

BHOPAL

Play by

RAHUL VARMA

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Author's preface

Nobel laureate Ravindra Nath Tagore once said that every child comes with the hope that God is not yet discouraged with life. That night Union Carbide proved God wrong

On the night of December 2, 1984, a pesticide plant in Bhopal, India belonging to Union Carbide, a US multinational, exploded, engulfing the city in a billow of deadly poisonous fumes. Small children fell like flies, men and women vainly scurried for safety, like wounded animals, only to collapse, breathless and blinded by the gas. By morning, the death toll was over 500; by sunset, 2,500. By the following day, numbers had no meaning. That night, Bhopal became the largest peacetime gas chamber in history.

Nobel laureate Ravindra Nath Tagore once said that every child comes with the hope that God is not yet discouraged with life. That night in Bhopal, Union Carbide proved God wrong: small children died in their sleep, clinging to their mothers' breasts, and little girls of five or six became mothers to their younger siblings. To date, more than 20,000 people have died and the toll is still rising.

Union Carbide came to India in 1905 while the country was still under British rule. Until the night of the explosion, the company was best known for the *Eveready Battery*. By the mid 60s, the company had moved into agrochemicals and, by the mid 70s, it had become one of India's largest manufacturers of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The company's best-known pesticide product was Savin Carbaryl, which it promoted to villagers using an enticing marketing gimmick. The company dispatched special vans equipped with a film screen. The film showed healthy green crops blowing in the wind. Birds sang and men, women and children beamed with happiness as a line scrolled across the screen: "Union Carbide will touch every life in India."

Union Carbide did indeed touch every life in India—over 20,000 people have died so far and no end is yet in sight; over 10,000 were seriously injured; 20,000 were disabled; and over 200,000 were blinded and left to suffer the ravages of respiratory disease, madness, cancer and scores of other, unidentified illnesses.

The Bhopal Union Carbide accident was the world's worst industrial catastrophe. However, the less explicit tragedy lies in the attitude that the accident exposed, that is, a total disregard for the lives of people of the Third World and a perception of the rich as being the trustees of the poor. The so-called accident was designed in the US, in a corporate boardroom, and then shipped to its Indian subsidiary in the form of Savin Carbaryl to help in India's "Green Revolution". Union Carbide manufactured Savin Carbaryl using a method that generated large quantities of a by-product called Methyl Isocyanate (MIC), the most poisonous chemical known to man. This by-product is what killed the people of Bhopal. While production of Savin Carbaryl was restricted in Europe and the US, it was manufactured in India in massive quantities using an MIC-based process.

Carbide treated MIC's toxicity as a trade secret. Needless to say, use of the MIC-based process had roots in economics. Long before the explosion, the effects of MIC were seen in nearby residents, who experienced diseases unknown to medical science, and in animals, many of which died near the company drainage pipe. Once, when a large number of animals were found dead near the pipe, the company responded by buying the owners' silence with cash payoffs. Afterwards, it became routine practice for animals that died of old age to be tossed into the effluent

by their owners so they could collect compensation from the company. While the company succeeded in buying the villagers' silence about the "loss of their animals," MIC continued to make its way into the bloodstreams of the neighbouring people, with nefarious effects. Women gave birth to deformed babies and infant mortality rose to alarming levels. When asked by local reporters, Mr. Warren Anderson, the CEO of Union Carbide, USA denied the charges, saying, "*You are ten times safer working at the plant than you are at home.*"

Ironically, Mr. Anderson was right. On the night of the accident, no one died inside the plant; they died outside, in the streets and the surrounding slum.

The question "Why Bhopal?" will continue to haunt the city's inhabitants as the story is passed on from generation to generation.

With a chemical as poisonous as MIC, it is no longer a matter of whether people should live in the surrounding slum, but whether they should live even remotely close to the plant. India's *Obnoxious Industry Law* forbade such plants from operating within 25 miles of a populated area; yet, by claiming that the company's application to manufacture MIC predated India's *Air and Water Pollution Laws*, Union Carbide was able to manufacture MIC within the city limits, beside Bhopal Lake—near people, playgrounds and the railway station. It was an ideal location, close to all the necessary amenities and with access to a vast pool of labour, and an ideal arrangement for a company interested in making a profit without assuming responsibility for public health and safety. The local government colluded by introducing a Master Plan calling for the Union Carbide site to be converted into housing and a light commercial area in order to prevent shanty slums from cropping up wherever multinationals settled. It granted construction permits and loans to build middle-class housing near the MIC plant. The promised housing never materialized. Corrupt contractors and bureaucrats used up most of the loans and slums mushroomed in the surrounding areas.

As environmental awareness and labour costs rise in the West, multinationals are finding it increasingly difficult to manufacture their products there. In response, they are relocating their manufacturing operations to the Third World, where wages are ludicrously low and environmental regulations virtually nonexistent. In most cases, unpopular governments or military dictatorships, which faced with ongoing social unrest and absence of genuine political opposition, must find public ways of solving their problems.

It is therefore not surprising that many Third World states with crippled economies resist environmental action. They see it as a chance to improve their bargaining power with the Aid Agencies and International Bankers. They justify their inaction by stating that they are not prepared to halt economic growth to compensate for centuries of environmental degradation caused by the West. Parity and equality have become part of the equation. Whereas the Third World states may not have had the strategic advantage in the past, now they have an "environmental card" that is resulting in greater economic or military parity than ever before.

The playing field is "levelled" through the unregulated introduction of technology, first to catch up and then to compete against the developed countries in a free market and a free trade environment. Mr. Warren Anderson put it succinctly when he said, "*without the technology and the capital multinationals help to introduce, developing countries would have little hope to eradicating poverty and hunger.*"

So, while the "eradication of poverty" becomes a joint cause, the environment, air, water, land and health of the people becomes its cost. Thus, given the unpopularity of Third World governments, especially those under influence of the West, it is not surprising to hear statements like "poverty is the greatest environmental hazard for the Third World."

In this context, when questions are raised concerning the right to choose the technology used, the right to information, labour ethics, and the impact of this type of development on women, children and the marginalized classes, one is more than likely to get an answer along the lines of: "It will generate employment and eradicate poverty." And if we are to take the viewpoint of the media and the upper classes, accidents, when they happen, "are no more than the unavoidable growing pains of a Third World in the midst of industrial development."

As this type of industrialization intensifies, so do the "growing pains" in the form of more and more deaths, deformities and human misery, particularly among those who, far from reaping the benefits,

are paying the price of this kind of development with their lives. This situation is due more to the economic relationship among the upper classes, Western governments and the multinationals than to actual industrialization. Inherent in the type of development these stakeholders are advocating is a double standard. Quite simply, a higher value is placed on Western lives than on the lives of others. To illustrate my point, three weeks and over 6,000 confirmed deaths later, Business Week ran the following headline: "Union Carbide Fights for It's Life." In other words, instead of asking why this happened in India and, more particularly, to those who are not benefiting from the current approach to industrial development, the mainstream US media navel-gazed, asking only whether such an event could happen in America.

Public analysis of Bhopal in the US did little to lay the groundwork for the kind of change that will protect victims in the Third World from unequal treatment, dumping, negligence and the crimes of multinationals. For example, DOW chemicals bought Union Carbide, which refuses to clean up the waterbed in Bhopal. The waterbed is contaminated with over 20 known carcinogens. While governments, papers, Union Carbide's lawyers and the company's new owner, DOW, keep speculating about who is responsible, the poor people of Bhopal have no choice but to live with poisoned water.

Bhopal is a vivid and painful reminder of corporate inhumanity, an example of callous mass murder legitimized in the name of progress, development and the state.

Bhopal does not grab the headlines anymore, but the Bhopal Syndrome lives on. Even after 16 years, mothers are giving birth to horribly deformed babies because they inhaled poisonous before, on or after the explosion. Babies are inheriting deformities from their mothers while still in the womb. As authorities endlessly speculate about how it happened, children continue to be born with unformed limbs, melted skin and holes in their brains.

The poisonous fumes generated by industrialization, which cause birth abnormalities in newborns, are a fundamental attack on children's natural right to be born healthy and free from bodily harm. While unknown chemicals and design faults are causes of industrial accidents, neither is the root cause. The main reason such tragedies happen is the denial of the right of people to live in dignity and without fear of bodily harm.

In their death, the victims of Bhopal have given us a sense of awareness which has led to a growing movement in support of the right of the Third World to have a choice over the technology it uses, the right to life without bodily harm, and the right to information. We owe it to the victims of Bhopal not to let Bhopal happen again anywhere in the world. Multinationals, backed up by forces of globalization, never learn on their own, and so we must raise our awareness and teach them by standing together in support of life and dignity for the people of the Third World.

Rahul Varma
Sept 1, 2002, Montreal

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Bhopal a play by Rahul Varma

Devraj, an Indian businessman trained at the knee of Andersen, the American CEO of Karbide International, returns to his native country to head up Karbide's *Bhopal* plant. A man of missionary zeal, he comes armed with a purpose: to introduce India to the miraculous properties of Karbide Thunder, the latest chemical weapon in the arsenal against pests. He will feed his starving nation, while sharing with its poor the benefits of western-style industrial development.

Sonya Labonté, a Canadian doctor, is suspicious. People near the plant are getting sick. Babies are being born with horrible abnormalities. With the patience of a Sherlock Holmes, she gathers evidence and mounts her case. The final piece of evidence? A young baby named Zarina.

The play ***Bhopal***, tells the story of how complex forces struggled to bury the truth, expose it, or shape it to the needs of self-interest, and how an unspeakable disaster ended all speculation. Ultimately, though, it is about—and for—those without means or influence, whose voices are seldom heard and yet who are made to pay the cost.

Bhopal was first produced in Montreal by the Teesri Duniya Theatre at the Montreal, Arts Cultural, from Nov 15 to Dec 9, 2001.

The cast and crew was as follows:

Dr. Sonya Labonte	<i>Rachell Glait</i>
Izzat Bai	<i>Micheline Dahlander,</i>
MR. Devraj Sarthi	<i>Shomee Chakrabartty,</i>
Minister Jaganlal Bhandari	<i>Ivan Smith,</i>
Madiha Akram	<i>Millie Tresierra,</i>
Pascale Sauve	<i>Nikija Malialin,</i>
Mr Warren Anderson	<i>Frank Fontaine,</i>
Story Teller	<i>Shalini Lal,</i>
Chorus	<i>Andrea Cochrane, Cortney Lohnes, Young Choi, Dipti Gupta and Aliya Varma</i>

Director Jack Langedijk
Stage Manager Kathryn Cleveland
Set designer Sheida Shojai
Light design Andrew Calamatas.
Music

Scott Murray and Brian Vockeroth

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Characters

Dr. Sonya Labonté: Canadian doctor and an activist who works with slum dwellers in Bhopal, India. She is head of a Canadian NGO based in Bhopal India.

