

SCARCE

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EXT. BANGALORE STREET - DAY

Bangalore is a city of abrupt growth. Towers of buildings sitting alongside humble stores and homes. In a still developing part of town - a burning truck surrounded by barricaded and shut store fronts.

SUPERIMPOSE: "IN 2016, THE CITY OF BANGALORE ERUPTED INTO VIOLENT RIOTS OVER THE ALLOCATION OF WATER."

Sirens blare as WHITE POLICE VANS come to a stop.

RIOT POLICE jump out of a police van with riot gear and batons. They make a single file and rush down the street.

PROTESTERS gather on one side of the street SHOUTING slogans. Some younger ones climb up a telephone pole to pelt stones at approaching COPS.

The stones bounce off their shields doing nothing. They CHARGE through the protesters with their batons.

Chaos. The crowd scatters in all directions.

A PROTESTER is tackled down by two policeman, ANOTHER tries to climb up the telephone pole but is quickly pulled down.

Some of the PROTESTERS break through the metal service doors of a store. They run in and grab as many JARS OF WATER as possible.

Another group stops a RICKSHAW and sets fire to it with a crude MOLOTOV COCKTAIL.

A YOUNG BOY (12) wanders into this street. He pulls a PLASTIC BAG closer to his chest and scoots down behind a car.

He peeps out and makes his way to the front of it. He looks for an opening. Nobody has seen him yet. His chances are good.

He rushes out.

A GUN SHOT.

His body slumps onto the hood of the car. His groceries scatter in all directions.

POV - from a LOW ANGLE UNDER THE CAR, we can see his face, dripping blood and we-

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. KAVERI RIVER - DAY

Water. Blue pristine water. We move out to see it's a river. The river Kaveri, to be exact.

A BOY JUMPS into the river where his FRIENDS laugh and swim around.

We float further down to some THREADS of river irrigating a FARMLAND. Surrounded by a VILLAGE where WOMEN wash clothes on the banks.

We move further down and see MASSIVE CEMENT PIPES. INDUSTRIAL WASTE GUSHES out at a rapid rate, mixing in with the river water.

Further down still, we find a FISHERMAN casting his net and then a couple of TOURISTS on kayaks.

We DIVE into the water. Fish swim past and then we find ourselves inside of a PIPE. We twist here and there, faster and faster until we FALL into a large treatment basin.

From here we move upwards to see the thousand BRANCHING pipelines,, no, tens of thousands. Up and up we go, revealing more and more pipelines. Until we pass buildings and skylines and the entire CITY is in our view.

Here we stop - the entire complex network of life-sustaining water in our view.

TITLE-OVER: "SCARCE"

As we ZOOM OUT of this view, the CITY-SCAPE turns into PIXELS and then just OUTLINES. And we reveal, this is a COMPUTER SCREEN.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, IT OFFICE - MORNING

SARAS (45), everything about her screams practicality as she codes away, fingers flying fast typing things not for us normal folk.

Her screen displays a 3D MODEL of all the buildings in the city. The IT SUPPORT OFFICE is filled with phones, computers. Every wall has an LCD screen with - GRAPHS, DATA-SHEETS, LINES OF CODE and WEATHER PATTERNS.

Saras's assistant, MEERA (20s), facetious and bubbly, flies in with a slice of pizza.

MEERA

Morning!

Saras doesn't look up.

MEERA (CONT'D)
How's it going?

Meera sets her things down and looks around at Saras who is concentrating hard.

Meera walks over and peers into her screen.

SARAS
Meera.

MEERA
Saras.

Saras sighs from her concentration being disrupted.

MEERA (CONT'D)
What's that?

SARAS
Nothing.

MEERA
Looks like a GIS system.

SARAS
Just playing around with something.

MEERA
Secrets secrets. The calendar says there's a meeting this morning?

SARAS
Yeah, with the new head of support to discuss the NISAR launch.

Meera smirks.

MEERA
The new head? Has he ever even been a part of a sat launch?

SARAS
I'd be surprised if he was. There are only a handful of private sat launch companies in India. Isn't he from tech?

MEERA
He has zero idea what's coming for him.

AJAY (50s), their apathetic boss, sticks his head into the office, does not look up from his phone.

AJAY

Saras. I need you in the meeting today.

He steps back out. Saras looks questioningly at Meera.

SARAS

He always wants me in the meetings to take his notes.

MEERA

Lazy bastard.

Saras gets up and heads out.

SARAS

Don't peek!

MEERA

I don't know what you're talking about.

As soon as Saras is gone, Meera slides over to her computer and clicks back to the screen where Saras was coding.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, CORRIDOR - MORNING

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KIDS on a class tour. They look into the satellite testing center window. Sparks fly off the component inside as it's tested.

TOUR GUIDE

Thrusters are a part of the satellite that will be in charge of pushing it exactly where we want it to be.

Some kids stick their faces on the glass as Saras passes by.

TEACHER

Kids, say hello to these two scientists!

KIDS

Hello!

Saras smiles awkwardly at being mislabelled.

TEACHER

Could we ask a question?

AJAY
We're not really qualified-

TEACHER
Okay, who has a question?

A BOY jumps with his raised hand.

BOY
Are they putting legos on the
satellite?

AJAY
Really expensive technical
equipment goes on the satellite,
son.

Saras notices a bench off to the side inside the testing room
where a WORKER is hunched over some COLORFUL COMPONENTS.

SARAS
Are you talking about the table in
there? Well, that's a really good
question. What that man is working
on is kind of like a lego. At this
stage of the satellite build, we
work mostly on the communications
relay so everything that is on that
table in there are things that will
help us talk with the satellite.
Just like how you put legos
together and it turns into
something even better. That's what
those are. There are semi-
conductors, computer chips,
somewhere in there is an L band
radar as well as S band. Which is
very different from most other
satellites in space.

The boy looks like he's in awe.

TEACHER
We're actually learning about
conductors in school, aren't we?

BOY
Yeah. A conductor is electric and
non-conductors don't give you
shocks.

SARAS

Exactly. And semi-conductors are somewhere in between so that they can have enough electricity but not enough to blow up the computer.

AJAY

Alright, we have very important things to get to now.

TOUR GUIDE

This way, kids! Who wants to see a real life rocket?

The teacher smiles a thanks at Saras - she knows her shit.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS and their SUBORDINATES filter in. Saras stands next to Ajay. Neither are important enough to have a place on the table.

On the screen is a satellite with the words, "NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) Mission" under it.

VIKRAM (late 30s), young and enigmatic compared to the dull middle-aged men in his position. The CHIEF ENGINEER standing next to him is exactly one of these men.

CHIEF ENGINEER

Got some general announcements. There will be a change in how we sign in-

VIKRAM

(interrupting smoothly)

-Gimme a sec here. People, we are so very close to launching NISAR and I won't bore you with the same old talk of how we got here. But I do want to tell you a story. A story of how a dedicated group of scientists wanted to reach out past their skies and see the great beyond but they didn't have the money or the time. What they did have was...

He waits for an answer.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

Brains. They had the brains to launch a Mars probe for a third of the money it took to make The Martian. Anyone see that? Good movie.

Laughter all around.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

Those scientists and engineers are right here, in this very building. And they... Couldn't have done it without you folks. The support. The backbone. Software, comms, network.
(looks at Saras)
And of course, I.T.

Ajay laughs meekly.

AJAY

We keep your computers running so you don't have to.

VIKRAM

Say Ajay, send someone on your team to my office later?

Ajay nods to Saras.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

Alright, back to the esteemed chief engineer.

The chief engineer blinks and then begins to drone.

CHIEF ENGINEER

For the NISAR launch, we are going to be implementing a different kind of check-in system than the one you are used to. We are putting up systems to track your check-ins to work and check-outs.

ENGINEER

Wait, you're making us punch in and out? That's a bit much.

CHIEF ENGINEER

The upper brass is interested in putting together some data to better our efficiency.

TECHNICIAN

Is this because our launches are always delayed?

ENGINEER

They're delayed because we barely have a full team. Not because we don't show up to work.

The chief engineer puts up his hands.

CHIEF ENGINEER

Rest assured, we are not going to be using this data against you. It's just for information gathering. That's all.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, VIKRAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

A utilitarian office. From the high-end computer system to the dual screen on the side, a tablet to go with it all - everything is expensive and everything has a purpose.

Saras peeps in.

Vikram is on his computer, looks up and nods for her to enter. He gestures to the computer and moves over for Saras to look at it.

VIKRAM

We're working with Sysper Systems for this check-in check-out system. I want you to go ahead and download the software on every computer and to set up the registry. Only me, you and the other heads should be able to access it.

SARAS

Got it, sir.

VIKRAM

They're pretty user-friendly. Everyone should be able to get a hang of it. Any questions?

SARAS

Looks very straightforward, sir.

VIKRAM

There's no need for the formalities. Just Vikram is fine.

Saras nods.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

You think people will be annoyed by this?

SARAS

Why would they be?

VIKRAM

Invasion of privacy. That sort of thing?

SARAS

Working here is always a careful mix of politics and science. The government demands one thing and the scientific exploration of space demands another. Our work isn't our own, I don't think people consider their time to be their own.

VIKRAM

Well, change begins at the most influential places, doesn't it? And I want to create an environment where employees feel free to be open and transparent.

Saras appreciates the candid honesty. She bites her lip and then goes for it.

SARAS

I've looked you up. Your first startup was a failure but your work in manufacturing is pretty remarkable and you actually graduated with a comsci degree.

VIKRAM

I always say comsci can do more than just sit behind a screen.

SARAS

I know you're busy with the launch but I was just wondering whenever you're free, if you'd like to check this algorithm I created. I mean it's not as important as what you're doing with image mapping but it's an open object detection algorithm.

VIKRAM

Of course I want to look at it!
Always happy to find potential
talents on the team.

He's got good intentions here.

SARAS

I can bring it to you later?

VIKRAM

Tell you what. Come over to my
place this weekend and I'll look it
over.

SARAS

Come over?

Not what Saras was expecting.

VIKRAM

To my place. My wife would love to
meet you too.

SARAS

But sir, I'm-

VIKRAM

-You're?

Saras was going to say, "not important," nods instead.

INT. SARAS'S CAR - DAY

Saras's 20 year old car drives into a humble neighborhood.
She is blocked by a WATER TRUCK. It's a jury-rigged medium-
sized truck with a tanker on the back.

Saras frowns at the water dripping out of the crude tap on
the back. It leaves a trail as it drives into the
neighborhood.

EXT. SARAS'S APARTMENT - DAY

She drives into her parking spot and gets out.

In the background, tents are set up for a wedding. WORKERS
hang lights off the side of the building and others carry
arches of Chrysanthemums.

ROUNAK (15), Saras's son, steps out of rickshaw covered in PAINT. He's at that age where he detests everything with a deep passion.

ROUNAK

Ma, hi.

SARAS

I thought you had after school classes today?

Rounak shrugs.

SARAS (CONT'D)

That's not an answer.

As Rounak walks away from her, she sighs.

INT. SARAS'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - EVENING

A middle-class house. Tiny but cozy. There's not a lot of money in the family but there is love.

Pictures show us Rounak as a baby, Saras's marriage at a young age, her with a diploma, her husband as a clerk in front of his law firm .

KITCHEN

Saras puts away the groceries in the fridge.

ROUNAK (O.S.)

(yells)

There's no water left! Ma, what did you do with the water I kept here?

SARAS

Your dad used it to wash his shoes.

Saras' VINTAGE CASIO WATCH BEEPS. She silences it without even looking at it.

SARAS (CONT'D)

It's 6! Rounak!

ROUNAK

But I really need a shower!

Rounak saunters out of his room still covered in paint.

SARAS

You wouldn't need a shower if you had gone to the study group, would you?

Rounak glares at her.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Please, go fill up the drum upstairs.

Rounak grumbles to himself as he heads out of the apartment.

A giant bucket stands in the corner of the kitchen. Saras pulls out a hose from under the sink, plugs one end into the tap and the other into the bucket.

She turns the tap, it spurts and then water pours out slowly.

EXT. SARAS'S APARTMENT, ROOF - EVENING

The beautiful Bangalore evening breeze blows through Rounak's hair as he waits perched on the railing, surrounded by hanging laundry.

Behind him, a tiny tap slowly fills up a 55 gallon water drum. The flow isn't quite as strong as it should be.

