Rajashree smiles knowingly.

RAJASHREE

(to herself)

"Striving," "A sense of collective  
striving."

INT. JAJA-BODDEN HOME

The pair enters their home, now fully furnished and settled into, and Minakshi looks down at her daughter. Alix looks back up at her, fake-contemplating whether to hand the envelope over, and then smiles and does so.

MINAKSHI

What do you say we open it together?

She sits down with Alix on her lap. She opens the envelope and finds two greencards inside: one for her and one for Alix.

She sits in silent, joyful shock. Alix grabs her card and turns it over, then shrugs with disinterest and climbs out of her mother's arms to play with some toys on the ground below.

Minakshi, still in stunned silence, wipes away a single tear of happiness.

INT. RESORT

Minakshi approaches Bikram and Rajashree with CLANCY MARTIN (white male in his late 30s) and his male PHOTOGRAPHER.

MINAKSHI

Bikram, Rajashree, I'd like you to meet Clancy Martin. He's a reporter for GQ.

They each shake hands.

CLANCY

I recognized him from his signature topknot.

Bikram holds his bun self-effacingly.

BIKRAM

So, you'll be attending a class.

CLANCY

Of course, if you'll have me.

RAJASHREE

And you'll be attending the lecture, I hope?

CLANCY

If that's alright with you.

RAJASHREE

You'll see what all the fuss is about.

MONTAGE

Rajashree and Bikram stand together in Bikram's office before the MAP. Now of the world, not just the US. A sea of blue and red pins.

CUT TO

Sarah Baughn alone in a studio, lays down her mat.

CUT TO

Bikram stands upon a platform at the front of a large CONFERENCE CENTER, mirrors behind him, practitioners in

front. One of them is Clancy.

As his photographer snaps pictures, Clancy openly, creepily leers at the female students around him.

CUT TO

Rajashree sits upon a stool before a large, packed lecture hall. Minakshi stands with Clancy behind a group of hypnotized students.

Bikram and Rajashree speak in tandem...

RAJASHREE

I am proud, Bikram and I are very proud, to be from where we are from.

BIKRAM

I come from the gutters of Calcutta, where people piss in the street like dogs.

RAJASHREE

People may not have very much, but they are content.

BIKRAM

When Indira Gandhi came to me for yoga instruction, she asked me, "Bikram, what should I do to improve India?"

More and more STUDIOS are being OPENED...

More and more students arrive at Sarah's class, led by instructor JIM KALLET (upper middle-aged white man). Sarah is a clear stand out, working harder, holding poses longer and better than the other students. Jim is clearly impressed.

RAJASHREE

We have a long history of problems. But still we are fundamentally happy.

BIKRAM

I said, "Build a fucking toilet!"

RAJASHREE

There is an innate happiness.

BIKRAM

Still, somehow, people manage to be happy.

More and more BRIGHT RED PINS on the map, more bottles of champagne POPPING...

Sarah approaches Jim after class: the two discuss something, shake hands, and hug.

RAJASHREE

Here, in America, you have everything.

BIKRAM

Here, you have so much. And you are miserable!

RAJASHREE

And still, you are not satisfied.

BIKRAM

So why did I leave a poor and happy nation for a rich and depressed one?

More and more ARTICLES and PHOTO SPREADS for more and more NEWSPAPERS and MAGAZINES. Some framed, some piled atop Bikram's desk...

Sarah and Jim work together, alone, for private coaching in platonic, productive intimacy.

RAJASHREE

Because you still want more.

BIKRAM

Because I was on a mission...

RAJASHREE

This is a country of innovation.

BIKRAM

...to bring yoga to you.

More and more CHECKS being WRITTEN to the "YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA", with more and more ZEROS...

Sarah also receives private instruction from Choudhury himself.

RAJASHREE

Here, anything is possible.

BIKRAM

Me, with my funny accent, and my tiny Speedo, with a bun on top of my head,  
(MORE)



BIKRAM (CONT'D)

I thought, "Who will listen to me?"

RAJASHREE

When Swami Vivekananda wanted to share his teachings of self-realization with the Western World? This was in 1893. Where did he go? Here, to America.

BIKRAM

But you listened.

RAJASHREE

Because here, you have a desire to constantly *improve*...

More and more "BIKRAM YOGA" signs prominently on display, which give way to more and more BENTLEY logos in his garage, more and more Rolls Royces...

Rajashree and Bikram co-teach a seminar, and Sarah is called to the front of the room to demonstrate a series of difficult postures as the couple looks on in pride and the class looks on in awe.

BIKRAM

You! Ms. Teeny Weeny Bikini! Spread your legs!

RAJASHREE

...to improve yourselves, and to improve the world around you.

BIKRAM

You, Mr. Masturbation! Until I say change, do not move a muscle!

The crowd laughs, totally bought in, receptive to his teachings, however HARSH, receptive to his MESSAGE. This looks familiar...

RAJASHREE

You are a nation of strivers.

BIKRAM

And now, Bikram is a religion.

RAJASHREE

This is a nation of collective striving.

More and more PHOTOGRAPHS on the wall: Bikram shaking hands with a new, FABULOUS actress, singer, star athlete, politician...

Sarah performs for a medium-sized, but fervently enthusiastic crowd, in front of a banner that reads "NATIONAL COMPETITION."

BIKRAM

And you are its chosen people.

RAJASHREE

Just as we stare straight ahead in yoga, just as we focus on our single drishti...

More and more PINS, the map is now a SEA OF RED...

The crowd applauds as Sarah is given a gold medal, and Jim raises her arm in triumph.

BIKRAM

I am not the only messiah.

RAJASHREE

You look forward in this country.

BIKRAM

You are blessed. You have my blessing.

RAJASHREE

You do not look backward behind your shoulder and say "Look at how great we once were!"

In the middle of another difficult routine, this time in front of a banner that reads "INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION," Sarah Baughn positions herself in WARRIOR II POSE, her arms lifted parallel to the floor, she looks FORWARD over her shoulder and stares STRAIGHT AHEAD.

BIKRAM

Go forth and spread the teachings of Bikram.

RAJASHREE

You look ahead and say "How can we be even greater? Greater than we've ever been before?"

BIKRAM  
People will listen...

RAJASHREE  
Americans are the greatest people. And  
that makes America the greatest  
country...

Bikram opens a drawer to reveal a case full of more and more  
EXPENSIVE, DIAMOND-ENCRUSTED WATCHES...

Sarah is executing her difficult routine flawlessly.

BIKRAM  
...because this is the greatest  
country...

RAJASHREE  
The. Single. Greatest. Country.

BIKRAM  
America is the greatest country...

RAJASHREE  
...that has ever existed...

More and more EAGER EYES in Rajashree's lecture...

An even larger crowd leaps to its feet as Sarah beams. A  
standing ovation for her perfect performance.

BIKRAM  
The very best country!

RAJASHREE  
...in the history of the...

BOTH  
(In unison)  
America is The Greatest Country In The  
World.

More and more YOGA MATS in Bikram's class, more and more  
slender, sweaty BODIES upon them, the mirrors AMPLIFY the  
effect, as though Bikram were teaching a boundaryless,  
INFINITE sea of devotees...

RAJASHREE  
But it can be better still.

BIKRAM  
Let. Me. Help. You.

And then the bodies all COLLAPSE in corpse pose. We see now that this is the same class from the opening scene.

We return to the tight shot of Bikram's face, but this time, we zoom out to reveal that he sits upon a SAFFRON THRONE. Gorgeous WOMEN massage his scalp and feet as he speaks.

BIKRAM  
You have been trapped in an illusion:  
the tricks of the mind that you think  
are reality. But I am here to free  
you, to help you see things as they  
truly are. You have been asleep for  
too long.

Sarah sits up, cocks her head ever-so-slightly, and looks at Bikram intently.

BIKRAM  
It is time to wake up.

Sarah takes this message to heart. She is determined. Her eyes NARROW.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ - RAJASHREE'S OFFICE

Minakshi drops the latest issues of GQ on Rajashree's desk. (Behind her is the framed WSJ article.) Rajashree looks down at the cover: a female celebrity posing in lingerie. She shakes her head amusedly but disapprovingly.

RAJASHREE  
GQ.

MINAKSHI  
It's GQ, alright. The author is a  
total perv.

Rajashree opens to the article. Minakshi walks around the desk to point out bits of text, beginning with the headline:

MINAKSHI  
"The Overheated, Oversexed Cult of  
Bikram Choudhury", "The women are long  
and taut," "their breasts perk  
cheerfully upward," "Their legs open  
like Georgia O'Keefe flowers."

RAJASHREE

Oh, god, the woman he quotes offering him advice in the kicker. "She approaches me with overt sexuality." Yeah, I'm sure she did.

Rajashree places the magazine down.

RAJASHREE

Well, this should help even out the gender ratio at our next teacher training.