Izzat Bai A young mother who lives in Bhopal slum

Mr. Devraj Sarthi Head of the Indian subsidiary of an American multinational called Karbide International. The company produces a pesticide called Karbide Thunder. He is an Indian national who is trained in the US and has returned back to head Karbide International. In India such people are also known as NRIs (Non Resident Indians)

Jagan Lal Bhandari Chief minister of the state of Madhya Pradesh, of which Bhopal is the capital.

Madiha Akram An employee at Karbide International. She is the personal assistant and lover of Mr. Sarthi

Pascale Sauve Canadian Deputy Ministry on a special assignment in India.

Warren Anderson President and the supreme head of the parent Karbide International

Chorus Consisting of up to 8, both children and adult.

SCENE 1

The play opens with children playing on the ground of a Bhopal slum. The CHORUS depicts daily activity characteristic of slum life. DEVRAJ enters as though he is looking for someone. The CHORUS and children of the slum take him to the mouth of IZZAT's hut and knock. She comes out. As she attends to him, the CHORUS peeks at them inquisitively.

IZZAT Oh, forgive me, sahib. ...

DEVRAJ It's okay...

IZZAT Oh ... Sahib, ... I'm not, I ... I not legal ..

DEVERA Don't worry...

IZZAT You want your money back? I not lie. Believe me. I bring you my goat. My dead goat ...

DEVRAJ I believe you. .. I believe your dead goat, your dead chicken, your dead cow..

IZZAT Then, why you here sahib?

DEVRAJ I just want to talk to you. You keep your money. And if you find any more dead animals, you bring them to me. But remember; don't tell anyone – it's a secret...now...uh...can I come in?

IZZAT May God forgive me, my hut is inhabitable for your comfort, my food is not your standard, my water is undrinkable, sahib...

DEVRAJ It's all right. Let's go in.

DEVRAJ and IZZAT sit for the next scene...

SCENE 2

Detention cell. Chief minister JAGANLAL is talking to SONYA LABONTE.

SONYA For kidnapping?

JAGANLAL Yes, for kidnapping.

SONYA You must be joking.

JAGANLAL Is that a way to talk to a minister?

SONYA I'm sorry .. sir.

JAGANLAL Doctor Labonte I trusted you. I gave you a seat on the advisory board of one of my most important missions. I even granted you privileges reserved only for Indians ... how can you sit there and tell me with a straight face that you were not abusing – the privileges granted...

SONYA Mr. Minister, there is some big confusion here...

JAGANLAL No confusion, you and your research will be impounded until we get to the bottom of this scam.

SONYA I need to call my consulate.

JAGANLAL You need to???

SONYA I'm a Canadian citizen.

JAGANLAL Therefore what?

SONYA And part of the UN's India mission...

JAGANLAL I've seen many such missionaries from the west...

SONYA Mr. Minister, you can't do this to me!

JAGANLAL You can't do your thing either. Poor, hungry, destitute, they may be doctor, but the children of my country are **sacred**.

JAGANLAL storms out, as we move back to IZZAT's hut where we last saw them.

Scene 3

IZZAT's hut. DEVRAJ continues speaking with her.

IZZAT Sahib, I'll run to the tea stall. A tarak cahi or masala? Oh no, maybe not... Our tea may be too strong for your stomach...

DEVRAJ Don't bother.

IZZAT Chote muh bari baat, .. but may be I bring something to sweeten your mouth sahib.. Wont be long, ... just

from across the street...

DEVRAJ Just stay, no need to go anywhere. **(hands her over rolled up money)** Here, you keep this. **(Izzat hesitates)** Go on, take it.. Take it, and get whatever you want .. for yourself, .. whatever you want...

IZZAT **(accepting money)** Meharbani sahib, may God give you long life.

DEVRAJ **(motions Izzat to sit)** Sit down.

As IZZAT sits, she pulls a wooden basket towards her, and places the bundle beside it...

I want to ask you something.

IZZAT Yes?

DEVRAJ's attention is drawn to the basket, for he hears the feeble sound of a baby coming from it.

DEVRAJ What's this?

IZZAT My Zarina!

DEVRAJ **(Looks inside)** Oh God! What has happened to her?

IZZAT Don't let her fool you, Sahib. She's a tough little monkey. God willing, she make me smile one day.

DEVRAJ Did you bring her to a doctor?

IZZAT Doctor Sonya, sahib. Doctor Sonya.

DEVRAJ Ah, really. I thought so. She's a good doctor...

IZZAT But she don't know what Zarina has.

DEVRAJ Well, Does she know what you have?

IZZAT Me sahib, I have poverty.

DEVRAJ I'm not sure if she knows that.

IZZAT What??

DEVRAJ If you weren't poor, Zarina wouldn't be sick.

IZZAT What you say sahib??

DEVRAJ Your little Zarina – she wasn't born sick, was she?

IZZAT She sahib, ... she look like an angel at birth.

DEVRAJ There you go.

IZZAT But now, can you help her sahib?

DEVRAJ I might know someone who can.

IZZAT It's more than time somebody knew someone who can. Who can do this, sahib?

DEVRAJ Do you mind if I ask you some questions?

IZZAT Questions make Zarina good? Ask, ask, ask question!

DEVRAJ Someone told me there are other babies sick like Zarina. And they go to see this Doctor Sonya?

IZZAT Yes, yes. I know them. I bring her patients ...

DEVRAJ Are they getting better?

IZZAT Well...Veena – her baby...No...Budhiya ...no...no, they don't get better.

DEVRAJ Do you know the names of all...um...all those mothers who go to see Doctor Sonya? Maybe I can help them.

IZZAT Know ? – All? Yes. All? No. I help.

DEVRAJ **(Gives her a card)** Good, good. I help you. Go to Dr. Hans Weil behind the factory. The yellow house! Give him this. He is a tall man. Pink skin. Thick cigar.

IZZAT I go.

DEVRAJ Wait, wait. Aren't you forgetting something? ... **(Izzat looks puzzled)** Could you tell me their names...the names of the other mothers who visit this Doctor Sonya...so I can help their babies.

IZZAT picks up the basket and starts to leave with the card DEVRAJ has given her. She speaks names of other women; DEVRAJ repeats the names.

IZZAT Sure sahib. Sure Kasturi, **Shanta, Farida, Phoolmati**, Babban, Meeta, Imarti, Roshni, Rani...

We move to the next scene.

Scene 4

Detention cell. Canadian diplomat PASCALE SAUVE arrives holding a briefcase.

SAUVE Dr. Labonte?

SONYA Hi.

SAUVE **(while producing a business card)** Pascale Sauve, special assignment, Government of Canada

SONYA Thank God you're here.

SAUVE It's my duty to help troubled Canadians abroad.

SONYA No one will talk to me. They won't tell me who charged me with kidnapping.

SAUVE Well, then let's get you out of here.

SONYA You don't really believe them – I mean you do realize that these charges are false.

SAUVE Dr. Labonte, the essential thing, in my opinion, is that you must return home spotless, ... that we as Canadians observe our obligation to you, without annoying the Indian government

SONYA Thank you!

SAUVE My assignment is not to believe them or disbelieve you—no! Foreign assignments Dr. Labonte, are always difficult, but when you've reached home, 'n your friends and family are relieved, you'll thank me. ... I want to see you get back home safe.

SONYA I don't want to go home. I want to get out of the jail, clear my name and do my work.

SAUVE But what you've got is this **(puts hand in briefcase, and pulls out plane tickets)** This I believe is your.

SONYA What's that? ... I don't know

SAUVE It has your name on it.

SONYA Okay.

SAUVE **(Pulls out a visa document)** And this visa application for that woman!!

SONYA Wait a minute, isn't that supposed to be a confidential thing?

SAUVE What? **(raising the paper)** This piece of paper or that you signed for her.

SONYA Nothing illegal about that—she gave me signing authority.

SAUVE Then you shouldn't worry about the confidentiality.

SONYA “ ????”

SAUVE **(Brings out a folder)** And this file. Does it contain all of your research?

SONYA **(She grabs her research)**? Oh my God. This thing was supposed to be with Dr. Bhalerao. How did you get this?

SAUVE Are there any more files? Is he, Dr. Bhalerao, ... is he hiding something for you?

SONYA Hiding? No. He is the head of my research team.

SAUVE **(closing his briefcase)** Well, Dr. Labonte, Canada entrusted you. Funded you to undertake development project in India. We find NGO's to promote Canadian values abroad. But you broke away from us, from your, I mean our original mission, and joined Dr. Bhalerao. well ... **(gestures unease)**

SONYA Are you suggesting Bhalerao is lesser than your Canadian values?

SAUVE I'm not suggesting any such thing – but you know how Mr. Jaganlal feels about him. However, if such was your wish, it's your decision, but I have my doubts..

SONYA What doubts.

SAUVE If Bhalerao understands – the public visibility he's giving to your arrest, ..

SONYA He should be silent you mean???

SAUVE Perhaps he should understand the big difference between him using your arrest for his cause and my duty to free you—we in the government are a little concerned ...

SONYA Is that what you came to tell me all the way from Canada?

SAUVE Dr. Labonte, perhaps you don't know, in three months, the Prime Minister of Canada will be arriving in New Delhi with 11 premiers, 250 businesspeople, and a design for a computer chip. It will be the largest-ever trade delegation since India opened up to Canada. My other mission was to set up a trade protocol. Now with your arrest... **(Beat)** I need your help. I can't have anything upstaging our Prime Minister.

SONYA Let me ...

SAUVE **(cutting into)** Let me get back to what we were talking **(shows picture on the visa document)** Do you know this woman?

SONYA Izzat, yes, yes, she was my patient.

SAUVE I know that.

SONYA And she was part of my study...

SAUVE What did you tell her, Dr. Labonte?

SONYA What do you mean?

SAUVE Did you tell, her... clearly...very clearly...what was in your study about her?

SONYA Yes.

SAUVE How clearly?

