

**"ARAB IN AMERICA!"**

An original screenplay by

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**FADE IN:**

An ARAB DRUM BEAT plays as an AMERICAN FLAG blows in the wind. A strong gust REVEALS:

**EXT. OUTDOOR ARENA - MORNING**

Five hundred COLLEGE GRADUATES occupy the center of the decorated stadium floor as FAMILIES settle in, anxious for the ceremony to begin.

MAN (V.O.)

Teddy Roosevelt once said, "Either an American is an American and nothing else, or he is no American at all."

Miniature American flags decorate every seat in the house.

MAN (V.O.)

An American is defined simply as "a person of the United States of America."

WELL-DRESSED MEN in black suits patrol a safety perimeter around the arena.

MAN (V.O.)

So, it's a good thing that I, without a doubt, am a perfect example of the quintessential "American."

THE MUSIC ABRUPTLY STOPS AS WE CUT TO:

A YOUNG, ARAB MAN'S BEARDED FACE staring straight ahead. He is beyond frightened.

MAN (V.O.)

Hello America. That's me. Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr. And yes, you heard right. My name is Osama, but my friends call me Sam.

Beads of sweat drip down SAM'S face. He stands at the rear of the stadium floor as the backs of the ENTIRE GRADUATING CLASS sit in front of him, focused on the SPEAKER on-stage.

SPEAKER

(from the podium)

...Life is a journey full of promising roads and honorable decisions.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

Follow your heart, and your dreams  
will be without a doubt a future to  
behold...

Sam is not listening. He is fixating on his inevitable long  
walk to the stage.

SAM (V.O.)

That podium is my Mecca. And I'm  
about to make the pilgrimage.

Sam closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. A SMACK on the  
back startles him. It's BRETT, his boisterous roommate.

BRETT

Sam, he's just a man.

SAM

I'm fine.

BRETT

Just look for your parents, use  
your note cards, and kick some ass.

SAM

Kick some ass...

BRETT

Yeah! Kick some ass, dude.

The Speaker introduces Sam, butchering his name.

SPEAKER

...please welcome our  
Valedictorian, Osama Ahmamed...  
...A-boo-Baker...

AN OVERWHELMING APPLAUSE slightly boosts Sam's confidence.

SAM (V.O.)

They say when you're nervous you  
should imagine the audience in  
their underwear. We Muslims do  
things a little differently.

POOF! Instead of underwear, EVERYONE is wearing BURKAS!  
Simultaneously, they all look at Sam.

SAM (V.O.)

There was a time when I would have  
relished all this attention.

As Sam takes his first step, Brett gives Sam another friendly  
SMACK:

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT - 15 YEARS EARLIER**

SAM, now 8, stumbles on stage with a MAGIC WAND and CAPE. A large TALENT SHOW BANNER hangs overhead. The AUDIENCE applauds as a weirdo PRINCIPAL introduces Sam from the podium.

PRINCIPAL

Everyone welcome our very own  
Houdini...  
(holds for laughs)  
Osama, The Teeny Genie!

Sam reaches center stage. He takes a deep breath. Theatrically, he makes a flower appear out of thin air. More applause brings a smile to Sam's face.

YOUNG SAM

And for my next illusion, I will  
lock myself in handcuffs and  
magically escape!

The Audience "OOHS" in anticipation as Sam locks himself up.

YOUNG SAM (CONT'D)

Open Sesame!

Nothing happens. He tries again.

YOUNG SAM (CONT'D)

Allah-CADABRAH!

Still nothing. Sam is stuck. The Audience watches in silence.

Sam's parents -- AHMED, a brooding, mustached man, and HUDIYA, who wears a hijab (Muslim head-scarf) -- watch on from the audience. Ahmed stands up and applauds.

AHMED

Bravo! Bravo!

HUDIYA

(whispering)  
Fosey! Sit down!

Hudiya lightly grabs Ahmed's arm and pulls him back in his seat. A gentle smile from his mother does little to ease Sam's embarrassment.

GENIE (O.S.)

"Wake up and smell the hummus."

**INT. YOUNG SAM'S ROOM - LATER**

Disney's "Aladdin" plays. Still in his outfit, Sam is glued to the TELEVISION. A smile breaks through Sam's defeated face.

SAM (V.O.)

There was one thing I could always count on... Aladdin, my hero. And before long, he ended up being everyone else's hero, too.

**EXT. STREET - HALLOWEEN NIGHT**

Trick-or-treaters crowd the Suburban streets.

SAM (V.O.)

I can't think of another time in American History when everyone wanted to be an Arab Muslim.

Sam is dressed as "Aladdin", just like half the neighborhood. He smiles from ear to ear.

SAM (V.O.)

And there she was...

HALEY, a natural "Princess Jasmine", walks with her friends.

SAM (V.O.)

...my Princess Jasmine. If there was one night when I had a chance, it was that night...the night when I was just like everyone else.

A nervous Sam runs up to Haley.

YOUNG SAM

Hi Haley. Can I trick-or-treat with you?

HALEY

Oh, I'm sorry. I already have my Aladdin.

Sam eyes a BOY dressed just like him. Haley turns back to her friends, laughing as they continue their Arabian night without him.

**EXT. ABOU-BAKR RESTAURANT - DAY - FOUR YEARS LATER**

*Prince Ali*, from Disney's "Aladdin", can be heard over a bare storefront. A SOLD SIGN hangs over the front window.

**INT. ABOU-BAKR RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS**

Sam, now 12, sports a peach-fuzz moustache. "Aladdin" plays on the TV. Ahmed and Hudiya unpack boxes behind him.

SAM (V.O.)  
From that moment on, I only watched  
the part of the movie with Prince  
Ali. Aladdin sucked.

In the movie, "Prince Ali" does a magic trick with an apple.

AHMED  
Osama, come in here.

Sam gets up from the TV and joins his parents. Ahmed puts his arm around Sam.

AHMED (CONT'D)  
You know, back in Lebanon, my  
father worked his entire life and  
had nothing to show for it.  
(beat)  
But here, we have our very own  
restaurant.

Ahmed holds his wife with his other arm.

AHMED (CONT'D)  
Allahu Ackbar. God is Great.

Ahmed joyously pats Sam on the back.

**EXT. OUTDOOR ARENA - PRESENT DAY**

Sam stumbles into the aisle. He scans the crowd of burka-wearing graduates.

SAM (V.O.)  
So here I am. Valedictorian in  
the land of opportunity, where  
anything can happen.

A GIRL -- the only one still in a cap and gown -- stands out from the crowd. Her beauty is hypnotizing.

SAM (V.O.)  
See her?

This is EMILY FITZGERALD, 23, wrapped with almost as many HONORS STOLEES and SASHES as Sam. Her eyes dart over to follow Sam. He quickly avoids eye contact.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (V.O.)

Yeah, the one who just looked at me. She's the girl next door. That is, if you live next door to the White House.

Beads of sweat continue to flow down Sam's face.

SAM (V.O.)

As Valedictorian, I am introducing our keynote speaker...her father... the most powerful man in the world...the President of the United States...of America.

Sam takes a huge gulp, and suddenly everyone is back in caps and gowns. Sam's world has returned to normal. And the WELL-DRESSED MEN suddenly make sense - they are the SECRET SERVICE.

SAM (V.O.)

Now, I might not be the President's daughter, but I also stand out in a crowd.

**INT. SAM'S HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - FIVE YEARS EARLIER**

Sam, 18, walks down the hallway, moving against the flow of students.

He opens his locker. Stuffed inside are his school books, a journal, binders, and the QUR'AN.

SAM (V.O.)

As a Muslim, growing up in America can be kind of difficult.

He eyes the holy book, and closes his locker.

**INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY**

Sam stands in the middle of the lunchroom, staring at the two signs above him: PEPPERONI PIZZA and BBQ PORK.

SAM (V.O.)

You see, Muslims can't eat pork.

WHIP PAN TO: THE SALAD BAR. A PIMPLE-FACED TEEN sneezes on the greens.

**INT. LIBRARY - LATER**

The quietest place in school. Sam kneels on his prayer mat in the corner, facing East.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (V.O.)  
Muslims also have to pray five  
times a day.

Sam stands, reciting the prayer aloud.

LIBRARIAN  
SHHHH!

The LIBRARIAN glares at Sam with her old eyes. He ignores her, and kneels to continue praying, reciting another verse.

LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)  
SHHHHHHHHHHH!!!! My God!

**INT. HIGH SCHOOL HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT**

This place is disastrous, full of BABES, JOCKS, and beer.

SAM (V.O.)  
We can't consume alcohol.

Sam is sitting on a couch talking with a CUTE GIRL. While Sam's not looking, a JOCK walks up and spikes Sam's drink.

CUTE GIRL  
I like you, Sam. I like you because  
you're different.

Sam tries to play it cool.

SAM  
I just gotta be me, babe.

As the Cute Girl laughs and scoots closer, Sam takes a sip of his spiked drink. Instantly, Sam spits the drink all over the Cute Girl's face.

SAM (V.O.)  
Even with all my differences,  
nothing could've prepared me for  
what happened next.

**EXT. SAM'S HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

A beautiful Autumn day. School is in session. The sun is shining. Birds are singing.

**INT. SAM'S HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

Lockers line the walls of an empty hallway that lead to double doors. An AIRLINER flying overhead can be heard.

Suddenly, an enormous BOOM!

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Sam smashes through the doors. The entire school follows. Every student, teacher, counselor, and custodian chases after Sam.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Sam sits between his parents on the couch watching the TWIN TOWERS on TV.

SAM (V.O.)

The entire country was covered by a blanket of fear, and our house was fear-central.

Sam holds his Mother's hand.

SAM (V.O.)

The Qu'ran has prayers for moments like this. Thankfully, my mom was on top of it.

Hudiya looks at Sam and starts reciting a prayer. Sam joins in, followed by Ahmed.

SAM, AHMED, AND HUDIYA

(in Arabic)

Oh, Lord! Help us to hold fast all together to Your path, even in the shaky times...

SAM (V.O.)

I needed a change of scenery.

FADE TO:

**EXT. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY - ONE YEAR LATER**

Morning light shines on the beautiful campus. PRETTY GIRLS, HACKEY-SACKERS, and acoustic GUITARISTS populate the campus green. Sam smiles wide at the glowing opportunity to fit in, now sporting the FULL BEARD we've already seen him in.

SAM (V.O.)

My favorite part of Cal Berkeley?

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

1) Sam enters a classroom, filled with Asian, Black, Latino, Indian, Pakistani, Arab, and Jewish people.

SAM (V.O.)

Minorities. A majority of minorities.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

2) Sam walks down a hallway. He stops, noticing an AD on a bulletin board. It reads: "Write for the campus paper!". He smiles.

SAM (V.O.)  
I had finally found where I fit in.

3) In the campus newspaper office, Brett greets Sam, welcoming him to the team.

SAM (V.O.)  
Journalism: My calling.

4) Sam circles potential news stories. He picks up the phone and starts typing.

5) The newspaper press mass-produces the campus paper. On the front page: "Student Bill of Rights? Written by Osama Abou-Bakr".

7) Sam shakes hands with the Dean while posing for a photo.

**EXT. OUTDOOR ARENA - BACK TO PRESENT**

A CAMERA FLASH as Sam arrives to the stage. He steps up to the podium. From here, he can see PRESIDENT FITZGERALD backstage, waiting for Sam to give the introduction.

SAM (V.O.)  
There he is. The President.

FOUR SECRET SERVICE AGENTS surround him. An endless amount of POLICEMEN guard each entrance. All eyes are on Sam. His palms begin to sweat.

SAM (V.O.)  
And there's me. The quintessential  
American.

Everyone is waiting.

SAM  
Today... is a great day...

FEEDBACK from the microphone does nothing to boost his confidence. Sam looks around, searching the Arena for his parents.

SAM (CONT'D)  
When I was a boy, my parents--

Sam spots TWO EMPTY SEATS on the upper level -- the only empty seats in the arena. Heartbroken, Sam can barely hold himself together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam can hear his HEARTBEAT accelerating. He wipes his hands on his gown.

SAM (CONT'D)  
(to himself)  
Hold yourself together, Sam. Come on.

With one last desperate effort to maintain his composure, Sam shuts his eyes:

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

He opens his eyes, now sitting with his parents on the couch. His mother grabs his hand.

HUDIYA  
(in Arabic)  
Oh Lord! Help us to hold fast all together to Your path...

Sam continues with his mother:

SAM  
(in Arabic)  
...even in the shaky times. Lord!  
You have promised to help us...

Ahmed joins in.

SAM (CONT'D)  
(louder, in Arabic)  
...in our time of trouble and need...

**EXT. OUTDOOR ARENA - BACK TO SCENE**

Sam opens his eyes, finishing the prayer aloud:

SAM  
(in Arabic)  
We rest upon Your word.

Complete silence. Suddenly, a SCREAM. He then realizes, he's been saying the whole prayer aloud --

-- THE AUDIENCE panics. Some are already on their feet --

-- Sam gets even more anxious. He is dripping with sweat --

-- Deep within the crowd, Emily stands. AGENT MADISON, Emily's Germanic female bodyguard, thrusts through the crowd towards her --

-- ON STAGE, Secret Service Agents secure The President --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- Chaos erupts. People scream for help and race for the exits --

-- AT THE PODIUM, Sam struggles to remember his speech.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Please!...Everyone...

-- Sam frantically searches for his note cards, but they are in his pants pockets. His gown is blocking access. In pure panic, Sam unzips his gown --

-- AN AGENT spots Sam --

AGENT  
Code Red! I repeat! We have a--

-- Sam finally grabs his notecards. He takes a deep breath --

SAM  
Today, is a great--

-- The Agent BOLTS for Sam. And then --

-- SMACK! The notecards fly through the air as Sam is tackled off the stage, falling face first into the first few rows of chairs below --

AGENT  
Secure! I have the suspect!

-- The AGENT slowly gets off of Sam. Sam's notecards float to the ground like feathers --

-- ON THE LAST NOTE CARD: "Today is a great day."

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER THAT DAY**

A spotlight shines on Sam. He sits at a table in his torn graduation gown. He puts an ice-pack up to his bruised face.

Opposite Sam, AGENT HARPER lights a cigarette.

AGENT HARPER  
For a valedictorian, you're pretty stupid.  
(beat)  
If I let you go, you're not going to blow anything up, are ya?

SAM  
I wasn't planning on it.

AGENT HARPER  
What were you planning on?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM  
After this? I dunno, maybe go crawl  
into a cave--

Agent Harper perks up. Sam realizes what he just said.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Oh, uh...you know what I mean.  
(beat)  
Do you know what I mean?

Agent Harper takes another drag of his cigarette.

AGENT HARPER  
Should I know what you mean?

SAM  
I just want to get out of here.

**EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - LATER**

Sam pulls up in his car on his cell phone.