MINAKSHI

I was thinking the same thing. Overall, it's good publicity.

(Beat)

We just...we might want to consider advising Bikram to pull back a little.

Rajashree looks up at her, waiting for her to continue.

Minakshi picks up the magazine.

MINAKSHI

It's just...and Clancy was all about it...but a few of his comments here might be opening us up to some legal liability: "There are the stories about him having sex with his students. He claims they blackmail him", "They say to me, 'Boss, you must fuck me or I will kill myself,' then I do it! Think if I don't! The karma!"

Knowing she's just humiliated Rajashree, Minakshi continues beyond relevance to soften the blow.

MINAKSHI

"Whatever the nature of his dalliances, his appeal to women is obvious. When Swami Vivekananda toured the U.S. at the end of the 19th century, it was the same way. Mostly women showed up for his lectures."

At this, Rajashree grabs the magazine out of her hands.

RAJASHREE

Great, sure. *That's* what he writes about Swami Vivekananda. Fantastic.

MINAKSHI

The article itself says Bikram has a  
"penchant for hyperbole." Certainly no  
one believe-

Here, Rajashree senses she's being comforted. It wounds her  
pride, and she rudely interrupts.

RAJASHREE

I'll speak to him. Tell him to tamp  
down the rhetoric. If that's your  
professional opinion.

Undeterred, Minakshi delivers the next line too gently.

MINAKSHI

Would you prefer I spoke to him?

RAJASHREE

(Coldly polite)  
I'll handle it.

Minakshi stands to go, then turns to face Rajashree, who rubs  
her temples in frustration. But when she speaks, she does so  
calmly.

RAJASHREE

On second thought, perhaps he'll pay  
more heed if the news comes from you.  
It's a business matter, after all. A  
legal issue.

MINAKSHI

Of course. Either way, I think at this  
point we've milked the brash  
blustering personality for all it's  
worth. Courting controversy has its  
limits. From a branding perspective.

Rajashree picks up her papers and resumes her task.

RAJASHREE

Yes, he ought to pull back. Exhibit  
more restraint.

(Beat)

From a branding perspective.

MINAKSHI

Exactly. I'll suggest he tone it down  
across the board. Generally.

Rajashree gestures at another chair in the room, indicating that Minakshi is welcome to sit.

Minakshi takes her up on the offer. A moment of brief, silent camaraderie.

MINAKSHI

Do you think he'll listen?

Rajashree turns to face her.

ABRUPT CUT.

INT. TOWN AND COUNTRY RESORT SAN DIEGO

A class full of students lies in savasana.

BIKRAM

They should ship all gay people to an abandoned, isolated island and leave them there to die of AIDS.

PANDHORA WILLIAMS's (early 30s, African-American woman) eyes shoot open and widen. She looks to her left and her right, trying to see if anyone has had a reaction beyond the few nervous titters.

When she sees a YOUNG FEMALE TRAINEE attempt to leave the class (LARGE MEN guard the doors), she is relieved and sits up, as if to gather her things.

The doorman shakes his head, gesturing at the trainee to return to her mat. The trainee, embarrassed, motions at the blood dripping down her leg.

Pandhora immediately lies back down.

The doorman is unsure of what to do. He looks to Bikram.

BIKRAM

(Shouting)

Where are you going? To change your tampon?

Hundreds of people hear the words echo through the hall. The trainee nods with shame. Bikram laughs coldly and nods to the doorman, who lets her out. We see her wipe away tears as she disappears from view.

BIKRAM

You see? Women, they are bitches and  
(MORE)

BIKRAM (CONT'D)  
whores. They are here for one thing,  
and that is to make babies.

Bikram motions to the doorman to lock the door behind her.

LATER

The class is over, and exhausted students are filing out of the room.

BIKRAM  
A short, one hour break. We have a  
long session this afternoon. No  
stuffing your faces.

As per usual, some students flock to Bikram to ask questions about an injury or for advice on a posture (typical yoga stuff), or even just to shake his hand or take a picture (unique to Bikram).

Pandhora lines up behind them, and when it is her turn, she approaches Bikram deferentially, cautiously.

Bikram puts his arm around her to pose for a picture.

PANDHORA  
No, Bikram, thank you, but...

BIKRAM  
Yes, do you have a question?

PANDHORA  
I do...

BIKRAM  
Come on, out with it!

PANDHORA  
I...I was wondering, Bikram, whether  
you meant what you said?

BIKRAM  
About what? I always mean what I say.  
Even when I am joking, there is some  
truth in it.

PANDHORA  
So you believe, then, that all women  
are good for is making babies?



BIKRAM

Listen, that girl, she walked out, in the middle of class. After I said that, said women were not good enough for my training, did not have what it takes, did you see anybody else walk out? No! I have to motivate the student. If you hate me, that is fine. But I will make a yogi out of you.

PANDHORA

What about what you said about gay people? Did that have a motivational purpose?

A small crowd has now gathered to observe the confrontation. People ask questions of Bikram during these sessions, but no one ever questions him.

He nervously eyes the growing crowd, though he'd never admit to being nervous.

BIKRAM

What do you care? Are you a lesbian?

PANDHORA

That's not the poin-- Bikram, yoga is so beautiful and so pure.

BIKRAM

Hey! What is this? Are you here to tell me what yoga is? I tell you what yoga is! I am Bikram! Who are you? All these people, they come here to learn from me, not from you.

Bikram gestures at the doormen, who also function, apparently, as his pseudo-security detail. They move in closer.

PANDHORA

But why preach hate? There is so much hatred in the world. Why not instead preach love? You're breaking my heart.

BIKRAM

We don't sell love here, you fucking black bitch. Get out.

A few people whistle, sigh, or mumble under their breaths. Pandhora sees that the guards are moving closer. She again

looks to the crowd for a response.

We zoom in on body parts again: this time, eyes, intentionally avoiding her gaze, and mouths, whispering to each other about her or sealed shut.

The guards escort her out of the room, not violently, but not gently, either.

She looks back at Bikram, one last time, as he signs an autograph for an admirer. Bikram is bold enough (unapologetic enough) to make eye contact.

BIKRAM

And don't come back!

INT. BIKRAM YOGA STUDIO

Minakshi takes a class. The instructor is FRANCESCA ASUMAH, a half-Ghanian, half-British woman in her early 40s, with a British accent.

The class is wrapping up, Francesca at the front of the room instructing STUDENTS on pranayama, the students each breathing in short, stilted breaths.

The sequence completes, everyone's breathing slows, and she closes her eyes calmly, and then opens them again, refreshed.

FRANCESCA

Wonderful work today, everyone.

The students clean off and roll up their mats as they gather their towels and walk toward the doors. Only Minakshi remains seated, her breathing erratic.

She draws the attention of some of her classmates, some of whom look to Francesca expectantly, but nobody stops or attempts to help her.

FRANCESCA

Minakshi?

Francesca approaches Minakshi, who is now in full-on panic attack mode. She lifts Minakshi's head in her hands.

FRANCESCA

Minakshi? Here, just breathe.

She guides her gently and calmly to deepen her breath. Minakshi is, momentarily, relieved.

FRANCESCA

There, there. You're alright. You're alright.

Minakshi looks back at her, embarrassed but still wanting. Francesca reads her perfectly.

FRANCESCA

Are you alright?

LATER

Francesca and Minakshi sit comfortably in the far corner of the studio, next to the open windows. They sip from cups of tea.

MINAKSHI

I always knew he was an off-the-cuff guy. Not politically correct.

FRANCESCA

Ha!

That's an understatement.

MINAKSHI

I know, I know. But I thought... I think maybe I was a little naive about this whole thing. About his eccentricity...

FRANCESCA

(Gentle but firm)

A little willfully naive, maybe?

MINAKSHI

Maybe, maybe.

(Beat)

There are some days he'll be calling me a "bitch," other days he's asking me to get into bed with him. And now with this lawsuit...I think I might be in over my head.

FRANCESCA

Pandhora's lawsuit?

Minakshi looks up, surprised.

MINAKSHI

You know Pandhora?

Francesca smiles.

FRANCESCA

Not personally, no. But it's a tight community. Bikram practitioners. The *black* Bikram community? Miniscule. People talk. Most of them have a similar story.

MINAKSHI

You mean...

FRANCESCA

Oh yeah, he says things like that all the time. To all kinds of people. You can't be surprised?

MINAKSHI

I suppose I am. Maybe I'm not. I never really thought much about it.

FRANCESCA

I'm mixed, you know. When Bikram found out..."You shouldn't have been born" were his words, I think. "People like you shouldn't be born."

MINAKSHI

Why wouldn't you tell me that?

Francesca shrugs.

FRANCESCA

(Not unkindly, matter-of-factly)  
Why would I?

The two women continue to sip their tea in silence.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ

An even bigger operation than when we saw it last.

