GUINNESS

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INT. INDIAN FAMILY HOME IN A SMALL TOWN IN 1987

A crowded room full of Indian men putting lots of t-shirts on one short man. They are shouting numbers but above the counting comes the sound of a woman's voice

ANIKA (MOTHER)
Sanjay

SANJAY (FATHER)
187!

ANIKA
Sanjay!

SANJAY
188!

ANIKA
Saaannnnjjjaaaaayyyy!

The men freeze. Sanjay attempts to extend an arm to open the door as a heavily pregnant woman in an oversized floral maternity dress, flanked by two young girls, flings it open.

ANIKA
(Breathless)
It's coming now - it's really early

SANJAY
(Joyously)
He's here!

ANIKA
Firstly, we don't know it is a 'he'
and secondly, 'it' is very early and
we need to get to the hospital. Now!

Sanjay grabs a set of keys hanging on a fridge and heads through the door only to have to turn sideways due to the width of the t-shirts (#188 is a faded 1983 Guinness Book of

EXT. ON THE STREET OUTSIDE FAMILY HOME

Records T-shirt). Together they waddle to a stretched, convertible car (a Hindustan Ambassador) and with neither of them able to fit behind the wheel, Sanjay's brother Raj ushers them into the back to lie down on bench seats so they are looking up at the sky while he puts the their daughters on the front seat and jumps behind the wheel. Dadi, the grandmother is running up behind them as they pull away.

ANIKA
Did you ever imagine this would be us?

SANJAY
What? Being chauffeured to hospital in the back of a topless, homemade car that failed to be the longest ever Hindustan Ambassador by over 8 feet?

ANIKA
No, I meant...

SANJAY
Or married to a man who could be wearing 188 t-shirts but not even own one decent suit to wear to the birth of his 3rd child?

ANIKA
Sanjay, that's not what I was thinking. I just wondered if you ever saw us beyond surviving, beyond plans and dreams but just us, right now?

His eyes fall to the words on his 1983 Guinness Book of Records T-shirt as the tree's and the sky slide by above them.

SANJAY
I always imagined that you would be a wonderful wife and mother.

They reach out for each others hands and there is a moment of silence before Anika screams out in pain

INT. HOSPITAL

Four expectant faces can be seen staring through the glass windows of the birthing room. Dadi and Raj are holding up the two young girls who watch the Doctor, nurse and Sanjay standing either side their mother in the final stages of giving birth.

DOCTOR
The baby is coming! You are nearly there

NURSE
The last 6 hours will be worth it honey.

DOCTOR
Here it comes...

There is a moment of pure silence as a digital clock radio ticks over from 11:59pm to 12:00am.

Then the baby begins to scream!

SANJAY
It's a boy

ANIKA
Let me see him

SANJAY
(gleefully)
I saw him first!

ANIKA
Please, let me see him

DOCTOR
Lay back we just need to cut the chord

SANJAY
(Chuckling)
He is very handsome

ANIKA
(with raised voice)
Let me see him now!

The rest of the family enter the room with tentative, bubbling excitement. The Nurse weighs the baby boy and passes him to Anika and begins to record the time of birth, weight and measurements. Anika cries as she looks at her newborn son.

ANIKA
(softly)

CONTINUED:

Is he not the most beautiful thing you have ever seen?

SANJAY
He is all that I have dreamt of. From this blessed day his destiny will unfold under the stars and he will shine brightest of all.

DADI
What will you name him my son?

SANJAY
(Pausing for drama)
Guinness. We will call him Guinness.

The newly expanded family smile and laugh as the baby stops screaming and peace settles over the room.

INT. FAMILY HOME

A year later, in the family lounge room Guinness is now laying on his back laughing as his sisters, Rav (5) and Rhea (4) are trying to teach him to speak and walk. Next to him are a Rubik's cube and some mathematical flash cards

RAV
Ma, Ma, Mama.

GUINNESS
MMMMMMMM

RAV
Good boy!Ma, Ma.

RHEA
He's talking.Talk, Ginny, Talk.

GUINNESS
MMMMMMMM aaahhhhh

RAV
(shouting out)
Bapi come quickly! he's talking!

Their father rushes into the room trying to chew and swallow the last of a mouthful of food while beginning to speak

SANJAY
Did you say he's walking?

RHEA
No, talking! he said Mama.

SANJAY
(dejected)
Oh, I thought you said walking. The Book of World Records does not recognise the youngest talker but we need him to walk soon so that he can begin his first World Record attempt. (pauses for effect) Youngest person to walk across a continent!

Anika enters slowly from the other room.

ANIKA
What is going on in here?

SANJAY
Guinness just said Mama.

RHEA
It's true Mama, he said Mmmmmaaa.

CONTINUED:

ANIKA
He's a genius for sure!I have a feeling about this. You know when I get these feelings.

SANJAY
Oh I know!

ANIKA
Do you remember when I knew that mean old rich man Deepak Kumar was going to die in his helicopter? What did I say?

SANJAY
You said the mean old rich man Deepak Kumar was going to die in his helicopter?

ANIKA
No. I said that all that money meant nothing. It doesn't matter what you take with you, it is what you leave behind.

SANJAY
(ignoring her and waving a newspaper)
But have you seen this? A child with 10 toes on one foot! You can't compete with that!

Anika picks up Guinness and carries him toward a book shelf adorned with many copies of the Guinness Book of World Records. She runs her free hand lightly across the covers and whispers to him.

ANIKA
It's alright my beautiful boy. You are perfect just the way you are.

SANJAY
Gather round my family.I have an announcement. I, Sanjay Kamal Mannan, your father and husband, on the 5th of May in Mumbai, will be attempting to inflate the most balloons in 1 minute at the Guinness Book of Records official World Record Day! I feel good about this one.

Anika rolls her eyes without disguise and covers Guinness' ears.

CONTINUED:

ANIKA
Well, you certainly have enough hot air to go round you fat old man!

Sanjay and Anika laugh together as they fuss over the little one but for the most part are unaware of his sisters and the fact that Rhea solves the Rubix Cube then casually drops it to the floor to leave both hands free to tickle her sister.

INT. GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS HEADQUARTERS LONDON

Two white men in their early thirties are working in a small office that has a television set with footage of Matej Gaspar, in Yugoslavia, the 5 Billionth person born in history. Both are dressed in grey suits with matching green Guinness Book of Records ties. They are seated in front of typewriters and computers.

COLIN
(strong Cockney accent)
He's not the 5 Billionf you know.

DECLAN
(English upper class accent)
What's that?

COLIN
This kid Matej. E's definitely not the 5 billionf person ever born. It is just because that U.N. Secretary-General, Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar just 'appened to be in that city that day. Talk about 'convenient'!

DECLAN
He will still make it into "the book".
(He fingers the air with quotations)

Colin dramatically pulls the paper from his typewriter, screws it up and lobs into a wastepaper bin.

COLIN
We'll see.

DECLAN
Are you ready to try a computer?

COLIN
Are you ready to be wrong?

DECLAN
No.

INT. FAMILY HOME (GUINNESS AGE 4)

Guinness's Uncle Raj is using a ruler to measure the length of Guinness's eyelashes, hair and fingernails. The room is filled with relatives listening to Guinness recite the English alphabet backwards while being measured.

DADI
(In Hindi)
Why is he speaking in English?

GUINNESS
P,O,N,M..

RAJ
(letting go of eyelashes)
2cm. Your eldest son believes that speaking English will be the way of the future and that it will be very useful for Guinness growing up when he wants to go to London or America or Australia even.

DADI
Well I don't like it. We are letting go of tradition and soon you will see that we don't recognise ourselves any more.

RHEA
He looks like Mowgli!

SANJAY
Well I don't recognise my own brother anymore with that haircut.
(Points to Raj)
Was there even any cutting?

RAJ
It is called styling. It makes me look a bit like George Michael, don't you think?

SANJAY
Who is this George Michael?

RAV
Bapi!? He is a famous singer.

Raj takes the ruler as a microphone and Rav grabs a hairbrush and they begin to sing.

RAJ/RAV
When the river was deep, I didn't falter
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

RAJ/RAV (CONT'D)
When the mountain was high, I still believed
When the valley was low, it didn't stop me, no no
I knew you were waiting, I knew you were waiting for me

Everyone is dancing and clapping in time except Sanjay who looks on in disbelief.

SANJAY
Enough! Enough! Guinness should be practising and we have a lot to do before next week when the Guinness Book of World Records comes to our town.

ANIKA
Sanjay, they are just having fun.

SANJAY
Fun is a luxury item.We cannot afford luxury items right now. There is work to be done and I cannot do it all myself.

Raj waves the ruler and notebook in his face in disbelief at the suggestion Sanjay is doing it all himself. The adults form a small group and begin to argue, the children are not visible

ANIKA
(reprimanding)
Sanjay!I have told you before that you are taking this too seriously!

RAJ
Your whole family is here helping you right now so perhaps you should just apologise!

DADI
Boys, please, please. Perhaps we should all have some tea?

ANIKA
That is a good idea, and besides, we have bigger issues to deal with. I don't know how we are going to pay this month's hot water bill?

SANJAY
(Softly reaching for her hand)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

SANJAY (CONT'D)
The answer is blowing in the wind my love. You see, Dylan. I know some music too.

DADI
But there are no answers when there is a calm before the storm. Remember India. Remember yourself.

SANJAY
Ok. I'm sorry.

As Sanjay leans forward to hug his mother he sees over her shoulder that his two daughters have been playing hairdresser with Guinness and the long hair that he had before is now on the floor. He screams.

INT. SCHOOL (GUINNESS AGE 8)

In a small but crowded classroom Guinness, now 7 years old, with very short hair sits at the front between a studious looking girl and a cheeky, unkempt boy who seems to be a lot smaller and thinner than the other children. These are his two best friends Neerav and Krish. The teacher is explaining simple multiplication when Guinness yawns.

TEACHER
I am sorry. Are we keeping you up?

GUINNESS
Uhhhhh.

TEACHER
Would you like a rest. Perhaps a short nap?

GUINNESS
Ohhhhh.

Other children in the classroom are giggling.

TEACHER
Silence! Well?

GUINNESS
Sorry Mrs Patel. I was practising juggling late last night for...

The bell rings and all the children begin running out the door.

TEACHER
Slow down and don't forget to practise,
(She eyeballs Guinness)
Practise your multiplication!

Guinness leaps from his seat to catch up with Krish and Nareev. Together they walk to the front of the school where he is being picked up by his Uncle Raj. As they approach he is sitting in his old, but cool car, singing and smiling. All 3 squeeze into the back seat.

GUINNESS
Hello Uncle Raj!

NAREEV
Hello Uncle Raj!

KRISH
Hello Uncle Raj!

Raj turns to face them, the car is not moving but music is playing on the radio (Sussudio)

CONTINUED:

RAJ
Hello you 3! Good day?

KRISH
Guinness got in trouble.

GUINNESS
Thanks for nothing.

RAJ
What for?

GUINNESS
(echoes himself)
For nothing.

RAJ
Really?

GUINNESS
I was daydreaming but then it accidently turned into a yawn.

RAJ
(Chuckling)
I know that feeling. When I was at university studying Engineering all I could think about was music. And Girls. But mainly music.

NAREEV
Is that why you work at the radio station? For girls and music?

RAJ
Yes. Well, truth be told, right now I am only the cleaner but one day I will be a DJ and have my own show and you can all come and visit the station.
(in a radio voice)
This is Raj Mannan playing your favourites from the 1980's. Keep listening for Sussudio by Phil Collins!