AHMED (O.S.)  
Hello!?

SAM  
Dad!

AHMED (O.S.)  
Hello!?

SAM  
Dad, it's me--

AHMED (O.S.)  
--is this thing on?

HUDIYA (O.S.)  
(muffled)  
Press the red button--

AHMED (O.S.)  
--I did! Oh, it's on! Hello! You've  
reached Ahmed and Hudiya, please  
leave a--

BEEP!

SAM  
(sarcastic)  
Hey Dad, it's your son. Remember  
me? College graduate?  
Valedictorian? Summa Cum Laude?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)

First one in the family to go to college. Would've been nice to see you there. Give me a call back.

Sam hangs up the phone, grabs a GREEN APRON from the back seat, and exits the car.

**INT. COFFEE SHOP - KITCHEN AREA - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam enters, putting on his apron. He passes a BULLETIN BOARD. A FLYER hangs for "Sam's Going Away Party". Squiggled underneath, it reads "Tonight!"

**INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS**

Sam goes behind the counter. Suddenly, an enormous uproar of APPLAUSE and LAUGHTER. EMPLOYEES and CUSTOMERS celebrate.

WALLACE, a pretentious co-worker, walks up to Sam.

SAM

You told them?

WALLACE

I didn't have to.

(pointing to the TV)

Its all over the news. You're bigger than Bono!

ON THE TELEVISION, Sam is on instant replay. The caption says it all: "Secret Service Sacks Senior."

**INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER**

Sam is cleaning the counter.

SMALL VOICE (O.S.)

Excuse me.

Sam leans over the counter to see a LITTLE GIRL with pigtails in a Catholic school uniform. Sam perks up.

SAM

Well, hello there.

LITTLE GIRL

What happened to your face?

SAM

You should see the other guy. What can I get for you?

LITTLE GIRL

How much is a hot chocolate?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM  
One twenty-five.

Counting the change in the Little Girl's hand, Sam notices she is short. Wallace looks on.

LITTLE GIRL  
(embarrassed)  
Nevermind. I don't have enough.

SAM  
Hold on a sec. I think you have enough. What's that right there?

Reaching behind the Little Girl's ear, Sam magically pulls out a quarter. Her eyes widen.

LITTLE GIRL  
Wow!

Wallace places the HOT CHOCOLATE on the counter. She grabs it.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)  
Thank you, mister.

The Little Girl runs off, revealing Emily Fitzgerald, the President's Daughter.

EMILY  
Cute trick.

SAM  
Oh. Hi. Thanks. Can I get anything for you?

EMILY  
A soy-milk latte, please.

Wallace starts making the beverage. An awkward silence.

SAM  
So...graduation, huh? Crazy!

His bruises stick out a like a sore thumb.

EMILY  
Yeah...I'm sorry about all that.

SAM  
Oh, it's not your fault. Happens to me all the time!

EMILY  
Really?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM  
No, not really.  
(beat)  
So, uh, planning on going into the  
family business?

EMILY  
No, I hate politics.  
(to Wallace)  
Sorry, can I get that without foam?

Annoyed, Wallace starts a new drink.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
(back to Sam)  
My Dad wants me to, but I don't  
know. I can't deal with people like  
that. Saying one thing and doing  
another. It's just not for me. What  
about you?

SAM  
Oh, well...I applied for this  
internship. I'm really hoping I get  
it. I don't want to have to go  
home.

Emily and Sam understand one another.

WALLACE  
--Soy-milk latte! NO foam!

Emily grabs the drink from the counter.

EMILY  
Thanks. Um, how much do I owe you?

SAM  
It's on the house.

EMILY  
Oh. Well, thank you Osama.

Emily smiles and exits. Wallace pops up behind Sam.

WALLACE  
Dude, you should show her your  
weapons of mass destruction.

**INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT**

Hardly recognizable, the coffee shop has been transformed  
into a celebration. Employees now drinking and enjoy each  
other's company.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Sam is all smiles. The manager, CHRIS, turns off the music.

CHRIS  
Sorry to interrupt, everyone. I'd  
just like to say a few things.

Everyone turns around and listens.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
I've known Sam for nearly four  
years now. And I'll be the first  
to admit that I'm sad to see him  
go.  
(beat)  
If half of you worked half as hard  
as Sam, I wouldn't need the other  
half of you.

Chris laughs at his own joke. But only Chris.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
Seriously though...I know deep-down  
you were made for great things.  
Follow your heart Sam...  
(beat)  
...unless of course, you're in the  
vicinity of the President, which in  
that case, you should run away as  
fast as you can!

Everyone laughs, giving Sam a hard time.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
To Sam!

Everyone holds up their drinks.

EVERYONE  
To Sam!

WALLACE  
Speech! Speech!

Giving into the pressure, Sam stands up.

SAM  
So, I don't really know how to say  
this...you guys are the first  
people in my life that I can  
honestly say I will actually  
miss... except you, Chris.

Some giggles in the audience.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (CONT'D)

You know, my parents came here in '79 because they wanted their son to have opportunities they didn't.

(beat)

I'm sure Chris has told you all, but I should be getting a call very soon about my internship at the LA Times...

Everyone claps. Sam raises his glass.

SAM (CONT'D)

To America.

(to himself)

And to my parents.

He toasts, but doesn't drink. Then, Sam's phone vibrates on the table.

WALLACE

It could be the internship!

SAM

Now? It's kind of late--

Wallace flips it open and hands the phone to Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)

Hello?

Everyone cheers for Sam.

VOICE (O.S.)

Osama...

SAM

Hello!... Dad?

AHMED (O.S.)

Osama, you need to come home--

He turns away from the crowd, trying to hear.

SAM

--Why? Where were you and Mom--

AHMED (O.S.)

--Your mother died. You need to come home.

Sam turns back to the crowd, distraught.

**EXT. AIRPORT - MORNING**

Sam bolts out of a cab, grabs his bag, and heads to the door.

**INT. AIRPORT LOBBY - CONTINUOUS**

Sam stands at the ticket counter.

TICKET LADY

...The earliest flight I can get  
you departs at 12:10 today--

SAM

--Do you have anything earlier? I  
need to get home before sunset.

She types on her computer.

TICKET LADY

Let me see here... I've got one  
that leaves in an hour. There's a  
layover in Phoenix but it arrives  
in Atlanta at 5:43. Does that work--

SAM

--Yes! Okay! Thank you so much.

She hands him his boarding pass.

TICKET LADY

Have a nice flight.

**INT. AIRPORT SECURITY CHECKPOINT - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam is next in line. A TSA WORKER grabs his boarding pass,  
noticing his name.

TSA WORKER

Uh... that line.

**INT. AIRPORT SECURITY CHECKPOINT - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam stands arms stretched as FOUR TSA WORKERS scan him with  
wands. A wand BEEPS near his belt.

TSA WORKER #2

You hiding something down there?

**INT. AIRPORT SECURITY CHECKPOINT - MOMENTS LATER**

Another TSA WORKER (#3) eyes Sam rushing down the terminal.  
He picks up a phone in the SECURITY STATION...

**INT. SOMEWHERE - MOMENTS LATER**

CLOSE ON: AGENT DODD, FBI. He picks up his phone:

AGENT DODD  
Agent Dodd. Anti-Terrorism. Talk to  
me.  
(beat)  
Hold on.

He looks down, focused on something.

AGENT DODD (CONT'D)  
D-9.

CLOSE ON: AGENT TODD, FBI.

AGENT TODD  
Miss!

THEN, WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

**INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - CONTINUOUS**

These two are passing the time with a game of BATTLESHIP.

AGENT DODD  
(back to phone)  
Sorry, what's up?

Agent Todd tries to sneak a look at Dodd's placement.

AGENT DODD (CONT'D)  
Really? Okay, I'll take care of it.

Agent Dodd hangs up.

AGENT TODD  
Something important?

AGENT DODD  
Dry-cleaning's finished.

AGENT TODD  
Ah... B-4.

Agent Dodd winces.

AGENT DODD  
Hit.

Suddenly, Sam bolts past them down the terminal. They both look at each other. Agent Todd pulls out his badge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AGENT DODD (CONT'D)  
Let's roll!

-- Sam runs, dodging travelers left and right --  
-- the Agents follow closely behind, closing the gap --

AGENT DODD (CONT'D)  
You! Stop right there!

-- Sam turns to see his pursuers. He eyes his watch: OUT OF TIME. He jumps onto the MOVING SIDEWALK. His speed doubles --

-- the Agents follow --

-- Sam reaches the end of the line, and jumps. The momentum is too much for his legs to sustain --

-- SMACK! Sam face-plants onto the floor. His bag goes flying. He pulls himself up, grabs his bag, and moves past --

-- a TELEVISION playing excerpts from a recent press conference with the President about his daughter's graduation catastrophe --

-- Sam reaches the gate. The last PASSENGER moves through --

SAM  
Hold the gate!

-- He hands the ATTENDANT his ticket. She puts it through the SCANNER --

-- A SECURITY GUARD sees the pursuit from a nearby gate --

SECURITY GUARD  
Get your hands up!

-- He draws his gun --

-- The Agents catch up, cutting off any exit --

AGENT TODD  
Let me see your hands!

-- Sam drops his bag and puts his hands up --

SAM  
(out of breath)  
Listen! I have to make that plane!  
I'm going to a funeral--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AGENT TODD

--THE ONLY FUNERAL YOU'RE GOING TO  
IS YOUR OWN IF YOU DON'T KEEP YOUR  
HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM!

Agent Dodd slowly approaches Sam, his gun drawn.

SAM

Please, my mother! No, this is just  
a HUGE misunderstanding!

Agent Dodd moves in with handcuffs.

SAM (CONT'D)

PLEASE! I just want to go home!

AGENT DODD

We can talk about this in a few  
minutes--

SAM

(pleading)

--Look! I have to make this flight!  
This is getting...Please...My mom  
is...I feel like...I'm going to  
explode!

Silence. Sam realizes what he just said.

SAM (CONT'D)

...Okay, that was a poor choice of  
words.

ALL GUNS are drawn on Sam.

AGENT TODD & DODD

GET DOWN NOW!

Agent Dodd throws Sam to the floor. Sam looks up. The giant  
BREEZEWAY DOOR closes.

**EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - LATER**

Sam's plane leaves the gate as the PRESIDENTIAL MOTORCADE  
passes through the frame, REVEALING --

AIR FORCE ONE, complete with the PRESS CORPS and SECRET  
SERVICE. The Sedans come to a halt.

The President gets out and is stopped by his daughter.

EMILY

Why are you making me do this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

Can we have this conversation later? I've got a plane to catch.

EMILY

I don't think they'll take off without you.

PRESIDENT

That's true. It is my plane. Crazy, huh?

(moving to the stairs)

Wasn't it Captain Kangaroo who said, "When you're finished changing, you're finished?"

EMILY

That was Benjamin Franklin, who also said, "He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else".

The President beams with pride.

PRESIDENT

That's my girl.

EMILY

This isn't fair.

He stops and faces his daughter in front of the stairs.

PRESIDENT

Emily, do your old man a favor. You're a grown woman now--

EMILY

--I have a Fine Arts degree! I hate politics.

PRESIDENT

Nobody works in the field they studied. I have a degree in Marine Biology, and I'm the President.

(sincerely)

I need your help... Please.

EMILY

Okay. But I'm not going to lie.

The President smiles, and heads up the stairs.

PRESIDENT

I love you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

At the bottom, Emily forces a smile.

EMILY  
Yeah, yeah, yeah... I love you,  
too.

The President enters his plane and the door shuts. Emily stands alone and takes a look at Agent Madison, her personal Secret Service Agent.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER**

This one looks no different than before. Alone in the room, Sam plays with the HANDCUFFS but it's no use. Sam gives up right as Agent Todd enters.

AGENT TODD  
Do you know a Muhammad al Mohammed  
al Bezier?

SAM  
No.

AGENT TODD  
Saddam Hussein?

SAM  
He's dead.

AGENT TODD  
(one step ahead)  
Sure he is.

Sam looks away in disbelief.

AGENT TODD (CONT'D)  
So, where's home? Paradise?

Sam tries to ignore him.

AGENT TODD (CONT'D)  
If I had forty virgins waiting for  
me, I'd blow myself up, too!

SAM  
My mother is dead! I have to make  
it home to her funeral...

Sam looks down at his watch.

SAM (CONT'D)  
(to himself)  
...which is in eight hours.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

AGENT TODD  
So you had plenty of time.

SAM  
I have to be in Atlanta before sun-  
down. If I don't get on a plane,  
and I mean, right now, I will miss  
her funeral.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - BEHIND THE MIRROR - CONTINUOUS**

Agent Dodd watches. He sees his phone ring and hits a switch  
to shut off the speaker.

AGENT DODD  
Go for Dodd.

VOICE ON PHONE  
Go for Dodd?! Who the hell do you  
think you are! Do you know how much  
crap I've had to deal with over the  
stunt you idiots just pulled!  
You're a trainee! You can't shut  
down an airport for four hours over  
a nobody!...

THROUGH THE GLASS: Todd gets right up in Sam's face.

VOICE ON PHONE (CONT'D)  
...If something like this happens  
again, I'll take that miniature  
badge and shove it so far down your  
throat you'll need endoscopic  
surgery to remove it! DO YOU HEAR  
ME!?

AGENT DODD  
Yes--

VOICE ON PHONE  
--What's that? I can't hear you?!

AGENT DODD  
Yes sir!

He hangs up. Agent Dodd flips the switch back on:

AGENT TODD  
(over the speaker)  
WHO DO YOU WORK FOR!?

**INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - LATER**

Agent Dodd hands Sam his carry-on bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AGENT DODD  
Here ya go.

AGENT TODD  
We'll be watching you.

AGENT DODD  
Don't get into any nonsense over  
there. Okay?

SAM  
Okay. Thank you.

AGENT TODD  
And after the funeral, you're on  
the first plane back.

SAM  
Got it.

Sam runs off. Agents Dodd and Todd watch him as he bolts down the terminal.

**EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - LATER**

A plane takes off.

**INT. PLANE - IN THE AIR - LATER**

Sam sits in the middle row section. This plane is packed -- except for every seat adjacent to Sam.

**INT. ATLANTA AIRPORT - TERMINAL - LATER**

Sam checks his watch as he gets off the plane. He rushes to:

**INT. ATLANTA AIRPORT - BAGGAGE CLAIM - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam stands next to the carousel. A TRAVELER grabs the last bag off the belt. Sam now stands alone.

Then, one last bag pops out -- torn up and duck-taped back together. A STICKER with a smiley-face reads, "INSPECTED BY THE TSA. HAVE A NICE DAY!"

**EXT. ATLANTA AIRPORT - SUNSET**

The sun sits low in the sky as Sam bolts out of the airport, frantically trying to find a taxi.

