

The Slap

Version 1.0

by
Raionond Mirza

September 2005

Copyright 2005

INT. OFFICE 1 - DAY

Speaking into camera, SUKI and LUCKY (Lakshmi) are pitching a play to various Arts Council commissioners, community theatre financiers etc.

SUKI
It's about sisters.

LUCKY
Doin it for themselves!

REACTION SHOT OF PANEL OF HEAVYSET FEMINIST TYPES NODDING.

INT. OFFICE 2 - DIFFERENT DAY

SUKI
It's about brothers.

LUCKY
Workin it out!

REACTION SHOT OF PANEL OF BLACK MEN NODDING.

INT. OFFICE 3 - DIFFERENT DAY

SUKI
It's about brother-sisters.

LUCKY
Thai lady-boys firing ping-pong balls from out their skirts.

REACTION SHOT OF PERPLEXED CONSERVATIVE LOOKING PANEL OF THAI MEN AND WOMEN IN SUITS.

INT. OFFICE 4 - DIFFERENT DAY

SUKI
Because that's what a colorful community is all about.

LUCKY
Color.

SUKI
We're British Asian. We contribute, and we're proud of who we are.

We cut to see a panel of white people shifting uncomfortably. Behind them is a sign that reads "Arts For Urban Communities Council".

WHITE MALE PANELIST

Err...thanks, and I think I speak for everyone here at the AFUCC, or ah-fuck, as we like to call ourselves, when I say that we think you're wonderful and very, very...visible!

WHITE FEMALE PANELIST

Very visible. Yes, and that's good.

WHITE MALE PANELIST

And really um road.

WHITE FEMALE PANELIST

(Softly)
Street.

WHITE MALE PANELIST

Street and I'm sure Thapar Theatre company, am I saying that right? Is vitally important and we'd love to give you a grant but we're not sure our remit is to go ethnic this year.

Lucky and Suki, with smiles frozen on their faces, realise they have to shift gears fast.

SUKI

(Softly to Lucky)
Plan B!
(Back to panel)
Well really, what's ethnic?

LUCKY

Does it even exist?

SUKI

These days White people know more about curry than Asians and they're all into discovering their spirituality and connecting with their karma...

LUCKY

And doin it tantric stylee!

SUKI

So really White is the new Asian...yeah?...stay with me.

(MORE)

SUKI(cont'd)

And as for Asians, all they want
to do is get the latest 3G
phone...

LUCKY

And connect to Bootybabe.com.

SUKI

Which means that Asian is the new
White.

INT. OFFICE 2 - CONTINUOUS

LUCKY

Because we are soooo Black!

Lucky skips up to one of the panel of Black men and holds
her somewhat olive toned arm next to his dark black skin.

LUCKY (cont'd)

See? Same same.

He stares like she's crazy.

SUKI

We've all gone hip-hop urban and
we say botty, bling and brethren!

INT. OFFICE 5 - DIFFERENT DAY

LUCKY

As only good Chinese can do, my
sweet and sour sister!

REACTION SHOT OF STONE FACED CHINESE WOMAN, PART OF A
CHINESE PANEL.

SUKI

Because Asian is the new Chinese!

LUCKY

And at the end of the day, who
really is Chinese?

One of the Chinese men raises his hand.

CHINESE MALE PANELIST

I am.

After a beat the woman next to him also raises her hand.

CHINESE FEMALE PANELIST

Me too.

Behind Lucky, Suki winces. She knows they've gone a step too far.

INT. CAFE IN SOUTHALL - DAY

Suki and Lucky are sitting at a table. Suki is clearly frustrated at all the pitching they've had to do. Lucky seems oblivious to the frustration and is bobbing happily to the soft club music in the background while casually exchanging flirtatious looks with a waiter.

SUKI

We're always begging money from stupid people. Why is it only stupid people have money?

LUCKY

I don't have any money and you're always calling me stupid.

SUKI

I don't have any either, which makes us even dumber than stupid people.

LUCKY

We are sad.

SUKI

Look at us, two actresses, full of talent, trying to get a theatre company off the ground and we can't even raise two pence to do our first play.

LUCKY

Oh I don't know. The Afro-Caribbean council seemed really into it. Two of them gave me their numbers.

SUKI

That's not why they did it.

LUCKY

They said they loved theatre.

SUKI

They asked if you were into role playing and could handle a ping pong paddle. Not the same thing.

The waiter that Lucky has been flirting with walks by and they exchange a look.

SUKI (cont'd)
And can you please stop that.

LUCKY
What? He's fit!

SUKI
You know Ricky and I are trying
for a baby.

LUCKY
So?

SUKI
We've been through this. It
disempowers me and belittles my
marital womanhood when you flaunt
your singledom so flagrantly.

LUCKY
Well it's not like you're trying
right here and now on the table.

Suki checks her watch.

SUKI
No but soon enough. I'm meeting
Ricky later. I'd better get to
the loo and check my temperature.

LUCKY
What..."down there"?

SUKI
Yes. The conditions have to be
just so.

