

THAT DARN BILLI!

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EXT. SUBURBAN SIDEWALK - DAY

The street is calm, with occasional cars whizzing by. In contrast to the tranquility is RANIA QUERESHI (78) who wears *Shalwar Kameez*, Pakistani clothing. She's short but there's NOTHING small about her personality. Or voice.

Walking with her is ALIYAH QUERESHI (12) who wears the latest spring collection from Justice. She looks pissed. Next to her is YOUSSEF QUERESHI (10) who's hair hangs in front of his face, obscuring his solemn face.

RANIA

I am telling you, I caught your billi *this close* to sticking her dirty paws in my Biryani.

ALIYAH

Okay we get it! Our cat is evil!

Youssef tugs on Aliyah's shirt.

YOUSSEF

Hey, Maggie isn't evil. She's good.

ALIYAH

I know. Granny doesn't seem to get that though.

As they cross the street to the park, they pass a MISSING CHILD poster taped to the crossing sign pole, accompanied with a photo of a ginger man titled HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN?

RANIA

Who knows what kind of diseases we would have gotten if I didn't catch this dirty cat! Rabies or HIV!

ALIYAH

Why do you even care? You not even staying with us that much longer.

RANIA

You know, in our culture we don't speak to our elders that way. Soo disrespectful.

ALIYAH

Well then our culture's stupid!

She feels instant regret, but it is too late.

RANIA
 (in a gravelly voice)
 Either I go, or that billi does.

YOUSSEF
 No we can't give Maggie away!

ALIYAH
 Don't worry Youssef.
 (sarcastically)
 Bye grandma! It was nice knowing
 you, but we pick the cat. BYEEE!!!

She starts waving aggressively in Rania's face. She grows
 incredibly furious. Youssef waves goodbye too, actually
 wandering off into the park. It takes a while for the
 brawling girls to realize--

ALIYAH (CONT'D)
 Wait...where's Youssef?

RANIA
 Haye Allah! (OMG!)

Rania puts her hands on her chest, panicking. They scan the
 park for him but he is nowhere to be seen.

RANIA (CONT'D)
 Youssef? YOUSSEF?

A young SECURITY GUARD approaches them, smacking gum
 obnoxiously. He sports a pencil stache. It does not suit him.

SECURITY GUARD
 Ma'am, is everything alright?

RANIA
 No my grandson's missing! I turn my
 head for one second and he's gone!

SECURITY GUARD
 Oh man. How old is he?

ALIYAH
 He's 10...we're really worried
 because he has autism and sometimes
 gets overwhelmed in unfamiliar
 places...

She gestures to the playground. Children's shouts are heard
 from the distance.

SECURITY GUARD
 Of course, I'll keep a lookout.

RANIA
A LOOKOUT? THAT'S IT? MY GRANDBABY
IS MISSING!

Rania grabs Aliyah's arm and rushes towards the main playground as fast as her 4'10" legs can carry her. She approaches a mother who is swaddling a baby in her arms.

RANIA (CONT'D)
Have you seen my grandson?

ALIYAH
He's about this tall, and he's wearing a SpongeBob t-shirt and blue shorts. And he also has long shaggy hair--

The woman shakes her head. Aliyah stares into the playground.

BEGIN SILENT MONTAGE:

-Adventurous music begins.

-Rania and Aliyah ask a family with unhinged children if they've seen Youssef, but to no avail.

-Aliyah sees a boy wearing a yellow shirt and the same shaggy hair as Youssef on a swing. She pats him happily, only for a random sticky iPad kid turn around.

-Rania and Aliyah ask a jogger if they've seen him, jogging along with him. He hasn't.

-Aliyah goes through a spiral slide and comes out the other end where Rania is. She shakes her head "no".

-Rania and Aliyah ask a woman walking her decomposing chihuahua, who shakes her head. The dog attempts to bite Rania, who fights it off with a stick.

-Growing more desperate, they search the filthy bathroom stalls, peering in each one, including the toilets. Rania pinches her nose.

-They walk out of the bathroom. It is nearly night.

END MONTAGE.

RANIA
It is getting so dark...

She crumples to the sidewalk, crying. Aliyah sits with her, awkwardly attempting to comfort her.

RANIA (CONT'D)
I only had this one task: take care
of you and I can't even do that--

ALIYAH
--Hey, this isn't your fault! Look,
Youssef is a tough cookie, I think
everything will be ok.

Aliyah's unconvinced. Rania sniffles and wipes her tears.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)
(beat)
Also, uh.

She fumbles with the Silly Bands on her wrist, snapping them.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)
I'm sorry for what I said about the
culture thingy. I didn't really
mean it. You were right, family
needs to look out for each other.

Rania buries Aliyah in a bear hug. Aliyah embraces her back,
but in her peripheral view she notices Youssef, who's talking
to a STRANGE GINGER MAN nearing his fifties.

They're all the way across the park. She pulls away from
Rania and points in their direction.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)
It's Youssef!

RANIA
What? Who is he talking to? My god!

The man says something to Youssef and he takes his hand.
Something in Rania shifts and she goes into full on grandmama
bear mode. She gets up and SPRINTS towards Youssef and the
man, who are now heading towards the parking lot. Aliyah
tries to keep up with her.

RANIA (CONT'D)
HEY! ROKO! ALIYAH POLICE KO BOLA!
(STOP! ALIYAH CALL THE POLICE!)

ALIYAH
YOUSSEF! GET AWAY FROM THAT MAN!

The man begins speeding up, but Rania has caught up to him.
She takes off her sandal and prepares to beat the absolute
shit out of him!

CLOSE UP ON ALIYAH AND YOUSSEF

Aliyah grabs Youssef, pulling him away from the madness, and wraps him in a tight hug.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)
You scared me.

YOUSSEF
I'm sorry, I didn't mean to.

ALIYAH
I know.

She continues hugging him, tears rolling down her cheeks.

CLOSE UP OF RANIA

Only Rania is seen in the shot, along with the sandal.

RANIA (O.S)
(while hitting the man)
Tu ghatiya ghandha insaan! Chuthiya
ka bachaa! Creepy pedophile! Fuck
you! (*You disgusting, dirty human!*
Son of a bitch!)

SECURITY GUARD
Whoa what's going on here?

RANIA
Yeh aadhmi...he-he--(*This man*)

CREEPY GINGER MAN
This psycho lady just started
attacking me!

The security guard looks befuddled.

ALIYAH
No! He tried to kidnap my brother!

The man starts to run! The security guard runs after him.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - LATER

Aliyah and Rania sit on a park bench while Youssef gets questioned by a police officer. The creepy ginger man is getting pushed into police car. It drives off.

RANIA
What a crazy day.

ALIYAH

I know. By the way...I pick you.

RANIA

Huh?

ALIYAH

Over the cat. We can give her up
for adoption or something.

She looks at Youssef.

ALIYAH (CONT'D)

I keep thinking about what would
have happened if you weren't
here...

RANIA

Oh forget about that. I was just
angry at you. We can keep the cat
on one condition: she stays away
from the kitchen! I will build a
barricade if I have to!

Aliyah giggles and nods.