

TARE ZAMEEN PAR

WRITTEN BY AMOLE GUPTA

DIRECTED BY AAMIR KHAN

Aamir Khan Productions Pvt. Ltd

1 I/E. PROLOGUE - DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A cacophony-ridden, toxically electronic music-track.

BLACK SCREEN:

Alphabets S A & W appear horizontally, then A & S appear vertically appended to W forming WAS, W A & N join in horizontally to S and form SWAN. A T U R A & L go up with N to form NATURAL. Alphabets O G I & C form to L's right and we have LOGIC. In this fashion, ominously bright alphabets do a snake-dance.

The graphic play of alphabets is joined in, with numbers and Devnagari alphabets dancing and filling up open spaces on the screen and starting to blink to cause more visual confusion. The alphabets of the snaky trail too, dance while changing size and shape.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A teacher's voice at a distance announces the marks of the class children. A series of names and marks being announced.

1A BLUE SCREEN

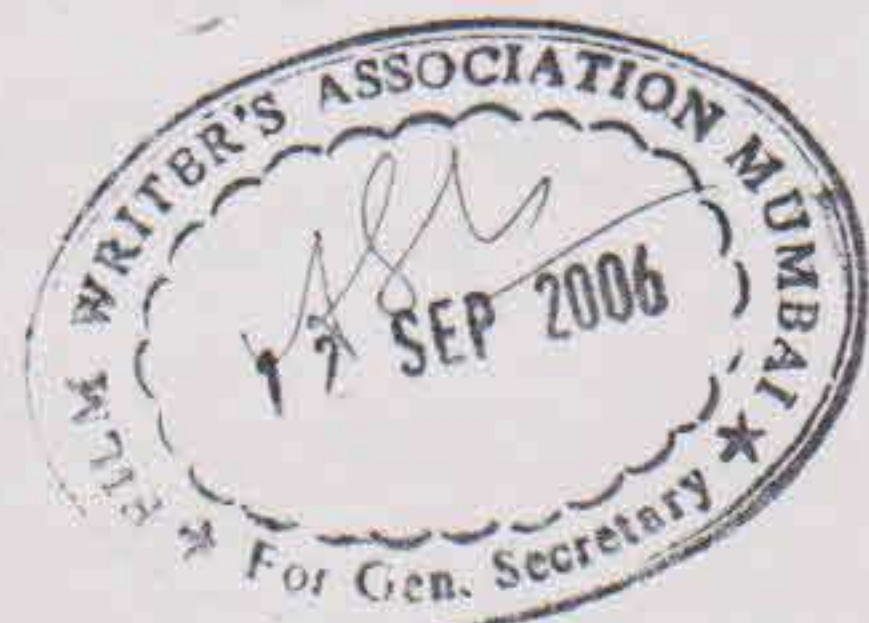
LOW ANGLE: DISTORTED CLOSE-UPS OF 2 STERN FACES (IRENE TEACHER & VICTORIA TEACHER) AS THEY READ OUT ONE AFTER THE OTHER, MARKS FROM ANSWER SHEETS.

IRENE TEACHER

KABIR JOHAR... 20 out of 25
 ARNAY CHAUHAN... 18 out of 25
 SHAUN ALMEIDA... 21 out of 25
 KARAN SADARANANI... 24 out of 25
 DHRUV KHOPKAR... 19 out of 25
 RASHID ICCHAPORIA... 15 out of 25
 ARYA KAPOOR... 22 out of 25
 HUZEFA LOKHANDWALA... 24 out of 25
 BIPIN PATEL... 20 out of 25
 AROON PODDAR... 25 out of 25.
 ISHAAN RAO... 2 out of 25

SUPER dissolves in under the face of the teacher, blinking like a tail-light

SUPER: Fail! Fail! Fail!



IRENE TEACHER (O.S.)
CHANDRAPRAKASH SIROYA... 24 out
of 25.
 KAUSHIK GUPTA...20 out of 25
 RAGHAV SHAH...20 out of 25
 SANDEEP PANDYA...17 out of 25
 VEER MOHAN...19 out of 25
 AJAY VIDYA SAGAR...25 out of 25
 SUDEEP ROY...24 out of 25

The second distorted face reads out

VICTORIA TEACHER
 HARI KUMAR...23 out of 25
 PRADEEP PANCHAL...17 out of 25
 SUBODH KARVE...22 out of 25
 AFZAL SHEIKH...19 out of 25
 MALHAAR GUPTE...16 out of 25
MANVEER SINGH... 24 out of 25
ISHAAN RAO... 3 out of 25...

SUPER dissolves in under the face of the teacher,
 blinking like a tail-light

SUPER: Fail! Fail! Fail!

VICTORIA TEACHER
SAURAV ROHIRA... 25 out of 25
 AADIT LAMBA... 23 out of 25
 SUMEHR MAKHIJA... 21 out of 25

The dance of alphabets reaches screaming pitch. The black screen is now full of flashing alphabets, making new, longer words, and the numbers are forming equations rapidly, all demanding the viewer's attention. They have a flashing, warning quality about them. The color of the alphabets and numbers turns to signal-red.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A siren, shrilly accentuating the flashing red words all around the black screen. A screeching end to this finale.

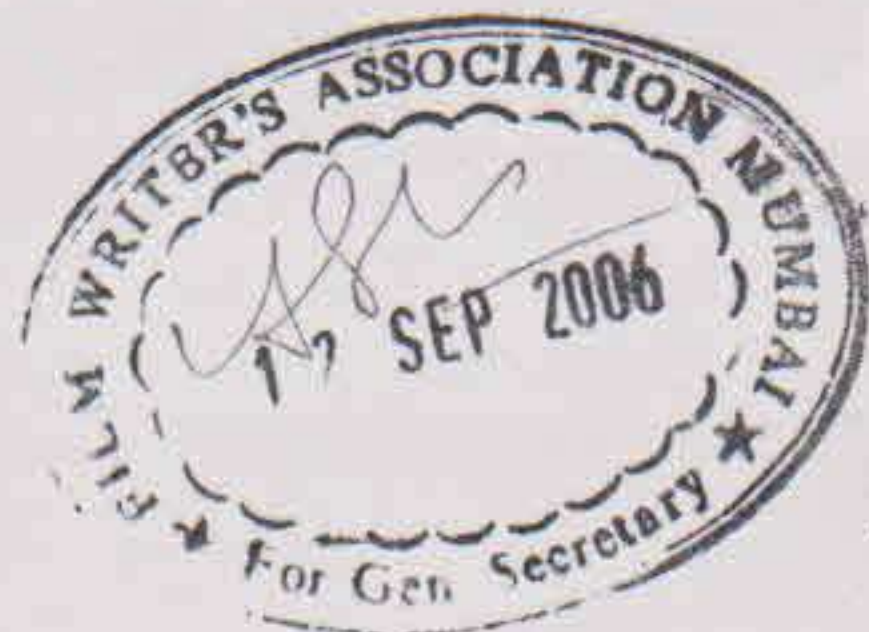
Sharp cut:

(120 secs)

FADE IN:

2 STUDIO - GUTTER

TOP ANGLE: CLOSE SHOT OF A NARROW FLOWING OPEN GUTTER, LOOKING MORE LIKE A RIVULET DUE TO THE FLOW OF THE WATER AND THE CLOSE MAGNIFICATION OF THE FRAME.



ANGLE ON: Weeds and worms, submerged in the little rivulet-gutter, bend elegantly to the flowing, tinkling water, little guppy fish and tadpoles among them. A crab slides sideways across the frame.

A reflection of an 9 year old boy (ISHAAN RAO), peering into this flowing, yet still, green-cast world.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A calming Bach - organ in 'A' minor adds to the richness of the image. Freedom song theme.

2A EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - GUTTER - EVENING

Fade in the sound of distant cheer of post-school kids, mixed with a repetitive call for 'ISHAAN'.

ISHAAN looks on, fascinated by the micro view of this small but complete world, not reacting to the cheer or the call. Next to him, lies his open school bag, with exam answer sheets carelessly stuffed in.

The magic-hour evening light envelopes the boy in its golden radiance.

A cool breeze ruffles his unkempt hair caressingly while he watches the fish in the gutter. A beatific smile plays on ISHAAN's dirtied-by-the-day face, now reflected in the tinkling stream of swaying weeds and worms.

ISHAAN has an improvised fish-net, made out of his own sock and wire. He is in a still position fishing for guppies. He excitedly catches a guppy fish and transfers it into his drinking water bottle. Having secured his catch, he fishes for more.

Suddenly a rude hand wrenches him from his peaceful perch and drags him away into the world outside. MAADHOO, the cleaner of the school bus curses ISHAAN, dragging him away.

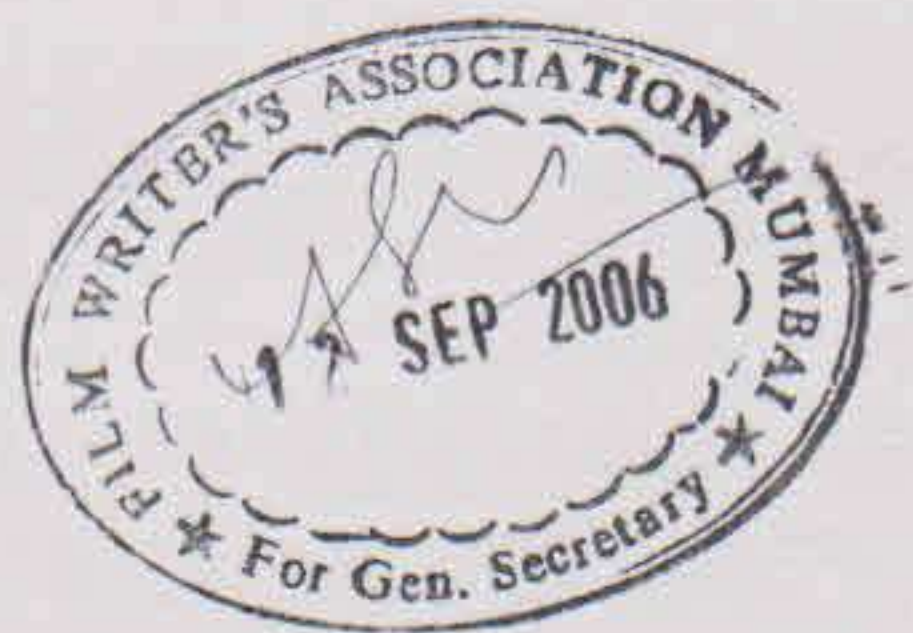
MAADHOO

Gutter me mundi daalke baithaa
hai Yedaa! Dus minit se bus ko
rok ke rakhaa hai!

(70 secs)

2B E/I SCHOOL BUS - EVENING

MAADHOO shoves ISHAAN roughly inside the waiting school bus. Bus starts.



3 INT. MOVING SCHOOL BUS - EVENING

Ishaan is seated next to the driver on the engine hump, water bottle in hand, bag on his back. Portrait of a busload of kids, full of energy, having fun, ...doing what they want. The children morph into Van Gogh's starry night river. TITLE: "TAARE ZAMEEN PAR" as the stars in the painting glisten.

(25 secs)

Titles follow.

(180 SECS)

4 EXT. ISHAAN'S BUILDING - EVENING

The bus arrives at a gate of a middle-class residential building. ISHAAN alights. The building pariah dogs dig their heels as soon as they spot ISHAAN. The mongrels make a run for him and bark excitedly. ISHAAN fondles and plays with them, then plays a short 'chase me' game with the mongrels, throwing answer sheets at them, making the mongrels more excited. The answer sheets are torn to shreds in seconds. ISHAAN 'yuk yuks' at the sight, opening his lunch box and throwing them the load of his untouched chapatti bhaji roll lunch. Suddenly, his attention is attracted by a shiny element in his path. Close-up: a metal zipper. He picks it up and puts it into a small, cute potli which he extracts from his pocket.

(40 secs)

5 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM/ISHAAN'S BEDROOM
- EVENING

MOTHER'S pallu in frame, ISHAAN enters the drawing room of his house... MOTHER'S O/S as ISHAAN about to drop his bag after two steps...

MOTHER (O.S.)
Haath-mooh dholo... aur bag
bedroom mein huh!

ISHAAN pulls his bag back on his shoulders.

A two-bedroom apartment - ISHAAN's home is a cluttered space. ISHAAN runs to his bedroom cum study room, dodging the furniture in his way. He gets off his heavy school bag on to a single bed. Then picking his guppy fish water bottle he exits towards the kitchen.



5A INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN/ WASH BASIN - EVENING

ISHAAN rushes quickly to a glass jar with a dozen guppy fish and quickly lets in the new guppy from his water bottle. He watches the guppy enter the guppy world with wonderment. He looks around on the kitchen platform and spots a shut bread box. He extends his (gutter/ bottle) hand towards the bread-box. He opens the box to reveal neat rows of triangular cheese sandwiches.

As ISHAAN grabs a triangular piece and brings it out, his MOTHER's hand raps his hand.

MOTHER

Ishaan! Jaao! Haath dhokar aao pehle!

MOTHER's tone is irritable and edgy. ISHAAN picks the sandwich nevertheless, munches on it, then laughing triumphantly, he moves to wash his hands at the kitchen sink, sandwich in mouth. His MOTHER's reaction to this defiant action is a tired sort of exasperated look.
(45 secs)

5B INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - EVENING

In his bedroom, ISHAAN is sitting on the floor, sipping from a tall glass of milk, a 500 bit jigsaw puzzle open in front of him. MOTHER steps in.

MOTHER

Aaj exam paper milne wale they na Inu? Teacher ne diye?

ISHAAN looks up but doesn't answer his MOTHER. He begins blowing bubbles in the milk instead.

MOTHER

Inu... Mai kya keh rahi hoon...

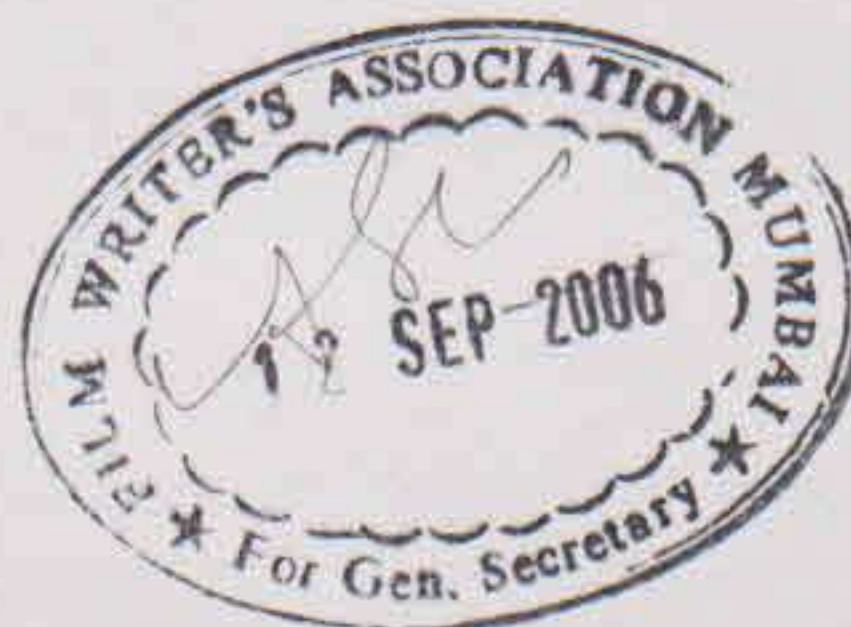
ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The doorbell rings. (15)

5C INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - MAIN DOOR - EVENING

MOTHER opens the door. It is YOHAN, her 12 year old elder son. MOTHER looks surprised.

MOTHER

Arre Yohan...



YOHAN

Drama practice cancelled mom!
Lily teacher ko viral ho gaya!
(5)

5D INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - EVENING

YOHAN goes towards his room. He systematically gets his heavy school bag off his shoulder and neatly keeps it at his study desk. He is excited as he takes out his answer sheets and exclaims.

YOHAN

Sab subjects me first Mom!
Algebra, Geometry, Physics,
Chem, Bio, Geography, History,
English! ... sirf Hindi mein do
marks se second!

ISHAAN takes a break from his puzzle and looks up at his brother with admiration. YOHAN catches ISHAAN's gaze.

YOHAN

Inu? Tera kaaisa gaya...

ISHAAN doesn't answer, quickly resumes solving the puzzle. YOHAN reacts to the puzzle ISHAAN is solving and exclaims.

YOHAN

Wow! ...Yeh to ban raha hai!

ISHAAN gleefully blows bubbles into his glass of milk, his eye on the puzzle.

SHOT OF THE HALF SOLVED PUZZLE. CLOSE OF HIS HAND, AS IT MOVES QUICKLY, REFLECTING HIS QUICK-THINKING MIND AS HE ARRANGES THE PIECES OF THE JIGSAW.

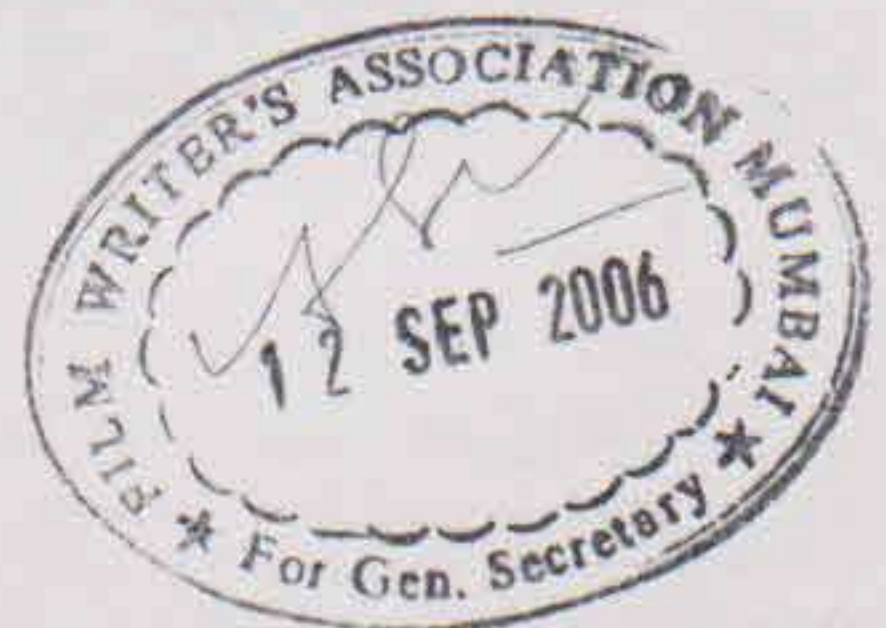
ON THE SOUNDTRACK: In the distance, the mongrels are barking excitedly.

ISHAAN reacts to the barking sounds and hastily brings down the milk glass, spilling the milk on the floor. He springs to his feet. He is still wearing his dirtied school uniform. MOTHER's stern voice.

MOTHER

Nahi Ishaan! ...Pehle Homework!
Pehle homework finish karo...

ISHAAN looks back at her, rushing out of the room. MOTHER shouts at the exiting ISHAAN.



MOTHER
Apna uniform to...

But ISHAAN has already exited. Door opens and shuts out of frame. MOTHER and YOHAN look at each other. YOHAN bursts out laughing.

(45 secs)

6 FXT. ISHAAN'S BUILDING - EVENING

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Music

ISHAAN is seen in the distance, away from the BUILDING KIDS who are playing cricket.

ANGLE ON: He is busy watching and playing with a snail in a small mud-patch skirting the concrete. The mongrels are his ready companions. The ball from the cricket game comes near ISHAAN. The GANG OF BOYS shout out to him to throw the ball back.

GANG OF BOYS
Aye ball ball ball ball ball
ball...

ISHAAN picks the ball and enthusiastically throws with all his might, but misses target by degrees, the ball going instead over the compound wall. ISHAAN bites his tongue and acknowledges his mistake. One of the GANG OF BOYS (RANJEET) shouts at ISHAAN.

RANJEET
Aye Duffer! Kidhar ball fekaa?
...Jaa abhi... ball leke aa!

Hearing the invective from RANJEET, ISHAAN doesn't comply. RANJEET is insistent.

RANJEET
Aye bola na ball leke aa.

ISHAAN keeps staring at him. RANJEET cannot tolerate this defiance from a boy much smaller than him. He walks menacingly towards ISHAAN and starts pushing him around in an insulting manner. ISHAAN holds his breath and resists a fight. This submission encourages RANJEET to get more physical and abusive.

RANJEET
Kya dekh raha hai! Huh? Kya dekh
raha hai?



(looking at GANG OF
BOYS)
Aye idiot... bola na... ball
leke aa... Chal... Chal...
Chal...

RANJEET keeps pushing ISHAAN from 1st position to 2nd, 2nd to 3rd, till he is against the wall. An indignant ISHAAN flings himself on RANJEET. ISHAAN, the smaller of the two, is vicious in this fight. The spunky ISHAAN takes on the taller, larger bully. The mongrels excitedly scamper around the two fighters. RANJEET, who begins twisting his hand, causing ISHAAN excruciating pain. ISHAAN holds back a grimace courageously. ISHAAN won't give up. Suddenly, he darts around and manages to sink his teeth deep and hard into RANJEET's hand. RANJEET screams and lets go. ISHAAN runs off.
(90 secs)

7/7A/7B I/E. ISHAAN'S BUILDING - STAIRCASE/ FIRST FLOOR/ TERRACE - EVENING (SUNSET)

A scratched and bruised ISHAAN runs up the stairs, his eyes moist, face grimacing with pain, he stops when he comes to the first floor and angrily kicks flowerpots arranged outside a door. ISHAAN charges up the stairs sometimes two at a time. Until he reaches the top landing.

(15 secs)

He pushes the terrace door open and runs right out. In the wide-open space, ISHAAN recovers his breath angrily, holding back his tears.

STAY ON ISHAAN, AN EXPRESSION OF HELPLESSNESS ON HIS FACE. FINALLY HE CRIES, NOT ABLE TO HOLD BACK HIS TEARS.

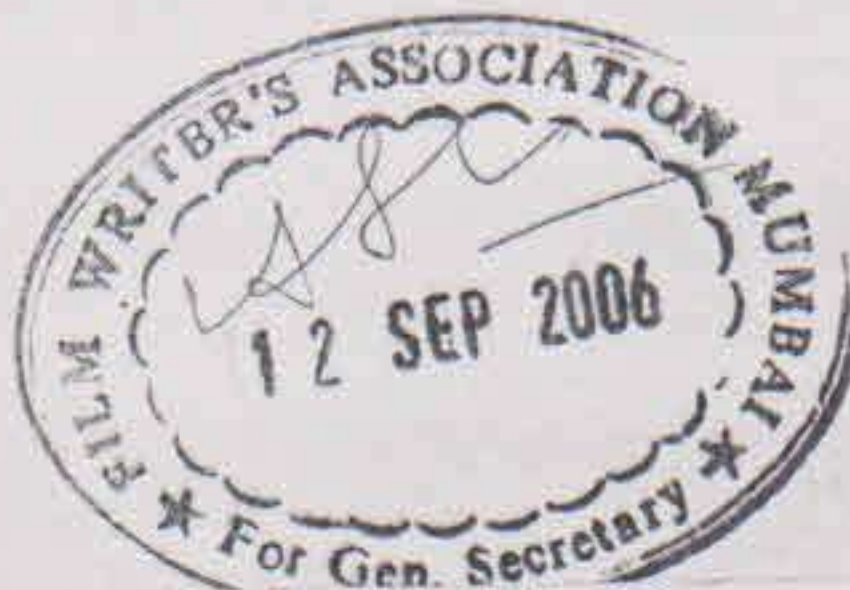
ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Sound of kids shouting from other terraces drowns his sound.

He looks around. A kati-patang flies into the terrace. This changes ISHAAN's mood. He runs to it, wraps the manja around his fingers, bites the string off from the kite, and carries both out of the terrace.
(30 secs)

8 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

ISHAAN pushes an open door.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: MRS. KARNIK speaks in a complaining tone...



MRS. KARNIK (O.S.)
 Bachchaa hai ya raakshas! Saare
 plants tahas-nahas kar diye...

ISHAAN gulps. MRS. KARNIK is ranting about ISHAAN, her
 bully son, RANJEET, standing beside her, putting on a
 'poor me' act for the benefit of ISHAAN's FATHER. ISHAAN
 moves back, realising the spot he is in but unfortunately
 FATHER spots him.

FATHER
 ISHAAN!

FATHER walks menacingly towards ISHAAN, raises his hand
 and tightly slaps ISHAAN on his cheek.

MOTHER winces as if she has received the slap... she
 holds YOHAN'S shoulder. Reaction of YOHAN.

YOHAN
 Lekin Papa...

Cut back to RANJEET just as he whines out a further
 complaint interrupting Yohan.

RANJEET
 Uncle...usne mera shirt bhi
 phaad dala...aur

But before he can complete his lie, ISHAAN pounces on the
 taller RANJEET. ISHAAN's FATHER extracts ISHAAN off
 RANJEET even as ISHAAN sways his arms trying to strike.

FATHER
 (distorted voice)
 ISHAAN Stop it! ISHAAN!!

A terrified MRS. KARNIK hastily exits with RANJEET,
 slamming the door behind her. ISHAAN's FATHER lets off
 steam on ISHAAN, not allowing him to put his argument to
 test.

ISHAAN LOOKS AT HIS FATHER SHOUTING, HIS VOICE SOUNDING
 ALL WARPED, HIS FACE DISTORTED IN A WIDE-ANGLE CLOSE-UP.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A drum roll accentuates the highs of
 his hollering.

FATHER
 Ha ho gayi! ... Har roz
 tumhari complaint! School se
 complaint! Building se
 complaint!... Ghar ke baahar



paon rakho to complaint. Agli
baar koi ghar pe complaint leke
aya... Mai...

FATHER's hand strikes MOTHER on the nose. ISHAAN cannot
resist a chuckle. This angers the FATHER further.

FATHER

Kass raha hai! Hass raha hai
Besharam! ...Shameless! Bahut ho
gaya!... One more complaint...
One more complaint ISHAAN...
Seedhaa Boarding School me daal
doonga!

FATHER turns towards MOTHER

FATHER

Dekha MAYA? Mai khadaa hoon...
tum khadi ho... phir bhi
maramari kar raha hai!!!!???

FATHER

Kya haalat kar dee uss bachche
ki! SHIRT PHAAD DIYA!

MOTHER walks intently towards ISHAAN, crossing FATHER and
sitting down on her haunches, cups ISHAAN's cheeks in her
fingers and keeps looking at ISHAAN's bruised face
continuously. FATHER watches her pointedly looking at
ISHAAN's face, avoiding FATHER's gaze. This exasperates
FATHER and he exits frame.

FATHER

Pooja karo baithkar iski!

FATHER exits frame. ISHAAN's MOTHER sees the muck on
Ishaan's clothes, the bruises on his face and body.

MOTHER

Kitni baar kahaa Inu, Ranjeet ke
saath mat khelo...

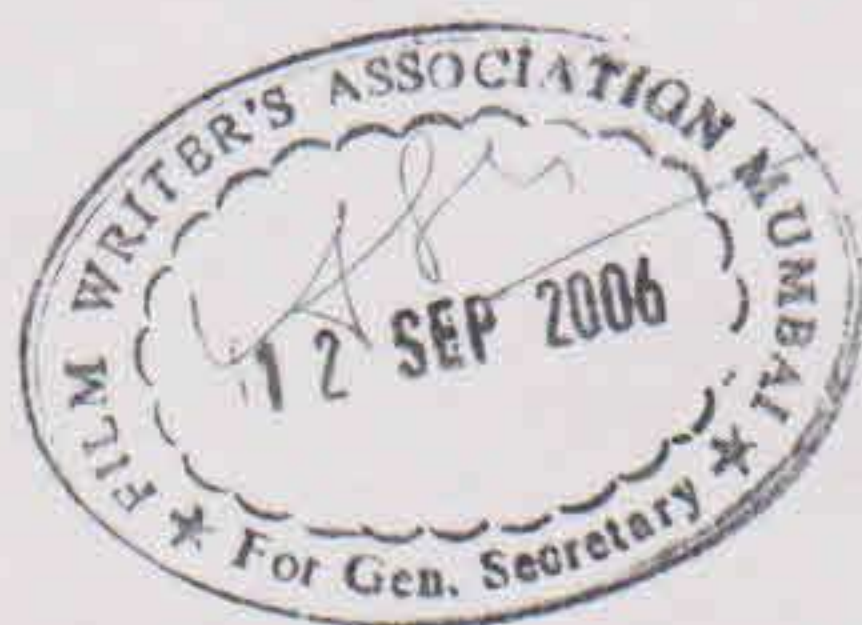
ISHAAN

Mama mai...

MOTHER

(softly)

Chalo, jao... garamaa garam
paani se nahalo. Phir dettol
lagaati hoon.



ISHAAN runs to the bathroom, stripping along the way. He passes YOHAN, who gives him a friendly pat on his bum. ISHAAN cackles and enters the bathroom.
(120 secs)

9 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

ISHAAN enters the bathroom and opens the hot-shower tap. Hot, steamy water pours on his body. He squirms as the steamy water jets hit the bruises, but he strikes a superhuman pose, repeatedly taking on, the steaming water on the bruises and snarling like an ape.
(10 secs)

10 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ISHAAN is wrapped in a towel post-bath as MOTHER applies Dettol on his wounds. ISHAAN tightens his nostrils and braves the sting of Dettol... MOTHER puts some mercury chrome on his bathed bruises. ISHAAN is brave about that too.

Suddenly he notices his FATHER packing his suitcase. He panics.

ISHAAN
(endearingly)
Papa... Papa, aap kahan ja rahe ho?

