

C I T Y O F L A K E S

Written by

Kevin Shahinian

FIRST DRAFT 7/8/09
SECOND DRAFT 9/10/09
SHOOTING DRAFT 9/25/09

EXT. JAG MANDIR PALACE - MORNING

Faint whispers of smoke tickle the air.

They rise from a fire set before a Hindu PRIEST, his eyes closed, hands intent, performing a puja ceremony. His figure is devoured in isolation by the grandeur of

JAG MANDIR PALACE

Suddenly we are flying over the waters of

LAKE PICHOLA

In the distance a small boat makes its way toward shore, passing the island sprawl of

LAKE PALACE

Majestic under the hot Indian sun.

AT JAG MANDIR PALACE

the Priest slowly opens his eyes. Summoned. He rises and watches the boat as it passes. A young lone man in white is seated at its helm. This is HARISH (30's).

EXT. DOCK - CONTINUOUS

Two children look out over the water; A Gujerati boy, SAMU (Young Samir) (10) and a Punjabi girl, MISSY (8) (Young Melissa).

Samu admires an old watch - its hands frozen in time. He peeks over at Missy, who admires an ornate necklace. Hanging from it: a small pendant of Ganesh.

SAMU (Hindi)
What is that?

MISSY (Hindi)
A gift.

SAMU (Hindi)
A gift for who?

MISSY (Hindi)
A bride. There is a wedding today.

The two spot Harish guide his boat into port. He ties it off and draws a deep breath of air with his first step on land. As he offers the two a smile, the ruckus of a small crowd gathering behind them draws attention to:

EXT. CITY PALACE - CONTINUOUS

An old HOTEL PORTER tries to disperse a crowd of MERCHANTS who anxiously present items for a wedding.

HOTEL PORTER (Hindi)
I told you, go home! The bride and groom must not be disturbed!

CROWD (Hindi)
Let them out!

CROWD (Hindi)
We bring goods for the wedding!

HOTEL PORTER (Hindi)
You must leave!

INT. CITY PALACE - PRIVATE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

From a window, curtains part. A female figure's point of view reveals the crowd growing restless.

EXT. CITY PALACE - CONTINUOUS

Missy eagerly manages her way through the crowd. Samu follows, curious, from a distance.

Suddenly the doors to City Palace part and the crowd goes silent. Like a King and Queen descending on their court, MELISSA and SAMIR exit, followed by an imposing entourage of DANCERS:

BEGIN "MARJAANI" DANCE SEQUENCE

Melissa and Samir dance & sing as they select items for their wedding day:

SAMIR (Singing)

Deek ha-uh deek deek saba-kucha-deek
Uh-huh-paas ah saba-kucha-raba-nazadeek
(oh oh oh oh x2)
Heeyyy raba-ke hazure eh kasa-bay-mu-khali
Dunie annie ranni manni razameni bally
(oh oh oh oh x2)

MELISSA (Singing)

Fira beeya mane koye tota ba-tey;
Ma-ne joe ma-ne mane to bala-tey;
Duni-yena mane kasamanu kai-yea;
Kasamanu ka marjaani.

MELISSA AND SAMIR (Singing)

Marjaani Marjaani (x3)
Oye kasmanu khaye Marjaani

MELISSA (Singing)

Hai - haya dunajai kya kya;
So cheta reta hega oof;
Ke-no choo-ta reta hega.

SAMIR (Singing)

Hey - tu mud ke dekha na kai;
Jo-sar may soch-a yegi (hey);
To-pomoya moch-a yegi.

MELISSA (Singing)

Utt utt ke raa-too may;
Dard-eh-ye pala hai;
Andhi jawani may;
dard-ek u-chala hai.

SAMIR (Singing)

Dil tera-na roki baliye;
Dil tera-na jogi baliye;
Dil tera sansar-hey ga;
Lage-dil ko-bey-mari.

Missy holds up her necklace to the bride, but the throngs of adults overshadow her. She goes unnoticed.

MELISSA AND SAMIR (Singing)

Marjaani Marjaani (x3);
Oye kasmanu khaye Marjaani.

END "MARJAANI" DANCE SEQUENCE

Melissa and Samir retreat into City Palace. The doors slam behind them and the crowd disperses. Missy hangs her head low. Samu watches her with sad eyes.

AT THE DOCK

Harish works on his boat. He notices Samu.

HARISH (Hindi)
You're quite fond of her?

SAMU (Hindi)
I am not.

HARISH (Hindi)
Well she's fond of you.

SAMU (Hindi)
How do you know?

HARISH (Hindi)
I just know. I can see it in her eyes.

Samu turns and catches Missy watching him from afar.

SAMU (Hindi)
She has a gift for that bride.

HARISH (Hindi)
You wish to help her?

Samu shakes his head "yes."

HARISH (Hindi)
You see that road? The
groom and baraat will pass through
soon. That's your chance.

SAMU (Hindi)
Thank you.

Harish offers a smile: "you're welcome".

SAMU
Where's the wedding?

HARISH (Hindi)
There. Jag Mandir Palace.

Harish points across the lake to Jag Mandir island.

EXT. LAKE PALACE - MOMENTS LATER

Melissa ponders the breathtaking view. Her expression hints at melancholy. AMY approaches.

AMY (Hindi)
Melissa? It's time.

Melissa doesn't answer, distracted.

AMY (Hindi)
What's wrong?

MELISSA (Hindi)
Nothing.

AMY (Hindi/English)
You're about to become my new sister.
You can tell me anything.

MELISSA (English)
It's weird. I feel like... We forgot something.

AMY (English)
Don't worry. We didn't forget anything.

MELISSA (English)
You're right. It's probably just nerves.

The two enjoy the view.

MELISSA (English)
Could this be anymore perfect?
(beat)
What do you think Samir's doing?

AMY (English)
In his room, about to get ready, thinking
to himself how did I get so lucky.