On the adjoining roof, a HANDYMAN and a NEIGHBOR are hammering and screwing things about.

Curious, Rounak moves closer to inspect.

They step back to reveal a WATER MOTOR PUMP attached on top of a water drum.

NEIGHBOR

Now what?

The handyman flips a switch. It ROARS deafeningly. They wait expectantly.

Water GUSHES out at an incredible flow. Nothing like Rounak's tap.

They turn the motor off.

HANDYMAN

I suggest buying a tank. Keep it filled up and you'll have water all day every day.

Rounak frowns.

INT. SARAS'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Saras buzzes about cooking dinner for the family. You could practically smell the coconut curry through the screen.

DINING ROOM

DHEERAJ (50s), workaholic on the outside but soft on the inside, is nose-deep in papers.

Saras brings out last of the dishes.

SARAS

Dheeraj, put away your work please.

DHEERAJ

Yes, ma'am.

Rounak, still paint all over, joins them.

DHEERAJ (CONT'D)

Did a tub of paint fall on you or was it the other way around?

ROUNAK

There's not enough water for a shower today and tomorrow so I'll just hold off till tomorrow.

Saras joins them and they serve themselves.

DHEERAJ

We should get a motor.

SARAS

It's time, isn't it? We held off for as long as possible.

ROUNAK

What? No.

SARAS

Everyone has one, Rounak.

DHEERAJ

I'm tired of trying to schedule in showers around a municipal water supply.

ROUNAK

But if we use a motor we're a part of the groundwater depletion problem.

DHEERAJ

Yeah but that's not just us.
There's corporations and industries
and agriculture. It's a whole web
of people involved.

Rounak fiddles with his food, irritated.

DHEERAJ (CONT'D)

(to Saras)

I can't pick up Rounak after his
extra classes tomorrow. Can you?

ROUNAK

I won't be going to extra classes
tomorrow.

SARAS

Why not?

ROUNAK

There's an award ceremony thing at
Rang.

SARAS

What award ceremony?

ROUNAK

Just something.

DHEERAJ

Your grades are slipping, Rounak.
That last report card wasn't great.

SARAS

More importantly, entrance exams
are coming up.

DHEERAJ

You will go to a good college.

ROUNAK

You guys didn't go to good
colleges.

DHEERAJ

And you want to end up a small-time
clerk and a glorified computer
cleaner?

SARAS

We worked very hard to put you
through private school.

ROUNAK

What does it matter?

SARAS

What does it matter?

ROUNAK

What does it matter? What future do I have? Bangalore is going to run out of water, get set on fire, or be destroyed by toxic waste within 10 years. Pick one. I should be doing more. Colleges aren't going to help with that.

SARAS

(short)

There's policy changes required. Laws to be amended. Research to be done. Big organizations to get involved. Bigger than you and me.

A beat.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Just like how you painting walls in the slums isn't going to solve poverty-

Rounak gets up.

ROUNAK

-I'm done. I have a long day tomorrow.

Saras looks guilty about her retort.

DHEERAJ

That could have gone better.

SARAS

I don't know how to get through to him anymore.

DHEERAJ

He loves that organization so much. It's like we don't exist.

Off Saras, contemplating this.

SARAS

You know what, I'll pick him up tomorrow. I want to see what's so great about this place.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, IT OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Saras codes away, fingers flying fast. She clocks the time on her computer: "3:58pm". She logs out, grabs her purse, makes Meera look up.

MEERA

You wanna get some chai?

Saras is already out the door.

MEERA (CONT'D)

That would be no.

EXT. SHABBY STREET - DAY

Saras' car enters a really shabby street - potholes and hanging telephone wires everywhere. A market on both sides - vegetables, cheap toys, utensils, hawkers, street snacks, plastic ware, etc.

The wheels splash through a puddle.

Saras parks in the only spot big enough for her car among some hundred scooters.

She gets out and looks up to see a sign in both Kannada as well as English: "Slum Rehabilitation Project"

EXT. SLUMS, ALLEYWAYS - DAY

Saras finds her way through a paved maze. Tiny cement houses stand next to each other on both sides. Some are more decrepit than others with blue tarps instead of roofing.

Occasionally she comes across vivid murals of all different types - some obviously painted by children.

Saras comes to a small building in the corner with a bright sign that says "Rang Organization." Note: Rang means color.

INT. RANG ORGANIZATION OFFICE - DAY

A really small space that looks like a preschool art room. A whole bunch of KIDS (ages 5 to 12) sit on little chairs. Some have grandparents cross-legged on the floor next to them. Rounak sits in a corner. He's smiling away at little kid getting an award from a VOLUNTEER (20s).

RANG VOLUNTEER

And next, the best painter award
goes to Ria!

RIA (9) gets up and graciously accepts her award.

RANG VOLUNTEER (CONT'D)

Now we have a special award to give
out but I want to call Surya here
to give it.

SURYA (17), fiery and passionate, jumps up and jogs up front.

SURYA

So I put this award in myself. As
someone who was born and raised in
this community, what once used to
make me feel shame now brings me
joy. Makes me feel that it's worth
living here. So this award, is from
all of us to Rang Organization for
bringing in more brightness to our
lives and specifically to one
volunteer who works the hardest and
who I'm proud to call my best
friend. Rounak. This one's for you.

Then children all applaud and cheer. Beaming ear to ear,
Rounak collects his award. Surya gives him a friendly thump
on his back.

SURYA (CONT'D)

You deserve it, buddy.

Saras clocks the look on Rounak's face.

EXT. RANG ORGANIZATION OFFICE - DAY

Saras looks around at the kids all pooling out of the small
building hopping and skipping around Rounak. Just then-

ROUNAK

Ma?

Saras smiles at him.

SARAS

I'm sorry about last night. I
realized I've never actually seen
your art and I was wondering if I
could.

Rounak beams even more. He's touched.

ROUNAK
Surya, this is my mom.

Surya respectfully puts his hands together.

SURYA
Namaste ma'am.
(jokingly)
Forget everything I said in there!
Your son is a nuisance! Please take
him away and tell him to not come
back.

ROUNAK
Hey!

They get into a little boyish shove and tussle.

RANG VOLUNTEER
Boys, come on now. Gotta lock up.

ROUNAK
Wait, why are we locking up so
early?

RANG VOLUNTEER
Head office said so. We're going to
be taking a small break until we
can figure out the water situation.

SURYA
But if the water stuff gets worse,
the kids will need this
organization more than ever.

RANG VOLUNTEER
Sorry Surya, it's not my call.

Rounak and Surya exchange worried glances. Saras steps in.

SARAS
What's going on?

ROUNAK
The supply stopped two weeks ago.

SURYA
(grimly)
And the reservoir finally emptied
last night.

ROUNAK
There's nothing?

Surya shakes his head.

SURYA

Nothing. I mean the municipal line was barely enough to begin with. An hour a day with 400 people sharing it?

ROUNAK

(to Saras)

Makes our water problems at home seem like nothing, doesn't it?

DIVYA (15), level-headed and the epitome of responsible, runs towards them.

DIVYA

(trying to catch her breath)

Surya, they upped the price again. There's barely enough for mom to cook with.

Surya frowns.

SURYA

How much?

DIVYA

70.

SURYA

I'll talk to them.

ROUNAK

I'll come with.

SARAS

(to Rounak)

Talk to who?

ROUNAK

The water mafia.

Saras grabs Rounak's hand.

SARAS

Rounak, why don't you show me your murals?

ROUNAK

I need to go help.

SARAS

What is going on? The mafia? You're
15. Come on.

ROUNAK

Ma, it's okay.

Saras lets him go and immediately regrets it.

EXT. SLUMS, SQUARE - DAY

They come to a large square. On the other end is a WATER TRUCK like the one we saw outside Saras's apartment. A tank has been jury-rigged on top of it.

Residents swarm around the truck. Rounak runs into the crowd.

SARAS

Rounak!

Saras follows close behind.

In the middle, Surya is in a rough fight with one of the WATER MAFIA, RAJ (20s).

Raj, sporting a cut lip, has Surya pinned down. Surya struggles to get out. Raj PUNCHES down.

Surya's breath leaves him.

ROUNAK

Surya!

Rounak hesitates - this is leagues away from his world. Saras grabs his arm.

SARAS

Rounak, stop.

He pulls away and jumps into the fray.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Rounak!

Rounak pulls at Raj from behind. Raj ELBOWS him in the face HARD. Rounak falls back.

This gives Surya a chance to get out of Raj's grip and jump up. He GRABS Raj by the collar and is about to HIT him but-

-A bunch of MALE RESIDENTS descend upon them and separate the two. One of them is HARI (70s), an elder and community-leader.

Saras rushes to Rounak to see his nose bleeding freely.

Surya is held back by two men.

SURYA

Is this some sick joke to you?

Raj pulls himself free but doesn't engage. He spits out some blood.

RAJ

I don't make the rules. It's the same price for everyone.

SURYA

But we aren't like your rich clients.

RAJ

You think I don't know that? I was born here too. We all were born in similar slums. Don't give me that shit. Water is expensive and it's just going to keep getting more expensive. You'll have to deal with it.

HARI

Surya, just apologize.

Surya pulls himself free from the men holding him back.

SURYA

You're not part of this community. And you never will be.

RAJ

I'm going to make you regret you said that.

He jumps into the truck and starts it.

The residents yell at him to stop but he drives the truck out of the square.

They glare at Surya as they disperse.

SURYA

What?!

Surya turns and heads off.

Saras grabs Rounak to stop from him from following Surya.

SARAS
 (firmly)
 Rounak, come on. Now.

ROUNAK
 Surya needs me.

SARAS
 No, he doesn't.

ROUNAK
 What?

SARAS
 I was right about this. You're
 missing future opportunities to run
 around with hooligans.

Rounak is clearly boiling, he clenches his fists.

ROUNAK
 I will help "these hooligans" find
 their water and there's nothing you
 can do to stop me.

Saras is shocked as Rounak storms away.

INT. SARAS'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Saras and Dheeraj get ready for bed. Saras pulls off the covers.

DHEERAJ
 (can't believe it)
 Rounak? Fighting?

SARAS
 Maybe we should send him to one of
 those pre-college training
 facilities?

DHEERAJ
 Rounak is smart. He doesn't need
 that.

Saras stops and plops down on the bed, defeated.

SARAS
 He is so happy there. He's really
 making a difference. I just don't
 want him getting caught up with
 mafia and violence.

DHEERAJ

Months with no water? Why isn't someone doing something? Why hasn't it been reported?

SARAS

Because it's happening everywhere.

DHEERAJ

You know what the lawyers do when the clients are moving slowly with their paperwork?

SARAS

What?

DHEERAJ

They send me to harass them. Didn't you have a friend at the water board?

Saras gets what he's saying.

DHEERAJ (CONT'D)

Nothing gets done in this country without someone breathing down your neck.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, IT OFFICE - DAY

"3:59pm" is the time on Saras' computer. She watches it intently.

"4:00pm" Saras jumps up.

MEERA

You want to get... nevermind-

Saras is out the door.

EXT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD - DAY

Saras passes a line of people that basically goes OUT THE GATE and around the block - TWICE.

She passes THROUGH THE GATE and into the main ENTRANCE DOORS.

INT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD, OFFICE - DAY

Saras enters a plain, paint-peeling-off-the-walls, utterly depressing government office. KAMLA (40s), a bureaucrat through and through, hugs Saras warmly.

SARAS

It's so good to see you.

KAMLA

It's been too long.

SARAS

You have a long line down there.

KAMLA

Most of those people down there don't even live in legal dwellings so there's nothing we can do to help.

Saras takes a seat and admires the plaque on the desk, "Kamla Reddy, Manager of Technology", then looks around at the posters showcasing the latest in WATER METERS.

SARAS

What's happening to this country? I never imagined I would live to see a day where we actually ran out of drinking water.

KAMLA

People drilled, bored, motored, siphoned, sucked it all. People want someone to blame? They should look in the mirror.

SARAS

Then what's the government for?

KAMLA

I have a list of complaints going back to 2001. There's about 60,000 pipe leakages, spillages, broken in this city at any given time. We don't have the manpower to address every issue.

SARAS

So if I came to you about a water situation-

KAMLA

-it would take me till next year to get to it.

SARAS

Even if it's urgent?

KAMLA

When is water not urgent? Look, we're doing our best.

She points to the POSTERS of METERS.