**EXT. GRAVEYARD - AFTER SUNSET**

The TAXICAB pulls up. Sam jumps out of the cab with his destroyed bag. He runs through the graveyard -- not a soul in sight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam stops, defeated. He spots his mother's new headstone. Sam moves closer, barely able to keep himself together.

SAM  
 Mom... I'm sorry I'm late.  
 (struggling)  
 I just wanted to...  
 (now sobbing)  
 I... I miss you.

**EXT. ABOU-BAKR FAMILY RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

Sam gets out of a cab and looks at the restaurant. A giant sign above reads: "THE ALLAH CARTE."

**INT. THE ALLAH CARTE - CONTINUOUS**

Sam's ENTIRE FAMILY -- aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins -- is sitting in the center of the quaint restaurant, deep in conversation. Ahmed is at the head of the table.

The bell over the door JINGLES as Sam enters. All conversation abruptly stops. CHERIEN, Sam's adorable nine-year-old niece, runs to greet him.

CHERIEN  
 Uncle Sam! Where were you?

Cherien jumps in Sam's arms as he approaches his family.

SAM  
 Asalam Wualakium.

EVERYONE  
 Walakium asalam.

AHMED  
 Did you go and see her?

SAM  
 Yes, sir.

CHERIEN  
 I'm sorry, Sam.

SAM  
 I'm sorry, too.

The entire family comes up to Sam one-by-one with hugs and kisses.

**INT. THE ALLAH CARTE - KITCHEN - LATER**

Sam and Ahmed wash the dishes in silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

Dad.

Ahmed continues scrubbing.

SAM (CONT'D)

Dad.

Ahmed stops and looks at his son.

SAM (CONT'D)

I can finish up if you want to go home and get some sleep. It's been a long day.

AHMED

No, it's fine.

Ahmed finishes his current dish. Sam walks over and puts his hand on his father's shoulder. Ahmed stops.

SAM

Dad, it's okay. You should go home.

AHMED

(takes a deep breath)

Yeah, okay.

Sam takes Ahmed's sponge and picks up where his Dad left off. Ahmed heads for the door and stops.

AHMED (CONT'D)

(not facing Sam)

Congratulations.

SAM

Thanks.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - LATER (THAT NIGHT)**

Sam enters. He quietly closes the door and stops outside the living room.

Cherien lies in front of the television as "Aladdin" plays softly. He quietly tip-toes over the other family members and turns off the television.

CHERIEN (O.S.)

Sam?

Sam turns and sees Cherien awake. He whispers:

SAM

Cherien, you should be asleep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

                  CHERIEN  
I slept on the plane.

                  SAM  
You did?

She nods with a cute smile. Sam kneels down beside her.

                  SAM (CONT'D)  
Come on. It's time for bed.

Sam picks her up.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - SAM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Sam enters and lays Cherien on his bed. He tucks her in.

                  SAM  
Get some sleep.

                  CHERIEN  
I'm a night owl, Uncle Sam.

Sam smiles.

                  SAM  
Me too.

She gets more comfortable. Sam kisses her on the forehead and moves to the door.

                  CHERIEN  
Are you leaving again soon?

                  SAM  
I don't know.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam walks in, but the room is empty. The desk lamp is on. He walks over and sees a PHOTOGRAPH -- Sam with his parents.

Then, he sees a bunch of PAPERS -- open bank statements, bills, mortgage payment stubs -- all with past due amounts. He notices "The Allah Carte" on many of them.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - SAM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Sam lays down next to Cherien, now sleeping. He pulls out his PHONE and KEYS from his pocket and places them on the nightstand. He notices his cell phone screen: "One New Voicemail".

He listens:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICEMAIL

Hi Osama. This is Ricky Day with the Los Angeles Times. I just wanted to call and tell you the internship is yours. We're all very excited to have you on board...

Sam looks at Cherien sleeping next to him.

VOICEMAIL (CONT'D)

...We were hoping that you can come in Monday, so give us a call as soon as you get this. Look forward to hearing from you.

He pulls the phone away from his ear and stares at it for a moment. Then, he deletes the message.

**EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - SUNRISE**

Sunlight cascades over the horizon. Ahmed stands outside and begins the CALL TO PRAYER, which can be heard over a SERIES OF SHOTS:

- 1) Cherien's mom, MINEL, gently wakes everyone.
- 2) Sam's grandmother, EMAN, helps Cherien wash her hands and face.
- 3) Ahmed turns to the West, concluding the call.
- 4) In a straight line, everyone lays out their prayer rugs in the grass.
- 5) Sam walks outside to see his entire family lining up.
- 6) In rows, they all kneel, touching their foreheads to the prayer rugs.
- 7) On their knees, in unison, everyone turns their heads to the left and then back to the right.

**EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS**

One by one, everyone gets up and heads back into the house until Sam and Ahmed are alone.

Sam stands to leave.

SAM

I'm gonna stay.

A hint of a smile finds its way to Ahmed's face as Sam walks back into the house.

**INT. AIRPORT - DAY - BACK IN CALIFORNIA**

Agents Dodd and Todd stand among LIMO DRIVERS in the waiting area, surveying the new arrivals.

AGENT TODD  
I don't think he's coming back.

AGENT DODD  
Come on, we got work to do.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

With a newspaper open, Sam circles jobs, prints his resume, and makes some phone calls. He scratches off previously circled jobs and makes more phone calls.

**INT. SAM'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

He straightens his tie on a new suit.

**INT. ATLANTA BANNER-HERALD - OFFICE - DAY**

Sam waits patiently. The INTERVIEWER reviews his credentials.

INTERVIEWER  
Osama...Valedictorian of High School and College, graduated with a Master's in Journalism, editor-in-chief of the campus newspaper... and even captain of the chess team.

Sam beams.

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)  
Yeah, we're looking for someone a little more qualified...

**INT. METRO NEWS ONE - OFFICE - DAY**

Sam waits patiently. The INTERVIEWER (#2) eyes his resume.

INTERVIEWER #2  
We've got a couple of Jews down in Accounting...  
(beat)  
That gonna' be a problem for you?

**INT. PROGRESSIVE NEWS NETWORK - OFFICE**

Anxious, Sam watches the INTERVIEWER (#3) read over his resume for the umpteenth time.

SAM  
Is there something wrong?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTERVIEWER (#3)  
I'm going to be honest with you...  
U.S. Affirmative Action Laws state  
that two Mexicans equal one Arab.  
(beat)  
I hired them yesterday.

**EXT. PROGRESSIVE NEWS NETWORK - MOMENTS LATER**

Crushed, Sam mopes out of the building. He passes the two newly hired MEXICAN LANDSCAPERS working in the garden.

**INT. WHITE UTILITY VAN - CONTINUOUS**

TWO AGENTS spy on the scene. Through the windshield, they see Sam moping along.

AGENT #1  
Is this it?

AGENT #2  
Yes. Lets grab 'em.

**EXT. PROGRESSIVE NEWS NETWORK - CONTINUOUS**

Suddenly, the WHITE UTILITY VAN races in and SCREECHES to a halt. On the side of the van, big black letters read: "INS".

The Two Agents jump out of the van and chase after the Mexicans.

AGENT #1  
Freeze! INS!

MEXICANS  
LA MIGRA!!! LA MIGRA!! ANDALAI!!

The two Mexicans head for the border.

**EXT. DOWNTOWN ATLANTA - LATER**

Sam hails a taxi.

**INT. HABEEB'S CAB - CONTINUOUS**

Sam plops down into the back seat.

DRIVER (O.S.)  
(in a thick accent)  
What's the matter? Have a hard  
day?

Sam looks up. The driver, HABEEB PATEL, a stocky man with crumbs in his bushy, grey beard, turns around.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

SAM  
550 Bluebird Lane.

HABEEB  
Fine. Shut me out.  
(to himself)  
Everyone else does.

SAM  
I had a few interviews today.

HABEEB  
No luck, I suppose?

SAM  
No. Everyone just looked at my  
name and that was it.

HABEEB  
That's such bull-donkey, man! I  
went through that same crap, too.  
"Your name is Habeeb? No job for  
you!" They didn't even once look at  
my credentials. They just took one  
look at my name, and that was it.  
(to himself)  
Sons of bitches.

Habeeb's sudden outburst alarms Sam.

HABEEB (CONT'D)  
So, what is your name, if you don't  
mind my asking?

SAM  
Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr.

Habeeb laughs hysterically.

HABEEB  
Whoa man...I thought I had it bad!  
(beat)  
What's in a name, anyway? Chutney  
by any other name would taste as  
sweet.

Sam looks up at Habeeb.

HABEEB (CONT'D)  
I mean...if I was a John Smith,  
I'd be a cardiologist.

Just then, Sam gets an idea --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

-- a CAR cuts Habeeb off. Indian knick-knacks fall off the dashboard as he swerves violently.

HABEEB (CONT'D)  
Ass-mother! I shove my hand  
in your hairy chest and squeeze  
your heart till you die!

SAM  
Turn the car around!

HABEEB  
You got it!

Habeeb cuts the wheel.

**EXT. CITY HALL - LATER**

The Gold Dome shimmers like a beacon of democracy. The cab slides into frame.

**INT. CITY HALL - CONTINUOUS**

Sam bursts into the office. He runs to the first available DESK CLERK. She looks up.

SAM  
I'm here to change my name.

The Desk Clerk points to a sign -- "Ring Bell For Service" -- Sam rings the bell.

DESK CLERK  
How can I help you, sir?

SAM  
I'm here to change my name from  
Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr...  
(beat)  
To Samuel Adam Baker.

DESK CLERK  
Good call.

**EXT. CITY HALL - AFTERNOON**

Sam walks down the stairs of the courthouse, stopping right in front of an American Flag dramatically blowing in the wind. He puts on his sunglasses.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - OFFICE - LATER**

Sam prints his new resume sporting his new name. He takes it from the tray and looks it over--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AHMED (O.S.)

--Osama?

Sam quickly hides his resume behind his back. Ahmed stands in the doorway.

AHMED (CONT'D)

How'd it go today?

SAM

Ya know...Fine.

AHMED

Mecca wasn't built in a day, son.

Sam chuckles. A smile warms Ahmed's face.

AHMED (CONT'D)

"Allah is with those who patiently persevere."

Ahmed walks out. Sam exhales, and pulls his resume back out.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

The NEWSPAPER lays on the table. All the jobs now have RED X's but one -- NEWS PRODUCER, HOUND NEWS.

SAM

God forgive me.

Sam dials the number. It rings once--

TEXAN VOICE (O.S.)

--He-llo!?

SAM

Hello! Hi, my name is...

Sam peeps his head in the hallway. No one is around.

SAM (CONT'D)

...Samuel Adam Baker. I'm calling to inquire about the News Producer position.

TEXAN VOICE (O.S.)

Ab-so-lutely. What are you doin' right now?

SAM

Um...Standing in my kitchen?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEXAN VOICE (O.S.)  
Well get outta 'yer kitchen and  
come get dinner with me. Oh...and  
bring your resume.

SAM  
Oh, okay. Where?

TEXAN VOICE (O.S.)  
How about that new place on  
Peachtree and 10th? Say 7:30?

SAM  
Yeah, sure--

TEXAN VOICE (O.S.)  
--Great! See you there--

SAM  
--Wait. What do you look like?

TEXAN VOICE (O.S.)  
Look for the big hat.

CLICK. Sam hangs up the phone.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - BATHROOM**

Sam looks at himself in the mirror. He rubs his beard.

**EXT. PORKY'S PORK EMPORIUM - NIGHT**

Sam, with a FRESHLY SHAVEN FACE, stares at the HUGE PIG SIGN.

**INT. PORKY'S PORK EMPORIUM - CONTINUOUS**

Sam enters. Tacky, decorative pig art clutter the walls. He makes his way through and sees what has to be the man with the Texan voice. He waves feverishly at Sam with his bolo tie swaying in the wind. This is HERSHAL, easily 6'2, big frame, big hat, big personality.

Sam walks up.

HERSHAL  
You must be Samuel! I'm Hershhal.

Hershhal gives Sam an immensely firm handshake.

SAM  
(cringing)  
Nice to meet you.

HERSHAL  
Samuel, the pleasure's all mine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hershal gives a little laugh as they sit. An annoyingly exuberant waiter, NAPOLEON, approaches the two.

NAPOLEON

Oink! Oink everybody! Welcome to Porky's Pork Emporium. Home of the Porky Tacos! I'm Napoleon and I'll be your waiter. What'll ya have?

HERSHAL

I'll have the bacon-wrapped pork chop with a side of fried pork rinds.

NAPOLEON

Excellent choice, sir.  
(to Sam)  
And for you?

SAM

Uh, just a salad.

NAPOLEON

Ah, The Atomic Bacon Salad!

SAM

No. Just a normal salad.

NAPOLEON

Our Hamazingly Porky Salad!?

SAM

No. Just the garden salad.

NAPOLEON

Aha! The Super Pork Infused Lettuce Salad!

SAM

No! Just give me some leaves and dressing!

HERSHAL

(bewildered)  
Just leaves and dressing?

Sam takes a deep breath.

SAM

Well, I can't eat pork because I'm a Muslim.

HERSHAL

You're a Musawhat?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM  
I'm a Muslim.

HERSHAL  
Oh my God!

Hershal stands, quickly blessing himself. He grabs a mug of beer and throws it in Sam's face.

NAPOLEON  
Get outta' here you damn terrorist!

In a nearby booth, a MOTHER holds her DAUGHTER close.

DAUGHTER  
(crying)  
Mommy, are we gonna die?

MOTHER  
I don't know, baby! I don't know.

CUT BACK TO:

**INT. PORKY'S PORK EMPORIUM - MOMENTS EARLIER**

Sam takes a deep breath. Perhaps a lie would be smarter.

SAM  
Uh...I'm a...a vegetarian.

Napoleon walks off.

HERSHAL  
(slightly confused)  
Interesting...Now, I know what you're thinking, "Why is the editor-in-chief doing my interview?"

SAM  
Actually, I didn't know you were the editor--

HERSHAL  
--Well I am and don't you forget it!  
(beat)  
Relax. I'm pulling your leg. But seriously, I like to get in on the grassroots. I hire everyone. Thata' way, I know the station runs without a hitch. Bring your resume?

Sam hands Hershal his resume.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERHSAL (CONT'D)

Nice resume. It's pretty. I like the colors. You know, I've got a good feeling about you, Sam. Gotta go by 'yer gut sometimes. Nobody woulda' voted for George Double-Ya if they didn't. Ya know what I mean?

Hershal laughs, leaving Sam horribly confused.

HERSHAL

How about I offer you the job?

SAM

Really?! That'd be great!

Sam takes a sip of water.

HERSHAL

Great! How does eighty-five thousand sound?

Sam chokes on his water. Hershal smacks him on the back.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

Nod if that sounds good.

Sam nods.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

Great. You'll start tomorrow.