LUCKY
God. Conceiving is so
complicated. It's like the time I
tried that Easydo wax in my hair
only it was for cars not people
and my head was hard and shiny
for weeks.

Suki stares.

SUKI
Yes...it's exactly like that.

Two women, CHERYL and KRISTA walk into the cafe and Suki
cringes but it's too late they've been spotted.

SUKI (cont'd)
Oh no. Not now.

Cheryl and Krista walk over uninvited.

CHERYL

Lucky, Sucky!

SUKI

Suki.

CHERYL

Of course.

KRISTA

Look at you two, lounging around.
Aren't you supposed to be
becoming the new Andrew Lloyd
Webber or something.

CHERYL

Or off fleeing the paparazi? Oh
wait, we're thinking of
successful, famous people. How
are you two darlings?

LUCKY

Very busy. Suki's got to put a
thermometer up her fanny.

Suki glares at Lucky.

CHERYL

Oh bless. You and your husband
still struggling? You did leave
it too late. I just read this
morning that young women are half
as fertile as teenagers and
middle-aged women are half again
as fertile as young women. Which
means you're...

A confused Lucky is counting on her fingers, trying to
figure it out like a mathematical problem.

SUKI

Younger than you! Anyway how did
you two secretaries...

KRISTA

Executive assistants!

SUKI

Whatever, how did you slip your
leashes? Aren't you supposed to
be giving your executives relief?

KRISTA

We're on lunch, expenses paid,
but then you're actors and you'd
know more about serving tables
than sitting at them wouldn't
you?

LUCKY

Hah! We are sitting at a table,
stupid.

SUKI

We're also directors of our own
theatre company. I'm the director
and Lucky's the artistic
director.

CHERYL

That's so sad. Nobody will hire
you so you have to create work
for yourselves.

LUCKY

We've got work. I'm off to do an
advert right now.

SUKI

And I'm doing a very high profile
cutting edge drama.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

CLOSE UP OF SUKI VERY DISTRAUGHT.

SUKI

You bastard! Is that what you
think of me? I feel so unclean!
Oh God!

She bursts into loud sobbing tears. We CUT TO a shocked
audience of businessmen at a seminar on "Sexism In The
Workplace". The MODERATOR is also staring open mouthed at
Suki. He snaps out of it.

MODERATOR

Uh, right. Well there you have
it. One of the effects of
inappropriate terms in the
workplace such as "love" or
"darling". Um, thank you Suki.

Suki gets up takes a "humbled actor" bow and walks off to
the side as all of two people out of the crowd applaud. She
feels her mobile vibrating, takes it out and answers it.

SUKI

Ricky? I'm working. You should know better...what?... is it time already? Okay I'll see what I can do.

She hangs up and tries to get the Moderator's attention. He stops in mid-flow and walks over to her.

MODERATOR

What is it?

SUKI

I'm really sorry but I've got to pop out for moment. Is that alright?

MODERATOR

Yes fine just be back at one. We're doing sexist female boss.

SUKI

Oh yeah I've come up with this great woman for that. You'll love it. She's all Arrgh
(Growls and makes claws)
And you know, I think she should have had an abused childhood.

MODERATOR

Right... Well go on but just be quick.

SUKI

I'll hurry.

INT. BACK SEAT OF A CAR - AFTERNOON

Suki and Ricky are trying to make a baby in the back seat of his car. It's rough going for both.

SUKI

Ricky! Hurry up! I've got to get back.

RICKY

Shut up! You're distracting me.

SUKI

Distracting you? What else are you thinking of? Who else are you thinking of? Oh! Are you thinking of that whore in Grand Theft Auto again? Ricky she's a cartoon! That's just stupid!

RICKY

No! Not that! There's a lot on at work and you're not helping right now.

SUKI

You've got work troubles? At least your job is steady. Look at me. I'm on the bloody edge but you don't hear me whining do you? God! Men are useless at multi-tasking.

Suki's phone rings and she answers it.

RICKY

Oi!

SUKI

Shh! This could be important.

EXT. SOUTHALL STREET - AFTERNOON

Lucky is doing her "advert": she's handing out fliers wearing a sandwich sign.

LUCKY

Suki, you've got to come quick.

INT. BACK SEAT OF A CAR - CONTINUOUS

RICKY

Could everyone just leave it be!

SUKI

Quite I can't hear her...What?

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

LUCKY

We've got a call back...yeah they want to see us again but we have to meet today...okay I'll see you there...is that Ricky? Say hi.

She hangs up and notices a man with sunglasses, AJAY, staring intently at her. He walks towards her and at first she's fearful and she starts to walk away but, being in a sandwich sign, can't go fast at all. He catches up and blocks her path. She blurts out the only thing that comes to mind.

LUCKY (cont'd)

Two for one samosas today only at
Juggy Poona's don't molest me!

AJAY

I'm sorry but I couldn't help
myself. You have the most
beautiful eyes.

Lucky tries to act shy and delicate and as she turns away
she clips Ajay's knee with her sign.