FATHER continues to pack, ignoring ISHAAN

ISHAAN
Papa... Papa aap

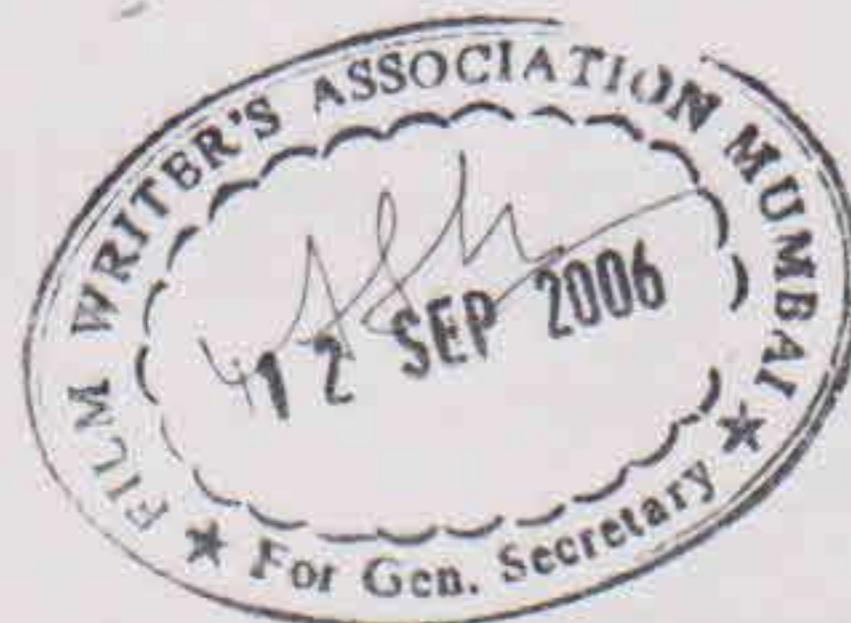
Sharp cut.

FATHER
Jaa raha hoon mai... ghar chhod ke... waapas nahi aaoonga...

Ishaan frightened.

ISHAAN
...Sorry Papa... sorry Papa...

FATHER does not respond. ISHAAN's MOTHER intervenes.



MOTHER

Kyon dara rahe ho bacche ko?
(to Ishaan)

Inu... Papa office ke kaam se ja
rahe hain... tumhari wajah se
nahi. Sunday ko vaapas aa
jaayenge...

ISHAAN looks at his FATHER with a look of accusation for
having lied to him.

STAY ON ISHAAN'S LOOK.

(45 SECS)

**11 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - PARENTS'S BEDROOM - MORNING
(DAWN)**

ANGLE ON: Clock shows '5.30'. ISHAAN's FATHER is ready
for exit, looking dapper and businesslike. YOHAN and MOM
are there to see him off. On this action, the song
begins.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: SONG I - 'FAMILY SONG' begins. Plus
digital alarm clock that goes off in the distance.

FATHER exits.

(30 secs)

JUMP CUT TO:

11A INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - MORNING

A spic-and-span YOHAN buttons his top few buttons and
brushes his hair. ISHAAN is still in bed. YOHAN picks up
his heavy satchel, a covered tennis racquet and gallantly
strides out of the house at 6.45.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The song continues.

YOHAN

Bye Mom... shaam ko tennis
practice hai!

YOHAN exits.

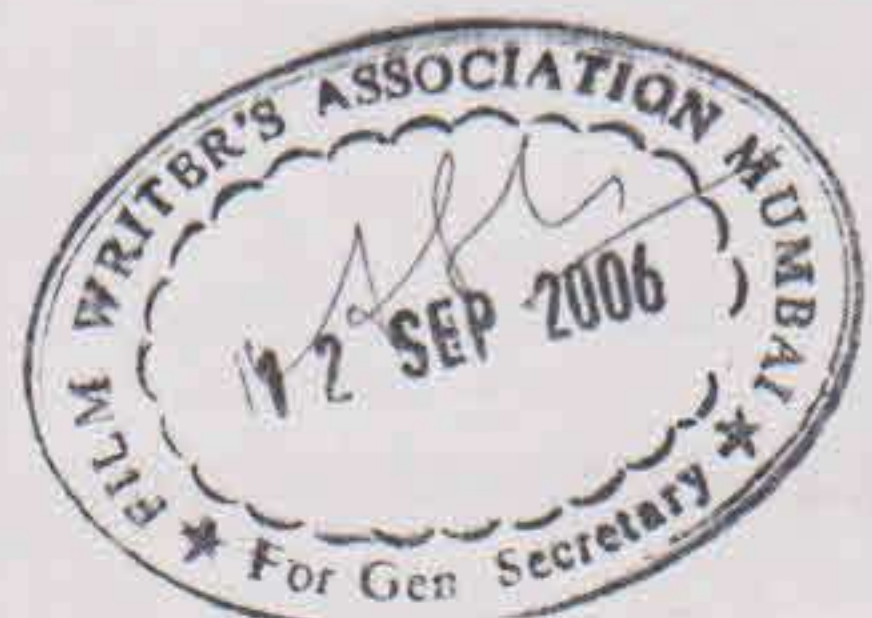
(25 secs)

JUMP CUT TO:

11B INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - MORNING

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Idli cooker whistle.

MOTHER, comes into ISHAAN's room post head bath and
shakes up ISHAAN "It's 7.30!"



HE TURNS ON HIS PILLOW TO FACE CAMERA, CLOSE IN ON HIS CALM FACE...

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The Song continues.

MOTHER

Saade saat baj gaye!!! Inu
utho!!!

JUMP CUT TO:

11C INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - WASH BASIN - MORNING

ISHAAN with brush in mouth but not brushing.

JUMP CUT TO:

11D INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - MORNING

ISHAAN with milk glass to mouth but not drinking.

JUMP CUT TO:

11E INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - TOILET - MORNING

ISHAAN sitting on the potty and swaying his feet.

JUMP CUT TO:

11F INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MORNING

ISHAAN under the shower and his blue soap is a spaceship.

ISHAAN

ZZZZZZZZZZZ ATTACK UNIDENTIFIED
AIRCRAFT... POSITION D2F7...
DDDDDDDD!!!!

MOTHER (V.O.)

(exasperatedly)
ISHAAN! Jaldi karo!

(45 secs)

JUMP CUT TO:

11G INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM/ ISHAAN'S BUILDING - STAIRCASE - MORNING

ISHAAN, on the bed, in towel, solving the Rubik cube.



ON THE SOUNDTRACK: HONK! HONK! The song continues.

The sound of the school bus horn! Horrors! Obviously, this happens every morning.

IN QUICK CUTS, MOTHER MAKES ISHAAN READY... SOMEHOW BUTTONS ISHAAN'S SHORTS, TIES HIS LACES, AND BRINGS HIM OUT OF THE DOOR WITH HIS BURDENSOME BAG.

11H EXT. STAIRCASE- MORNING

MOTHER LITERALLY PULLS ISHAAN DOWN THE STAIRS.

All this while, the insistent sound of the school bus honking increases in pace.

11I EXT. ISHAAN'S BUILDING - MORNING

ISHAAN steps out of the building gate, straight into a puddle. *SPLASH!!!* MOTHER's reaction! She hauls up the boy with MAADHOO'S help. Now only ISHAAN'S face sticks out in profile from the bus. MOTHER gives a peck on ISHAAN's cheek.

(50 secs)

11J INT. SCHOOL BUS - MORNING

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Song continues up-tempo until the end of this scene.

In the bus, MAADHOO picks him up and makes him sit in the front, on the engine hump next to the DRIVER.

Stay on ISHAAN, from behind him, as he looks out of the front window. (30 secs)

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The prattle of kids.

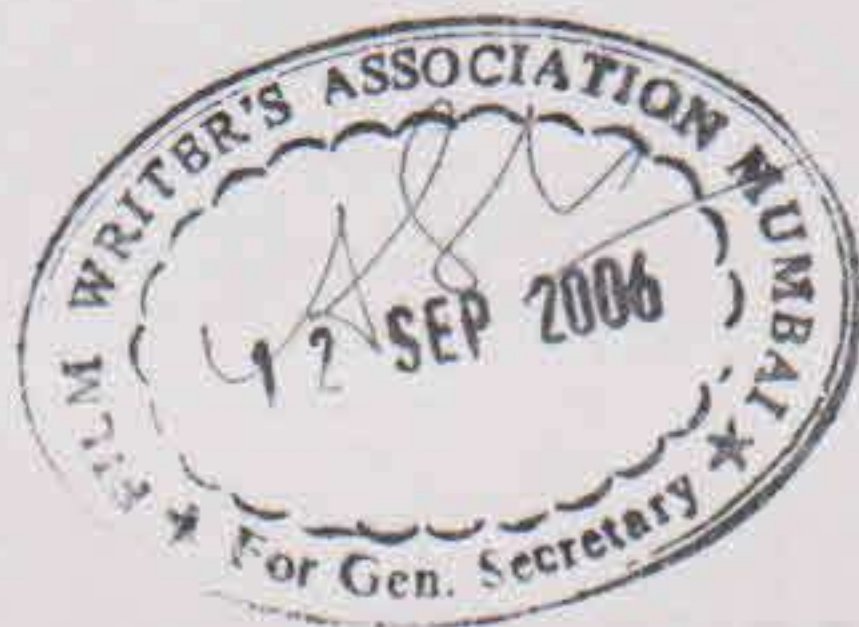
12 EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - MORNING

The bus arrives in school and pours out its contents.

(10 secs)

13 EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - ASSEMBLY HALL - MORNING

As the STUDENTS gather in the assembly hall. We travel the faces of various children - each child special, each with his own eccentricity. The scene treatment is documentary. We let the children's faces speak of restlessness, stillness, naughtiness, alertness - each



face telling it's own story. Nobody seems to be listening to the voice of the Principal, which is distorting badly on the P. A. System. It sounds like an indecipherable railway announcement.

13A EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - ASSEMBLY EXIT - MORNING

Follow feet as they step out of assembly in single file. Zero in on one pair of feet, the socks dropped to the ankles, the shoes mucked up with 'keechad'. The step is completely non-synchronous. Tilt up to reveal ISHAAN as he attempts to keep time with the boy in front. He is suddenly pulled out of line...

PREFECT
(pulling out ISHAAN)
Shoe polished nahi hai!

ISHAAN joins a bunch of improperly uniformed kids. The appearance of this lot speaks a lot about its character. Portrait of the misfits. (60 secs)

FADE OUT.

14 STUDIO - POTHOLE

ANGLE ON: A pothole filled with water, reflecting the sun, seen through the classroom window. Some vehicle or the other splashes cyclically over it.

Stay on the puddle as the water in the pothole settles.

IRENE TEACHER (O.S.)
Class... Turn to page 38,
chapter 4, para 3. We are going
to mark adjectives today...

14A INT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - MORNING

ISHAAN does not react to the teacher's voice. He keeps staring at the shimmering puddle. The sunlight shines in ISHAAN's eyes, reflecting his wonderment. He is lost in the world outside.

CLOSE ON: ISHAAN

IRENE TEACHER (O.S.)
ISHAAN RAO... please turn to
page 38, chapter 4, para 3...

ISHAAN'S POV: The image of the puddle.



IRENE TEACHER (O.S.)
 ISHAAN RAO! Can I have your
 attention please...

ANGLE ON: ISHAAN. There is no response to the teacher's
 call. The voice turns harsher

IRENE TEACHER (O.S.)
 ISHAAN!

ISHAAN reacts sharply and turns towards his teacher.
 Sharp cut.

ANGLE ON: IRENE TEACHER

IRENE TEACHER
 I said turn to page 38, chapter
 4, para 3... read the first line
 and point out the adjectives!

ISHAAN just doesn't seem to get the question. He looks
 around blankly, seeing what the others are doing. IRENE
 TEACHER repeats.

IRENE TEACHER
 Page 38, chapter 4, para 3. And
 don't start your dumb act again!

He stands up and asks

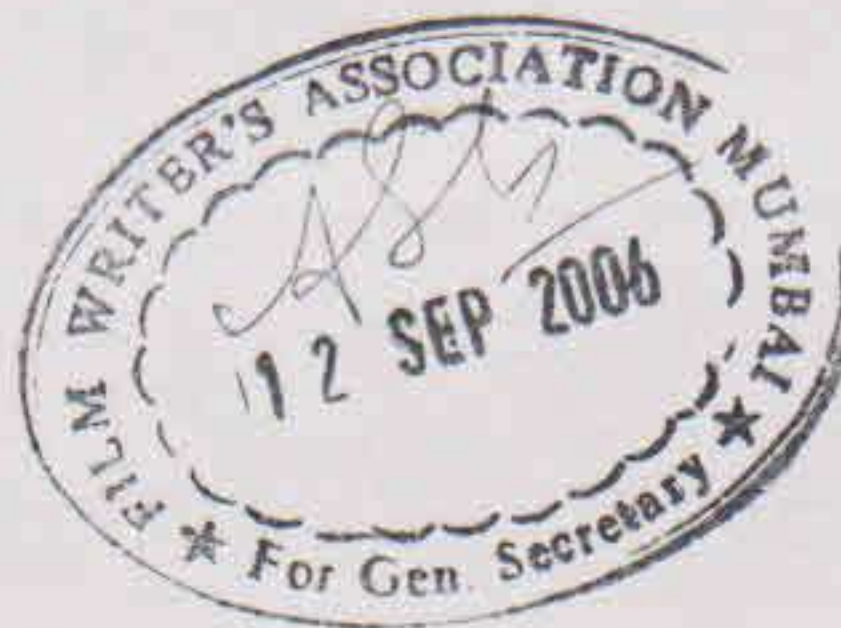
ISHAAN
 ... w...w...w?

IRENE TEACHER
 ...Page 38, chapter 4, para 3.
 AADIT LAMBA... just help the
 boy...

The boy sitting next to ISHAAN turns ISHAAN'S book to the
 requisite page... ISHAAN keeps staring at the page.

IRENE TEACHER
 Come on now... 3rd para... read
 the sentence and tell me what
 the adjectives are...

ISHAAN tries with difficulty but without success. The
 result... a stretched, intensely excruciating moment for
 the uncomfortable ISHAAN.



IRENE TEACHER

This won't do everyday... come on, come on...

ISHAAN looks fixedly at the book, but doesn't utter a word. The class starts snickering.

IRENE TEACHER

OK... lets mark the adjectives together... read the sentence... come on.

ISHAAN

...ye... ye... naachte hain...

Class reacts with titters

IRENE TEACHER

What??? Speak in English!!!

ISHAAN

... the letters are dancing...

More titters.

IRENE TEACHER

The letters are dancing again are they???! Well... read the 'dancing letters'

ISHAAN tries afresh... mumbles at most... completely inaudible. IRENE TEACHER instructs...

IRENE TEACHER

LOUD AND PROPER! LOUD AND PROPER!

ISHAAN feels cornered. An expression of entrapment begins forming on his face. He looks around in panic and as if hunted.

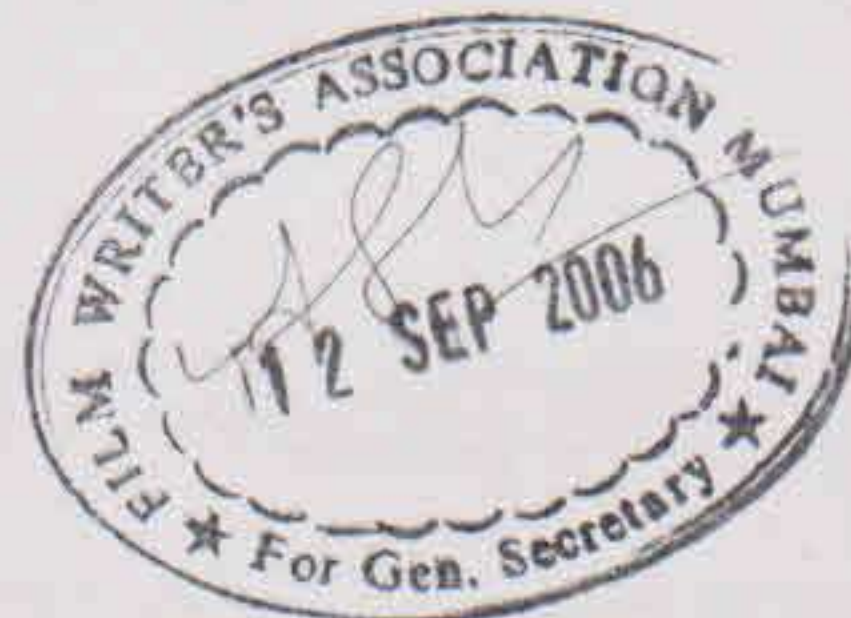
IRENE TEACHER

Come on... we don't have all day!!! Loud and proper!!!

He suddenly looks down into the book and launches into gibberish loudly in a manner that has the class in splits. The teacher loses control over the class.

IRENE TEACHER

Enough! Enough is enough! I've had it! Out you go! ...Out! Out of the class!



ISHAAN's face falls. A moment of reckoning. Then he begins walking up the row towards the exit. As he passes the children up close, suddenly he strikes a pose of bravado.

ISHAAN

Yesssss!!

And pulling a clenched fist triumphantly, he exits the class, throwing a last look at the kids as if this was what he actually wanted!

(120 Secs)

14B EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM - DAY

Outside the classroom he gets restless. He looks around and shifts about. A class is being taken for P.T. The passing row of kids, the kids look at the punished boy.

JUMP CUT TO:

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The school-bell rings.

ANGLE ON: ISHAAN's face. It is the end of the English Grammar class. The teacher steps out.

IRENE TEACHER

Go in now.

ISHAAN moves towards the class.

(30 Secs)

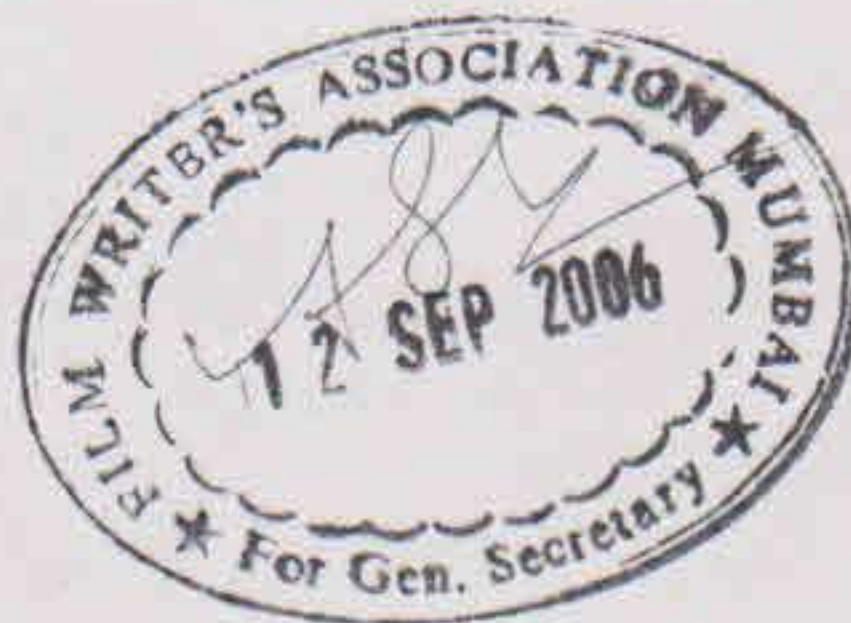
14C INT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Follow ISHAAN as he enters class. He is met with snickering faces. He enters the row to go to his seat. AROON PODDAR who is opening her math book accosts him.

AROON PODDAR

...ISHAAN... Maths homework
kiya?

Panic on ISHAAN's face.



AROON PODDAR

Ha Ha... Unit Test paper sign
karke laya?

(ISHAAN's fear ridden
face)

Gayaa... ab tu gaya! Now you're
gone!

Stay on ISHAAN's face as he moves unsure towards his
seat. He sits down and thinks nervously. Then he picks up
his satchel, heaving it over his shoulder.

(30 Secs)

15 EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - STAIRCASE - DAY

CLOSE ON: Tight close of satchel strapped on.

PULL OUT: ISHAAN going down the stairs.

15A EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - CORRIDORS - DAY

ISHAAN travels through St.Xavier's Corridors.

16 EXT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - COMPOUND - DAY

TIWARI GUARD is distracted as a teacher hands over some
papers for him to xerox. Just then, ISHAAN comes out of
the building and wanders off to the backside of the
school.

(20 Secs)

17 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE SCHOOL - DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: SONG II - FREEDOM SONG begins.

A table-top tight-pan over boras, chikki, imli, churans,
zeera golis, chana-sing, white and pink striped sticky
candy being shaped into a cycle. (10 Secs)

17A EXT. ROAD CROSSING - DAY

Tight telephoto follow, ISHAAN taking on a whizzing,
buzzing traffic, almost getting knocked down. (10 Secs)

17B EXT. HIGH RISE - DAY

Agile feet climbing up scaffolding erected on a tall
building. The feet reach a towering height. Swish tilt
down to ISHAAN's face, intense, watching the painter at
work on the exterior of the high-rise. Plop! A small
droplet of paint falls on ISHAAN's cheek in a tight



close-up shot as he watches the action above with great interest. (15 Secs)

17C FXT. ROAD CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

A huge earth-mover in action as it crunches into a tar road stretch. Pan over faces of people who have taken time out from their daily chores and formed a crowd to watch this momentous event; so what if it doesn't concern their mundane daily lives! The pan on the faces ends with ISHAAN's sweaty face, his eyes shining with discovery. Again, the awesome jaws of the earth-mover crunch on the tar. (15 Secs)

17D EXT. ROAD TREASURE SITE - DAY

New locale... ISHAAN finds a shiny ball-bearing. He takes out his potli and puts the ball-bearing in. As an afterthought, he extracts a 2 rupee coin...

17E EXT. ICE CANDY VENDOR - DAY

Shot of a hot midday sun reflecting into the lens.

A slab of ice being sliced on a manually operated ice-candy machine. The 'gola' taking shape in the seasoned wrinkled hands of a 'golawala'. Bright yellow colored syrup from a capped bottle going 'glubb glubb' on the 'gola' followed by deep red syrup from another bottle. Thick, gooey orange syrup is poured on the head of the 'gola' and the sinfully attractive stuff is ready to be had. The 'golawala' hands it to a MASON, who pays the 'golawala' and extends the 'gola' to his TODDLER SON, who is seated comfortably on his shoulders- both father and son, sparsely dressed, only in 'langoti', their healthy skin, a deep chocolate brown.

ISHAAN's POV: The TODDLER SON merrily slurps on the 'gola' as the MASON begins to move. Follow the twosome for a distance.

Shot of ISHAAN watching the happy father-son image, even as he forgets to slurp on his own 'gola'. The gola falls off the stick. (30 Secs)

17F I/E. PET SHOP - DAY

CLOSE ON: A goldfish in a fish-tank, ISHAAN's face reflected in the glass.

WIDE: A roadside pet-shop, where he is gazing at the fish. (10 Secs)



17G EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

A steady stream of water from a bent utensil ends up into an upturned open mouth of a laborer as he glug-glugs it down. ISHAAN, seated on a pile of construction sand, watches this action intently. He is eating his chapatti-roll. He picks up his water bottle, unscrews the lid and tries to imitate the laborer's action. Most of the water spills out of the mouth. Also, he chokes with the action. (15 Secs)

17H EXT. STREET #2 - DAY

Shot of a cotton beater 'twang-twanging' on the road. A couple of steps behind, ISHAAN following the twang-twang man. (10 Secs)

17I EXT. STREET #3 - DAY

Siesta time - a static composition of a foot stretched out of a stationary rickshaw. A street dog stretches, luxuriously yawning on the pavement. (10 Secs)

18 INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The SONG II - FREEDOM SONG fades out.

ISHAAN is crashed out on a seat in the school bus.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Sound of a school-bell in the distance.

ISHAAN rises. He has a window seat today. The school kids pour into the bus.

CLOSE ON: ISHAAN's face. The joy of a day well spent reflects in his mood. (20 Secs)

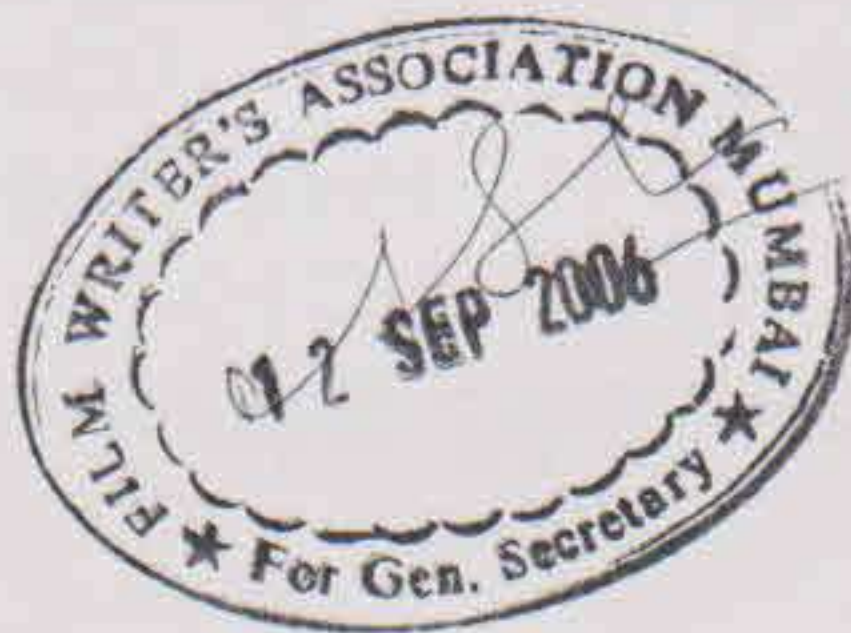
19 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - EVENING

ISHAAN, sitting cross-legged on the floor with color pencils and paper, a look of contentment on his face, while he works on a painting in his scrapbook. The painting is of color smudges created using color pencils, fingertips and spit.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Sounds of cutlery and crockery, setting up the table for dinner.

MOTHER (O.S.)

YOHAN, ISHAAN, haath mooh dho
lo, main khana laga rahi hoon.



YOHAN is studying at his table, close to ISHAAN. Next to his table, on a smaller study table, lies a castle made out of a cardboard carton. The label on the cardboard castle says 'Export Quality Mahabaleshwar Strawberries'.

ANGLE ON: The crafted cardboard structure.

YOHAN peeps over ISHAAN's shoulder and watches his colorful painting. He smiles.

YOHAN
Wow! Ye kya hai?

ISHAAN looks meaningfully at his creation.

CLOSE ON: The painting.

FLASH INSERT: In half dissolve a gola rotates on its axis.

Both painting and gola, yellow, orange and red.

The rotating gola reflects in ISHAAN's shining eyes.
(30 Secs)

FADE OUT.

20 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

In the darkness of night, the detail of two brothers in bed, YOHAN fast asleep, ISHAAN restless. He extends his arm and the next instant the room is flooded with light from the bedside lamp. ISHAAN shakes up YOHAN.

ISHAAN
Dada... Dada... Dada...

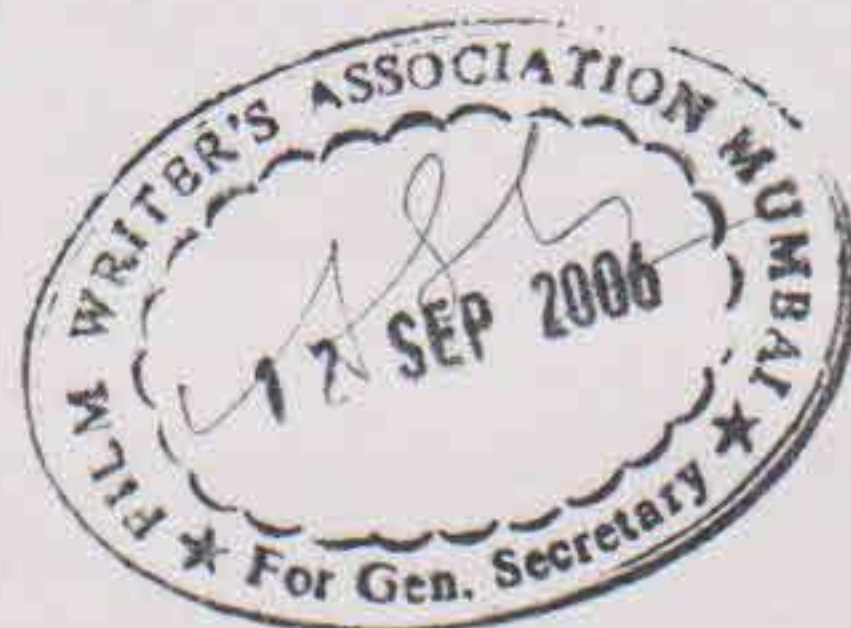
YOHAN
So jaa Inu...

ISHAAN
Dada...

YOHAN
Sorry, Inu, aaj kahani nahi...
mai bahut thak gaya hoon.

YOHAN pulls the sheet over his head. ISHAAN pulls it off.

ISHAAN
Dada, aaj main school se bhaag gaya...



YOHAN

Kya???

ISHAAN

Wo...wo wall... wall cross
karke... bhaag gaya!

YOHAN

Hainnn???

ISHAAN flashes an ear-to-ear smile.

YOHAN

Kab?

ISHAAN

First period ke baad...

YOHAN

Kyun?

ISHAAN

Home work nahi kiya tha na...
aur...

YOHAN

...kidhar gaya tu?

ISHAAN

Kahin nahi... idhar-udhar
ghoomaa... Road pe...

YOHAN

Road pe?

ISHAAN nods.

YOHAN

Akele?

ISHAAN

...Bindaas!

YOHAN springs and sits up.

YOHAN

Look at your guts! ...Huh?
Maaloom hai kitna dangerous hai?
Kuch bhi ho saktaa hai road pe!
Koi kidnap kar leta to? Idiot!
Papa bhi nahi hain!!!

Silence



YOHAN
Mom... mom ko bataya?

ISHAAN shakes his head silently.

YOHAN
Mai bataaon?

ISHAAN
(hisses)
Nahi!!! Nahi!!!!...

YOHAN
Phir...

ISHAAN
Dada, Dada please... absent note
likh ke do naa... please...

YOHAN
Kya?

ISHAAN
Absent note...

YOHAN
Nahi...nahi...nahi...nahi... mai
nahi... Jhooth-mooth ka note mai
nahi likhne wala!!! I'm sorry...
Chal...Chupchaap so jaa! Kal
subah Mom ko sab bataa doongaa!

And YOHAN shuts the light. Two beats... light comes on
...