Napoleon shows up with the food.

NAPOLEON

"Just lettuce and dressing".

Napoleon places the salad in front of Sam. The bleu cheese salad dressing has huge chunks of bacon and ham riddled about.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

The entire family sits on the floor after dinner, sharing dessert.

AHMED

...and I was out there on my little boat at five in morning and I wasn't catching anything. For three hours, I sat out there on that lake, all by myself, and NOTHING! Not one bloody fish!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ahmed notices Sam enter, already smiling.

AHMED (CONT'D)

Osama! You remember this. You used to love this story!

CHERIEN

Uncle Sam! Here, you can sit with me!

Sam sits down and Cherien jumps on his lap.

AHMED

...So out of nowhere, this skinny man rows up next to me. He's got no fishing pole. Just a net! He turns to me, with this foolish grin on his face, and says, "Hold onto your butts!" He drops a grenade in the water and then, BOOM! And then, Allah as my witness, a hundred fish floated to the top.

Everyone laughs.

AHMED (CONT'D)

I grabbed six of those fish and I told Hudiya that I caught them myself.

The laughter continues. Eman, his grandmother, grabs Sam's cheek.

EMAN

Osama, you look so handsome with your new face! You know your cousin Walid works with a very pretty young lady. Maybe you--

AHMED

--Osama doesn't have time for girls. He needs to get a job.

Sam bounces Cherien on his lap.

SAM

Actually, everyone, I have an announcement to make...

(milking it)

...You're looking at the new Associate Producer at Hound News!

Cherien smiles at Sam.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

EVERYONE  
Congratulations! That's great news!

SAM  
Thank you. Thank you, guys.

EMAN  
(standing up)  
This calls for a celebration!  
Nidal grab the hookah! Khaled put  
on the coals.

AHMED  
None for me. Doctor's orders.

She starts dancing, and pulls Sam up from his seat to join her. Everyone joins in singing and dancing but Ahmed, still sitting, proud of his son. Finally, he rises, and walks up to Sam.

AHMED (CONT'D)  
I'm very proud of you, Osama. I  
wish your mother was here to see  
this.

Ahmed smiles, and leaves Sam surrounded by the celebration.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - LOBBY - MORNING**

The moment Sam walks in, he sees a huge BANNER gracing the entrance of the lobby reading: "Mission Accomplished".

SAM  
Oh. My. God.

Sam approaches the RECEPTIONIST, whose face is blocked by a New York Times newspaper.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Hello, I'm Samuel Adam Baker, I'm  
supposed to start today.

The receptionist puts down the paper. It's Hershhal.

HERSHAL  
Hey, Sam! Ready for your first day?

Sam looks flabbergasted.

HERSHAL  
I know you're probably asking  
yourself, "Why in God's name is the  
editor-in-chief answering all the  
phones?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

The thought had crossed my mind.

Hershal leans in, talking with his hands.

HERSHAL

Well, you see Sam, I like to get in on the ground floor. You know, personally see it all happen. Keeps me in the know. Ya know?

SAM

I see.

HERSHAL

(standing)

Come on, buddy. I'll show you around.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**

Sam is overwhelmed by the scale of the News Room Bull Pen. Hundreds of computers, cameras, and stages decorate the immense space. Two interns, ED and LARRY, walk up to Hershal with a clipboard.

ED

Mister--

HERSHAL

--How many times have I told you, Ed. Call me Hershal.

ED

Mr. Hershal... The location for the Annual News Makers Convention has finally been decided.

Hershal quickly reviews the document.

HERSHAL

The D.C. Convention Center?! Good. Better chance to get the President.

Hershal grabs Sam's shoulder and leads him away from the Interns. They follow anyway.

ED

Is Dave going to be the speaker?

HERSHAL

(ignoring them)

Haven't decided. Go away.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

(to Sam)

Well, this is our news floor...

Suddenly, a news producer, GARY, approaches the two.

GARY

(to Hershhal)

Who's this? He looks good.

HERSHAL

This is our brand new Associate Producer, Sam. I'm showin' him the ropes.

GARY

Can he read?

HERSHAL

Of course, he can read. Why?

GARY

Dave Dodson has a pimple the size of the Patriot Act and we need someone to fill in for his interview... like right now!

SAM

Uh... I--

HERSHAL

--He's good, take him.

Gary quickly moves behind Sam, pushing him along.

Sam and Gary pass a GROUP OF ANALYSTS having a meeting in a conference room. The dry-erase board behind them reads "The Global Warming Myth."

ANALYST

So what now!? You're going to tell me it's getting colder instead?

Moving along, Sam passes a RESEARCH TEAM.

TEAM LEADER

Now, this Republican Senator just came out for Stem Cell research. First one to find some dirt on this guy gets a promotion.

Gary, gaining speed, continues to push Sam past a stage where TWO PUNDITS argue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PUNDIT #1

Just because you're a Muslim  
doesn't make you a terrorist--

PUNDIT #2

--You don't see Christians  
strapping bombs to themselves, do  
you!--

PUNDIT #1

--Well, not in this century.

PUNDIT #2

Exactly! I think they just need to  
turn the entire Middle East into a  
giant shard of glass.

They pass through...

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

...as Gary shoves Sam into the arms of the waiting MAKEUP  
GUY.

MAKEUP GUY

This him?

GARY

Yep.

The Makeup Guy starts throwing foundation on Sam's face.

MAKEUP GUY

He's cute.

A SOUND TECH rushes in.

SOUND TECH

Where's our interviewer? We go  
on in two minutes!

Gary points to Sam. The Sound Tech hurriedly attaches a  
wireless microphone to Sam's shirt.

SOUND TECH (CONT'D)

Say your name.

SAM

Uhhh?

The Sound Tech looks away and nods to the TECHNICIAN.

SOUND TECH

Levels are good!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Sound Tech walks away. Sam has no idea what's going on.

GARY

Now this is a three camera show,  
and whichever camera is live  
will have a green light flashing.

Sam looks to the lights. Gary grabs Sam's face.

GARY (CONT'D)

I'm going to need you to pay  
attention.

(pointing)

Only the two right cameras have  
teleprompters on them. Those two  
cameras are for you. All the  
questions will be there, so all you  
have to do is read. The other  
camera is for your subject's close-  
ups, and there's no teleprompter on  
that one.

(beat)

Now she's very smart so try and  
keep up.

SAM

She?

GARY

Oh, and watch what you say. It  
might come back to bite you in the  
ass.

The Makeup Guy finishes. Gary quickly leads Sam to the seat.  
The TITLES GUY shows up.

TITLES GUY

Who's this?

GARY

Oh, this is...

Gary doesn't know. He looks to Sam.

GARY (CONT'D)

What's your name?

SAM

Os...uh...

GARY

We haven't got all day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM  
Samuel Adam Baker.

The Titles Guy writes it down.

TITLES GUY  
Got it.

The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR starts counting down.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
We go live in five, four...

Sam turns to see the interviewee: Emily Fitzgerald.

The countdown, IN SLOW MOTION --

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
...three, two, one...

**INS. TELEVISION SCREEN**

TITLE MUSIC starts with VOICE OVER...

VOICE OVER  
This is The News Hour with Dave  
Dodson. Filling in for Dave, Samuel  
Adam Baker...His guest? The first  
daughter, Emily Fitzgerald. And  
now, today's host, Samuel Adam  
Baker.

The titles disappear revealing Sam's petrified face.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

Sam stares at the camera. The ENTIRE CREW waits for Sam to  
say something.

Sam, anxiously looks to Emily, and then back to the camera.  
He tries to speak, but nothing comes out. Emily squints to  
get a better look.

EMILY  
Osama?!?

Sam gulps.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Why did that man call you Samuel?

Watching from offstage, Hershals' mouth drops open. Gary  
freaks out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY

Osama?!? The terrorists have infiltrated us! I knew we shouldn't have run that "Was Mohammed gay?" story! Oh God! We're all gonna die!

Everyone screams hysterically. Gary finds the Makeup Guy and passionately kisses him. Hershhal pulls out a pill.

HERSHAL

You Camel Jockeys not gonna take me alive!

He pops the poison pill and begins convulsing.

CUT BACK TO:

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE - MOMENTS EARLIER**

Sam stares at the camera. The ENTIRE CREW waits for Sam to say something. Gary frantically points to the teleprompter.

SAM

Good morning... I'm Dave--

The teleprompter operator quickly erases Dave Dodson's name and replaces it with Sam's.

SAM (CONT'D)

Samuel Adam Baker... And with me today is the First Daughter, Emily Fitzgerald.

Sam looks to see a looming Agent Madison.

SAM (CONT'D)

Emily, it's great of you to have me here.

(corrects himself)

I mean, it's great for you to be here.

EMILY

Thanks, Samuel.

Sam lets out a sigh of relief. He reads the teleprompter.

SAM

"So you've been out there promoting a touchy subject. Abolishing religion in public schools? You can't be serious."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMILY

I wouldn't agree with your choice of words there, but religious intolerance in our public schools is a serious problem today.

Sam continues reading the prompter.

SAM

"Isn't that just a back-door way to shutting out creationism in the schools to teach only evolution?"

EMILY

Again, not the words I'd use...but look; we want everyone to feel equal. When you give preference to one belief, you exclude others.

**INT. CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Every camera angle of the interview is on display. THE DIRECTOR cuts to the next shot.

DAVE DODSON, the blue-eyed, blonde-haired bombshell senior reporter, quietly walks in. Gary gasps at the sight of Dave's enormous pimple.

GARY

Whoa! That thing looks like a third eye. Can't you have Chris in makeup cover up that monstrosity. I can talk to him for you... if you like.

DAVE

This is my replacement?

GARY

He's doing pretty well, actually.

He pats Dave on the back as he exits.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

On the teleprompter: "Do you really think you are qualified to talk about Education Policy with an Art Degree?"

Sam sees Emily wince at the next question.

SAM

Listen Emily, it's obvious you don't want to be here. I wouldn't want to be here, either.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)

So let's talk about something you do care about.

EMILY

(perks up)

Okay. Let's do it.

SAM

So what do you want to talk about?

EMILY

How about I ask you a question?

SAM

Fair enough.

EMILY

How long have you been a television anchor?

Sam jokingly checks his watch.

SAM

Umm... Twenty two minutes. Give or take.

EMILY

Wow. Twenty two minutes and you already bagged the First Daughter?

SAM

Well, not the words I'd use...

Emily laughs, embarrassed.

SAM (CONT'D)

...but seriously though, you're an artist right? And you hate politics...

That sounds vaguely familiar to Emily.

SAM (CONT'D)

(joking)

...What are you doing here?

EMILY

Honestly, my Dad asked me to.

SAM

Really?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EMILY

I know right? I have an Art Degree.  
I have no business talking about  
education policy.

Sam and Emily smile.

Offstage, Hershhal gives Gary a high five.

HERSHAL

Hot Diggity! We got 'er!

On-stage, Sam returns to the teleprompter.

SAM

"Well there you have it, Emily  
Fitzgerald, Art Major and Political  
Expert. Coming up next, ten ways to  
show you love America more than  
your neighbor."

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

...and... We're out. 180 seconds!

Hershhal pounces and grabs Sam's shoulders.

HERSHAL

That was mighty fine television!  
Nice thinking on your feet there.

SAM

I try.

EMILY

Hey Samuel?

HERSHAL

Oh! I'll let you two love birds get  
to it!

He pats Sam on the back and disappears into the busy News  
Floor, leaving behind an awkward silence. Then, Emily's phone  
rings "Hail to the Chief". She looks at it: "Dad."

SAM

(joking)

I wonder who that is.

Emily smiles and puts it on silent.

EMILY

I'll call him back...

(standing up)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

EMILY (CONT'D)

This is crazy, I feel like I've met you before.

She takes off the microphone. Sam rises to her level.

SAM

Um... I don't think so. I'm pretty sure I'd remember if I'd already met you.

She blushes.

SAM (CONT'D)

So! We never got to discuss what you actually care about?

EMILY

Well, I'm gonna' be in town for a couple of days.

Sam beams with confidence.

**INT. THE ALLAH CARTE - LATER**

The bell JINGLES as Sam enters. Ahmed hurries to Sam.

AHMED

There's a crazy man at table nine who says he knows you.

Sam looks down the restaurant and sees Habeeb stuffing his face. Habeeb notices Sam.

HABEEB

(waving)

Sam! You were right! This place is great!

SAM

(to Ahmed)

That's Habeeb!

AHMED

I've seen better manners from a donkey.

Ahmed attends another guest. Sam walks over to greet Habeeb.

HABEEB

How's the new name working out...

(winks)

...Samuel?

SAM

Habeeb, keep that to yourself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Worried, Sam looks to see if Ahmed overheard. Habeeb understands.

HABEEB

Ah! Ah! I see! Your secret is safe  
with me!

**INT. THE ALLAH CARTE - LATER**

Ahmed finishes vacuuming while Sam stacks chairs.

SAM

How was it today?

AHMED

Lunch was slow. Like dinner. I  
don't want to talk about it. How  
was your first day?

Sam pauses for a moment.

SAM

You know, it was good. First day  
stuff. Nothing exciting.

AHMED

Don't expect to be hot stuff  
overnight. "Allah is with those--"

SAM

--who patiently persevere." Yeah,  
I know Dad.

AHMED

I'll finish up here, go home and  
see everyone before they leave  
tomorrow.

Sam puts up one last chair.

**EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - MORNING**

Ahmed helps the family pack TWO TAXI CABS as everyone says  
their good-byes. Sam leads Cherien, by the hand, to the cab.

CHERIEN

Asalam wualakium, Sam!

SAM

Walakium asalam.

Eman gives Sam a hug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMAN

Remember what I said! She's a very pretty girl, Osama! She'd be perfect for you.

Eman smiles as she pulls out a slip of paper and puts it in Sam's shirt pocket.

EMAN (CONT'D)

Here's her number just in case.

CHERIEN

Asalam wualakium!

SAM

(chuckles)

Thanks, grandma. But I'm fine on my own.

(to Cherien)

Walakium asalam.

Sam helps Cherien into the cab.

CHERIEN

Asalam wualakium, Sam!

Sam gives her the eye.

CHERIEN (CONT'D)

You have to say it! Allah says you do!

SAM

If you don't stop saying it, I'm not gonna give you a hug!

(beat)

Walakium asalam!

CHERIEN

You have to! That's not fair!

Sam puts her seat-belt on and gives her a hug. Sam closes the cab door.

CHERIEN (CONT'D)

(through the door)

Asalam wualakium!

Sam laughs. The cabs drive away. Ahmed puts his arm around Sam.

SAM

(to himself)

Wulakium asalam.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S CUBICLE - DAY**

Sam works. Dave plops himself on Sam's desk, playing with his desk trinkets.

DAVE  
Dave Dodson.

SAM  
Ah, that was your show! Samuel Adam Baker.