LUCKY

Oh sorry!

AJAY

No no. That's fine. I'm alright.
Tell me, you must be a model
right?

LUCKY

An actress but I've done photo
shoots. Did you recognize me from
that poster I did for VD?

AJAY

Uh, no but listen...sorry, VD?

LUCKY

Yeah it was huge and everyone
thought I had it but I didn't and
I couldn't get a date for weeks.
I had to practically give myself
away and...hey I shouldn't be
saying this. I don't even know
you.

AJAY

Forgive me.

Hands her a business card which she reads.

AJAY (cont'd)

Ajay Assaam.

LUCKY

Wow! You're a Bollywood producer?

AJAY

Yes and we're in the middle of a
production just around the
corner.

LUCKY

Oh I love Bollywood and I can
really dance.

She starts to show him and almost whacks him again with the sign.

AJAY

Yeah, yeah. I can tell. You're a natural. Listen, we've just had a disaster. Ashwarya and Shah Rukh were meant to be doing a scene today but her guru-ji called and said that she's not coming out from India until we provide a suitable temple for her pet mongoose.

LUCKY

Wow.

AJAY

Can you believe it?

LUCKY

I always thought she'd be kind to animals. She's the type.

AJAY

Er, yes, but obviously we can't deal with this so we've turned her down. But now we need to replace her and I was just on my way to a casting session when I saw you and your beautiful eyes.

LUCKY

Oh my God! You want me to replace Ashwarya Rai in a Bollywood film with Shah Rukh Khan?

AJAY

Well, when you put it like that, it does sound pretty good.

LUCKY

Oh no! I can't. I've got to go to an important meeting. Can you wait?

AJAY

Everyone is ready. We need to shoot right now.

LUCKY

This is a dream opportunity but I'd have to abandon my best friend when she needs me most. I don't know what to do.

INT. MOVIE SET IN SEEDY APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Lucky is dressed up in fairly skimpy courtesan garb. Ajay stands next to a Cameraman holding a single, low grade video camera.

LUCKY

You promise? You'll get Suki a part in the film too?

AJAY

There's a vital scene in a bathtub. Maybe the two of you can do it together.

LUCKY

Okay. So when do I meet Shah Rukh? I'm all ready.

AJAY

He prefers to meet actresses for the first time in the scene itself. It makes it more naturalistic. So we're just going to go for a take.

LUCKY

So soon?

AJAY

Don't worry. Just relax and go with it and remember, you are the courtesan lying with your eyes closed when the emperor, that's Shah Rukh, comes to your bed for a night of passion. Places everybody! And, action.

Lucky lies on some cushions and closes her eyes. We CUT TO the Cameraman and Ajay, both looking lecherous. We hear a man enter. He lies down and we hear Lucky moaning.

LUCKY (O.S.)

Oi! You're not Shah Rukh Khan!
Get off! What's going on? ...Oh
you...!

Ajay and Cameraman wince as we hear the man with Lucky get kicked in the nuts.

EXT. SOUTHALL STREET OUTSIDE OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Suki glares as lucky shows up late.

SUKI

What time do you call this?
They've already asked us in and
I've made them wait.

LUCKY

I know, I know but I got a job at
the last minute but it didn't
work out.

SUKI

What? What job? What is that? Are
you covered in body glitter?

LUCKY

No.

SUKI

You are! Lucky tell me you didn't
almost make a porn film for a
fake Bollywood producer.

LUCKY

No.

SUKI

Oh God! Again? This is like the
time you filled out a bunch of
forms 'cause someone was giving
out free food and you found
yourself doing a samosa advert in
the nude for some freaky cult!

LUCKY

I was hungry!

SUKI

Why do you listen to every pimp
that comes along?

LUCKY

He said I had nice eyes!

SUKI

You have useless eyes. You
wouldn't spot a pervert if he was
touching himself right in front
of you.

LUCKY

I would too. See this one coming
up here? He looks filthy! I've
got a bad feeling straight off.
You just watch me handle him.

Lucky glares at a man in a suit who walks up to her and
Suki.

BERNARD

Ah there you are.

LUCKY

Yeah well don't think because
you're old I'm going to...ow!

Suki has stepped on Lucky's toe.

SUKI

Hi again. Lucky, this is Mr
Bernard Caldwell, head of the
committee.

LUCKY

Oh...hi.

BERNARD

Nice to have you both here.
Please follow me.

INT. OFFICE 6 - CONTINUOUS

Bernard leads Suki and Lucky into a meeting room. On a wall
behind a panel of elderly people we see a large banner:
Council for Universally Naturalistic Thespian Studies.

SUKI

(whispering to Lucky)
God we've done so many of these I
don't even remember who these
people are.

LUCKY

Me either but we must have been
good.

The two girls giggle hopefully. Bernard takes a seat with
the other panelists and motions for Suki and Lucky to sit
in a pair of chairs facing the panel.

BERNARD

Ladies, welcome, indeed welcome
back to the Council for
Universally Naturalistic Thespian
Studies, rather a mouthful, don't
you think? Please just use the
shortform.