ISHAAN
Dada...please...
(90 SECS)

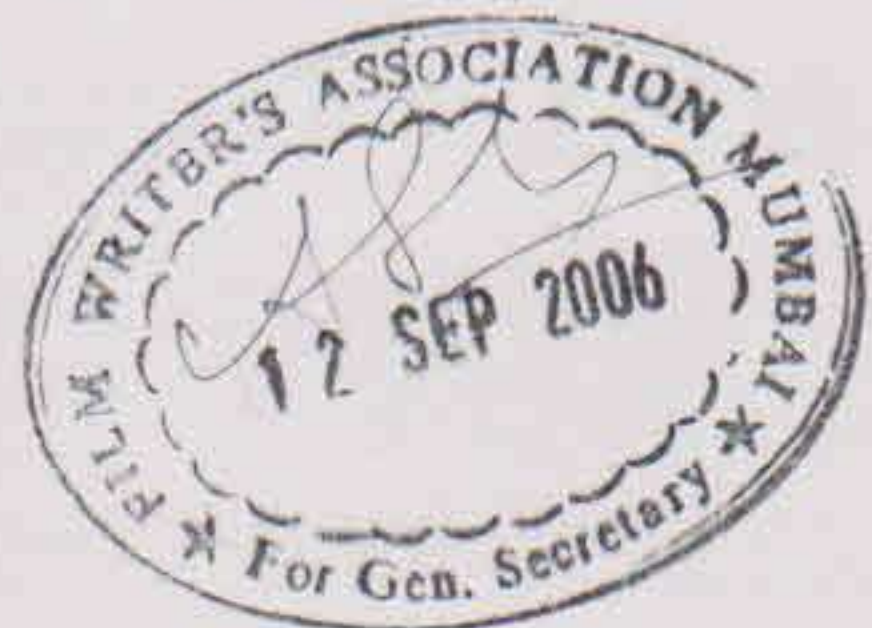
21 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

ISHAAN hands over his school calendar to VICTORIA, the
Mathematics and Class teacher.

CLOSE ON: The calendar page. An absent note, written and
signed with the name MR3. MAYA N. RAO.

The TEACHER countersigns it and returns the calendar to
ISHAAN.

ISHAAN has a slight cough and sniffle.



VICTORIA TEACHER
(feeling ISHAAN's
forehead)

Hmmm...

ISHAAN turns and smiles under obvious glee. As he moves away she starts to get up announcing loudly...

VICTORIA TEACHER
Children... surprise math
test...

VICTORIA TEACHER
Ye test final me ginaa
jaayegaa... to dhyaan se
(VICTORIA TEACHER
distributes test
sheets...)
Ye lo... take one and pass the
rest...

ISHAAN peers at the quiz sheet lying in front of him. The sheet has a series of simple multiplication and division questions. He looks around himself. Everybody is busy with the quiz. He twiddles with his pencil and looks back into the paper.

CLOSE ON: The first question - $13 \times 9 = \underline{\quad}$

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The classroom ambience sounds change to a suspended musical note that builds into a Sci-fi track.

CLOSE ON: The number 3.

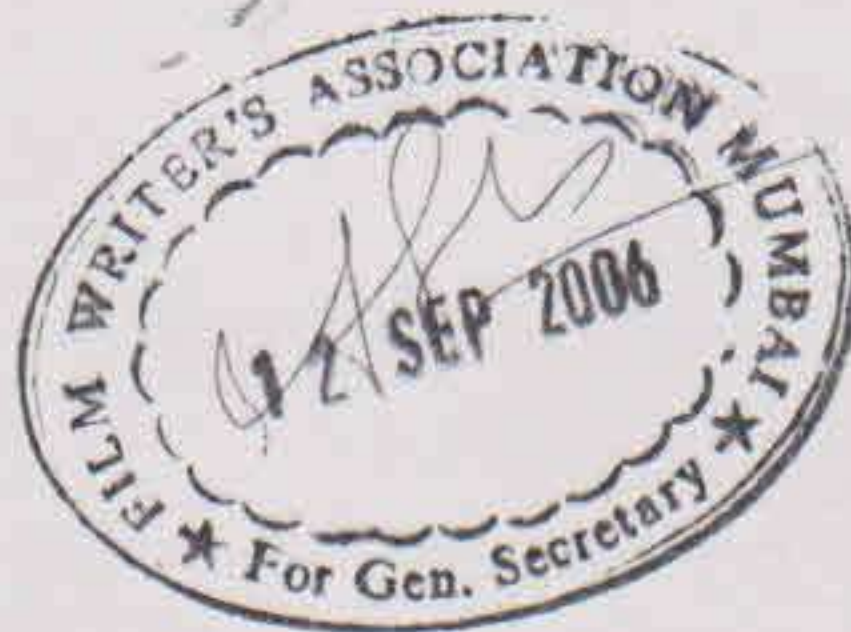
ON THE SOUNDTRACK: ISHAAN's voice speaking with mission zeal.

22 I/E. ISHAAN'S IMAGINATION

CLOSE ON: The number 3 morphs into a 3-D animated ball, namely, planet Earth, 3rd from the Sun.

PULL OUT: The other corresponding planets.

A spacecraft enters foreground, inside the bubble-headed spacecraft, is ISHAAN in command! He turns his head and looks at planet Earth.



ISHAAN (V.O.)
 Bindaas CAPTAIN ISHAAN Mission
 Impossible pe niklaa! ...Uska
 mission: Sooraj se teesre
 planet...planet Earth ko
 kheenchkar ... solar system ke
 9th planet... Pluto mein "into"
 kar denaa hai... 3...
 "into"...9.

Captain ISHAAN pushes a high-tech button and an anchor drops from under the spaceship. The anchor falls and latches on to snow.

WIDE SHOT: Planet Earth begins to move with a groaning creaking sound.

ISHAAN pushes several buttons.

ON THE SOUND-TRACK: Ear-shattering sound of many jet engines fills the track.

Planet Earth moves rapidly now.

The spacecraft tows the earth-ball away from its position towards Mars, which looks like a glowing fireball.

ISHAAN (V.O.)
 Arey Baap Re! Garmaagaram planet
 Mars to CAPTAIN ISHAAN ki
 Himalaya pakkad ko pighlaa
 degaa!

ISHAAN puts the spacecraft in full throttle. The earth-ball hurtles past Mars and the other planets and moves speedily towards Pluto. After the successful maneuver CAPTAIN ISHAAN sighs with relief.

ISHAAN (V.O.)
 Bachaa liyaa! ... ab 3... 9 mein
 "into" hone jaa raha hai...

The planet earth now speeds towards the 9th planet. CAPTAIN ISHAAN jams two buttons on his panel and the anchor chain and the winch fall off the spacecraft. The spacecraft does a sortie and exits frame.

Earth ball is now about to collide with Pluto. The number 9 flashes on Pluto, while number 3 flashes on the moving Earth globe.

ISHAAN watches the action from the bubble-head of the spacecraft.



Then the collision of the two planets occurs. Pluto is reduced to dust, while planet Earth rotates around itself and shines brilliantly.

ISHAAN (V.O.)
(triumphantly)
Pluto is destroyed! Wo planet hi nahin raha! Bindaas CAPTAIN ISHAAN ne Pluto ko solar system se uda diya!

CAPTAIN ISHAAN nods his head approvingly.

ANGLE ON: The revolving earth morphing fully into the number 3.

ISHAAN (V.O.)
(triumphantly)
Dhoond liyaa! Bindaas CAPTAIN ISHAAN ne jawaab dhoond liyaa! 3... 'into'... 9 ka jawaab hai...

The answer blinks.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The school bell rings.

BACK TO:

23 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

ANGLE ON: ISHAAN's quiz sheet. He writes the number 3, with a twisted grip on his pencil. All the other questions remain unanswered. A hand enters frame and takes away the sheet.

ISHAAN has a smile on his face. He looks around and meets another student's eye, who asks with a worried look.

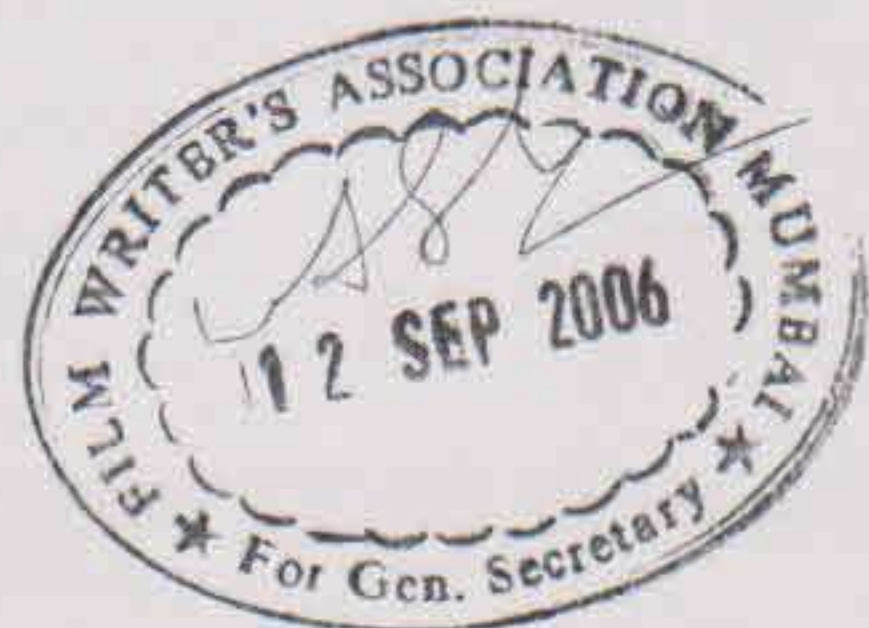
KABIR JOHAR
Kaisaa thaa... test...

ISHAAN
Bindaas!

(140 Secs)

24 INT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - WATER COOLER - DAY

ISHAAN mock-drives his space-ship and comes and stands behind a BOY (LOO BULLY) for drinking water from the cooler. The LOO BULLY drinks water very slowly, hogging the only glass. ISHAAN gets restless, taps him to hurry.



ISHAAN

Aye... jaldi kar naa...

LOO BULLY shrugs him off arrogantly.

LOO BULLY

Kya re... 3rd standard fail!
Idhar 4th standard ka line hai!
... Paas hoega tab ana paani
peene ko! Bloody duffer!

Anger flashes on ISHAAN's face momentarily. Then he smiles.

ISHAAN

Ek trick dikhaaon?

LOO BULLY

What stupid trick? Shuddup!!!

LOO BULLY fills his glass at the cooler tap. ISHAAN easing out the filled glass from the bully's hand

ISHAAN

Sachchi! Nice trick.... dekh...

And ISHAAN gulps down the water without the glass touching his lips glugg-glugg-glugg from above, just like the Mason at the construction site. ISHAAN finishes the glass and gives it back to the bully.

ISHAAN

Ahhhaaa!!! Abhi tu kar...

LOO BULLY fills it up and tries the trick.

LOO BULLY

Choke! Choke! Splutter!
Splutter!

ISHAAN laughs hysterically, copying the spluttering and choking action of the bully.

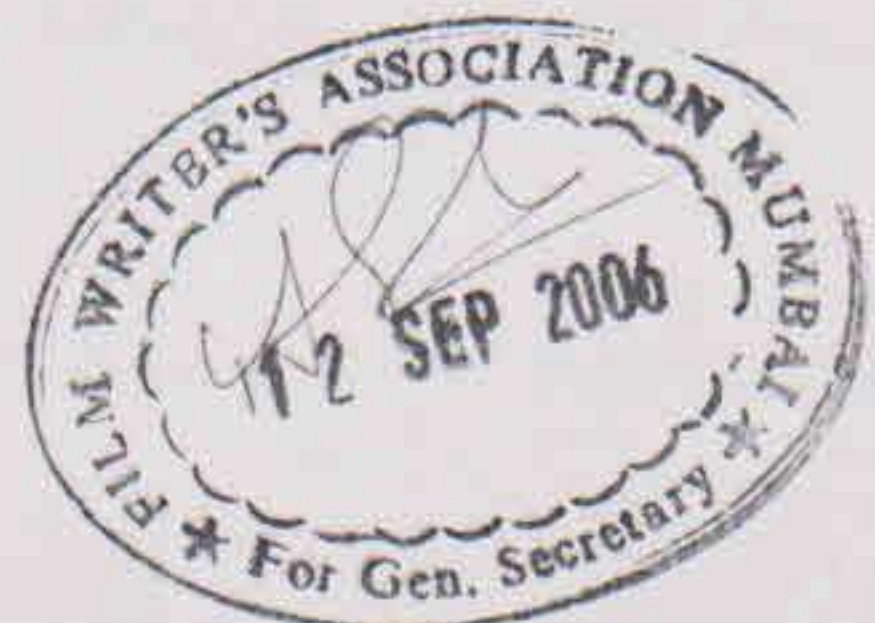
ISHAAN

(shouting and running
off)

Aye Duffer!!!!

The bully takes a late start to chase ISHAAN.

(60 secs)



24A INT. ST ANTHONY STAIRCASE- DAY

Documentary style shoot of end of day at St. Xaviers School staircase... kids gallop down...

(5 secs)

25 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

ISHAAN and his MOTHER are doing his homework together. YOHAN (b.g.) is at his study table. ISHAAN writes laboriously with a twisted grip on his pencil, his tongue sticking out, his face straining with the pressure. He writes slowly.

MOTHER

...Dikhaao...

ISHAAN hands over his book. She reads it and frowns. Meanwhile ISHAAN is looking at YOHAN and trying to whistle out with no success.

MOTHER

ISHAAN... sab spellings galat!
...Idhar table... t-a-b-e-l ...
aur yahan... t-a-b-l? ...Ye kya?
T_H_E the ki jagah sirf D? Kitni
baar ISHAAN? ...Ye kya hai???
Kal hi humne ye kiyaa thaa...
tum kaise bhool sakte ho Inu?

No answer from ISHAAN.

MOTHER

Bahut masti ho gayi! Phir usi
class mein reh jaaoge beta...
saare dost fourth standard mein
chale jaayengee... Concentrate
Inu... please... concentrate...

ISHAAN cocks his eyes and looks at his MOTHER intently.

MOTHER

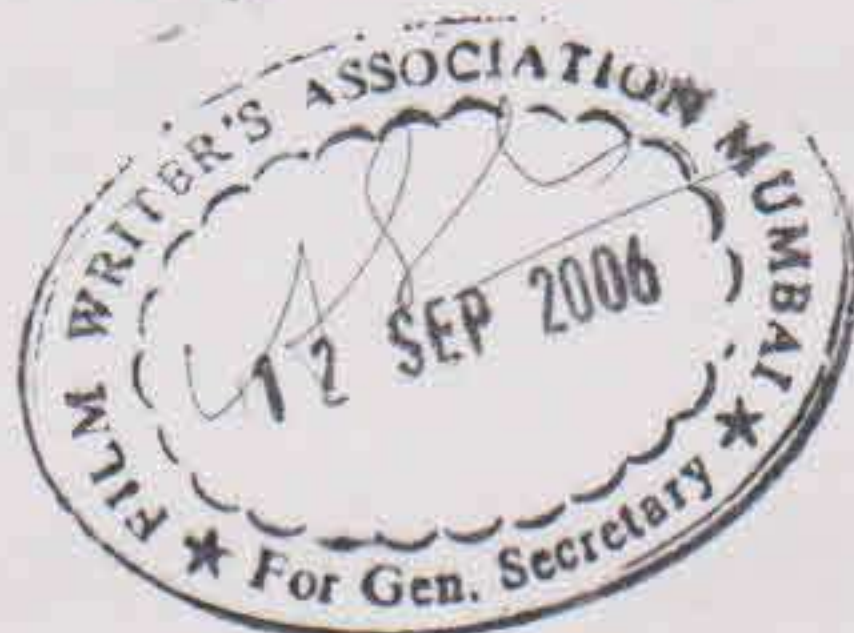
Baqwaas band karo aur spellings
correct karo!

ISHAAN

Nahi...

MOTHER

Kya?



ISHAAN

NO! NO! NO!

MOTHER bangs the book down on the bed. ISHAAN sticks out his tongue and escapes the frame even as MOTHER calls out.

MOTHER

ISHAAN! ISHAAN! Idhar Aao!!!
ISHAAN!

(60 secs)

26 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: TV screen. Channels whiz one after the other, at one point, a channel with a drummer doing a solo. Whiz back to this solo. Beat. The drummer in the middle of an awesome roll.

ANGLE ON: ISHAAN breathing deeply, immersed in the drum solo.

ANGLE ON: The drummer brings the solo to a cracking finish.

(20 secs)

FADE OUT.

27 EXT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - MAIN DOOR - MORNING

ANGLE ON: Sunday morning papers hung outside ISHAAN's house door.

The door opens and out pops YOHAN in tennis gear, ready to leave, kit-bag and all. He picks up the newspapers.

**28 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM/ KITCHEN/
ISHAAN'S ROOM - MORNING**

YOHAN gives the newspapers to FATHER, who is lounging on the sofa in his pajamas.

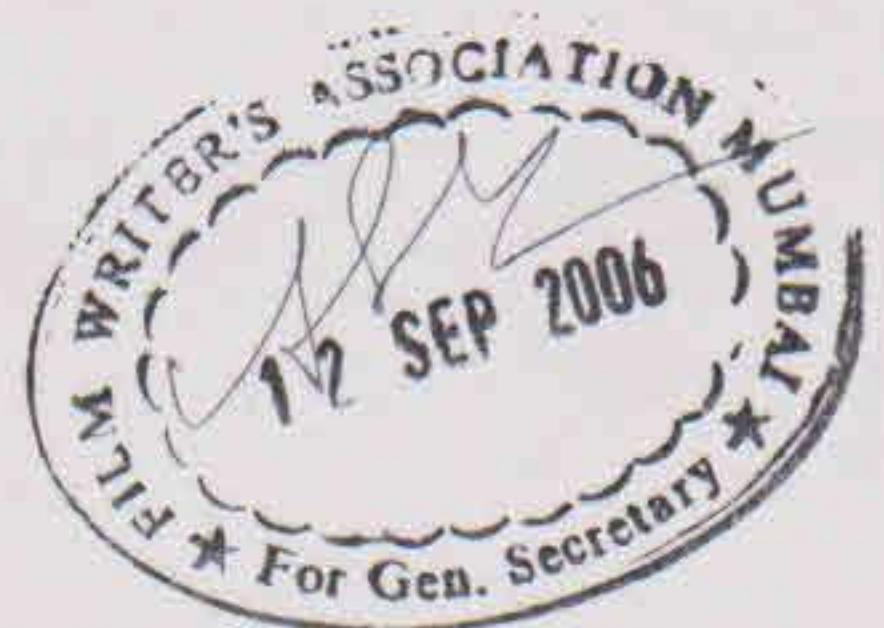
JUMP CUT TO:

28A INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - MORNING

ISHAAN is fast asleep in bed. YOHAN pops in his head.

YOHAN

Papa aa gaye Inu!!!



ISHAAN's eyes pop open! And a big smile appears on his sleepy face. Bleary eyed, he stumbles out of the bed and rushes out to greet his FATHER. Genuine joy!

28B INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - MORNING

ISHAAN
Papa... kab aaye?

FATHER
Kal raat... tum so rahe the...

YOHAN watches ISHAAN dig into FATHER's side. YOHAN smiles.

YOHAN
Bye Papa! Bye Inu!
(shouting out to mom in
the kitchen)
Bye mom!

YOHAN strides off with his tennis gear. ISHAAN looks up at his FATHER.

ISHAAN
Mere liye kya laaye?

FATHER points to the dining table, an unopened carton of grapes.

ISHAAN
Dada ke liye?

FATHER points to the grapes again.

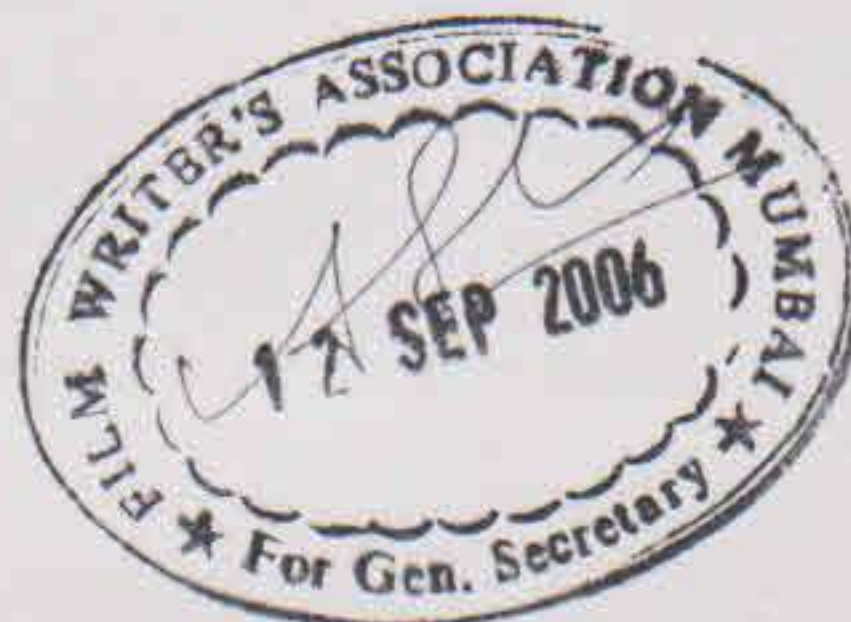
ISHAAN
Donon ke liye?

ISHAAN rushes to the table, opens the carton and picks out a bunch.

FATHER
Dho lo pehle!ISHAAN.....

ISHAAN teases him by getting the bunch to his lips, then he drops the bunch back into the carton and rushes to his FATHER and curls up next to him. It is a happy morning.

(45 secs)



29 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - MORNING

ISHAAN is sitting alone at the dining table, eating idlis and bargaining with FATHER for a trip to the aquarium. HOUSEMAID is doing jhaadoo-katkaa in the (b.g.)

ISHAAN

Papa... Papa... aquarium... Papa aquarium... please...

FATHER nods noncommittally, reading the Sunday papers, sitting comfortably on the sofa. He pulls out the latest Outlook from the neatly stacked newspaper rack. A rolled sheet of paper, around which is wound a couple of meters of manja, falls out of the rack. Out of curiosity, FATHER unwinds the manja and unrolls the paper. It is the absent note torn from ISHAAN's calendar. FATHER scrutinizes the note with MOTHER's signature. Then he calls out...

FATHER

MAYA!!! Thursday ko ISHAAN ko bukhaar tha?!

ISHAAN panics... freezes mid-chewing. MAYA hurriedly steps into the drawing room, wiping off her wet kitchen hands on her saree pallu.

MOTHER

Nahi to!

FATHER

To ye kya hai?
(shoving the note at MOTHER)

ISHAAN tense. MOTHER's face falls.

MOTHER

Maine ye note nahi likhaa hai...

Both parents now turn to ISHAAN.

FATHER

ISHAAN!!! Idhar aao!!!

ISHAAN inches towards where his parents are standing. ISHAAN's FATHER takes back the note from MOTHER and extends it to ISHAAN.

FATHER

Ye kya hai... Iss absent note ka kya matlab hai?!!



ISHAAN has turned into a statue.

FATHER

Kya poochh raha hoon mai?
Sunaaie nahi deta? Kya matlab
hai iss note ka?

A stunned ISHAAN just gapes at his FATHER. MOTHER peers at the note.

MOTHER

... Arre Thursday ko subah...
Mahabaleshwar gaye naa aap...
school bus tak chhodne mai khud
gayi thi...

FATHER continues interrogation.

FATHER

School nahi gaya... absent note
diya... Thursday ko kiya kya?
Jawaab do ISHAAN... varnaa maar-
maar ke chamdee udhed doongaa!

Unable to bear his FATHER's pitch he looks down.

FATHER

Neeche mat dekho Ishaan... Oopar
dekho... Oopar dekho... Meri
Aakhon mein... and answer me...
Where the hell were you on
Thursday!!! Where? Huh?
...Kahan??? School nahi gaye to
kahan gaye!!! Answer, God-damn-
it!!!!

ISHAAN

(stammering)

IIII... Bbbbbbbbunk...

FATHER

Kya? ...Kya bola??

ISHAAN

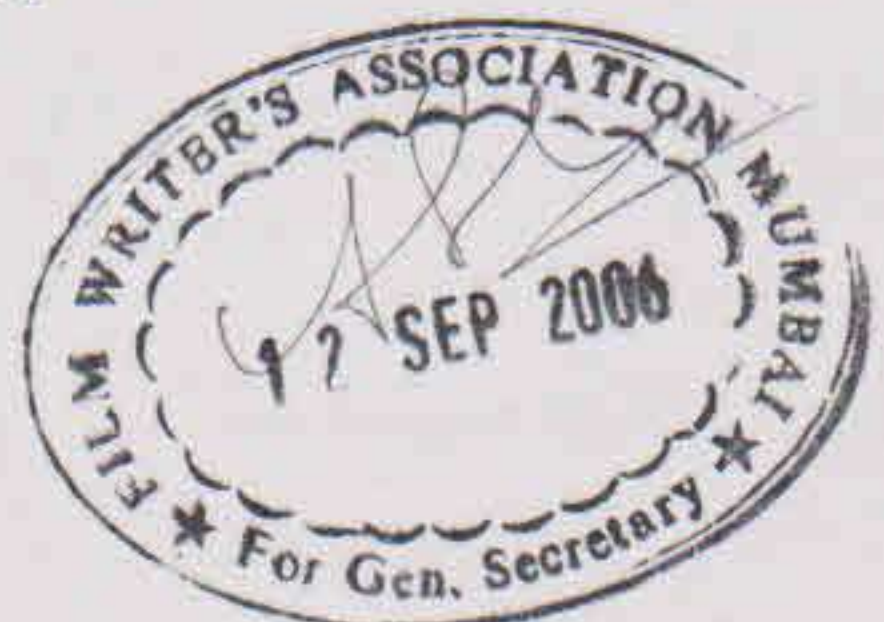
Bbbbbbbbbbunnnkkk...

FATHER zapped by the answer.

FATHER

WHAT? School bunk kiya
ISHAAN?

ISHAAN nods slowly with his head down.



FATHER

Bunk kiya aur kya kiya? Huh? Kya kiya? Kahaan gaye??? ...Kahan?

ISHAAN

Mai... mai... road...

FATHER

Road? What road? Kaunsa road? Kiske saath? ... Huh? Kiske saath???

ISHAAN

...Aaa...a...ake...akele...

FATHER

Akele? Dimaag kharaab hai??? Are you out of your bloody mind???...Sheher bhar mein akele ghoom rahe the... Hamaaraa zaraa bhi khayaal nahi aya??? Sunaa tumne MAYA? Kuch bhi ho sakta tha... Agar ye kho jaataa to kahan dhoondhte ise?!!!

Focus shifts to the absent note which FATHER is swishing around.

FATHER

Aur ye kisne likhaa???

Silence again while ISHAAN stands stoic.

FATHER

Tum to dhang se likh nahi sakte... bloody duffer... itna likh paate to paas nahi ho jaate? Bataao... kisne likha note???

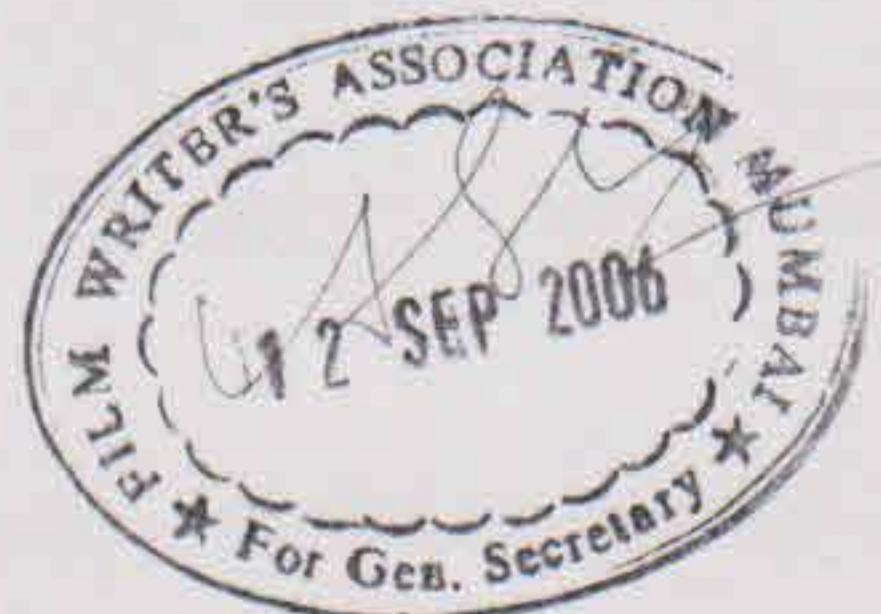
TELL ME ISHAAN... WHO WROTE THE ABSENT NOTE???

ISHAAN is stoic. He won't squeal. FATHER keeps badgering him with the same question.

FATHER

FOR THE LAST TIME... WHO WROTE THE ABSENT NOTE??? WHO??? WHO???

ANGLE ON: ISHAAN's shorts - he wets them - then the trickle down.



CLOSE ON: FATHER's open palm comes crashing on to ISHAAN's cheek. Tears well up in ISHAAN's eyes. Beat. Red welts form on his cheek.

(180 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:

30 * INT. ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S CABIN - DAY

CLOSE ON: ISHAAN standing in the Principal's cabin.

PRINCIPAL ANTHONY, ISHAAN's FATHER, MOTHER, VICTORIA TEACHER and IRENE TEACHER are seated.

CLOSE ON: ISHAAN.

VICTORIA TEACHER (O.S.)
Class-work aur homework... dono mein ... koi improvement nahi. Bilkul pichhle saal ki tarah... Books are still his enemies!

VICTORIA TEACHER
Padhnaa likhnaa jaise punishment! Uski English writing to kabhi-kabhi Russian jaisi lagti hai! Jaan boojh kar mistakes repeat karta hai! Dhyaan hamesha class ke baahar rehta hai...

IRENE TEACHER
...All the time asking permission to go to the toilet... I'm thirsty, I want to do susu... thirsty-susu, thirsty-susu... Disturbs the whole class with his pranks all the time.

VICTORIA TEACHER
Aap ne uske exam papers dekhe honge? ... har subject mein ande ubaale hain...

MOTHER interrupts.

MOTHER
Aap ne uske exam papers bheje the??



VICTORIA TEACHER

Pichhle Wednesday ko diye!
Parents signature ke liye... aaj
tak waapas nahi aaye.

IRENE TEACHER

They were a sight I tell you
MRS. RAO!... I sent a note just
to meet you...

Silence from ISHAAN. VICTORIA TEACHER extracts fresh
evidence from her file... shows empty blanks of the math
test.