Sam extends his hand. Dave eventually takes it.

DAVE  
Not a bad performance out there.

SAM  
Thanks. It was my first time.

DAVE  
I could tell!  
(stands up)  
Well, welcome aboard. If you need any pointers or anything - if you have any questions - just follow my example.

A pretty, young female intern, TINA, walks by. Dave slaps her ass.

DAVE (CONT'D)  
Looking good today, Margaret!

Tina is disgusted.

TINA  
(walking away)  
It's Tina... jerk.

DAVE  
She wants me. Anyway, remember what I said.

Dave winks at Sam. Gary pops his head in.

GARY  
Think you can do the weather?

SAM  
Sure!

**INT. CAFE - DAY**

Emily waits in line, on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMILY  
Dad, I told you I wasn't going to  
lie...

Sam enters with a smile.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
--Dad, I gotta go.

CLICK. Sam walks up. She's next in line.

SAM  
Sorry I'm late.

EMILY  
No worries. What do you want?

SAM  
Um...Just tea, thank you.

EMILY  
And a soy-milk latte.

SAM  
(to the BARISTA)  
No foam on that latte.

Emily's eyes grow wide. She's on to him.

EMILY  
That's right. No foam. I always  
forget to ask that.

BARISTA  
That'll be five forty-two.

Emily digs in her purse.

EMILY  
Oh crap... I'm short, do you have a  
quarter?

Sam smiles, and then, reaches behind Emily's head, magically  
pulling out a quarter. She eyes him the entire time, paying  
no attention to his trick.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Do you know any other tricks,  
Osama?

SAM  
Well, actually I...  
(realizing)  
...Oh...NO!--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EMILY

--I knew it! I knew it was you! Why did you lie to me?!

Sam is completely embarrassed.

BARISTA (O.S.)

One tea and one soy-milk latte. No foam!

SAM

Well... alright, this is gonna sound really silly, but...

(takes a breath)

...nobody will hire Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr. But Samuel Adam Baker can get a job anywhere. The problem isn't just the name, it's everything that comes along with it.

(beat)

I didn't mean to lie to you, but I couldn't tell you. At least when you asked, and I wanted to see you again.

Emily smiles.

EMILY

Sam, you shouldn't have to do that.

SAM

I wish I didn't have to.

Agent Madison interrupts.

AGENT MADISON

A bunch of press are on their way over here. We should probably get going if you want to avoid them.

Emily looks back at Sam.

EMILY

I'm sorry.

SAM

Don't be, I don't want anything to do with them, either.

EMILY

You are the press.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (3)

SAM  
You know what I mean.

Emily smirks, getting ready to leave.

EMILY  
I'll see you later... Sam.

SAM  
Hey listen, are you coming back  
here anytime soon?

EMILY  
(smiling)  
Maybe.

Emily and Agent Madison leave Sam at the table.

**BEGIN MONTAGE:**

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE - DAY**

Sam reports on stage giving a sports update.

SAM  
...and the Falcons lose yet again!  
28-3!...

Hershal watches from behind Gary.

GARY  
He's good.

HERSHAL  
Of course he's good! I hired him,  
you know.

GARY  
You hire everyone...including me.

HERSHAL  
And don't you forget it!

The Makeup Guy, holding a powder pad, walks up next to Hershal.

MAKEUP GUY  
Does he look hot to you?

Hershal immediately moves to make Gary a buffer between them.  
Gary holds back a smile.

Sam continues his excellent reporting.

**EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - DAY**

Sam opens the mailbox and sees his paycheck. His reaction says it all.

**INT. MOSQUE - DAY**

Sam and Ahmed attend Friday prayer. They sit, legs crossed, listening to the sermon.

**EXT. HOUND NEWS - DAY**

A Taxicab slides in front of the building, smoke flailing from the tires.

**INT. HABEEB'S CAB - CONTINUOUS**

Petrified, Sam hands Habeeb his fare and quickly gets out. A car honks from behind.

HABEEB

I'll move when I want! Ass-mother!

**INT. HOUND NEWS - DAY**

Sam enters a hallway. Everyone says hello, including Tina.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE - DAY**

Sam interviews a number of commentators. Offstage, Dave watches jealously.

**INT. CORNER OFFICE - DAY**

Hershal opens the door for Sam, revealing his new office, with a beautiful skyline view. Dave looks on from across the hall.

**EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY**

Sam and Hershal tee off.

HERSHAL

Wahoo-ya! Straight as an arrow!

Sam turns and laughs. Dave peers through the bushes.

**END MONTAGE SCENE**

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S OFFICE - DAY**

The corner office is now decorated. Sam, praying, kneels on the floor on his prayer mat.

Hershal pops his head in, startling Sam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM  
Hershal?!

HERHSAL  
Hey, Sam!  
(noticing Sam)  
What'd you doin' down there?

Sam takes a moment, caught.

SAM  
I ahh... just finished praying.

HERSHAL  
Praying? Wait a minute! It's not  
Sunday! Oh my God! You're a Muslim!

SAM  
Hershal! Wait!

HERSHAL  
I knew it! Gut feelin', Sam!

Hershal pulls out his CELL PHONE.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)  
Get me the FBI!

Suddenly, Agents Dodd and Todd enter.

AGENT DODD  
(to Hershal)  
You did the right thing.

AGENT TODD  
(to Sam)  
Alright, "Sam", lets see how you  
like the water board!

Agent Dodd pulls out a BOARD out of no where. Todd places a  
BUCKET OF WATER on the floor.

SLAM! The door shuts as we PULL BACK down the hallway.  
GURGLES and SCREAMS can be heard from Sam's Office bringing  
everyone outside to their feet.

CUT BACK TO:

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S OFFICE - MOMENTS EARLIER**

Sam takes a moment, and quickly thinks of another lie:

SAM  
Oh...I...ah....spilled my coffee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hershal walks up to his desk and presses the intercom button.

HERSHAL  
(into the intercom)  
Hey Brenda, can you send a janitor  
up here to get a coffee stain out?

BRENDA (O.S.)  
(over the intercom)  
I sure can.

HERSHAL  
Thank ya' darlin'.  
(to Sam)  
There ya go, little buddy. Come  
by my office when you get a second.

Hershal walks out. Sam folds up his prayer mat. Then, when no one is looking, he pushes his coffee mug off the desk.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - HERSHAL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Hershal, sits awaiting Sam from behind his enormous oak desk. Various animal trophies adorn the wall. Sam enters.

HERSHAL  
Hey Sam! Have a seat.

Hershal stands up and walks towards a pull-down projection screen. Sam sits.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)  
Take a look and tell me if this is  
something you'd be interested in.

Hershal presses a button. The lights dim.

ON THE SCREEN -- Computer generated news swoops and animated American flags dart across the screen.

VOICE OVER  
You've seen him on The News Hour  
with Dave Dodson. You've seen him  
tear up the opposition on Hounding  
Friends. And you've seen him take  
one for the team on Hound In The  
Morning.

Various video clips of Sam on all the corresponding TV shows,  
fly in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

Now he's here to stay. His one mission: To Kick Ass and Take Names. The Sizzling Samuel Skewer Hour! Coming this fall - Only on Hound News!

A ridiculous intro swoops in with an intimidating font reading: "The Sizzling Samuel Skewer Hour!"

Hershal pushes the button and the lights fade back on.

HERSHAL

What do ya' think little buddy?

SAM

What is that? Is that real?

HERSHAL

You betcha! What'd ya' say?

SAM

Uhh--

HERSHAL

Say you're grateful, Sam.

SAM

I'm grateful--

HERSHAL

--Fan-tast-ic! I'll get them started on the stage.

Hershal starts writing on a piece of paper. He hands it to Sam.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

There's your new salary.

Sam looks at the paper in disbelief. Herhsal grabs two beers from his mini-fridge.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

Cause for celebration if ya' ask me!

He offers one to Sam.

SAM

No thanks, I don't drink.

HERSHAL

(bewildered)  
You don't drink?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

Uhh--

HERSHAL

--I guess I'll just have to drink  
'em both.

He drinks. Sam breathes a sigh of relief. Hershals's secretary, JANET, walks in.

JANET

Sam, I have Emily Fitzgerald on  
line two for you.

Sam's face lights up.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE #2 - LATER**

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS build the new set for Sam's show. Orchestrating the event, Gary points to a Worker.

GARY

That looks like crap! Re-do it,  
this isn't The Daily Show!

Dave walks up and stares at the set.

DAVE

Looks like someone got a  
promotion...

GARY

Yeah, he's moving up.  
(to the workers)  
This needs to be clean. Wipe that  
off! Serious people are going to  
see that!

DAVE

Do you know something that I don't?

GARY

What are you talking about?

DAVE

You don't think I'm losing the  
Keynote Address at the News Makers  
Convention, do you?

Gary looks at him--

DAVE (CONT'D)

--Yeah. That's stupid, I know. Who  
could replace me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gary walks off berating another worker.

GARY  
What the hell is wrong with you?!  
Don't put that there!

Suddenly, Sam bolts through the place.

SAM  
Looks great guys! Keep up the good  
work!

DAVE  
Sam!

Sam stops.

DAVE (CONT'D)  
Where the hell are you going? Got a  
date or something?

SAM  
(excited)  
Yeah! Got to go!

Dave can't believe it.

**EXT. EMILY'S HOTEL - DAY**

Sam pulls up in AHMED'S CAR. Emily and Agent Madison are waiting at the door. Sam gets out and walks up to them.

To Emily, Sam performs a new magic trick and makes a FLOWER appear out of thin air. She is impressed.

EMILY  
So you do know other tricks.

Then, he performs the trick for Agent Madison.

SAM  
And a flower for you.

Agent Madison takes it, smiling.

EMILY  
So how does that work? You keep a  
pocket full of flowers?

SAM  
A magician never reveals his  
secrets.

She laughs. They walk to the car. Sam opens the passenger door for Emily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMILY

So where are we going?

SAM

If I tell you, then it wouldn't be a surprise.

Agent Madison gets in the back seat, squashed between piles of MIDDLE EASTERN GOODS. Sam gets in, and notices.

SAM (CONT'D)

Sorry about the mess. It's my dad's car.

(to Emily)

You're about to witness a great Georgia tradition.

**EXT. STONE MOUNTAIN PARK - SUNSET**

Sam and Emily, with Agent Madison tagging along, stand near the back of a large field in front of the enormous granite rock that is STONE MOUNTAIN, towering over 800 feet into the sky.

EMILY

I don't get it.

Sam is ecstatic.

SAM

I told you this date was gonna rock!

Emily rolls her eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)

Can we forget I said that?... And Stone Mountain isn't just any rock!

EMILY

That's very romantic, Sam.

SAM

(pointing)

See that carving on the side? It's the largest bas-relief in the world. The three men depicted are the sons of the Confederacy: Robert E. Lee, "Stonewall" Jackson, and Jefferson Davis...

A closer look reveals the three Confederate figures on horseback carved midway between the ground and the summit.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)  
 ...It's about the size of three  
 football fields.

Emily looks around, trying to understand.

EMILY  
 So this is a confederate monument?

SAM  
 Yeah, but nobody cares. Come on.

Emily follows Sam down the field.

**EXT. STONE MOUNTAIN PARK - NIGHT**

Hundreds of people wait on the field for the big event. Sam and Emily sit amongst them in the middle of the field.

EMILY  
 Everyone seems really excited.

Emily shivers. Sam puts his jacket around her.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
 Hey, what ever happened to that  
 internship?

SAM  
 (holding back)  
 It didn't work out.

EMILY  
 What do you mean?

SAM  
 (giving in)  
 Well I had to come home for my  
 mom's funeral... and I stayed  
 because I didn't want my dad to be  
 alone. So here I am.

EMILY  
 I'm sorry.

MUSIC -- Ray Lynch's *Celestial Soda Pop* -- begins the show.  
 The crowd APPLAUDS.

Emily watches the excitement around her. LASERS light up the mountain, tracing over the carving, outlining the figures.

The MUSIC crescendos as FIREWORKS explode over the mountain.

Emily smiles. She looks to see Sam smiling at her. Slowly,  
 Emily takes Sam's hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The fireworks stop, the light dims, and the music ceases.

Then, a NEW SONG plays -- Lee Greenwood's *I'm Proud To Be An American*:

LEE GREENWOOD (O.S)

(music)

"The flag still stands for freedom,  
and they can't take that away!"

The entire crowd immediately comes to their feet to patriotically sing along. Sam and Emily laughingly follow suit.

EVERYONE

"And I'm proud to be an American!  
Where at least I know I'm free..."

**EXT. EMILY'S HOTEL - LATER (THAT NIGHT)**

Sam pulls up to Emily's hotel.

**INT. AHMED'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

Sam and Emily wait as Agent Madison gets out, but--

CRASH! The mountain of Middle Eastern goods falls from the backseat.

AGENT MADISON

Sorry! Sorry--

She stumbles trying to quickly pick up the pieces. Sam and Emily wait patiently for Agent Madison to finish cleaning up. Finally, she closes the door.

EMILY

I had a great--

Agent Madison opens the door to put one final can back.

AGENT MADISON

Sorry.

The door closes. Emily smiles at Sam, embarrassed.

SAM

I had a great time, too.

(beat)

Well, I guess this is goodnight--

Emily quickly grabs Sam and kisses him. She pulls away.

EMILY

Goodnight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She gets out and closes the door, still wearing Sam's jacket. She returns and Sam opens the window. She takes his jacket off, handing it back to him.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Sam.

She smiles and walks away. Sam starts the car and drives off,  
REVEALING --

-- a PHOTOGRAPHER snapping pictures of Sam and Emily.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S OFFICE - DAY**

Sam works, whistling, *I'm Proud To Be An American...*

HERSHAL (O.S.)  
(from the hallway)  
Me too, Sam!

Sam laughs, and gets back to working on his computer. Then, his cell phone RINGS--

GARY  
--Hey Sam, you ready? Showtime!

Sam looks up to see Gary poking his head in. Sam looks down at his phone. It's Emily.

GARY (CONT'D)  
We gotta go.

SAM  
(silencing the phone)  
I'll call her back.

Sam gets up from his desk. We PUSH IN on his computer screen, reading, "1 New Message."

**INT. THE ALLAH CARTE - MOMENTS LATER**

Habeeb stuffs his face. Ahmed waits on another table in the background.

HABEEB  
Ahmed! Do you mind if I change the channel!? I can't take any more of these crazy Arab music videos!

He gets up and begins channel surfing. Then, he stops on a catchy swooping intro...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE (O.S.)

"...Now he's here to stay. His one mission? To Kick Ass and Take Names..."

HABEEB

Hey Ahmed, why didn't you tell me he got his own show!?

AHMED

What?

HABEEB

Sam! He's on TV!

Ahmed moves in for a closer look.

VOICE (O.S.)