Raj takes the wheel and turns up the radio as the children laugh and do bad shoulder dancing in the back seat.

INT. NIGHT - BATHROOM OF THE MANNAN HOUSE

Guinness is submerged in a bath that is filled with ice. His sisters sit beneath a sink in the corner and watch in silence. An alarm clock is suspended just above his eyeline and it is only the sound of ticking that can be heard until he bursts from under the water at the same time as his Mother bursts through the door.

GUINNESS
(gasping for breath)
Mother! I lasted 94 seconds! It is a new PB for me!
(His teeth are now chattering)
Is Bapi home? I can't wait to tell him!

ANIKA
Ginny! Get out at once you are freezing!

Sanjay walks as she is putting a towel around Guinness.

SANJAY
Hello son! Have you been practising?

ANIKA
This is ridiculous, I found him nearly drowning in...

GUINNESS
Yes Bapi! I lasted exactly 94 seconds but then...

SANJAY
Slow down and I will hear you both. My love, you first, Guinness get yourself dry and I will come and put you to bed in 5 minutes.

GUINNESS
Alright.

SANJAY
And remember, 94 seconds is still at least 60 seconds off the world record.

Dejected, Guinness leaves the bathroom.

SANJAY
Before you say anything, you should know that I have had a hard day at the factory.

ANIKA
Really.

CONTINUED:

SANJAY
The bosses have taken an order for 300 more tyres a month which seems impossible and they will not hire any more men. It is crazy.

ANIKA
Right now I actually don't care. I am more worried about our son. You are pushing too hard.

SANJAY
But I...

ANIKA
He is so happy to do what you ask of him but his teachers say that he is always tired and has trouble focusing on the lessons. Even Krish is getting better grades.

She has reached into the bath to pull out the plug and he speaks over the sound of water leaving the tub.

SANJAY
I will not lie to you. It is hard not to push him more. He has a gift, the same gift that I had and together we can help him fulfil his destiny.

ANIKA
I am not sure what this 'gift' is that you speak of. I only know that he has started writing poems instead of practising and he is listening to music instead of doing multiplication. . We cannot escape what we have to face in life but is this what you really want for him? Do you think we could find some time for him to play with his friends after school?

SANJAY
Friends? Poems?

ANIKA
Krish and Neerav have asked 3 times this month to go to see Raj at the radio station after he offered to Ginny to take them but he races home to practise to make you happy. And the poems? I have one that the teacher took off him when she thought he was passing notes in class but actually it is a beautiful little story of boy who
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ANIKA (CONT'D)
walks to the moon and back.

SANJAY
I will be happy when we succeed. But maybe you are right, perhaps he needs a break. Why he would want to go to that stupid radio station I don't know.

ANIKA
Thankyou.

As they both walk out of the bathroom the sisters have not moved and are resigned to being ignored once again. Rav has been pinching her nose and holding her breath for the duration of the scene.

EXT. BAR IN OUTBACK AUSTRALIA

Official Guinness Recorders Declan and Colin are standing outside a door, clip boards in hand, staring at a sign that proclaims The Dog and Bell pub will host an attempt to break the 23rd Prime Minister of Australia's seemingly immortal record set in 1954 for sculling 2.5 pints of beer in 11 seconds, his name is Bob Hawke. They are dripping with sweat but still wearing their suits. The sound of INXS' Stay Young is muffled but playing loudly inside.

DECLAN
(Hand on the door)
You do realise that we are 4 hours early for this thing?

COLIN
I believe some extra research is in order.

He gestures to the barman as they take seats up at the bar. At the same time two young, attractive blonde girls with backpacks at their feet are getting up from their table and walking towards them.

COLIN
2 pints of whatever you'll be serving up tonight!

BARMAN
Well, well. You two must be the Poms from Guinness.

The girls are now standing expectantly beside Colin and Declan. Declan is about to reply to the barman.

BACKPACKER 1
Hi fellas.

BACKPACKER 2
Boys.

COLIN
Ladies.

DECLAN
If you mean are we the British representatives for The Guinness Book of World Records who have been despatched to cover this evenings event, then yes, we are.

BACKPACKER 2
Ooh la la, he's posh.

CONTINUED:

COLIN
And just so you know, it don't 'ave nuffing to do wiv' the tasty black beverage uvver than it was started by a bloke from that company. And they own it. But uvver than that...

BACKPACKER 1
(ignoring what Colin said)
Are you in the comp then?

COLIN
No, we are here to validate the legitimacy of their attempt.

The girls look confused and disappointed.

BACKPACKER 1
So you won't be drinking then.

COLIN
Prob'ly not.

DECLAN
Definitely, not. I suspect the gentlemen in the corner are more likely to participate.

BACKPACKER 2
(rising)
Come on Amy.

The girls walk away in the direction of 3 older men in blue singlets and shorts laughing and watching horse racing on a big screen while sipping beer like they had never tasted it before.

COLIN
Smooth.

Colin and Declan turn their attention to the icy cold beers before them and sip in silence.

DECLAN
You given any more thought to how you might find the real 5 billion dollar kid?

COLIN
Funny you should ask, I believe I do.

DECLAN
Do tell.

COLIN
(Sculling his beer)

CONTINUED:

We will need another drink for this.

Colin gestures again to the barman and looks up at the clock. Time freezes for a moment and returns with the pub at full capacity, music blasting and the Record attempt has not yet begun. Their conversation is made up of shouting and beer soaked sign language.

DECLAN
So what you are saying is, there is a computer thingy, algebrythm...

COLIN
Algorythym

DECLAN
That's what I said. Anyway this thing can calculate more better ways to know the exact date and time and which little rascal is the real one?

COLIN
In a manner of speaking. There's a bird in stats that has been 'elping me. She says she has it narrowed down to India.

DECLAN
(sarcastically)
India? Well that should be easy then.

Before he can speak again a loud cheer sounds and they turn to see a spot light on the stage and Amy the backpacker is chugging down a 'yard of ale'

COLIN
Get yer stopwatch out then!

INT. FAMILY HOME KITCHEN GUINNESS 10 YEARS OLD

Guinness is pacing while reciting Pi to as many places as possible and stumbling around the 200 mark. His friend Krish and Nareev are sitting at the table clearly impatient to leave. His father listens while placing spoons onto his face.

SANJAY
You know the record is 40,000 digits don't you? In 1989, Japan's Hideaki Tomoyori pulled off that little miracle.

GUINNESS
I have to be wasting my time.

DADI
My dear boy, your father has faith in you, you must have faith in yourself

GUINNESS
But Dadi nothing I ever try seems to work.

KRISH
I have faith in chocolate laddu.

NAREEV
(tapping her wrist)
And I have faith in my watch.

KRISH
Let's go!

Anika enters from the other side with a spring in her step and broad smile as she meets the children on their way out.

ANIKA
Good news. We have new neighbours!

DADI
(hopefully)
And?

ANIKA
They have a daughter...

Krish and Nareev look at each other then directly at Guinness.

KRISH
Oooooooh

NAREEV
Oooooooh

ANIKA
Sanjay, why are you not at work?

CONTINUED:

SANJAY
Tell me more about the neighbours.

The three children run from the argument that is beginning to brew and they leave the house, fly down the street and then turn on to a dirt track that takes them to a small creek amongst the trees. They sit on an old log and begin dividing a small parcel of chocolate laddu that Krish has pulled from his backpack.

KRISH
(out of breath and coughing a little)
I thought we would never escape.

GUINNESS
Sorry.

KRISH
That's ok. I am so hungry.

NAREEV
You are always hungry.

KRISH
Well, you had better eat one now. You never know how many days you have left.

GUINNESS
(taking one from his friend)
What do you mean?

KRISH
(through a mouthful of laddu)
Till you die.

NAREEV
What do you mean?

KRISH
My brother said we only have 25,000 days to live and we have already used more than 2000!

NAREEV
Wow.

GUINNESS
What shall we do for the next 22,000 days? What if you get hit by a bus?

NAREEV
Or choke on chocolate?

CONTINUED:

They all stop eating and time freezes them and the water for a second before returning to the moment.

NAREEV
We should have a countdown. You know, like a calendar, but for your whole life, not just a year.

GUINNESS
I have my notebook.

Guinness has a cloth bag over his shoulder and he pulls out a small notebook and a pen. He writes the date, July 14th 1995, and 3 columns with one name in each.

GUINNESS
Do you think we will all have the same number of days?

They sit in silence for a while.

NAREEV
(to Guinness)
Do you like all the stuff you have to practise for your father?

GUINNESS
It is ok I guess. He says it is very important.

KRISH
What have you been working on?

GUINNESS
Well my father doesn't know but I am trying to guess what the temperature of something is just by touching it.

KRISH
Cool. Your sisters say you have written a poem about a space boy, did you?

GUINNESS
(embarrased)
What? No, that's stupid. They're stupid.

NAREEV
Have you been practising for standing on the pole?

GUINNESS
Not yet but maybe when we go home? I'll do it later.

Krish stands, pretending to be Sanjay standing on one leg.

CONTINUED:

KRISH
Guinness, it is your destiny. The whole town is behind you. You will bring honour to us all!

NAREEV

Anika stands and pretends to be Anika by wrapping her scarf over her head.

Oh Ginny, you will be the hero and you will marry the beautiful, beautiful neighbour in a big wedding, la la laaaa!

Nareev turns around and puts her own arms over her shoulders and makes sounds as if she is kissing someone. Krish is laughing so hard he falls into the river.

INT. FAMILY HOME (GUINNESS AGE 15)

The whole family are sitting around listening to the radio when the music fades and a warm baritone voice leaps from the speakers.

RAJ
Good morning, good morning! Welcome to the Sunday Morning 80's Breakfast Show with your host, me, Raj Mannan! I'll be spinning you through the best of the 80's with some of my favourites and yours to if you just dial in on 1800 1980, you can request something you loved from the Greaty Eighties!

RHEA
It's him! It's Uncle Raj!

RAV
Did he just say 'greaty eighties'?

RHEA
I think he sounds cool.

Sanjay enters the room looking tired and angrily shuts off radio and orders Guinness to to his room with a sharp pointing of his finger.

SANJAY
You have capitals and countries to work on today, perhaps they will be easier than Pi.

Anika glares at her husband and turns the radio back on in time to hear Raj announcing the news.

RAJ
...and in local news, I have always wanted to say that, I am excited to announce that the Guinness Book of Records will be visiting us in 5 weeks time. So if you have not been shaving or trimming for a few years come on down. Seriously though, it says genuine applicants only! We will be running a competition to see who can name the most songs in a minute with just a snippet of music, like this.

The sound of just a beat or two from 3 popular songs plays as all members of the family (except Guinness) shout out which song they think it is. Guinness is sitting in a corner of the room with pen and paper, leaning on a pile of books by Gibran, Ginsberg and Grisham writing as fast as he can.

EXT. IN THE MIDDLE OF A FIELD

Sanjay has a decibel recorder in his hand and Guinness is holding his belly.

SANJAY
You must have the proper technique. Do you have it?

GUINNESS
I sure hope so.

SANJAY
Have you been practising?

GUINNESS
What are we doing now?

SANJAY
Don't be rude. We have many years to work on this one as your body is still developing, but it is quite achievable, I believe, ff I had started younger I myself would have had a chance at this one.

He looks down at the decibel reader.

SANJAY
Raj borrowed this from the radio station so it should work. Ready?

GUINNESS
Ready.

SANJAY
Go.

GUINNESS
(at full voice)
Aggghhhhhh!