Minakshi walks through the hall with Bikram, chasing after him, waving a paper.

MINAKSHI

Bikram, Bikram!

Bikram ignores her and keeps walking.

MINAKSHI

Bikram, we need to talk about this!

Bikram turns to another person in the office, an AIDE who clearly isn't following the conversation.

BIKRAM

(Gestures to indicate she's crazy)

What is she talking about?

Minakshi catches up to him when he pauses. The entire time he looks at her without recognition.

MINAKSHI

I am talking about the fact that I have been subpoenaed to testify.

(Beat)

In the Pandhora Williams case?

(Beat)

She is suing you for racial discrimination?

(Beat)

Calling her a black bitch.

A hush falls over the office and they all look toward the arguing pair. Bikram grabs the paper out of her hand. He looks around, and everyone continues to work. More quietly, but enough to drown out their words.

BIKRAM

And you are being subpoenaed?

MINAKSHI

Yes. I just received a note today from...

Minakshi looks down at the paper.

MINAKSHI

...From Carla Minnard.

BIKRAM

Well, then. We'll just have to tell them we don't know where you are.

He walks into his office and slams the door. Minakshi looks after him, frightened and frustrated, as Rajashree looks on. She raises her hand, indicating that Minakshi should take a moment and calm down. Minakshi nods and walks away, while Rajashree enters Bikram's office.

INT. BIKRAM'S OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

BIKRAM

I want her out.

RAJASHREE

She is our attorney. She is just doing her job. And she does a good one.

BIKRAM

I want a new attorney.

RAJASHREE

(Sarcastically)

Well, who did you have in mind? People are not exactly lining up to work with you after your-

Bikram hands her a paper. A resume. The name at the top: "Petra Starke." Rajashree is stunned.

BIKRAM

This woman wrote to me. A true Bikram devotee. Not like that stupid, fat bitch. She's become Westernized.

Rajashree holds up the resume.

RAJASHREE

And she isn't Westernised? "Petra Starke." "Georgetown Law." "White House counsel."

BIKRAM

Exactly. She has pedigree. Big names! Not like her. Idiot. Went to some itty bitty college. Nobody knows it. I don't even know what it's called.

RAJASHREE

The Bishnu Ghosh Mission?

Bikram looks at her, absolutely furious. Quietly, threateningly.

BIKRAM

Get out.

Rajashree says nothing but stands where she is. He throws a stack of papers off his desk.

BIKRAM

Get out!

RAJASHREE

With. Pleasure.

She turns and exits calmly from the room.

INT. LAW OFFICE

Sarah sits in front of a lawyer, MARY SHEA HAGEBOLS (white woman, early 40s), and her two AIDES.

She gives a deposition; a camera is in the room. We enter in media res.

This scene in which she "testifies" is distinct from the rest of the film: there are no abrupt cut aways, no cut aways at all, no flashy, frenetic pacing, no music. It isn't remotely stylized. We stay tightly on Sarah's face throughout--- we have to wallow in our discomfort when she chokes up or pauses. We are forced to react to her words in isolation with no visual or aural tidbits that signal, one way or the other, their truthfulness. And we are forced to reflect on that reaction when we learn what we're about to find out.

SARAH

I've been practicing Bikram since October of 2004. That's when I took my first yoga class.

(Clears throat)

I was a sophomore in college.

MARY SHEA

And when was the first time you noted something was amiss?

SARAH

Less than a year later. In teacher training. Very early on, I noticed that his relationship with young female students was different. Inappropriate. But I assumed there were cultural differences I didn't understand. Maybe the young women were just overly enthusiastic.

(Beat)

On the fifth day of training, Bikram--

At this, Mary Shea looks at her, as though to issue a reminder.

SARAH

Choudhury. Choudhury asked me to come into his office. And he said "What should we do about this? Should we make this a relationship? I know you from a past life, and I have this feeling about you." And he went on and on. "I can't love, you know that, but that's how I feel about you. I have never NEVER felt like this about ANYONE. What should we do about this?"

MARY SHEA

And how did you feel? What did you do?

SARAH

I was frozen. Mortified. But my certification was at risk. I continued to protest, and eventually pointed out I was already late for class. So he let me go.

(Beat)

And I just burst right into tears. The second I left his office. So I called my boyfriend, and he encouraged me to report the harassment.

MARY SHEA

And what did the head of teacher training tell you?

SARAH

That even if Bikram--

She responds to another look from Mary Shea...

SARAH

Well, I'm quoting her, here, so...

(Beat)

"Even if Bikram wasn't a good man, he was a good teacher. So I needed to separate the man from the teacher." It wasn't the first time I'd hear that refrain. I was told that if I told Bi-Choudhury to stop, then he would. And I was told not to say anything else to anyone.

MARY SHEA

And what happened then?



SARAH

Days later, Bik--

(To Mary Shea)

Choudhury. Sorry it's just so  
unnatural. We always called him Bikram--

MARY SHEA

That's alright. It's not a problem.  
Keep going.

SARAH

Choudhury. Choudhury. Choudhury  
pressed his body into mine while he  
was pretending to assist me. He pushed  
me down toward the floor and was  
pulling my arm and leg apart, opening  
my body. He started whispering sexual  
things to me and I collapsed into  
sobs. In front of the entire class.  
They took it as a sign of weakness.

MARY SHEA

Did you tell anyone?

SARAH

My boyfriend. So he started to show  
up. Making shows of devotion: sending  
me cards, visiting. And I told the  
owners of my studio. They told my  
mother he was "badly behaved" but  
"harmless." And they said they would  
confront him.

MARY SHEA

Did they?

SARAH

I imagine they did, because he started  
to retaliate. He'd glower down at me  
from the podium, shoot me nasty looks  
while loudly instructing others. It  
became obvious to everyone that he was  
pointedly not speaking to only me.

MARY SHEA

Did he ever offer an apology for his  
behavior?

SARAH

Yes.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(Beat)

To my boyfriend. He told him "things happen," and he hoped he wasn't unhappy.

MARY SHEA

Did things ever return to normal in class?

SARAH

I thought they might. He started demanding that I be the one to brush his hair. He kept prodding me until I gave in.

(Beat)

And then he called on me to demonstrate again. I thought he meant I was back in his good graces. But when he was assisting me with a posture, "assisting me," he pulled on my top leg so hard he tore my hamstring. When I complained about the pain he mocked me in front of the entire class. I tore another muscle. I was immobilized.

MARY SHEA

Was he still coming on to you, romantically?

SARAH

Yes, still. So I started telling more people at the Yoga College, other studio owners. But everyone made excuses: "You know how he is", "Of course he's going to try to be with pretty, flexible girls", and, the classic, "You have to separate the man from the teacher. From the yoga."

(Beat)

And meanwhile the thing was exploding, everything was growing so fast. More and more people started coming through the doors. I realized that if I didn't warn people, didn't warn these young girls, young girls like me, no one was going to.

(Beat)

So I did. And they confided in me, too. They told me stories about

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

Choudhury pressuring them for sex. How when they refused, they were denied opportunities to travel, to earn extra money teaching seminars or advanced classes. Sometimes they got driven out of the organization altogether. Or their boyfriends or husbands found out and made them quit. Or they just couldn't take it anymore.

MARY SHEA

But you kept going?

SARAH

I kept going. I tried not to be alone with him. I really did try.

(Beat)

Even the night I went to his home, it was supposed to be a family dinner. I even arrived early, to help his wife in the kitchen.

MARY SHEA

What prevented you?

SARAH

Bikram. I asked him about my chances at Internationals, the International Yoga competition. And he put his hand on my leg, started whispering sexual demands in my ear. He grabbed me from behind and pressed his penis into my leg. I was shocked. I froze.

Sarah starts to cry. The aide reaches over to turn off the camera but Mary Shea holds his arm, preventing him. She eventually composes herself and continues.

SARAH

He told me, "I can make you a champion. It's the only way." I was livid. I pushed him off of me and told him I could do it on my own. He kept shouting "no," shaking his head at me, so I asked him outright. "Are you saying the only way I'll be a champion is to sleep with you?"

MARY SHEA

And his response?

SARAH

"Yes. That's the only way."

(Beat)

"You will never be a champion without me."

(Beat)

And I wasn't.

Sarah pauses for a long time.

SARAH

I wanted so, so badly to prove him wrong. I gave the best performance of my life at Nationals. Until Internationals. Where I gave the best performance of my life again. The judges knew it, the audience knew it. I was the clear winner.

(Aside)

And this stuff is no joke, either. People think "oh, yoga championships, whatever," but people train for months. For years. Train hard. The winner gets a significant amount of money-- thousands and thousands of dollars, a huge donation to the charity of your choice, funded travel, your accommodations are covered, publicity. Important opportunities. To teach and to learn. I'll never know what I could've become.