KAMLA (CONT'D)

I just closed a deal two months ago with this Japanese company. They're providing us with meters that have GSM transmitters. It'll help us see volumetric flow of water at any given time. You wouldn't believe how hard it was to get the funding for them.

SARAS

Are these on the field?

KAMLA

In some major neighborhoods. It's still in beta testing. Roll out has been slow. The system only works on a connected network and you know how the state of wireless is in this country.

SARAS

Might help to have sat data in conjunction with it?

KAMLA

Saras, we are working on computers from 15 years ago with pipelines that were built in 1954 and don't get me started on our annual budget. It hasn't changed since 1989.

SARAS

When has India ever had enough money?

KAMLA

And it feels like we'll never have enough. I'm sorry but I'm doing my best. I wish I could do more.

Saras is at a dead end again.

INT. RANG ORGANIZATION OFFICE - DAY

Rounak steps in to find the office all empty except for Surya and Divya. They face-off against one another.

DIVYA
What the hell did you do!?

ROUNAK
What's going on?

DIVYA
Tell him!

SURYA
All I wanted to do was apologize.

DIVYA
Showing up with 10 of your goonish friends is not an apology!

SURYA
We wanted to show them we have some manpower too.

DIVYA
Manpower for what? Are you seriously considering going to war with the mafia? The only people out there who are willing to help us, might I add!

SURYA
They're slowly killing us anyway!
What difference will it make?

ROUNAK
Woah. Woah. Come on guys. The water will come back, right? We just need to wait.

SURYA
Ria's dad fainted the other day. Literally hadn't drank much water for 3 days since his work laid him off.

DIVYA
The children keep complaining.

ROUNAK

I can do a fund-raising at school.
We can get some support.

DIVYA

Temporary support. How long will it
last?

SURYA

I'm going to go talk to Hari. Maybe
he can help calm things down.

He slams out of the office. Divya settles down on a small kid
chair.

Rounak sits down across from her.

DIVYA

This is only going to get worse
before it gets better.

ROUNAK

If there's no other way, maybe he's
right? Maybe threats are the only
way people will pay attention.

DIVYA

There's always another way. There
has to be.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, OFFICE - DAY

Saras stares at her computer screen. The time in the corner
says: "3:03pm" It changes. "3:04pm" Saras sighs.

MEERA (O.S.)

Okay, talk to me.

SARAS

Huh?

Meera, hands on hips, towers over Saras.

MEERA

You keep leaving exactly at 4. We
don't do chai anymore.

SARAS

Sorry, it's just some stuff with
Rounak. He's gotten himself
involved with this slum
neighborhood that's run out of
water.

MEERA

He's a good kid.

SARAS

I'm thinking about what this friend of mine said.

MEERA

What's that?

SARAS

She said people in illegal dwellings aren't guaranteed water.

MEERA

That's not news.

SARAS

Yes, but it's not like they choose to live there. They are forced to.

MEERA

So what's all this got to do with you leaving on time every single day. What's this new obsession with time?

SARAS

There's not enough of it. I have to pick up Rounak after work.

MEERA

You always pick up Rounak after work.

SARAS

Yes. But if I had more time, I feel I could do more.

MEERA

Saras, as long as I have known you, you've never wanted to "do more" for anyone except yourself.

SARAS

I feel like maybe if I could look into their water, I could help things along.

Meera considers.

MEERA

Then go.

SARAS
It's not 4 yet.

MEERA
Saras, you have access to the
system. You can change the time.

Saras looks horrified at the thought of it.

MEERA (CONT'D)
Nobody ever needs us. Ever. You've
given enough of yourself to ISRO
for the past 20 years and for what?
One day is not going to hurt
anyone.

Saras nods, Meera is right.

INT. SARAS' CAR - DAY

Saras and Meera are in her car. They stop at a crossroads.

EXT. BANGALORE STREET - DAY

A large busy intersection with a flyover. Saras and Meera get
out of the car. Saras pulls out a backpack. Meera looks
confused.

MEERA
Where?

Saras crosses the street and Meera follows. Underneath the
flyover, Saras points to a pillar.

SARAS
There.

It's a METER - just like the POSTERS in Kamla's office.

MEERA
Is that a water meter?

SARAS
Kamla said it's in beta testing.
What if it's as simple as that?
What if the water got diverted
because of a faulty meter? We can
just fix it and everything will be
fine and nobody will know any
different. Keep an eye out.

MEERA

I didn't know I was signing up for
a heist but sure.

Saras pulls out a laptop, opens it and then connects a wire
from her laptop to behind the meter.

Meera scans the area like a good lookout.

SARAS

Oh my god.

MEERA

What?

SARAS

It's not even a passphrase. It's a
PIN CODE. This is so easy.

MEERA

You wanted the hacking to be
harder?

Saras pulls up an application on her computer.

SARAS

I'm going to brute force attack
this with a hash. It'll be done in
seconds.

A WHITE POLICE VAN flies by. Meera notices it go.

MEERA

Okay cop just went by.

Meera watches as the white police van is almost gone.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Okay, I think we're good.

When it turns around under the flyover and heads back.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Nevermind. Saras.

Saras' computer shows an application going through numerous
number combinations until it stops.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Saras.

SARAS

I'm done. I'm done. Going through
the logs now.

Saras scrolls through a LOG. Meera watches in horror as the white police van stops across the street and two COPS get out. Start walking towards them.

MEERA

Saras. Unplug. Now!

Saras is still scrolling through the log. And then-

COP

Good afternoon. What's going on?

Saras unplugs and stashes her computer, then stands up.

COP (CONT'D)

Tampering with government property?

MEERA

Tampering? We're not tampering.
We're just-

SARAS

I needed to go.

No embarrassment, no hesitation on her face.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Too far away from home. Couldn't stop it.

COP

Couldn't find a public restroom?

SARAS

Last time I went to one, I got a UTI.

The cop looks grossed out, then acquiesces.

COP

Move along.

INT. SARAS' CAR - DAY

Meera breathes a sigh of relief. She checks on Saras to see she is shaking.

MEERA

You okay?

SARAS

One time in tech college, I had this take home assignment.

(MORE)

SARAS (CONT'D)

I had to upload it at night. I didn't have internet so I snuck into the local politician's house and stole his. I'm not as young as I used to be but this felt like that.

Saras smiles at Meera who looks impressed. She pulls out her laptop. As soon as she opens it, a MAP of the whole network.

MEERA

That's all the online meters in Bangalore?

SARAS

All 50 of them.

MEERA

We got lucky.

SARAS

Very lucky.

Saras enters some numbers into FIELDS. The MAP changes. Lots of numbers on each of the 50 meters. Saras' face falls.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Everything looks normal.

MEERA

So it's not the meter?

SARAS

The amount of water going through this meter has actually increased over the last 2 years. It shows 124 million gallons in just the last 24 hours.

MEERA

Saras that's impossible.

SARAS

What do you mean?

MEERA

This part of the city would have about 260,000 people, right? Even if the average person here used 100 gallons a day - which they absolutely do not - it ends up being 26 million gallons of water. You're saying 124 million gallons. Who is using this much water?

Saras looks at her data, confounded. She has no idea.

SARAS
More importantly - where did it all
go?

INT. SARAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Saras enters her home to find Dheeraj pacing back and forth.

SARAS
What's wrong?

The door opens behind her and Rounak enters - covered in dirt and grime.

DHEERAJ
Where have you been?

Rounak ignores him.

DHEERAJ (CONT'D)
I'm talking to you!

SARAS
Dheeraj calm down. What's wrong?

DHEERAJ
(to Rounak)
You want to tell her?

Rounak's eyes fall down.

SARAS
Tell me what?

DHEERAJ
He's been skipping school again.

It's Saras' turn to be shocked.

DHEERAJ (CONT'D)
His teachers are saying he won't be
allowed to give entrance exams if
he doesn't get his act together.

ROUNAK
Entrance exams. Entrance exams.
That's all you care about! What
good are entrance exams when
there's people living two blocks
away from us who can't even get
water?

DHEERAJ

You're not one of them, Rounak. You are privileged enough to belong to a middle-class family and you are going to make change from the top, not the bottom.

ROUNAK

Your classist attitudes are the reason things like this keep happening!

Dheeraj loses his patience.

DHEERAJ

Your mother wanted to ground you but I thought that was harsh. I was so wrong. You're grounded. That's it. You go to school and you come back. No running around all over the slums, no nothing.

Saras looks really disappointed at Rounak.

SARAS

Why?

ROUNAK

They really need me.

SARAS

You're a very kind and compassionate person Rounak. I love that about you. But you can't throw away your own future like that. You know how things work in this country. Change will happen. But it will be slow.

Saras turns to leave.

ROUNAK

Change will happen. Only after all my friends are dead.

Off Saras, torn by his words.

INT. SARAS' APARTMENT - MORNING

Saras flits about the kitchen while Dheeraj cooks some breakfast. Something catches her eye - some WORKERS hang lights from her roof of her neighbor's apartment.

DHEERAJ
Saras, toast with butter or jam?

SARAS
Huh?

A SMALL WATER TRUCK rolls up right in front of the apartment.

DHEERAJ
Butter or jam?

Saras watches as someone steps out of the truck. It's RAJ - from when Surya fought him in the slums. He's clear by the checked red scarf around his neck and the black eye Surya gave him. Something clicks in Saras's head.

EXT. SARAS'S APARTMENT - DAY

Saras strides purposefully across the yard with a GIFT-WRAPPED BOX.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

She climbs some stairs and knocks on the first door. Her NEIGHBOR (50s), red-eyed and tired from the festivities, opens the door.

SARAS
Hi, I live in the apartment across the way and just wanted to say congrats on your daughter's wedding. I bought some sweets.

She takes them.

NEIGHBOR
That's very kind of you.

SARAS
Are you having trouble with the water supply too? I always see a tanker outside your house.

NEIGHBOR
The municipal water just isn't enough so we always get more. We had to buy four whole tankers for the wedding.

SARAS
You buy them regularly?

NEIGHBOR
We kind of have to.

SARAS
You have a guy I can talk to about
it?

The neighbor looks around to see if anyone's listening.

NEIGHBOR
Our apartment complex falls under
Thayappa's... Domain, so to speak.
He's sending a guy later today.
Talk to him but only him. They can
get pretty territorial.

INT. SARAS'S PARKED CAR - DAY

Saras sits in her car, waiting. Across the way, Raj gets into his WATER TRUCK and starts the engine.

Saras does the same.

EXT. BANGALORE, STREET - DAY

The truck stops at a FIRE HYDRANT. Raj gets out and pulls out a LARGE WRENCH. He hooks up his pipe to the HYDRANT and SCREWS it loose.

INT. SARAS'S CAR - DAY

Saras watches from a distance - the water spill is large. This isn't the most professional job.

EXT. BANGALORE, STREET - DAY

He gets back into his truck and now a trail of water LEAKS from the TAP in the back.

INT. SARAS'S CAR - DAY

Saras follows the truck closely past buildings in what is clearly the tech region of the city - there goes Dell, Uber, Seagate.

The truck heads into the Huawei building and Saras waits outside.

EXT. BANGALORE, OUTSKIRTS - DAY

Saras follows the truck through sparse neighborhoods.

The truck heads into a decrepit building with an EMPTY WHITE POLICE JEEP outside.

Saras stops and waits.

Doesn't look like it's coming back out.

EXT. THAYAPPA'S COMPOUND - DAY

She heads towards the compound on foot. She sneaks a look through the entrance - the truck heads to the back.

The bottom floor is a dusty old store-front in disrepair. Shadows walk around inside the glass. Saras gets right up next to it and through the grime, she can see a couple of POLICE OFFICERS and -

THAYAPPA (40s) cuts an intimidating figure. He's dressed in a button-up shirt and trousers.

The police officers are equally threatening, waving their batons around the place but Thayappa doesn't budge.

Thayappa walks over to the drawer close to Saras. He doesn't see her. He pulls out a wad of cash and hands it to one of them. They look disappointed - it's not what they agreed on.

Thayappa explains inaudibly. One of the officers lightly hits his baton against the table and then nods to the other. They step out.

Saras looks around for a place she can hide and spots a crumbling wall.

OFFICER

Ridiculous less than half of what we agreed.

OFFICER 2

He can't keep getting his way.

She rushes to it just as the officers walk by. She waits with bated breath. She hears their van start up.

She's seen enough, she gets up to leave.

She heads towards the gates-

RAJ

Hey!