SANJAY
90 decibels. A good start. I believe the record is around 120 so lets try again.

GUINNESS
(at full voice)
Aggghhhhhh!

The sound of giggling is coming from nearby.

CONTINUED:

SANJAY
96! Lets go again. Maybe try singing a line from a song?

GUINNESS
(with attempt at singing/ Italian accent)
What's a madda' you heyyyyyyyyyyy!

From within the tall grass sounds giggling and singing.

RHEA
Ahhhh Shud uppa ya face!

RAV
Shud uppa ya face!

EXT. AN OPEN DUSTY CAR PARK

Guinness is standing on one leg on a small pole with a yellow rope on the ground around him and he looks tired. His sisters and Nareev stand below him and an odd looking Indian man in a cheap suit stands six feet away with a clip board and a stopwatch. HIs family and friends are passing him water and snacks. Raj arrives with a Sony Walkman and a mix tape. There is a strong wind blowing a small whirling dervishes dance across the carpark.

As the adjudicator looks down at his stopwatch the numbers appear to show 2:22 and for a moment the wind and time stop, then return at 3:33 and Guinness is still on one leg, removing the cassette from the walkman and turning it over. As he presses play, in the seconds before the song begins, the wind drops and he looks over at his friends with a grin.

The opening riff of Satisfied by Richard Marx in his ears causes him to show off a cheeky shoulder dance move but at the same time he catches the reprimanding eye of his father a hornet filled with confidence in the calm has landed upon his standing leg and speared the weary calf muscle underneath the yellow trousers Guinness's mother chose for the attempt.

As he falls from the pole, he falls short of the record by several hours and is immediately disqualified by the adjudicator. sanjay kicks the ground and charges toward him as his sister chase him down to hold him back.

Guinness lies face down bleeding and laughing in the dirt as the foam headphones bleat out a tinny sound.

SONY WALKMAN
"I won't give up until I'm satisfied"

INT. FAMILY HOME KITCHEN

Alone at the kitchen table surrounded by books Guinness is wearing headphones and writing a list below the number 18, 225.

Sanjay storms into the room waving a report card and shouting. He launches himself at the table and scatters books and papers everywhere.

SANJAY
Why? Why? How can these grades be so bad? You are always reading, always writing? So tell me why?

GUINNESS
Father, there is no point in me trying to explain if you cannot see that I spend most of my time with you practising for world records that we never succeed at?

SANJAY
And who's fault is that? You do not believe you can do these things but I do. You were so close in Mumbai on the balance board and we were third place in Dehli in the three legged race. Your time will come. Our time will come.

GUINNESS
Time keeps on coming whether I do these things or not. What if I am not meant to be a world record holder? What if I am supposed to be a teacher or a...
(he pauses)
A writer?

SANJAY
You still think your words will save you from hard work? You think you can talk or write yourself out of a tough corner? Not true! Not true! Where will those words be in ten years? Buried in a book, but achieving a world record is for life. People will know who you are, for life. You can hold your head up, for life.
(he begins to raise his voice)
You are a fool to think that there is a place for you in this world as a writer. You are a fool if you walk away from all that we have done to
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

SANJAY (CONT'D)
prepare you. You have your best shot yet next month, this is an opportunity a lifetime in the making. I would do it myself if it wasn't for my damn back but that pain is nothing, nothing compared to the pain of watching you waste everything if you don't try harder. If you don't do it now.

Guinness stands to meet his father. They are now the same height and he looks him right in the eye. He is as soft as his Father is hard.

GUINNESS
Who am I supposed to be? I'm not you. I don't want what you want. I don't need what you need. I am sorry but all this is your dream. I don't even begin to dream when my head is so full of someone else's dreams it is like being awake in a nightmare. I want answers but I don't even know what the questions are yet.

Sanjay has begun to turn pale, he begins to shake then collapses on the ground. Guinness rushes to his side and calls for help.

EXT. NIGHT, HILL ABOVE THE TOWN (AGE 17)

Guinness and his sisters are sharing a bottle of wine, laughing and looking down upon the town.

RHEA
My husband would kill me if he knew what I was doing!

RAV
He is probably coming up the hill right now!

GUINNESS
Well Bapi is going to kill me. Now that he knows I hate my stupid name and that stupid book.I may have gone to far.

RAV
He's ok though right?

GUINNESS
Oh yeah, the doctor said he was severely dehydrated due to his training for beating the rule of 3

RHEA
Rule of 3?

RAV
You know 3 weeks without food, 3 minutes without air and he must have been shooting for 3 days without water. Insane. At least I remember something from my First Aid training.

RHEA
So what next then?

GUINNESS
I have been thinking about travelling, maybe make some money, head for a big city, meet a girl. You know.

RAV
(laughing and pouring another drink)
Solid plan.

RHEA
What about Nareev and Krishy? Do you think they would want to travel with you?

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS
Krish doesn't have the legs.

RHEA
That is if you leave, I mean you have been talking about it for a while now.

RAV
You are always talking about doing something. Do you remember when you were supposed to do that school project about something...

GUINNESS
(sighing)
Oil rigs.

RAV
Yeah, oil rigs and you had all summer holidays but you left it until the last night and then set your alarm for 3 am and started painting and cutting and banging!

RHEA
Bapi was furious

GUINNESS
Still got a B

RHEA
I think it was a C

RHEA
Or that time you were going to write a poem for Nareev and,

GUINNESS
Alright I get it, and I only have 18,000 or so days left so...

Guinness looks at his watch and the numbers glow back in the dark 18:02 and time freezes for a moment.

RHEA
What?

GUINNESS
Never mind. Pass the wine. I'm leaving tomorrow.

Rav, standing, picks up a stone, throws it and hits a street light 50 metres away.

EXT. BUS STOP IN TOWN

Anika walks up behind Guinness who is standing alone with a backpack and looking into the distance. She gently puts her hand on his shoulder but he still jumps a little. He turns to face his mother with a look of guilt and sadness.

GUINNESS
Mother?

ANIKA
Ginny. Are you ok?

GUINNESS
Yes. and no. I mean,

He cannot speak as he is filled with emotion. He drops his bag and throws his arms around her. She whispers in his ear.

ANIKA
I want to you to always know that I am so proud of you, whatever you do. The minute you came into the world I knew you were special. Not for the reasons your father was thinking but because I saw something in your eyes , like you were dreaming, a beautiful dream but you were awake. And I will tell you a secret. I really wanted to name you Tom.

Guinness steps out of the embrace, dries his eyes and looks questioningly at his mother.

GUINNESS
Tom?

ANIKA
That's right. The only television show we could watch in English when I was helping at the nursing home in Mumbai was called Magnum PI and the actor in the main role was called Tom Selleck. He was very tall and very handsome. Just like you have become.

GUINNESS
Mother?

ANIKA
Yes?

GUINNESS
Who am I supposed to be?

CONTINUED:

ANIKA
The answer to that is inside you. Only you can let it out.

They embrace in silence for a while.

GUINNESS
I hope the whole town isn't too hard on Bapi.

ANIKA
He will be fine, if he just drinks water! Your sisters will keep him busy enough with foolish husbands and needy babies. Oh, and I have something for you.

She pulls a small brown parcel from her handbag and places it in his hands and continues to hold his hands around it while she speaks

What ever you have to do, do it now. So when it is time to come home I will still be here.
(she winks and gives him one last kiss)
Right here, waiting for you.

Guinness turns, picks up his back and walks towards the bus that pulled up while they were speaking. His mother wipes tears from her eyes as she shouts out.

ANIKA
Don't forget to let it out!

EXT. (6 MONTHS LATER) RICE FIELDS IN CHINA

Guinness is riding in the back of an old pick up truck writing a short story titled The Boy and the Moon. The truck is driving through wide open space in the rice fields when it stops to pick up a group of students from the USA who have run out of money on their way to Shanghai after visiting Basecamp at Mt Everest.

STUDENT 1 (MALE, NERDY)
So if an obstacle is an opportunity in disguise then we are in great shape! This is a veritable feast of possibility.

STUDENT 2 (MALE, SPORTY)
Chill dude. Let's just look at what we can control.

STUDENT 1
(interrupting)
Control? This situation is out of control,

STUDENT 3 (MALE, CONSERVATIVE)
If we are going to get philosophical, apparently fish don't know what water is, true, but right now we are seriously strapped for cash.

STUDENT 2
What the hell dudes, you are making no sense at all. And that, is why we are squatting in a pile of chicken shit instead of sipping Mai Tais' in Cloud 9!

STUDENT 4
(interrupting from beneath a hoodie)
And this conversation is helping us how?

The fourth student is sitting right next to Guinness as they pull back a hoodie to reveal a striking 22 year old Chinese American girl who turns to Guinness.

VALERIE (STUDENT 4)
What do you make of these clowns then?

GUINNESS
Um?

VALERIE
Are you surprised we have no money?

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS
Well...

VALERIE
Do you have money? Don't answer that. If you don't then it makes sense that you are riding with us in a travelling poop shoot but if you do then you are some kind of psycho.

GUINNESS
Um.

Guinness nervously gathers his backpack to his chest before beginning to speak again

GUINNESS
So,

VALERIE
You don't have much to say do you?

GUINNESS
I haven't had much of a chance yet.

VALERIE
Sorry about that. I have been stuck with Huey, Luey and Duey for 4 weeks. I was dating Duey for almost a year but somewhere between New York and Nepal I realised what a fucking prat he is but by then Everest was inevitable.

GUINNESS
You climbed Mt Everest?

VALERIE
Not really. We just went to Basecamp.

GUINNESS
That is still impressive.

VALERIE
Well I am glad I impressed someone as my father will be severely unimpressed when the bill for this trip hits his Amex. I'm Valerie by the way.

As Valerie extends her hand Guinness awkwardly untangles himself from his back but does not offer his name.

VALERIE
(with a gentle smile)
And you are?

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS
Oh sorry, my name is
(he swallows)
Tom

VALERIE
Tom?
(she slaps one of the boys)
Hi Tom. This is Andrew, Justin and Chris.

GUINNESS
I thought you said their names were,

VALERIE
Anyway, enough about them. Let's hear more about me!

GUINNESS
I'm kind of pressed for time so if you could make it quick.

They lean back on their backpacks and look up at the clouds slipping by as Valerie begins to recount her journey so far.

VALERIE
It wasn't as cold as I expected but I wish I had brought more fucking socks

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD MANHATTAN 2 YEARS LATER

A cab pulls up outside a New York Diner as light snow is falling. Valerie and Guinness are looking well dressed and physically enmeshed. They are carrying some bags from clothing stores as they exit the cab. Moments after the cab pulls away she realises that she has left her bag and video camera behind.

VALERIE
No!

GUINNESS
What is it?

VALERIE
Shit! Shit! My bag! My camera! I just left them in the cab. No. No!

GUINNESS
(looking around)
Are you sure you had them? Both of them I mean.

VALERIE
Of course I am sure. I took them this morning so I could get the Basecamp video put onto a disc. And the Shanghai trip is on there too. There's all sorts of stuff on there!

GUINNESS
Us?

VALERIE
Yes us!

GUINNESS
Good thing I can remember the cab number then.

VALERIE
I'm so fucking stupid.
(looking in shopping bags)
Or did I give them to you?

GUINNESS
Like I said, good thing I can remember the cab number!

VALERIE
(looking up)
What? You can?

GUINNESS
6Y13B

CONTINUED:

VALERIE
Are you sure?

GUINNESS
Sure enough to call them and find out who was driving that cab.

VALERIE
You are my hero!