SONYA **(In frustration)** I told her she had leucorrhoea and she might die of cervical erosion, if not lymphocircoma of the uterus. And, if she survived, her offspring would be mutagenic and die from chemical AIDS!

SAUVE Chemical Aids? That's a shocker. Huh ... And she understood all of that..
SONYA Did you talk to her?
SAUVE I have to speak with all the witnesses against you.
SONYA Witnesses?

FLASHBACK: Transition to SONYA's clinic. IZZAT is lying on a floor mat used as examination table. Members of chorus become SONYA's assistant as she examines IZZAT's stomach and the vaginal region.

IZZAT My stomach - burns – feels hot inside.
SONYA When did it start, one month ago? One year? Two years...ten?
IZZAT Yes... 10 minutes – go away.
SONYA Now... Are you menstruating normally? ... Bleeding?
IZZAT I bleeding...more... Doctor sahiba.
SONYA Thick and dry? What does it look like?
IZZAT Mucky - bleeding much long.
SONYA Hmm...Open your legs.
IZZAT No.
SONYA It's all right ... open.
IZZAT No.

SONYA applies force to open IZZAT's legs.

Doctor sahib no, no, no, please... my this thing ... mess
SONYA **(pressing with her fingers)** Let me check your this thing...
IZZAT **(grabs her hand)** Agh....I sit up?
SONYA No, let me see.
IZZAT I'm okay. I don't need this thing. Zarina father dead!
SONYA I know, but I still need to see.
IZZAT Doctor company ...
SONYA What?
IZZAT - want to see...I say I'm okay...I'm okay –
SONYA What ? Did you go to Karbide International's company doctor? Hans Weil? Did you? Dr. Hans Weil?
IZZAT Uh?...
SONYA Big hair, moustache?
IZZAT Oh, Weil Hans...
SONYA Did you?
IZZAT No.
SONYA Good.
IZZAT He came to me.
SONYA The doctor?
IZZAT No.
SONYA Give me a straight answer, Izzat.
IZZAT Sahib Sarthi come my home. He said he want help me.

IZZAT For Canada? Me and Zarina? Thumbprint.

End of flashback: we return back to the present, and the detention cell. SONYA is beginning to look tired of being interrogated by SAUVE.

SONYA And then I told her that with the financial resources like my NGO, she didn't need to worry about money to go there.

SAUVE Because she was your star subject? and you got her thumbprint? to ensure that she wouldn't see another doctor?

SONYA Yes, well...no – not really ...I was just trying to keep *him* from my patient.

SAUVE Him?

SONYA Karbide International's doctor.

SAUVE Dr. Hans Weil?

SONYA Yes. The ex-Pentagon man!

SAUVE The man is a top toxicologist of the world Dr. Labonte. And you're telling me that he came all the way to India to steal patients from you?

SONYA Well, ask him, what is a top toxicologist doing in the Karbide International?

SAUVE I did.

SONYA And?

SAUVE He said what is a Canadian NGO doing in a slum?

SONYA What is his boss Sarthi doing in the slum? Ask yourself, why would Sarthi go into the slums to visit mothers. Why would the CEO for Karbide International be interested in these women?

SAUVE I will.

SONYA Ask him for me, why did he go to see my patient Izzat. Ask him!

We begin to hear incoming voice of DEVRAJ. He is seen walking through his office ordering his workers...

DEVRAJ (away) Give this to Rahul and tell him to check safety valves. .

DEVRAJ rushes off as one worker take the file from him and bring it to the MADIHA at the company office. Other workers simply follow the one carrying the file. We now have moved to the next scene.

SCENE 5

Waiting area of DEVRAJ office. MADIHA is seated at her desk. Workers stand by her desk with the files. SAUVE enters from the opposite side. MADIHA attends to SAUVE first.

MADIHA **(to Sauve)** I am sorry he is not here at the moment. **(notices worker and gives them more files, they leave)** Could you take that to Rahul. **(to Sauve again)** Why? Is he in trouble? Because you know he never does anything but help these people.

SAUVE May I speak with him?

MADIHA I'm sorry, but he's not here.

SAUVE When is he back?

MADIHA Let me see...(checks date book) tomorrow morning at 8am! Can I help you?

SAUVE Thank you, but no, I must talk to the boss directly. Good day, Miss.

MADIHA Wait, wait ...Miss Sauve?

SAUVE Yes?

MADIHA Maybe I can help you.

SAUVE I don't think so. Thank you anyway.

SAUVE starts to go

MADIHA I know everything that happens here.

SAUVE **(stops)** What?

MADIHA You know I am his executive assistant. I sometimes know more about what goes on here than he does.

SAUVE Do you know a Doctor Sonya Labonte?

MADIHA Yes.

SAUVE Have you ever spoken to her?

MADIHA Yes, many times. **(under her breath)** That woman keeps trying to destroy this company.

SAUVE Pardon me?

MADIHA Yes, we have spoken.

SAUVE And does she have anything to do with this Animal Charity Fund?

MADIHA No! Did she say that? Mr. Sarthi started that fund to.....

FLASHBACK: Transition to an episode which occurred at the company office involving IZZAT. ... IZZAT enters with the basket and waits impatiently. MADIHA looks at her with annoyance.

IZZAT Memesahib, ..

MADIHA Told you hundred times, don't call me memesahib.

IZZAT I call Sahib ... Sahib so I should call Memsahib ... Memesahib.

MADIHA What do you want from me?

IZZAT Nothing

MADIHA How come whenever I catch you sneaking to him, you're doing "nothing".

IZZAT Nothing like that memsahib..

MADIHA Is it a goat? What is it this time? A dog? A rat?

IZZAT Listen to me memesahib

MADIHA We're not paying for any more for your dead animals.

IZZAT Sahib Boss said...

MADIHA Raasta Napo. **(Beat)** Let me see...

IZZAT **(pointing at basket)** No! For sahib!

MADIHA You probably kill them yourself just to get the money. You can dodge him but I'm not a fool.

IZZAT Memesahib know herself better.

DEVRAJ enters, MADIHA stands up.

MADIHA Oh, Mr. Sarthi...Mr. Sarthi.

IZZAT rushes towards him with the basket.

IZZAT I begged the Chowkidar, sahib, because I wanted to show it to you right in your hand.

DEVRAJ All right, show me what?

She tires to give the basket to DEVRAJ who's reluctant to take it in his hands. IZZAT begs, pleads trying to give him the basket. Simultaneously, MADIHA tries to get rid of IZZAT.

They overlap each other in chaos like situation.

MADIHA Another dead animal...

DEVRAJ Miss Akram...

IZZAT **(to Devraj)** Look, look inside...

MADIHA ...which, I'm sure is not hers.

IZZAT ... getting worse sahib.. see one more time please sahib ...

MADIHA ... she probably picked it up from the street...

DEVRAJ ... wait, Miss Akram, Madiha...

MADIHA ... do not pay a cent to this woman.

IZZAT **(going for the basket)** Oh, please... please...look.

MADIHA ... she says the company kills their animals. They are doing it themselves.

IZZAT **(To Madiha)** No. You, no, look....

MADIHA pulls away the rag covering the basket and screams at what she sees inside. IZZAT grabs the basket and runs to a corner. A hush sets in. DEVRAJ goes to IZZAT, looks inside the basket.

DEVRAJ **(to Izzat)** Is that your child? **(to Madiha)** She's not dead. **(to Izzat)** What do you want me to do? Didn't you bring her to Hans - Dr. Weil?

IZZAT No. You help? ... She's worse today. You sahib, .. please make better .

DEVRAJ **(gives her two 100 rupee notes)** He will, I want you to go to him. **(Holding money in the palm of her hand, as if to say "what do I do with this")** Go on, keep it, keep it... Go to him...

IZZAT Meharbani sahib, ... *Bus isay bacha leejije* ...

DEVRAJ Go to him. The yellow house!

SONYA enters. Her path crosses that of IZZAT who was leaving.

SONYA Izzat?

IZZAT No, no – it is not me.

Izzat runs out like a thief.

SONYA **(calling after her)** Izzat? What are you doing here?

IZZAT doesn't stop. SONYA rushes into DEVRAJ's office.

(to Devraj) Who is she going to see?

DEVRAJ Were we supposed to meet?

SONYA May I speak with you in private!

DEVRAJ **(to Madiha)** Miss Akram, is my 2 o'clock here yet? **(to Sonya)** I'm sorry, doctor, you'll have to make an appointment -

SONYA What is your company doctor treating?

DEVRAJ Why don't you ask him? This is not a hospital.

SONYA How is he treating Karbide Thunder?

MADIHA Karbide Thunder is not a disease -

DEVRAJ **(giving her file)** Miss Akram, please...Get this to Rahul and tell him to see me.

MADIHA takes the file from him. Instead of leaving the room, she stays back at a short distance, listening to everything inquisitively.

SONYA What exactly is Hans Weil doing in the depths of your Charitable Hospital?

DEVRAJ What are you doing in the depths of your NGO clinic?

SONYA Why have Hasina and Kastoori stopped coming to my clinic?

DEVRAJ Who, in God's name are you talking about?

SONYA Women and their babies who are part of my research -

DEVRAJ **(to Madiha)** Doctor, I really don't have time for this today. Please make an appointment.

SONYA I know why you want to buy Izzat out of my research.

DEVRAJ Your research is nonsense, Doctor...

SONYA Then why are you afraid of it?

MADIHA **(to Devraj)** Do you want me to call security?

DEVRAJ Miss Akram – please. Give that to Rahul.

SONYA I'd like to see the list of patients Hans is treating...stealing...and maybe killing.

DEVRAJ Dr. Labonté, I don't have time for this.

SONYA If Hans Weil comes anywhere near Izzat and if anything unusual happens to her baby...

DEVRAJ Out of my sight! Good day, Doctor!

SONYA Don't forget, Mr Sarthi, Progress Zone or no Progress Zone, I know about the Animal Charity Fund and your company's cover-up.

MADIHA Cover up?

DEVRAJ Miss Akram, please...

SONYA Buying silence ...

SONYA Are you going to buy the dead babies too?

MADIHA What?

SONYA Ask him.

End of flashback.

MADIHA So you see, Devraj goes out of his way to help these people and she keeps giving him a bad name ...

SAUVE I see.

MADIHA You said you're from Canada?

SAUVE Yes..

MADIHA Take her back, and keep her there..

SAUVE Thanks for your help...

MADIHA And ask her ...