VICTORIA TEACHER

Ye dekhiye uska Math test. 3×9
= 3. Buss! iske baad saare
sawaal chhod diye.. ye aisi-aisi
kartooten iski... Kaun maanegaa
ye YOHAN RAO ka chhota bhai
hai!!!

Silence overcomes the room as the group glares at ISHAAN.
PRINCIPAL ANTHONY clears her throat.

PRINCIPAL ANTHONY

MR. RAO, 3rd std mein vaise bhi
aap ke bete ka ye doosraa saal
hai... agar aisa hi chaltaa raha
to... mujhe dukh hai ki mai aap
ki madad nahi kar paoongi...
shaayad usey koi problem hai...

FATHER

Kya matlab???

PRINCIPAL ANTHONY clears throat again after a pregnant
pause.

PRINCIPAL ANTHONY

Aap uska test kyun nahi karaate?
Shaayad wo... kuch bachche
badnaseeb hote hain... aise
bachchon ke liye... alag se...
special schools bhi hote hain!

A pregnant pause settles on the group.

ISHAAN stands unsure of his fate.

(120 secs)



31 INT. MARUTI ZEN - DAY

ISHAAN'S POV. STREET KIDS selling books at the signal. ISHAAN sits alone, huddled in the back seat of the car. The car starts moving. The silent drive home is laden with meaning, with MOTHER in tears and FATHER indignantly glaring at the world in front of his steering wheel. The silence is punctured by Father's words.

FATHER

Thirks my son is a retard!
Sochti hai mera beta normal nahi
hai! ...Class me saathh-saathh
bachche bhare padey hain! Kya
khaak dhyaan de paayegi teacher
har bachche ko!

MOTHER

Kya nahi kiya maine... Bachchon
ki khaatir career, job sab kuch
chhod diya! Khud lessons leti
hoon... Subah-shyaam... ISHAAN-
ISHAAN-ISHAAN...

FATHER looks ahead angrily.

FATHER

No Maya... tumhara fault nahi
hai...

(Looks angrily at
ISHAAN in the rear-
view)

Ye aise nahi sudhrega...

Silence in the car.

32 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

FATHER is on the phone.

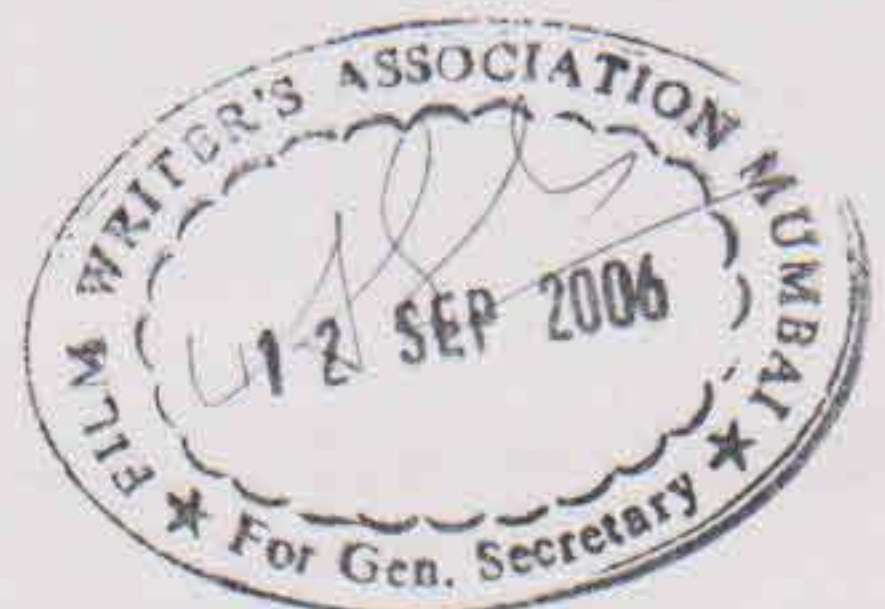
FATHER

Mai kal subah hi aa jata hoon...
Thanks. Thanks a lot SURESH!
Good night!

MOTHER, standing at the passage asks apprehensively.

MOTHER

Lekin... term ke beech me?



FATHER
(confidently)
SURESH KAPADIA ke chacha school
ke founder trustee hain... kal
hi Head Master se milke... fees
vagairaa bhar doongaa.

ISHAAN's horrified face. He bangs the table...

ISHAAN
Nahi!!! ...main nahi jaaongaa!

FATHER
ISHAAN! ...

YOHAN holds ISHAAN'S hand under the table, trying to give ISHAAN comfort. MOTHER has a look of serious worry on her face, she pauses and speaks in an unsure sort of way, a lump already knotting itself in her stomach.

MOTHER
...Ye saal pooraa kar lene dete
hain... phir... I mean...
Nandu... aaj tak wo mere
bagair...

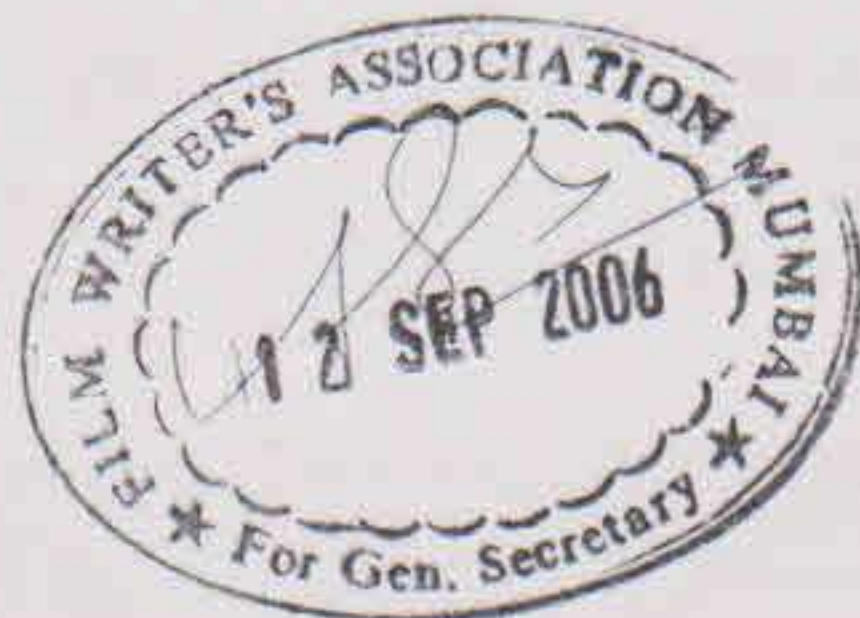
FATHER defends his decision.

FATHER
Aadat daalni hogi usey! ... Aur
tumne Principal ki baat nahi
suni? Wo to usey agle saal
school mein rehne nahi denge!
Dubaaraa fail karke nikaal
denge...Phir kahan jayenge hum?

A defiant looking ISHAAN stares angrily at his FATHER.
FATHER reacts.

FATHER
Dekho... kaise ghoor raha hai!
No bloody regret on his face!
Nasik Public School mein thok
peetke seedhaa kar denge! Aaj
Yohan se absent note
likhwaayaa... kal pataa nahi
kya!

Pause. An unsure MOTHER's face.



FATHER

mera yakeen karo MAYA... mai
baap hoon uska! ...Fees hamare
budget ke baahar hain... lekin
adjust kar lenge...

Pause. MOTHER reflects.

FATHER

Diwali ke baad term shuru ho
jaayegi...

ISHAAN looks at his MOTHER, who looks at his FATHER.
ISHAAN has tears in his eyes as he pleads.

ISHAAN

Papa... mujhe mat bhejo... i
don't want to go...

(90 secs)

33 EXT. RAILWAY STATION - DAY

<DREAM>

ISHAAN and his MOTHER are at a crowded railway platform.
A suburban train enters the platform. ISHAAN's MOTHER is
able to enter the train, but in the tug and pull of the
crowd, ISHAAN loses grip of his MOTHER's hand and is left
behind on the platform just as the train moves and
gathers momentum. ISHAAN screams hysterically, calling
out to his MOTHER.

ISHAAN

Mama... Mama...

(30 secs)

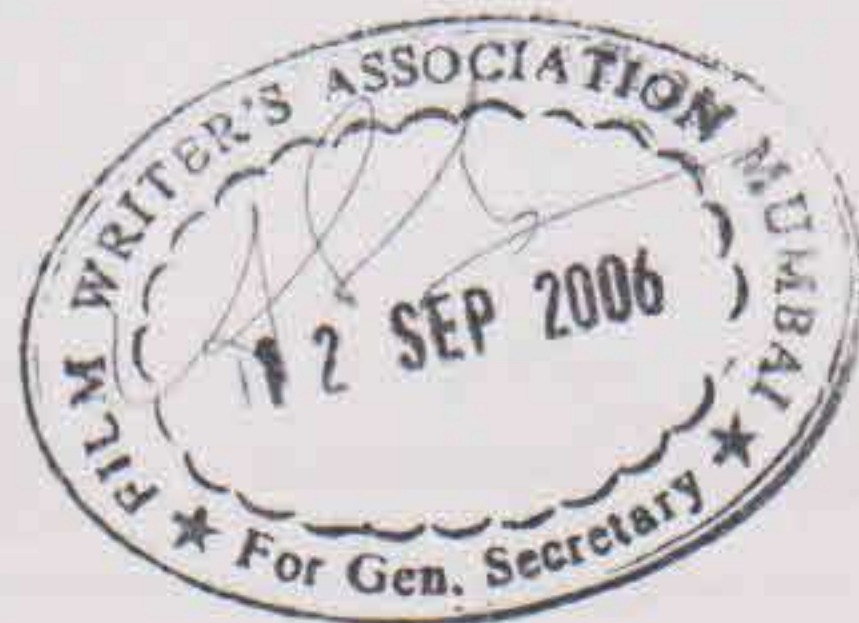
34 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - MORNING

ISHAAN is screaming in his bed.

ISHAAN

Mama! Mama!

He has wet his bed. ISHAAN's MOTHER runs to him. She
notices the wet blotch on the bed. Also, he is dripping
with sweat. She hurriedly shakes him to wake him up. He
sobs. MOTHER tries to calm him without success. MOTHER
has a lump in her throat. ISHAAN breaks down. He looks
most vulnerable..



ISHAAN

Mujhe boarding nahi.... nahi jana
mama... I am trying Mama... I am
knowing Mama... really... see...
A B C D H I K M L O V U X Y Z...
Dekhaa Mama... I know! Mujhe
aata hai Mama! ...aur bhi
aayegaa! Sab study aayegaa...
Main crackers nahi phodoongaa
Mama... No Diwali... lekin mujhe
boarding nahi... I don't want to
go Mama... mujhe boarding nahi
jana hai... mujhe boarding nahi
jana hai....!

The poor kid sobs like hell. MOTHER holds him tightly.
She too has tears in her eyes.

35 EXT. ISHAAN'S BUILDING ALT - TERRACE - NIGHT

ISHAAN sits alone while the building kids burst crackers.
RANJEET comes to light a sparkler next to ISHAAN, where a
diya is lit. He snickers at ISHAAN.

RANJEET

Kya ISHAAN... Phataka nahi phod
raha hai? ...Darr raha hai
naa... boarding school jaaneko?

ISHAAN gets defiant.

ISHAAN

Chup be!... Mai nahi dar raha
hoon! ... Dekh!

And he lights up a lavangi-mala in his hand and pointing
it towards RANJEET, sends it in his direction. RANJEET
has to scamper in order to dodge. ISHAAN shouts out to
RANJEET.

ISHAAN

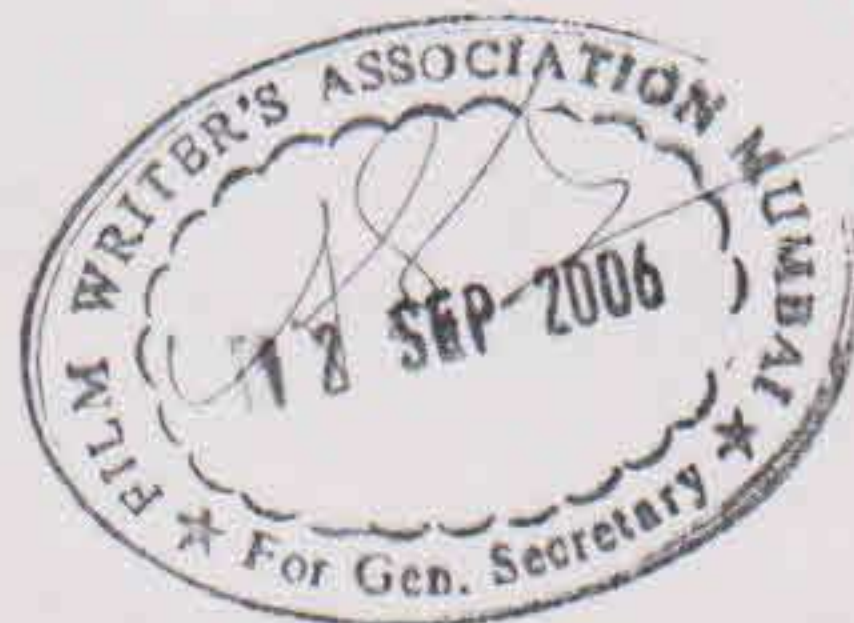
Mai nahi jaoongaa... mai nahi
jaoongaaa...

(30 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:

36 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

ISHAAN is weeping into his brother's chest, holding him
tight and pleading.



ISHAAN

Mujhe nahi jana... mujhe nahi
jana... Dada... please Papa ko
bolo naa... wo tumhari baat
sunenge... please... please
Dada... Papa meri baat nahi
sunte... please... mujhe nahi
jana hai...mujhe nahi jana
hai...

He sobs.

The night sky outside the secured bedroom window has
crackers bursting. (15 secs)

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

37 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

WIDE: Boarding School campus.

A hired Qualis, laden with luggage and carrying the Rao
family enters campus.

March-past practice is in progress on the wide school
ground.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Sound of bugles and drums give the
school an army-like feel.

(20 secs)

38 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - DAY

If ISHAAN had any intention of starting afresh, the
warning note of the HOUSEMASTER swiftly kills it. Though
he is not 'mean', he is firm and authoritative.

HOUSEMASTER

Aap ke Papa bataate hain ke aap
bade ziddi hain... Ek baat saaf-
saaf sun lo... Iss Boarding
School mein ek hi sikkaa chalta
hai ...discipline.

(to ISHAAN's FATHER)

...Aap fikar mat kijiye MR.
RAO... Yahan bade-bade bigde
ghodon ko naai pahanaayee hai
hum ne...

ISHAAN's frightened face speaks volumes of his fear.



ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A harsh bell rings somewhere, announcing the end of classes.

(25 secs)

39 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - EVENING (TWILIGHT)

Doors of the hired Qualis shut firmly.

Faces of FATHER, MOTHER and YOHAN inside the Qualis, looking like convicts, not meeting ISHAAN's eye. The driver starts the engine.

The effect of the engine starting on ISHAAN's face as he suppresses his emotions and raises a hand to wave his family goodbye.

ISHAAN's MOTHER cannot hide her tears, so also YOHAN.

The car moves away from ISHAAN until it is but a speck.

Only then, in the twilight, ISHAAN's chin quivers with emotion as his eyes well up. HOUSEMASTER in (b.g)

(45 secs)

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: SONG III - 'SONG OF SEPERATION 1' takes off.

40 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - EVENING

ANGLE ON: Depressing yellow lamps lighting up in a row, the dark dorm corridor.

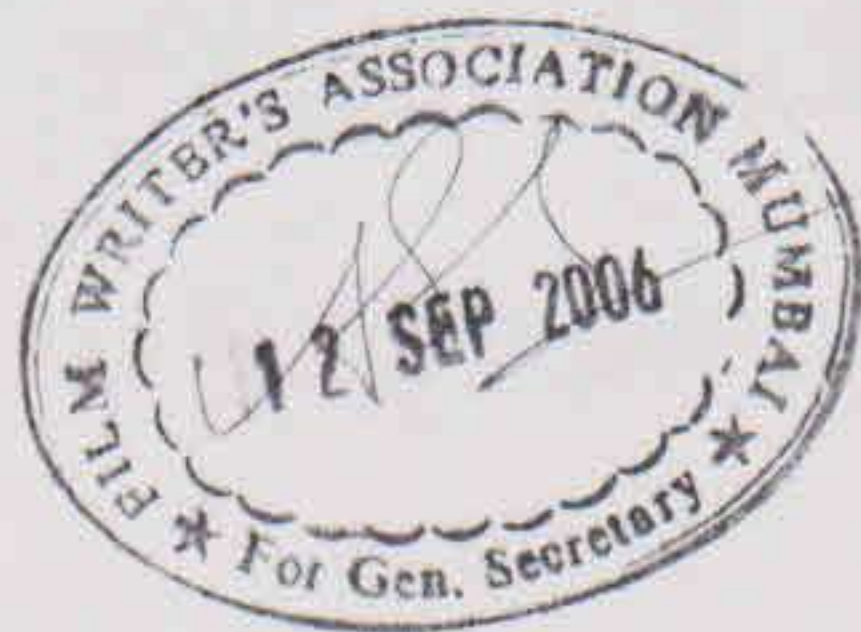
ISHAAN is seated on his bed, dressed in kurta pajamas.

In the b.g., other kids are changing into kurta pajamas for dinner.

A sad, dreamlike quality about the image. Slo-mo.

40A INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

ISHAAN at the dining table, not eating a single morsel of food from the served plate.



40B INT. TOYOTA QUALIS - NIGHT

MOTHER, looking out of the window, tears flowing freely from her eyes. YOHAN, passed out beside his MOTHER, his cheeks still wet with tears.

40C INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - NIGHT

ISHAAN sitting huddled in bed.

INSERT: A huge dorm clock as it strikes 10.

Lights out.

Other children of the dorm covering themselves with blankets.

INSERT: Shot of the clock. It is 2.

ISHAAN is seated on his bed, knees pulled up, his face hidden underneath, his shoulders shaking.

40D INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

MOTHER's hand opens Ishaan's Flip book. A series of ISHAAN's drawings of a family of 4 animate and end up with a drawing where the smallest of the family separates from them and exits the page. A tear drops on the page.

40E INT. BOARDING SCHOOL.

The dying strains of the song... Tie up the lace of life... baby learn to survive... Blind ...to... your... beauty... This world... is... really... naïve..... The guitar picks up, as Ishaan gets ready with a degree of difficulty, wrongly buttoning his shirt, not able to tie up his laces.

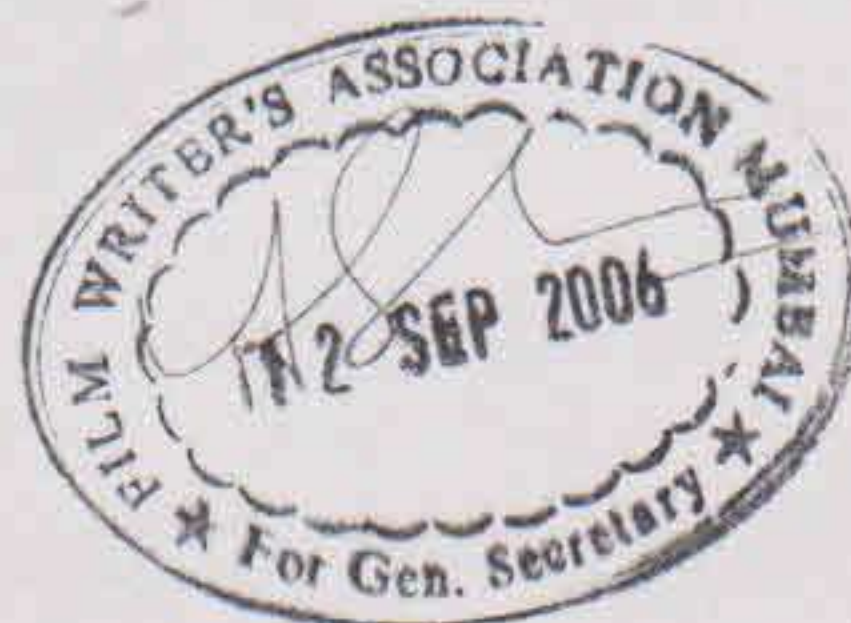
(180 secs)

41 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S CLASSROOM. DAY

A despicable character, the Hindi Teacher, MR. TIWARI, points a finger at ISHAAN.

MR. TIWARI
Bachchon... ye hai... ISHAAN
NANDKISHORE RAO!!!

MR. TIWARI commands ISHAAN...



MR. TIWARI

Yahan aage aao... apna bastaa
uthaalo! ...Aaj se tumhari jagah
yahan...

(points to the 1st
bench next to RAJAN
DAMODARAN)

...Meri aakhon ke theek
saamne... RAJAN DAMODARAN ki
bagal mein. RAJAN DAMODARAN
class mein first ata hai...
RAJAN ki sangat ka achchaa
parinaam tumpar ho... aisi
apekshaa karta hoon.

ISHAAN'S bench partner, RAJAN DAMODARAN, is polio-affected.
He smiles warmly at ISHAAN, who looks tense...

MR. TIWARI

Kavita pathan aur vyaakkyaa...
aaj ka kaarya-kram...
Atthaaaiswaan pannaa... "Kshann"
RAJAN... kavita paath karo...
aur ISHAAN NANDKISHORE RAO...
aap... aap kavita ka arth
samjhaayenge!

RAJAN

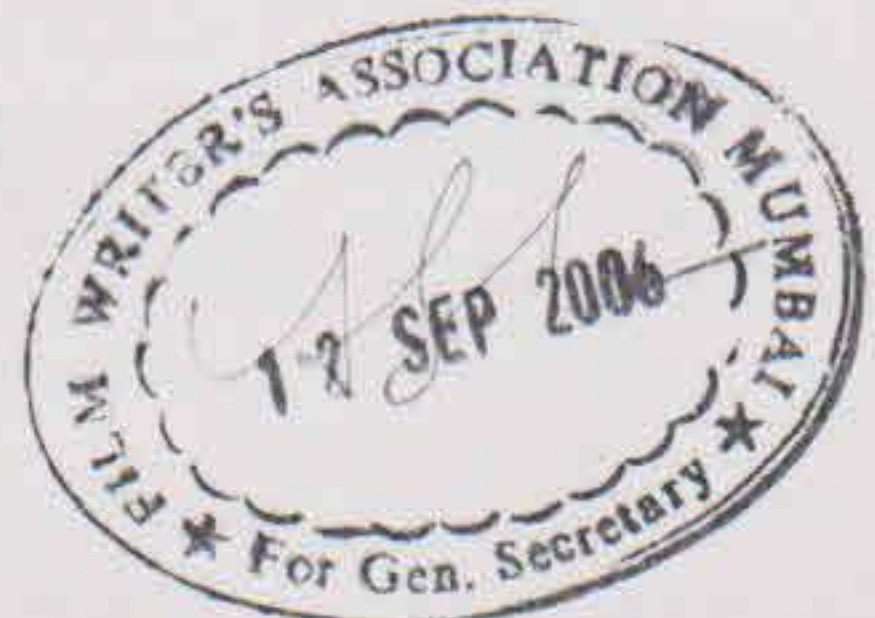
Copar se dekhoon
Tu hai Khulaa aasmaan
Baadalon se bharaa bharaa
Tera Yeh Jahaan
Jab tak na taras jaay
Peene ko haathi
Ya kood ke dikhaye
Ye mere saathi
Cykil ki ghanti
Ya kankad ya maati
Ya tujh pe baras jaay
Andhe ki laathi
Tab sab ko tu dikhe hai
Paani se ladee
...Tu to hai tu
Apni pyaari si nadi

MR. TIWARI

...ISHAAN NANDKISHORE RAO...
kavita ka matlab samjhaao!

ISHAAN stands up unsure... and...

VERSION 1



40B INT. TOYOTA QUALIS - NIGHT

MOTHER, looking out of the window, tears flowing freely from her eyes. YOHAN, passed out beside his MOTHER, his cheeks still wet with tears.

40C INT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - NIGHT

ISHAAN sitting huddled in bed.

INSERT: A huge dorm clock as it strikes 10.

Lights out.

Other children of the dorm covering themselves with blankets.

INSERT: Shot of the clock. It is 2.

ISHAAN is seated on his bed, knees pulled up, his face hidden underneath, his shoulders shaking.

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(180 secs)

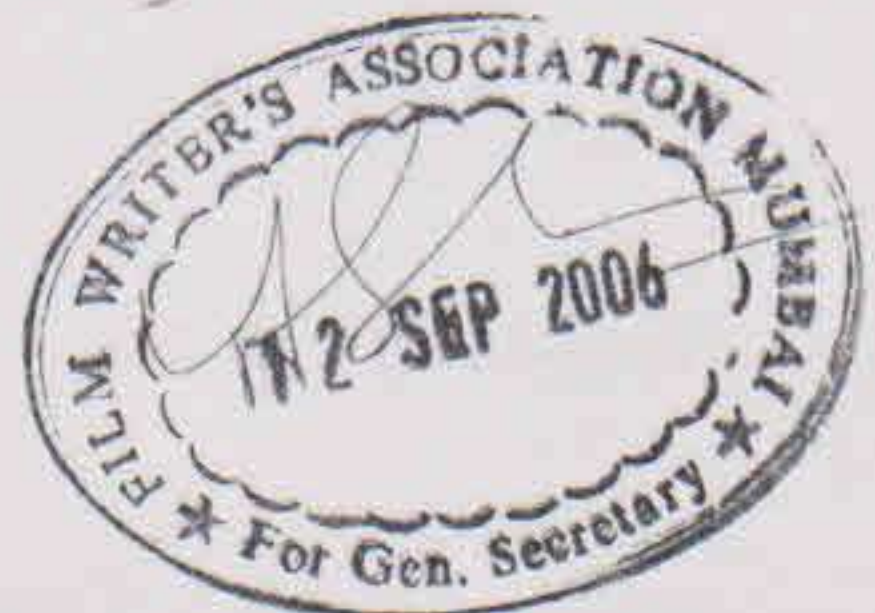
41 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ ISHAAN'S CLASSROOM. DAY

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MR. TIWARI

Bachchon... ye hai... ISHAAN
NANDKISHORE RAO!!!

MR. TIWARI commands ISHAAN...



ISHAAN

Jo dikhta hai humko lagta hai
hai aur jo nahin dikhta humko
lagta hai nahin hai. Lekin
kabhi kabhi jo dikhta hai woh
nahin hota aur jo nahin dikhta
woh hota hai. Matlab...

MR. TIWARI

Arre Kya dikhta hai nahin dikhta
hai kar rahe ho? Minoo
Patel...tum sambhao.

ISHAAN turns and looks at MINOO PATEL as he rises.

MINOO PATEL

Kavi kehta hai ki jab wo nadi ko
dekhta hai usme aakash ka
pratibimb dikhta hai...is
pratibimb ko vo alag alag
vastuon se bhang karta hai aur
nadi ka chitr phir se ubhar aata
hai

MR. TIWARI

Uttam MINOO PATEL! Baijh Jao

ISHAAN feels snubbed. Sits down dejected.

(120 secs)

TRANSITION

41A BOARDING SCHOOL CLASS-DAY

The class has ended. RAJAN smiles at ISHAAN as he clicks
his calipers into locking position. In the background,
kids are getting up and moving towards the door.

RAJAN

Actually Kavita ka asli matlab to
tumne samjhaya. Baaki Sabne ne to
rate hue uttar diye....TIWARI SIR
bahut strict hain... Jaisa **wo**
bataate hain vaisa hi yaad karke
sunana padta hai...

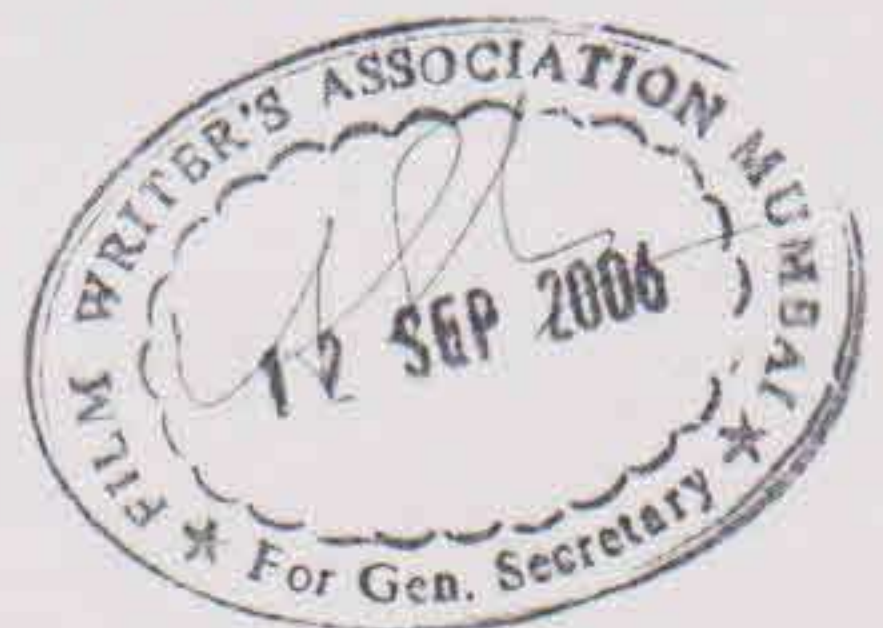
(pause as RAJAN thinks)

Tum... saal ke beech mein kaise aa
gaye?

ISHAAN

Wo...mere papa...

(Ishaan shuts up...)



RAJAN heaves himself out of the seat.

RAJAN
Chalo, chalo... Art Class hai...

... Then ISHAAN moves with RAJAN.

ISHAAN
... Tum to class mein first atey
ho... Phir tumhare papa-mama ne
tumhe yahan kyun bhej diya?

RAJAN
Matlab?

ISHAAN
Matlab boarding mein... punish
karneko...

RAJAN
Mai boarding mein nahi rehta...
Mere Appa school ke estate manager
hain... mai staff quarters mein
rehta hoon... mere amma-appa ke
saath... aur tumhe kisne kaha ke
yahan ke sab bachche punishment
mein aate hain???

An emotional Ishaan takes a pause...

(70 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:

42 INT. BIRD'S NEST- DAY

ANGLE ON: Bird's nest with newborns, the parent birds
hovering around, coming and feeding the impatient mouths.

ISHAAN is watching this activity with a lot of interest
from his window seat in the Art Room.