(Beat)

People knew I was robbed. The judges, even. They told me outright. But still, the people at the Yoga College wouldn't admit it, they couldn't, they wouldn't admit a thing.

MARY SHEA

Okay, Sarah. I think we've--

SARAH

Do you know what they said to me? When I confided in them?

(Beat)

They said it must have been a psychological block. That I lost because, on some level, I wanted to.

(Beat)

Isn't that something? What a convenient worldview. That you can

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)  
work really hard for something, you  
can really truly earn it, you can  
deserve it, and then someone can come  
along and snatch it right out of your  
hands on a whim. And it isn't his  
fault, oh no. It's not his fault for  
being spiteful, being spoiled, being a  
thief. It's yours. Because that's how  
it works. The only reason anyone ever  
gets anything-- the only reason  
anything ever happens to you-- is  
because you must, on some level, have  
really, really wanted it. Isn't that  
just awfully fucking convenient?

SERIES OF SHOTS

A television turns on as MANY DIFFERENT newscasters read from  
their prepared scripts.

NEWSCASTER  
In local Los Angeles news today-

CUT TO

NEWSCASTER  
In national news today-

CUT TO

NEWSCASTER  
On tonight's international news

CUT TO

NEWSCASTER  
Yoga teacher to the stars

NEWSCASTER  
Bikram Choudhury

NEWSCASTER  
The celebrity yoga teacher behind  
Bikram Yoga

NEWSCASTER  
The hot yoga guru is in finding  
himself in some hot water as

NEWSCASTER

Bikram Choudhury has been accused of sexual assault

NEWSCASTER

A former student of the celebrity yoga guru

NEWSCASTER

has accused the iconic yoga teacher of sexual harassment

NEWSCASTER

Sarah Baughn

NEWSCASTER

Sarah Baughn

NEWSCASTER

Sarah Baughn, a former protege of the guru to the stars

NEWSCASTER

claims that the namesake of Bikram Yoga

NEWSCASTER

a favorite of celebrities like Beyonce Knowles

NEWSCASTER

Bikram Yoga, a favorite of stars Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher

NEWSCASTER

The yoga practice favored by George Clooney, Jennifer Aniston, and Madonna

NEWSCASTER

His Bikram Yoga chain of studios is frequented by stars like Jennifer Aniston, David Beckham, and Lady Gaga

NEWSCASTER

Baughn says that when she tried to reject Choudhury's advances

NEWSCASTER

Mentioning her boyfriend

NEWSCASTER  
Choudhury was dismissive, replying  
that he also had a wife.

CUT TO

Rajashree watching television in the Choudhury living room.

NEWSCASTER  
Choudhury, whose wife is also a  
defendant in the case

NEWSCASTER  
Choudhury's wife Rajashree is also  
mentioned as a defendant in the case

NEWSCASTER  
According to Baughn, Bikram complained  
that he was lonely, in pain, and  
unfulfilled

NEWSCASTER  
Baughn alleges that Choudhury then  
began to bash his wife, Rajashree

NEWSCASTER  
"She's so mean to me," Baughn claims  
he then said, "You have no idea."

NEWSCASTER  
"You have no idea."

NEWSCASTER  
Baughn claims that Bikram told her his  
body was "breaking down."

NEWSCASTER  
"You have no idea."

NEWSCASTER  
To which Baughn alleges she replied  
"Why don't you just do your yoga?"

NEWSCASTER  
"That will fix you-- at least that's  
what you tell us."

NEWSCASTER  
Baughn claims

NEWSCASTER  
She alleges

NEWSCASTER  
Her complaint alleges that

NEWSCASTER  
He then called her a

NEWSCASTER  
According to Baughn, he then referred  
to her as a

NEWSCASTER  
Baughn says that Choudhury then called  
his wife Rajashree an offensive  
epithet.

NEWSCASTER  
a bitch

NEWSCASTER  
He then called his wife, who is also  
named as a defendant in the case, a  
bitch.

NEWSCASTER  
a bitch

NEWSCASTER  
a bitch.

CUT TO

Rajashree turns the television off and calmly walks out of  
the room.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE (CONTINUOUS)

Rajashree walks into the garage, where Bikram is working on  
one of his many cars. He doesn't look up.

Still calmly, gracefully, she maneuvers between the vehicles  
until she's standing right beside him. She SLAMS the trunk  
shut.

He jumps and looks at her expectantly, though he doesn't know  
what quite to expect.

We don't know either.



Neither, she realizes, does she. Her face reveals a thousand emotions: fury, deep hurt, betrayal. Finally, she settles on exhaustion.

RAJASHREE

Bikram-  
(exhasperated)  
What the hell?

BIKRAM

These women, they are all trash liars.  
They are jealous of me, they are  
jealous of you. Why would I need to  
cheat with any of these ugly bitches?  
Why would I want to? Liars. They are  
lying. Do not waste your energy on  
them.

Rajashree looks at him for a long time before she speaks again.

RAJASHREE

There's only been one woman, Bikram.  
(Raising a single finger)  
Just one woman.

Bikram realizes he's been caught in a lie, but reacts indignantly. He's not embarrassed.

BIKRAM

(Waves hand)  
Bah!

RAJASHREE

So far, right? Only one so far.

She turns to walk out, and then turns back to him.

RAJASHREE

I know who the real liar is, Bikram.

He's still unbothered.

RAJASHREE

When was it, Bikram, that you won the  
All-India Yoga Asana Championship?

BIKRAM

1957. I was the youngest champion in  
the history of the competition. I was  
thirte-

RAJASHREE

The first All-India Championship was  
in 1976. You were already in America.

Bikram is genuinely shocked. Now, he is embarrassed. Ashamed.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - BOMBAY

Bishnu and Bikram's hands hoisted in the air in triumph.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

Bikram twitches, and the image disappears.

RAJASHREE

I was an All-India Yoga Asana  
Champion, Bikram. You were never a  
champion.

(Edges in)

How old were you, Bikram, when you  
went to study with Bishnu? At his  
mission.

BIKRAM

(Clears throat, softly)

I was-

(His voice cracks)

I was five, six maybe.

RAJASHREE

Bishnu did not have a mission.

EXT. BISHNU GHOSH MISSION - BOMBAY - DAY

Young Bikram performs a headstand. He falls out of the pose.

CUT TO:

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

Bikram twitches again, violently, and the image disappears.

RAJASHREE

Bishnu did not have a mission, Bikram.  
He had a gymnasium. And you were never  
a weight-lifter there. You went to  
work for him as a teenager. Do you

(MORE)

RAJASHREE (CONT'D)  
think, Bikram, that in Bombay, people  
did not talk about these things?

INT. BISHNU GHOSH GYM

Teenage Bikram performing menial tasks for Bishnu.

BISHNU  
Bikram!

He wipes down sweaty benches, puts away weights.

BISHNU  
Bikram!

He brings Bishnu a bottle of massage oil while he works with one of his champions.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

Bikram shakes his head again. He slaps himself violently.  
Rajashree's voice fades back in over Bishnu's shouts.

RAJASHREE  
And then you trained with him, not as  
a yogi. As a masseuse. That was your  
only exception. Your one skill.

INT. BISHNU GHOSH GYM

Bikram gently kneads an ATHLETE. In the background a weight falls onto the knee of another WEIGHT LIFTER. He lets out a loud scream as Bikram watches in horror.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

RAJASHREE  
When did you meet Richard Nixon,  
Bikram? When did you heal the United  
States President?

INT. HOTEL ROOM

The same hotel room where we saw Richard Nixon. Now empty.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

BIKRAM  
It was 19-- 1973?

RAJASHREE

1973, Bikram? At the height of the Watergate scandal? Nixon went to Hawaii, and then asked for you?  
 (Rolls eyes, laughs ruefully)  
 How much of an idiot...my God, imagine believing that story to be true.  
 (Beat)  
 And you did, didn't you? You really believed it was true.

Bikram tries to head into the house but Rajashree blocks his way. Now he lashes out angrily.

BIKRAM

So leave me! So leave me if I am such a joke to you. I can find a million other women! A million other young, beautiful women! Women who want to be with me! I am Bikram!

RAJASHREE

No. That is my brand. As much as it is yours. Maybe more. Do you think I care that you call me a bitch? I care that you are destroying my creation. That I built. And I will not see you turn it into a joke, into a laughingstock, just like you.

(Beat)

I am leaving you. But I'm not leaving Bikram.

She walks out the door, back into the house.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ

Bikram sits in his office, staring at Rajashree outside as she consults with some EMPLOYEES in their cubicle.

Minakshi storms in holding a piece of paper.

MINAKSHI

Bikram, what is this?

BIKRAM

(Distracted)

A press release.

MINAKSHI

Yes, a press release. You thought that  
 (MORE)

MINAKSHI (CONT'D)

was a good idea. To put out a press release denying sexual harassment allegations with a picture of you, shirtless, wearing a Speedo at the top? Petra Starke thought that was a good idea?