SAUVE **(getting ready to leave)** I will ...

SAUVE leaves waving her a bye

MADIHA Ask her ...

SAUVE has gone. We return back to the jail cell and on to the next scene.

SCENE 6

Detention cell where SONYA is being held. SAUVE is present.

SAUVE About what?

SONYA His Company was violating more than one of India's industry laws!

SAUVE What laws?

SONYA Operating a plant within 25 miles of a populated area.

SAUVE Look, it's their country. There are so many laws, its impossible not to break a few.

SONYA Are you saying Indians are law-breakers?

SAUVE I didn't say that.

SONYA Well ...

SAUVE I meant their laws are their business.

SONYA Carbide is draining its AIDS ...

SAUVE AIDS?

SONYA Chemical AIDS!!!

SAUVE No wonder you shock the hell out of them.

SONYA The diseases are unknown to medical science.

SAUVE Seems you know them...

SONYA If you want to see that a human baby is not necessarily a human baby, go to the slum.

SAUVE I've come here to free you Miss Labonte. **(pulls out a letter)** So will you sign this?

SONYA **(reading it)** Sign what?

SAUVE The charges against you are very serious.

SONYA **(shocked pause)** You're already talking as if I'm guilty.

SAUVE I'm just trying to help you.

SONYA **(tossing the letter)** I didn't do this and I will not sign this.

SAUVE Well, ... this is what I'll do. I'll go to New Delhi and speak to the Canadian High Commission, meanwhile I leave you to weigh your options

SAUVE exits. We move to the festive atmosphere of the next scene.

SCENE 7

JAGANLAL's office, festive atmosphere. Members of chorus become guests, DEVRAJ and MADIHA enter. JAGANLAL welcomes them with great galore.

JAGANLAL Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Devraj Sarthi!

DEVRAJ Thank you Mr. Minister. What have I done to deserve such an honour?

JAGANLAL I want to shake your hand, Mister Sarthi. You're a great NRI.

DEVRAJ NR!?

MADIHA Non-resident Indian

JAGANLAL Not really Indian! **(laughs)**...and *aadab* to you Madam...

MADIHA **(shakes hands with Jaganlal)** Madiha Akram Mr. Minister.

JAGANLAL How so very wonderful to see women acting as equals. ... you have no idea how much I have anticipated this dinner tonight. Are you prepared to make a speech?

DEVRAJ Speech....

JAGANLAL - a little after-dinner speech?

MADIHA Of course, do it!

DEVRAJ On the People's Progress Zone?

JAGANLAL How must I introduce you? .. People say you're blinded by your feelings for the poor...

MADIHA He is!

JAGANLAL And you're an animal lover.

MADIHA In a strange sort of a way!

JAGANLAL How so? How must I point that out?

MADIHA He created Animal Charity Fund.

JAGANLAL Oh yeah, I've heard great things about that.

DEVRAJ The Animal Charity Fund. ... it's a public service... Sometimes...but especially now – due to this drought animals die and the people throw them into the ditch and then they start to rot.

MADIHA ...and when they start to rot they contaminate the drinking water.

DEVRAJ Thank you, Miss Akram. **(continuing with JAGANLAL)** Yes, In order to prevent disease from spreading, we encourage the people to bring the dead animals to Karbide International, and we compensate them...That helps *them*, and certainly doesn't hurt our company image **(beat)**...that's what I call the Animal Charity Fund.

JAGANLAL Brilliant! Compensation ...

MADIHA Charity...

JAGANLAL Just brilliant – until yesterday, America had sent India, its hippies, druggies and devotees—in you mister Sarthi, I see a new man—an exceptional NRI who went to America to learn, design and build, and then return back to heal his home country..

We enter DEVRAJ's mind. ANDERSON appears at a remote spot. (It was the time when DEVRAJ was being interviewed by ANDERSON for the job of the CEO of the Indian subsidiary of the Karbide International)

D E V R A J

From Lucknow, India, sir.

A N D E R S O N

And you've been with our corporation how long?

D E V R A J

Eight years.

A N D E R S O N

Now you want to go back home?

D E V R A J

Challenge that I'm looking for.

A N D E R S O N

What are your thoughts on DDT?

D E V R A J

In my opinion sir, Karbide Thunder must replace DDT.

A N D E R S O N

You'd like to be known as the last salesman of DDT

D E V R A J

Because DDT has been found in bird population.

A N D E R S O N

(testing) True, but it has also saved millions from malaria.

D E V R A J

But it's a well-known carcinogen. You see, sir I believe Karbide Thunder is more effective. Not only does it save the bird population, it's non-carcinogenic and it's 10 times cheaper to produce. Beside, I will prove to you sir, that it will cost less to manufacture it in India than in the US

A N D E R S O N

And increase India's trade potential.

D E V R A J

The country deserves it.

A N D E R S O N

All poor countries deserve it.

D E V R A J

India is not poor sir, it's simply forgotten.

A N D E R S O N

I like that. Mister Sarthi, the heroes of the world are men who have vision and take risks...

D E V R A J

No development is without a risk, but if it can keep hungry millions from starving, it will more than make up for the risk. Believe me, Mr. Anderson, given the chance, I'll show you, Karbide Thunder will touch many lives.

A N D E R S O N

You impressed me.

DEVRAJ returns back from his memories and resumes his conversation with JAGANLAL.

DEVRAJ The People's Progress Zone – it's like...- a country within a country...

JAGANLAL Achha... *(right in Hindi)*

DEVRAJ ...but free of bureaucratic barriers, an area of deregulation – no laws...

JAGANLAL Okay...

DEVRAJ ...and I feel that would be the most efficient way to produce profitable chemicals.

JAGANLAL Pesticides you mean?

DEVRAJ As you may have seen in my submission, pesticides have recorded a quarter century of sustained growth. That means under People's Progress Zone plan, we can manufacture upwards of 5 to 10 thousand tons of Karbide Thunder a year. But the quantity is not the important thing.

JAGANLAL Oh??

MADIHA It's the quality. Pesticides are peaceful. They are not like war-chemicals.

JAGANLAL Right, they are in the war against pests... har, har, har...

MADIHA Of course, the pests will not eat poor peoples food leaving them to go hungry, but let me tell you one more thing mister minister. The life of an average Indian today, ... like myself, ... like yourself, ... our life is better than 19th century maharaja – because of the kind of chemicals Karbide produces..

JAGANLAL Yes, yes. But I'm concerned. I've heard a rumour that Dr. Bhalareo and Dr. Labonte are planning judicial action to stop the People's Progress Zone.

MADIHA Oh, she! She thinks Karbide Thunder is poisoning everyone. That woman just won't stop –

DEVRAJ **(stopping Madiha)** Miss Akram... **(to Jaganlal)** They are worried someone might drink Karbide Thunder.

JAGANLAL Drink it?

DEVRAJ ...as if someone would drink pesticide...but I mean, even if Karbide Thunder got into your body...

JAGANLAL My body?

DEVRAJ ...it would only cause coughing, sneezing or itching, but it would be hydrolysed.

JAGANLAL **(sighs)** Aaah... **(thinks)** what?

DEVRAJ Our company doctor, Hans Weil, confirms that it'll rollout via the eyes.

JAGANLAL Like tears?

DEVRAJ Like tears...

JAGANLAL Aaah! ...Is your Bhopal plant identical to the US one?

DEVRAJ Of course.

JAGANLAL And they know this Karbide Thunder will roll out their eyes in the form of tears, like ours?

Devraj nods affirmatively

Any proof?

Devraj is silent, Madiha steps forward

MADIHA Mr. Minister, let us invite these people to this dinner and then give them Karbide Thunder –

DEVRAJ Miss Akram –

JAGANLAL What?

MADIHA ... yes! Just to prove that it will come out of their eyes just like tears!

JAGANLAL Brilliant.

DEVRAJ Of course we wouldn't need to do that.

We enter in DEVRAJ's mind again. At the interview desk, ANDERSON appears at the same spot,

ANDERSON Mr. Sarthi, our Bhopal plant will be in good hands.

DEVRAJ What you've got is overpopulated slums, disease and hunger... Yet hoards of young Americans and Europeans sweep through the shantytowns of India, pretending they know better. But do they?

ANDERSON In you Mister Sarthi, we have the right man.

DEVRAJ returns back from his memories, which lead him into his after-dinner speech.

D E V R A J

Mr Minister, on the way to your office, I passed through the slum. It was filled with opened garbage, suffocating heat and the unbearable stench of human excrement. I stumbled over drunken men, saw babies hanging from their mothers' breast, and encountered stubborn seven- and eight-year-old boys with faces that said that if I didn't give them some change, they'd die of hunger. I met a woman, a poor woman named Izzat, who told me that her child died of worms that crawled out of its body. Why? How did this happen? Karbide Thunder? No. We must always think of safety first. But environmental safeguards are irrelevant – if we don't attack poverty first - for it is poverty that is our greatest environmental hazard. Yes, my efforts aren't reaching the people – yet. But with my plan in place, the benefits will trickle all the way down to the poorest of the poor. That's why I believe we need the People's Progress Zone. You are either with us, or against us.

Applause

J A G A N L A L

That storm of applause is for you.

M A D I H A

That was wonderful.

D E V R A J

Really.

M A D I H A

Yes.

J A G A N L A L

Mr. Sarthi, that was a very moving speech. People in this room, my staff and dignitaries, froze as you talked, and we now know we want to hear more from you. Yes, you must boost production, but on one condition, ladies and gentlemen, the first gift of the People's Progress Zone. **(motions to Devraj to approach him)** You will build 700 new houses!

DEVRAJ

700 new houses?

J A G A N L A L

But of course! If you expand your Karbide complex, I must find accommodation for my people.

D E V R A J

By building 700 new houses.

J A G A N L A L

Why not? Where will my people go? I don't have right to evict my people.

D E V R A J

But housing by the factory...

J A G A N L A L

You said the factory is safe.

M A D I H A

That it is ...

J A G A N L A L

Then providing 700 homes must be a necessary gift of Karbide.

D E V R A J

In that case, I must name it Jaganlal Colony.

J A G A N L A L

Thank you ladies and gentlemen. Mr. Devraj Sarthi.

JAGANLAL exits. So does rest of the crowd and the chorus etc.

SCENE 8

Next day. DEVRAJ'S office. MADIHA is standing with her back to audiences, DEVRAJ enters and grabs her in his arms.