GUINNESS
Well, not yet but let's get inside and find out. 6Y13B

VALERIE
I can't believe you remembered it.

They walk past the diner and onto 84th St and into the lobby of a well kept apartment building. A door man greets them.

DOORMAN
Hello Valerie

VALERIE
Frank!

Valerie hugs him and spins to introduce Guinness.

VALERIE
Frank this is Guinness. Guinness, Frank!

Guinness shakes Franks hands.

GUINNESS
Good to meet you Frank.

FRANK
Likewise Guinness. That's an unusual first name.

VALERIE
Can you believe he actually introduced himself to me as Tom! Does he look like a Tom?

FRANK
Tom? Not really. Not Like Tom Marchesi in 6A.

GUINNESS
(distracted)
Not 6A, 6Y13B, 6Y13B

FRANK
What is he doing?

CONTINUED:

VALERIE
Frank do you mind call the cab company and asking if the car 6Y13B found a couple of bags in it?

FRANK
You left yours in it.

VALERIE
Yep.

FRANK
No problem. Anything for you shnooks!

VALERIE
Thanks. We'll head on up now.

INT. GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS LONDON OFFICE 2008?

Colin and Declan, now in their forties, are sitting down in front of a large section of a newspaper wrapped about a greasy pile of fish and chips. There are staring at a large map of the world with red pins in a variety of countries. Colin has a shiny new MacBook pro laptop.

COLIN
(stuffing chips in his mouth)
So how was Rome?

DECLAN
An incredible waste of my time if you must ask.

COLIN
What?

DECLAN
That's right.

COLIN
But what about the cannoli? The world's longest cannoli?

DECLAN
I had to disqualify them for negligent hygiene practises. The rules clearly state that the food needs to be kept in hygienic conditions throughout the attempt of the record. The food must safe to eat at the point at which the food was distributed.

Declan drops half a piece of battered fish on the floor but scoops it up quickly and carries on talking and eating at the same time.

DECLAN
Sadly for them the sun came out blazing and the ricotta cheese took a turn for the worse. Lucky it wasn't world's biggest curry.

COLIN
Speaking of India.

DECLAN
Mmm, a little racist.

COLIN
Not really. Just association. to'ally different 'fing.
(Scarfs 4 or 5 chips)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

COLIN (CONT'D)
As I was saying. Speaking of India. Remember my search for the missing billions? The kid who would actually be number 5 Billion?

DECLAN
Didn't we hit 6 billion about 7 years ago?

COLIN
Vats beside the point. I never give up. When I start something I finish it. To be honest I did 'fink I was cooked after our search in India gave us nuffin but a few monf's ago a new website
(he rubs the edge of his Mac like a magic lamp)
was launched in India that is a database of all hospital records and guess who know's a girl in stats?

DECLAN
Isn't Brenda 45 and married with kids?

COLIN
Anyway, she has a name for me but she said I won't believe it and she want's to see my face in person when she tells me.

DECLAN
Nice. Your face that is.

COLIN
We're having dinner tonight.

INT. A LAVISH NEW YORK APARTMENT WITH CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Standing beside a very large Christmas Tree is an imposing man in his sixties standing beside a younger woman and two small children. For the second time in a few minutes Guinness is being introduced again.

VALERIE
Father. Jenny. How are you?

MR KANE
(leaning in for a kiss)
Hello darling.

JENNY
(insincerely)
Hi Valerie. Who's your friend?

The small children pull away from Jenny and begin shaking boxes under the tree.

VALERIE
This is Guinness. My boyfriend.

GUINNESS
Nice to meet you both.

MR KANE
Like the drink?

GUINNESS
(reluctantly)
Sure.

Mr Kane shakes his hand longer than necessary before turning to Valerie

MR KANE
So where have you been? I haven't seen you for months.

VALERIE
It's been a year Dad. I was in Shanghai for 6 months and you were, well, anywhere but here.

MR KANE
(unperturbed by the accusation)
And when did you and this young man become an item?

JENNY
He is the first boy you have brought here in a long time. It must be serious.

CONTINUED:

VALERIE
We met just after I finished the trek to Basecamp.

MR KANE
Ah, Basecamp. I almost feel like I was there myself, I don't know why.

Valerie and Guinness share a small smile, they all accept drinks from a passing waiter and Guinness confidently enters the conversation.

GUINNESS
Actually we have been working in Brooklyn for the last few months and I apologise for not having come to visit sooner.

JENNY
Are you living together?

MR KANE
What sort of work do you do?

GUINNESS
I am helping a guy build a studio, like a recording studio. He can't pay much but we get to stay in one of the rooms.

VALERIE
It's in DUMBO, but one of the old buildings with no lead.

GUINNESS
And we have a lot of time for writing as well.

MR KANE
You are a songwriter then?

Guinness and Valerie laugh openly.

GUINNESS
No. I am not a songwriter. I was not blessed with a voice for listeners but I hear lyrics and poems and stories like they are just falling into my head.

MR KANE
How poetic. Can you make a living from this?

VALERIE
Dad!

CONTINUED:

MR KANE
What?

VALERIE
You know very well you can make money from writing.
(turning to face Guinness)
I haven't mentioned this before because I want you to do this on your own but my father here happens to own a very large and very successful Ad Agency and they have...

MR KANE
(leaning in)
We have copywriters, lyricists, screenwriters, editors, freelancers. I even hired a guy to write a limerick last month.

VALERIE
The point is in that type of work you could end up writing taglines for tampons or ditties for dog food!

JENNY
She has quite the way with words.

MR KANE
Look, just because Valerie chose to take a degree in 'Life' doesn't mean there aren't opportunities for you young man. Call me if you finish writing rough drafts for Gloria Steinman here and want to get paid.

VALERIE
Thanks Dad. Classy. And by the way I have a real job. I am an editor at The L magazine and it is doing very well thank you!
(she downs her drink)

JENNY
Guinness, do your family live in Manhattan?

GUINNESS
No.

Frank enters the conversation carrying two bags.

CONTINUED:

FRANK
Sorry to interrupt you all but look what I have.

VALERIE
Oh my God!

GUINNESS
That's amazing!

VALERIE
Thankyou Frank.

FRANK
Thank Guinness.

JENNY
What did we miss? Were you robbed?

VALERIE
I left my bag and my video camera in a cab but Guinness remembered the number..

FRANK
And when I called the cab company they said he was still in the area.

Valerie is taking the camera from the case and rewinding the footage.

VALERIE
It has so many memories on here, I was so stupid to be carrying it around.

She presses play. There is some static and then the smiling face of an Indian cab driver from the angle of the camera in his lap.

CAB DRIVER
Hello, Hello! Testing! You ain't nothing but a...
(the sound of screeching tyres)
Mother F!!!!!!
(the sound of car horn)

VALERIE
Let's get out here.

INT. KAREOKE BAR NYC

It is an empty booth and no music is playing

GUINNESS
This is not what I expected

VALERIE
Did you think it would be some sad dive bar with a of old drunk people?

GUINNESS
I don't even know what a dive bar is. But I didn't think it would be this private.

VALERIE
Don't worry I have some friends stopping by later I have been dying for you to meet them.

GUINNESS
I think I have done enough meeting for today. Are you ok with seeing your father?

VALERIE
My sweet Indian Englishman! I probably haven't seen my dad more than 10 days a year since I was 8, and that's including Christmas. After he left my mum for Jenny we drifted apart and it all feels a bit fake now. Have you spoken to your family yet.

GUINNESS
Um.

VALERIE
Do they even know about us.

GUINNESS
I am planning to tell them everything. I mean, they know I am in New York but they think I am already working as a writer so I am waiting for my reality to catch up to their truth.

VALERIE
I'm real.

GUINNESS
I know. I miss them so much but I feel frozen when it comes to getting in contact. My sister rings me sometimes.

CONTINUED:

VALERIE
Which one?

GUINNESS
Rhea. Rav is too consumed with men right now. At least that's what Rav says.

VALERIE
And your friends? You don't really hang out with people here except me. Don't you want Krish, is it Krish? to come over?

Guinness looks up at the time on the big Kareoke screen and the mirror ball spins and splashes light all over the room. He looks at her in the light like he is about to say 'I love you'. For a moment it all stops.

Valerie has begun to play with the song selection machine and she hands Guinness a microphone.

VALERIE
Do you think we will know any of the same songs?

GUINNESS
Sure. Who doesn't love Richard Marx?

VALERIE
Huh?

GUINNESS
Genesis?

VALERIE
Nope.

GUINNESS
Come on!
(sings and shoulder dances)
"she seems to have an invisible touch yeah, she seems to..."

VALERIE
Please stop. You are obviously old because I have never heard of them but how about old school, Aretha?

GUINNESS
Aretha Franklin? and George Michael - 'I knew you were waiting'!

VALERIE
There you go!

CONTINUED:

Together they select the song from the machine and perform it, badly, but with an alcohol fuelled enthusiasm. As the introduction plays before the singing she puts her hand over the microphone and mouths the words.

VALERIE
I love you.

Guinness uses a combination of clumsy sign language and exaggerated mouthing to say

GUINNESS
I love you too!

INT. BATHROOM OF VALERIE AND GUINNESS' APARTMENT NIGHT

Guinness is sitting in the dark illuminated by the glow of his phone. Sitting on the toilet but with trousers up, fully dressed.

GUINNESS
Put Ma on.

RAV
Why?

GUINNESS
I can't take anymore stories about boys who won't behave.

RAV
Ok. Ma!

GUINNESS
Bapi is not there is he?

RAV
No. Still at the factory. Like always when you call.

ANIKA
(taking the phone)
Ginny is that you?

GUINNESS
Yes Ma. **W**ho else would it be! Are you ok? I wanted to tell you about someone.

ANIKA
This sounds promising.

GUINNESS
I think it is. When I was working in China I met...

ANIKA
(interuppting)
China!? That was almost 2 years ago!

GUINNESS
I'm sorry. I met a girl named Valerie. She is beautiful, feisty, what can I say.

ANIKA
Wait till I tell everyone!

RAV
(trying to grab the phone)

CONTINUED:

Tell everyone what?

ANIKA
Where does she live?

GUINNESS
With me.

ANIKA
With you?

GUINNESS
Her father lives in a big apartment in Manhattan but we have found something a place called DUMBO

ANIKA
Like the elephant?

GUINNESS
Down Under Manhattan Bridge Overpass

ANIKA
You live under a bridge?
(sighs)
When will you bring her home?

GUINNESS
Soon Ma. Soon. How is Bapi?

ANIKA
He misses you.

GUINNESS
Did he say that?

A muffled voice from outside the bathroom door.

VALERIE
Are you going to be long in there, I'm busting!

GUINNESS
(hand over phone)
Nearly done!
(into phone)
Sorry Ma, I need to go.

ANIKA
Wait. Have you heard about Krish?

GUINNESS
No.

CONTINUED:

ANIKA
Nareev came round last week and she said he is mainly in the hospital these days. You should call.

GUINNESS
I'll do it later. I have an early start tomorrow in a recording studio. They are cutting one of my songs.

ANIKA
That sounds lovely my son. I miss you.

GUINNESS
Bye Ma. I'll come home for a visit soon.

ANIKA
Bring the girl.

GUINNESS
I miss you too.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO IN THE CITY A FEW MONTHS LATER

A producer and an engineer sit at a mixing desk and a female singer is wearing headphones in a vocal booth. Guinness is offered a seat by an assistant and the producer spins his chair to face him.

PRODUCER
Everything ok kid?