42A INT. BOARDING SCHOOL- ART ROOM - DAY

A very severe looking Art teacher (MR. HOLKAR) has placed
geometric objects to form a composition for still-life
study. He is announcing pompously to the class.

MR. HOLKAR
Bagair Phoot-patti istamaal
kiye... Kaapi Karo... lakeeren
bilkul seedhi kheencho! Zaraa si
bhi tedhi ho gayi...



(showing a ruler)
Daahine haath pe Paanch!

MR. HOLKAR spots ISHAAN looking out of the window and not paying attention to him. He chucks the ruler and picks up a full chalk piece. He taps the blackboard with the chalk piece, creating an almost invisible point. He then throws the chalk piece at ISHAAN with ferocity and shouts

MR. HOLKAR
Oye New Boy! ...Nazar idhar...
Blackboard pe! ...Dikhaa...
Point Dikhaa!

ISHAAN looks at the blackboard purposelessly... as he doesn't understand the teacher's instructions.

MR. HOLKAR
Maindak ki tarah kya dekh raha
hai??? Point Dikhaa!
Kidhar banaya maine point???

ISHAAN looks at the blackboard. It has several academic drawings of geometric shapes. He can't spot any point on the blackboard. He peers harder but it is of no use to him.

ISHAAN
...Nahi dikhtaa...

MR. HOLKAR
Nahi Dikhta??? ... Point Nahi
Dikhta??? Huh??? ...KIM HARTMAN!

A nerdy white-skinned boy (KIM HARTMAN) gets up to the call.

MR. HOLKAR
Come here and show him where I
made the point on blackboard.

KIM HARTMAN walks up to the board and using a pointer, shows where the point is. MR. HOLKAR, satisfied, shouts out to ISHAAN.

MR. HOLKAR
Ab dikh gaya point???

ISHAAN nods.

MR. HOLKAR
Good! Idhar aao! ...Idhar aao!!



ISHAAN leaves his seat. MR. HOLKAR picks up the wooden ruler.

MR. HOLKAR
Band muthhi pe paanch!!!
...Taaki... blackboard par se
attention na hate!!!

MR. HOLKAR methodically shows ISHAAN how to hold his clenched fist then he strikes him on his knuckles with the narrow side of the ruler. ISHAAN camouflages his pain behind a brave face, but RAJAN winces every-time the teacher strikes.

MR. HOLKAR
Jaao... Ye still-life study
kaapy karo... Shape **perfect**
chaahiye mujhe! Varnaa... doosri
mutthi pe paanch!

IMAGES: ISHAAN looking fearfully at the arranged geometric shapes.

SFX: The shapes grow to daunting proportions on the screen. From the shapes emerge alphabets and numbers. These too, grow large and exit frame after filling it.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The cacophony of the toxic track from the prelude adds meaning to the visual.

(120 SECS)

43 HALF DISSOLVE- MR. SEN's face grows large.

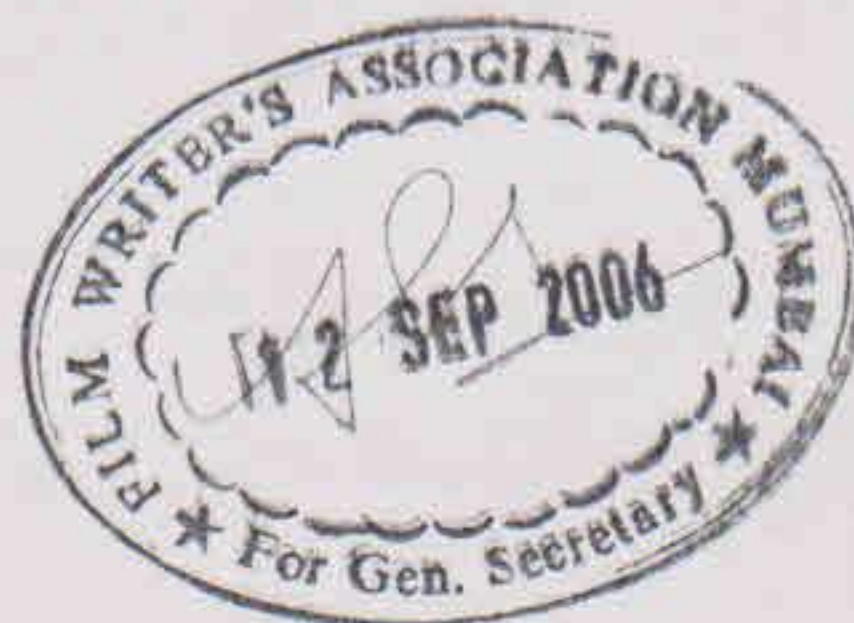
SONG IV - SONG OF DYSLEXIA.

43A INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Sharp sound of MR. SEN...

MR. SEN
ISHAAN RAO!!!

ISHAAN startled. MR. SEN fires rat-a-tat...



MR. SEN

A noun is a naming word! A pronoun is used instead of a noun! An Adjective describes a noun! A verb describes the action of a noun! An adverb describes the action of a verb! A conjunction joins two sentences into one! A preposition is a word which shows the relationship between a noun or a pronoun and a noun or a pronoun! An interjection is a word thrown in to express feelings! You got it?? You got it???

Throughout the 'grammar' soliloquy of MR. SEN, ISHAAN recedes back in fright of the onslaught. And finally tears at his hair in sheer desperation as the frame fills up with alphabets and numbers

43B I. E. BOARDING SCHOOL - D/N

From the numbers and alphabets emerges MR. TIWARI's face, grows big, just like the numbers and alphabets.

MR. TIWARI

Why? Why can't you read ISHAAN RAO?

43C INT. BOARDING SCHOOL CLASSROOM- DAY

ISHAAN's face emerges from frame-center in a canted, stilted way...

43D INT. BOARDING SCHOOL CLASSROOM- DAY

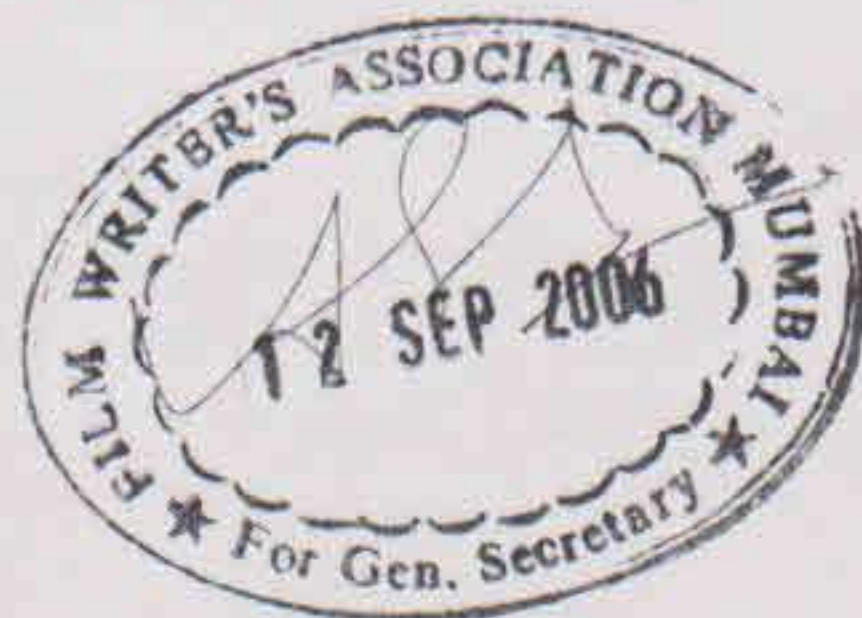
Tight close-up of Ishaan, trying to write with great difficulty, labored pencil grip, tongue sticking out.

Flashes of red pen underlining miss-spelt words.

43E EXT. GROUNDS- DAY

Close-up of ISHAAN's feet as they try to keep up with other marchers' feet. Pull-out as the P.T. teacher MR. AGASTI pulls out ISHAAN roughly from the marchers.

A process of two captains selecting their teams - the captains shout out name after name -



CAPTAINS 1/2 ALTERNATELY

SATISH... RAJU... YEZDI... HOODA... SUNIL... TANMAY...
ADIL... ROHIT... SOHAM...

(The respective faces falling out of the crowd to join their respective sides)...

SIVARAMAN... PARMAR... TOMAS... KIM etc...

ISHAAN is the only kid left out from the crowd.

The next shot from behind ISHAAN's back, as he and RAJAN sit quietly, the two teams playing football in the background.

43F INT. DORMITORY- NIGHT

Night time in the dorm... ISHAAN struggles with his homework.

43G INT. BOARDING SCHOOL CLASSROOM- DAY

A teacher condescendingly talks down to ISHAAN...

TEACHER EXTRA

Tck tck tck tck tck... Dekho
bachche... aise nahi chalega...

Tableaus of teachers as they ask questions in song... the cuts staccato, hellish distorted close-ups of the accusers.

SONG OF DYSLEXIA

Tumhara problem kya hai ISHAAN?
'Why can't you do sums? Why
can't you add?
Why the Dickens' your writing so
bad?
Grammar pathetic and spellings
all wrong!
Can't march to beat! Can't learn
up a song!
Blank! Lazy!
Idiot! Crazy!
You fumble, you stumble, you
stutter, you mumble,
This child can drive anybody
mad.
Cad! Duffer! Call up his dad!
Cad! Duffer! Call up his dad!
This dreamer's rightful place is,
the zoo (laughter)
(Bully) - With monkey and donkey
and the kangaroo



Lash him! Thrash him! His face
 makes us sad!
 Cad! Duffer! Call up his dad!
 Cad! Duffer! Call up his dad!

The last chorus has ISHAAN trapped in a classroom. He is the camera as he finds himself surrounded by tormentors. Some faces are familiar - The HOUSEMASTER, the English teacher, MR. SEN, other rowdies in school uniform etc. The tormentors' faces are distorted by the lens. They look frightful, as they increase the volume of the chorus...

(120 SECS)

44 I/E. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - EVENING

ISHAAN falls face down on the bed and sobs.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Persistent knocking on the shut door.

ISHAAN does not react to the knocking.

On the other side of the door, ISHAAN's parents are knocking urgently and shouting.

MOTHER

ISHAAN! ISHAAN! Please darwaza
 kholo ISHAAN! ...Please beta
 darwaza kholo...Dekho... dada
 bhi aya hai... Dada... you
 tell...

YCHAN

Inu... champ open the door...

Suddenly the door is thrown open and ISHAAN runs out without warning. MOTHER, FATHER and YOHAN watch with astonishment.

45 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - GROUNDS - EVENING (TWILIGHT)

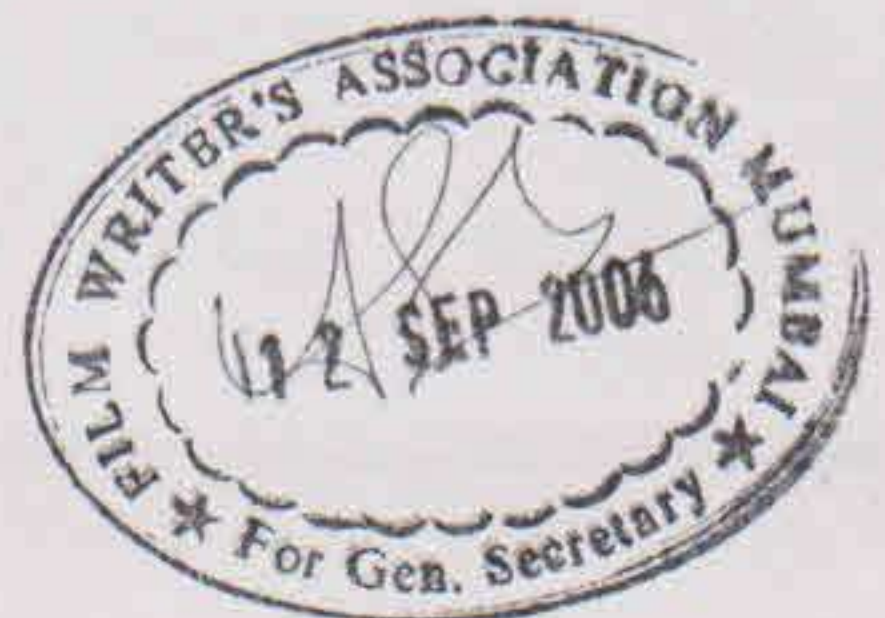
A frenzied ISHAAN runs as if possessed, round and round the empty playground, giving vent to his despair.

The twilight adds to the bizarre image of ISHAAN's protest. His parents arrive at the playground.

ISHAAN's MOTHER steps forward to hold him, but he dodges her and runs off, rejecting her.

(60 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:



46 I/E. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - NIGHT

ISHAAN is sitting, holding YOHAN's hand in silence, looking down. ISHAAN's grip tightens involuntarily. YOHAN reacts.

YOHAN
Kya hua Champ?

ISHAAN doesn't answer. FATHER and MOTHER enter frame...

FATHER
Chalo.. let's go...maine
housemaster se permission lay
lee hai...

MOTHER
(soothingly)
Inu... abhi gussaa chhodo...
chalo...

(30 secs)

47 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The plush interiors of a modern-day hotel.

Family eating. ISHAAN not eating, looking down. MOTHER reacts.

MOTHER
Inu...

ISHAAN looks up.

MOTHER
Khao beta...

ISHAAN looks down again. MOTHER looks at FATHER with concern. FATHER makes a reassuring gesture as if saying 'It's a phase'.

(20 SECS)

DISSOLVE TO:

48 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

PULL BACK: YOHAN is extracting a brand new drawing book, a box of color tubes and brushes. ISHAAN takes the stuff and limply keeps it aside.

(10 secs)



DISSOLVE TO:

48a INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are out.

In available light, we catch detail of ISHAAN tossing and turning on the bed, his fist tightly gripping MOTHER's night-wear, her eyes open, watching her fretting son. YOHAN is on ISHAAN's other side. FATHER is sleeping on a mattress on the floor.

(15 secs)

49 EXT. TENNIS COURT/HOTEL ROOM - DAY

YOHAN is playing tennis energetically with FATHER. ISHAAN is quietly watching the activity from their room above.

(10 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:

50 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

SONG PART SEPARATION - "there goes your heaven go back to your shell... your tears have all dried up there's no one to tell"

ISHAAN, lifeless face, as he sees his family off...

50A INT. dorm - night

ISHAAN puts in the art gifts into the locker...

(30 secs)

51 I/E. BOARDING SCHOOL - CORRIDORS OUTSIDE ART ROOM - DAY

Valley..... ISHAAN is dangerously poised over a railing off the corridor. A fall from the height would mean instant death. RAJAN has spotted the danger ISHAAN has courted. He shouts...

RAJAN

ISHAAN!!! Kya kar rahe ho? Kya kar rahe ho?



RAJAN walks slowly towards ISHAAN...

RAJAN

Neeche utaro... neeche utaro...

ISHAAN keeps looking at RAJAN from his height. RAJAN leaps forward and his crutches fall to the ground and RAJAN too crashes to the ground. This brings ISHAAN down with sudden urgency... He holds up RAJAN from under his arm-pits. RAJAN looks into ISHAAN'S eyes.

RAJAN

Oopar kyun chadhe the??? Huh?

ISHAAN ducks RAJAN's probing gaze. ISHAAN has dark circles around his eyes.

RAJAN

Come... we're late...

But ISHAAN doesn't move or speak.

RAJAN

Kya ho gaya?

ISHAAN doesn't move. RAJAN soothes him.

RAJAN

Arre? Tumhe maaloom nahi? Woh gaya! HOLKAR SIR gaya! Pooraa New Zealand ko drawing sikhaane gaya!

No difference on ISHAAN'S face.

RAJAN

Uski jagah ek naya temporary teacher aya hai... I hope ke wo HOLKAR SIR jaisaa nahi... Chalo late ho raha hai... Chalo naa...

(85 SECS)

RAJAN tugs at an unwilling ISHAAN's elbow.

52 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ ART ROOM - DAY

ISHAAN and RAJAN are the last to enter the class. They take their seats on the front bench. There is no sign of the new teacher..



SUDDENLY... a melody played on a flute captures the attention of the class!

They all look at the shut door of the art teacher's room that is inside the art class. Hold on their faces.

The volume of the melody shoots up, suggesting the door has opened.

The expression on the kids' faces changes instantly to awe!

Reveal NIKUMBH SIR as he sings a song! He is dressed like the Pied Piper of Hamelin! Wig et al! He has a red joker's ball stuck on his nose, whiskers peak on his cheeks, has long, elephant ears. He is smiling radiantly at the kids. He does a flip in the air and lands on his feet...

The kids too break into spontaneous smiles of wonderment, never having seen such an incredible sight in the classroom.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: SONG V - 'NIKUMBH SIR'S SONG' begins.

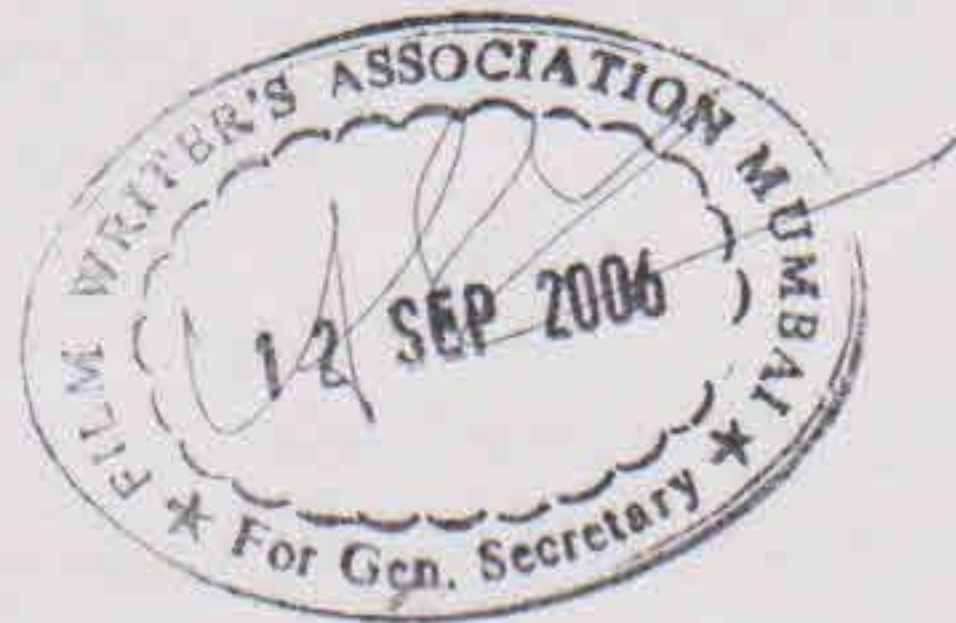
NIKUMBH SIR
 Bhrrrrummm Bhrrrrummm
 Sheeeky sheeeky Pik Pok
 Chik Chok Chek Chik Tiki Tiki
 Tik Tok
 Honky Ponky Suppanoodle
 Dayki Docky Pikadoodle
 Hayki Mayki Hoki Poki
 Toki Doki Hookaboodle!

The children burst out laughing. The PIED PIPER says "SSSSSHHHHHHHHHHH!"

FREEZE FRAME: Pied Piper.

(60 SEC)

INTERVAL



53 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ART ROOM - DAY

SOUNDTRACK: SONG V - 'NIKUMBH SIR'S SONG'

NIKUMBH SIR plays the flute. Children have a look of wonderment on their faces as they watch with joy.

He shuts the door of the classroom and turns around and continues the song.

NIKUMBH SIR

Shhh... arey bhai zor se na karo
shor... Maine 'Muchchad'
chowkidaar ko window se dekhaa...

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Kids' laughter

NIKUMBH SIR

Shhhhh...

KIDS

SHHHH... SHHHH...

NIKUMBH SIR

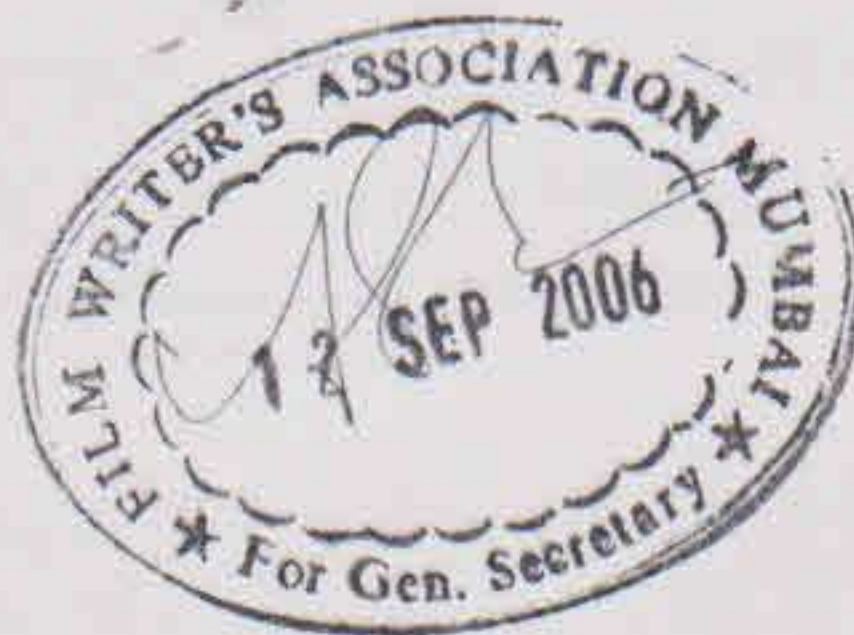
Mai hoon apka naya Chitrakala
Shikshak - Yaani New Art Teacher
- RAM SHANKAR NIKUMBH!
Ab ye bataao...
Ye kaisi balaa
Jise kehte hum Kalaa
Hmm... What is this balaa called
Art?

Pause... silence of wonderment

NIKUMBH SIR

Arey bhai... Ye balaa called Art
is simply the Kalaa to give a
loud...

He purses his lips and blows out his tongue real hard.
Laughter. This sets a chain reaction in the class. He
picks up his flute and plays a run to the amazed kids.
Then he sings.



NIKUMBH SIR

Ye Balaa jo hai Kalaa isse banti
meri roti....

Hoon mai Zero, Nahi Hero, hai
akal apni motee

To meri madad karo... please help
karo...

mujhe sikhaao, mujhe padhaao,
Khidki-darwaaze kholkar

meri mental umr badhaao!

Rubber ki tarah... kheencho aur

lambi-lambi kar do manzilen...

Kitna kuch karna hai zindagi
mein...

Jaannaa hai jaan lo...

Ye kalaa hai...Pehchaan lo...

(plays a riff on the
flute)

Ise bhi

(showing a cartwheel)

ise bhi...

(showing his actor's
make-up)

ise bhi!!!!!!

The kids cheer loudly.

ISHAAN is not a participant in the cheer. He looks
emaciated and tired. His eyes lifelessly blank.

NIKUMBH SIR jumps on to the raised platform and goes to
the laden art table and picks up large sheets of art
paper and color tubes and jumps back. He begins with the
first bench, distributing the art material to the kids.

NIKUMBH SIR

Ye lijiye... Ye aap ka...

He gives paper and paint box to ISHAAN, RAJAN, then moves
on to the next row.

NIKUMBH SIR

Ye aap ka... Ye aap ka... Ye aap
ka... Ye aap ka...

Draw karo... paint karo... Jo
jee mein aaye vo karo!

(Systematically he gets
off his disguise and
makes a pile of it in
his hands while the
kids look at him with
surprise.)

mai zara ye rakhke ata hoon...



The kids protest.

KIM HARTMAN
lekin kya paint karen Sir? Table
pe to kuch nahi hai...

The table of geometric objects lies empty.

NIKUMBH SIR
Ha Ha Ha! Wo table... Wo table
meri jaan... bahut chhotaa
hai... itna chhotaa... ke
tumhaare khoobsoorat khayaalon
ka wazan uthaa hi nahi paaegaa!
Apne dimaag mei jhaanko aur ek
zabardast technicolor tasveer
kheench kar baahar nikaalo , aur
patko paper pe!!! Looto... maze
looto! Yahan tumhe koi nahi
rokne-tokne wala!

NIKUMBH SIR exits through his room door.

The kids start sketching with pencils.

ISHAAN keeps staring at the white paper for a long time.

JUMP CUT TO:

54 INT. ART ROOM- DAY

NIKUMBH SIR emerges. ISHAAN hasn't started yet. NIKUMBH SIR looks at him, whistles and smiles and gestures to him with his eyebrows. ISHAAN looks down.

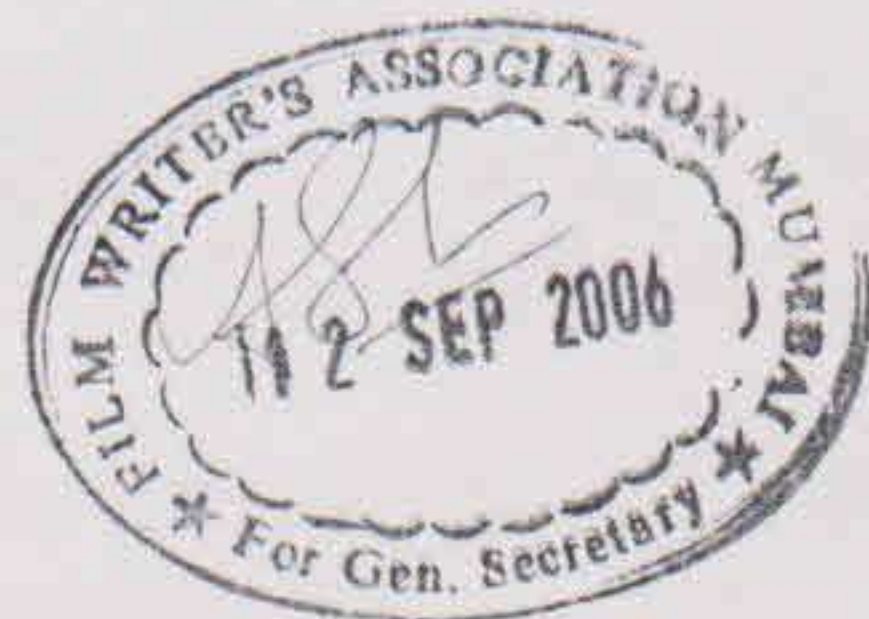
NIKUMBH SIR walks towards ISHAAN and observes ISHAAN with a serious, pondering face. Then he asks gently.

NIKUMBH SIR
Kahan kho gaye dost... Khayaalon
mein kuch dhoondh rahe ho?
...koi baat nahi... koi jaldi
nahi hai...

And NIKUMBH SIR moves further.

CLOSE ON: Children happily working on their sheets.

One kid looks up and smiles. NIKUMBH SIR smiles back. The kid extends his hand to touch NIKUMBH SIR where his moustache was. Both laugh. The kid goes back to his drawing, that of a pied-piper with a moustache.



JUMP CUT TO:

NIKUMBH SIR's POV: A hand-held sweep over the children's creations. There are clowns, mamas and papas, flowers, and houses, and clouds, and golden sunsets.

NIKUMBH SIR comes to ISHAAN and stops. ISHAAN's sheet of art-paper is untouched. NIKUMBH SIR looks perturbed.

NIKUMBH SIR

Kya hua bachche? ...Painting
karnaa achchaa nahi lagtaa??

ISHAAN keeps looking down, shoulders shrunken. NIKUMBH SIR asks gently.

NIKUMBH SIR

Aap ka naam kya hai?

ISHAAN keeps looking down. Finally to break the pause, RAJAN answers on ISHAAN's behalf

RAJAN

Sir... iska naam ISHAAN RAO
hai...

NIKUMBH SIR

Thanks...

NIKUMBH SIR speaks involuntarily, even as he keeps staring at ISHAAN.

(120 secs)

55 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - POND - EVENING (SUNSET)

ISHAAN sits in solitude. He can see himself as a dark shadow silhouetted in the pond, the setting sun behind his head. Gloom has set in.

(15 secs)

56 INT. NIKUMBH SIR'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Golden sunlight envelopes NIKUMBH SIR's studio apartment. Impressionist images on canvasses mounted on improvised easels.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan qawali plays.

Table-top Shot of an overused chai bartan with black tea boiling on a single gas burner.



NIKUMBH SIR in deep thought keeps looking unconsciously at the boiling tea.

(20 secs)

**FADE TO
BLACK.**

57 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - EVENING

The house is in study hour. The HOUSEMASTER is **upset** with ISHAAN.

HOUSEMASTER

Kahan gaye the tum? Huh? Kahan
gaye the? ...Tumhari maa ka
phone aya tha... Jaao... phone
ke paas khade raho... Wo
dobaaraa karnewali hain... Go!

ISHAAN walks away.

(15 secs)

58 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - HOSTEL RECEPTION - EVENING

ISHAAN walks up to the attended phone and stands dead-pan.

Beat.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The phone rings after a while.

The ATTENDANT picks it up.

ATTENDANT

Hullo... Hullo... Ji... Ji...
Baat kijiye... ye lo...

He hands the receiver to ISHAAN. MOTHER speaks

INTERCUT WITH:

59 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

MOTHER

Hullo Inu... hullo...

58 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - HOSTEL RECEPTION - EVENING

But ISHAAN doesn't speak.



59 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

MOTHER

Hullo bolo beta...

58 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - HOSTEL RECEPTION - EVENING

ISHAAN keeps holding the receiver tightly without uttering a word. An audio leak from the dorm, a bell or a clock...can be heard over the phone.

59 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

MOTHER

Dekho Inu... hum log... hum log
iss Saturday ko nahi aa sakte
Inu... Sunday ko Dada ka Inter-
school Tennis Final hai!

(pause)

...Main jaanti hoon tum Mamma se
bahut gussaa ho... bahut buri
hai mamma... mamma is very bad!
...I'm sorry Inu... Lekin mamma
bhi kya karey? Dada ko finals ki
tension hai naa...

(again no reply from

ISHAAN)

Ye lo Dada se baat karo... Wish
him all the best...

MOTHER gives the receiver to YOHAN.

YOHAN

Hullo Inu... Yohan bol raha
hoon... Hullo... Hey! Are you
there? Inu bol na kuch... tujhe
bataanaa tha... mai tujhe bahut
miss karoonga final mein...
Hullo...

MOTHER takes the phone back.

MOTHER

Hullo Inu baat karo mamma se...