Lucky smiles and goes to speak but Suki elbows her.

SUKI

No.

LUCKY

He said...

SUKI

Shut up!

BERNARD

Yes...as I was saying, we were very impressed with your application but first we'd like to know how you heard about us. We hadn't really advertised the Thespian grant all that much.

Suki and Lucky are stuck.

LUCKY

It's...it's because we're all for the sister love thing. Respect and all you know. Not that we're like that ourselves. I mean kebabs rolls all around for me and Suki but hey everyone's got their rights.

SUKI

(hissing to Lucky)

Not that kind of thespian!

(to Bernard)

How, how, we heard about you? Well, um, I think everyone who's anyone who's ever heard of anyone who works with every and anyone really respects your work. Yeah.

BERNARD

Oh, thank you. How encouraging. Let's move on. Perhaps you could tell us a bit more about your theatre experiences.

SUKI

Right, well we were both regulars at The Globe.

FEMALE PANELIST 2

Oh one of my favorites. Did you work with Mark Rylance? I loved his all female Richard III.

SUKI

Er, no. The other Globe.

FEMALE PANELIST 2

Which one was that?

LUCKY

The Pindi Globe Pub and Theatre in Southall.

FEMALE PANELIST 2

Ah...

SUKI

Yes, when they did Julius Caesar Goes To India I was 4th handmaiden beneath a coconut tree.

BERNARD

(To Lucky)

And you?

LUCKY

I was the tree.

SUKI

It's how we met.

BERNARD

Quite. Perhaps what we lack in experience we'll get with enthusiasm, which, from your first presentation was more than apparent.

Suki and Lucky exchange a quick "Haven't a clue what you're talking about but okay" look.

BERNARD (cont'd)

We're all absolutely delighted that you've taken our principles to heart.

SUKI

Your principles are our principles.

FEMALE PANELIST 2

It's so refreshing to find creative people whose minds aren't cluttered with preconceptions.

LUCKY

Our minds have nothing in them.

BERNARD

I think that about covers everything. So ladies...

Suki and Lucky sit tight in their seats. Their dreams are about to come true.

BERNARD (cont'd)

I can safely say that your application...

The girls hold hands.

BERNARD (cont'd)
To produce an original play for
the Council of Universally
Naturalistic Thespian Studies...

The girls eyes get wider still.

BERNARD (cont'd)
Is successful.
(beat)
How does it feel?

The girls don't say a word and try to play it cool but Suki looks like a cat who's just caught a mouse and Lucky looks like a balloon ready to pop.

EXT. SOUTHALL STREET - CONTINUOUS

Suki and Lucky are screaming and jumping up and down, hysterically happy.

INT. CAFE IN SOUTHALL - AFTERNOON

CLOSE UP OF SUKI AND LUCKY LOOKING DOWN INTO CAMERA AT SOMETHING.

LUCKY
It's so beautiful.

SUKI
And it's ours.

We CUT TO a wider shot and see they're holding their funding cheque.

SUKI (cont'd)
Our very first pay-cheque.

LUCKY
I never want to lose it. We
should just frame it.

Suki gives her an exasperated look. Right at that point Cheryl and Krista walk up.

CHERYL
Ah, is that a resume of all your
achievements?

KRISTA
I'm surprised you need such a
large paper.

SUKI

This is proof of something that we've worked hard to accomplish that you two house pets could never hope to achieve.

CHERYL

Orgasm with a door handle?

LUCKY

Like that's hard.

SUKI

This is a cheque for the Thapar Theatre Company, our company, to produce our first original play.

KRISTA

Really? So I guess now you'll never have to work again.

SUKI

Well, not exactly.

CHERYL

But you'll each be able to buy a house, right?

SUKI

That's not the point.

KRISTA

Well I'm sure it's at least big enough to buy something you can both use in your careers.

CHERYL

Double-headed dildo?

LUCKY

We already have one...each!

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DAY

Suki and Lucky are in the upstairs of the pub which houses a small to medium theatre space with a raised stage. They are moving chairs and sundry things around, getting ready to start work. Suki is fighting mad.

SUKI

We'll show those two cows. We're going to put on the best, most successful show this town's ever seen. This time next year they'll be eating paneer out of our shorts!

LUCKY

Ooh I could go for a bite. I'm starved.

SUKI

Not now! Stay focussed. There's a lot to be done. We have to find a script, do casting, get a set designer, costumes, composer... the works.

LUCKY

And then you'll give me some paneer?

Four young Sikh brothers enter and stand staring.

SUKI

Who the hell are you stooges?

GURDEEP

Gurdeep.

MANDEEP

Mandeep.

PARAMDEEP

Paramdeep. And he's Hank.

Hank just keeps staring.

LUCKY

Hee hee...Hank.

SUKI

Er, that's lovely boys but the pub's downstairs.

GURDEEP

Yah we know. Our dad owns it.

MANDEEP

He owns this theatre too.