GUINNESS
Sure.

PRODUCER
First time?

GUINNESS
If by first time you mean...

PRODUCER
It's your first time then.
(turns to engineer)
We got ourselves a virgin!

ENGINEER
Sweet.

PRODUCER
Sweet meat.

ENGINEER
Fresh meat.

The singer can see them talking but cannot hear them. The producer leans forward and presses a mic button.

SINGER
What are you boys talking about.

PRODUCER
Nothing sweet heart.
(to the engineer)
Can you turn the kick up a hair and then we'll go from the top.

GUINNESS
Excuse me.

PRODUCER
Yep?

GUINNESS
Did you guys get the final version of the lyrics I sent through last night.

CONTINUED:

PRODUCER
Yep.

GUINNESS
And you were all good with them?

PRODUCER
Yep.

GUINNESS
It was just that...

PRODUCER
Look pal, we will have this thing in the bag in an hour. Shelley is a freakin' kick arse singer and she will have the main and harmonies done before you can write a 'gone to lunch' note for us. Comprende?

GUINNESS
Sure.

SINGER
You ready, I'm getting hungry.

ENGINEER
(takes nod from Producer)
Rolling.

As she begins singing Guinness looks down at the piece of printed paper he has with him with his final version of the lyrics. A few bars of music sound kind of cool then he 'air' sings along with her.

SINGER
You were the light, I was the dark. You were the fire, I was the spark. Now cleaning is easy!

GUINNESS
You were the light, I was the dark. You were the fire, I was the spark. Now I know you need me.

Guinness drops his head into his hands, exhales then looks up.

PRODUCER
Nailed it baby!

ENGINEER
Sounds good me. Let's get another just for safety.

PRODUCER
Perfect.

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS
(under his breath)
Just perfect.

INT. BATHROOM OF THE MANNAN HOUSE

Sanjay is underwater in a tub full of ice. He bursts to the surface after just 53 seconds. He shouts loudly and with anguish.

SANJAY
No!

He pulls the clock from the rail hurls it into the water.

ANIKA
(muffled through the wall)
Everything ok?

SANJAY
Yes dear.

ANIKA
It doesn't sound ok.

SANJAY
I said it's ok.

ANIKA
OK.

He sits in a silence that grows so intense that the sound of the clock ticking can be heard from beneath the water. He is frozen in his own thought as he feels the ticking slow to match the rhythm of his heartbeat for a moment they are the same.

EXT. ROOFTOP BROOKLYN HEIGHTS 11PM

Guinness is sitting amongst a dozen note pads and piles of paper. He has been writing in one but now he his staring out across the city. Valerie walks out onto the roof.

VALERIE
What are you thinking about?

GUINNESS
Nothing

He puts down the notepad.

VALERIE
I don't even know if that's possible

GUINNESS
Nothing comes from nothing right?

VALERIE
Not even nothing comes from nothing

GUINNESS
Is this conversation going nowhere?

She sits down next to him.

GUINNESS
I just can't stop thinking

She interrupts him.

VALERIE
I knew it! About what?

GUINNESS
About 'why' am I here? Why have written all these stories and ideas down only to hold them close and never let go. Why am I happy enough in this moment but always wondering if there is something else I am supposed to do.
(faux dramatically)
Why am I here on this messed up planet, what is my purpose?

VALERIE
Wow. That's not at all heavy

She pulls away and turns to face him as he sits up taller.

GUINNESS
I am sorry. It's not about you or us but it is something inside of me that
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS (CONT'D)
I cannot switch off, or maybe switching on is what I need.
(he stands up)
It seems that in New York nobody settles for anything. They have all come here to achieve, something.People seem to know what they want and who they are but me...not so much.

They are silent as the night sky sparkles to the sound of traffic and distant sirens. Valerie walks very close to the edge of the roof holding his notebook titled 'The Boy and the Moon'. Guinness body goes into alert but she holds up a hand for him to stay back.

VALERIE
I need to tell you something. Or ask you.

GUINNESS
(nervously)
What do you mean?

VALERIE
You know that I love you? Right? These last few years have been amazing.

GUINNESS
What are you saying?

VALERIE
How come you have never asked me to marry you?

GUINNESS
(breathing heavily)
I was waiting for the right time. When we have enough money and maybe when I have published something.

VALERIE
Stop. That is exactly what I am talking about.

He steps towards her to take her hand but they are now both standing very close to the edge of the building. Cars and people move 5 stories below.

Guinness, you have a way with words but words are not the way to my heart. I need action and passion! You have to show me you love me! Show me you're a writer!

She takes a step away from the edge and pulls him close.

CONTINUED:

Then she whispers in his ear.

VALERIE
I think we should take a break.

In a moment he see the numbers, cars and lights across the city freeze.

VALERIE
Did you see that flyer in the foyer looking for ushers for the Guinness Book of Records event in Hell's Kitchen? It's at the Javits Centre I think.

Guinness does not answer. He is looking at his phone.

TEXT FROM NAREEV
Krish is gone.

EXT. 9TH AVENUE IN THE NYC 6 AM

A lime green jacket cuts a path through waste high snow. We follow Guinness as he struggles a passes by different types of people working, getting up, running, trying to make it in NYC. He can see people balancing tall piles of plates, throwing fish, doing burpees but all with a Guinness Book of Records lens.

Insert flashbacks of him training with his father?? come on Ginny, try one more xxx

He is fumbling for his phone in the cold and texting but we can't see who.

INT. DINER ON 9TH AVENUE IN THE 80'S

Guinness has a whole booth to himself and is surrounded by paper, a laptop, post-it notes and pens. An African American waitress in her late fifties is giving him a refill of coffee.

WAITRESS
You're lucky it's so quiet sugar.

Guinness nods and accepts the coffee gratefully.

WAITRESS
I'll be cutting you off soon. That's enough coffee to raise the dead.

She tries to look over at what he is writing on the computer. Instead she reads out something written on a post-it note.

WAITRESS
Do it now. Sounds like a new Nike t-shirt. No wait, it sounds like that Swarzenegga guy, you know
(does bad Arnold Schwarzenegger accent)
Do it, Do it now.

Guinness looks up initially exasperated because he is trying to write but he ends up cracking up with laughter as she repeats the phrase.

WAITRESS
Do it, do it now!

GUINNESS
It was actually something my mother said to me.

WAITRESS
Oh honey, I didn't mean to be rude.

GUINNESS
No, that's ok. It is just funny because she is kind of tough in her own way.

WAITRESS
All mom's are tough.

GUINNESS
You have children?

WAITRESS
I got 4. Well 3 now since my baby girl joined the lord.

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS
I'm sorry.

WAITRESS
It is better for her. I still got my 3 boys though and they all went to college. Their father, God rest his soul, made sure of that.

She picks up another post-it note.

"Let it Out" that one of your mamma's as well?

Feeling awkward that the conversation has become so personal so quickly Guinness pulls forward his empty plate and interrupts her train of thought.

GUINNESS
Excuse me?

WAITRESS
Yeh?

GUINNESS
Could I please have some more?

WAITRESS
More?

GUINNESS
More toast please?

WAITRESS
Oh sure hon.

But instead of leaving to get the toast she sits down and tops up his coffee a little more.

WAITRESS
You know, my King, My husband's name was King, he wasn't an actual King but a lotta people thought he would be something important. You know what I'm saying?

GUINNESS
More than you know.

WAITRESS
Well he didn't end up important to them but he was to me, is to me. And you know what he used to say?

Guinness shakes his head.

CONTINUED:

His saying was "life is like a bag of rattlesnakes,

Guinness raises an eyebrow.

you don't know when you'll get bitten, only that you will get bit"

She finishes by standing, placing her arms on the table and leaning into him.

What do you think about that?

Guinness is about to answer when the door to the diner opens and Mr Kane walks in. He looks around then walks over to the booth. The waitress squeezes Guinness's hand then walks away.

WAITRESS
I'll get y'all some fresh coffee and a menu.

MR KANE
Thankyou.
(he sits opposite Guinness)
Guinness.

GUINNESS
Mr Kane. Thank you so much for coming. I know it's early and

MR KANE
(interrupting)
It is. And let's move on from Mr Kane, I have a wife your age so let's go with Alex.

GUINNESS
Ok, got it. Alex.

Mr Kane removes his gloves and takes off a black Cashmere overcoat.

MR KANE
So why am I here. Other than to wait for bad coffee.

He gestures to the waitress.

GUINNESS
Last night Valerie and I had a fight, sort of a fight, more of a warning shot but it might have been a direct hit, I don't...

CONTINUED:

MR KANE
Sounds like you're getting your metaphors mixed up son but it also sounds a lot like Valerie. I might not have been around a lot when she was growing up but she sure has the Kane fighting spirit whether she would admit it or not.

The waitress pours Mr Kane a coffee, looks to fill Guinness's cup but he gives her a face that says 'no'. She places a menu in front of Mr Kane.

MR KANE
And I still don't really understand why I am here. We barely know each other.

GUINNESS
Well you see, that is one of the reasons you are here. I feel like I have been lying to Valerie, to you and to my family about who I really am. I even told Valerie my name was Tom when we first met. My family think I am a successful writer and I always tell my mother I am coming home soon.

Guinness drops his head into his hands but Mr Kane slams a hand on the table and Guinness looks up.

MR KANE
These are not lies son. God, I should know. The real lies are the ones we tell ourselves.

GUINNESS
But I feel like I have lost the truth. Do you know I am not named after the beer drink? My father named me after the Guinness Book of Records and I spent more than half my life trying to please him and get into that damn book.

MR KANE
Are you in it?

GUINNESS
No. Not the point.

MR KANE
Or is it? I think you are talking to the wrong father. My advice about Valerie?

The waitress sidles by clearly eavesdropping.

CONTINUED:

MR KANE
Two eggs over easy, waffles and a side of bacon please.

WAITRESS
You got it. Syrup

MR KANE
Perfect.

His coffee has kicked in and the waitress is warming to him.

GUINNESS
(impatiently)
Yes? The advice.

MR KANE
Give her some space. Not as much as I did. But maybe a little time to miss you while you sort your shit out. Now what was the other reason?

GUINNESS
Reason?

MR KANE
That I am here for.

GUINNESS
Well Valerie spoke a lot about my writing and how I seem to be frozen, unable to let go of my creations or too afraid to put it out there.

MR KANE
Is that true.

GUINNESS
(pauses)
Not really. Well, maybe a little. I'm not much of a salesman and I think I create something and then move on.

MR KANE
Look, I'm no shrink even though God knows I have spent have enough on them but I think you are stuck. Stuck in the past. Stuck in 1st gear. Stuck in a pile of guilt.

GUINNESS
That is obvious to me know too and that is why I want to give you something.

CONTINUED:

Guinness turns to his laptop and drags a file named 'The Boy and the Moon' onto a drive then pulls the USB stick from the side of the computer.

GUINNESS
If I am to begin taking action then I think I need some help.

MR KANE
It takes a big man, or woman
(for the benefit of the waitress who is clearly still eavesdropping)
to ask for help. What do you need son?

GUINNESS
I am going to head down to Florida with a DJ friend of mine for a while to earn some money so I can go home to see my family and then get my own place in the city before asking Valerie to marry me.

MR KANE
Woah!

The waitress is in the background doing a shoulder dance mouthing the words "do it, do it now".

MR KANE
Big plans young fella.
(reflects for a second)
How can I help?

GUINNESS
Just take this.
(hands him thumb drive)
Read it when you can and if you think you know anyone who might be interested please pass it on. If not, forget I ever gave it to you.
(pauses and looks at the waitress)
Oh, and do I have your permission to ask your daughter if she'll marry me?