58 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - HOSTEL RECEPTION - EVENING

ISHAAN keeps the receiver down, even as MOTHER's voice can be heard through the receiver. ISHAAN walks off from the reception. The attendant picks up and says...

ATTENDANT

Hullo... Wo to chala gaya...

59 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

MOTHER keeps the phone down worried...

MOTHER

Baat bhi nahi kiye usne...

FATHER

Fikar mat karo... agle Sunday chale jaayenge...

(90 secs)

60 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - STAFF ROOM - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR has carried the paintings of yesterday's class to be kept in the staff room cupboard. He opens the cupboard and slides the lot of paintings in. MR. TIWARI notices this.

MR. TIWARI

Arre arre... wahan kahan rakh rahe ho...

NIKUMBH SIR turns around.

NIKUMBH SIR

Bachchon ka class-work hai...

MR. TIWARI

To kya hua? ...HOLKAR kabhi nahi rakhta tha... Wo jagah kitaabon ke liye hai.

NIKUMBH SIR

To inhe kahan rakhoon...

MR. TIWARI

Lautaa do waapas... bachchon ko... vaise bhi... kis kaam ke hain ye!

NIKUMBH SIR is appalled by the remark, but holds himself back. MR. SEN, the English teacher looks up and reacts to



MR. TIWARI'S barb positively. He speaks further... definitely in the mood to spoil NIKUMBH SIR's day.

MR. SEN

What a racket they're making in your class Nikam! ...Pukkaa Machchi Market ban gaya hai!!!

NIKUMBH SIR

Bachche hain Sir... shor to karenge hi... aur phir 'Art Class' mein bachche apne jasbaat nahi dikhaayenge to kahan dikhaayenge?!

MR. SEN

Wo sab theek hai... Just go easy... Head Master ko school mein discipline chaahiye...

NIKUMBH SIR keeps the drawings on the table. A lady teacher (SENIOR SCIENCE TEACHER), who is seated at the table, looks up and joins in.

SENIOR SCIENCE TEACHER

Sunaa hai...kal class mein... aap gaa rahe the... aur... aur... flute bajaa rahe the???

NIKUMBH SIR

(in a matter-of-fact way)

Haan... Gaa raha tha... flute bhi bajaa raha tha... bachche khush ... mai bhi khush!

MR. TIWARI looks up at NIKUMBH SIR.

MR. TIWARI

lekin iss school ke bachche unn bachchon jaise nahi hain...

NIKUMBH SIR looks surprised

NIKUMBH SIR

Unn bachchon jaise?

MR. TIWARI

Tulips School mein padhaate ho naa? Mentally retarded... Abnormal bachchon ko??



NIKUMBH SIR looks appalled by the politically incorrect sound... hisses under his breath.

NIKUMBH SIR
Wo abnormal... to kya aap normal?

MR. TIWARI
Kya kaha?

NIKUMBH SIR
Nahi...nahi... kuch nahi...

NIKUMBH SIR stares angrily at MR. TIWARI who adds insensitively...

MR. TIWARI
Uss tarah ke schoolon mein...
man chaahe vaise padhaao... Kya
fark padta hai! ...Koi
bhavishhya to banaana nahi hai
unn bachchon ka!

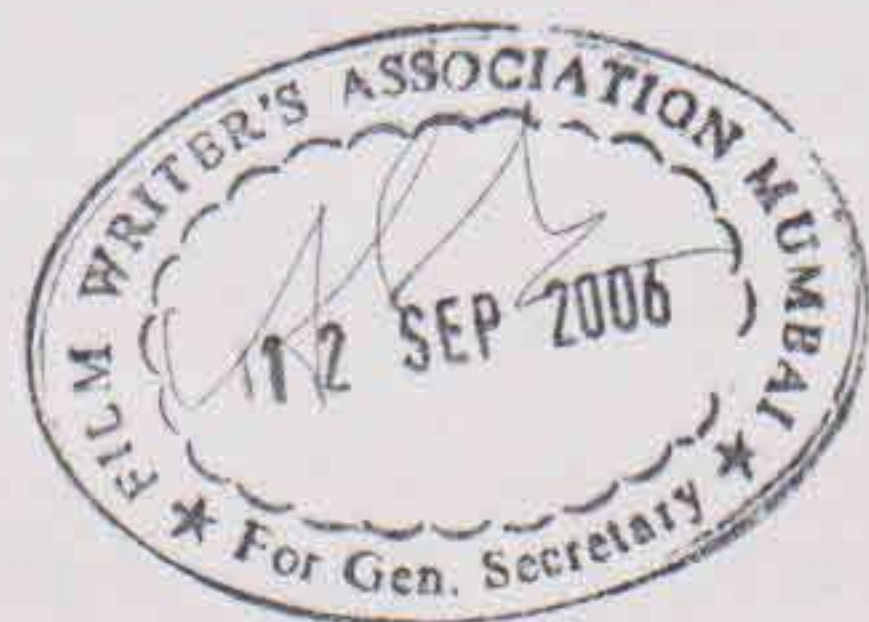
NIKUMBH SIR's eyebrows go up in response as if to say 'really?'. He picks a paper on the table and starts making a sketch.

MR. SEN
No... seriously NIKUMBH! Ye ek
formal school hai... Tumhara ye
singing dancing style yahan nahi
chalega! Idhar hum bachchon ko
taiyaar karte hain life ka race
ke liye... Kids have to compete,
succeed, make a future!

MR. TIWARI
Hamaare Vidyalaya ke teen
siddhaant... Niyam! Anushaasan!
Parishram! Safaltaa ke teen
stambh! Sampoorana Shiksha ka
aadhaar!

NIKUMBH SIR
(handing over a
caricature)
Hail Hitler!

(120 secs)



61 I/E. BOARDING SCHOOL - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ISHAAN'S CLASSROOM - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR is walking down the school corridor, carrying the drawings back to the art class in a ponderous mood.

Suddenly he spots ISHAAN kneeling down outside a classroom. NIKUMBH SIR stops in his steps.

ISHAAN spots NIKUMBH SIR looking at him. He cringes in his position, turning his neck away.

NIKUMBH SIR walks up to him and stops near him. NIKUMBH SIR looks inside the class.

PANDE SCIENCE TEACHER is practically reading out from a science textbook. There is pin-drop-silence in the class.

NIKUMBH SIR looks back at ISHAAN.

NIKUMBH SIR
Kya hua Ishaan?

ISHAAN behaves like a wet chicken in a corner. He tries to shrink into the corner and disappear from NIKUMBH SIR's sight.

NIKUMBH SIR is disturbed by the boy's trauma. He doesn't want to disturb him more.

NIKUMBH SIR
I'm sorry... I'm sorry...

NIKUMBH SIR takes a step away and walks.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The recess bell rings.

Children run down the corridor.

NIKUMBH SIR looks back. ISHAAN has disappeared.

(30 secs)

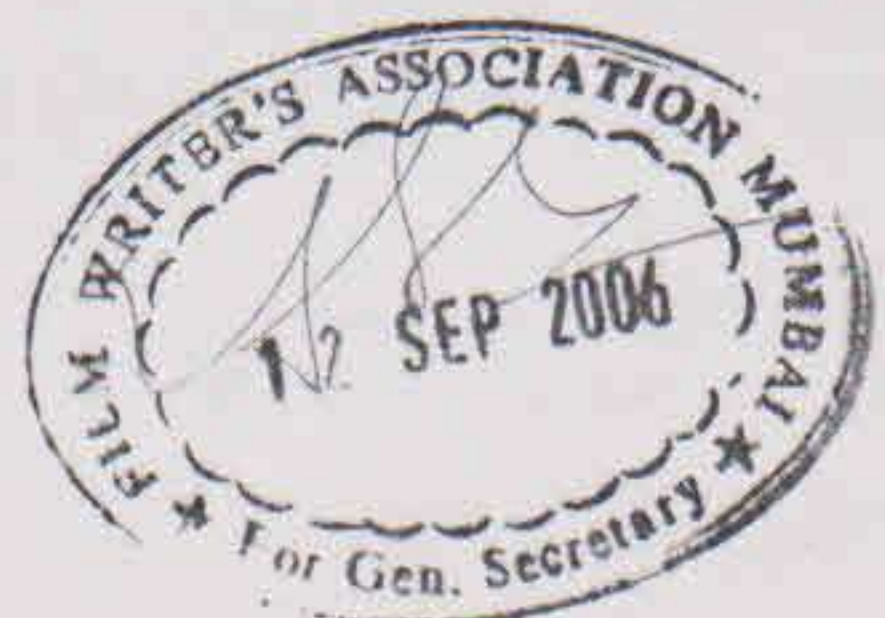
62 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - GROUNDS - DAY

TOP ANGLE: Recess shot of the playground with children shouting and playing.

TELE SHOTS: Kids in recess.

(10 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:



63 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - GROUNDS - DAY

High-jump session in progress for ISHAAN's class.

A nervous ISHAAN in the queue of boys. The line progresses as the kids finish their turn. By the time there are only 5 kids ahead, ISHAAN breaks into sweat, he looks back.

RAJAN seated with his crutches and calipers, offers moral support in the form of a gesture of solidarity to ISHAAN. That is not enough.

By the time it is ISHAAN's turn, his feet have frozen.

A long pause.

MR. AGASTI is impatient...

MR. AGASTI

Chalo chalo... nahi kar sakte to
RAJAN ke paas jaake baith jao
please... next!

NIKUMBH'S POV: LONG SHOT - ISHAAN walking dejected towards RAJAN.

NIKUMBH SIR has been watching the above scene from his Art Class window.

(30 secs)

64 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - PATH FROM SCHOOL TO DORMITORY - AFTERNOON

TRACKING: Hand-held camera at adult height walks along with children leaving the school building. Up ahead, RAJAN is walking with the help of his crutches. Camera catches up with RAJAN.

NIKUMBH SIR

Tumhara dost kahan hai?

RAJAN turns around to encounter NIKUMBH SIR.

RAJAN

Maaloom nahi Sir...abhi tha
idhar... suddenly bhaag gaya...

NIKUMBH SIR

Apne naye pakaou art teacher ko
aate dekh liya hoga...



RAJAN smiles

RAJAN

Nahi nahi Sir... dining hall
gaya hoga... lunch ke liye.

NIKUMBH SIR

Yaar tumhara naam kya hai?

RAJAN

RAJAN DAMODARAN Sir.

NIKUMBH SIR

Ek baat bataao RAJAN... Ye
ISHAAN ka kya chakker hai?

RAJAN

Sir?

NIKUMBH SIR

Koi taqleef hai usko? Daraa-
daraa sa lagta hai hameshaa...

RAJAN

Sir... usko ghar jana hai...

NIKUMBH SIR

Kyun?

RAJAN

Sir New Boy hai...

NIKUMBH SIR

Saal ke beech mein?

RAJAN

Problem hai Sir usko... Kitna
bhi try kare... padh nahi pata-
likh nahi pata... har waqt
punished rehta hai... Poore book
mein red marks red marks... what
to do?

A thought registers on NIKUMBH SIR's face. He turns
around and walks back rapidly.

(75 secs)

65 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - STAFF ROOM - AFTERNOON

NIKUMBH SIR enters the empty staff-room with urgency. He
quickly opens the 3rd Standard cupboard. He fishes out
ISHAAN's notebook and quickly flips through it. Anxiously



he sieves through the pile of books and pulls out all of ISHAAN's, gathers them in a heap and moves towards the table.

Shots of him fishing out ISHAAN RAO's class-work books.

Shot of NIKUMBH SIR hastily sitting at the table with the books.

CLOSE ON: Pan in extreme close up over an English scribble. Capital B R J and D are inverse mirror images of the alphabets. The handwriting is inscrutable. Almost every spelling is wrong.

SLOW PAN on page after page of ISHAAN's botched-up class-work - English grammar, Mathematics and Sciences.

NIKUMBH SIR's face shows more and more anxiety.

He keeps reopening the same books over and over again. Conjunctions and prepositions are incorrectly used. A logic sum like 'If 5 boys have 2 candies each, how many candies do they have together is misconstrued as an addition problem $5+2=7$ is written with an unsure hand.

NIKUMBH SIR keeps sitting at the table, staring at the clock on the wall.

(60 secs)

66 EXT. PANCHGANI - STREETS - AFTERNOON

A troubled NIKUMBH SIR walks on the streets, deep in thought. As he passes a vegetable vendor, a cabbage slips off the hand-cart. NIKUMBH SIR, unconsciously picks up the cabbage and puts it back on the cart, then exits frame.

(15 secs)

67 INT. TULIPS SCHOOL - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR is moving around a group of CHILDREN, some affected by Downs Syndrome, some autistic, some spastic.

Full of care and gentleness, he holds their hands and guides them, using clay, paints, wax crayons and other artists' materials. The children are creating large colored petals of various flowers.

The children return his affection by touching him.



A girl with Downs Syndrome (PRAARTHNA), looks up at him and flashes a radiating smile at him. With eager eyes, NIKUMBH SIR plays a charade of popping out his tongue by pulling his ears and chin. PRAARTHNA responds to his charade.

It is evident that this class constitutes of children with multiple disabilities. NIKUMBH SIR helps a child with material and wistfully ruminates. NIKUMBH SIR moves slightly away from the group, pensive.

NIKUMBH SIR's thoughtful face

JABEEN, a sweet sensitive girl-woman, walks into the class and sits besides NIKUMBH SIR. She senses NIKUMBH SIR's mood and inquires

JABEEN

Pyaaaz kaatkar aa rahe ho kahin se?

NIKUMBH SIR pauses, looks at her and shakes his head sadly.

NIKUMBH SIR

Insaan bhi naa...

She completes...

JABEEN

...jaanvar se badtar hai. Jaanti hoon...

NIKUMBH SIR

Aur...Andhaa hai! Androoni khoobsorti se bilkul parey...

JABEEN

Kisse paalaa padaa wahan?

NIKUMBH SIR

Apne aap se. Saalon baad apne aap ko sheeshe mein dekh raha hoon.

JABEEN

Jaate hi kisine sheeshaa dikhaa diya? Hamesha kehti hoon dekhne ko... Kitni achchi shakal hai tumhaari...

NIKUMBH SIR

Wo khatre mein hai JABEEN...



JABEEN

Kaun?

Nikumbh doesn't answer. JABEEN insists.

JABEEN

Kaun RAM?

NIKUMBH SIR looks around at the children. Pan on the children.

NIKUMBH SIR

...Hai ek ... uss school mein...
 aath-nau saal ka bachchaa... naa
 bolta hai... na kuch...
 daraadaraa sa rehta hai... uski
 aankhen... jaise madad maang
 rahi ho... mujhe darr hai... wo
 doob jaayegaa...

JABEEN

Tum to jaante ho RAM... Duniya
 bedard hai... Jo dhara ke
 saath-saath nahi tairte...
 "Plop" ...doob jaate hain!

NIKUMBH SIR

Jaantaa hoon... Sab jaantaa
 hoon...

PRARTHNA pulls NIKUMBH SIR away... All the CHILDREN hold
 each other's hand.

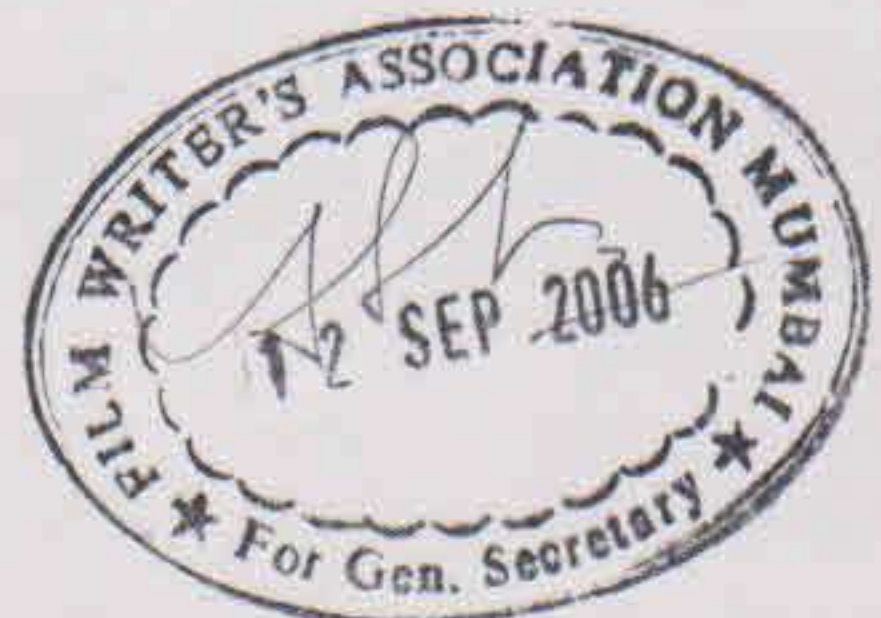
NIKUMBH SIR and JABEEN too, form separate links in the
 chain.

NIKUMBH SIR, JABEEN & CHILDREN
 INCLUSION SONG... The metaphor
 of the rainbow and its
 colors...the song of inclusion.

MONTAGE OF PREP TO PERFORMANCE most of the children are
 just swaying, clapping and nodding, some in and some off-
 tempo, not even having the faculty to speak.

(150 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:



68 INT. TULIPS SCHOOL - DAY

The CHILDREN are now dressed up as flowers enter the stage to the music. A short performance of the children as the parents and guests watch. The guests' eyes are moist, the parents' eyes running with tears.

NIKUMBH SIR is standing behind a girl-child, helping her to clap on beat, while he sings with JABEEN and teachers and a few other children who can.

At the end of the performance, parents rush to their children to embrace them.

NIKUMBH SIR cannot control his tears.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: INCLUSION SONG CONTINUES

The song takes up NIKUMBH SIR's concerns about children... his description of what a child means to the world vis a vis what is the child's hidden contribution to life.

From NIKUMBH SIR's face MATCH DISSOLVE to ISHAAN's face.

68A I/E. BOARDING SCHOOL - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - DAY

ISHAAN is alone in the hostel corridor, dressed in kurta-pajamas.

68B I/E. BOARDING SCHOOL - MONTAGE #2 - DAY

IMAGES: ISHAAN in various places of the empty campus.

INTERCUT WITH:

68C EXT. TENNIS COURT - DAY

A tennis match in progress, YOHAN missing shots. FATHER grimacing in the stands.

68D I/E. ASIAD BUS - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR in an Asiad bus, traveling away from PANCHGANI, the bus entering Bombay.



68E EXT. DHABA ON HIGHWAY - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR befriends RAJU at the dhaba. TEA & BISUITS for RAJU.

68F INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - DAY

ISHAAN alone in the dormitory, the other kids having gone for the weekend.

68G EXT. ISHAAN'S BUILDING - NIGHT

NIKUMBH SIR alights from a TAXI outside ISHAAN's house.

68H INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

NIKUMBH SIR introduces himself to ISHAAN's parents and YOHAN.

YOHAN brings the cardboard castle to NIKUMBH SIR.

NIKUMBH SIR inspects ISHAAN's cardboard castle, his load of paintings appreciatively, especially the flip-page series of paintings where the youngest figure of a family of four disappears from the last page.

NIKUMBH SIR's eyes well up.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK:

SONG - 'INCLUSION SONG' ends. (300 SECS)

69 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

NIKUMBH SIR's throat is choked.

NIKUMBH SIR
Paani milega please...

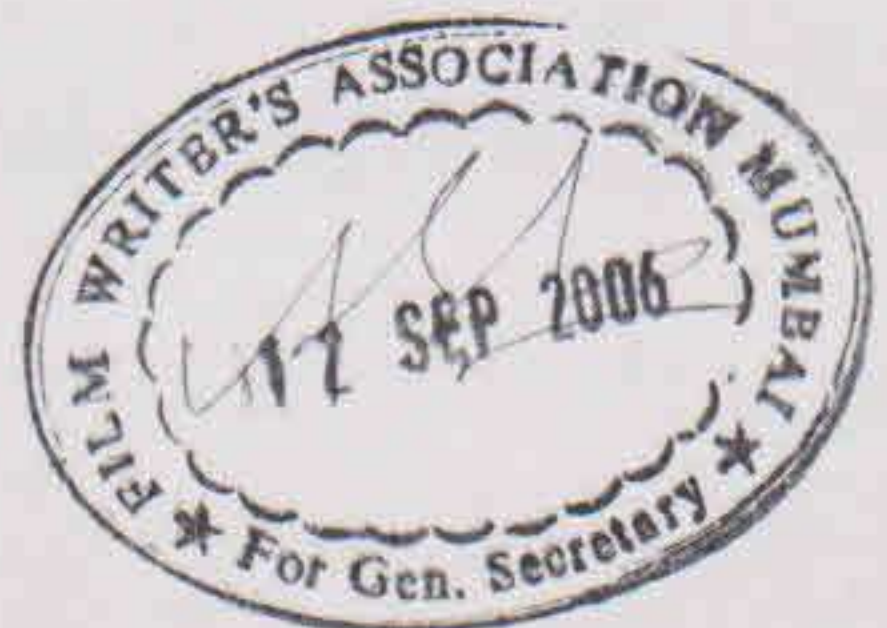
MOTHER gives him a glass. He gulps it down and keeps the glass down. He clears his throat.

NIKUMBH SIR
Kyun bhej diya usko...

Nobody answers.

NIKUMBH SIR
Huh? ... Kyun bhej diya?

FATHER looks at NIKUMBH SIR.



FATHER

Koi raastaa nahi tha... Pichhle saal woh 3rd Standard mein fail ho gaya...yakeen karenge... 3rd Standard!aur sudharne ke koi aasaar nahi... sochiye... badaa beta har class mein har subject mein first! ...Aur doosra????

NIKUMBH

Aap ko kya lagtaa hai... uski problem kya hai??

FATHER

Problem? Uska ravaieya aur kya! Padhaai ki taraf... Har cheez ki taraf... Hamesha badmaashi... tevar hi tevar... kabhi koi baat hi nahi sunega!

NIKUMBH SIR

Mai aap se uski problem poochh raha hoon... aap symptom bataa rahe hain... Aap bataa rahe hain bachche ko bukhaar hai jab ki mai poochh raha hoon usko bukhaar kyun hai?

FATHER

Haan to... Aap hi bataaiye naa...

NIKUMBH SIR

Kya uske padhne-likhne ki galatiyon mein...aapne koi pattern dekha? Koi galati...jo wo doharata hai?

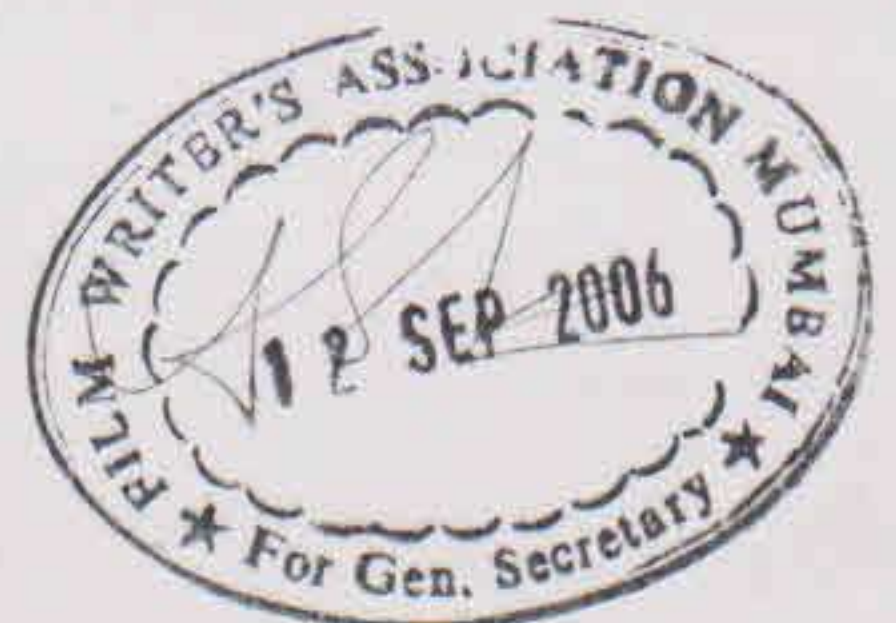
FATHER

Kya pattern? Saari galatiyaan hi galatiyaan!!!

NIKUMBH SIR

Phir aap pattern pehchaan nahi paaye hain...

NIKUMBH SIR opens his satchel and brings out ISHAAN's class-work books. MOTHER comes to his side quickly.



NIKUMBH SIR

Dekhiye... B ki jagah D... to D
ki jagah B... aur ye Animal...
Ek hi shabd...ek hi page par...
alag alag spelling... Dekhaa? A-
n-m-l-l-e -Animal... phir A-n-i-
m-l - aur... E-n-a-m-l... ek hi
page par! Doosri baat... ek
jaise shabdon ko mix up karta
hai... T-o-p top ban gayaa p-o-t
pot... Dekhaa?
S-o-l-i-d solid ban gayaa...
s-o-i-l-e-d soiled... Kyun karta
hai wo aise? ...Aalsi hai?
Bewaqoof hai? Naa... mera
khayaal hai... usey akshar
pehchaanne mein dikkat ho rahi
hai

MOTHER looks on anxiously.

NIKUMBH SIR

Jab aap 'A-p-p-l-e' apple padhti
hain... aap apne dimaag mein ek
laal-laal apple banaa leti
hain... Ishaan wo a-p-p-l-e
apple padh hi nahi pata
shaayad... isi liye matlab
samajh nahi pata...

FATHER begins paying attention.

NIKUMBH SIR

Padhaai-likhaai ke liye alfaazon
kaa matlab samajhnaa zaroori
hai... ye ahem zaroorat shaayad
Ishaan poori nahi kar paa
rahaa...

FATHER shrugs off the argument.

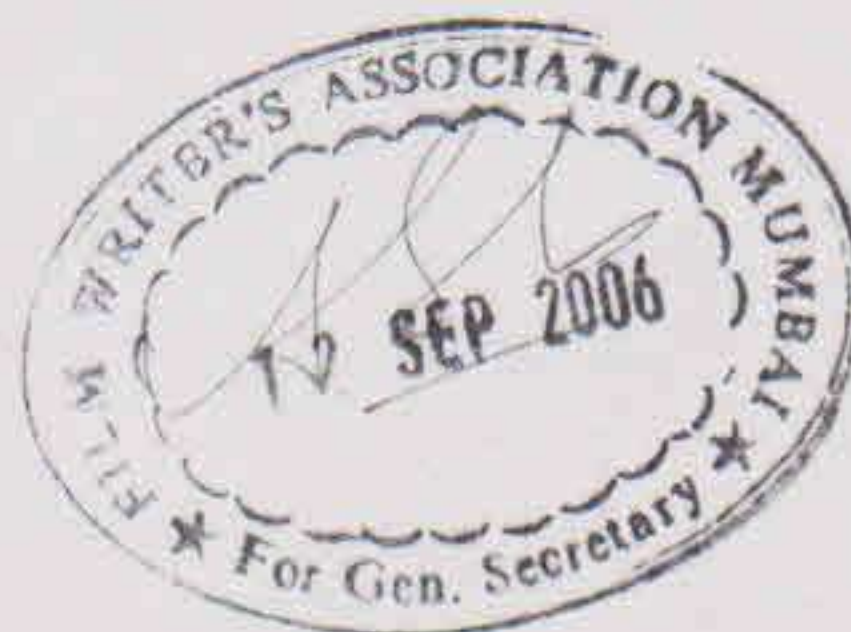
FATHER

Aisaa kuch nahi hai! Sab bahaane
hain padhaai taalne ke!

NIKUMBH picks up a beyblade box from around and gives it
to FATHER.

NIKUMBH SIR

Zaraa... ye padhiye... MR.
RAO...



FATHER is astounded because there all the instructions are in the chinese script on the box.

NIKUMBH

Padhiye naa

FATHER

Ye kaise padhoon ... ye to...
Chinese mein hai...

NIKUMBH

Arey koshish to kijiye... zaraa
dhyaan dijiye...

FATHER

(dropping the box)
Kya bagwaas kar rahe hain! Nahi
nahi...

NIKUMBH

Dekhiye aap shaitani kar rahe
hain... Aap ka ravaieya theek
nahi hai...

Reactions of FATHER, MOTHER and YOHAN as they get the drift of NIKUMBH SIR's words.

NIKUMBH

Kuch aisi hi kaifiyat hoti hogi
ISHAAN ki... Akshar hi samajh
mein nahi aate honge...
Iss padhne-likhne ki taqleef ko
Dyslexia kehte hain.
Kabhi kabhi Dyslexia ke saath
saath bachche ko aur bhi
taqleefen ho sakti hain jaise
poor fine and gross motor
skills... kya ISHAAN ko apne
shirt ke button, ya joote ki
lace baandhne mein taqleef hoti
hai?

MOTHER

Haan...

NIKUMBH

Yohan... agar tum ISHAAN ki
taraf ball phenkte ho... kya wo
pakad pata hai?

YOHAN shakes his head.



YOHAN

Kabhi ball judge hi nahi kar
pata wo...

NIKUMBH SIR

Kyun ki wo Size, Distance aur
Speed- inn teenon ko ek saath
samajh nahi pata! Kitni badi
ball kitni doori se kitni tez aa
rahi hai... jab tak wo jaan
le... gaadi chhoot jaati hai...

NIKUMBH SIR takes a breath and resumes

NIKUMBH SIR

Sochiye... ek bachcha... mahaz
aath ya nau saal ka... Padh nahi
pata, likh nahi pata, roz-
marraah ke maamooli kaam nahi
kar pata... Wo saari cheezen
nahi kar paata jo uske saath ke
bachche badi aasaani se kar dete
hain... kya beet-ti hogi uspar?
Uske Self-confidence ki to
dhajjiyaan udti hongi har roz!
Apni khaamiyon ko... tedhepan ke
libaas mein lapetkar... duniya
se ladhtaa hoga har roz! Gadar
machaata hoga gadar yahan!!!

(MOTHER nods smiling)

Kyun bataaon duniya ko ...ki
mujhe ata nahi... Nahi karnaa
keh kar na taal doon? ...Badon
se hi seekhte hain bachche...
Ab to wo gadar bhi kuchal diya
gaya hai wahan!

NIKUMBH SIR shows the paintings.

NIKUMBH SIR

...Mujhe afsos hai..... usne
painting karnaa band kar diya
hai... bade dukh ki baat hai...

MOTHER can't take it. The fatalistic tone returns

MOTHER

lekin ISHAAN hi kyun?