MADIHA frees herself from him and looks at him from a distance.

DEVRAJ Do I detect that look on your face?

MADIHA Do I have a look on my face?

DEVRAJ Do you?

MADIHA Did you see the look in people's eyes?

DEVRAJ What people?

MADIHA In the party last night!

DEVRAJ What look?

MADIHA The look that says, "look how that slut is talking."

DEVRAJ Oh come on Madiha.

MADIHA You know what people think about me!!

DEVRAJ Please...

MADIHA I blackened my name for you...

DEVRAJ We have talked about it enough times.

MADIHA So what are you going to do about it?

DEVRAJ I won't do anything now to make you feel miserable later.

MADIHA What would that be?

DEVRAJ grabs MADIHA and kisses her passionately.

DEVRAJ I have something for you.

He kisses her and gives her a gift.

Open it!

Before she can open the gift, he opens it for her.

MADIHA Devraj, what is this?

Puts a locket around her neck.

DEVRAJ With this, I make you a promise.

MADIHA Yes??

DEVRAJ I'll be yours, I promise, but I can't handle marriage.

MADIHA Then, what's the promise?

DEVRAJ Marriage like a sacred duty or marriage like a burden – it's a no, no for me. But we can do something else. I don't need to be married to be with you, do I? And I want to be with you. I promise I'll be yours ... for ever ... I promise. ...

MADIHA What if you broke your promise?

DEVRAJ **(touching the locket)** I can't handle scandals.

MADIHA Still...

DEVRAJ Trust me.

MADIHA You always have a way of convincing me ...

They kiss again. Incoming crowd noises take us to the next scene.

SCENE 9

One week later. JAGANLAL comes to the mouth of slum with his entourage, i.e. CHORUS, REPORTERS, CAMERMEN etc.

J A G A N L A L

No, no, no ...Don't take a photo yet. Over here.

Slum dwellers begin to assemble, Jaganlal notices Izzat.

You, Bai **(calling)** Would you...? Yes, yes, please – come here...stand here – don't move. .. **(in part to himself and in part to the media)** when I see a woman like you bai, a voice inside me says, "go hug her, ... pick up her child in your arms and give her your shawl"

puts his shawl over her shoulders

IZZAT May God give you long life mantri ji.

JAGANLAL Okay. **(to photographers)** Now. **(to IZZAT)** Smile. **(she does)** no, no, not like that, like this **(he models a smile for her and she imitates him mockingly for camera)** Like that, okay. **(cameras start flashing.)** I'm sick of having my photograph taken, if I catch anyone of these photographers, I will shoot to kill....

IZZAT steps out of the photo-shoot

IZZAT Me too mantri ji.

JAGANLAL I feel very close to you bai, so close that I want to drink from your glass and eat from your plate.

IZZAT Honour is all mine mantri ji, but I don't have much on my plate.

JAGANLAL Where is your hut bai?

IZZAT answers with innocent animation

IZZAT Do you see this *pagdandi*? (narrow muddy path)

JAGANLAL I'm standing on it.

IZZAT **(pointing into the distance)** This *pagdandi* snakes through garbage, ... faeces ... and dead animals..

JAGANLAL Bad, very bad...

IZZAT ...All the way to pond. Do you see the pond?

JAGANLAL Haan, haan.. .

IZZAT From the pond **(flinging her left arm)** one *pagdandi* goes this way ... to the company ... and **(flinging her right arm)** the other goes that way ... to the lake...

JAGANLAL Aaaha, aaha..

IZZAT The one that goes to the lake, do you see that mantriji?

JAGANLAL **(drops his head in impatience)** Bai, I will have to walk up to the lake to see it...

IZZAT My hut is there.

JAGANLAL I have decided to demolish it.

IZZAT Oh, no...oh please...Mantri ji...I'm a poor women....

JAGANLAL But I am going to do something about it.

IZZAT Mantri ji, please... My husband... lost everything... to bottle... And I... end here. I put my home - behind railway... The chowkidar... "*hut haramzadi*"

JAGANLAL Your house –

IZZAT Then...I put home...between fences and then mandir and the pundit ji...“*chal bhag. Bhagwan kay ghar say.*” (get lost from god’s place)...so I go ...under bridge...on sidewalk...by gutter...“*Hutt, bhaag, hatt bhaag.*”

JAGANLAL Now bai, your new house –

IZZAT Finally found...I make this shack...my home...in shadow of Sahib’s company...

JAGANLAL Yes, yes but...

IZZAT Sahib has seen it... It is here...here.

JAGANLAL But having your home here doesn’t make you legal!

IZZAT In front of all these people, I confess I not legal. In the name of all these people, mantri ji, be merciful, **(showing sling on her back)** I have sick baby.

JAGANLAL I’m sorry, this hut of yours will be replaced with a house!

IZZAT What will happen to me, mantri ji?

JAGANLAL You bai...you will live in that house.

IZZAT What??

JAGANLAL Your hearing is fine, bai. You will own the house... *(Laughs)*

IZZAT Me? House? Mine? But...but...

JAGANLAL But what, bai?

IZZAT It feels like promise.

JAGANLAL And didn’t I promise a water tap in the basti last year?

IZZAT We were hoping for some water in this year.

JAGANLAL Such life - such life here! You are the ray of hope. **(to media, crowd)** This bai is right. I hereby announce — and you media people note me and quote me — through the authority vested in me as the chief minister and head of the new Super Ministry for Trade Liberalization – **(beat)** I declare that Bhopal Lake, the connecting bridge and the railway station – all this area surrounding Karbide International - to be known as the People’s Progress Zone, a new, independent governing zone which will also be known as the PPZ.

IZZAT PeePeeZeee....

JAGANLAL The PPZ will be a model site, a country within a country, with distinct rules to help us – and you - catch up on years and years of underdevelopment. As of today, all inhabitants of the Peoples Progress Zone will own the piece of land on which their illegal huts sit. Bai -

IZZAT May god give you longest life mantri ji, I’ll have a real home? God be merciful, this means a ration card and right to vote!!!!

JAGANLAL This is not for your vote bai; this is for real.

IZZAT Oh?

JAGANLAL **(signs a card and gives to IZZAT)** And yes, You are the first citizen of the People’s Progress Zone... Yes. And this is what your home will look like.

He distributes pictures of model homes to the SLUM-DWELLERS

(calls out) This is for you. This, maa ji, this is for you ...

IZZAT calls other SLUM DWELLERS. They laugh together with happiness while comparing photographs of their prospective homes.

IZZAT I live in this, in the paper... Imrati. Babu. Come here. Look, my home... window and indoor *snadas* (toilet)..... no more shutting the bowel from sunrise to sunset , no, noo... no more behind the bush... ... and hey, look .. a water tap ...

SCENE 10

One week later: SAUVE meets with JAGANLAL. She has just returned from the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi. SAUVE opens a document for JAGANLAL.

SAUVE Mr. Minister let me be frank with you.

JAGANLAL I wish you would.

SAUVE People back home are protesting.

JAGANLAL What are they saying?

SAUVE Either *you* free Doctor Labonté or *we* call off the trade talks.

JAGANLAL One woman is more important than two countries?

SAUVE Did you ever stop to think sir, that it would come to this—but it has—I need your help..

Gives him document, Jaganlal ignores it

JAGANLAL I can't let her go. ...

SAUVE Perhaps it will help...

JAGANLAL **(returning back the document)** I will not release her.

SAUVE ... to know that the next round of trade summit is in Montreal, where our prime minister will be your honoured host.

JAGANLAL I know that.

SAUVE The problem is sir, Labonte was scheduled to give her talk...

JAGANLAL At the next round of Trade summit?

SAUVE She calls it the parallel summit—and it's happening next door, side-by-side, to ours ...

JAGANLAL **(with a victorious smile as if to say)** Not any more...

SAUVE That's why the protesters will throw themselves against the fences and through tear gas ... at a time when the eyes of the world are set on our prime-minister.

JAGANLAL You want me to drop the charges against this doctor so your Prime Minister would have one less headache?

SAUVE Quite frankly sir, it is a trade headache.

JAGANLAL I don't accept that

SAUVE stares at him firmly, walks away and comes back towards

JAGANLAL.

SAUVE I'm here to ensure that the trade talks between our two countries go without a wrinkle. And it has taken years to assemble the Team Canada—11 premieres and 250 top trans-national businesses. When they return home, the media out there will harass them with questions about Labonte who is also an environmentalist—after all she's Canadian and her arrest will be a newsy thing. Well that's okay for her but our premieres and businesses will have a hard time ratifying contracts they signed in India. Therefore it is absolutely essential that Team Canada be cleared up of all obstructions, and given every chance to succeed. So if you refuse to sign this little concoction..

JAGANLAL Concoction?

SAUVE Sir, sooner or later, she will be out, ... you asked me to be frank, I'm being frank—the world will come to know that she wasn't kidnapping ... she was just trying to bring a mother and her sick child to a conference in Canada. Forgive me for saying this—people would not only see her as a victim, but would also say that you caved in to karbide.

JAGANLAL Caved in?

SAUVE In real world, sir, it's a minor matter, its unimportant what she's done, ... frankly who cares, but bare in mind, I'm pleading for success of our trade-talks, both in India and in Canada. So if you don't sign this statement—Karbide International will applaud you—and I don't feel at ease saying this ... but the Canadian Trade and Canadian aid to India will not grow.

JAGANLAL Are you blackmailing me?

SAUVE I 'm just saying sir, our embarrassed premiers, and greedy trans-nationals will be more than happy to take their investment to one of those 75 countries around the world, whose GDP is less than their corporation's profit—the choice is yours..

SAUVE starts to close-up the file, JAGANLAL walks back and returns again

JAGANLAL What else does the statement say?

SAUVE **(reopens the statement)** In exchange for Dr. Labonte's lifetime ban in India, and that I say is not a small thing, she will be allowed to return to Canada.

JAGANLAL Bring her in.

SONYA enters

Is this your first visit to India?

SONYA First to a jail.

JAGANLAL The children of my country are not your props.

SONYA Nor should they be casualty of Karbide...

JAGANLAL ... you have stayed here barely long enough to see a few malnourished kids and

SONYA ... those kids are sick with disease unknown to the human kind.

JAGANLAL Except you're in habit of unseeing the millions of healthy kids ...

SONYA Because they don't make the sick ones feel any better.

SAUVE ... well, Mister minister, ... madam doctor, ... I brought you both here...