Saras curses under her breath and turns slowly with her arms up. She barely gets a look at the guy when-

THWACK!

SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. THAYAPPA'S OFFICE - DAY

Blurry vision of a glass of water.

Saras comes to on a chair. She winces and touches her head.

THAYAPPA
(in Kannada)
Drink.

Saras grabs the glass of water and gulps it down.

She looks around to find she's inside the store seated at a small table. Dust and grime all around.

Thayappa takes the seat across from her and leans in.

THAYAPPA (CONT'D)
(in Kannada)
Who are you?

SARAS
Huh?

THAYAPPA
You're not from here.

SARAS
No.

THAYAPPA
You're oddly calm.

Saras looks him straight in the eye.

SARAS
I've seen worse.

A beat.

Thayappa laughs.

THAYAPPA

I apologize for my man. He's a bit jumpy.

Thayappa glares at Raj.

THAYAPPA (CONT'D)

(in Kannada)

Apologize.

Raj bows his head and heads out of the room.

THAYAPPA (CONT'D)

I need to make sure they learn to treat our guests right. I hope you'll forgive him.

SARAS

Like I said, I've seen worse.

THAYAPPA

I want you to know you're not a hostage. You're free to go.

Saras looks towards the door and then back at him.

SARAS

You're Thayappa, right?

THAYAPPA

That's right. And you?

SARAS

Saras.

THAYAPPA

What do you want, Sarasji?

SARAS

I wanted to see where you get your water.

THAYAPPA

Ahah. Where do you think we get our water?

SARAS

You steal it.

THAYAPPA

"Steal" isn't really it. What is there to steal if it's already ours?

(MORE)

THAYAPPA (CONT'D)

The air belongs to us, the trees,
the clouds, doesn't water too?
Plus, we are constitutionally
guaranteed the right to drill for
water.

SARAS

But not for underhanded tactics to
resell the water you gather.

Thayappa gets out of his chair and walks around.

THAYAPPA

This store isn't really mine. It
came to my possession a couple of
years ago. You see, the land is
mine and I fought a 20 year long
court-case for it. It's belonged to
my family for more than 200 years.
It was our village and then all
this swallowed us whole.
Corporations. You know how much
water one building uses? You know
how much goes into industrial
manufacturing? Or agriculture?

SARAS

You're still a part of the problem.

THAYAPPA

Am I though? What do you know of
the riots in 2016?

SARAS

I know it was over the Kaveri river
allocation.

THAYAPPA

And people got pissed off. They
rioted. They looted. They set
things on fire. I hear a boy died.
Over what?

(beat)

Water.

(beat)

People call us all sorts of things.
Thieves. Mafia. Goons. The truth
is, people will always need water.
And sometimes, we are their only
option.

INT. SARAS'S PARKED CAR - DAY

Saras gets into her car and starts it. She turns a corner and notices Raj is following her in his truck. She stops off the side of the road, he stops as well.

She realizes he is going to continue following her and there's not much she can do about it.

INT. SARAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Saras stares out the window to see Raj in his truck just hanging out outside the apartment.

DHEERAJ

Honey, you okay?

Saras turns to see Dheeraj stuffing a pair of socks into a suitcase. She moves to the couch and sits on the corner.

SARAS

I want to tell you something.

Dheeraj looks up at her, sees she's wringing her hands.

DHEERAJ

What's wrong, honey?

He takes her hands and looks up at her. Saras considers telling him everything but then-

SARAS

I'm worried about Rounak.

DHEERAJ

We raised a good kid. It's just a phase.

SARAS

What if it's not?

Dheeraj holds her hands in his.

DHEERAJ

We'll just have to trust him and see.

Saras nods. She wishes she could tell him everything.

DHEERAJ (CONT'D)

You still have that dinner with your boss?

SARAS
Yes, tonight.

DHEERAJ
Try to sell yourself.

SARAS
You know I'm really bad at things
like that.

DHEERAJ
Just try. Please? I want everyone
in the world to know how brilliant
my wife is.

Saras smiles a little.

EXT. VIKRAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

Saras drives up to a luxury apartment complex, newly built, very fancy. A UNIFORMED GUARD salutes her on the way in and closes the electronic yet minimalist gate behind her.

INT. VIKRAM'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The elevator opens up to an open design apartment. Her own would probably fit in about 1/6th of this space. A HELPER namastes her as she enters and leads her down a dark wood and glass hallway.

From here, we can see that the balcony is equally as big as the apartment with a tree and garden to boot! This is how the rich live in a congested metropolitan like Bangalore.

Vikram is in his garden.

VIKRAM
Saras! Come on in. I guess I mean
out. Come on in and then out!

EXT. VIKRAM'S APARTMENT, BALCONY - EVENING

Saras walks out to find him potting a small plant in a hole he's dug up. She tries to compose herself.

SARAS
You have a beautiful place.

VIKRAM
Thank you. It was mostly my wife.

SARAS

I've never seen a garden in an apartment before.

VIKRAM

I like to think the future is here. Living eco-friendly with nature rather than without.

PAYAL (O.S.)

Vikram?

VIKRAM

Out here!

PAYAL (late 30s), chic just like her house, shows up.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

This is Saras. Saras, this is Payal.

INT. VIKRAM'S APARTMENT - EVENING

A CLINK. Vikram sets his glass of water on the table. They have a hearty spread in front of them. Not fancy, things Saras would eat at home herself - curry, some rice, some vegetables.

PAYAL

So Vikram tells me you're in the IT department?

SARAS

I am. I've been there for 18 years now.

PAYAL

18!?

VIKRAM

Come on, honey. Just because you can't stay interested in something for more than a year, doesn't mean other people are like that.

PAYAL

Oh hush.

VIKRAM

Did I tell you what her latest venture is?

Saras shakes her head. Vikram and Payal exchange mischievous looks.

PAYAL

Oh Vikram, don't do that to her!

VIKRAM

What do you think you're drinking over there?

He points to Saras' glass of water.

SARAS

Water?

VIKRAM

That's not just any water.

(beat)

It's toilet water.

Saras' face falls. Vikram cracks up and starts to laugh.

PAYAL

It's recycled. All contaminants are taken out. It's cleaner than most purified water out there.

Vikram walks over to the side cabinet and brings back a GLASS BOTTLE with a label on it that says: "VAYAL: Recycled for you and the Earth."

PAYAL (CONT'D)

We own a company that's working on installing these recycling water plants on every apartment complex in the city. We hope by 2030, we can get them in so many places that Bangalore won't be in danger of running out of drinking water and maybe even be producing more than we use.

VIKRAM

The company is called Vayal. Like both our names together.

PAYAL

Also means drought. It's supposed to be ironic. Like we are the ones helping the drought.

VIKRAM

(doting)

Genius.

(MORE)

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

(to Saras)

We have several other investments including manufacturing.

SARAS

Manufacturing?

VIKRAM

COVID really opened our eyes. The shortage of chips and semi-conductors in particular.

PAYAL

See, most of these parts come from Taiwan. And the supply chain is incredibly fragile.

VIKRAM

Exactly, and with world politics the way it is, who knows when the next shortage will happen.

PAYAL

So we wanted to invest in tech manufacturing right here at home.

VIKRAM

So we never have to rely on other countries again.

Saras is awed by their big ideas and forethought.

PAYAL

Let me get you my card. If you want a better job with more pay and cushy benefits.

VIKRAM

Are you trying to poach one of my best employees?

A moment as Payal rummages around a drawer near them and hands over Saras a card with a GREEN LOGO of TWO INTERTWINING WATER DROPLETS that says VAYAL.

SARAS

I... thank you so much but I'm nobody. I don't know if you'd find me of much use.

PAYAL

Oh hush. I already know that you're smarter than most of the men in my company. I look out for women in tech. Please, think about it?

SARAS

Thank you.

INT. VIKRAM'S APARTMENT, STUDY - NIGHT

Vikram's study is all nordic - wood, glass and green. He's got a GIANT DESKTOP. Saras watches nervously as Vikram scrolls through her code.

VIKRAM

This is great. Very precise. It feels very similar to the building detection algorithms I had at my old company. You did this all yourself?

Saras lights up.

SARAS

This was my first time playing around with them but I specifically used a spectral based algorithm. I can get a generic layout and geometry of objects but not their exact composition.

VIKRAM

Maybe a combination of both spectral as well as abundance based data would yield better results. It would be really heavy but worth it.

SARAS

Yeah, I could do that. I could track - let's say the spectral signature of chlorophyll.

VIKRAM

And you'd see all vegetation around. Exactly.

SARAS

But I'd need a high res data set that can provide both microwave and radar input data. And it should be from sensors in low orbit with frequent coverage. Which is-

VIKRAM

-Tough.

Then he lights up.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

Something like NISAR? Dual frequency L-band and S-band. The most complex satellite we will ever launch.

SARAS

That would actually work.

VIKRAM

This is exciting! You can track anything. Vegetation, oil spills, chemical discharge.

It dawns on Saras.

SARAS

Water.

VIKRAM

Water?

SARAS

I could track water. Water leaks, spillages, where pipes are broken, places that are tampered with.

VIKRAM

I was thinking bigger but - yes, water.

Saras looks like she has a million ideas shooting around her head. This may be the answer she was looking for but then-

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

I'm wondering, Saras. How would you like to help me out with the Sat launch? Be by my side, you might pick up a lot.

SARAS

I've never been to any of the launches. Usually Ajay is the only tech on them.

VIKRAM

I see a lot of potential in you and I don't understand why ISRO has kept you at such a low level for 20 years. I think you deserve more. What do you think?

He smiles at her.

SARAS

I would love it! Thank you.

INT. SARAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rounak eats dinner silently as Saras washes up the dishes.

SARAS

Rounak? Have you noticed any suspicious people are you?

ROUNAK

Suspicious?

SARAS

Someone maybe following you.

ROUNAK

No.

SARAS

(relief)

The launch is tomorrow. I won't be home. I want you to come straight home after school, okay?

ROUNAK

Whatever.

Saras sighs. She walks over to the table and sits across from Rounak demanding his attention. He puts away his phone.

SARAS

This is for your own good.

ROUNAK

I said okay.

SARAS

Rounak.

ROUNAK

Mom. Okay. I will come home straight. I promise.

Saras feels a little relief.

EXT. ROUNAK'S SCHOOL - DAY

School kids file out. Rounak with them. He checks his phone, worried.

EXT. SLUMS - DAY

Rounak jumps out of a rickshaw and pays the guy his fare. He makes his way through the slums. Not a soul in sight.

EXT. RANG ORGANIZATION OFFICE - DAY

Rounak finds Ria on the doorstep.

RIA

The door is locked. I wanted to finish coloring my dinosaur.

ROUNAK

I'll go get the spare key from Surya.

INT. SURYA'S HOME - DAY

He pushes the door and makes his way in.

ROUNAK

Surya?

The one room has everything in it - children's drawings on the wall, cooking utensils off to the side with a paraffin stove.

Some really ugly looking water boils away in a pot.

The other corner has two metal trunks as a makeshift dressing table and three rolls of bedding on the floor.

Divya, pale skin and red eyed, is on one of them. Surya peels off a wet cloth from her forehead.

ROUNAK (CONT'D)

Hey, man. What's wrong?

He leans in to check on her. Surya looks flustered.

SURYA

I can't get her fever down.

Rounak gently checks her temperature with his own hand.

ROUNAK
What happened?

SURYA
(shaky)
She's been throwing up and mom told me to let her sleep but her stomach was hurting. Then she passed out.

Rounak looks at the pot bubbling away.

ROUNAK
Surya, we need to get her to the hospital.

A stoic Surya nods.

ROUNAK (CONT'D)
Come on.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ajay holds a meeting with a small IT staff. The screen has an image of the satellite, NISAR and a countdown that reads, "T minus - 20 hours."

AJAY
Saras, boss wants you on this launch as primary IT support. Everyone else, be on call to come in if things go sideways.

Everyone looks around at Saras, momentarily confused.

MEERA
(whispers)
Look at you, rising up the ranks.

SARAS
Can I bring Meera with me? It'll go faster.

Ajay shakes his head - sure.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Saras and Meera check the computers with an EXTENSIVE CHECKLIST next to them.

Saras sits at one that shows her WEATHER PATTERNS. She clicks around and the screen changes to a DATA-LIST.