MR KANE
(laughing heartily)
Valerie Kane does not need my permission to do anything! That is wall for you to climb alone. Good luck with that.

The waitress comes over and places a plate of breakfast in front of Mr Kane.

CONTINUED:

MR KANE
Thank you
(he pauses to look at her badge)
Thank you Etta.

GUINNESS
Thanks Etta.

WAITRESS
Goodluck kid.

EXT. WINTER, HEAVY SNOW - COLIN AND DECLAN ARE OUTSIDE VALERIES APARTMENT - MORNING 10AM

Colin and Declan are knocking on the door in the hope that they will finally find Guinness and confirm him as the 5 billion person in the world.

DECLAN
I actually still cannot believe it is his name. If we weren't already in New York I would definitely have sat this one out.

COLIN
You don't want to know what I went through to get here.

DECLAN
Ah, the lovely Brenda. Still calling?

Unfortunately Guinness is not home and Valerie answers the door in a t-shirt and ugg boots. They are struck by how attractive she is.

DECLAN
Um, excuse me maam we are looking for a Guinness Mannan.

VALERIE
Why?

DECLAN
I'm afraid that it is a private matter mam.

VALERIE
(putting on a Scottish accent)
oooh aye! Are you from Scotland Yard?

DECLAN
Sorry mam but I am not Scottish, Scotland Yard is not in Scotland and we are not the police.

VALERIE
Interpol? Well you are out of luck anyway as he is not here.

DECLAN
Do you know when he is coming back?

VALERIE
No.

CONTINUED:

COLIN
If I may, could you please give him my card and 'ave him contact us as soon as possible. We are only in New York for another free days and would really like to speak wiv' him.

Valerie takes the card and puts it in her pocket without looking at it.

VALERIE
Will do. Thankyou. Bye

She abruptly closes the door.

COLIN
Looks like we've got a bit of the ol' Barney Rubble.

DECLAN
You're right. She may have been hiding something. Maybe not.

COLIN
But not the ol' rasberry ripple!

DECLAN
You are pure class. Let's head up to the Javits Centre. It is going to be a long day.
(puts on a Scottish accent)
We are nort the sprrrye adjudicators of yestrrryear!

COLIN
Tosser!

INT. JAVITS CENTRE HELL'S KITCHEN NYC - DAY

Sanjay stands in the entrance to the Javits staring around the room with wide eyes. A huge Guinness Book of Records sign hangs from the ceiling and there are row upon row of registration desks being attacked by line upon line of applicants.

There are giants, midgets, athletes, animals, freaks, groups, structures and more all waiting to submit an entrance fee and category. The Javits Centre is spectacular structure with huge glass ceilings.

VOICE ON LOUDSPEAKER
Would all applicants please lineup immediately.

Sanjay is constantly looking up in amazement and doesn't where he is going until he bumps into a young woman.

SANJAY
I'm so sorry.

He regains his balance and is about to help her with her bag that has fallen behind her when she easily bends over backwards and picks it up.

SANJAY
Oh my!
(he drops his bag and extends his hand)
Your Liu Teng the contortionist!Hello!

LIU
Hello!
(in Chinese)
I am so sorry. I did not see you. Are you ok?

SANJAY
Oh my! I have no idea what you are saying but good luck this week.

LIU
(in Chinese)
I have no idea what you are saying or who you are but I hope you succeed in your attempt. Goodbye

SANJAY
(he finally lets go of her hand)
Goodbye

He know moves quickly toward the front of the line with only two or three people before him. The two men just behind him

CONTINUED:

him have 2 large silver road cases. They have pale skin and are speaking angrily in Polish before stepping away from the table.

POLISH 1
(addressing Sanjay in English)
Please forgive me sir. My partner appears to have left our credit card at the hotel room. Would you mind holding our spot in the line?

Before Sanjay can answer a woman with extreme body modification who looks like a snake has leant in to the conversation.

SNAKE LADY
(very strong Southern accent)
Oh no you don't

POLISH 1
I'm sorry?

SNAKE LADY
You can't pull the chat and cut like some sort of reverse Larry David bullshit! You leave the line, you Leave the line.

POLISH 2
Are you talking to us?

SANJAY
I am very happy to hold your position. To be honest I could do with a quick trip to the bathroom.

POLISH 1
Then perhaps we can return the favour in a few minutes.

The Russians push their roadcases together to mark their spot in the line.

SNAKE LADY
(adopting a friendlier tone)
So what are you here for honey?

SANJAY
I am hoping to be the first man to swallow the most teaspoons in one minute.

SNAKE LADY
Oh my goodness! Are you crazy?

CONTINUED:

SANJAY
(looks her over before responding)
Perhaps, but I have been practising with the Kit Kats and I have a sensible plan for quick removal.

SNAKE LADY
You mean you 'poop' them out?

SANJAY
That's right.

SNAKE LADY
Is it sanctioned? You know they strict with any sort of self harm. Last year a young girl from Australia tried swallowing 13 AA batteries and they told her to go home right away. At least you can do it on your own.

SANJAY
I know. These days in India it is all about the mass participation.

SNAKE LADY
Really?

SANJAY
Thats right. Over 8000 people doing the same Bollywood dance routine! Can you believe it?

SNAKE LADY
Well I never

She adjusts her wheelie bag and sits comfortably on it.

SNAKE LADY
And where are you from honey?

SANJAY
(ignoring her question)
Do you think it is strange that the young men have just left their boxes here?

They both look over at the silver road cases.

SNAKE LADY
Now you mention it, it was a little weird they both needed to go back to the hotel.

CONTINUED:

SANJAY
Perhaps we should tell someone. After all it is New York City.

Sanjay begins to walk toward the table and everyone begins to shout at him to stop cutting in.

INT. BACKSTAGE AT THE JAVITS CENTRE - DAY

In a long underground corridor Colin and Declan are walking and talking.

COLIN
Hey Dec.

DECLAN
Yep?

COLIN
Do you fink we'll evva find 'im?

DECLAN
It almost seems weird that we haven't. You were sending those notices to his home right? We tried contacting his family. It's like he knows someone is after him but he hasn't done anything wrong.

COLIN
Would you want the title?

DECLAN
No. You?

COLIN
Troof be told I wouldn't want any Guinness records in my name. There's always a cost right?

They pass through a set of wide doors.

DECLAN
What do you mean?

COLIN
There's a price, a sacrifice. Wevva it be hours practising that you never get back or being unable to eat a bloody bowl of soup 'cos your nails are 27 feet long. Not to mention actual cost cost, like dollar cost.

DECLAN
Like a $12,000 cupcake that tasted like cardboard.

COLIN
Or an 'alf million quid set of golf clubs made out gold. What's the point? Well for them anyway. Me, I still love my job cos we get to be fairy
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

COLIN (CONT'D)
godmothers, our price is just one of admission for the rest of the world.

DECLAN
That's deep. And you're definitely a fairy godmother

They pass through another set of wide doors.

We nearly there yet?

A muffled explosion sounds in the distance.

DECLAN
Did you hear that?

COLIN
Yep. It came from that direction.
(points in front of him)

They begin running in that direction

DECLAN
Why are we running towards it?

COLIN
There's always a cost.

Yet another explosive sound which shakes the ground they are running on.

COLIN
What the 'ell is going on?

DECLAN
It felt like an earthquake but maybe it was an explosion?

COLIN
Come on.

DECLAN
Alright, there's not a lot of give in these pants.

COLIN
Come. On! There are 100's freaks, women and children up there that are going to need our help! Let's go!

Large swinging doors appear as the come round a corner. They push through at speed.

CONTINUED:

EXT. FREEWAY NORTH NYC DAY

Guinness is driving on the I-95 heading South and passing through Newark. He is pulling himself up and out of the events of the night before and the blur that was breakfast with Mr Kane. He has Peter Gabriel "Don't Give Up" on the stereo

PETER GABRIEL
In this proud land we grew up strong
We were wanted all along
I was taught to fight, taught to win
I never thought I could fail

The white lines on the road skateaway underneath the car and trees are blurry spectators at the curb.

No fight left or so it seems
I am a man whose dreams have all
deserted
I've changed my name, I've changed my
face
But no one wants you when you lose

Guinness has a free path on the road but the traffic heading the other way is slow and congested

GUINNESS
(uncharitably)
Suckers!
(instant regret)
Don't be an asshole Gin.

KATE BUSH
Don't give up'Cause you have friends

Don't give up
You're not beaten yet...

Guinness cuts her off by flicking off the music on his phone.

Valerie's face is the screen saver.

He drives in silence and passes the turnoff for the Thomas Edison National Park. His phone rings.

GUINNESS
Ma?

ANIKA
Guinness it's me.

GUINNESS
I know Ma, it says so on the phone.

CONTINUED:

ANIKA
Right. Listen to me. Your father is in New York.

Guinness loses slight control of the car before responding.

GUINNESS
Are you serious?

ANIKA
Very.

GUINNESS
Where? For that matter why?

ANIKA
Do you have time to talk?

GUINNESS
I am driving.

ANIKA
Pull over it's not safe

GUINNESS
Alright
(he looks to pull over but no opportunity on freeway)

ANIKA
Forget I said that. There's no time. Where are you now?

GUINNESS
I'm in Newark. Why didn't you call me about this earlier.

ANIKA
I only found out he was gone this morning. He said he was doing a double at the factory and that Raj be stopping by for dinner. When he got here he gave me note from your father that I assumed was of a romantic nature but instead it was all about his trip to New York. Raj had no idea!

GUINNESS
But why?

An opportunity to exit the freeway presents itself and Guinness takes it to begin the return journey into the city.

Are you there? Can you hear me?

CONTINUED:

ANIKA
Yes.

GUINNESS
Why is he coming here?

ANIKA
He believes this is his last hurrah. His final attempt to get into the Guinness Book of Records.

GUINNESS
Oh no.

ANIKA
Since you left he has been even more obsessed with completing his life's work so we, the family, the town, maybe even the world will know that he existed. In the note he said he was sorry he named you Guinness and that he was sorry he drove you away.

GUINNESS
Oh Ma. I'm sorry too.

ANIKA
Enough sorry's. More action!

GUINNESS
You sound like someone I know.

ANIKA
What?

GUINNESS
Nevermind. Where is he?

ANIKA
He is staying at a hotel in a place called Hobekken, but by now he should be at The Javits Centre. Do you know it?

GUINNESS
Sort of.

ANIKA
Will you go and find him? The attempt is not that dangerous but I am more worried about him not qualifying or succeeding than getting hurt.

GUINNESS
Ma, I am doing it now.

CONTINUED:

ANIKA
I'm sorry if this has spoilt your plans.

GUINNESS
No Ma. I am sorry I left you so far away. You gave me wings to fly away and I will always love you for that but I should have flown home more and I don't care that it is not cool to regret things, I regret that. I miss you all the time.

Guinness is nearly crying.

ANIKA
That's nice dear but do you think you can get to your father? I have a bad feeling about all this and you know when I get those feelings.

GUINNESS
(smiling for himself)
Yes Ma. I am doing it now!

At this point he re-enters the freeway and hits lands amongst the commuters that he mocked only 10 minutes earlier.

GUINNESS
Kharma!

INT. JAVITS CENTRE FOYER DAY MID AFTERNOON

All the security guards are surrounding the road cases and beginning to move everyone away.

Suddenly the Polish guys appear.

POLISH 2
What is going on here?