JAGANLAL **(abruptly)** I know ... but I want to let this lady to know something ... **(to SONYA)** sit down. **(SONYA sits in chair)** Maybe your research is great; maybe our housing project is a bad idea. Maybe the People's Progress Zone is a corporate-cover up. ... Maybe the children of Bhopal are really unlike any human beings you have ever seen before, but at least let us find out for ourselves how bad it is. I resent white people telling me what's best for my country. **(SONYA is shocked, JAGANLAL stops for a moment, then, realizing his rudeness, turns away, and finally turns**

Why not?

I Z Z A T

She's sleeping.

S O N Y A

That's okay..

I Z Z A T

My man is back.

SONYA Your man is dead!

I Z Z A T

You go, Doctor Sahiba!

S O N Y A

Where is she?

I Z Z A T

She was my baby.

S O N Y A

Was? Is that what you said? Was? Where is Zarina?

IZZAT Why you look at me like that? Huh? Why? What for? Why do you look at me like that?

SONYA Where is she?

IZZAT You want your money back?

Starts to throw money at SONYA.

Here, take your money back, here, ... take it back. ...Leave me peace.

SONYA They bought you, didn't they?

IZZAT Gift – gift for telling about you.

SONYA You sold your baby.

IZZAT No...

SONYA Like Hasina...

IZZAT I did not.

SONYA Like Kastoori

IZZAT Noo.

SONYA Your sold your own child.

IZZAT (**breaking into tears**) My fault...my fault. Devil invaded my heart, devil took money for Zarina... The devil in me did that... Devil live in my stomach.

SONYA Devil lived in the company's poison...you fool.

IZZAT Me fool?

S O N Y A

Yes you fool--that company killed Zarina – gave you some cash for her dead body, and you went home thinking that the company did you an act of charity.

I Z Z A T

You don't know how I survive doctor sahiba.

SONYA throws the same money back at IZZAT ...

S O N Y A

This is nothing compared to what I may have gotten for you, if you'd let me show to the world what the company was doing to people like you, ... you fool.

I Z Z A T

Fool. How far you get? Huh? Think I make evidence of my Zarina in far land? Huh? What people say? What mother she? Showing her daughter— hands, skin, head – shame. Who want to look at my Zarina? You no fool me! No clinic - no research - nothing – just big mouth – how dare you? I sold my daughter—my daughter in peace. I have peace. Please doctor sahiba ... please ...let her be peace.

SONYA still upset but then goes over to IZZAT and touches her with compassion.

SCENE 12

DEVRAJ'S office, DEVRAJ enters. SONYA storms into his office. MADIHA has failed to stop SONYA from coming into the office.

SONYA Where is he? Where the hell is he?

MADIHA I tried to stop her.

DEVRAJ (**to Sonya**) You're not supposed to be here, doctor.

SONYA Godammit, stop what you are doing.

DEVRAJ Stop what...

SONYA Killing everything that lives around this factory -

DEVRAJ Chaukidar. (Security!)

SONYA Your Peoples Progress Zone

DEVRAJ Get on your plane, white woman.

SONYA Stop your cover-up coconut.

MADIHA Coconut??????

SONYA That's right, coconut... Brown shell, white meat!

MADIHA This woman does not stop.

SONYA turns to MADIHA

SONYA **(to Madiha)** Do you know what his company is doing? **(to Devraj)** Does she know?

MADIHA What?

SONYA Your company doctor paid my patients for their bab-

DEVRAJ Out... out of here!

SONYA 27 dead bodies, no –

MADIHA What is she talking about?

DEVRAJ Where the hell is security?

SONYA **(to Devraj)** You bought Izzat's dead baby,

MADIHA No, that woman is lying. Devraj -

SONYA **(to Devraj)** Was paying for Izzat's dead baby, part of your Animal Charity Fund?

MADIHA It was alive...the baby was alive -

SONYA '... to destroy evidence that the company was *poisoning* the mothers and their unborn ba-

MADIHA Mothers faked pregnancy to get our money.

SONYA They brought their poisoned dead babies to that pentagon Dr. Hans Weil ...

MADIHA They brought dead *animals*.

DEVRAJ **(to Sonya)** I want you to leave ... now!!!

SONYA I'll leave right, ... but you can't hide. A copy of my research is already smuggled out

MADIHA This woman is driving me crazy...

SONYA - with a list of the mothers who sold the corpses of their dead babies to this company, and all those who were forced to abort.

DEVRAJ Get out!

SONYA I have evidence -

DEVRAJ The hell with your evidence!

MADIHA The evidence? The evidence is right here, right inside me.

DEVRAJ What?

SONYA Miss Akram...

MADIHA Yes. **(to Sonya)** I breathe more "*poison*" than any of those women in the slums. If what you say it true, then my baby must be ten times more deformed -

DEVRAJ Is this...?

SONYA You're damn right madam, because the company's poison treats everybody equally.

MADIHA Then I'll be a good test case for you...

SONYA What?

MADIHA Sign me in your study.

SONYA is clueless, MADIHA takes a pause, and goes to SONYA

Why not?

SONYA There's no study anymore...

MADIHA offer my womb regardless.

DAVRAJ What's wrong with you Madiha?

MADIHA **(to Devraj)** I'm helping you. I believe in you so much, I want to shut her mouth.

DEVRAJ is answerless, SONYA laughs, MADIHA turns to SONYA

(to Sonya) To see you posturing, ... bindi, and nathni and a khaddar jhola – trying to look like an Indian when you're not, **(imitating her)** I have this evidence, I have that evidence — **(pointing at her own stomach)** well here is my evidence ... when my baby is born ...

DEVRAJ I can't believe I've to live through this..

SONYA **(to Madiha)** I'll be put on plane in 24 hours, so I won't be here to see it **(to Devraj)** But how are you going to live with it?

DEVRAJ walks away from MADIHA , she keeps looking at him.

Do something!!

SONYA exits, DEVRAJ follows her and returns to MADIHA

DEVRAJ What the fuck is wrong with you?

MADIHA For the last two months, I have been thinking how to break the news to you.

DEVRAJ What's happened to you?

MADIHA I missed two months.

DEVRAJ What does that mean?

MADIHA Yes, ... yes.. I'm pregnant.

Hush, shock

Aren't you going to say something?

DEVRAJ How did this happen?

MADIHA Is that all you can say?

DEVRAJ That night was the only night...

MADIHA Are we talking about a single night?

DEVRAJ We?? Didn't we???

MADIHA Devraj, I just revealed to you the fruit of our relationship ...

DEVRAJ I thought we had ...

MADIHA ... I'm going to be the...

DEVRAJ ...an understanding....

MADIHA ...mother of your child.

DEVRAJ ...what do you want me to say?

MADIHA Say something nice...

DEVRAJ Are you sure?

MADIHA **(drops her head in exasperation)** ” Aaaaah...”

DEVRAJ Pleeese ... how do you know for sure!

MADIHA It makes me very hungry, and makes me vomit – of course I know for sure—it's in my body for goodness sake.

DEVRAJ **(pause)** How long has it been?

MADIHA Stop talking to me like that.

DEVRAJ Madiha...I think maybe -

MADIHA What?

DEVRAJ You could get an abortion.

MADIHA slaps him.

MADIHA No. No! I would never do that – never, not in my life. ... this is your baby - for god's sake, Devraj!

A low noise followed by sounds of escaping steam. DEVRAJ takes note but ignores it.

DEVRAJ I'm sorry, I didn't know how to react to news like that ...

MADIHA **(eases on him)** Hold me in your arms, ... kiss me ...

He does

DEVRAJ It's just that I don't want to do something now that I can't handle later...

MADIHA You can't handle a baby???

DEVRAJ What if the baby /

MADIHA What???

DEVRAJ I mean...

MADIHA ...is not healthy? .. like those slum women?

DEVRAJ I mean, I'm not prepared to be a father ,

MADIHA Have you been hiding something from me?

DEVRAJ I don't think you understand ...

MADIHA For all these days? Are you?

DEVRAJ Are you what?

MADIHA Hiding something from me?

DEVRAJ Like what?

MADIHA Why wouldn't the baby be healthy?

DEVRAJ I didn't say it wouldn't be?

MADIHA What is that woman's research about?

DEVRAJ Madiha, do you know why ...

MADIHA ... and the Animal Charity Fund...

DEVRAJ I returned back to Bhopal from the US.

MADIHA ... why do you give money to those women ...

DEVRAJ Listen ... **(he walks away and comes back at her)** I was friends with the son of my family's maidservant during my childhood.

MADIHA What has that got to do with me?

DEVRAJ ... We went to primary school together and I used to give him half of my lunch against the sniggering of my mother. As we grew into adults, I earned a business degree and he ended up pulling a rickshaw. **(Madiha gestures restlessness, Devraj motions her to listen...** It was winter when I left for the US and he came to see me off at the airport. I gave him my coat. As I walked past the gate and looked back through the glass, I saw my mother walking up to him, I am sure with a dirty look on her face and an insulting taunt on her tongue. Right then and there, I swore to myself that I'd come back. And I am back,

We hear trammels,

MADIHA That's great but

DEVRAJ walks to the window, takes note of trammelling sound but continues...

DEVRAJ Do you think I'd leave the comfort of the west to kill babies???

MADIHA So why is Labonte being thrown out..

DEVRAJ She's being sent back where she came from. She came to India for an adventure ... pre-prepared to find India bad, and when she finds that things aren't that bad, she wants to make them look bad ...

Sounds of thunder, escaping gas... Devraj takes note but continues ...

MADIHA She dared you...

DEVRAJ It's too bad that I must defend myself for helping the poor. Animal Charity, my sweets is a way to

help the poor, just like 700 new houses, was a way to help poor... because that's what I want to do.

MADIHA Well that's noble to say but...

DEVRAJ We are not killing no babies, buying no babies ... The slum mothers not dying of diseases caused by Carbide Thunder, but by poverty caused by the lack of wealth it represents. I don't give a toss to Labonte, I'm just nervous with the thought of being a father ...

MADIHA I'm sorry I doubted you, but I only wanted to help you...

DEVRAJ By betting your baby with that dreadful doctor ??

MADIHA You are so passionate about your work, I don't mind betting my womb to shut her up. After all what's better proof than our own baby...

DEVRAJ holds her in his arms... kisses her...

DEVRAJ Oh Madiha you don't understand....

Suddenly sound of deafening thunder start.