"...the Sizzling Samuel Skewer Hour!..."

Sam shows up on the screen:

SAM (O.S.)

"...Hello! Welcome to the show. I'm your host, Samuel Adam Baker..."

Ahmed watches, ashamed.

AHMED

Turn it off.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Ed and Larry walk around, handing out today's newspaper. Sam's Show is being recorded in the background.

Some of the ANALYSTS open their newspapers.

**INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

A newspaper lands on Dave's desk. He flips through it. An evil grin consumes his face.

**INT. FBI BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam's Show is on the television in the background as Agents Dodd and Todd flip through the newspaper in their conjoined cubicles.

Agent Dodd throws the newspaper on the table, and we see it for the first time -- a picture of Sam and Emily in the car -- he grabs a magic marker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AGENT TODD  
What are you doing?

Agent Dodd begins drawing a beard around Sam's face, making him look like the Osama they last saw.

AGENT DODD  
Son of a bitch.

Agent Todd looks on.

AGENT TODD  
We catch this guy, and we're full-blown Agents for sure.

AGENT DODD  
Pack your bags. We're going to Atlanta.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S SHOW - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam continues on his show.

SAM  
...now for my favorite part of the show, I'm taking your calls. You've listened to me, and now its my turn to listen to you.  
(beat)  
So here we go! Roger, from Indianapolis. You're on the air.

ROGER (O.S.)  
So Sam, I just wanted to congratulate you on all you're success. You're a true inspiration to all of us.

SAM  
Well thank you, Roger. Do you have any questions?

ROGER (O.S.)  
Well actually, I do have one question...

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Dave spins around in Sam's chair.

DAVE  
...what's it like dating the president's daughter!?

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S SHOW - CONTINUOUS**

Sam sits, petrified.

SAM

Uhhh...well that's all the time we have today! Tune in tomorrow, when I...someone will be here and we'll have another show.

Sam stands and walks off-stage to...

**INT. HOUND NEWS - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS**

Sam rushes through. He passes Gary first, holding the paper.

GARY

Yeah, Sam!

Sam grabs the paper from him. He sees the photograph, and throws the paper back to Gary. He runs into Tina.

TINA

I see how it is, Sam.

Sam moves around her. The rest of the floor begins cheering for Sam.

SOMEONE

Hit that, Sammie! Tap that ass!

Then, Sam looks on the television. He is the story:

REPORTER (O.S.)

"...talk about cozeying up to the media..."

Sam runs to...

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam busts through the door to see Dave sitting in his chair, his feet plopped up on his desk.

DAVE

Nice show.

SAM

That was you?

DAVE

Looks like this office will be mine soon.

(beat)

Hershal wants to see you.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Sam exits, and runs into Emily--

EMILY

--Sam!

SAM

--Emily! What's going on?

EMILY

I tried to call you.

SAM

Do you realize what this means? If they find out who I really am, my life is over...

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Dave stands up, listening in...

SAM (O.S.)

...This is exactly what I was afraid of!

**INT. HOUND NEWS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

SAM

Emily, my boss is waiting for me and I'm about to get fired.

(taking a breath)

I can't do this.

Emily is heartbroken.

EMILY

It's just a picture, Sam--

SAM

--It's not just a picture. You wouldn't understand.

EMILY

Well, I'm sorry you feel that way.

SAM

I have to go.

Sam walks away from Emily.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Dave, still standing behind Sam's desk, looks down noticing the PRAYER RUG.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - HERSHAL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam takes a deep breath before entering.

SAM

You wanted to see me, sir?

Hershal stands and slowly approaches Sam.

HERSHAL

How many times have I told you to  
call me Hershal!

(beat)

Do you know what you've done,  
little buddy!?

Sam doesn't realize how happy Hershal is.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

Everyone knows who you are! And you  
know what that means?!

(beat)

Bigger ratings! And bigger ratings  
equals more money! I knew I was  
right about you, Samuel.

(beat)

Those gut feelings! True stuff!

It finally sinks in for Sam. Hershal puts his hand on Sam's  
shoulder.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

So, here's what I'm gonna do. I'm  
gonna make you our Keynote Speaker  
at this year's Newsmakers  
Conference in Washington, D.C.!  
How'd you feel about that!?

SAM

Uhh--

HERSHAL

--Just say your grateful, Sam.

SAM

I'm grateful.

Hershal gives Sam a huge slap on the back.

**INT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Ahmed sits at the kitchen table, alone. Sam enters.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

AHMED  
Who's Samuel Adam Baker?

Sam is caught off guard.

AHMED (CONT'D)  
I saw your show today.

SAM  
That's who I am now. I was going to  
tell you, but I just didn't know  
how.

AHMED  
Why would you do that, Osama?

SAM  
I did it for us.

AHMED  
(getting up)  
Your mother picked that name.

SAM  
Dad, I did it to save the  
restaurant.

AHMED  
(turning around)  
What do you mean?

SAM  
I paid off the restaurant today.

AHMED  
What if I didn't want to save  
the restaurant?

SAM  
What?

AHMED  
I don't want to keep a family  
business when I'm the only one  
left in the family.

Ahmed leaves Sam alone.

**INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY**

Five control room workers prepare Sam's show. Gary notices Sam sulking in his chair on the monitor. Gary presses the intercom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY

Sam, you're on in a minute. Look happy.

Gary passes Dave as he exits. Dave approaches STEVE, the teleprompter technician.

DAVE

Are you on the teleprompter today?

STEVE

Yeah.

DAVE

Can you add something in for me?

STEVE

Sure?

DAVE

"I know who you are."

STEVE

I know you do, I'm Steve.

DAVE

No idiot, this is what I want you to add.

STEVE

Oh! Oh! I thought you meant...  
(giggling)  
What a hilarious misunderstanding!

DAVE

Just shut up and write.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SAM'S SHOW - CONTINUOUS**

Gary walks up to Sam.

GARY

Dude, what's wrong.

SAM

(to himself)  
How did I become so low?

Gary rolls his eyes.

GARY

Low? What are you talking about?  
Your ratings are through the roof!  
Don't screw it up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Assistant Director walks up.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Places people.

(beat)

And we're on in three, two, one.

The logo music comes on. Sam peeps up and looks at the teleprompter.

SAM

"Good day, I'm Samuel Adam Baker.  
And this is the Sizzling Samuel  
Skewer Hour on Hound News. I know  
who you are--"

Sam pauses and takes a closer look at the teleprompter. It reads: "I know who you are. If you take the D.C. Convention gig, I'll make sure everyone else knows who you are, too. - Love, Roger from Indianapolis."

Sam stares at the teleprompter.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - HERSHAL'S OFFICE - LATER**

Sam sits opposite Hershhal.

HERSHAL

Are you getting scared or  
somethin'?

SAM

No, it's just...I think that there  
might be someone better to do it,  
that's all.

HERSHAL

That's hog-wash, Sam. First of all,  
I picked you. Secondly, all the  
mailers and pamphlets have already  
been printed. They're on really  
nice, glossy paper. And thirdly, I  
had a dream about you and your  
speech last night. It was amazing!

SAM

You had a dream about me?

HERSHAL

No, not really. But I might  
tonight! Who knows?! I'll tell you  
tomorrow if I do!

(beat)

I believe in you, Sam.

**BEGIN MONTAGE:**

**INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Sam enters with a box in his hands. He sets it down on the kitchen counter of his empty new apartment.

**INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - LATER**

Now partially furnished, the apartment doesn't look so barren. Sam is on his knees praying in the living room.

**INT. MOSQUE - DAY**

Ahmed attends Friday prayer, alone.

**INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (RAINING)**

Sam pulls a picture of his entire family out of a box and places it on his desk.

WIDER, Sam's apartment is now fully furnished.

**INT. EMILY'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Emily stands in her studio, painting. Her phone rings. Sam is calling. She ignores it.

**INT. ATLANTA AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS**

Sam is waiting in line with his phone to his ear.

SAM

Hey, it's Sam...Osama, I'm on my way to D.C. for the weekend. So I just wanted to see if you'd be around. Call me back.

Sam hangs up the phone and arrives at the counter. He gives the TICKET LADY (#2) his ID. She smiles at Sam.

TICKET LADY #2

Have a nice flight.

**INT. ATLANTA AIRPORT - TERMINAL - LATER**

Sam heads down the terminal, passing an arrival gate. Agents Dodd and Todd disembark, heading towards Baggage Claim.

**EXT. HOUND NEWS - LATER**

Agents Dodd and Todd exit their BLACK SEDAN and head towards the building.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS**

They approach Tina, walking by.

AGENT TODD  
We're here to see Samuel Adam  
Baker.

Agent Dodd whips out his badge.

AGENT DODD  
F.B.I.

TINA  
Everyone's in D.C for the National  
Newsmakers Convention, except for  
me.

Agents Dodd and Todd look at each other.

AGENT TODD  
Back to D.C.

**END MONTAGE**

**INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY**

Sam sits on the hotel bed with a phone to his ear.

SAM  
So are you coming?

**INT. ALLAH CARTE - CONTINUOUS**

Ahmed sits at his desk holding a ticket in his hand.

AHMED  
It's really busy here right now.

SAM  
Dad, your flight leaves in an hour.

AHMED  
You know I hate flying, Osama.

**INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

SAM  
It would mean a lot to me, Dad.

AHMED (O.S.)  
I don't know if I can.

Sam slowly closes his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM  
All right. I love you.

AHMED (O.S.)  
I love you too, son.

Sam hangs up the phone. Then, a KNOCK. He walks up to the door.

SAM  
Who is it?

MAN (O.S.)  
Complimentary room service.

SAM  
I didn't order any room service.

MAN (O.S.)  
It's complimentary, open up.

Sam cracks the door. The MAN pushes through, moves right by Sam, and checks the room and closes the blinds. The man presses his earpiece.

MAN (CONT'D)  
It's clear.

Sam turns to the door to see The President standing in his doorway.

PRESIDENT  
Are you going to ask me in?

SAM  
Oh..uh, yes sir.

The President waits.

PRESIDENT  
Well?

SAM  
(fumbling)  
Oh, excuse me. Would you please come in?

PRESIDENT  
Thanks.

The President walks into Sam's room and looks around.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)  
Nice room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

It's a cheap hotel room.

SAM  
Can I get you anything?

PRESIDENT  
No son, let me get right down to  
the point.

SAM  
Certainly.

The President sits down on one of the twin beds.

PRESIDENT  
You can sit down, too.

Sam sits down on the other bed.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)  
The reason why I'm here, Sam...it's  
all because of that damn photo,  
really.

Sam swallows.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)  
I know who you are Sam, and frankly  
I don't care. But, I need to know  
your intentions.

SAM  
Well, sir. I--

PRESIDENT  
--Let me tell you something Sam.  
You see, it's all my fault, really.  
This stuff happens to her all the  
time. I know she hates it. I hate  
it sometimes, but that's the way it  
is. She didn't choose this life, I  
did. We all make sacrifices for our  
family Sam, and this is the one she  
made for me.

Sam nods.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)  
You can't choose your family.  
(standing up)  
She liked you Sam, but you really  
messed up. If there's one thing  
Emily can't stand, it's being lied  
to. I should know.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

(beat)

So you have to ask yourself, is  
this the life you want?

SAM

Well--

PRESIDENT

--Don't answer. Just think about  
it.

SAM

Yes sir.

The President moves to the door, followed by his Secret  
Service detail.

SAM (CONT'D)

See you tomorrow, sir.

PRESIDENT

(turning around)

Why would you be seeing me  
tomorrow?

SAM

I'm introducing you at the News  
Makers Conference tomorrow  
afternoon.

PRESIDENT

Ah, yes...

(smiles)

...I've been trying to get out of  
that for weeks.

Sam watches them leave.

**INT. ALLAH CARTE - NIGHT**

Ahmed sits at the register, lost in thought. Habeeb is  
engulfing food at a table. Ahmed stands and walks to Habeeb.

AHMED

I need a favor.

HABEEB

Anything for Abou-Osama, the fine  
craftsman of this delicious  
cuisine!



**EXT. THE ALLAH CARTE - MOMENTS LATER**

Ahmed and Habeeb herd a CROWD OF CUSTOMERS out of the restaurant.

HABEEB  
Everyone out!

Ahmed turns off all the lights and flips the sign: "Closed."

**INT. HABEEB'S CAB - MOMENTS LATER**

Ahmed sits in the back seat. Habeeb gets in.

AHMED  
How long till we get there?

HABEEB  
Driving to D.C.? It's supposed to take eight hours. With me? We'll be there in five!

Habeeb dramatically drops it into gear and speeds off.

**EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - SUNRISE**

The sun rises over the D.C. skyline.

**INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Sam sits at the foot of his bed, staring out the window as the sun shines over the horizon.

**INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam cuts himself shaving.

**INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam tightens his tie and puts on his coat. He grabs his briefcase and exits the room.

**INT. MOSQUE - LATER**

Sam prays amongst the other Muslims.

**EXT. MOSQUE - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam exits, and is stopped by a MUSLIM DAD, holding his DAUGHTER.

MUSLIM DAD  
Hey...I know you!--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

--No, you must be mistaken.

Sam shies away.

MUSLIM DAD

No, you have that TV show, right?  
I had no idea you were a Muslim.

(beat)

Masha'Allah! Thanks be to Allah,  
it's so nice to see a Muslim in the  
media not blowing themselves up.

Sam is taken aback.

MUSLIM DAD (CONT'D)

My family's never gonna believe  
this. Thank you.

Sam notices the Muslim Dad's daughter.

DAUGHTER

Asalam Wualakium.

SAM

Wualakium Asalam.

**INT. HABEEB'S CAB - D.C. STREET - LATER**

Habeeb and Ahmed sit in bumper-to-bumper traffic. The Capitol Building can be seen in the distance.

HABEEB

Of course, when I said five hours,  
I didn't account for traffic.

(turning to Ahmed)

Do you know how to get to this  
place?

Ahmed is sweating profusely in the back seat.

HABEEB (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

AHMED

I need some air.

Ahmed opens up the car door and tries to stand.

HABEEB

What are you doing? Get back into  
the car.

Habeeb gets out of the car. Ahmed collapses to the asphalt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HABEEB (CONT'D)

Ahmed!

Habeeb grabs Ahmed and tries to hold him up. PEOPLE get out of their cars to help.

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DRESSING ROOM - LATER**

Sam stares at himself in the mirror. Gary pops in, startling Sam.

GARY

It's time.

SAM

I'll be there in a minute.

Gary closes the door. Sam takes one final look at himself.

**INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - DAY**

The hospital doors slam open as PARAMEDICS push Ahmed through on a gurney. Habeeb runs behind.

HABEEB

I'm going to find Osama!

The paramedics stop the gurney at the elevator. Habeeb catches up to them.

HABEEB (CONT'D)

I'll find him, Ahmed.