SUKI

And we've rented it for our show.

PARAMDEEP

Yah we know. Our dad used to let us practice here.

GURDEEP

Till you came along and gave him money.

MANDEEP

And now he's chucked us out.

SUKI

So what do you want from me?

PARAMDEEP

He told us to help you.

LUCKY

Do you have any paneer?

SUKI

Lucky!

(To boys)

Really? Our very own crew. Right then start moving these chairs out. Give us some space.

LUCKY

What did you used to practice here?

GURDEEP

Bhangra Boxing.

MANDEEP

It's a combination of traditional dancing and Thai kick boxing.

PARAMDEEP

We was gonna be champions. You want to see? Maybe we could be in your show?

LUCKY

All right. Go on then.

Gurdeep, Mandeep and Paramdeep let out some martial arts yells, do a couple of crap Bhangra/Martial arts moves and form the beginnings of a pyramid. Hank silently does a couple of moves of his own and goes to jump on top of the pyramid but instead kicks Gurdeep in the face sending all of them crashing to the floor.

LUCKY (cont'd)

Cool. Do it again?

SUKI

That's enough. You lot get those chairs moving. Lucky and I've got scripts to read.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DAY

Suki and Lucky are sitting at a table piled high with scripts. Across from them is Inarticulate Mumbling Playwright.

SUKI

So tell us about your play.

The Playwright begins to mumble...inarticulately. Suki and Lucky look at each other.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

ANGRY MALE PLAYWRIGHT

My play's about all the rubbish
women put men through. All the
false ritual and pretence and
entrapment and the day to day
grind and lies and I'm not
putting that in my mouth and the
scheming and whining and guilt
and relatives and friends and I'm
not your mother just go have sex
with her why don't you?

REACTION SHOT OF SUKI AND LUCKY UNIMPRESSED

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

ANGRY LESBIAN PLAYWRIGHT

And just 'cause you like sex with
women they think you want to get
off with your mother and that's
why I created this world see,
without any men, except a few
that are used as farm animals or
maybe in labs having their organs
harvested for real people to use.

REACTION SHOT OF SUKI AND LUCKY LOOKING A LITTLE SCARED.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

Inarticulate Mumbling Playwright is still mumbling
inarticulately. Now Suki and Lucky lean in to try and hear
better.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

SINCERE BORING FEMALE PLAYWRIGHT

It's about a little girl. Well
it's not really about a little
girl but about a girl who is a
little like all of us or maybe
not and we go through a day in
her life but not really a day, it
could be any day.

REACTION SHOT OF SUKI BUG EYED AND LUCKY NODDING OFF.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

Suki and Lucky are now leaning right close up to
Inarticulate Mumbling Playwright and still can't make out
what he's saying.

INT. SUKI'S BEDROOM - DIFFERENT DAY

Suki and Ricky are on their bed still trying to make a baby
while Suki holds a phone in her hand.

SUKI

Ricky keep it down!

RICKY

That's not what you should be
saying to me right now.

SUKI

I'm trying to listen.

On Suki's phone we hear the voice of Sincere Boring Female
Playwright droning on.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

SINCERE BORING FEMALE PLAYWRIGHT

I think meaning is dangerous
don't you? I mean just because
you mean something it doesn't
mean that I do and if I did which
I don't why should I impose my
meaning onto you?

On the other side of the table Lucky has fallen fast
asleep.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

Suki and Lucky are talking to FELIX NIGHT, a flamboyantly gay playwright.

FELIX

It's a sensitive intercultural coming of age story about a young boy coming to terms with his sexuality amidst the political and cultural tensions that are pulling his community and his family apart.

Suki and Lucky sit up. This could be good.

FELIX (cont'd)

And of course the roles of the male lapdancers would be played by a selection of very muscular men with small, pert bottoms.

Suki and Lucky lean forward simultaneously.

FELIX (cont'd)

And all the dialogue would happen as a techno song and as there are any number of important intimate scenes I would probably need to coach each actor myself, privately.

Suki and Lucy sit back simultaneously.

FELIX (cont'd)

There is, of course, another version which sets two very beautiful women, not unlike yourselves, in the midst of all those men.

Suki and Lucky lean forwards simultaneously again.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

A buzz of activity involving various people painting and working on backdrops and sets is going on all around Suki as she talks with ALVIN, the set designer.

ALVIN

There are just sooo many directions one could take this but I think I'm seeing something very bold, very now, very "I watch naked fat people on reality TV and I don't care who knows".

SUKI

Alright, so what props will you need for the kitchen?

ALVIN

Nothing.

SUKI

Nothing?

ALVIN

Completely blank, but Mum should always be in an apron holding a pot or ooh, maybe, and this is sooo "Nigella Lawson does Desperate Housewives", how about a salt pig?

SUKI

Uh-huh. And the bedroom?

ALVIN

Nothing.

SUKI

Nothing at all? Not even a bed?