Bikram slams his hand on his desk and stands.

BIKRAM

Yes! Petra thought that was a good idea! She believes me. Someone finally believes me! Is that what bothers you? That someone has faith in me?

MINAKSHI

What bothers me, Bikram, is that Petra Starke does not technically work for you. She is still employed by the White House. That means she is still employed by the American taxpayer. She is not, as it reads here, the President of "Bikram's Yoga College of India LP." That is not, Bikram, even the name of your company. It is "The Yoga College of India." That's it. Not "Bikram's." This is, this is a gross violation of legal---

Minakshi realizes that Bikram isn't paying attention to her at all. He is still just staring at Rajashree. He seems to feel, for the first time, vulnerable.

Minakshi looks out at Rajashree then back at Bikram. More with dismay than concern, she says:

MINAKSHI

Bikram, what the hell is going on?

INT. LUXURY HOTEL SUITE

Minakshi arrives at Rajashree's hotel suite with a box of files and a bottle of wine. Rajashree's eyes are swollen and red.

RAJASHREE

Come in, come in.

(Beat)

Thanks for bringing these over.

MINAKSHI

Of course.

Minakshi places her things down and the two embrace.  
Rajashree closes her eyes, getting emotional for a moment,  
then abruptly pulls away.

RAJASHREE

Come, come. Sit.

(Beat)

So there are two women now?

Minakshi carries the box over. The two go through the files  
as they discuss.

MINAKSHI

Yes, two women in addition to the one  
who came out already.

RAJASHREE

And what was the quote..."A hotbed  
of..."

MINAKSHI

Yes, about the teacher training. "It  
was a hotbed of alleged harassment and  
abuse."

RAJASHREE

Well, that GQ article won't be such  
good PR anymore. You were right to  
flag it as a liability.

Minakshi takes no pleasure in this.

RAJASHREE

And there's one false imprisonment,  
and a human trafficking charge, in  
addition to the harassment?

Minakshi nods.

MINAKSHI

Some of these lines are going to hurt  
us from a branding point of view?

RAJASHREE

More than that!?

MINAKSHI

Not so much more as differently. For  
(MORE)

MINAKSHI (CONT'D)

now, those charges are just allegations, they'll play that way in the press. But there's more of the "my body is dying" stuff. It's going to change the way people perceive him on a more superficial level.

RAJASHREE

Which is what matters.

(Reading from a file)

"Jane Doe alleges that she reported the behavior to her male teacher. She says she was told, 'That's just the way Bikram is.'"

MINAKSHI

That's here, too.

(Reading)

"Everyone knows that's just how Bikram is."

Rajashree puts down the papers.

RAJASHREE

I should have had a contingency plan in place. From Day One. I was just sitting around. Waiting for the other shoe to drop.

MINAKSHI

I think we both were.

Rajashree looks at her with a flicker of confusion, then anger. Minakshi doesn't notice.

MINAKSHI

You know, we don't have to work tonight. We can just drink, and talk, and...

Rajashree rises abruptly wearing an artificial smile.

RAJASHREE

It's been a long day.

She leads Minakshi by the arm toward the door.

RAJASHREE

Maybe we should just call it.

MINAKSHI

Of course.

She turns to hug Rajashree, who gently rebuffs her.

MINAKSHI

If you need anything, of course feel  
free to-

RAJASHREE

Sure, sure.

She shuts the door.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

Rajashree enters the garage. Bikram is not working on a car, just sitting in the passenger seat of one, leaning back, staring blankly ahead. (Important not to portray him sympathetically here. This is meant to illustrate his deterioration, nothing more.)

Rajashree enters the car.

She is in the driver's seat.

RAJASHREE

I don't think we should do this. I  
have made that very clear. But if we  
are going to attempt to hire Petra, we  
have to do it right.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - FOYER

The Choudhurys greet the Starkes - PETRA (white woman, mid 40s), her HUSBAND, and her young SON.

Rajashree greets her son excitedly and warmly, taking his face in her hands, before turning to Petra.

RAJASHREE

I'm Rajashree.

Petra takes her hand.

PETRA

Petra.

RAJASHREE

It's such a pleasure to meet you. I've  
heard so many wonderful things.



PETRA  
Likewise, likewise.

RAJASHREE  
Please, come in. You must be hungry.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

RAJASHREE  
Do you remember my lecture? The story  
of Swami Vivekananda?

Bikram nods. Rajashree is silent. He turns to her and she  
raises her eyebrows.

He defeatedly shakes his head "no."

Rajashree begins:

RAJASHREE  
When Swami Vivekananda wanted to share  
his teachings of self-realization-

Her voice bleeds into Bikram's.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - DINING ROOM

The two families sit together sipping coffee, the remnants of  
an ornate feast on the table, their small son napping in the  
corner.

BIKRAM  
When he wanted to spread his ideas to  
the West, this was in...

RAJASHREE  
...1893.

BIKRAM  
In 1893, he came here, to America.  
Because this is a nation of striving.

RAJASHREE  
Here, you have a desire to constantly  
improve, yourselves and the world  
around you. It's unique to this  
country.

BIKRAM  
And you, with all your government  
work. Truly, you are an inspiration.

Petra places her hand on her heart.

PETRA  
Coming from you, that means so much.

BIKRAM  
We believe you could do good with us-

RAJASHREE  
Continue your mission-

BIKRAM  
If you came to work for the Yoga  
College full time.

INT. CHOUDHURY HOME - GARAGE

Petra watches, eyeing the cars greedily, as her small son runs between them. Rajashree play-catches him and hoists him up in the air.

The Bentley logo glistens in Petra's eyes.

PETRA (V.O.)  
Yes, I would be honored. I accept. Of  
course I accept.

EXT. CHOUDHURY HOME

Bikram and Rajashree stand on the doorstep, waving goodbye to the Starke family. Once they are out of sight, Rajashree re-enters the home. Bikram stays where he is.

She reemerges just moments later, dragging a suitcase behind her. The two don't speak, or even make eye contact.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ

We catch Petra in the middle of a conversation with Bikram.

PETRA  
The key is to portray these women as  
bloodsuckers without using those  
words. We have to vilify them without  
being seen as vilifying them. Because  
that's what they are, of course.  
Leeches.

Minakshi storms in.

MINAKSHI

What are you doing here? What is this?

Bikram nods to two men by the door, who only now come into view.

Just like Williams, Minakshi is escorted from the room, not roughly, but not especially gently.

MINAKSHI

(Shouting)

What is this?

Petra watches with smug satisfaction.

As Minakshi is escorted past Rajashree's office, Minakshi turns to look at her. Rajashree does not avert her eyes, and is not sympathetic, but also isn't cold. An unflinching, unfeeling, empty gaze.

INT. BIKRAM'S BATHROOM

Like something out of Trump Tower-- expensive but tasteless, gaudy and gilded.

He PLOPS onto the toilet, passes gas. He looks AGED and EXHAUSTED. He groans loudly.

He rises eventually and washes his hands at the sink. He picks up a bottle of BLACK HAIR DYE and, in painstaking detail, searches his hair for grey roots-- he's done this before.

He picks up a magnifying mirror, examining his wrinkles closely. When he spots a faint line, he opens a drawer to reveal a row of NEEDLES filled with BOTOX.

He injects himself, dabbing away the drops of blood that follow. His face is EXPRESSIONLESS... one might even confuse his EMPTINESS with serenity.

He strokes the back of his head, holding up a small handheld mirror so that he can see it. He puts on a black headband, and draws his hair into his signature topknot to cover up the large, growing BALD PATCH that has come into view.

He moves slowly, lethargically. He is OLD. Again, this is not sympathetic. It is disgust-inducing. Grotesque.

Over the course of the entire routine he does not once meet his own gaze.

## INT. YOGA STUDIO

Bikram teaches a large class. For the first time since the beginning of the film, the room isn't packed, though it can hardly be called a modest showing.

The class lies in corpse pose as he rambles dully.

## BIKRAM

Stars, athletes, politicians. They all come to me for healing. I fix them all. Presidents! Nixon, Clinton. All of them. They ask for me, Bikram. Sometimes, they doubt me. They say, "Maybe I should go to a doctor." But your doctors here, they know nothing. I say "give me one class." That is all I need to cure you. Of anything! Just one class. And I fix them. I am Bikram!

At this, one of the STUDENTS sits up, and takes an envelope out from underneath his mat. He walks up to the platform.

## STUDENT

Bikram Choudhury?

## BIKRAM

Yes, what are you--

The student hands him the envelope.

## STUDENT

You've been served.

Bikram wipes a black bead of sweat from his forehead...the hair dye stains the white paper in his hands.

## INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ - RAJASHREE'S OFFICE

Bikram barges into Rajashree's office holding his subpoena.

Rajashree holds up one of her own.