(looking out) What the hell is that? **(calls out)** Kasra! Kasra! What is happening?

Sound of thunder rises like a massive earthquake. Sparks start going off in all direction. DEVRAJ's phone starts ringing. Gradually sounds of chaos – people running in all direction, the noises from the street turn into cries of help. DEVRAJ runs to the window ...

DEVRAJ God! The plant is burning...

M A D I H A

Oh my God.

D E V R A J

(Calling) Rishi, Ashraf, Pooja, Wait! Wait! **(to Madiha)** Go with them. Take the southeast exit. The southeast exit! **(Calling out)** Raja! You stay here with me.

M A D I H A

Aah! My eyes, ... I can't breathe...

MADIHA runs back to DEVRAJ.

D E V R A J

Cover your eyes, Madiha. Just run. Madiha, just GO!!! **(calling out)** Pooja, Rishi – help her!

He pushes MADIHA to escape. Complete darkness. We hear PEOPLE whisper in complete darkness.

DEVRAJ What in God's name has happened? What do you mean a tank has exploded – what tank?

JAGANLAL What?

DEVRAJ The MIC?

JAGANLAL Say it again. Explosion – where?
IZZAT Big factory...Yes, yes. Ja. Ja. Juldi...juldi...chandalika...
JAGANLAL Teekhai, teekhai. Dead? How many? **(to wife)** Nothing, sweetie, nothing, go back to sleep.
SONYA People are dropping dead like flies, you say nothing..
IZZAT Zahreeli gas...
MADIHA My eyes...I can't breathe...my baby...
IZZAT Pee Pee Zee ...
SONYA Get some more doctors.
IZZAT Bring all the children over here.
MADIHA ... not my baby...

Loud clearing of throat from ANDERSON. We see him in the USA while actors continue in whispers ..

ANDERSON I've had the flu for a week,
MADIHA I've never touched a dead body before...
ANDERSON ... but I'm getting over it. Washington's humid as all hell at this time of year. I wanted to get back to Connecticut today, but Julie was invited to lunch with the First Lady at the White House. So...what about you? What! Are you sure?...Worse than Brazil...

Crowed in India ...

SONYA It's a gas chamber...
DEVRAJ Mr. Minister, sorry to bother you
SONYA Photograph the dead ... body number on the forehead...
IZZAT Body number 1537, 1538, 1539 ...

ANDERSON in the US

ANDERSON How many dead you say?

In India

SONYA Numbers have no meaning anymore...
DEVRAJ Damn it! Damn it! Idiots! Mukund! Mukund! Mukund, what is happening?
IZZAT Run.
MADIHA Please let my baby be all right.
IZZAT Hang on. Hold on. Run...yes, yes, I know, everybody cough...everyone hold hands!
ALL Please

ANDERSON in the US

ANDERSON Whose our guy over there...I want to talk to him...the minister?...Spell it. J-a-g-a-n-l-a-l-B-h-a-n-d-a-r-l

In India

JAGANLAL Karbide International's slogan has come to haunt us. **(to wife)** Close the windows. Now! Please. More stairs. Can you hear me?
MADIHA No air. No light

Gradually lights begin to fade. ANDERSON and JAGANLAL start to move to the front. While moving forward, JAGANLAL repeats his lines.

JAGANLAL Why Bhopal?

I bleed ...

S O N Y A

I know...

I Z Z A T

...all holes...

S O N Y A

I know...

I Z Z A T

my body...

S O N Y A

I know...

I Z Z A T

...please.

IZZAT coughs up lumps of blood and tries to stop the blood by shoving the edge of her scarf into her mouth.

S A U V E

Dr. Labonte. A moment please...

S O N Y A

(ignoring SAUVE, attending IZZAT) When did the blood start in the cough?

IZZAT spits out lump of blood.

I Z Z A T

Am I coughing blood?

SONYA massages IZZAT'S chest and holds her face in her hand. ...

SAUVE **(to Sonya)** May I have your attention doctor?

SONYA removes the patch from over IZZAT's eyes.

SONYA Can you not see what I'm doing?

I Z Z A T

Am I going blind?

S O N Y A
I don't know, I don't know...

I Z Z A T
You know...you treated me before ... you know ... you took my urine, my blood, you've my file, ... you know ...

S O N Y A
All I know is your situation is changing every day. **(putting the eye-patch back)** I will give you a letter. Perhaps that will get you some government help.

SONYA moves to get the letter, SAUVE blocks her way.

S A U V E
I requested your attention Labonte.

SONYA I'm sorry ...

IZZAT takes out bunch of tablets from her pocket.

I Z Z A T
Do these help?

SONYA comes back to IZZAT ..

S O N Y A
Oh, God. Who sold you these M&Ms?

SAUVE follows her

SAUVE Look, if you don't stop, I'm afraid I'll have to be rude.
SONYA **(to Sauve)** Just shut up.
SAUVE You've got a motive.
SONYA What?
SAUVE Investigators are already looking for clues – how it happened, who did it, who was there when it happened?

SONYA Shut up Sauve!

IZZAT Let me explain, legally you can't help this woman. And if they charge you for sabotage, which they will, because everybody is looking for somebody to assign the blame, and trust me Canada cannot go on fixing your screw-ups ...

SONYA is silent, IZZAT starts to cough again uncontrollably

We all want to help-- PM's trade mission is temporarily suspended, but three planeloads of blankets and medicines are on the way, we do care .. but don't use this tragedy to renew your cause. ...

IZZAT becomes breathless, starts to choke SONYA rushes to resuscitates her...

SONYA No, no, no – ... breath easy, ... one more breath ,... a long one ... take a deep ... I won't let you die.

SAUVE In 24 hours, I want to see you catch the plane. You're obliged to leave, Dr. Labonte, did you hear what I said?

SONYA keeps helping IZZAT, SAUVE leaves. We begin to hear sound of airplane landing and slogans of protest , “Killer Karbide”, “Anderson hatyara hai”, ... Amid sounds of police charges, etc, .. we move to the next scene.

SCENE 14

... As the sounds of protest fade, we see ANDERSON arrive in India. JAGANLAL receives him at the airport ...

ANDERSON Mister Minister, I am so sorry.

JAGANLAL Yes, Mr. Anderson.

ANDERSON I really am sorry.

JAGANLAL You don't have much time Mister Anderson.

ANDERSON I appreciate your coming personally!

JAGANLAL They are outside.

ANDERSON Who are they?

JAGANLAL They are the police.

ANDERSON Am I being arrested?

JAGANLAL You need protection.

ANDERSON Where is Mr. Sarthi?

JAGANLAL Safe!

ANDERSON May I see him?

JAGANLAL You will.

ANDERSON I'll proceed to the police car.

JAGANLAL Let the photographers take your picture there. Our people need to see you answering to authority. I'm doing you a favour. I will keep you under house arrest. 24-hour surveillance. Nobody will be allowed near you but Sarthi. That is the best I can do under the circumstances.

ANDERSON I'm sure.

Policemen take ANDERSON away

JAGANLAL **(stomps his foot in disgust)** Chol!

JAGANLAL too leaves.

SCENE 15

ANDERSON's house arrest. He's on the phone while DEVRAJ sits nearby looking depressed.

ANDERSON **(on the telephone)** What?! Yes...I don't know... they had one, of course they had one – it's right here in front of me ...Yes - I know... what? That many? No. No. Fine. **(he hangs up, and turns attention to Devraj)** Stocks are down 17 percentage points. That's \$678 million dollars that someone is going to have to assume. What the hell do you people do in this country? **(Tosses the safety manual to Devraj)** What is this?

DEVRAJ Your safety manual.

ANDERSON Did you ever look at it?

DEVRAJ Yes.

ANDERSON You had a total of four safety devices. How many were working?

DEVRAJ The refrigeration was turned off at your request to cut costs. The scrubber had just been repaired, but still didn't function. The water hoses did not reach the tower -

ANDERSON Rulebook says at least two should have been working. How many were working?

DEVRAJ They were certified.

ANDERSON But were they working?

DEVRAJ I don't know.

ANDERSON You don't know????

DEVRAJ None!

ANDERSON Who certified them?

DEVRAJ Minister's safety inspection team – we were certified.

DEVRAJ gives ANDERSON a logbook; ANDERSON flips pages

ANDERSON When was the last time it was certified?

DEVRAJ Two weeks ago.

ANDERSON When is the next one?

DEVRAJ silent.

Okay, ... if the plant hadn't blown up, when would it have been?

DEVRAJ Two weeks from today!

ANDERSON That means week 4. But it's already certified. So are weeks 6, 8 and 10. What is going on here? You have clearance for periods that haven't even arrived yet?

DEVRAJ This is *India*. There are only 2 certification officers for the whole province and they won't come every two weeks. We have to adjust to local conditions here.

ANDERSON Which means?

DEVRAJ We must bribe them. So once they come for certification, we bribe them to certify 3 months in advance. Corruption is culture here, sir.

ANDERSON **(Beat)** You had gas leaks before didn't you?

DEVRAJ Not this big

ANDERSON What was done?

DEVRAJ We handed out flyers ... door to door

ANDERSON Aren't people illiterate ????

DEVRAJ answerless

How much did you save shutting down the refrigeration?

DEVRAJ It was -

ANDERSON ... and the scrubber!!

DEVRAJ Listen sir!

ANDERSON And on bribes, ... how much?

DEVRAJ Mister Anderson ...

ANDERSON Why weren't we informed about all this in America?

DEVRAJ You were, sir. I have them recorded. There were 27 memos sent

ANDERSON 27?

DEVRAJ No, I 'm sorry, 18, it was 18.

ANDERSON How do I save this corporation?

DEVRAJ We responded to all instructions sent by the head office in the US -

A N D E R S O N

Shut up.

ANDERSON picks up the newspaper.

How come this Raj Kishor Keshwani reporter here, whose name I keep seeing all over the place, prophesied so much about the safety of the plant - and I never heard about it?

DEVRAJ Sir, he's been writing those editorials ever since the plant opened.

ANDERSON He mentions this clinic's research - about Karbide killing unborn babies!!

DEVRAJ A Canadian doctor. She was doing this research to prove that Karbide International has been poisoning unborn babies ever since its Bhopal plant was built.

ANDERSON And you ignored it?

DEVRAJ We had her barred from the plant.

ANDERSON And what's this...about a Karbide employee... Madiha Akram...who is apparently pregnant with the CEO's child?