ALVIN

No no no! Oh please! That's so sweet. Nothing, nada, not a low fat veggie sausage, except perhaps, and I'm just throwing caution to the wind here, one tiny vase with a single flower on the floor which, of course everybody will get is the boy's virginity which is about to be cruelly plucked.

SUKI

And that's the whole bedroom?

ALVIN

Yes, and I know what your thinking. We do have to be careful. We don't want to signpost things too much.

SUKI

How much am I paying you?

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - AFTERNOON

Still amidst a hubbub of activity, Lucky, holding a single sheet of paper, is talking to OLLIE the painter.

LUCKY

Now I've got very careful notes from Suki and I've got to stick to them so don't try any fancy talk.

OLLIE

No worries. About the west wall, we can go pink, purple, lavender or even mauve.

Lucky listens carefully nodding in agreement and then reads the paper in her hand and speaks with great concentration.

LUCKY

Black.

OLLIE

Just black.

LUCKY

Black.

OLLIE

Right. And working our way around, the back wall could lead us into blues, maybe turquoise, cobalt, ultra-marine, even cerulean.

LUCKY

Uh-huh, uh-huh, yeah...black.

OLLIE

So it is. Down to the floor. I thought we could highlight the downstage with some earth shadings starting with deep browns to ochres, umbers, asphalts right up to this lightly burnt sienna.

LUCKY

Ooh that sounds lovely. Let's do that.

OLLIE

Really?

LUCKY

Yeah except we'll go with black.

We CUT TO an overhead shot showing that "Suki's notes" on the sheet that Lucky is holding, consist of the word "BLACK" in huge letters taking up the entire page. Ollie tries to sneak a peak at the notes but Lucky holds the paper closer to her chest.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE STAGE - DAY

Suki is directing Lucky and SHANI, a nervous young actor.

SUKI

Now really let us feel how scared you are...and action!

Lucky screams making everyone jump.

SUKI (cont'd)

Lucky! For the last time, don't do that. This isn't about your fear! This is where you're about to kiss Shani and he's the one who's terrified because he's coming face to face with his suppressed desires.

LUCKY

Sorry.

SUKI

Let's try that again and remember, Shani, teenage angst, sex, taboo, the need to feel a man against you. Just draw from your own life.

SHANI

But I'm not gay.

SUKI

Right, excellent, hold on to that. I'm actually believing the denial.

SHANI

But...

SUKI

Now come on. Let's feel the fear. Take it from your entrance and...action!

Lucky screams again.

EXT. SOUTHALL STREET - DAY

Suki and Lucky are walking as Suki talks on her mobile with Bernard. Lucky is eating an ice cream cone like a child and flirting with passers by.

SUKI

Yes Mr Caldwell, it's all fantastic. We can't wait to see you at the show. Oh? The entire council and all your members will be there?

Suki and Lucky exchange a "Ain't that grand" look.

SUKI (cont'd)

And you want us to what? Sorry?

INT. OFFICE 6 - CONTINUOUS

BERNARD

It's vital that you make the members of the public aware of exactly what kind of show this is. Specifically, they must be familiarized with the principles of Naturalistic Thespianism. Not everyone gets us as quickly as, you and especially your colleague.

EXT. SOUTHALL STREET - CONTINUOUS

SUKI

Don't worry about a thing. We'll take care of it. See you opening night!

She hangs up.

SUKI (cont'd)

He wants us to "educate" our whole audience about Natural Thespianism. Yah right!

LUCKY

He's got to let that go. Most women just don't like another girl playing in their monkey box you know.

SUKI

No, sweetheart. You've really got the wrong word...

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE STAGE - DAY

Four muscular men wearing very little indeed are doing a Chipendale routine on stage to techno music. They finish and hold position. We pull out and see SHANI, also on stage sitting at a table, playing his role of a sensitive, closeted gay man. Unfortunately Shani just looks nauseated by the gyrating crotches in front of him.

SHANI

(Very unconvincing)

This can't be happening! I can't possibly be turned on. Dear God what's wrong with me?

SUKI (O.S.)

And cut! That's lovely thank you all.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE SEATS - CONTINUOUS

Suki and Lucky are standing watching the stage with Veena, a reporter from a local Southall newspaper.

SUKI

So you can see we're really going for the jugular. This is going to touch people right in their seats.

In the background Felix walks up behind Shani and pats his bum and Shani reacts quite badly and almost punches Felix. The four brothers also hover into view and start horsing around.

VEENA

Yeah. Sounds great but I don't really know if this is news enough to give you a good spread.

Suki and Lucky exchange a look. Suki takes Veena by the hand as Lucky lets fly with a huge whistle in the direction of the muscular men who appear instantly by Veena's side.

SUKI

Why don't we take a picture with all of us together?

Lucky gives a signal to the men who all of a sudden hoist Veena up in their arms. Veena is instantly smitten with the dancers at such close range and can't stop herself touching their arms.

VEENA

Oh my! Well seeing as you're doing such...big things for the community, I'm sure we could give you a few good inches.

LUCKY

We need our inches.

All of them look into camera and smile and pose as a flash goes off.