## RAJASHREE

You too?

## BIKRAM

Call my attorney.

Bikram exits. Rajashree looks down at the paper. The

plaintiff in the lawsuit: Minakshi Jafa-Bodden. Rajashree looks after Bikram as she picks up her phone.

INT. LAW OFFICE

Rajashree and Minakshi sit in mediations. Rajashree's LAWYERS (both white) sit next to her, Minakshi's LAWYER (a white woman, CARLA MINNARD) by her side. A MEDIATOR sits between them.

MEDIATOR

...And the plaintiff Minakshi Jafa-Bodden, represented by Carla Minnard.

(Beat)

Now, shall we get started?

Rajashree nods.

INT. LAW OFFICE (ANOTHER ONE)

This time, when we turn to the other end of the table, it is Bikram sitting opposite Rajashree. They are in mediations for divorce proceedings.

We focus on Rajashree's side of table, zoom in tightly on the faces as they speak. Her lawyer turns to her.

R LAWYER 1

How old were you when you met Mr. Choudhury?

RAJASHREE

Nineteen.

As we turn around, back in:

INT. LAW OFFICE

Minakshi sits with her LAWYERS across from Rajashree here. She has also filed suit.

We weave between the two proceedings.

R LAWYER 1

And did you, in the capacity of your role at the Yoga College of India LP or any Bikram subsidiaries or holdings, ever knowingly tell or repeat a lie about Mr. Choudhury the man or Bikram the company?

RAJASHREE

No.

R LAWYER 1

And were you aware of Mr. Choudhury's affairs and assaults while they were ongoing? Or, in some cases, as Mr. Choudhury contends, in advance?

INT. LAW OFFICE (OTHER ONE)

RAJASHREE

I found out in the papers. On the television.

Rajashree turns to face Bikram, and addresses the next line to him.

RAJASHREE

Like everybody else.

INT. LAW OFFICE

MINAKSHI

It doesn't matter when she knew, whether she knew. What matters is that she created a culture, she had a leadership position in an organization, where such behavior went unchecked. I don't think she understands what I went through. Bikram's behavior wasn't just racist and misogynistic. It was erratic.

(Beat)

And, I'm sorry to say, but Rajashree manipulated everyone. She manipulated me, she manipulated the press, she manipulated Bikram--

RAJASHREE

*I manipulated Bikram!?*

MEDIATOR

Mrs. Choudhury! No outbursts, please.

Rajashree collects herself.

RAJASHREE

It's Ms.

MINAKSHI

I didn't mean about the women...or the accusers...I...I'd never...I'm not suggesting that.

(Beat)

But I was dependent on them for everything. Bikram would say he gave me everything. But that means I needed them for everything. For my housing, for my immigration status. By the time I was escorted off the premises I hadn't been paid in months. I have a daughter. A young daughter. I don't think Rajashree understands how vulnerable I was. I don't think she knows what it's like to be that vulnerable.

INT. LAW OFFICE (OTHER ONE)

MEDIATOR

Well, given the young age at which Mrs. Choudhury entered this marriage, her lack of familiarity with our legal systems here, we couldn't expect her to have entered into an equitable pre-nuptial agreement. And since she has proven to be a more credible, and more cooperative, witness than Mr. Choudhury, there is no reason to, no evidence to cast doubt on her claims that she was unaware of the alleged abuses. So it is only fair to exempt her from liability for any current or future penalties inflicted on Mr. Choudhury for these or any future charges.

R LAWYER 1

And just to clarify, that includes the charges filed by Minakshi Jafa-Bodden before the divorce proceedings began?

MEDIATOR

Yes, that includes the ongoing litigation. Furthermore, given her contributions to the development of the Yoga College of India, we find Mrs. Choudhury is entitled to half of the company, and to half of Mr. Choudhury's assets. This includes his  
(MORE)

MEDIATOR (CONT'D)

home, his collection of jewelry, and cars....

INT. LAW OFFICE

MINAKSHI

It's just...I want to understand. There were times it seemed like we were friends. Family, even. You should have seen her with my daughter. But then I see snapshots for her and Petra's son...and I...it's just hard for me to know...

Minakshi looks to Rajashree.

RAJASHREE

It's ok, go on.

MINAKSHI

How am I supposed to know what is and isn't real?

EXT. COURTHOUSE

A group of REPORTERS and CAMERA CREWS have gathered. The former shout questions at Bikram as he exits with his lawyers.

REPORTER

Bikram, what do you have to say about the charges of rape and abuse? Do you owe your victims an apology?

BIKRAM

I have no victims! These women are trash! Liars and trash! I took them from the gutter and give them life, and this is how they repay me? With these lies! All for what. A few dollars!

REPORTER

Bikram, the allegations being raised are all remarkably similar. Are you suggesting these women conspire-

BIKRAM

This is fake news! Lies! And you print them! You are supposed to be

(MORE)



BIKRAM (CONT'D)  
journalists! To find the truth!  
Instead you print these lies!

REPORTER  
Bikram, what's your reaction to the  
judge's verdict today? That you pay  
Minakshi Jafa-Bodden damages of \$7  
million?

BIKRAM  
I told the judge. I do not have that  
kind of money!

REPORTER  
What about your fleet of cars? Your  
luxury cars, Bikram? How much are  
those worth?

BIKRAM  
I told the judge! You don't do  
reporting! I promised those cars to  
Governor Jerry Brown. To start an  
engineering school. For poor children.  
Here in California. See, you do not do  
your research. And you call yourselves  
journalists. All you report are lies!

REPORTER  
Bikram, we have investigated those  
claims you made to the judge. Governor  
Brown and his office both  
categorically deny them. They say they  
don't know anything about this  
engineering school. Is that just  
another lie?

Bikram's lawyers quickly usher him into a limousine with  
tinted windows.

INT. STARKE HOME

Petra and her husband sit on the couch, watching the press  
conference.

She switches off the television and turns to him.

PETRA  
Wow.

HUSBAND  
Wow is right.

PETRA  
I mean holy shit.  
(Beat)  
Seven. Million. Dollars.  
(Whispers to herself)  
Holy shit.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

INT. OTHER LAW OFFICE

This time Petra and her team of lawyers -- P LAWYER 1 (a white woman) and P LAWYER 2 (a white man) -- sits across from Rajashree and hers.

Rajashree's lawyer rattles off the same series of questions to their seemingly uninterested client.

R LAWYER 1  
And did you, in the capacity of your role at the Yoga College of India LP or any Bikram subsidiaries or holdings, ever knowingly tell or repeat a lie about Mr. Choudhury the man or Bikram the company?

RAJASHREE  
No.

R LAWYER 1  
And did you-

RAJASHREE  
The lies I told were bigger.

Everyone's eyes JOLT up. Rajashree remains detached.

Her team of layers are RATTLED. They ruffle their papers.

R LAWYER 1 eyes the camera at the head of the table, recording the scene.

R LAWYER 1  
I'm sorry, Ms. Choudhury, can you repe-

Rajashree eyes the camera, too. She knows what she's doing.

She turns and faces the camera directly.

RAJASHREE

The lies I told were bigger.

INT. PLANE

Bikram sits in a window seat in FIRST CLASS. He has a birds eye view of the country he came to decades ago, for what he knows may be-- will likely be-- the very last time.

He SLAMS the window shut.

RAJASHREE (V.O.)

Bikram has lied to me my entire life.

INT. COMPETITION STAGE (FANTASY FLASHBACK)

Bikram remembers, vividly, scenes we now know to be FALSE. But this time they are even more grandiose and ABSURD.

RAJASHREE (V.O.)

He lied about his background, he lied about our marriage, he lied about his affairs, he lied about his assaults.

A teenage Bikram stands on the competition stage-- this time Bishnu Ghosh hoists him on his shoulders as he holds a giant trophy. The audience throws flowers at him.

INT. STADIUM (FANTASY FLASHBACK)

Bikram holds a heavy weight high above his head in a large stadium filled with spectators, who again throw flowers on him and shower him with applause.

RAJASHREE (V.O.)

He's been lying easily, effortlessly, casually, about everything, for as long as I can remember.

INT. OVAL OFFICE (FANTASY FLASHBACK)

Bikram shakes hands with a grateful Richard Nixon inside the Oval Office, a crowd of photographers snapping pictures, inexplicably throwing flowers on the pair.

RAJASHREE (V.O.)

And not just to me, to everyone, to all of you, for as long as you've known him, too.

INT. PLANE

Bikram reclines, closing his eyes.

We won't see him again.

INT. OTHER LAW OFFICE

When Rajashree says "you", she doesn't mean the people in this room. She's speaking generally, and it shows.

RAJASHREE

I don't think he even knows what the truth is anymore. He certainly doesn't care. Fantastic lies. About anything you can think of. Anything he could think of.

(Beat)

But the lies I told were bigger.