NIKUMBH SIR

Iska koi jawaab nahi hai... it's a neurological disorder... kabhi-kabhi genetic hota hai... aam aadmi ki zabaan mein kahoon... to brain mein... zaraa si wiring ki problem hai...

FATHER

To aap ye keh rahe hain... Mera beta normal nahi hai! Mentally Retarded hai?

NIKUMBH SIR opens out the paintings frantically

NIKUMBH SIR

Ye dekhiye... Ye dekhiye... Ye tez dimaag hazaaron khayaal bunn raha hai rangon mein... aap ki aur meri qaabileeyat se kai aage!

FATHER

Lekin iskaa faaydaa kya?

NIKUMBH SIR

Aap isme faaydaa kyun dhoondh rahe hain?

FATHER

To kya dhoondo? Kya banega wo bada hokar? Kaise baraabari kar paaegaa duniya ke saath? Kya saari umr khilata rahoongaa mai?

NIKUMBH SIR gets up, paces and looks around the house, then looks out of the window and points.

NIKUMBH SIR

Jaantaa hoon! Wahan... ek be-raham competitive duniya basi hai! Uss duniya mein sabhi ko... apne-apne gharon mein toppers aur rankers ugaane hain! Har kisiko awwal number chahiye! Doctor, Engineer, Management, I.T. se kum jaise bardaasht hi nahi hoga! 95.5% 95.6% 95.7% Isse kum to... gaali ke baraabar! Arey zaraa samjho har bachche ki apni khoobi hoti hai, apni chaahat hoti hai apni kaabileeyat hoti hai ... Lekin



nahi... har ungli ko kheenchkar
lambi karne me lage hain sab!
Lage raho! Chaahe ungli hi kyun
na toot jaay!

NIKUMBH fuming.

(420 Secs)

70 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR

No options! Kehta hai... No
options!? Koi chaaraa nahi hai!

NIKUMBH SIR recounts to JABEEN.

NIKUMBH SIR

Agar ghode daudaaneka itna hi
shauk hai, to breed race horses
dammit! Bachche kyun paidaa
karte hain?!! Apni ambition ka
wazan apne bachche ke kamzor
kandhon par rakhna... shyaaa!
This is worse than child labour!
Aur bachchaa wazan uthaa nahi
paya to?

NIKUMBH SIR sighs.

NIKUMBH SIR

Kab samjhenge... ki har bachchaa
apne hisaab se wazan uthata
hai... aaj nahi to kal seekh hi
jata hai. Apni-apni raftaar
hoti hai... Paanchon ungaliyon
ka haath bantaa hai...

JABEEN

Aur kahan hum inhe nanhe-munnon
ko mainstream mein settle karne
ke sapney dekh rahe hain...

PAN: The TULIPS CHILDREN.

(50 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:

71 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

MOTHER watches a short musical montage of baby and
toddler ISHAAN - mixed media - photos, VHS and DV home
videos.



71A INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Infant ISHAAN gurgling in MOTHER's arms.

71B INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

ISHAAN takes his first step. #find

71C I/E. KINDERGARTEN - DAY

ISHAAN's 1st nursery day video - crying for mom. #veer

71D I/E. KINDERGARTEN - DAY

ISHAAN climbs up a jungle-gym and balances. #veer

71E INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

ISHAAN's first big bruise on his arm. #veer

71F INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - DAY

ISHAAN completely covered with colors, only in chaddu, finger-painting on a large sheet of white. He looks up and grins ear to ear. #veer

71G I/E. KINDERGARTEN - DAY

ISHAAN being given a medal on the sports field.?

71H INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

The current ISHAAN running around the house, chased by YOHAN and MOTHER. The TV shuts off.

(60 secs)

BACK TO:

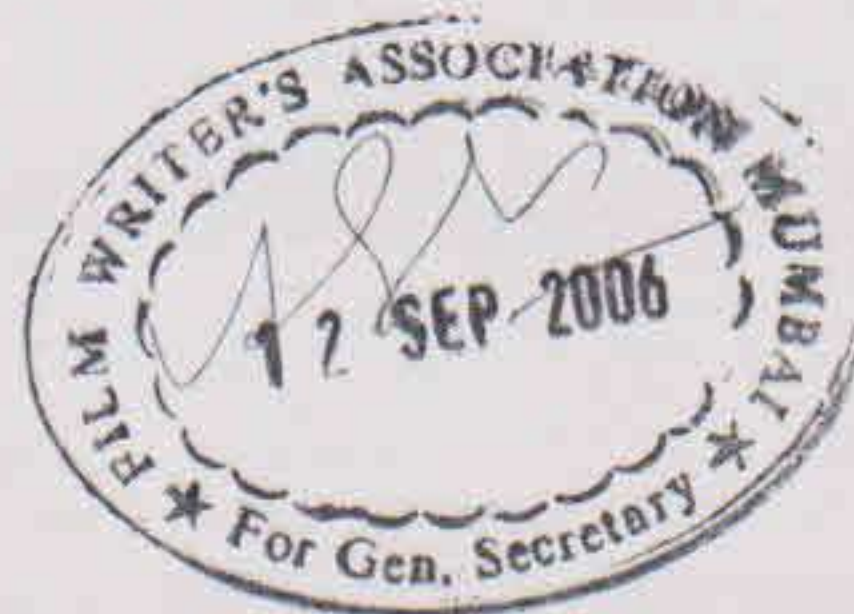
71I INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON: An emotional MOTHER, TV remote in hand.

72 INT. NASIK PUBLIC SCHOOL - ART ROOM - DAY

ANGLE ON: ISHAAN's flipbook painting. The pages flip and the boy disappears from the page.

The book lies in front of ISHAAN. He looks up with surprise.



NIKUMBH SIR is looking intensely into his eyes.
Meaningful silence shared by the two. Then NIKUMBH SIR
turns around and steps up the platform.

NIKUMBH SIR
Doston... Aaj mai tumhe ek
kahani sunaaoonga...

CLASS CHORUS
YEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEY!

He looks at ISHAAN.

CLOSE ON: ISHAAN-tense.

NIKUMBH SIR
Ek ladke ki kahani.....

CLOSE ON: ISHAAN looks anxious.

NIKUMBH SIR
Suno...
Ek ladkaa tha...
Mat poochho... kidhar...
Wo padh-likh nahi pata tha...
Lekh koshishon baad
Usko rehta naa tha yaad
Ki Y... X ke baad ata tha...
Alfaaz uske dushman...
Uski aankhon ke saamne naachte
the...
Dance karkarke jee bharbhar ke
bechaare ko sataate the
Likhnaa-padhnai thakaa deta usko
Dukhde apne sunaataa wo kisko?
Bhejaa full tha Starter gull
tha Oopar se ABC Disco
Fail ho gaya... ek din bechara
Padhne-likhne ke bojh ka mara...
Logon ne usey Gadhaa, Bewakoof
kahaa...
Bachche ne sara apmaan bahaaduri
se sahaa...
Phir ek saavere usne sona
uglaa... Theory jo suni jahaan
ne... Sara Jahaan pighlaa...
Bolo...Bolo... kaun hai wo...

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Booming heartbeats, ISHAAN's tense
heart.

There is silence in the classroom.



ISHAAN has withdrawn deepest in his shell, afraid of the answer.

NIKUMBH SIR starts unraveling a large poster, slowly the picture of Albert Einstein reveals itself to the class.

RAJAN shouts out loudly

RAJAN
Albert Einstein!

NIKUMBH SIR nods.

NIKUMBH SIR
Correct! RAJAN! Albert Einstein!
Genius, mahaan Scientist...
jisne duniya ko apni 'Theory of
Relativity' se hilaa ke rakh
diya! ... 'The Brownian Motion'
'The Photo-electric Effect' for
which he was awarded the Nobel
Prize in 1921.

NIKUMBH SIR unfurls another poster. It is a print of Da Vinci's sketch of a helicopter.

NIKUMBH SIR
Ye kya hai?

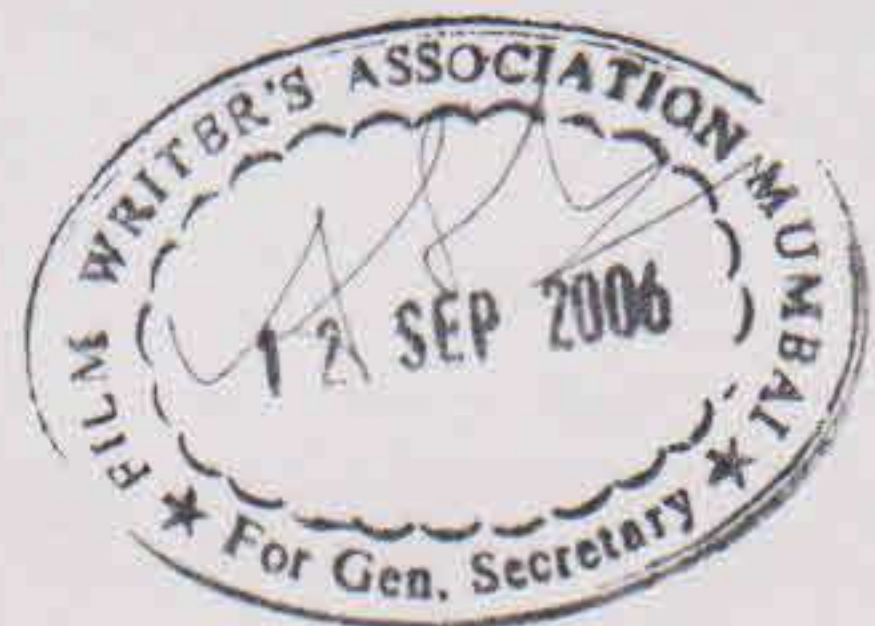
KIDS shout in chorus.

CLASS CHORUS
Helicopter!

NIKUMBH SIR
Na Na Na... Koi ordinary
helicopter nahi hai ye... The
Great Artist-Inventor...
Leonardo... Da Vinci... kaun?

CLASS CHORUS
Leonardo... Da Vinci!

NIKUMBH SIR
Haan... unhone ye tasveer
banaayi! A working sketch of a
helicopter... Lekin kab? In the
15th Century! Pandrahvi Sadi
mein... Pehlaa havaaijahaz udtaa
uske Chaar-sau saal pehle!
Jaante ho? ... Leonardo Da Vinci



ko padhne likhne mein badi
tagleef hoti thi... ulta likh
dete the Vinci Saahab... right
to left... mirror image...

NIKUMBH SIR illustrates the laboured style by writing 'My
name is RAM SHANKAR NIKUMBH' right to left.

The KIDS are awestruck by the effort. They start
clapping.

NIKUMBH SIR
ISHAAN... zaraa light on karo...

A baffled ISHAAN gets up and switches on the light.

NIKUMBH SIR
(to ISHAAN)
Kis mahaan hasti ne duniya ko
electricity se raushan kiya?

ISHAAN unwittingly answers

ISHAAN
Edison... Thomas Alva Edison...

NIKUMBH SIR
Bilkul sahi ISHAAN! Wo bhi
bechaaraa... tha A B C D ka
mara... Aao baitho
Ishaan...nahi light rehne do...
Edison Bhai ki raushani hum par
patti rahe....

NIKUMBH SIR opens yet another poster.

NIKUMBH SIR
OK, Isko to sab jaante hain...

KIDS
(echoes the class)
...Tom Cruise!

NIKUMBH SIR
Ek aur badnaseeb... jise alfaaz
naachte nazar aate the...

ISHAAN looks relieved for the first time since he came to
BOARDING School.



NIKUMBH SIR

Aur bhi hain... asli namoone...
Picasso, the famous cubist
painter... usko... seven number
kabhi samajh mein nahi aya...
kehta tha...

He demonstrates on the black-board

NIKUMBH SIR

Ye to mere uncle ki ulti naak
hai...

Children laugh at the caricatured nose

NIKUMBH SIR

Tom & Jerry ka Baap... kaun?
(quizzical looks of
kids)
...Walt Disney... aksharon se
pareshaan... daal di cartoonon
mein apni jaan!
Neil Diamond, the popular
singer... laal-laal report-card
ki sharm mein doobaa... gaane
likhtaa...
Agatha Christie, the best
mystery-books writer... Yakeen
karoge? Lekhika jo bachpan mein
padh-likh nahi paati thi!
Lekin... lekin aaj sudddunlee...
ye sab mai kyun keh rahaa hoon?

Silence in the ranks. ISHAAN is listening with keen
interest.

NIKUMBH SIR

Tumhe ye bataane... Duniyaa mein
aise-aise heere paidaa hue hain
jinhone saari duniya ka hi
naqshaa badal diya... kyun ki wo
duniya ko... apni alag nazar se
dekh paaye... Dimaag unke zaraa
hatke the... aas-paas waalon ko
bardaasht nahi hua... taqleefen
khadi kar di... iske baavajood
wo jeete... aur aise jeete ki
duniya dekhti reh gayi! Inn
saare Bilandaron Kalandaron
Sikandaron ke naam... aaj ki ye
Art Class. Unko yaad karte
hue... iss chaar-diwaari ke
baahar kadam rakhenge... kuch



alag banaayenge...different! Jee
mein aye wo utha lo... pathhar,
lakdi, kachraa, kuch bhi!

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Laughter.

NIKUMBH SIR

Unn mahaan inventors ko yaad
karke... Kuch different banaa
lo... Chalo... chhote taalaab ki
taraf badhnaa shuru karo...

The KIDS jump up with joy. Clearly, they have begun
loving this teacher.

NIKUMBH SIR sees the kids leaving the class. ISHAAN too,
is walking off with RAJAN. NIKUMBH SIR calls out.

NIKUMBH SIR

ISHAAN... ek minute...

ISHAAN turns back, terrified and walks to NIKUMBH SIR
with unsure steps, just as the class gets empty. He comes
and stands in front of NIKUMBH SIR, the flip-book in his
hands, looking down. NIKUMBH SIR tousles ISHAAN's hair
and takes the flip-book from ISHAAN.

NIKUMBH SIR

Jaante ho... unn saare logon
mein... ek aur naam tha... jo
maine nahi liyaa... shaayad is
liye ke wo naam itna mahaan nahi
hai... lekin taqleef usko bhi
wohi hai...Wo naam
hai.....RAM...
SHANKAR... NIKUMBH.

ISHAAN looks up sharply.

NIKUMBH SIR

Haan mujhe bhi bachpan mein
padhne-likhne ki taqleef thi...
Mere pitaji mujhe samajh hi nahi
paaye... unhe lagtaa tha mai
shaitaani kar raha hoon,
jaanboojhkar nahi padh raha
hoon.... unko lagaa aage chalke
mera kuch nahi hoga...
...Jo hoon aaj tumhare saamne
hoon Ishaan...

ISHAAN keeps looking at NIKUMBH SIR.



ISHAAN
Aap mere ghar gaye the?

(360 secs)

73 EXT. NASIK PUBLIC SCHOOL ~ POND - DAY

LONG SHOT: ISHAAN walking silently with NIKUMBH SIR towards the pond, where other children have reached.

DISSOLVE TO:

ISHAAN laboriously collects the right shaped leaves, dried kernel and twigs and starts off.

NIKUMBH SIR notices ISHAAN's craft skills.

ISHAAN turns his collected material into a boat-plane with the help of string and pins and buttons that he carries like treasures in his pocket. What's more, his boat-plane floats when tested in the pond.

NIKUMBH SIR
Wow! Ye to chalne lagi!!!

ISHAAN shies away from him and hides behind others.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The school bell rings in the distance.

The KIDS don't want to disperse. But NIKUMBH SIR has to do his duty.

NIKUMBH SIR
Chalo... apne class chale
jaao...
(kids protest)
Jao bachchon... please... Warnaa
principal mujhe nikaal denge!

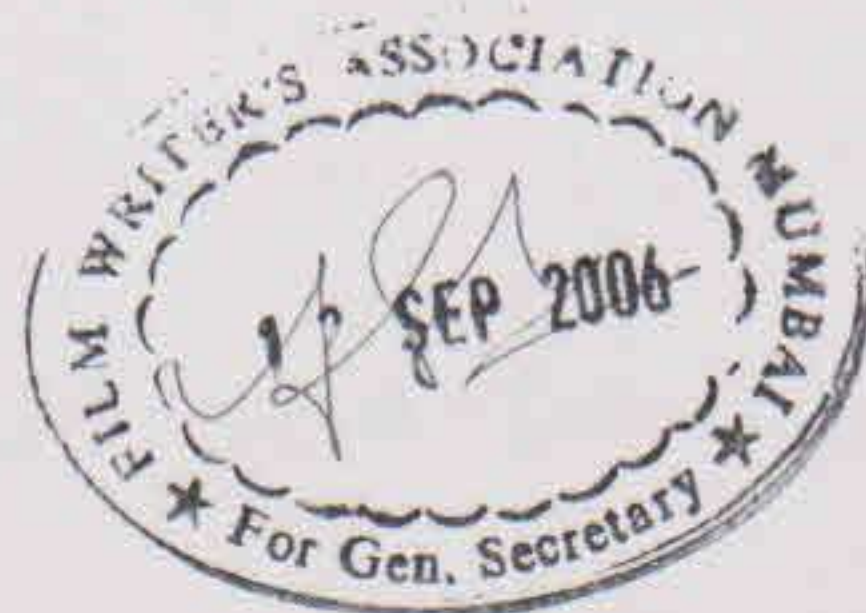
The KIDS are disappointed. They begin exiting from the pond site.

(75 secs)

74 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ RIVULET - EVENING

ISHAAN sits on his haunches and peeps into a rivulet. Little guppy fish are swimming among the gracefully swaying weeds.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Bach's organ in A-minor plays soulfully to the uplifting image.



(15 secs)

75 INT. NIKUMBH'S STUDIO APPT - EVENING

NIKUMBH SIR enters and puts ISHAAN's boat-plane on his shelf fondly.

(15 secs)

76 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - HEADMASTER'S CABIN - EVENING

NIKUMBH SIR enters the Headmaster's office.

NIKUMBH SIR

Good Evening Sir...

HEADMASTER

Hmmm NIKUMBH... Come in.

NIKUMBH SIR

Sir mujhe ek student ke baare mein baat karni thi... ISHAAN RAO... IIIB... nayaa student hai...

HEADMASTER

Oh! I know... I know... Doosre teacheron ke bhi complaint aa gaye hain... Baitho... Hamen nahi lagaa wo saal bhar bhi tik paayegaa...

NIKUMBH SIR

Nani Sir... wo badaa aqalmand bachcha hai... He is a bright boy! ... Buss... reading-writing mein thodi taqleef hai... Aap to jaante hi honge... Dyslexia ke baare me.... Usey...

(interrupted by
HEADMASTER'S
exclamation)

HEADMASTER

Ahhh...Oh... I see. Tumne hamara kaam aasaan kar diya NIKUMBH... Soch rahe the... uske father se kya kahenge hum... Bachchaa trustees ke through aya hai you see... Good... Good... Good... to phir... special school hi sahi jagah hai uske liye...



Kyun... Le jana chaahte ho usko
apne school... Tulips?

NIKUMBH SIR

No Sir... He is child with above
average intelligence...bahut tez
bachchaa hai wo... usey pooraa
haque hai ek normal school mein
padhne ka... usey bass zaraa si
madad ki zaroorat hai hum se...

HEADMASTER

Lekin chaalis bachchon ke beech
usey padhaanaa badaa mushkil ho
jaayegaa teachers ke liye... Ye
nahi ho saktaa!

NIKUMBH SIR

Lekin sir... Duniya bhar mein...
har kism ke bachche, chaahe jo
bhi unki problem ho...ek saath
normal school mein padhte hain!
...Balki... mere Tulips ke
bachchon ko pooraa adhikaar
hai... kisee bhi saadhaaran
school mein padhneka!

HEADMASTER'S reaction.

NIKUMBH SIR

Maaf kijiye Sir... ye mai nahi
keh raha hoon... ye hamare
Maharashtra State ka kaanoon
kehta hai... Do% reservation hai
aise bachchon ke liye... ye aur
baat hai ke bahut kum schools
iss kaanoon ka amal kar rahe
hain...

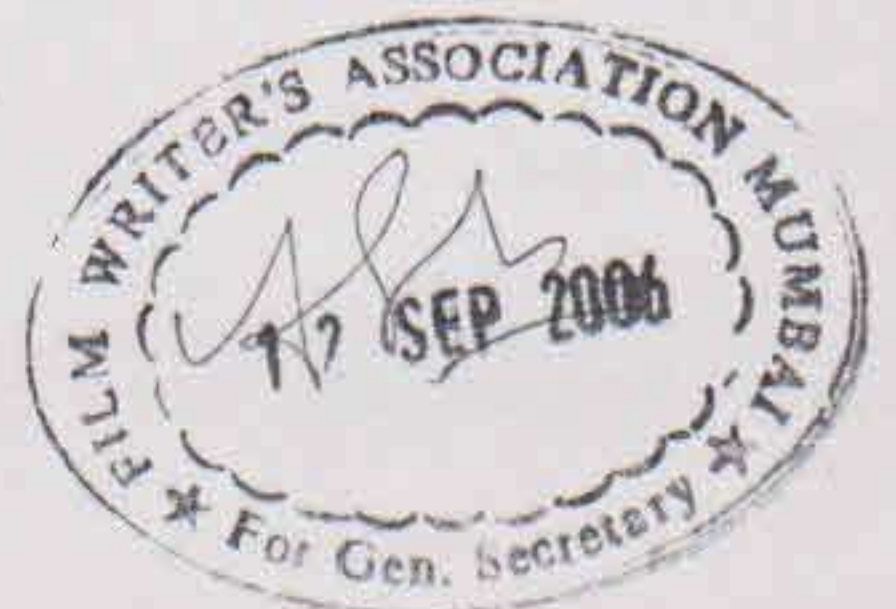
The HEADMASTER changes tracks...

HEADMASTER

Nikumbh... tum mujhe ye
bataao... ye bachchaa yahan
kaise manage kar paayegaa?
...Maths hai, history hai,
geography, sciences,
languages...

NIKUMBH SIR

Wo kar lega Sir... Teachers
zaraa sa haath bataa den to ho
sakta hai...



HEADMASTER

Kahan hai time teacheron ke
paa3....

NIKUMBH SIR

Sir aap jitna soch rahe hain
utna time nahi lagtaa! ...mai
karke dikhata hoon... Zyada nahi
Sir... poore hafte mein sirf
teen ghante mujhe chahiye...

HEADMASTER ponders about it...

NIKUMBH SIR

Waise bhi inn saare subjects
mein sirf usko paas hona hai...
uski asli manzil kahin aur
hai...

HEADMASTER

Achchaa! To aap ka subject chhod
ke... baaki saare subjects jo
hum sikhaate hain wo betuke
hain?

NIKUMBH SIR

Nahi Sir... mai ye nahi keh raha
hoon... lekin har bachche ka
apna hunar hota hai ... Aur
vaise bhi... as Oscar Wilde
says, "Who wants a cynic who
knows the price of everything
and value of nothing!" Har cheez
ka daam jaanaa lekin uski keemat
na samajhna? Kya faaydaa???

The HEADMASTER raises his eyebrows toasting NIKUMBH SIR's
wonderful metaphor. NIKUMBH SIR takes advantage of this.

NIKUMBH SIR

Sir please Sir... Zaraa bachche
ki paintings dekhiye Sir...

NIKUMBH SIR opens up a folder of ISHAAN's creations for
the Headmaster's benefit.

NIKUMBH SIR

Ye dekhiye... Jung ka maidaan...
sipahi surang khodtaa hai...
khodte-khodte panna palat ke
surang se udanchhoo! Kya soch
hai Sir... Ye confident brush-
strokes... such bold use of



color...bedhadak! Aur Ye dekhiye
Anokhaa flip-book... ghar se
bichhad jaane ki daastaan -
mahaz aath saal ke bachche ki
banaayi!

NIKUMBH SIR demonstrates and meets the HEADMASTER's eye.

NIKUMBH SIR
Sir patari ke baahar bahut kum
log soch paate hain... ek
chance...Sir
Usey ek mauke ki zaroorat hai..
warnaa uski ummeed toot
jaayegi...

PAUSE. The HEADMASTER scratches his chin for want of a
gesture.

HEADMASTER
To kya chaahte ho humse?

NIKUMBH SIR
Sir thode samay ke liye uske
spellings, uski likhaawat ko
nazarandaaz kiya jaay... uske
tests zabaani poochhe jaay...
gyaan to gyaan hota hai...
chaahe zabaani ho... ya
likhaawati! Utne mein mai uski
likhaai-padhaai pe kaam kar raha
hoon... dheere-dheere wo bhi
sudhar jaayegi...

HEADMASTER
Pataa nahi... temporary teacher
ki baaton mein aakar... kahin
hum permanent damage na kar
baithen!

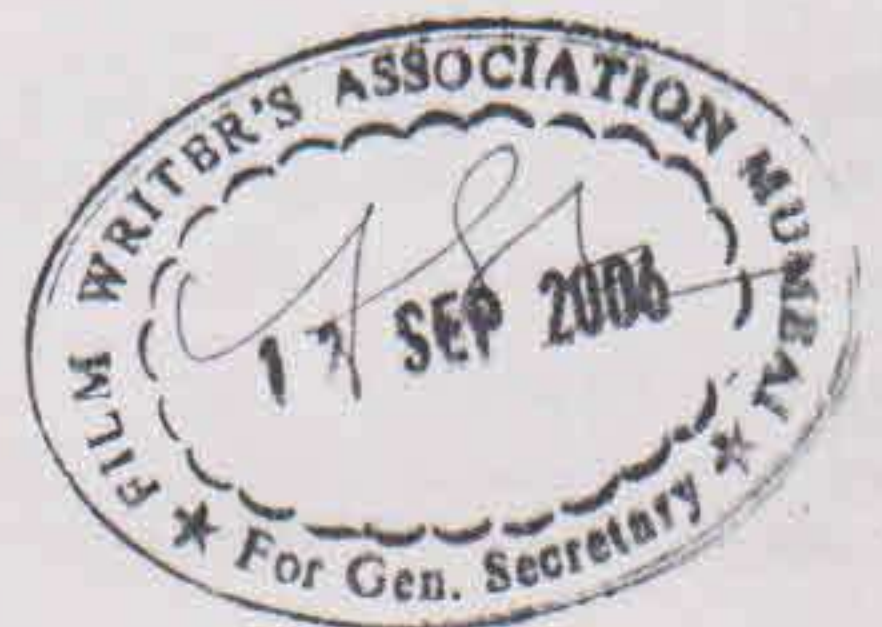
(270 secs)

77 INT. ISHAAN'S HOUSE - ISHAAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Page after page, on Dyslexia, opening on the monitor.

MOTHER and YOHAN are watching attentively.

(20 secs)



NIKUMBH - ISHAAN MONTAGE-INT/EXT

78 EXT. NIKUMBH - ISHAAN MONTAGE AT BOARDING SCHOOL

-SCHOOL SAND-PIT OR OPTIONS

(in rice, rava, red mud. (tray in contrast colour from its material))

NIKUMBH SIR traces the letters and as he traces, he explains the sound to ISHAAN.

NIKUMBH SIR
a makes the sound 'aa'

In this way, NIKUMBH SIR goes over a few vowels and consonants in order a, i, o, e, u and b, t, g moving from distinctly different sounds.

78A INT. ISHAAN'S DORMITORY-DAY

-NIKUMBH SIR traces the letters on ISHAAN's forearm and forms their sounds

-NIKUMBH SIR traces the letters on ISHAAN's back and ISHAAN guesses. ISHAAN recognizes the letters.

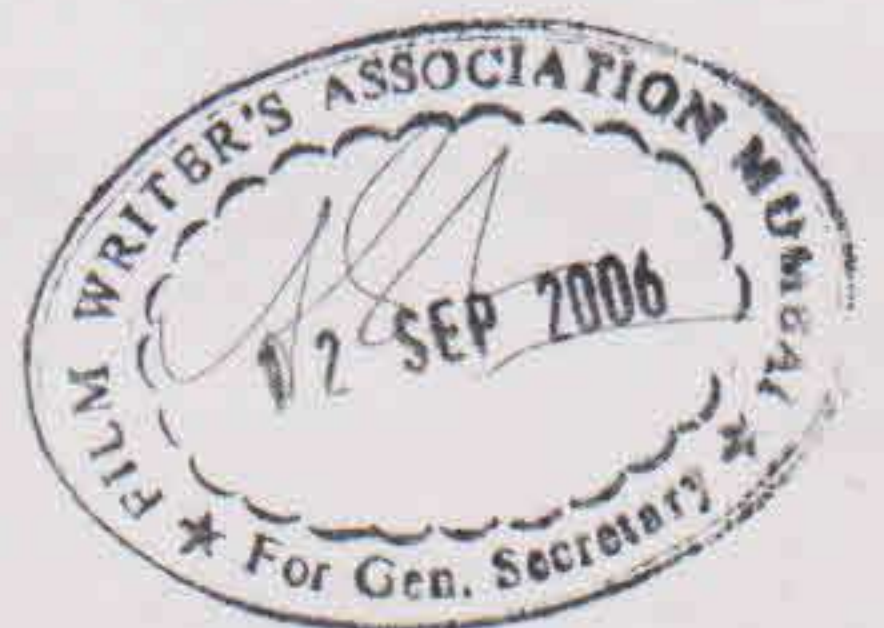
78B INT. ART ROOM-DAY

-NIKUMBH SIR dips fingers in paints and writes words. ISHAAN copies

-NIKUMBH SIR writes three letter words with a wet brush on the blackboard. The words dry up and ISHAAN repeats them from memory.

-NIKUMBH SIR gives ISHAAN clay to work with. The process is fun for ISHAAN.

-NIKUMBH SIR gives ISHAAN 3 dimensional kits to work with. They join with the help of magnets and ISHAAN is able to make enormous structures.



78C EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ART ROOM- DAY

-NIKUMBH SIR draws an enormous number line and ISHAAN walks on it gauging the numbers and their values.

78D INT. ISHAAN DORMITORY - DAY

-NIKUMBH SIR gives ISHAAN the magic cube to work on his multiplication and his tables.

-ISHAAN starts writing math in his math book, where 4 blocks have been combined into a single one to give ISHAAN room to write large letters. Gradually, the blocks reduce in size and Ishaan finally fits letters within the normal block.