In the background Gurdeep, Mandeep and Paramdeep have again formed a pyramid and again Hank leaps and kicks Gurdeep in the face bringing them all crashing to the floor.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB - NIGHT

People are filing into the pub downstairs and making their way up to the theatre. They have to pass by a large poster advertising the play: Thapar Theatre Company sponsored by C.U.N.T.S. Proudly Presents Felix Knight's "Virginity Interrupted". Bernard and other members of C.U.N.T.S. can be seen amongst an Asian crowd including a few Grannies and Grandpas.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Gurdeep and Hank, wearing headsets are manning the door. Gurdeep is giving someone a hard time but we don't see who it is.

GURDEEP

Look the ticket says, you're in stalls not front bloody row. So get yourself up in the Gods and learn to read.

We PULL OUT and see that he's talking to a sweet little old Asian GRANNY who hauls off and clips him on the ear and then pushes past him.

GRANNY

(In Hindi, subtitled)

Idiot! This is how you speak to your mother's mother? I should have poisoned your milk when you were in the crib!

GURDEEP

Yes Naani-ji. Sorry Naani-ji.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Lucky is putting on her make-up and Suki is pacing back and forth behind her.

SUKI

This is it. Everything we've worked for. No more humiliating workshops for me. You'll never have to take your clothes off for a pervert again. Tonight Thapar Theatre Company makes its mark.

Lucky turns around and shows that she's marked an abnormal number of beauty spots onto her face.

LUCKY

What cha think Suks? If just one of these makes Cindy Crawford beautiful, think of what all them will do for me!

SUKI

What they'll do? They'll bloody raise Mother Theresa from the dead so she can come help another leper! Get them off! Just get them off now!

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE SEATS - CONTINUOUS

Bernard is sitting next to Granny as the seats all fill up. Suki walks up to say a quick hello before the show.

SUKI

Wow the whole committee's here.

BERNARD

And most of our membership. I must say I'm delighted at the turnout from the local community. I'd no idea that Southall was so open-minded. You've really reached out them.

SUKI

Oh well, we're just fulfilling our artistic destiny and people are responding.

Mandeep and Paramdeep, both wearing headsets, walk up to Suki.

SUKI (cont'd)

Bernard, won't you excuse me.

MANDEEP

Emergency. Sunita's not showing up.

SUKI

What? She has to! She's playing mother. She signed a contract. We're paying her.

PARAMDEEP

Her agent called and said she got a part in a film.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lucky and Shani are getting ready.

LUCKY

Do your parents know about your lifestyle and all?

SHANI

What? Look I wasn't joking before. I'm doing a character yeah? Just like you. I'm not gay. There are no men in my life. No secret cravings.

LUCKY

Right, so no boyfriend then. Well don't worry, we'll find you someone.

Suki bursts in.

SUKI

See if I ever hire that lying slut again!

LUCKY

What's happened?

SUKI

Sunita's bloody bailed on us that's what's happened. She's doing some rubbish film, replacing Ashwarya Rai in a courtesan scene with Shah Rukh Khan.

LUCKY

Aw man! I'd have been perfect for that! But what'll we do now?

SUKI

I don't know. I need time.

SHANI

We're on in ten!

SUKI

Yes thank you! Just let me think.

(beat)

Why does God hate me?!

LUCKY

You'll have to do it. You have to play mother.

SUKI

What? I'm the director.

LUCKY

You're the only one who knows all the lines, Suks. There's no one else.

SUKI

Well fine. If that's what it takes. C'mon!

They start to bustle her into a costume and makeup.

SUKI (cont'd)

(Aloud but to herself)

Okay, okay, Suki, get into character. I can be a mother. I can have a child.

LUCKY

'Course you can. Soon as Ricky puts one up you.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE LIGHT/SOUND BOARD - CONTINUOUS

Gurdeep speaks into his headphones.

GURDEEP

Check one check one. Lights can you hear me?...I said lights can you hear me? What about sound? Are you there sound?

We pull out and see Mandeep and Paramdeep standing right next to him by the lighting and sound boards.

MANDEEP

Of course we can bloody hear you bhundu!

PARAMDEEP

Yeah man. So can everybody else. Put a sock in it.

GURDEEP

Don't talk to me like that. I'm the stage manager. Are you the stage manager? Don't bloody think so! Now answer properly!

MANDEEP

Alright...Lights check.

PARAMDEEP

Sound check.

GURDEEP

More like it. Now cue lights.

The house lights go down.

GURDEEP (cont'd)

Cue sound.

An atmospheric lounge track fades up.

GURDEEP (cont'd)

Cue smoke.

Near the front of the stage, Hank, holding a smoke machine doesn't move.

GURDEEP (cont'd)

Oi! Cue smoke!

MANDEEP

Toss brain! He can't hear you.

PARAMDEEP

You know these aren't plugged in!

He holds up the end of the headset which is indeed not plugged into anything.

GURDEEP

(Loudly)

Hank! Cue bloody smoke!