AN EMPLOYEE walks around setting GLASS BOTTLES on everyone's desk. Saras looks up at hers. It says "VAYAL: Recycled for you and the Earth."

Saras picks up her bottle and looks confused.

MEERA

Nice! Glad we finally replaced the plastic bottles.

SARAS

Yeah.

She sets the water bottle back down. STAFF shuffle in talking amongst themselves.

MEERA

You okay?

SARAS

Huh?

MEERA

You've been down ever since we went to the water meter.

CHIEF ENGINEER

Sat launch in 2 hours, folks! 2 hours.

Everyone perks up.

INT. GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL - EVENING

Rounak steps inside a shabby decrepit government hospital. Chipped paint, flickering light bulbs, a very long line of sick people.

All poor. All huddled. Babies cry here and there, someone howls in the background, all are hushed. Too tired, too dehydrated to speak.

Rounak has never seen anything like this. He looks around at the mass of sufferers wishing he could help.

Surya carries Divya behind him. They make their way through slowly and head up to the counter. The RECEPTIONIST looks haggard and like he's about drown behind all the paperwork.

RECEPTIONIST

Another one?

SURYA

She drank bad water.

The receptionist looks at the three of them with pity.

RECEPTIONIST

It's all full. You'll have to wait
in line.

SURYA

She needs help now!

RECEPTIONIST

A couple of paramedics are
traveling up and down the line
administering IV saline. They'll
get to you.

SURYA

She needs more than saline.

ROUNAK

She has a fever and has been
throwing up.

RECEPTIONIST

We'll only be able to treat it once
she's admitted in. Just wait in
line and we'll try to get to you as
soon as possible.

SURYA

So we, what? Put her on the floor?

RECEPTIONIST

(genuine)

I would let you put her on my desk,
son but then I won't be able to
work.

Rounak touches Surya's shoulder and gestures to the line.
Surya holds back tears and shoulders on.

Rounak slumps against the wall as Surya gently lowers Divya.

SURYA

It's their fault. It's all their
fault.

ROUNAK

Surya, let it go.

SURYA

If something happens to her... I'm her big brother. I'm supposed to take care of her.

Surya sobs as Rounak puts a hand on his back.

SURYA (CONT'D)

We have to do more. We have to.

ROUNAK

What do you mean?

SURYA

They need to understand what they've done.

ROUNAK

Who does? The mafia?

SURYA

Are you with me?

ROUNAK

For what, Surya? You're scaring me.

SURYA

I asked - are you with me?

Rounak looks around, down at Divya and back at Surya, then nods.

EXT. ISRO CAMPUS - NIGHT

Saras stares up at the night sky as Meera walks over with TWO cups of tea.

MEERA

We ready?

Saras nods. Meera gobbles up her snack.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Didn't have dinner.

SARAS

You really should eat better.

Meera mock-rolls her eyes.

MEERA

Yes, mom. Your checklist is done?

SARAS

All good. And I'll be here if anything goes wrong.

She spots a PERSON next to the tea-stall. She looks closer.

It's Raj. Saras jumps up.

MEERA

Saras?

SARAS

Hold on.

Saras walks up to him.

SARAS (CONT'D)

How did you get in here?

Raj drinks a cup of tea.

RAJ

Excuse me? I work here.

The tea-stall guy looks from one to the other. Meera joins them - ready for a fight.

MEERA

Saras, who is he?

SARAS

Do you think it's okay to follow me around 24/7? Do you think it's okay to harass me like this?

RAJ

Harass you? I'm trying to make a living here, lady.

SARAS

You can tell Thayappa I'm onto him. I will come after him.

MEERA

Saras, let's go.

Saras turns to leave. Raj smiles.

RAJ

Is that before or after you save your baby boy?

Saras stops, fear in her eyes. Meera tugs on her arm.

SARAS

What?

RAJ

Getting a little too close to the
slum-people for your comfort, isn't
he?

Raj saunters away. Saras pulls out her phone, goes to
Rounak's ID and calls it.

It RINGS, RINGS and HANGS UP.

MEERA

Come on Saras. He's just playing
mind games with you. Rounak is
fine.

Saras doesn't look too sure. She tries calling him again.

RINGS, RINGS and then HANGS UP.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Saras. The launch is in 10 minutes.

SARAS

I have to go. I need to find him.

She tries again.

RINGS and RINGS and -

MEERA

You're primary support.

Saras shakes her head and then turns away.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Saras!

Saras breaks into a run - the damage is done.

EXT. SLUMS, SQUARE - NIGHT

Weary, weak and sick people all sit on the ground. It's a
town hall under weak yellow bulbs.

A WOMAN holds a TODDLER in her arms as she speaks.

WOMAN

I try to get as much water as I can
from work. My employers know I have
a little one.

(MORE)

WOMAN (CONT'D)

(switches him over to her
other side)

But he's not moving as much
anymore. All he wants is water and
when there's none, he just sleeps.
He's not eating, not playing,
doesn't want to go to the art
program. We need to do something.
Anything.

Hari sits up front of the crowd with a few other elderly folk
from the community.

HARI

I hear all of you. This can't go on
any longer that's for sure. So we
have come to a decision. We will be
protesting outside the water board
building next week.

Disappointed and disagreeing murmurs shoot through the crowd.

MAN

They'll just send cops after us.

HARI

Anyone who wants to join can come
to me after this meeting.

MAN

That can't be all. We have to do
more.

SURYA (O.C.)

And you can do more!

Surya with Rounak by his side strides up to the front.

SURYA (CONT'D)

Why should we have to wait? Why
should we have to boil puddles? Why
should we have more deaths?

Anger and agreement shoots through the crowd.

INT. ISRO HEADQUARTERS, CONTROL ROOM - DAY

A SCREEN up front show us the countdown, "T - 1 minute... 59
seconds... 58 seconds..."

Another shows us the launch site and the LAUNCH VEHICLE.
With, "Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Andhra Pradesh" at the
bottom.

All the support, engineers and technicians in the room concentrate on complex graphs and numbers on their screen, some on weather patterns. They've been here all night and look like it too.

Meera enters and stand off to the side.

Vikram glances back at her, looks for Saras. Meera catches his gaze. Her guilty eyes betray her.

The CHIEF ENGINEER sits right next to him.

CHIEF ENGINEER
(announcing)
Launch in T-minus one minute and counting.

EXT. SLUMS - NIGHT

Saras runs through the alleyways. The sounds of COMMOTION in the distance.

EXT. SLUMS, SQUARE - NIGHT

Saras exits into the square where Surya yells to the crowd.

SURYA
When has a protest ever helped us?

HARI
Stand down, Surya!

The crowd looks from one party to another.

MAN
Let him speak! We want to hear what he has to say.

Hari finds himself sidelined.

SURYA
I took my sister to the hospital. You know what I saw there? I saw death. A line of death going from their rooms, out the doors and onto the streets.

ROUNAK
Nobody is listening. Nobody cares how much you complain!

SURYA

Protesting isn't going to do anything. They'll just send the cops after us like they always do. We need to take this fight to the streets! We need to show everyone who wronged us our anger! The government, the people, the mafia.

CHEERS grow through the crowd. Young men and women feel the same pain.

SURYA (CONT'D)

I'm tired of waiting!

Saras finally spots Rounak in Surya's group. She can't believe it.

SURYA (CONT'D)

If you agree with me, come find me after this shit-show of a community gathering.

The crowd CHEERS loudly. Hari realizes things are getting out of control.

HARI

Enough! Surya, stand down.

SURYA

Or what, old man?

Hari gently reaches out for Surya's shoulder.

HARI

Violence has never been a good answer. We always lose and things always take a few steps backward for us.

Surya squares up to Hari's face.

SURYA

It's too late.

EXT. THAYAPPA'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Thayappa stands in the darkness. Lights dance on his face. Where are they from?

EXT. SLUMS, SQUARE - NIGHT

Hari, terrified at Surya.

HARI
What did you do?

EXT. THAYAPPA'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

A burning water truck. Thayappa betrays no emotions but that doesn't mean he's not rage inside.

EXT. SLUMS, SQUARE - NIGHT

Hari gently reaches out for Surya's shoulder.

HARI
Your mother needs you at home,
doesn't she?

Surya nods.

HARI (CONT'D)
Go to her.
(to the crowd)
Listen to reason. We are not going
to hurt people or their belongings.
(back to Surya)
I'll talk to Thayappa.

The crowd begins to disperse, some still muttering angrily.

Saras nears Rounak and grabs his arm.

ROUNAK
Mom!

SARAS
Let's go.

ROUNAK
What are you doing?

She squeezes hard.

SARAS
We're going home.

Rounak fights her grip. He gets a little too aggressive and manages to scratch her arm.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Ouch! Rounak!

ROUNAK

I'm-

Rounak looks aghast. He didn't mean that.

ROUNAK (CONT'D)

Mom, I'm sorry.

Saras stares at him not sure who he is anymore.

EXT. SARAS' CAR - NIGHT

Rounak and Saras get into her car. She hesitates.

SARAS

Stay here.

ROUNAK

Ma?

Saras heads back into the slums.

EXT. RANG ORGANIZATION OFFICE - NIGHT

Surya sits around with a bunch of fellow ACTIVISTS. They're chatting grimly when Saras shows up. Surya gets up to meet her.

SARAS

Look, I understand how you're feeling right now. I get it. But you need to keep my son out of this.

SURYA

Whatever, lady. Rounak is his own person. I don't drag him around with a leash.

SARAS

He looks up to you. And he treats this place like his second home. But he's not made for this.

SURYA

You think I am? You think any of us are? None of us are ready for the things we have to do. But we have to do them.

(MORE)

SURYA (CONT'D)

Rounak told me you were raised in a village. You should know surviving in this country isn't just laying back and getting help. It's fighting. Every single day. Isn't it?

Saras wants a retort but he's right.

SARAS

I just want the best life for him. Not the life I had or my husband had. I want him to have the world. And he's not going to have it if he keeps following you.

SURYA

Let me ask you this - You want him to have the world but exactly what kind of world are you giving him?

Saras has no answer.

EXT. THAYAPPA'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Thayappa smokes a cigarette in the dark. The embers of his truck die out in front of him. Raj approaches him.

RAJ

It was one of those slum rats and that woman's kid.

Thayappa flicks his cigarette away.

RAJ (CONT'D)

They're planning a protest to get their water back. I think maybe we dug too deep, boss.

THAYAPPA

Cops will be there?

RAJ

Probably.

THAYAPPA

Good.

He lights another cigarette, plotting away.

RAJ

What do you want me to do about her?

Thayappa glares at him - what do you think?

INT. SARAS'S CAR - MORNING

A haggard but hopeful Saras drives onto the ISRO campus and to her parking spot.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, IT OFFICE - MORNING

Saras enters. The computers are all gone, everything is bare.

MEERA

Saras?

SARAS

What on earth?

MEERA

Did you find him? Did you find Rounak?

SARAS

Yes but where is everything?

MEERA

Ajay said they're getting us new equipment.

SARAS

My algorithm was on those drives.

Meera realizing the repercussions of this.

MEERA

I'm sure they won't erase the drives. It's probably backed up.

SARAS

Yeah.

The door opens and Ajay steps half-in, half-out.

AJAY

Saras, the big boss wants to see you.

Saras and Meera exchange looks.

INT. SATELLITE CENTER, VIKRAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

Saras enters to Vikram signing some papers.

VIKRAM

Saras, sit.

Saras takes a seat. She notices a GLASS WATER BOTTLE on the corner of his desk. Again, the same one: "VAYAL: Recycled for you and the Earth."

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

They want the best technology up there so they can parade around our achievements and hard work but not increase the budgets.

(shaking his head)

Politicians.

SARAS

I'm sorry. I know I left in the middle of the launch. I think that's why you called me here. I had a family emergency.

Vikram leans back, nods. Of course.

VIKRAM

Is everything okay?

SARAS

Yes.

VIKRAM

You know why ISRO functions so well even though we barely have the resources of a startup?

A beat.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

Because of the collective. The collective coming together to do better for humanity, to reach higher and to understand more. It's like a circuit board. If you have even one connection missing, it fails to work.

Saras feels guilty - she knows where this is going.

SARAS

I'm so sorry.

VIKRAM

What does this job mean to you Saras?

SARAS

(hesitates)

I've always wanted to work here. Always. But I didn't come from a proper background. My father was a farmer and the highest education I ever got was at a technical college. But I worked so hard to get here.