Ahmed manages to take Habeeb's hand.

AHMED

Thank you, my friend.

The paramedics push Ahmed into the elevator. The doors close.

HABEEB

(to himself)

I'll find him.

**INT. HABEEB'S CAB - D.C. STREETS - MOMENTS LATER**

Habeeb speeds down the road, frantically trying to find his way. He opens a gigantic map, leaving little room to see through the windshield. Suddenly, a TAXI cuts him off.

Habeeb slams the brakes.

HABEEB

--Sorry!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAXI DRIVER  
(flipping him off)  
Ass-mother!

Then, the back door OPENS. Emily, holding shopping bags, gets in--

HABEEB  
--Hey! Find another taxi! Can't you see my light's off.

EMILY  
Oh, sorry.

She begins to exit--

HABEEB  
(frantic)  
--Wait! Can you tell me how to get to the convention center. I need to find my friend, Osama.

EMILY  
Sam?

HABEEB  
You know him?!

EMILY  
Yeah, I know him. Wait, is something wrong?

HABEEB  
His father just had a heart attack. I need to find him.

Emily closes the door.

EMILY  
Take Washington.

Habeeb drives off revealing Agent Madison following behind in a BLACK SEDAN.

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DRESSING ROOM - LATER**

Sam, takes a deep breath, before continuing to...

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

Sam enters, noticing Dave up ahead, leaning against the CURTAIN ROPES. The President, surrounded by his Secret Service detail, waits on the other end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dave feigns a grin as Sam continues forward, avoiding a confrontation.

HERSHAL (O.S.)  
And next up, to introduce our  
keynote speaker, Mr. Samuel Adam  
Baker!

Sam walks to...

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Sam enters the stage, greeted by APPLAUSE. Hershhal awaits him, smiling. He shakes Sam's hand.

SAM  
Thanks, Hershhal.

HERSHAL  
You betcha'!  
(to the Audience)  
Let's hear it for Sam!

Sam takes the microphone from Hershhal, who leaves the stage for his front row seat. The applause ends. Beads of sweat drip down Sam's brow.

SAM  
Good afternoon, ladies and  
gentlemen.

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

Dave, whistling with delight, yanks the curtain rope next to him.

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Behind Sam, a GIANT BANNER falls. In huge, block letters, it reads: "MY NAME IS OSAMA, BEHOLD MY JIHAD!"

A single SCREAM begins the pandemonium. The audience panics, rushing for the doors. Hershhal stands up.

HERSHAL  
What in tarnation?!

Sam turns around to see the giant banner.

Suddenly, a BLACK BAG is forced over Sam's head.

**INT. UNDISCLOSED LOCATION - UNKNOWN**

The bag is removed, revealing Sam -- now beaten and bruised -- tied to a chair. A bright, spotlight focuses on Sam, shrouding the rest of the room in darkness.

SAM  
(disoriented)  
Where am I?

A silhouetted FIGURE sits opposite Sam.

FIGURE  
What is your name?--

SAM  
--Who are you!?

Sam struggles, but is unable to move.

FIGURE  
What is your name?

SAM  
Samuel Adam Baker.

FIGURE  
No. Your real name.

SAM  
You don't know anything about me!

FIGURE  
Your real name.

He fights his restraints, but its useless.

SAM  
Osama... my name is Osama Ahmed  
Abou-Bakr.

FIGURE  
So, who are you?

Sam gives up.

SAM  
I'm Sam... Osama... I don't know.  
At least not anymore.

FIGURE  
Then, who do you want to be?

CUT BACK TO:

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS EARLIER**

Sam stares into the mirror at himself.

SAM  
(to himself)  
Uncle Sam.

He takes a deep breath and exits to...

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

Sam enters, noticing Dave up ahead, leaning against the curtain ropes. The President, surrounded by his Secret Service detail, waits on the other end.

Dave feigns a grin as Sam moves closer. Dave extends his hand.

DAVE  
Oh! Sam! Ah. Great to see you--

SAM  
--Don't.

Dave's grin fades as Sam clenches his hand.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Don't.

Sam releases his grip, and continues, waving to the President, who politely waves back.

HERSHAL (O.S.)  
And next up, to introduce our  
keynote speaker, my dear friend,  
Mr. Samuel Adam Baker!

Sam walks to...

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Sam enters the stage, greeted by APPLAUSE. Hershhal awaits, smiling wide. He shakes Sam's hand.

SAM  
Thanks, Hershhal.

HERSHAL  
You betcha'!  
(to the Audience)  
Let's give it up for Sam!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam takes the microphone from Hershhal, who leaves the stage for his front row seat. The applause ends. Sam closes his eyes and takes one last, deep breath...

SAM

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I've been given the honor of introducing a great man today: the President of the United States. But before I do, I need to say one thing...

(beat)

We live in the greatest country in the world. A country that has destroyed itself and built itself up again. A country that's founded on the freedoms of individuality, religion, and the free expression thereof. However, for me, and eight million other Americans, this is not the case. Why do I feel like I'm not a part of that great nation? It's because I've been living a lie. And it took me a long time to figure it out...

Emily enters from the back of the room, out of breath. Agent Madison is right behind.

SAM (CONT'D)

...We feel like this because of you. And me. The media.

(beat)

We need to lead the way. The media has the power to change hearts and minds. But now, we are dividing this great nation by vilifying an entire people based solely on the actions of a few.

(beat)

I think it's time for a change. It's time to leave behind our ignorance and prejudice and to take with us tolerance and understanding, moving forward into an era of accepting one another. And to those feeling left out, we need to make a much larger effort to integrate into that America. Why we haven't done so, already - I don't know. Perhaps it's because we are all afraid to take the initiative.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (CONT'D)

It won't happen over night. But if we can all make an effort to move toward that goal, maybe the next generation can have a brighter future.

Sam looks around the room.

SAM (CONT'D)

My name is Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr. I'm a Muslim and more importantly, I am an American.

Silence. Emily smiles at Sam.

Someone finally begins clapping -- Hershhal, now standing. He looks around and sees he's the only one.

SLAM! The rear doors fly open, revealing Agents Dodd and Todd rushing in.

AGENT TODD

FBI! Get him away from the President! We have a Code Red!

Immediately, the Secret Service forces the President off the premises.

HERSHAL

What in tarnation?!

-- On-stage, Sam doesn't move, content --

-- The Agents get closer --

AGENT DODD

Get your hands up!

-- Sam slowly raises his hands --

-- Todd and Dodd bolt past Emily and Madison as the audience panics, running for the doors --

-- Dave enters from backstage, watching with pleasure --

-- The Agents reach the stage and wrestle Sam to the ground.

AGENT TODD

Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr, you're under arrest for suspected terrorist activity!

-- Sam's face lays flat on the floor. He takes a long look back at Emily --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

-- Dave walks up as the Agents handcuff Sam --

DAVE  
So long, Osama.

-- They yank Sam up and take him away --

**INT. CONVENTION CENTER - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS**

Agents Dodd and Todd lead Sam through to the exit. ONLOOKERS watch from outside. Emily spots them.

EMILY  
Sam!

She runs to Sam.

SAM  
Emily! I'm sorry--

EMILY  
--Sam, listen to me. Your father...

Sam struggles to understand Emily.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
...he's at the hospital. He had a heart attack, Sam.

SAM  
What!?

EMILY  
He's here in D.C.

Sam looks down at his handcuffs. He closes his eyes and concentrates...

In one swooping motion, Sam frees himself from the handcuffs. He bolts for the door. Without hesitation, Emily follows close behind. Agent Madison chases after the two.

AGENT DODD  
Oh, you've got to be kidding me.

**EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - MOMENTS LATER**

In front of the entrance, Dave proudly conducts a live, televised report covering the Osama scandal from a NEWS VAN. Gary films. On the television: "OSAMA-GATE".

DAVE  
The perpetrator? Our very own Samuel Adam Baker. His true terrorist name?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVE (CONT'D)

Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr. This dangerous international criminal was gallantly arrested by the ever capable Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation...

BOOM! Behind Dave, Sam and Emily bolt through the doors of the Convention Center. Madison follows. Agent Dodd and Todd frantically pursue.

AGENT DODD

Look out he's loose!

-- BACK WITH SAM, Sam stops at the sight of Habeeb's Cab --

SAM

Habeeb?!

**INT. HABEEB'S CAB - CONTINUOUS**

-- Habeeb looks up --

HABEEB

Sam! Hurry! Get in! Get in!

-- Sam runs into the cab. Emily jumps in behind him --

SAM

What are you doing?

EMILY

I'm coming with you!

SAM

No you're not!

EMILY

You need me. You don't know your way around D.C.

HABEEB

Crazy woman at 5 o'clock!

-- BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Madison bangs on Emily's window --

EMILY

Drive!

**EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - CONTINUOUS**

-- Habeeb's cab speeds off. Agent Madison presses her earpiece --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AGENT MADISON

We're at code black. She's been taken. The President's daughter has been kidnapped!

-- Agent Dodd and Todd, panting, catch up to Agent Madison --

AGENT DODD

My God. It's happening.

-- BACK WITH DAVE, he quickly turns to Gary --

DAVE

Are you getting this?! We got to move.

-- Dave gets in the news van and starts the engine --

DAVE (CONT'D)

The chase is on! We've got an exclusive!

-- BEHIND THEM, Agent Madison's SEDAN flies by. Agents Dodd and Todd jump in their SEDAN and follow --

**EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS**

-- Habeeb's Cab zooms by, weaving in and out of traffic. INSIDE, the three hold on for dear life. Sam jumps up in the backseat to see TWO SEDANS and a NEWS VAN chasing them --

SAM

We've got company!

-- Sam and Emily buckle up --

HABEEB

--Where am I going?!

EMILY

Uh...take a right!

-- They FISHTAIL around a corner, barely missing a STREET VENDER --

-- The pursuers follow them onto the next street. The News Van swerves, narrowly avoiding an ONCOMING CAR --

-- Habeeb's Cab speeds towards a BUSY INTERSECTION. The light is red --

EMILY (CONT'D)

Watch out!

-- Habeeb hits the gas and closes his eyes --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HABEEB  
Ahhhhhh!!!

SAM AND EMILY  
Habeeb!!!!

-- Somehow, they make it through the intersection. Habeeb opens his eyes --

HABEEB  
That was close!

-- Madison follows, avoiding another collision --

-- Todd and Dodd try their luck. SMASH! Their FENDER flies into the air --

DODD  
(driving)  
Oops.

TODD  
That's coming out of your paycheck!

-- The light turns GREEN, just in time for the News Van to pass through --

DAVE  
Get the hell up here!

-- Dave looks back to see Gary falling all over the place, trying to make it up to the cabin --

GARY  
I'm comin', Dave!

-- He finally makes it --

-- Habeeb takes another turn --

EMILY  
Turn in there, that alley!

HABEEB  
You got it!

-- Habeeb flies through the narrow ALLEYWAY, SMASHING IN his side mirrors. Sparks fly --

-- Madison flies through the alley with precision --

-- Todd hangs on --

TODD  
You are definitely paying for this!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

-- SMASH! The Sedan bangs between the walls like a bouncy ball. Finally, Dodd gains control and HITS the gas --

-- Dave SLAMS on the breaks. The Van skids to a halt, barely missing the building --

DAVE

Damnit!

-- He reverses, and speeds down to the next street --

**EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS**

-- Habeeb ACCELERATES through the alley --

HABEEB

What do I do?!

EMILY

Relax, its a shortcut.

SAM

Shortcut to where?

-- The cab FLIES off an INCLINE. The tires SQUEAL as they hit the ground, now heading DOWNHILL towards --

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

-- An ATTENDANT finishes meticulously polishing the gate. She turns around, and suddenly fear consumes her as she sees --

-- Habeeb's Cab speeding towards her --

EMILY

Watch out!

-- The Attendant presses a button, the GATE slowly begins to rise --

-- Habeeb just barely misses it --

-- The Attendant breathes a sigh of relief, the gate lowers --

-- Madison speeds toward the gate --

-- The Attendant frantically presses the button again. The gate rises. Madison narrowly misses it. The gate lowers --

-- ON THE ROAD, Dave comes from the opposite direction, heading towards the Parking Deck. He sees --

-- Todd and Dodd approaching the gate --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- The Attendant slams the button again, as Todd and Dodd enter. Over it, the Attendant leaves the gate up --

-- Dave swerves into the entrance.

DAVE  
Lower the satellite!

GARY  
It won't go down any further!

-- The satellite dish RIPS the gate to shreds --

-- The Attendant walks over to what's left of the gate. She kicks a piece in frustration --

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - TOP LEVEL - MOMENTS LATER**

-- a LAWYER exits the elevator and walks towards his JAGUAR, parked against the railing --

-- Madison bumps Habeeb's Cab, now heading towards --

HABEEB  
Get out of the way!

-- the Lawyer looks up, seeing Habeeb heading right for him. He dodges the cab as --

-- Habeeb yanks the wheel into a U-Turn. He swerves, NICKING the Jaguar --

LAWYER  
Aww. Come on!

-- The Lawyer pulls a NOTEPAD out of his briefcase, frantically trying to copy down the licence plate --

-- Madison quickly pulls a U-turn to follow, SMASHING the Jaguar into the railing --

LAWYER (CONT'D)  
Oh hell no!

-- The Lawyer flips the page and tries to copy down Madison's license plate --

-- Dodd and Todd fly past Habeeb and Madison already heading in the other direction. Dodd pulls the wheel --

-- SMASH! The Jaguar pushes through the railing. The Lawyer throws a fit as he flips the page to write down Dodd and Todd's plate --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- Dave swerves to follow everyone, but his newsvan doesn't turn nearly as fast --

-- SMASH! The Jaguar is now teetering on the edge --

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - EXIT - CONTINUOUS**

-- The cab heads for the exit --

SAM

Watch out!

-- POP! POP! Habeeb's Cab hits the TIRE SPIKES --

HABEEB

Oh! This is not good!

-- Madison follows, also hitting the spikes --

-- Dodd tries to avoid them, but SMACKS into the SIDE POST, forcing the car back on the spikes --

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - TOP LEVEL - CONTINUOUS**

-- The Lawyer checks the damage as his car teeters on the edge. He makes the sign of the cross, praying --

-- a BIRD lands on the hood, and CAWKS --

LAWYER

Nice birdie.

-- the bird flies off with just enough force to sway the Jaguar --

LAWYER (CONT'D)

No...No!..No!!!

-- the Jaguar falls. The Lawyer throws down the notepad --

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - EXIT -- CONTINUOUS**

-- SMASH! The Jaguar lands right in front of --

-- Dave, who swerves to avoid the collision --

-- POP! POP! The newsvan's tires are ripped open by the tire spikes. With no more control, Dave whacks into a wall, forcing the van on its side --

-- The windows SHATTER as the van slides to a stop. Dave and Gary crawl out --

DAVE

Hershal's not gonna' like this.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

-- Down the street, the chase continues at a snail's pace --

**INT. HABEEB'S CAB - CONTINUOUS**

-- A SEMI-TRUCK cuts Habeeb off. He slams the brakes --

-- SPARKS fly from the cab, now riding on the rims --

HABEEB

Hold on!