-NIKUMBH SIR takes compound words and ISHAAN has to break them up. "If you remove rain from raindrop, what do you get?" "If you remove corn from popcorn, what do you get?" "If you remove the b from ball, you get all."

78E INT. BOARDING SCHOOL CLASSROOM-DAY

-RAJAN reads to ISHAAN

-RAJAN asks ISHAAN questions

-RAJAN puts carbon paper in his book for ISHAAN.

78F INT. ART ROOM-DAY

-NIKUMBH SIR shows ISHAAN the way around his laptop. ISHAAN learns and loves to play pacman.

78G INT. BOARDING SCHOOL CLASSROOM-DAY

-NIKUMBH SIR gives ISHAAN a series of work sheets to help him improve his math and reading.

Work sheet*****----- +**----- =-----

Sentences... This is a _____ (dog/god)

-was/saw and other such words all jumbled over the page. Ishaan has to circle the 'saw'



78H INT. ART ROOM - DAY

-NIKUMBH shows ISHAAN impressionist painters... Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' in particular.

78I EXT. STAIRCASE (TREE HOUSE??)-DAY

-ISHAAN learns to read. ISHAAN reads simple three letter words. NIKUMBH SIR looks pleased.

-NIKUMBH SIR has broken up words as per their spellings. All similar spelt words are clubbed together.

"Feel, reel, green, bee"

"moon, soon, cool fool, drool".

Then the more complicated spellings; the 'magic a words... "hat becomes hate, tap becomes tape, at becomes ate",

Then the magic o words...

"hole, pole, role, stole...."

-We see him in various stages of reading from books now...first books with larger print and pictures. ISHAAN gradually moves to smaller print, lesser pictures.

78J INT. ISHAAN DORMITORY-NIGHT

-NIKUMBH SIR's voice from a cassette recorder, as ISHAAN reads the Hindi reader

NIKUMBH SIR (V.O.)
oooh se dekho...

(12 secs)

78K INT. ART ROOM- DAY

-NIKUMBH SIR shows ISHAAN his style of water coloring. ISHAAN is impressed.



78L INT. TREE HOUSE -DAY

-ISHAAN being supervised by NIKUMBH SIR... A worksheet with a printed paragraph with a fair amount of spelling mistakes. ISHAAN is circling the mistakes with a pencil. NIKUMBH SIR shows ISHAAN the magic of the RUBIC CUBE.

78M INT. HEADMASTER'S CABIN- DAY

NIKUMBH SIR AND HEADMASTER.

NIKUMBH SIR

Sir aap ne... school pass hone ke baad... kabhi painting kiya hai?

79 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - NOTICE BOARD AREA - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR is pasting a huge handmade hoarding.

INSERT: Hoarding reads: For All Students and Teachers! Come and paint at the Art Mela on Sunday, 24th December from 9 AM to 12 Noon, at the School Gymnasium!

CHILDREN are gathered around the hoarding.

KIDS

Sir kya hai... Sir kya hai?

NIKUMBH SIR

Painting Competition Sunday ko! Teachers, students sab ke liye!

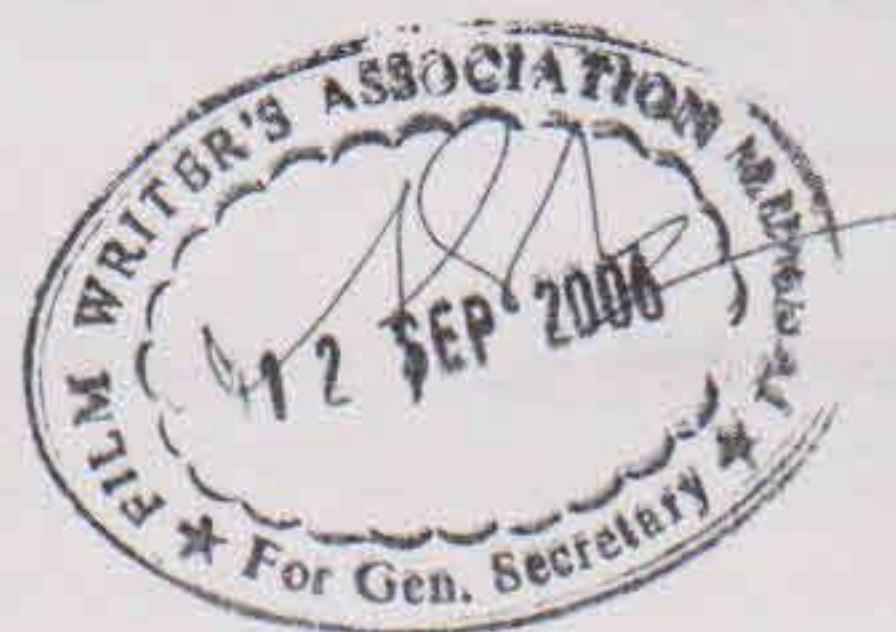
(15 secs)

80 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ART ROOM - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR is addressing a different, much older class.

NIKUMBH SIR

Kalaa ka maqsad kya hai? ...aap ke andar chhipe jasbaaton ko chhoot dena... Aaj khush ho? Haath bright colors ki taraf badhtaa hai! Lunch bagwaas tha? ...saare kaale gardoole rang paper pe nikalte hain!



FATHER

Excuse me...

ISHAAN's FATHER is standing at the door.

NIKUMBH SIR

MR. RAO... please come in...
(to the class)...Doston...zaraa do minute mai
abhi aya...Tab tak Apne-apne
bench-partner ka chehera
banaao... aur naak mat phulana
... khaamakhaa naaraaz lagoge.

The BOYS laugh. NIKUMBH SIR takes FATHER inside his room.

(30 secs)

80A INT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ ART ROOM ANNEXE - DAY

NIKUMBH SIR

Yahan kaise?

FATHER

Factory ke kaam se aya tha ...

NIKUMBH SIR

Ishaan se mile?

FATHER

Nahi... abhi nahi...
miloongaa... pehle aap se kuch
baat karni thi!

NIKUMBH SIR

Haan... Baithiye...

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The laughter from the class outside is audible.

FATHER is tense.

FATHER

Meri wife internet surfing kar
rahi hai kuch dinon se...
Dyslexia par chhapi saari
jaankaari usne padh daali... aap
ko bataanaa tha...

NIKUMBH SIR

Mujhe kyun bataanaa tha?



FATHER

Nahi... shaayad aap ye soch ke baithe hon... hum unn logon me se hain jo apne bachchon ka khayaal nahi karte....

Silence.

NIKUMBH SIR

"Khayaal karnaa"... bahut zaroori hai MR. RAO. Isme mein ilaaj ki shakti hai... ek marham hai... jisse Dard mita hai.... bachche ko tasalli ho jaati hai ke uska koi khayaal kartaa hai... ekhaad jhappi ... pyaar bhari pappi... ye dikhane ko ke mai khayaal kartaa hoon... Beta mai tumse pyaar kartaa hoon... Agar koi fikar ho to mere paas aao... kya hua agar tum phisle, galati hui... Mai hoon naa... ye dilaasaa... Khayaal karnaa... isi ko kehte hain na MR. RAO? ... Mujhe khushi hui ye sunkar ki aap ko lagtaa hai... aap khayaal karte hain...

FATHER is frozen. It is evident that was not the drift of MR. RAO's boast. He feels small now.

FATHER

Theek hai phir... mai chala...

He gets up. NIKUMBH SIR throws his salvo.

NIKUMBH SIR

Aap ki wife ne Solomon Islands ke baare mein kuch padhaa??

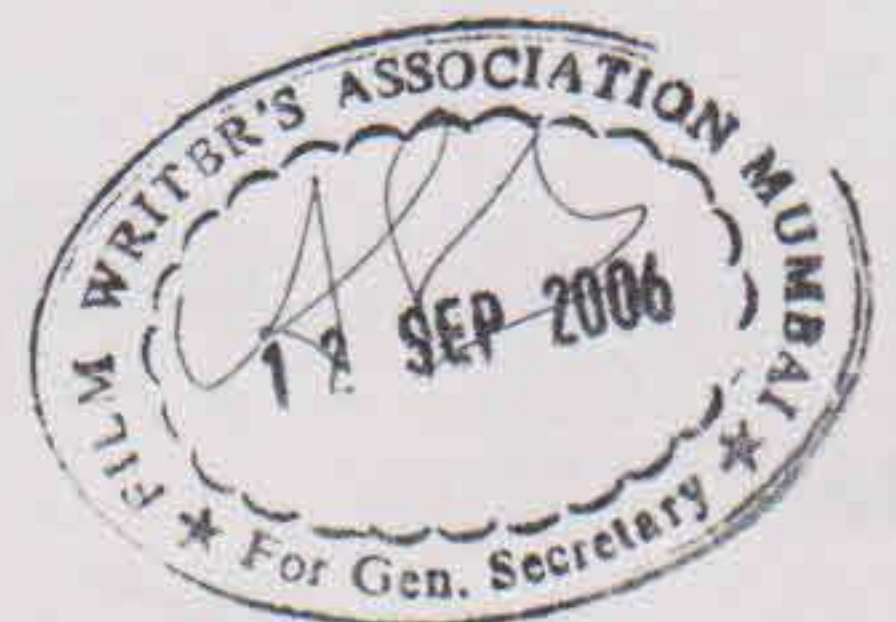
FATHER is unsure.

FATHER

Pataa nahi... Mujhe pataa nahi...

NIKUMBH SIR

Solomon Islands mein... jab adivasiyon ko jungle ka koi hissaa kheti karne ke liye saaf karna hota hai... wo ped-darakhton ko kaat-te nahi...



Mahaz us ped ke paas saare
pahunch jaate hain aur jee bhar
ke ped ko gaali dete hain...
koste hain... dekhte hi
dekhte... kuch hi dinon mein ped
murjhaa jata hai... apne aap hi
mar jata hai...

NIKUMBH SIR keeps looking at the receding figure of
FATHER. His shoulders have dropped.

CLOSE ON: NIKUMBH SIR

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The laughter increases in volume to
suggest that the door has opened.

(150 secs)

81 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ NOTICE BOARD AREA - DAY

FATHER'S POV: LONG SHOT. ISHAAN stands alone, with hands
folded at his back, watching the hoarding, trying to read
the announcement.

CLOSE ON: FATHER, his eyes have welled up. His chin
quivers, as he hastily turns around and exits in the
opposite direction.

(30 secs)

82 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - MORNING
(PRE DAWN)

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: An Indian bamboo flute plays a soulful
rendition in Raag Bhopali to the accompaniment of chimes.

It is not yet dawn.

IMAGES: A freshly bathed ISHAAN is buttoning his shirt
with a degree of difficulty. He tucks his shirt into his
pant, then, wears his socks. He slips into polished shoes
and ties his laces. He walks towards his study desk with
an empty canvass jhola. He opens his desk and takes out
the brand-new box of color-tubes. He looks at them,
stoic, then, puts them in the jhola. He puts crayons,
color pencils etc into the jhola. Then he shuts the desk
and leaves through the silent empty corridor.

(30 secs)



83 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ ISHAAN'S DORMITORY - MORNING
(DAWN)

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The sound of morning birds.

ISHAAN as he steps out of the hostel building.

It is the break of dawn.

(5 secs)

84 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ POND - MORNING (DAWN)

LONG SHOT: ISHAAN makes his way to the pond.

The early morning sky behind him, silhouetting his form, with the pond in foreground.

He comes and stands at the pond.

(15 secs)

FADE OUT.

85 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - DAY

Fade in. Funny caricatured signboard. "Aiyiee...rango ke mele me kho jayeye- TURN LEFT." Other such whacky signboards undulate into the last one which says "rangon ka mela yaheen to hai"

86 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ AMPHITHEATRE

Open wide to reveal the amphitheatre. A festive mood in the space.

NIKUMBH SIR, is dressed for the occasion, looking as if he has just stepped out from a luxurious bath. HEADMASTER enters with his WIFE and greets NIKUMBH SIR.

HEADMASTER

(guffawing)

Ye dekho... Hum aa gaye NIKUMBH!
You have finally convinced me to
become a Sunday painter!

CHILDREN of all ages are entering the gymnasium in hordes. MR. SEN and MR. AGASTI also arrive.



MR. SEN

(jokingly)

NIKUMBH! I've already decided!
I'm going to make a wordy
painting... Itna alphabets
daaloongaa... Pooraa alphabets
se bhar doongaa!!! Ha Hah!

NIKUMBH SIR

You seem to be limited by your
language MR. SEN!

MR. AGASTI

Kya NIKUMBH! Phasaa diya apne ko
bhi!

NIKUMBH SIR laughs.

NIKUMBH SIR

Karke to dekhiye AGASTI Saab!
Mazaa ayega! Chaliye Chaliye aap
ke liye khaas jagah bani
hai...aap ke liye bhi MR. SEN!

Montage of other teachers entering with more children
following...within the montage, teacher caricatures
marking the sitting spaces for them.

SUDDENLY NIKUMBH SIR'S attention is drawn to a graceful
old man in a short-sleeved kurta and pajama (SHRI. BADRI
NARAYAN), entering the hall.

NIKUMBH SIR moves to the man and folds his hands with
respect. He ushers the man to the HEADMASTER and
introduces.

NIKUMBH SIR

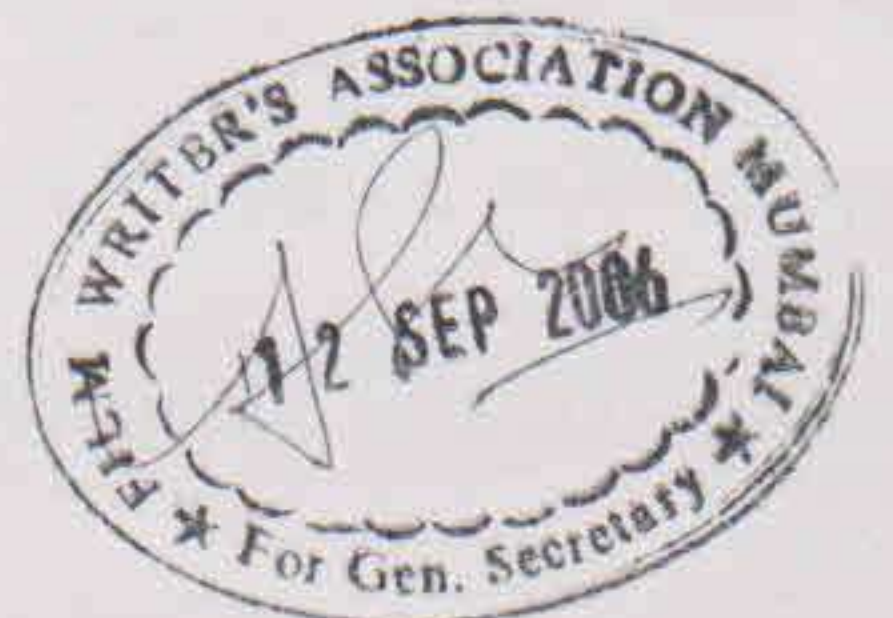
Sir... aaj ke khaas mehmaan...
SHRI BADRI NARAYAN... painter,
teacher, inspirer... Mere
Guru... Aur ye hain hamare
Headmaster... DR. P. N. SATHU.

SHRI BADRI NARAYAN notices the caricatures of the
principal and his wife and chuckles.

BADRI NARAYAN

NIKUMBH...khel kood jari hai
huh? Good!

He looks towards the PRINCIPAL



BADRI NARAYAN
 Wah Sadhu Saab! Sach much
 rangeen mela laga hai aur jagah
 bhi badi khoobsurat chuni hai.

PRINCIPAL smiles in response.

DISSOLVE TO:

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The bell rings long and loud to announce the beginning of the Art Mela.

STUDENTS and TEACHERS are seated side-by-side, large white sheets spread in front, color boxes and pencil sets lying open.

NIKUMBH SIR is pacing up and down. There is no sign of ISHAAN.

DISSOLVE TO:

NIKUMBH SIR is also seated with a white art-paper sheet empty in front of him. His eyes are searching.

Others are busy drawing and painting.

NIKUMBH SIR shouts across to RAJAN, who is seated at a special table.

NIKUMBH SIR
 RAJAN! Wo kahan hai?

RAJAN
 Pataa nahi Sir... Sab ke uthne
 se pehle hi hostel se nikal
 gaya.

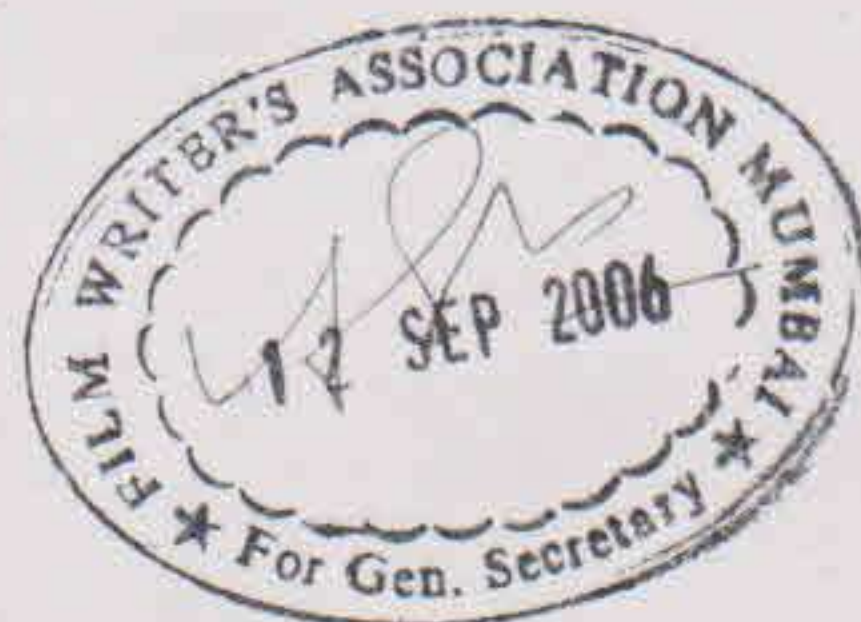
That brings worry lines to NIKUMBH SIR's face. He fiddles involuntarily with his brush. He gets up and starts worriedly pacing around the children.

Just then ISHAAN's figure appears at the top of the amphitheatre. From POV ISHAAN, he spots NIKUMBH SIR. ISHAAN moves downwards towards HIM. NIKUMBH SIR senses Ishaan's presence and turns to see them.

NIKUMBH SIR jumps up and runs to ISHAAN with a fresh sheet of art paper and makes him sit down comfortably. NIKUMBH SIR leaves ISHAAN to himself and goes back.

MONTAGE:

MONTAGES IN THREE STAGES



-AGASTI'S MONTAGE

-PRINCIPAL'S MONTAGE

-SEN'S MONTAGE

-TIWARI'S MONTAGE

-AGASTI'S MONTAGE

-BADI NARAYAN'S MONTAGE

Kids, who have finished, are peeping into others' drawings.

MR. AGASTI's drawing gets the most laughter from the naughty spies.

ISHAAN is immersed in his painting, his back bent, his head nearly touching the painting.

NIKUMBH SIR eyes ISHAAN's work-technique - most unique, no pencil work, no outline, no brushwork. Colors flow out directly from the tubes on to the paper, then it is fingers and water.

ISHAAN's painting forms on the screen, a silhouette of a boy against the morning sky, his reflection in the pond.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The flute plays again.

ISHAAN looks for NIKUMBH SIR in the crowd, sees him rising, his back to ISHAAN.

ISHAAN takes his painting to show NIKUMBH SIR. He offers his painting to NIKUMBH SIR, and while Sir is watching the details of his painting, ISHAAN steals a glance at NIKUMBH SIR's painting and he freezes.

It is a portrait of ISHAAN, a happy, smiling ISHAAN, rendered with bold strokes of warm colors.

ISHAAN cannot hold back his tears, while he watches himself in the mirror created by his Teacher and sobbing uncontrollably he crashes into NIKUMBH SIR and holds on to him, his shoulders shaking with sobs. NIKUMBH SIR slips down to his knees and embraces ISHAAN tightly.

(300 secs)

DISSOLVE TO:



87 INT. BOARDING SCHOOL ~ AMPHITHEATRE - DAY

The HEADMASTER on stage, the mike in his hand. He taps it.

HEADMASTER

Waah! Kya guzri hai subah!
Rangeen khidkiyon ke sheeshe
paar kar ke ...guzarte-guzarte
pahunch gaye apne bachpan mein
... Subhanallaah!
Aur doosron ka bachpan bhi khoob
dekhaa... AGASTI SIR se to vada
liya humne... compulsory lesson
lenge wo NIKUMBH SIR se! Kyun
AGASTI SIR!

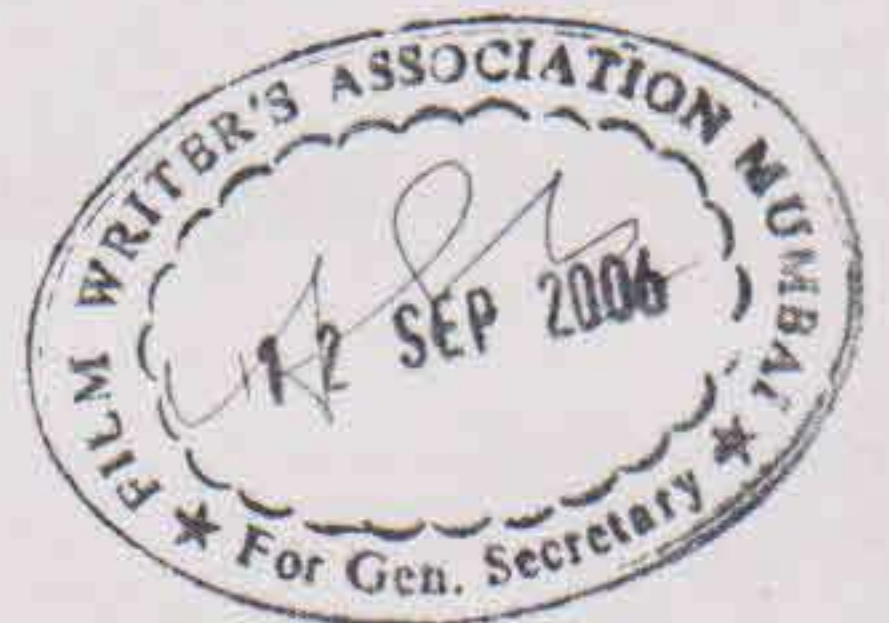
AGASTI SIR holds his ears and smiles.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Laughter.

HEADMASTER

...Khair... ab jiskaa aap sab ko
intezar hai...wo announce karne
jaa rahe hain...let me come to
the results of the Art Mela!
Hamare Khaas Mehmaan SHRI BADRI
NARAYAN was in a real fix! Badi
uljhan mein oopar neeche kar
rahe the... Do paintings ke
beech mein phanse the... It was
a tie! Wo to keh rahe the...
donon ko 'Best Painting of the
Art Mela' ka khitaab do! Lekin
ye mumkin nahi tha kyun ki... Jo
painting chunaa jaayegaa, hum ne
sochaa School ke Yearbook ka
front-cover ban jaayegaa... Ab
do front cover to nahi ho
sakte...
Kya karen...kya karen... kya
karen... BADRI NARAYANJI
dharamsankat mein... Khoob soch
vichaar karke wo nateeje pe
pahunch gaye hain... Aiyiee,
aiyee sahab. Bachon, SHRI BADRI
NARAYANJI ka swagat ki jeeye.
Char shabd humare bachon ke
liye..

BADRI NARAYAN takes the mike.



BADRI NARAYAN

Zindagi mein bahut kam baar kisi school ke Principal ko ye kehte suna hai kya guzri hai subah painting karte karte...Wah! Kya Mahaul Hai...ek simple si baat hai.

Padhai likhai apni jagah lekin agar bachon ko unke andar chupe hunar se wakif karna ho, unke hunar unhe sheeshe me dikhane ho to mahaul ka hona bahut jaroori hai.

Soliloquay continues and BADRI NARAYAN shares his vision. A day when schools realise that every child is special, that every child's skill should be celebrated, that every child has different abilities and its time we accept and cheer them...

(300 secs)

Aur rahi year book ke cover ko sajane wali painting ki baat. Maine guru ko naa chunke shishya ko chunaa hai! Jee haan bachon... Ye jo aapke NIKUMBH SIR hain na, wo haar gaye hain... aur unko chit kar denenewala shishya hai... nanhaa-munna nau saal ka ISHAAN NANDKISHORE RAO from III B! A big hand for ISHAAN RAO!

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Thunder of applause.

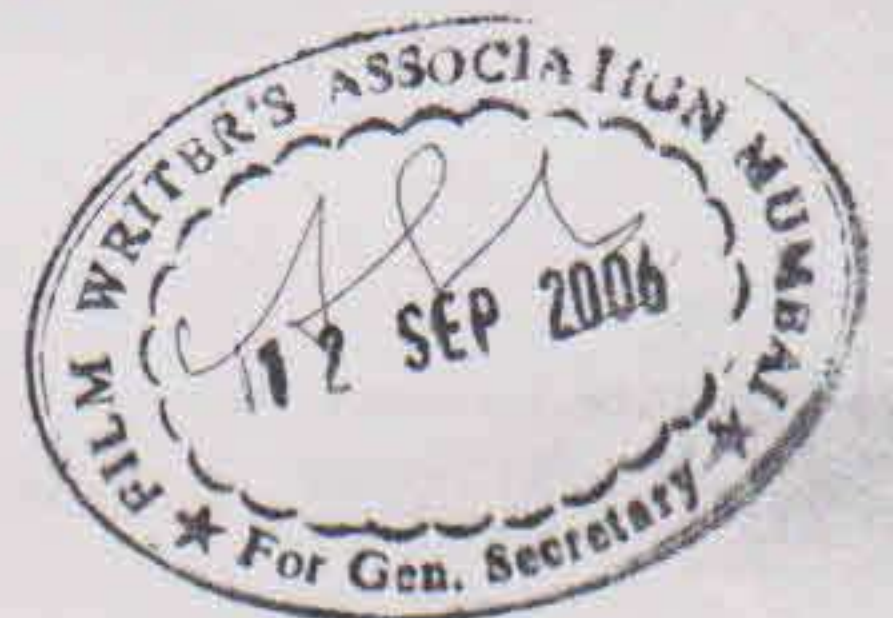
The Crowd of children look around to spot this unknown wonder.

ISHAAN, in line, is shuffling restlessly, unable to come to terms with the moment, he moves about his space, looking up and down, up and down.

BADRI NARAYAN

ISHAAN RAO! Come to the stage and receive your citation please...

The KIDS from ISHAAN's class fall back and form a path for ISHAAN to move forward. The sea has parted. But ISHAAN won't budge from the circle he has created for himself.



Right across the path, NIKUMBH SIR is standing.

ISHAAN meets his eye and NIKUMBH SIR beckons him to come forward with a gentle gesture.

ISHAAN begins moving, almost in a daze, stumbling a couple of times.

Children go up on their heels to get a better sight of him.

The cheer of claps starts building up as the little boy gets closer and closer to the raised platform.

ISHAAN stumbles up the stairs.

BADRI NARAYAN has the Citation in his hand, and tears in his eyes.

The school resounds with applause, when ISHAAN takes the Citation from BADRI NARAYAN. And ISHAAN breaks into sobs in Nikumbh SIR's arms...

FADE OUT.

EPILOGUE

88 I/E. BOARDING SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - DAY.

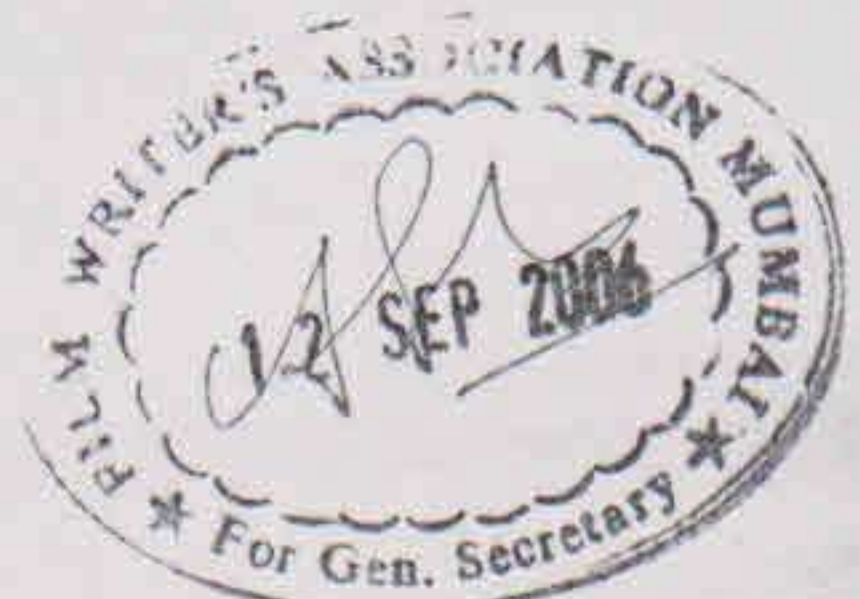
The school is in a festive year-end mood. Children are accompanied by parents. It is obvious that it is the end of the year. Families are loading the luggage into their cars and moving out of campus.

89 INT. ISHAAN'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Parents are talking to MR.SEN, MR.TIWARI and other teachers. ISHAAN'S PARENTS approach MR.SEN. He greets them warmly and indicates his surprise and pleasure at ISHAAN'S progress. ISHAAN'S PARENTS look pleasantly happy. ISHAAN'S PARENTS are given the year book with ISHAAN's painting on the front cover. NIKUMBH SIR's impressionistic painting of ISHAAN's face is printed on the back. FATHER and MOTHER are overcome by emotion.

90 EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - ENTRANCE

ISHAAN'S PARENTS move towards NIKUMBH SIR surrounded by kids in the distance. As ISHAAN and YOHAN play together in the background, ISHAAN'S PARENTS talk to NIKUMBH SIR.



ISHAAN'S FATHER is overcome with tears. NIKUMBH SIR hugs ISHAAN'S FATHER and comforts him. NIKUMBH SIR says his byes to the family, extracting a promise from ISHAAN that he will be back in two months. The family leaves, as NIKUMBH SIR watches in fore-ground. As the family walks some distance, ISHAAN turns back and runs into NIKUMBH SIR's arms. NIKUMBH SIR flings him into the air. FREEZE on ISHAAN'S image mid-air.

END



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