VIKRAM

That's admirable. But you asked to be on this and didn't follow through. On top of that you jeopardized an 18 million dollar project because you felt compelled to leave 10 minutes before the launch. 10 minutes, Saras. You couldn't have stayed 10 minutes?

Vikram pulls up something on his computer screen and then flips it around for Saras to see.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

Leaving early, coming in late. Every single day.

SARAS

I'm not usually like this. I can do better.

VIKRAM

(softly)

I'm sorry but I'm going to have to suspend you.

A beat as Saras is caught off-guard.

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

It's just a suspension, Saras. I have to do this or I won't be respected here. I hope you'll forgive me.

SARAS

Okay but I need the data on my computer.

VIKRAM

Our work isn't our own. You were the one who said that to me. Everything you work on while at ISRO, belongs to ISRO. It's in your contract.

(MORE)

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

I can't stop you from accessing the sat data from NISAR - it's public, but I can't just hand you back the work you did while on campus here.

Vikram looks genuinely apologetic but Saras is devastated - now what?

EXT. BANGALORE STREETS - EVENING

Saras drives home in her car. When she stops at a traffic signal, she sees TWO-STREET KIDS playing with EMPTY PLASTIC BOTTLES.

In her rearview, she spots a TRUCK with a TANKER on the back. Saras' hands grip the wheel tighter.

She takes a turn, hoping that it will stop following her but it continues to do so. Angrier and angrier, Saras drives faster.

Down one road and then into an alleyway. The truck follows her still. Saras hits the gas pedal, the truck seems to rev up as well.

Then-

She BRAKES. Braces herself.

The TRUCK HONKS, can't stop and then BANGS into her from behind.

Saras steps out of her car. She waits for Raj or one of Thayappa's men to show up. It's a YOUNG DRIVER in a UNIFORM.

YOUNG DRIVER
What the hell?!

Saras has made a big mistake.

INT. POLICE STATION, CELL - NIGHT

Saras sits inside a dank unlit cell, lost and tired.

A COP shows up and unlocks the gate. He gestures outside.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Saras walks out into the station. Dank, overcrowded with papers and LEERY CONSTABLES. Meera sits across from one. She looks up with a small smile.

The COPS talk amongst themselves.

CONSTABLE
Boss said to come in early
tomorrow. Gotta be ready for some
protest or something. Water
building.

Saras glances at the CONSTABLE who cracks his knuckles.

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)
Finally something other than
paperwork.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Saras and Meera walk out into the dark.

SARAS
How much did you bribe them?

MEERA
It's okay, Saras.

SARAS
Meera, how much did you give the
cops?

MEERA
I heard about your job. Vikram
shouldn't have done that.

SARAS
It's my fault.

MEERA
Let me drive you home.

Saras nods.

INT. SARAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door unlocks and Saras enters. She immediately looks up
at Rounak's room but it's empty.

MEERA
Maybe with his friends?

Saras gives Meera a look and plugs her phone into a charger
on the wall.

Meera moves to the kitchen as Saras dials Rounak's number. It RINGS and then HANGS UP. Meera returns with a glass of water for Saras. Saras DIALS AGAIN, and then-

She THROWS the phone across the living room. Meera looks at the phone and then back to her.

MEERA (CONT'D)
Feel better?

Saras pants with frustration. Meera holds the glass of water out. She takes it and sips.

MEERA (CONT'D)
Rounak will be fine. He's a smart kid.

SARAS
Those poor people will all die before anyone gets them their water back.

MEERA
Maybe the protest will work?

SARAS
Protests-

Saras look at her then-

EXT. BANGALORE STREET - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A repeat of the scene at the beginning of the script. The burning truck.

SUPERIMPOSE: "2016"

SARAS (V.O.)
There was a boy.

A young boy wanders into the street.

SARAS (V.O.)
He was just going home.

A GUN SHOT. The boy slumps onto a CAR.

SARAS (V.O.)
I think about his mother, maybe she sent him out to get groceries-

LOW-ANGLE, SHADOWED POV - The groceries go everywhere. The boy's body slides down into frame.

SARAS (V.O.)
 -and maybe she's going to have to
 live with that for the rest of her
 life.

WIDEN TO REVEAL - WE'RE UNDER THE CAR - WHERE SARAS IS HIDING
 - it's HER POV.

As she stares at the boy's body slump onto the ground, her
 hand is over her mouth, tears stream down her face.

CUT TO:

INT. SARAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Saras looks up at Meera.

SARAS
 It's not even that I'm afraid it
 would happen to Rounak. I'm afraid
 of it happening to anyone. To lose
 your child that way. Injustice
 stemming from more injustice. Who
 do you even blame?

MEERA
 I don't know if we can blame
 anyone.

SARAS
 But someone needs to take
 responsibility.

MEERA
 Are we talking about the boy or the
 missing water?

Saras hangs her head.

SARAS
 I don't even know anymore.

MEERA
 Saras, you remember when we first
 met?

SARAS
 On your first day?

MEERA
 No, actually the first time we met
 was during my interview. Ajay had
 made me wait 2 hours.

(MORE)

MEERA (CONT'D)

You had come in to see if I needed any water or tea.

SARAS

Oh right.

MEERA

You said - people like us need to look out for each other. Nobody else will.

Saras considers this.

SARAS

I don't know how to look out for them anymore. You saw how excited those cops looked about the protest tomorrow. I don't know what to do. If we can recreate the algorithm somehow.

(her face falls)

It was a lot of work. It took days.

Saras sighs.

MEERA

And you're sure you didn't bring a copy of your code home or something?

SARAS

We're not allowed.

MEERA

Oh Saras, the rule-follower. Well, good thing I'm not.

SARAS

What do you mean?

MEERA

I guess I'll just come out with it: I watch you when you code and then I try to copy it at home.

A beat as Saras processes this.

SARAS

You do?

MEERA

I want to learn more.

Saras is touched.

MEERA (CONT'D)

The only issue is that it doesn't really work. But if you look it over, we won't need to recreate all of it. Just patch it up.

SARAS

We still won't finish in time.

Meera cracks her fingers.

MEERA

You don't get it. I was the IIST typing champion 4 years in a row. My typing speed is like 200 WPM.

Saras' eyes light up.

SARAS

Let's do it.

EXT. SLUMS - NIGHT

Rounak looks around - no one in sight. There is a light in the window of the Rang building.

INT. RANG ORGANIZATION OFFICE - DAY

Rounak opens the door to find a GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE from the rally. They are all huddled around the small room.

He moves closer and sees - they're stuffing pieces of cloth into glass bottles.

ROUNAK

What's this?

Surya steps out from the back.

ROUNAK (CONT'D)

Surya? You asked me to come. What's going on?

SURYA

Come, join us.

ROUNAK

Dude, what is this?

SURYA

This is taking matters into our own hands.

ROUNAK

But didn't Hari tell us to stand down?

SURYA

Hari is old and stupid. We want to send a message, this is the way to do it.

ROUNAK

Are you sure?

SURYA

Look. We're not going to hurt anyone. We're just going to scare them a little. Aim at the street, at pillars, that sort of thing. Not people.

ROUNAK

Oh.

SURYA

You in?

Rounak still hesitates.

SURYA (CONT'D)

You're a part of this community now. You're family. I consider you my brother.

ROUNAK

And you're mine.

SURYA

So you going to help us?

Rounak nods - of course.

INT. SARAS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Meera and Saras are red-eyed.

SARAS

Running it.

The code yields: "ERROR"

Meera rubs her eyes, frustrated and Saras runs her fingers through her hair.

SARAS (CONT'D)
We need to comb it again.

MEERA
This is the third time.

SARAS
We have to. Come on. I'll make tea.

MEERA
Now we're talking!

EXT. SLUMS - MORNING

Rounak steps out to go to the bathroom. He walks through the slums. Everyone is just waking up, getting ready for their long commutes to their working class jobs.

Hari, more haggard and weak than usual, spots him.

HARI
Rounak? You stayed here.

He stumbles. Rounak rushes to help him.

ROUNAK
Yes, just in the organization building. My mom didn't come home last night so I left.

Rounak helps Hari to his house.

HARI
You boys aren't planning anything, are you?

ROUNAK
No sir.

HARI
Hmmm. Stop here. Here is good.

Hari slumps onto a little stool in front of his house.

HARI (CONT'D)
You coming to the protest?

ROUNAK
Yes sir.

HARI

Good good. We need you. Sometimes they listen better when there's people who speak their language.

ROUNAK

Hari, you think it's going to work?

Hari looks him dead in the eye.

HARI

We have to try.

ROUNAK

You don't, do you?

HARI

You're a good kid. You'll keep Surya in check, won't you?

Rounak looks guilty but nods.

INT. SARAS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Meera looks up from her laptop.

MEERA

(tired)

Saras.

Saras heads over to Meera's laptop where she has just finished her code.

MEERA (CONT'D)

It's working with our sample. Do you want to try it with the NISAR data?

Saras nods. Meera pulls up a MAP OF BANGALORE.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Here. I've already plugged in the chemical composition of treated water.

Saras takes over. She hits some keys and BLUE LINES show up all over the maps.

SARAS

(in awe)

This is it. All the treated water in the city.

She's proud of herself and hits some keys.

SARAS (CONT'D)

These are the municipal water lines.

Some RED LINES appear all over the MAP. She scrolls in.

SARAS (CONT'D)

This is the affected area... The slums. No sign of any water here. The NISAR data should be able to let us zoom in.

She ZOOMS into the MAP so only the slums and surrounding area is visible.

MEERA

What's that large angry looking square over there?

Saras zooms into a VERY BLUE SQUARE with a RED LINE coming out from it.

SARAS

It's a building. That's a lot of spillage. A 2 km radius of treated water. Can you check what it is?

Meera pulls out her phone and checks the location.

MEERA

Figures, it's the closest water treatment center.

SARAS

Okay so assuming the water is coming out of treatment and then-

She follows the red lines out of the treatment center towards the slums.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Somewhere here is the meter we went to. Still good. The program is picking up water spills here and there. And after this point-

She stops at a DEAD ZONE. No more BLUE.

SARAS (CONT'D)

-Drier than a desert.

MEERA

No sign of water, no sign of anything.

SARAS

Not a single trace of treated water. How's that possible?

MEERA

Maybe they're hiding it well.

SARAS

Where would they hide it?

A beat.

They are both stumped.

A KETTLE WHISTLES.

MEERA

Think the tea is done.

Meera heads into the kitchen. Saras scrolls up and down the map, contemplating.

Meera brings two cups of tea and puts the full one in front of Saras. Saras glances at the cup.

SARAS

I don't want that much.

Meera picks up her cup and quickly POURS excess tea into her own cup. She places a now half-full cup in front of Saras.

Saras stares at it.

A beat.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Pour it back.

Meera looks at cups then at Saras. She plays along, POURS it back.

Saras's eyes go wide.

SARAS (CONT'D)

When I first visited the slums, Surya said something interesting. He said the underground tank reservoir emptied.

MEERA

Those things hold enough water for 500 people for a whole year.

SARAS

Yeah they're massive.

MEERA

There's no place you can hide that much water especially if you planned to continue doing it for a while.

SARAS

Unless you hide it exactly where it's supposed to be.

Meera stares at Saras - kind of getting it.

MEERA

How are we supposed to find an underground reservoir, Saras?

Meera scrolls back out to the dead zone.

MEERA (CONT'D)

That's 20 square kilometers of land.

SARAS

I have an idea.

Saras pulls up a WEBSITE with an image of a PAIR of DUAL SATELLITES. They have the words, "GRACE" underneath.

SARAS (CONT'D)

This is GRACE. It's been up there calculating gravitational anomalies for decades. Even a little hint of anything off, it knows. If we can get the data and place it over our map-

MEERA

You think it can pick up a whole reservoir full?

SARAS

That's the plan.

Saras downloads the data into her GIS software.

Nothing changes.

SARAS (CONT'D)

There have been no gravitational anomalies in this entire area.

MEERA

So maybe they're not storing it. They're using the water right away.

A beat as she stares at the screen.

SARAS

That's weird.

MEERA

What?

SARAS

It's the dry season. Hasn't rained in months.

MEERA

Yeah.

SARAS

Then why is the data telling me that the lake here has increased?

Meera looks to where Saras is pointing - a BODY of BLUE WATER with GREEN CIRCLES ON TOP.

MEERA

Saras, what if they're not pumping it into a reservoir?