R LAWYER 2

Why don't we take a break and regro-

RAJASHREE

(To Petra)

How old were you when you met Mr. Choudhury?

Petra looks to her lawyer.

P LAWYER 1

Don't answer that.

Petra looks back to Rajashree and smiles. SMUGLY.

Rajashree smiles as well, but as she speaks she grows angry. A quiet anger. PASSIONATE, but not erratic. She's grounded.

RAJASHREE

Bikram lied about his life, about yoga, about India. But the lies I told -- the ones he repeated-- they weren't about Bikram and they weren't about that place.

(She gestures in the East's general direction)

They were about this one.

Here, Rajashree no longer speaks generally. She is being very precise:

RAJASHREE  
 They were about you.  
 (To Petra)  
 And you ate them up.

Petra's eyes SHOOT daggers. She realizes she was had.

RAJASHREE  
 Do you know what you call a lie in  
 this country? Do you know what you  
 call an utterly fantastical,  
 unbelievable lie, a myth of your own  
 making, here in America?  
 (Beat)  
 A brand.  
 (Beat)  
 And America is the most profitable  
 brand of all.

Rajashree sits back.

RAJASHREE  
 This country will believe anything you  
 tell it about itself. Anything good.  
 If you're selling it, this country is  
 buying. So here, in this room--

Here, Rajashree addresses not just Petra, and not just  
 Petra's lawyers, but also her own.

RAJASHREE  
 --don't you all talk to me, don't you  
 all look at me, like I'm the first  
 person who ever built a fortune on a  
 fraud.

P Lawyer 1 shuts her folder and gathers her papers with a  
 satisfied, decisive finality.

P LAWYER 1  
 Well what we're hoping, Mrs.  
 Choudhury, is that you'll be the last.

At this, Rajashree smirks, holding back laughter. She  
 blatantly, dismissively eyes Petra up and down.

RAJASHREE  
 I doubt it. I really, really doubt it.

It is Rajashree's turn to be smug.

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ - BIKRAM'S OFFICE

Minakshi enters the office complex...formerly bustling with frenetic energy, it's now dead. A few stray papers on top of a few desks.

A lone figure sits at the desk. We cannot see who is in it.

Minakshi takes a deep breath and enters. The chair swivels around: Rajashree.

MINAKSHI

I was told that you wanted to see me.

RAJASHREE

In exchange for what?

MINAKSHI

You tell me.

RAJASHREE

I don't think I have to.

Minakshi looks at her skeptically, feeling her out.

RAJASHREE

You were told I wanted to see you, of course. But that isn't why you're here.

MINAKSHI

We still don't know where Bikram is?

Rajashree shrugs.

RAJASHREE

His housekeeper has not seen him in weeks. Which means that, for now, there is no money to move. A mess, that's all he left behind. A gigantic mess.

MINAKSHI

I was told that you were willing to hand over control of The Yoga College of India.

RAJASHREE

The Yoga College of India.  
Headquartered in Beverly Hills.

MINAKSHI

I was told that control would go to me, and me alone. That you would give Petra a cash payout, but no stake in the company.

Rajashree takes a set of keys out of her pocket. She places them on the desk in between them.

RAJASHREE

In exchange for what?

Minakshi is exasperated. She's done being tested.

MINAKSHI

In exchange for this meeting.

Rajashree gestures that she should take a seat. Minakshi eyes the keys and relents.

RAJASHREE

Do you remember the story of Swami Vivekananda?

MINAKSHI

He came here to spread his teachings. He came here, to America, because it is the greatest country...

BOTH

(In unison, sing-songy)

The greatest country in the world.

Rajashree laughs, wryly, and Minakshi offers up a dry, wistful smile in spite of herself.

RAJASHREE

Do you know what he found when he got here?

Minakshi half shrugs, half gestures broadly, as if to say "All of this."

RAJASHREE

He found a mean and vicious country with a primitive caste system. "Whites Only," that's what he heard at every hotel he went. He wasn't at the bottom, but he was damn close.

Rajashree opens a drawer and removes a press clipping. She

takes it out and places it on the desk...it's right at home with all the newspaper articles and magazine photos of yore.

RAJASHREE

"Minakshi Jafa-Bodden: Oxford-educated lawyer"?

MINAKSHI

Their words, not mine. I only gave them a short quote.

RAJASHREE

But you didn't correct them. I know your resume by heart, Minakshi. You were educated at a small, for-profit college in the town of Oxford, but you did not receive a law degree from Oxford University.

MINAKSHI

So it's technically accurate, then, isn't it? Which is more than you can say for half the articles up there.

Minakshi gestures at the wall behind Rajashree.

RAJASHREE

Petra went to Georgetown Law. Before working at one of the largest, fanciest law firms in our nation's capital. And she went on to serve at the White House.

MINAKSHI

Well, then, perhaps you should hire her. I'm sure you could use the counsel.

RAJASHREE

She isn't as smart as you are.

Minakshi is shocked, genuinely moved. *Shocked to find herself genuinely moved.*

RAJASHREE

Do you know what they say about me? That I arrived a submissive, obedient Indian wife. But here, in the States, I became smart and strong. They say that is why I'm smart and strong. Because I became Westernized.

(MORE)



RAJASHREE (CONT'D)  
Americanized.

MINAKSHI  
How does it feel to be out of that  
burqa?

Rajashree laughs-- surprised but dry.

RAJASHREE  
(Sarcastic)  
It feels great. It feels great to  
finally be out of that burqa.  
(Pause)  
They don't know, do they, what Indian  
women are?

Rajashree stands and gathers her things.

RAJASHREE  
(Matter-of-factly)  
This is a stupid country filled with  
stupid people who have been far too  
rich and far too powerful for far too  
long.  
(Beat)  
Don't go chasing after their respect  
on their terms. Don't look for their  
validation.  
(Not unkindly)  
You're never, ever going to get it.

The two circle the table, remaining on opposite sides of the  
entire time, facing each other, until they've switched  
places.

RAJASHREE  
Petra isn't as smart as you, Minakshi.  
I told Bikram so. And I should have  
told you, too.

Rajashree gestures that Minakshi should sit. In Bikram's  
chair.

RAJASHREE  
But I shouldn't have had to.

Minakshi sits.

Rajashree takes in the sight. She loves it, but it's  
bittersweet. She turns to exit.

Behind her, Minakshi folds her hands, nods her head, and calls, performatively...

MINAKSHI

Namaste.

Rajashree returns the gesture, faux-ironically, but actually quite sincere.

RAJASHREE

Namaste.

She leaves the room.

INT. YOGA STUDIO

Rajashree enters a random yoga studio. A giant statute of Ganesh greets her.

VOICE

Welcome.

Rajashree looks up to see a white receptionist (to whom the voice belongs), who hands Rajashree a pricing menu.

RECEPTIONIST

Is this your first time here?

Rajashree nods.

RECEPTIONIST

In that case, we offer an intro package...unlimited classes for your first week for just \$15.

RAJASHREE

Great, I'll do that.

RECEPTIONIST

Fantastic.

Woman looks at Rajashree expectantly. After a pause...

RECEPTIONIST

That'll be \$15.

RAJASHREE

Oh, right.

Rajashree hands her cash.

## RECEPTIONIST

There's a bathroom in the back, and  
you can just hang out in the studio  
whenever you're ready.

(Checks watch.)

Class should begin in about 15  
minutes.

Rajashree smiles and takes her change. She enters the class  
with her mat. This is not a Bikram studio--- there is no  
carpeting, no overbearing heat.

She places her mat down carefully, front row center, eyeing  
the hardwood floors to ensure it is perfectly aligned.

She sits in lotus pose and closes her eyes in meditation. She  
is entranced and doesn't notice...

A group of white MUSICIANS wearing white robes enters, and  
begins to set up their traditional Indian instruments.

Slowly, other students begin to enter the classroom, chatting  
merrily with each other. As a group of WOMEN (Caucasian)  
enters, one edges Rajashree away.

## WOMAN

(Rudely)

Excuse me. Excuse me!

Rajashree, startled, is jolted out of her trance. She opens  
her eyes, surprised to find another student so close when  
there is plenty of room elsewhere.

## WOMAN

(Unapologetic)

This is my usual spot.

Rajashree hurriedly moves out of the way and rearranges her  
mat. The YOGA TEACHER enters.

## TEACHER

Hello, class! I see we have some new  
faces here today.

(To Rajashree)

Is this your first class?

## RAJASHREE

I'm sorry?

## TEACHER

Have you done yoga before?

Rajashree opens her mouth to answer instinctively, but upon a moment's reflection...

RAJASHREE

Not in quite some time, actually. Not  
in quite some time.

TEACHER

(To Rajashree)

Um, ok. Well, this is an advanced  
class, so if you-

(To class)

- or anyone else- needs to take a  
break, you should always feel free to  
take child's pose.