SECURITY GUARD 1
On the ground hands behind your back.

POLISH 1
Are you serious?

SECURITY GUARD 2
(shouting)
Down. Now!

POLISH 1
(from face down)
I can open them and show you what's inside.

SECURITY GUARD 1
Alright. Get up.

He opens the cases for security to show that there are just large amounts of bright yellow footballs inside.

While this is happening Sanjay has managed to grab an application form and is trying to complete it using Liu's back as a table. A guard walks past.

SECURITY GUARD 3
Come on, move it.

SANJAY
It will just take a moment.

SECURITY GUARD 1
Everybody needs to move downstairs.
(looks up at the glass ceiling)
I don't know what's happening out there but if this comes we're screwed! So move!
(To another guard)
We still don't know what's in the balls.
(into his radio)
Get me the bomb squad now.

Sanjay and Liu are pushed into the crowd that is being hustled down the stairs.

CONTINUED:

More security is arriving but some are panicking and leaving. Standing well back from the road cases one guard addresses the Polish guys who are trying to take back their roadcases.

SECURITY GUARD 2
(with eyes and gun directed at the road cases)
Are these yours then?

POLISH 1
Yes.

SECURITY GUARD 2
Why did you leave them?

POLISH 2
We left our credit cards at the hotel.

SECURITY GUARD 1
(to security guard 3)
Check with the hotel.

SECURITY GUARD 3
Got it.

SECURITY GUARD 2
(pointing into the roadcase)
Why do you have so many balls?

POLISH 2
Why do you have no balls!?

POLISH 1
Are you setting us up? Is somebody setting us up? Pick on the Polish. Ooh they're so scary. So hairy.

POLISH 2
This is outrageous! We are the world champions for keeping...

At that moment there is a loud explosion sounds across the foyer. People outside the building can be seen running everywhere and in all directions. Further loud explosions are heard in the distance. Security guards are shouting into walkie-talkies and trying to get people to calm down.

INT. LEVEL 2 LARGE ROOM

Sanjay is stuck in a room with more than 200 people. It has big columns and all the cages containing animals that are part of the Guiness Book of Records Day as well as motorbikes, cars and other vehicles. There are multiple exits to the room he is in. Declan and Colin come crashing through one set of doors.

COLIN
Everybody stay calm!

DECLAN
It might just be a gas explosion we have security looking into it.

VERY TALL MAN
I just saw security running out the door.

A woman with a lot of children screams.

OCTOMUM
Who are you?

DECLAN
We are from the Guinness book of records. We are here to help.

COLIN
(to Declan in a whisper)
Really? Here to help?

DECLAN
(loudly and defiantly)
That's right. We are here to help.

The very tall man has scooped up a tiny lady.

COLIN
Alright then.
(loudly)
Find yourself a buddy. Introduce yourself and
(looking at 2 young men with chainsaws)
put down anything you are carrying. You don't need it.

The very tall man looks at the tiny lady and shakes his with a smile. Colin and Declan are not gaining any control.

OCTOMUM
(dragging 8 children)
What about the forms.

CONTINUED:

DECLAN
Are you serious?

OCTOMUM
Uh huh!

DECLAN
But you are already in it. You had 8!

OCTOMUM
But now they sing. 8 part harmony by siblings!

COLIN
Are you f%^&...

Another explosion rocks the ground below the room they are in and water is now pouring under the doors.

EXT. JERSEY ENTRANCE TO LINCOLN TUNNEL

Guinness is sitting in his car when he hears the first explosion in the distance. Going nowhere in the traffic he climbs out of the and can see police sirens and road blocks being set up in the distance.

There is now smoke coming from Manhattan and the bridge is blocked. Guinness can see people being turned away from the pedestrian walkway but this is the only way across.

There is a single, thin pipe that runs underneath the bridge and Guinness with the conviction of his training balancing on poles and walking on wires as a child has the conviction to do it.

When the police aren't looking he climbs down and begins to walk. A minute into walking and high above the water his phone rings. It's Valerie. He accepts the call, puts it on speaker phone and reaches his arms back out.

GUINNESS
Are you ok? Can you hear me?

VALERIE
Just about. Why is it so noisy? Are you ok?

GUINNESS
(shouting)
You're on speaker phone!

VALERIE
What??

GUINNESS
You. Are. On. Speak...Oh never mind. Where are you?

VALERIE
I am at home. There were some men looking for you. Then there have been some bombs or something up near the Javits Centre.
(it is breaking up)

GUINNESS
Where?

VALERIE
The Javits Centre, near the Lincoln Tunnel. You know the Tunnel?

GUINNESS
(looks down)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS (CONT'D)
I've been close to it, but where are you and what are the explosions?

VALERIE
I don't know. I'm at Dad's. He took me out for a late breakfast

GUINNESS
Really? Was he hungry?

VALERIE
What?

GUINNESS
Nevermind. How was it?

VALERIE
It was good. He hasn't done anything like that, just the two of us for a long time.

Guinness loses balances for a moment and steadies himself.

GUINNESS
Val?

VALERIE
Yeah?

GUINNESS
There is so much I want to say but it's not the best time. I have no idea what is happening in the city but today's fun fact is that my father is in New York, possibly, probably at that Javits place.

VALERIE
What?

GUINNESS
It's true?

VALERIE
Why? Oh wait, The Guinness Records thing. Is that why?

GUINNESS
Yes. My mother called me earlier, before the explosions and I was just going to cruise over and maybe say 'hello' and maybe 'why the hell didn't you call to tell me you were coming to fucking New York City!!"

He nearly loses balance again.

CONTINUED:

GUINNESS
I got to go.

VALERIE
No. Are fucking kidding me? I will come to where you are.

GUINNESS
No.

VALERIE
Yes. Where are you?

GUINNESS
No. Stay with your father. I love you.

VALERIE
Ok. Ok. I love you too and I am sorry about...

Guinness loses grip on the phone and it falls through the air. Before it hits the water it stops for a moment and we see the time and Valerie's face, when time begins again a wind is blowing and Guinness pushes on toward the other side.

INT. MANNAN FAMILY HOME KITCHEN NIGHT

Anika, her daughters, Raj and Dadi are all sitting at the kitchen table watching the television. The news is showing coverage of what is happening in New York City.

DADI
Have you heard anything?

ANIKA
Nothing.

RAJ
Did you call his mobile?

ANIKA
I have tried the hotel that your father was supposed to be staying but they have not seen him since he checked in the night before And I have rung Ginny's phone and lot but no answer.

RHEA
Did you try Valerie?

RAJ
Valerie?

RHEA
She is Guinness's girlfriend.

ANIKA
(confused)
But how do you know? I thought...

RAV
You could have told me. I had to find out from Ma!

ANIKA
And why did you not tell me?

RHEA
You are missing the point. I have known for a while. Get over it.Just let me call her.

Rhea Gets up and walks away from the table pulling her phone out of her pocket.She moves into another room.

RAJ
This is unbelievable! Sanjay has run away to New York City, New York city is under attack or whatever, And now I
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

RAJ (CONT'D)
find out that Guinness has a girlfriend? Unbelievable!

The news of the television has focused on a close-up of a woman's face. She is speaking and the words below her say 'Update on NYC".

DADI
Turn it up, quick, turn it up!

Raj leans over to turn up the television.

RAV
Is anyone hungry?

DADI
Shhh!

NEWS READER
...Claire Maine is reporting from outside the Javits Centre. Claire? What have you heard from the Mayor's team?

CLAIRE MAINE
Thanks Trudi, I can tell you that we have a good news/ bad news scenario down here. I am with Chief Fire Marshal Craig Timms who can explain it best.
(turns to the Fire Marshal)
Chief Timms tell us what you know so far?

CHIEF TIMMS
Well Claire, the good news is that this is not a terrorist attack.

DADI
Thank God.

ANIKA
I knew it.

RAV
Really?

ANIKA
I had a feeling.

CHIEF TIMMS
This is very important to not panic. The Governor has spoken with Washington and they are confirming that this is not, I repeat not a terrorist attack.

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE MAINE
(visibly relieved)
So what are we dealing with?

EXT. 200 METRES FROM THE JAVITS CENTRE

Guinness is running as fast as he can. 1000's of people are running in the opposite direction but emergency services are heading into the Centre. He pauses to listen.

FIREMAN COMMANDER
(shouting at 4 younger firemen)
These explosions are not bombs. There is no terror threat but we have a transformer fire that has relayed across the network under this part of the city. Con Ed have got to get in there, de-energise the units and we need to starve the O2 as much as possible.

FIREMAN 2
Will we be going in?

FIREMAN COMMANDER
Right now there are no plans to go in until we get word on the stability of the structure and termination of gas leaks.

FIREMAN 3
What about the freaks inside.

FIREMAN COMMANDER
Not freaks, what the fuck they teach you at the Academy? They are applicants or guests for the Guinness Book of Records day on Saturday. Not likely now of course. There may be animals as well but at this point they are safer where they are unless.

FIREMAN 2
But what if the water breaks through where the transformers have blown.

FIREMAN COMMANDER
Not likely son. And if it does then God help them.

Guinness resumes his mission to get into the Centre.

THEY ARE A LEVEL DOWN

INT. MANNAN FAMILY HOME KITCHEN NIGHT

Whole family still watching television.

CLAIRE MAINE
So you are saying that it was probably due to old age, wear and tear?

CHIEF TIMMS
That's correct.

CLAIRE MAINE
But why so many? And will they continue? Sorry.
(puts hand to earpiece)
I being told that there are several hundred people trapped inside the Javits Centre. can you confirm that?

CHIEF TIMMS
I don't have numbers on that.
(an aide leans in and whispers in his ear)
But I have been told that there is a group of people who have been cut off in one of the convention rooms.
(the aide leans in again)
I'm sorry, that is all I can say for now.

ANIKA
Sanjay!

RAV
Ma, Ma! It's ok, I am sure he is not in there. He is probably practising somewhere at the hotel.

ANIKA
Oh Sanjay.

At this moment Rhea runs back into the room.

RHEA
I spoke to Valerie.

DADI
And?

CONTINUED:

RHEA
She says that she thinks Guinness is on his way to the Convention Centre to look for Bapi! She said she is going to go too!

DADI
This is all crazy. My boys. What is happening. I will get some tea.

RAV
I can't believe that Guinness is going there too!

RAJ
You better believe it. Look!

Raj points to the television and behind the reporter and the departing Chief even amongst the grey smoke and panic they can clearly see Guinness slip under the barricade and enter the Javits Centre.

INT. LARGE ROOM LEVEL 2 JAVITS CENTRE

The room is chaos, water is coming in underneath the swinging doors and a makeshift bar has been fitted to hold them but it is straining. The exit to the stairs is being held by the security guards with orders to let no-one up.

VERY TALL MAN
I wonder why no-one is coming.

TINY LADY
(standing on a cage with Zeus, a huge Great Dane inside)
Maybe we are safer here?

SANJAY
Do you think those young men were terrorists?

SNAKE LADY
I don't think this is a terror attack hon.

SANJAY
No?

SNAKE LADY
I think this would be the aliens.

VERY TALL MAN
Maybe that's why no-one is coming.

INT. MAIN ROOM OF JAVITS CENTRE

It is empty except for the Polish men who are pushing there road cases toward the door.

POLISH 1
One minute we are champions, the next al-Qaeda, then we are left to die like Australians in the sun!

POLISH 2
Just hurry!

GUINNESS
Hey. Where is everyone? Have you seen and older Indian man? When...

POLISH 1
(interrupting)
Slow down friend.