Hank fires a stream of smoke onto the stage.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The lights come up on a barren stage to reveal Suki, Lucky and Shani looking very dramatically serious. Suki opens her mouth to speak when a disturbance ripples through the crowd and then chaos and shouting erupts in the seats.

LUCKY

What's happening?

SUKI
Shh! Just ignore it! Keep going.
Say your line!

LUCKY
Oi Taz, are you coming out
tonight?

The yelling is now so loud Shani can't hear

SHANI
What?

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE LIGHT/SOUND BOARD - CONTINUOUS

GURDEEP
Trouble. C'mon let's roll!

Gurdeep, Mandeep and Paramdeep head down towards the disturbance. Two OAPs seem to be fighting. When the boys get there Gurdeep reaches for one of them. It's Granny. She turns around and clouts him across the head. He falls over taking his brothers with him.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE STAGE - CONTINUOUS

SUKI
Curtain! Curtain!

LUCKY
We don't have one Suks!

SUKI
Lights! Something! Why does God
hate me?

Suki jumps off the stage and goes to the trouble.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE SEATS - CONTINUOUS

The boys have separated Granny from the man she was fighting with. It's Bernard. Suki runs up.

SUKI
Naani-ji! Stop! What are you
doing?

GRANNY
This sicko saying you should take
clothes off. He kept saying!

The boys reach for Bernard.

GURDEEP

Right! You, out!

MANDEEP

Move it!

SUKI

What? No! Stop. That's Mr Caldwell. He's our sponsor! You heard wrong.

BERNARD

Actually, Ms Thackar she didn't and I can tell you the committee is most upset!

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Suki and Lucky are with Bernard.

SUKI

I don't understand. What is all this about?

BERNARD

It was made perfectly clear at your first application. Our remit at the Council for Universally Naturalistic Thespian Studies is to support the presentation of theatre in its most natural form, nude.

LUCKY

You perv! Do we get paid extra?

SUKI

I don't remember anything about this at all.

BERNARD

Surely Ms Pardesi here must recall the first interview. She was naked at the time in front of an entire panel of trustees.

SUKI

What?

LUCKY

I was?

BERNARD

Yes. I was told you came in on our community awareness day, filled out a form and progressed straight to your first interview which takes place on camera in the nude.

SUKI

Were there samosas present?

BERNARD

I believe there were.

SUKI

Oh my God! Lucky!

LUCKY

It's not my fault. I thought it was an advert!

SUKI

I can't do this! I can not take this stress. Why are you doing this to me? Do you know how bad this is for my health? Are you trying to make me barren? Are you trying to kill my unborn child before it's even conceived? Why don't you just scoop out my womb with a spoon and eat it!

LUCKY

Stop it! Stop it! You know I'm vegetarian!

SUKI

Mr Caldwell. I'm so sorry but can't we just do the show we've prepared?

BERNARD

I'm afraid the guidelines are very clear. If you fail to adhere to them we shall have to withdraw our funding and ask for our money back.

SUKI

But we've already spent it.

LUCKY

Yeah our set cost a fortune.

BERNARD

Then I'm afraid we'll be taking legal action.

SUKI
Isn't there something we can do?

LUCKY
Well...

Suki and Bernard turn to look at Lucky.

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE STAGE - LATER

The stage is dark. We see Suki and Lucky from the chest(ish) up looking like they are naked.

SUKI
I want you to know I hate you.

LUCKY
Aw Suks don't be like that.

SUKI
This is humiliating!

LUCKY
At least he's not suing us and
now we have a curtain.

From the seats we hear Gurdeep's voice.

GURDEEP
Up curtain...cue sound...cue
lights.

We see Paramdeep and Hank holding up two ends of a massive sheet behind which Suki, Lucky and Shani are revealed in nude silhouette.

LUCKY
Oi Taz! Are you coming out
tonight?

Shani, naked and wide eyed is frozen with fear.

SUKI
Come on! Just say the line!

Shani loses it and bursts out from behind curtain, standing buck naked in front of the audience.

SHANI
I can't take it anymore! I can't
live a lie! I don't care about
this stupid play. I'm gay! There.
I've said it! I'm gay I'm gay I'm
gay! Mom, dad this is who I am
and I don't care who knows!

LUCKY

Hey Suks. That's not in the script. What's he doing?

Suki holds her head.

END CREDITS

INT. PINDI GLOBE PUB THEATRE - DIFFERENT DAY

Suki and Lucky are auditioning another playwright.

CRAZY EXPERIMENTAL MALE PLAYRIGHT

You remember John Cage's famous 4.33? I mean who doesn't? You know in the original version a piano player comes out on stage, sits silently for a few minutes and then walks off and all the crowd hears is the sound of itself. Well in my play we do the same thing but with a lavish production, cast of hundreds, huge sets, a backing band with double gospel choir and a troupe of dancers and it'll just be all of them and the audience staring at each other not saying a thing for a whole hour. Genius ahh?

SUKI

Thanks. We'll be in touch.

LUCKY

Would those male dancers be wearing anything?

THE END