SARAS

What if they're pumping it into that lake?

MEERA

But why?

SARAS

Doesn't make sense.

MEERA

Road trip?

Saras nods.

EXT. RANG ORGANIZATION OFFICE - MORNING

Rounak sits outside on the step sipping on some tea. Surya exits the building and teasingly ruffles Rounak's hair.

SURYA
Come on. It's time.

EXT. BANGALORE STREETS - NIGHT

Saras and Meera drive past the same intersection where they checked the water meter.

Meera checks the GPS on her phone.

MEERA
A little more then take a left up there.

Saras keeps looking around.

MEERA (CONT'D)
What's wrong? Is someone following us?

SARAS
I haven't told you everything.

MEERA
What do you mean?

SARAS
After the meter thing, I did something.

MEERA
What did you do?

Saras checks her rearview mirror again - nothing.

SARAS
I threatened the water mafia.

MEERA
You what?

SARAS
And they've been following me around ever since.

Meera looks aghast.

SARAS (CONT'D)
They know about Rounak and they know about - well, he and this friend of his burnt one of their water trucks down. They know about it all.

A beat.

SARAS (CONT'D)

So this situation comes with a little bit of danger. If you want to get out of the car, I would completely understand.

MEERA

No.

SARAS

No?

MEERA

I wasn't going to leave you before and I'm definitely not leaving you now, Saras.

Saras looks over at Meera, who smiles at her.

SARAS

Thank you.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING - MORNING

-A half-constructed abandoned building. Like it was being remodeled and then left abruptly. Saras stops her car.

SARAS

Thayappa was holed up in a building just like this.

MEERA

Let's move towards the lake.

Saras and Meera continue on.

EXT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD - DAY

Right outside the Water Board are the gates that Saras passed through before. The walls are around 10 feet high. And a good distance from the building itself.

PROTEST AREA

Between the walls and the street, are a large group of PROTESTERS. All the people we saw earlier in the slums square.

Hari seems to be their de facto leader. He stands on a cinderblock rallying everyone else.

HARI
We deserve better, give us our
water!

CROWD
Give it now!

Citizens in the line for complaints look on, dumb-founded.

EXT. BUS STAND - DAY

Rounak and Surya drop down from a rickshaw. They both have backpacks on. They approach the Water Board building from the other side of the street.

SURYA
There they are.

Rounak looks around at all the people here - all innocent, all unaware.

ROUNAK
Surya, this isn't a good idea.

SURYA
Just follow me.

They join a group of ACTIVISTS with backpacks on just like them. They make a little huddle.

SURYA (CONT'D)
Remember, we just want to scare. No
throwing any at people, at stores,
at possessions. I want none of
that. You wait for my signal.

The group nods and heads out.

ROUNAK
I know you say we won't hurt people
but this just doesn't feel like a
good idea anymore.

SURYA
You're either in or you're out,
Rounak.

Surya walks away from him. Rounak is torn.

Kamla - Saras's friend in the department - steps out of the gates. She looks annoyed as she approaches them.

KAMLA

Is there anyone I can talk to?

Hari turns slowly.

HARI

You can talk to me.

The crowd cheers - they're being heard.

KAMLA

Let's have a chat... Inside.

Kamla leads him inside.

Surya watches warily while the crowd relaxes and chats amicably.

Unbeknownst to either Surya or Rounak, a FEW WATER MAFIA MEN with scarves around their faces infiltrate the crowd.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Saras and Meera pass by more abandoned buildings - one after the other. All vacated mid-construction.

MEERA

I've never been to this part of town.

SARAS

It's like an abandoned city.

MEERA

Saras?

SARAS

Yeah?

MEERA

Behind us.

Saras checks the rearview mirror. It's a WATER TRUCK being driven by Raj.

SARAS

Shit. He found us.

Saras hits the pedal. The car jumps.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Hang on!

INT. WATER TRUCK - MORNING

Raj follows close behind.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Saras' car makes a series of sharp turns. Raj's more clunky vehicle can't keep up.

INT. WATER TRUCK - MORNING

Raj scans the street looking for signs of Saras. Then, he spots the car in a distance.

He lunges forward, driving fast. The car makes another turn but Raj is faster, flies down an alleyway to come to a stop right in front of Saras' car.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Raj steps down and walks over to Saras. The window is rolled down. Reveal: Meera behind the wheel. Saras is not here.

MEERA

What are you staring at?

Raj curses and heads back to his truck.

EXT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD - DAY

The crowd is distracted by SIRENS as a white police van approaches and stops near the protesters. Cops rush out and head into the building.

A moment later-

Hari is dragged out of the building in HANDCUFFS. Kamla follows close behind.

KAMLA

We can't deal with anyone who becomes violent.

Surya jumps forward.

SURYA

What the hell are you on about?
Hari being violent?

KAMLA

He insulted us and even after we
asked him to leave, he wouldn't
budge. There's a proper way to do
things.

SURYA

What's the proper way to do things!
Tell me. I'll do it.

KAMLA

Fill out a complaint.

SURYA

There are HUNDREDS of complaints
from us!

KAMLA

I'm sorry then. It'll take the time
it does.

SURYA

How much longer?

KAMLA

You have to be a little patient-

SURYA

-Patient?!

KAMLA

There are people out. They're
investigating. Just a few more days
and-

SURYA

-People are dying now! There must
be something you can do? Temporary
relief?

KAMLA

That's not how we work. You need to
talk to NGOs about that.

Kamla shoots him an apologetic look and then rushes back
inside. Surya stares, aghast.

He looks back at Hari being stuffed in a POLICE VAN on the
other side of the street.

The cops watch the protestors looking for signs of more trouble. Rounak anxiously pulls himself out of the crowd and next to Surya.

ROUNAK

Hey, it's going to be okay. Let's go home and regroup.

Surya's fists clench in rage.

EXT. HIGH END FACTORY - MORNING

Saras approaches a fancy high end factory. Looks like a tech manufacturer. A sign outside tells us this is: SWP TECH MANUFACTURER.

WORKERS enter for the day through the side gate. They all seem to be from the slums nearby - not really your average tech factory workers.

Saras slips into the line with them.

INT. HIGH END FACTORY - MORNING

Glossy white hallways. Saras follows the line of workers.

She turns to one of them.

SARAS

(in Hindi)

Do you speak Hindi?

They shake their head. Saras looks around.

WORKER

I speak Hindi.

Saras turns to spot an aging WORKER.

SARAS

What is this place?

WORKER

What do you mean, what's this place? It's work.

SARAS

But what is Thayappa making us do?

WORKER

Thayappa? Never heard of him. You new or something?

SARAS

Yeah. My sister told me to come here. Don't know what I'm supposed to be doing.

WORKER

We don't either. We come in and they put us into our roles for the day.

SARAS

It's not specialized?

WORKER

Hah not at all! They just need bodies. I've heard they move the operation around a lot. It's very temporary but the pay is better than other permanent jobs, which is why I'm doing it.

SARAS

What do you mean by the operation?

The worker gestures to the door. He steps through it. Saras takes a breath before following him.

INT. HIGH END FACTORY - MORNING

The inside looks nothing like the hallways. BOTTLES and BOTTLES all in a service line roller coasting their way around the factory.

It's a giant BOTTLING OPERATION.

Saras watches as they make their way down the line. A LINE MAN tells everyone where to go.

LINE-MAN

I need 8 more people on loading.
And then I need 20 people on labelling.

People line up according to where they want to work. Saras joins the loading line.

The line-man walks by scrutinizing them all.

LINE-MAN (CONT'D)

Follow me.

Saras follows with the group. She watches as the BOTTLES make their way down a conveyer belt and get filled up with water.

She follows the pumping mechanism deeper into the factory.

Saras jogs up to the line-man.

SARAS

Excuse me?

LINE-MAN

Hmm?

SARAS

I was wondering if I could join the water treatment crew. I did it at my last job.

LINE-MAN

You? You worked water treatment?

Saras feigns confidence.

SARAS

Yes, I did.

LINE-MAN

Bullshit. Water treatment is all mechanized. Unless you were on software, which I highly doubt.

SARAS

I could do software. What software are you running on? Linux? iOS?

The line-man stops abruptly.

LINE-MAN

Like I believe that. If you want your daily wage, you will load. If not, you will leave. Understood?

Saras nods - understood. The line-man continues ahead. Saras sees an opening and takes her chance.

She ducks out of the line and under a conveyer belt system towards people who are loading up empty bottles.

Saras spots a door. TWO MEN walk through it. Saras hurries through the door before it can close.

EXT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD - DAY

A couple of security guards escort out whoever was left in the building - citizens who didn't work there - and lock the gate behind them with a padlock.

The protesters march up to the gates and Rounak is swept along.

CROWD

Give us our water! Give it now!

The protesters rattle the gate, yelling.

SIRENS IN THE DISTANCE

Surya rushes forward to climb the gate.

ROUNAK

Surya don't!

He looks around and holds up his arm - it's the signal! The backpack wearing ACTIVISTS move out.

Off Rounak, panicked.

EXT. LAKE - MORNING

Meera stops Saras' car just next to the lake. She gets out onto the dusty turf. She looks down towards the bank and slides down the dirt.

From her vantage point, she can see the factory and right next to the factory, A GIANT CEMENT PIPE surges out gallons and gallons of water.

MEERA

You were right, Saras.

Meera's eyes follow the pipe to the lake water itself. She pulls out her PHONE to take a picture.

INT. HIGH END FACTORY, CONTROL CENTER - MORNING

Saras finds herself in a control room high above the factory floor. There's nobody here.

She looks down and spots SEVERAL LARGE RESERVOIRS FULL OF WATER.

INT. HIGH END FACTORY, TREATMENT - MORNING

Looking into the control room, we see TWO SECURITY GUARDS climb up the stairs towards Saras, unbeknownst to her.

EXT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD - MORNING

Several WHITE POLICE JEEPS and VANS with SIRENS blaring, come to a stop at one end of the street.

A POLICE LIEUTENANT (50s) steps out of his car with a couple of his men behind him.

They pull out STEEL BARRICADES from their vans and line them up. A bunch of COPS jump out of the VANS with BATONS and SHIELDS, stand at the ready.

POLICE CAPTAIN

Any sign of trouble. A single person who gets out of line and we move.

SIDE STREET

Thayappa stands in the alleyway in front of a WATER TRUCK. One of his GOONS shows up.

GOON

The cops are here.

THAYAPPA

Got a good look at the building?

GOON

They closed down the gate but the scum are still there.

THAYAPPA

Alright. Roll out.

He gestures. A bunch of THAYAPPA'S MEN show up from behind the truck. All holding METAL RODS, BATS and other weapons of mayhem.

THAYAPPA (CONT'D)

Don't get caught.

GOON

We'll be in and out before anyone knows anything better.

Thayappa nods.

PROTEST AREA

CROWD

We want it now! We want it now!

Surya spots the cops standing in a line. He pulls off his backpack and then locks eyes with Rounak in the crowd.

Rounak shakes his head - don't do it.

Surya hesitates.

Then pulls out a MOLOTOV.

Following his example, the others start to do so as well from various positions in the crowd. Rounak tries to inch closer to Surya but people keep getting in his way.

INT. HIGH END FACTORY, CONTROL ROOM - MORNING

Saras slides into a chair and boots up the computer system. A VERY COMPLEX LOG of NUMBERS scrolls down the screen. Saras spots two words at the top: "Filtration efficiency."

She moves towards the bottom of the screen and clicks out to find: "VAYAL TECHNOLOGIES" with the LOGO.

Her suspicions are confirmed. Saras jumps up out of the chair and looks down at the RESERVOIRS. Sure enough the VAYAL logo jumps out at her now.

But then, she spots the TWO GUARDS outside the glass window.

Saras moves quickly. She picks up a CHAIR and JAMS it under the door handle.

Moves back to the computer and pulls out a necklace. It has a USB STICK on it. She plugs this into the system.

One of the guards jostles the door and then notices Saras through the window.

GUARD

Hey! Open this door! You!

The other guard pulls out his BATON and SWINGS it towards the glass.

THUD!

Saras hurriedly copies all the information into her USB stick.

THUD!

Her hands tremble as she drags and drops folders.

CRASH!

The glass breaks. The guard reaches in through the door and pushes the chair out.

Saras pulls the memory stick out and rushes out the other door just as the two guards RUSH after her.