POLISH 2
Yes, we saw him. They went that way down the stairs just minutes ago.

POLISH 1
You should get out too.

Guinness is already racing toward the stairs.

EXT. 9TH AVE IN THE 80'S DAY

Valerie is standing on the street looking for a cab and beginning to run when she sees an UberEats scooter, engine running and the driver buzzing at the apartment door.

She takes it.

VALERIE
Sorrrrrrry!

UBEREATS RIDER
Mother Fucker!!

INT. LEVEL 2 LARGE ROOM JAVITS CENTRE

Guinness enters the room pushing past the security guards who have lost interest in guarding the door and are calling family and emergency services on their phones.

SECURITY GUARD 2

Honey, Honey! it's ok we are safe. No, I don't no what's

going on but...

Don't out her on, I can hearing her crying,

SECURITY GUARD 1

It's a mad house down here! Literally, birds, bikes, bearded ladies!
How long do we stay here?
I don't give a shit about structural integrity. I just want out of...

It's ok, daddy...

Guinness looks around but he cannot see his father just a completely chaotic blur of faces and species. In a corner Sanjay has approached Colin and Declan who are on their phones trying to get information from Guinness Headquarters.

COLIN
(passionately)
You have got to let us know what is going on! We are in the dark down 'ere and everyman and 'is dog are here!

He pauses listening to reply and Sanjay stands before him.

COLIN
I'm not kidding! I am looking at bloody cheerleaders, axe throwers, acrobatic poodles and Robert-fuckin'-Wadlow!
(looks directly at the tall man)

SANJAY
Excuse me?

COLIN
'old on fella!

DECLAN
(turning and putting phone in pocket)
What is it?

SANJAY
(pointing to jammed large doors)
The water on the outside is rising rapidly. in a few minutes it will be higher than the ceiling and I think it will force the doors.

CONTINUED:

DECLAN
And flood this entire room?

SANJAY
That's right.

Declan knocks Colin's phone out of his hand and looks him squarely in the eye.

DECLAN
We have to get everyone out. Now.
(he starts shouting to get attention)
Hey, Hey!

COLIN
Listen up! Hey!

No-one can here them.

EXT. HI-LINE WALK

Valerie is now driving the scooter illegally along the hi-line walk while talking into her headphones.

VALERIE
Rhea! can you hear me?

RHEA
Yes! Yes I hear you? What are you doing?

VALERIE
I don't know! I really don't! I am heading towards the Centre but can offer no support what-so-ever. In fact I am sure I will just make it harder for some poor emergency guy.

RHEA
My mother wants to speak to you.

VALERIE
Really? Now? Oh, what the hell.

ANIKA
Hello Valerie.

VALERIE
Hello!

Up ahead Blue lights are flashing.

VALERIE
Let me call you back.

INT. LEVEL 2 LARGE ROOM JAVITS CENTRE

Guinness climbs on top of a giant Rubix Cube, closes his eyes, place his hand on his belly and inhales. Then with the loudest voice imaginable he shouts.

GUINNESS
BAPI!!
(a small pause)
BAPI!!

The room as silenced and on the second shout they turn to face him. On the third Bapi, Colin and Declan have him in their view.

GUINNESS
BAPI!

Sanjay turns to Declan, Colin and the others.

SANJAY
That's me!

Sanjay steps up onto a crate labelled Balloons, puts his hand on his belly and shouts back with an equally impressive voice.

SANJAY
GUINNESS!!!

Colin and Declan turn to each other gobsmacked for a second that they may have just found the 5 Billionth human but realise the room of the room being silent. Leaping up beside Sanjay Colin waves his arms.

SANJAY
(to the people closest to him)
That's my boy.

COLIN
(shouting but not very loudly)
We have to get out now. Please help each other. Head up the stairs and outside!

SECURITY GUARD 1
What the hell?

DECLAN
They can't hear you!

SANJAY
(at full voice and pointing)
Up the stairs. Outside. Now!

CONTINUED:

COLIN
(turning to Declan)
I'm sticking with the dad!

Guinness runs across the room pushing past people heading toward the stairs. He rushes into his father's arms. They say nothing.

DECLAN
We really have to go!

Sanjay looks at the crowd of people, some who have taken animals, others have grabbed unicycles and their tools. He then looks at the straining doors.

SANJAY
(pointing to doors)
They will not hold.

DECLAN
Then let's go!

SANJAY
There's not enough time. I have an idea.

Sanjay runs to a 1963, Ferrari 250 GTO, slams it in reverse and backs into the doors continuing to accelerate burning rubber even in the rising water. There are still more than 50 people trying to get to the stairs.

GUINNESS
(to Colin and Declan)
Go. Just Go.

Colin looks at Declan, back at Guinness then back at Declan.

COLIN
Just not meant to be.

DECLAN
(pushing him on)
Or is it?

Guinness has jumped into the car beside his dad.

EXT. MAIN HUGE GLASS ROOM AT JAVITS CENTRE

The Chief Fireman and all emergency services look up to see a huge and bizarre crowd running through the large glass structure straight towards them. There are people riding unicycles, carrying other people, pulling trolleys of rubber duckies and so much more!

CHIEF TIMMS
Oh sheeeeeeet!

INT. LEVEL 2 LARGE ROOM JAVITS CENTRE

SANJAY
You should go too.

GUINNESS
No Bapi. We can do this together.

SANJAY
Thank you son.

The noise is deafening and the last people are heading up stairs.

GUINNESS
(laughing)
How you feeling about destiny right now?

SANJAY
It doesn't matter now does it.
(the noise is deafening)
You can't take it with you.

GUINNESS
(looks confused)
Money?

SANJAY
No. Pride. You can't take it with you.

GUINNESS
Maybe it's not what you take with you but what you leave behind?

SANJAY
(looking straight at him)
Or who.

GUINNESS
(looking back at the doors)
Hey, Bapi. We can still do this. Listen. On my count I want you to put it in 1st gear and drive as fast as you can toward the stairs.

SANJAY
What?

GUINNESS
We won't make the distance but I reckon if we can hold our breath for a minute or 2 we could rise up the stairs as the water gets let out.

CONTINUED:

SANJAY
But what...

GUINNESS
No time. Do it now. Let it out!

The last person has gone, the water is almost above them and Sanjay floors the car as the doors burst and the water is released behind. A moment later they launch themselves from the car and begin swimming underwater toward the stairs.

Guinness looks over at Sanjay as they hold their breath together. It is silent and everything pauses for a moment but this time Guinness does not see time or numbers only his father. It unpauses and now it looks they are 50 feet underwater but swimming toward a light.

INT. MANNAN FAMILY HOME KITCHEN NIGHT

The family are still watching the news but Rav has fallen asleep, Nareev is there now too and Raj is wired on coffee.

RAJ
We should call her back. We should definitely call her back. Do you think we should call her back. Do you think she found them. Oh my god!

ANIKA
What is it?

RAJ
Nothing. Just oh my God.

The television shows Claire Maine again.

RHEA
Ooh! Look it's her.

DADI
I like that lady. She looks nice.

RHEA
Dadi, you need some sleep. Or some of Raj's coffee!

DADI
I will sleep when I'm dead.
(winks at Raj)
Bon Jovi.

ANIKA
Turn it up.

Raj goes to turn it up but spills his coffee. They all fuss to clean it up but freeze as they realise Sanjay is being interviewed by Claire Maine. In the background they can see Guinness wrapping his arms around a handcuffed Valerie.

CLAIRE MAINE
Crazy scenes here in downtown Manhattan! It looks like everyone is out alive!

The entire family scream and cheer with joy.

Sanjay stands next to her, soaking wet but wrapped in silver thermal blanket.

SANJAY
(before she introduces him, to camera)
Hello!

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE MAINE
Hello! I am here with the man they are calling the 'Accidental Guru'

SANJAY
Well that sounds a bit racist. Just because I am Indian I am a Guru?

ANIKA
Oh Sanj!

CLAIRE MAINE
(embarrased and flustered)
Oh I'm sorry, I...We...

SANJAY
(laughing)
I'm just kidding!

Claire looks relieved and begins to smile.

SANJAY
(pulling serious face again)
Or am I?

Claire rolls her eyes and motions camera to just her face.

ANIKA
Oh Sanj!

CLAIRE MAINE
Let's see if we can get Chief Timms to comment on the latest development.

She doesn't finish her sentence as the family have all come together for a group hug and now block the screen.

EXT. MANAAN FAMILY HOME KITCHEN 3 MONTHS LATER

Guinness is sitting at the table with his notebooks and he is writing. His mother is cooking, Dadi is washing up.

ANIKA
I'm so glad you came home.

GUINNESS
I'm only here for another 2 weeks Ma.

ANIKA
I know, but I just love having you around. Notebooks on the table, books all over the house.

DADI
(laughing)
Crumbs as well. I see a lot of crumbs.

GUINNESS
I like toast. It's very crumby!

Guinness looks across the table and picks up an old blue notebook. Sketched on the front is 'The Boy and the Moon", he turns it over and opens to the back page.

Inside he sees 3 columns, 3 names and the number of days they have left. He stares at it for a moment then tears it from the book and crushes it into his hand.

GUINNESS
Hey Ma.

ANIKA
Yes Ginny?

GUINNESS
Love you.

DADI
Ginny, help me out with these dishes.

A horn is sounding frantically outside.

ANIKA
(softly)
Love you too.

The sweet moment dramatically interrupted as Sanjay flys through the door holding a package and followed by Rav, Rhea and Raj who are all excitedly impatient.

RAJ
Come on brother! Open it.

CONTINUED:

RHEA
What are you waiting for?

SANJAY
(pauses)
Nothing.

He carefully opens the package to reveal the new Guinness Book of Records 20XX in a all its shiny glory. The cover is a photo of the Very Tall Man and Tiny Lady in wedding gear.

Sanjay holds it up like a new baby or a bible then places it on the table as everyone gathers round. He turns the pages quickly and eventually lands on a page that has 'corrections' . The 5,000,000,000th Human is listed as Guinness Mannan born to Anika and Sanjay Mannan and 12:00am 11th July 1987.

As the family pour over the entry and congratulate Sanjay, Guinness has quietly, but happily left the room.

INT. THE KARAOKE BAR IN NEW YORK

Guinness is alone at the mic but on the screen instead of lyrics there is a facetime of Valerie in an Orange Prison issue jumpsuit.

VALERIE
Are you kidding me?

GUINNESS
Nope.

VALERIE
You know I'm in here for 2 more months right?

GUINNESS
Yep. You ok?

VALERIE
Sure. It's more Martha Stewart than Orange is the New Black. Other than the threads. Even Dad stopped by.

GUINNESS
How is he?

VALERIE
Fine. Weirdly he says he has someone for you? Don't know what that means. Don't want to know. Anyway probably better go soon. You know, otherwise I'll get shivved for my phone that I smuggled in my ass!

GUINNESS
Charming! Happy Birthday! Call me when you get out.
(pauses with a smile)

Guinness presses play on Glass Tiger's Don't Forget Me When I'm Gone. As the intro plays he does bad shoulder dancing. Valerie flips him the bird then smiles and cries.

GLASS TIGER
You take my breath away oh

Love thinks it's here to stay oh

There's still so much for me to do

And I can't stop loving you

Oh, can this be true?

If you could see what I have seen oh

(The) broken hearts and broken dreams
oh

Then I wake up, and you're not there

Pain finds me everywhere

Oh, but you don't care

Don't forget me when I'm gone

My heart would break

I have loved you for so long

It's all I can take