(Beat)

So, as you can see, we have a special  
treat today. The Wild Lotus band is  
here to provide us with some live  
music as we go through our practice.  
So, let's begin.

The music begins-- this is the same music we heard at the  
beginning of the film, during the flashbacks to India.

Rajashree goes through the ordinary paces of class with ROTE  
grace and ease as the teacher leads.

Eventually, Rajashree holds a CROW POSE-- a misleadingly easy  
posture. As she balances on her hands, she stares at a spot  
on the floor in front of her. Slowly, her gaze rises. She  
locks eyes with her own reflection, and...

COLLAPSES out of a pose, tumbling forward onto her face.  
BLOOD drips from her nose.

A few other practitioners look at Rajashree, some concerned,  
some disgusted, some annoyed by the distraction.

Rajashree looks at the musicians, at the reflection of  
Ganesha on the wall, around her at the white faces, then back  
to the mirror. She covers her face in her hands, and we  
assume she's begun to sob, but then...

She removes her hands, and instead we see that she is  
laughing. First a soft chuckle, then loud, hysterical  
laughter.

RAJASHREE

(Muffled)

I'm sorry-I'm so-

She can barely eke out the apology through her laughter.

She stands.

She walks toward the door...she doesn't even bother to pick up her mat.

There is NO ONE there to obstruct her, NO ONE at the front of the room SCOLDING her, admonishing her not to leave.

She takes a deep breath, sighs with contentment, and exits.

YOGA TEACHER

(Flustered, with faux-authority)

Yoga...can sometimes...bring up lots  
of emotions... for... people...

One of the musicians nods emphatically, genuinely moved by the scene. The Teacher cues them to begin playing again, but we don't hear what follows.

REAL SPORTS WITH BRYANT GUMBEL CLIP

Jane Does 1 and 2 sit down with journalist ANDREA KRAMER (Caucasian F, late 50s), for an interview for HBO's "Real Sports" with Bryant Gumbel.

They both sit down with Andrea alone, but we cut between the two interviews:

ANDREA

Your name?

JANE DOE 1

Jill Kramer

JANE DOE 2

Maggie Genthner

ANDREA

(Smiles gently)

Formerly known as Jane Doe?

JILL

Formerly.

MAGGIE

That's me. That's what I became. What  
Bikram made me.

ANDREA

Why did you think it was important to come forward and identify yourself?

JILL

I want to be seen as a whole person again, and I think it's important for people to see my face, and hear me tell my story.

MAGGIE

Because if there are other women who have gone through this, either with Bikram or anywhere, they should know that they can come forward too.

JILL

I had to live alone with this for so long.

MAGGIE

And I don't want anyone else to have to go through what I went through.

ANDREA

The assault?

JILL

The assault, yes, but also the aftermath.

MAGGIE

The isolation that follows the abuse. It's just devastating.

JILL

I went through hell.

ANDREA

What do you think made you vulnerable to Bikram?

JILL

He was my guru. He wa- I can't even explain. Like, I really, really loved him. You know? I really, really did.

ANDREA

What happened during the assault?

MAGGIE

He was trying to grab my breasts and take off my clothes. And then he starts to try to have sex with me.

JILL

He hurt me. He assaulted me.

ANDREA

Bikram forced you to have sex?

MAGGIE

He pulled me on the bed. I'm, like, screaming like, 'No. Stop. Don't do this. Please don't do this.' And he starts calling me an idiot, just over and over again. And then he penetrates me and I scream, 'You're hurting me. You're hurting me.' I screamed it. And he replies, 'It's supposed to hurt.' All of a sudden, like, the veil lifts, the veil of who I think this person is.

JILL

Yeah. He hurt me, he assaulted me. I felt so disgusting, but I just did what he told me to do, which was basically, like, manually jerk him off. I hated doing it. But I felt like I owed him, you know? I felt like I owed him for, like, my life. He definitely took something from me that I've never been able to get back again.

ANDREA

Which is?

JILL

My love for myself. My purpose in life. I can't do yoga anymore. It makes me feel sick.

MAGGIE

He's no longer, like, the treasured teacher. The mentor. He's, you know, the man who raped me.

ANDREA

Is Bikram Choudhury a predator?

MAGGIE

Yes. He's a- he's a sexual predator.

ANDREA

And you say that so strongly because?

MAGGIE

Because of my experience. Because of the other women's experience. There are women who are frightened.

ANDREA

Do you practice yoga today?

We now see that Andrea also interviewed Sarah Baughn for the segment.

SARAH

No. No, I tried...a few months ago, I think, and I, I didn't make it in the door. I showed up and I, I ended up crying in the parking lot. I couldn't go in.

(Beat)

But I'm glad that I tried. To try to take a yoga class.

(Beat)

It was a good first step, I think.

We cut, visually, between Sarah, Maggie, and Jill's faces. Each has tears in her eyes.

ANDREA (V.O.)

We were able to track Bikram down at a teacher training in Mumbai, where we confronted him about these allegations.

(Beat)

This is what he had to say.

Television abruptly shuts off.

EXT. YOGA STUDIO- DAY

Silence, except for the sounds of the Los Angeles street.

The exterior wall of a Beverly Hills studio reads "BIKRAM". Above, a row of windows. This was the first, original studio.

But it looks different now, as it stands on a developed street, between a juice bar and a sushi restaurant.



A blonde woman walks by, an adorable well-groomed dog peeking out of her Louis Vuitton bag. More white passers by, more blatantly branded bags. ABJECT WEALTH.

A group of PAINTERS (Hispanic, aged 20-40) approaches, joking with each other in inaudible Spanish. They set up a ladder, and one painter climbs.

He begins to paint OVER the name.

A group of WOMEN, clad in designer Lululemon, stroll by the painters with no acknowledgment, entering the studio, and eventually emerging in the windows above. They lay out their mats in preparation for class.

As the painters continue their work, the epilogues appear.

Text: "After Sarah, Jill, and Maggie, a wave of women came forward to publicly share their stories."

Text: "Many of them approached the LAPD, but Bikram never faced criminal charges."

Text: "Some filed, and won, civil suits against Bikram."

Text: "Because Bikram fled the country, they have yet to be made whole..."

Text: "...financially."

#### INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

We see a series of images on Bikram Choudhury's Instagram account, all advertising expensive teacher trainings, classes, and lectures abroad.

Text: "Bikram still holds regular teacher trainings."

Text: "For which he still collects a hefty fee."

#### WEB SITE

A picture of Petra, smiling, or rather, SMIRKING.

Text: "Petra founded her own "alliance" of hot yoga studios."

Above Petra's picture, the logo for "Sweat N Glow" appears.

Underneath the picture, her title: "Founder and Chief Idealist."

The image of her face is copied and pasted, so there are six duplicates. Five of the pictures morph ever so slightly to produce different faces-- the other Sweat N Glow executives, with their respective titles-- in a way that emphasizes their racial homogeneity.

Then, a quote from Petra, in glittery pink script, with an animated twinkle: "I do not sweat, I sparkle."

We move on.

EXT. YOGA CENTER- INDIA

Rajashree instructs a group of young Indian children in yoga. She speaks to them faux-sternly and angrily.

Text: "Rajashree still gives paid lectures and yoga classes. She is also an active philanthropist."

Rajashree breaks character as the children giggle. She hugs them affectionately, kissing their foreheads.

Then, we zoom out, and she reviews pictures of these images with a photographer, as their mothers dote over them in the background. She speaks to him in Hinglish, explaining that she wants them displayed prominently on her web site. (We make out the last two words.)

Text: "...According to her web site."

INT. YOGA COLLEGE OF INDIA HQ

Empty and dead, as it was when we saw it last. Only Minakshi paces back and forth in Bikram's office, rehearsing.

MINAKSHI

It's sacred...descended from a  
sacred...

Text: "Minakshi is still President and C.E.O. of "Bikram, Inc.".

INT. YOGA STUDIO

Minakshi takes a class with a REPORTER while a PHOTOGRAPHER takes pictures. Francesca leads.

Afterwards, she speaks to the reporter.

MINAKSHI

Bikram didn't invent the series, you  
(MORE)

MINAKSHI (CONT'D)  
know. The practice itself is descended  
from a sacred geography.

Text: "Bikram Yoga-- the 26 postures,"

"the humidity,"

"and the heat--"

"is, they insist, good."

MINAKSHI  
What we must do now is figure out how  
to separate the yoga from the man.

EXT. ORIGINAL BIKRAM YOGA STUDIO

The now-packed yoga class inside is ongoing, steam fogging up  
the windows.

The painters are where we left them-- one wipes the sweat off  
his brow in the BLISTERING heat.

It appears their work is almost done. But then we zoom in:

Peeking out from behind layers of grey, fading further with  
each coat of paint but still stubbornly visible: the name  
"BIKRAM". \*