EXT. HIGH END FACTORY - MORNING

Inside Saras's car, Meera scans the gates and spots Saras exiting.

SARAS

Go go go!

Saras jumps into the car as Meera hits the pedal and lurches forward. The two security guards slow down as they realize they can't foot-chase a car.

MEERA

Anything?

SARAS

(breathless)

Everything.

EXT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD, STREET - DAY

Cops continue watching the protestors. Fingers itching to their batons, sweat beads falling down their faces, feet raring to go.

PROTEST AREA

Surya moves closer to the gate. He takes out a LIGHTER and is about to LIGHT UP the molotov when-

-Rounak PINS Surya down with everything he's got.

SURYA

Rounak! What are you doing?

ROUNAK

STOP IT! This isn't the way! Hari said this isn't the way.

Surya kicks Rounak in the stomach. Rounak doubles over and Surya uses this opportunity to grab the MOLOTOV back.

SURYA

We need to be heard. By everyone!

Surya elbows him and runs into the crowd. Rounak runs after.

In another part of the crowd, Thayappa's goon slinks by. He pushes a woman aside and then he uses his METAL ROD to hit a man over the head.

People begin SCREAMING IN PAIN all over the crowd.

A LIT MOLOTOV is thrown against the wall of the building.

STREET

This is it. The inspector blows on his whistle. The troops move out.

EXT. BANGALORE STREETS - DAY

Meera and Saras drive down towards the protest area. Saras has just filled her in.

MEERA

Vikram! Our Vikram?

SARAS

The tech manufacturer front is a decoy - it costs too much. Too much can go wrong. But the best part is - no government intervention. It's new business. No regulation, no inspections, nothing. So on the inside, he can get away with anything.

MEERA

Even selling back water to the same people he stole it from.

She hands Saras her phone. Saras SWIPES through the pictures of the GUSHING WATER.

SARAS

It's in the lake. The satellite was right.

MEERA

Yep.

SARAS

We have to stop this.

Meera and Saras come to a police barrier. Meera has to stop her car.

MEERA

Shit. The protest.

SARAS

Okay, stay here. I'll find Rounak
and bring him back.

MEERA

What do you mean stay here?

Saras jumps out and runs for the barrier. The cops are looking the other way so she slides between two of them.

EXT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD - DAY

Saras runs down the street and comes to a horrifying sight.

Cops are rushing into the crowds with their batons. Protestors on the floor screaming in pain. Thayappa's men fight the cops right back. A MOLOTOV hits the wall.

It's pandemonium.

Saras looks around frantically for Rounak. She notices a line of RIOT COPS in CAMO carrying RIFLES making their way down the streets - these guys mean business.

SARAS

(panicking)

Rounak!

In the side street, she spots the water truck. Confused, Saras makes her way to it.

Thayappa sits behind the wheel when he spots Saras. The two look at each other.

Emboldened, Saras climbs into his truck.

THAYAPPA

What are you doing?

SARAS

I need your help.

THAYAPPA

Lady, first you accuse me of stealing water, one of your lackeys sets my truck on fire and now you want help?

SARAS

Those cops they wanted more money from you. Your business isn't doing so well, is it?

This catches Thayappa's attention.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Yes, I know. There's less and less groundwater every year. It's not sustaining your business around the city.

THAYAPPA

So what?

SARAS

I can offer you more.

Thayappa looks at her dead in the eyes. He pulls out a knife from his back pocket and casually holds the steering wheel with it.

Saras doesn't flinch - she can't when so much is at stake.

SARAS (CONT'D)

I have a software that can find all the underground water you want around the city. I'll give it to you if you help me stop this madness.

Thayappa considers this.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Please.

GATE

People here bang away at the gate while some try to climb over to get away from the cops.

Rounak looks around for Surya but can't find him.

The gates open.

The PROTESTERS FLOOD IN.

ENTRANCE AREA

The protesters are at the main entrance door. Surya ducks towards the corner. His back to the wall.

He quickly pulls out a bottle and a lighter.

Rounak manages to free himself of the moving crowd a few feet away. He spots Surya.

ROUNAK

Surya! Stop!

Surya lights up the MOLOTOV and is about to toss it straight into the window when he sees the FRIGHTENED PEOPLE inside the windows. He hesitates. But then-

-A PROTESTOR bangs into him. The bottle is KNOCKED out from Surya's hand and he watches as-

-It falls next to him. It BURSTS.

A TOWER OF FLAMES.

A HAND GRABS his shoulder and PULLS.

Surya breathes hard - that was close. Rounak pulls him up by his shirt.

Surya looks - INSIDE THE WINDOW - there's a WOMAN crying and a couple HOLDING HANDS.

Surya realizes that this wasn't what he intended.

The RIFLED COPS are almost at the gates now. Their guns trained on the crowd.

A GUN SHOT RINGS OUT.

Rounak pulls Surya to the ground.

SIDE STREET

Back in Thayappa's truck. They hear the GUN SHOT.

SARAS

Your men are in there too! Is this what you want?

THAYAPPA

What do you want me to do? Those cops have guns, we have a water truck.

SARAS

Drive out there!

Saras looks pleadingly. Thayappa puts the truck's engine on.

He hits the accelerator. They rev out of the side street.

Thayappa zigzags through people here and there.

THAYAPPA
Okay, now what?

SARAS
I didn't think this far ahead.

Thayappa groans exasperatedly. Saras spots some columns of fire and smoke.

SARAS (CONT'D)
You have water in the tanker?

Thayappa looks at her - what is she planning?

MAIN ENTRANCE

Surya and Rounak lie on the ground and cover their heads.

More SHOTS RING OUT.

SURYA
How do we stop them?

ROUNAK
We can't. Just stay down.

SURYA
I'm sorry, Rounak.

ROUNAK
It's okay. I understand.

Water drops on his nose. He squints at it.

ROUNAK (CONT'D)
(confused)
It's raining.

He looks up - not a cloud in sight.

PROTEST AREA

Saras barely manages the weight of an INDUSTRIAL SIZED HOSE. Thayappa helps.

THAYAPPA
Get it over the wall. Hold on tight.

Thayappa leans on the back and helps Saras point the hose up and over the wall.

The cops stop their advance, pretty confused by this sight. Is this a part of the rescue effort?

MAIN ENTRANCE

Water rains down on the protesters, Thayappa's men and cops.

Slowly, the protesters smile and rejoice. Some drinking up as much as possible.

It's rain like no other.

PROTEST AREA

Saras sees a drenched Rounak approach, forgets the hose and rushes to embraces him.

ROUNAK

I'm okay. I'm okay. Are you?

SARAS

Yes.

ROUNAK

The fires are out. Let's go. The cops are rounding up people.

She hugs him and kisses the top of his head.

SARAS

I need to do something first.

She turns to look at Thayappa. Thayappa nods - go do your thing.

INT. BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE BOARD, OFFICE - DAY

Kamla looks out of the window. Ambulances have gathered by the dozen. The protesters are now dispersing.

Thayappa's water truck starts up again. Raj and bunch of others jump on it before some cops can get to them. It revs out of here as fast as possible.

Kamla sighs in relief. She made it.

Her office door BURSTS open. Saras walks in with Rounak.

SARAS
I know who's taking their water.

KAMLA
Saras?

Saras slams the USB stick onto Kamla's desk.

SARAS
Vayal technologies. They just started a tech manufacturer a few months ago?

KAMLA
Yes, we approved them. They have an impressive record.

SARAS
I would take a closer look at the building, if I were you.

Kamla gestures to the other chair.

KAMLA
Tell me everything.

EXT. HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA - DAY

Saras, Meera, Rounak and Dheeraj all stand around on the tall steps of the high court in their best clothes. The hot sun blazes down on them.

MEERA
Burning. What I wouldn't give for a shower right now.

SARAS
It's almost time to go in.

MEERA
Look who's here. Assholes.

An ATTORNEY walks by with Vikram and Payal.

MEERA (CONT'D)
Sorry, not sorry.

ROUNAK
How long will it take, dad? For the case to finish?

DHEERAJ

Depends on the number of witnesses and the evidence. Since it's connected to land, there's nothing urgent about it. Should be done by when you're 25.

ROUNAK

You're kidding.

Dheeraj hugs him.

DHEERAJ

Welcome to my world.

SARAS

They're going to get away with it.

ROUNAK

Don't give up, Ma.

Rounak holds out his arm and Saras joins the two in a family hug.

SARAS

I love you.

She spots a figure in the distance and then lets them go.

SARAS (CONT'D)

Hold on, I'll be right back.

Thayappa hangs around in a corner. Saras reaches into her purse and pulls out a thumb-drive. She hands it over but before he can take it-

SARAS (CONT'D)

I have conditions.

THAYAPPA

Tell me.

SARAS

This isn't going to stop. This cycle of water stress, people like you providing it, people like Kamla trying to find stop gap solutions, people like Surya and Divya suffering for it. It's not going to stop so I have nothing to lose here when I give this to you. But you have to promise me something. Don't let those people down again. They don't deserve any more pain.

Thayappa grabs the thumb-drive and solemnly nods.

THAYAPPA
You have my word.

He seems genuine as he takes his leave.

MEERA
(shouting)
Saras! It's time.

INT. HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA - DAY

Saras is on the stand.

Meera, Dheeraj and Rounak sit on the front row. On the other side are Vikram and Payal. They whisper to one another. Vikram looks up and glares at Saras.

The DEFENSE ATTORNEY stands in the middle of the two rows inside the ATTORNEY BOX.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY
After you - broke into the factory
without permission, you say you
found several reservoirs.

Saras clears her throat.

SARAS
Yes, they were for water treatment.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY
You are an IT person, right? And
have been for close to 20 years.
How do you know what water
treatment looks like?

SARAS
I saw the stats on the filtration
system in the computer. It was
pretty obvious.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY
That's interesting because only
highly specialized people can read
logs like that.

SARAS
What about the factory floor with
all the bottles of water?

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Your honor, the authorities found nothing of the sort when they went there. Yes, their report does say they found reservoirs and it's true that the lake was overfilled despite it being a dry season, but nothing here suggests that my clients were involved in an illegal water bottling operation.

SARAS

I guess someone got there before them.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Mrs. Menon. I will advise you to not speak out of turn.

Saras clamps her mouth.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

Your honor, my clients are a little confused about Mrs. Menon's claims here. Internal investigations suggest that perhaps the pipeline that Mrs. Menon here saw might possibly have linked to the municipal line by accident.

Meera mutters under her breath.

MEERA

Accident? Are you fucking-

Saras remains calm, not a single expression betraying her emotions.

SARAS

I don't think pipelines are just created by accident.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Objection, your honor. The witness is out of line. This is pure conjecture.

JUDGE

Objection granted.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Defense rests.

The attorney goes back to Vikram and Payal who look like they just dodged a bullet.

JUDGE

I hereby declare this session over.
The next session will be held June
13th, 2023.

The judge KNOCKS the GAVEL.

EXT. SLUMS, SQUARE - DAY

Rounak, Divya and Surya watch as water GUSHES out of the taps in the square. PEOPLE chat amicably, the water taps are a social spot as well as a vital resource.

DIVYA

Oh here she is, Rounak!

Saras walks towards them across the square.

ROUNAK

Ma! Here!

He runs to meet her.

SARAS

They have water?

ROUNAK

Finally.

She looks around and catches Surya's eyes. He folds his hands in a namaste. She smiles back at him.

ROUNAK (CONT'D)

Even if it doesn't help everyone,
at least we helped here.

SARAS

Of course.

ROUNAK

Maybe if the case gets attention it
could help more.

SARAS

Maybe. You want to show me? I need
to get back to work.

ROUNAK

Oh right, first day as head of IT.
I won't keep you.

Rounak takes her to the corner of the square and here is a huge gorgeous mural - A rainy view of a lush green hill.

SARAS

Oh Rounak! This is beautiful.

ROUNAK

Thank you.

Saras leans her head on her son's shoulder. She points to two figures hiking up the hill.

SARAS

Is that supposed to be us?

ROUNAK

If you want it to be.

SARAS

Oh no, your father is going to be so upset he isn't on here.

ROUNAK

Oh fine I'll put him in.

SARAS

Thank you.

They continue admiring the mural as the people around them talk and walk and drink water.

A MOTHER hands her CHILD a BOTTLE of WATER. The label turns as the child drinks from it. It says: "VAYAL: Recycled for you and the Earth."

THE END