SAM AND EMILY

Ahhhhh!

-- CRASH! The cab is done.

SAM

(to Emily)

Are you okay?

EMILY

Yeah I'm fine--

HABEEB

--Get out! Get out!

-- Sam and Emily exit the cab. Sam notices Habeeb still in the car --

SAM

Come on!

**EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS**

-- Habeeb runs out to follow Sam and Emily. He hears a SCREECH, and looks up --

-- Agent Madison approaches, sliding on the rims --

-- Habeeb moves out of the way, narrowly escaping --

-- SMASH! Madison rear-ends the cab. She gets out and jumps over the hood to follow --

-- CRASH! Dodd and Todd smack into Madison' sedan. They rush out on foot --

-- Sam and Emily run as fast as they can, gaining distance --

-- Habeeb tries to keep up, severely out of breath. Madison bolts by, then Dodd and Todd, and finally Dave and Gary. Habeeb can't go on any further --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HABEEB

Just go on without me! Fly away,  
Sam.

-- Habeeb notices a FALAFEL STAND next to him --

HABEEB (CONT'D)

Ooh! Falafel!

**EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER**

-- Sam and Emily race down the street. They stop as --

-- a wave of POLICE CARS blockade the street --

-- Sam and Emily turn around, but Madison, Dodd, Todd, the  
Officers, Dave and Gary scurry towards them --

-- Emily notices a FIRE-ESCAPE on an APARTMENT BUILDING next  
to them --

EMILY

Come on!

-- She leads Sam up the fire-escape. They start climbing.

SAM

Why are you helping me?

EMILY

We're friends, Sam. That's what  
friends do.

SAM

Yeah, of course...friends.

-- Sam looks down to see --

-- Madison getting on the ladder, followed by everyone --

SAM (CONT'D)

Must go faster! Must go faster!

-- As Dave and Gary climb the ladder, an OFFICER grabs his  
radio --

OFFICER

(looking up)

Fire up the bird, we're gonna need  
air support.

**EXT. ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS**

-- Emily and Sam reach the roof. Emily points --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMILY  
There's the hospital!

SAM  
Great! How do we get over there?

-- They run to edge --

-- Madison climbs up, cutting off any escape. Todd and Dodd provide backup --

AGENT MADISON  
There's nowhere to run!

-- Sam turns around, they're cornered --

EMILY  
Just let him go!

AGENT DODD  
That's just the Stockholm talking!

AGENT TODD  
Osama! You have nowhere to run.  
Let your hostage go, and we can end  
this peacefully.

Dave and Gary reach the roof.

EMILY  
I'm sorry, Sam.

-- Sam looks down at the alley. CLOTHESLINES criss-cross between the buildings --

SAM  
I'm not.

-- And then, Sam JUMPS --

-- Sam falls, hitting clotheslines one after another, taking everything with him. He TEARS through an AWNING, and ANOTHER, softening the impact --

-- Everyone runs to the edge --

EMILY  
Sam!

**EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS**

-- Sam gets up from beneath the LAUNDRY PILE, covered head-to-toe in SHEETS RESEMBLING ARAB GARB --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM  
(shaken up)  
Allahu ackbar.

-- He looks at his pursuers, before darting off to --

**EXT. CAR LOT - CONTINUOUS**

-- packed with film equipment. A COMMERCIAL is filming. GENIE GERRY, decked out in a full-blown Genie costume, stands in front of a Middle-Eastern-theme set --

-- Sam sneaks up, noticing a live CAMEL --

GENIE GERRY  
...come down to Genie Gerry's Used  
Cars, where your wish is my  
command!

-- MAWR! Sam whips the camel, trotting through the frame. Genie Gerry turns around --

GENIE GERRY (CONT'D)  
Hey! I don't have camel insurance!

-- Sam gallops off down the road, the CREW chases after --

**EXT. DOWNTOWN - MOMENTS LATER**

-- Sam rides on his camel passing the WASHINGTON MONUMENT continuing through the NATIONAL MALL --

**INT. POLICE CAR - MOMENTS LATER**

-- TWO OFFICERS scarf food while listening in to the police radio --

RADIO  
...Officers be advised. Arab male  
last seen heading South on  
Philadelphia...

-- The driver puts down his food and picks up the radio --

OFFICER #1  
(in the radio)  
Uh...can we get a better  
description of the suspect?

RADIO  
He looks like an Arab!

OFFICER #1  
Looks like an Arab--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- Just then, Sam rides by on his camel, his Arab Garb flowing in the wind --

OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)  
(in the radio)  
327. In pursuit.

**EXT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER**

-- Sam arrives and dismounts the camel. He runs in --

**INT. HOSPITAL - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

-- Sam hurriedly approaches the front desk --

SAM  
Heart attack victims?

DESK CLERK  
Second floor. Take a right off the elevator.

**INT. HOSPITAL - SECOND FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER**

-- Sam exits the stairwell and spots a NURSE --

SAM  
Ahmed Nidal Abou-Bakr?

NURSE  
(pointing)  
Room 2187.

SAM  
Thanks!

-- Sam runs to --

**INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM 2187 - CONTINUOUS**

Sam enters, stopping at the sight of his unconscious father lying in the bed. He takes a deep breath.

DOCTOR  
Can I help you?

Sam sees the DOCTOR checking Ahmed's charts.

SAM  
I'm his son. How is he?

DOCTOR  
Well, he gave us a quite a scare, actually. But I think he'll be fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam exhales.

SAM  
Can I speak to him?

DOCTOR  
Well, he needs his rest, but you  
can go ahead.

The Doctor smiles as he exits. Sam closes the door behind him and locks it. He turns around and sits at his father's side.

Suddenly, Agent Madison, Dodd, Todd, Dave, Gary, and Emily rush to the door. Madison tries the handle.

TODD  
Open this door right now!

Sam takes his father's hand and ignores them.

MADISON  
Sam, this is your last chance. Open  
the door!

Madison, Dodd, and Todd rush off. Dave, Gary, and Emily watch Sam through the window.

SAM  
Dad, I don't know if you can hear  
me, but I'm sorry...I'm sorry I  
missed Mom's funeral...I'm sorry  
that I changed my name...I'm sorry  
that I lost my way...I'm so sorry  
for everything.  
(emotional)  
But I'm not sorry that I stayed.

Dave takes a step closer, witnessing a new side of Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Dad, I can't lose you. I need you.

BANG! Madison smashes the window with a fire extinguisher and unlocks the door. Sam doesn't flinch.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I love you, Dad.

Dodd, Todd, and Madison pour into the room with their guns drawn. Agent Todd grabs Sam.

AGENT DODD  
Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr. You're under  
arrest...again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam holds his hands up while Todd gets out a zip-tie.

AGENT TODD  
Lets see you get out of this,  
Houdini.

Sam takes one last look at Ahmed while being whisked out.

**INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Emily, Dave, and Gary watch the Agents lead Sam away.

SAM  
(to Emily)  
Thank you.

Emily nods. Everyone follows except for Dave, who looks at Ahmed through the doorway, and then back at Sam. The doors close behind them.

**INT. POLICE STATION - JAIL CELL - LATER**

Sam lays on the bed, staring ahead.

OUTSIDE THE CELL -- TWO GUARDS go over Sam's possessions on a table.

GUARD #1  
He have any explosives on him?

GUARD #2  
No. Nothin'. Just some change and  
a pocket full of flowers.

BACK IN THE CELL --

MAN (O.S.)  
I understand what you're going  
through, man.

Sam sits up.

SAM  
Oh yeah? How do you have any idea  
what discrimination is like?

And now we see him -- a BLACK MAN wearing a very nicely pressed suit. He takes his glasses off, bewildered.

**INT. HOUND NEWS - HERSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Hershal sits behind his desk. Dave walks in.

HERSHAL  
Yes, Dave?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVE

I have an idea for a piece.

Hershal leans back in his chair, crossing his arms.

HERSHAL

Yeah, Dave? On what?

DAVE

Sam...on his real life and how he  
got into all this. A real story.  
About the American Dream.

(beat)

I was wrong about him. He doesn't  
deserve any of this and people need  
to know.

Hershal leans forward.

HERSHAL

Dave, all it takes in this business  
is some passion and honor...

Dave anticipates. A grin paints Hershal's face.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

...and you seem to have finally  
found some.

Dave smiles.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

Follow 'yer gut, Dave. That's all I  
ever do. And look where it got me!

Hershal grabs his coat.

HERSHAL (CONT'D)

Now come on. We've got work to do.  
Our boy Sam's got himself into a  
pickle!

**INT. HOUND NEWS - SOUNDSTAGE - DAY**

Dave sits at the Anchor Desk. Gary starts the countdown.

GARY

We go live in three, two...

ON THE TELEVISION -- a Special Report entitled: "Arab in  
America: The Shattered Dream of Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr".

DAVE

Osama Ahmed Abou-Bakr, or as the  
rest of America knows him, Samuel

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

DAVE (CONT'D)

Adam Baker, was chasing the American Dream. Tonight, you will learn of his desires, his motives, his dreams. And of course, his unfortunate demise that leaves him in jail as we speak.

**INT. AMERICAN HOMES - INTERCUT**

A series of shots from every day AMERICAN FAMILIES -- Christians, Jews, Hindus, Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, Asians -- all watching the news report.

DAVE (O.S.)

Osama is definitely an American hero. Not in a traditional sense, like how I went to Desert Storm to fight for our freedom, but in a different sense. Tonight, America will meet the quintessential American. Tonight, America will meet Osama.

**INT. POLICE STATION - JAIL CELL - LATER**

Sam sits, playing cards with the Black Man.

BLACK MAN

Go fish.

Sam grabs a card.

KNOCK! Sam looks up. It's the President of the United States.

SAM

(standing up)

Mr. President!

The Black Man stands up, tidying up his suit.

PRESIDENT

(looking around)

Nice place. So, I saw the show.

SAM

What show?

PRESIDENT

Nevermind. You know, every time you've introduced me you've been arrested and I never make it to the stage...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM  
Sorry about that.

PRESIDENT  
What do you say we turn it around  
this time.

SAM  
Excuse me?

The President looks to the Guard.

PRESIDENT  
Get him out of here.  
(smiling)  
And give the man back his flowers!

Sam eagerly stands up.

BLAK MAN  
Can I come, too?

The President thinks for a second.

PRESIDENT  
Yeah, okay. He can come, too.

**INT. POLICE STATION - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER**

Sam and the President approach the front doors. Sam stops.

SAM  
What is that sound?

MUFFLED SOUNDS from outside leak through. The President  
smiles and nods Sam to the door.

**EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS**

The doors open as Sam walks out. The President and the Black  
Man follow.

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE, complete with streamers, balloons, and  
signs, SCREAM and APPLAUD for Sam's release.

Suddenly someone starts chanting...

HABEEB  
O-sam-a! O-sam-a! O-sam-a!

It catches on. Soon, the entire crowd joins in.

EVERYONE  
O-SAM-A! O-SAM-A! O-SAM-A!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam cannot believe his eyes. Everyone is there -- Hershhal, Dave, Gary, Emily, Agent Madison, Dodd and Todd, and Habeeb.

The President takes Sam's arm and raises it in the air. Everyone goes wild. Beaming, Sam approaches the excited crowd as they greet him, waiting for their chance to shake his hand.

Sam scans the crowd. Emily walks up to him.

SAM

I'll never be able to thank you enough.

EMILY

Don't mention it.

Sam leans in to kiss her, but she stops him.

EMILY (CONT'D)

We're friends, Sam.

He smiles, and then gives her a peck on the cheek.

SAM

I know.

Out of the corner of Sam's eye, he sees Ahmed and his entire family with him, filled with tears in their eyes. Sam walks to his father.

SAM (CONT'D)

Dad--

Ahmed embraces Sam.

AHMED

--I love you, son.

Hershhal and Dave watch, almost crying themselves. Hershhal takes off his big COWBOY HAT.

DAVE

It's okay, Dad.

HERSHAL

I know it is, son. I know it is.

Hershhal puts his hat on his son's head before putting his arm around him in a big Texan embrace.

CHERIEN (O.S.)

Uncle Sam!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam turns to see Cherien running towards him. Emily watches Cherien jump in his arms.

SAM  
Asalam wualakium!

Cherien giggles.

CHERIEN  
Wualakium asalam!

Cherien pecks Sam on the cheek. His family smiles.

Emily watches, standing next to her father.

EMILY  
You did the right thing, dad.

PRESIDENT  
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

The President wraps his arm around Emily.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)  
Who knew an Art major could be so persuasive.

EMILY  
If you ever need my help in the future--

PRESIDENT  
--Really? Getting a knack for politics, are we?

EMILY  
Maybe.

With his family, Sam turns around to see the crowd. He smiles.

SAM  
Today is a great day.

**INT. ALLAH CARTE - DAY**

The restaurant is decorated for Cherien's birthday party. Sam's entire family is joined by Hershhal, Dave, Gary, The Make-Up Guy, Ed, Larry, Tina, and Habeeb.

ON THE TELEVISION -- The President stands next to Emily in the White House Rose Garden. A reporter is covering the press conference.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER (O.S.)

...In a stunning turn of events, the President today dissolved his own initiative to ban religion in our public schools, citing his reason, and I quote, "Education is the foundation of our great society. Having children experience different religions and cultures in our schools is the best chance we have to understanding and respecting one another."

While no one is looking, Habeeb pokes his finger in the birthday cake, sampling the frosting.

Ahmed enters from the kitchen carrying two gigantic trays of food. Habeeb's eyes widen.

AHMED

Who's hungry?

Tina and Dave laugh together as they watch Hershhal give Cherien her BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

HERSHAL

There ya go, little, little buddy!

CHERIEN

Thanks, Mr. Hershhal!

Cherien opens the present, revealing a large, PINK COWBOY HAT. She excitedly tries it on.

CHERIEN (CONT'D)

Wow! How do I look?

HERSHAL

Like an Arabian, Cowgirl Princess!

Off to the side, Sam laughs with his grandmother, Eman.

EMAN

Did you ever call that girl I told you about?

The bell JINGLES as the front door opens. A beautiful ARAB WOMAN walks in, holding a present. Sam is enamoured by her beauty. He gets up.

EMAN (CONT'D)

Oh, I didn't tell you she was coming?! I must've forgotten.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The Arab Woman notices Sam as he approaches her.

SAM

Hi.

ARAB WOMAN

Hi, I'm Jasmine.

SAM

My name is Osama.

JASMINE grins.

JASMINE

I've heard a lot about you...

They smile together.

FADE OUT.