Snatches newspaper from him..

DEVRAJ This was written before the accident....

ANDERSON So you made that employee pregnant.

DEVRAJ Yes.

ANDERSON Was it consensual?

DEVRAJ She's my girl friend.

ANDERSON What a mess. I thought I sent India a man with vision, I didn't know I was sending a playboy.

DEVRAJ May I explain ...

ANDERSON ... Where is that Canadian doctor ...

DEVRAJ The government has shut her down.

ANDERSON Are you positive?

DEVRAJ She was charged with kidnapping, sir.

ANDERSON Kidnapping who???

DEVRAJ Mother and her sick baby

ANDERSON Was she deported?

DEVRAJ I think so...

SCENE 16

SONYA's clinic. Victims are huddled on the floor including MADIHA and IZZAT. MADIHA has both eyes covered with an eye-patch; IZZAT has one eye covered.

IZZAT Madiha memsahib? **(No answer)** Memesahib? Madiha memesahib? Can I call you Madiha – old days are gone remember ... Madiha ... What that name mean? Flower? Maybe mean nothing at all. May be God of wonder? Madiha. No talk? No words? **(Still no answer from MADIHA; after few moments she starts to cough. IZZAT begins to eat grain)** Do you eat? You eat for baby? You eat? **(hands food to MADIHA who drops it)** Now you know where it is. Good idea. You are saving it.

Enters SONYA

SONYA **(to Izzat, pointing at Madiha)** Has she spoken?

MADIHA Sonya Labonte? Dr. Sonya Labonte???

MADIHA half-sits up, attempts to take the eye-patch off, SONYA stops her from doing so...

SONYA No, don't take that off...

IZZAT **(to Madiha)** You were taken for dead.

SONYA The clean-up crew threw you in the municipal truck for the unidentified dead -- but I saw your hand move.

IZZAT Miracle...

SONYA So I brought you here...

MADIHA tries to take the eye-patch off, SONYA stops her again.

SONYA Keep that on ...

MADIHA Thank you.

IZZAT (to Madiha) You come back from the dead... you lucky ...

MADIHA (to Sonya) I know I have not been kind to you. Now I feel embarrassed...

SONYA Don't be. ...

MADIHA I don't know how to thank you

IZZAT Everybody thank Dr. Sonya ...

MADIHA ... for giving me back my life... and my little baby ...

SONYA It's alive...

MADIHA See, I told you.

SONYA Very well

MADIHA I need to see Devraj ..

SONYA Miss Madiha Akram, there are some things you need to know. Will he be okay with this?

MADIHA That you looked after me? Of course ...

SONYA I mean your pregnancy.

MADIHA Oh that, I'm sure he will be. Specially after this accident ..

SONYA (sarcastically) Accident, isn't it !!!

MADIHA Yes, after the accident, he needs something to cheer about. Here (points to her stomach) soon my body will begin to show. My feeling is he'll be so happy he will want to marry me.

SONYA But, as your doctor I must tell you... it's not over yet. The real nightmare is just starting.

MADIHA What do you mean?

S O N Y A

The first baby born after the accident was in my clinic. She was missing her eyes.

M A D I H A

Doctor Labonté, why are you trying to scare me?

S O N Y A

Bhopal is about to be littered with deformed and stillborn babies.

M A D I A H

That doesn't include me. Look, those women lie. They lie about their babies. ... not just their babies ... they lie about everything ... about their families ... about their animals..

S O N Y A

Miss Madiha...

M A D I H A

(in Izzat's direction) Like her -- She lied about everything -- her dead dog, her dead pig, her dead hen...

S O N Y A

In the end her daughter, Madiha.

M A D I H A

... I see what you're doing. You cannot stop, can you? You want to blame Devraj for everything... You want to scare me, too. That would be convenient, wouldn't it? Scare me so I give up my child. Imagine the embarrassment: child of CEO of Bhopal plant -- victim of company's misdeeds. Have you no shame?

S O N Y A

For your sake, I wish I'm wrong, but I must tell you -- your child may be

M A D I H A

Why do you talk like that?

S O N Y A

Abortion is an option. I will not tell you what to do. I can't. But have to warn you of the risks. In any case, I have to get you to fill out this form.

M A D I H A

Why?

S O N Y A

No doctor in Bhopal will touch you without filling one out. Government requirement. All births and abortions are to be recorded and made public.

M A D I H A

And I understand why you'd want to make birth of my baby public.

S O N Y A

(shows the form) You could see a doctor outside Bhopal and avoid this form -- of course -- but what if something happens?

MADIHA That if something does happen. **(gesturing helplessly due to her eye-patch, raising her hand towards SONYA)** but I'd oblige you. Guide my hand, I'll sign your form.

SONYA guides her to sign the form

SONYA This will authorize me to use you and your baby ...

MADIHA Now my bet is formal.

SONYA Miss Madiha, you're one stubborn woman.

MADIHA I will prove you wrong, I'll prove him innocent. You tell him to come and get me.

IZZAT You bet your baby memesahib, you bet your baby... (bachhay ki baji laga dee memesahib...)

MADIHA turns her face towards IZZAT, SONYA looks at the form intensely, lights fade to black.

SCENE 17

ANDERON's house arrest. JAGANLAL has come to meet with him. He throws a book at ANDERSON.

J A G A N L A L

This is the settlement you are proposing?

A N D E R S O N

Yes.

J A G A N L A L

This is not just

A N D E R S O N

Mr. Minister, there is always an element of speculation in all such arbitration. The point is -- the dead have stopped dying.

J A G A N L A L

The dead have stopped dying????

A N D E R S O N

Look ...

J A G A N L A L

My people are dying faster than the insects your chemical was supposed to kill --

A N D E R S O N

Well ... your casualty numbers don't match ours...

J A G A N L A L

200,000 and counting...

D E V R A J

There have only been 2000 recorded deaths.

J A G A N L A L

Only?

D E V R A J

We have to be precise about the numbers ...

J A G A N L A L

37 wards were affected.

D E V R A J

That's the entire city.

J A G A N L A L

... and the poison cloud are not clear yet.

A N D E R S O N

Mister minister, we'll compensate. We'll look after them – every one of them. But, you have to determine who was living in those wards at the time.

J A G A N L A L

And how should I do that? Ask the dead to give me their home address?

A N D E R S O N

Well

J A G A N L A L

As if they had homes ...

A N D E R S O N

And what are we supposed to do? We cannot pay for every hospitalised person you have.

J A G A N L A L

(picks up his file) 300,000 registered medical files, 200,000 temporary disability, 150,000 possible permanent disability.

D E V R A J

How many of them are faking..

J A G A N L A L

Faking?

D E V R A J

Yes faking...

J A G A N L A L

How does one fake death Mister Sarthi?

D E V R A J

Half the dead wouldn't have been alive, in the first place, had it not been for the wealth the plant provided.

J A G A N L A L

(explodes) For goodness sake Devraj, I bent over backwards to grant you People's Progress Zone --- bent over backwards to give you concessions that are unmatched in the history of India. You could at least return me the favour of thinking before opening your mouth ...**(imitates him in repulsion)** ... half the dead wouldn't have been alive

D E V R A J

I'm sorry mister minister you go on forgetting -- this was an accident!

J A G A N L A L

An accident?

D E V R A J

Do you think we'd do it purposely? It was an accident - a chemical, a chemical got too hot and exploded.

J A G A N L A L

Spell it.

D E V R A J

What?

A N D E R S O N

What?

J A G A N L A L

Spell that chemical, Methyl-Iso-Cynate...

A N D E R S O N

Look, Mr. Bha-.

J A G A N L A L

The chemical that killed my people!

A N D E R S O N

We-

J A G A N L A L

Spell it! **(Long silence)** You knew it.

D E V R A J

What?

J A G A N L A L

Methyl-Iso-Cynate was killing my people and you kept it a secret, did you not?

D E V R A J

No.

J A G A N L A L

No? The Animal Charity Fund? Buying dead animals to keep the lid on.

A N D E R S O N

Mister minister, we have charities in all corners of the world but this was an accident, this could have happened in the US too

J A G A N L A L

Then why didn't it?

Long hush

A N D E R S O N

Let's just calm down everyone - I believe we all share the same philosophy concerning this....

J A G A N L A L

Aaah, so there's a philosophy in killing all these –

A N D E R S O N

(to Devraj) Show him our figure

J A G A N L A L

Your figures?

A N D E R S O N

These are generous figures!

J A G A N L A L

Should not the courts of India ...

A N D E R S O N

.... and my final offer...

J A G A N L A L

... determine what's final ?

A N D E R S O N

You don't understand the scope of my problems. I have stockholder insurance companies suits – shareholder suits – derivative suits...

J A G A N L A L

Regardless of your problems, you can't be your own judge and your own jury. This happened here, and an Indian court must settle this...

A N D E R S O N

If you want to wait that long—but your people need help – now! Give him our figures. You listen carefully.

D E V R A J

8000 per death, 4000 per partial permanent disability and 2000 per partial temporary disability!

J A G A N L A L

Is this in rupees or in dollars?

A N D E R S O N

American dollars.

J A G A N L A L

This is what an Indian life is worth.

D E V R A J

These figures are based on Indian standard of living.

J A G A N L A L

How American Indian boy!

D E V R A J

(closing his file) you had noting here, we brought you a world-class plant

J A G A N L A L

A world calls plant? I licensed you to manufacture mega-quantities of Karbide Thunder and agreed to an outrageous extension to the People's Progress Zone. Why? Because my country is poor! We are not competitive on the global market. We are *always* in the position of trying to catch up to *you*. But the price *we* pay for trying to catch up leaves us *victims* of your progress, your - technology and your - crimes against humanity.

A N D E R S O N

We are not criminals?

J A G A N L A L

And India is not your banana republic.

Silence, then JAGANLAL pulls out LABONTE'S study

You don't want to wait for an Indian court, you want to go to an US court – well ... that's fine by me – I will negotiate with this.

A N D E R S O N

What is that?

D E V R A J

Labonte's research on Karbide Inter- - No!

J A G A N L A L

Why not?

A N D E R S O N
 What is that...Devraj!!

D E V R A J
 That can't be admissible.

J A G A N L A L
 Why?

D E V R A J
 I can't accept it.

J A G A N L A L
 because you purposely hid information -

D E V R A J
 This is ludicrous.

J A G A N L A L
 -and coerced mothers to abort and bury deformed dead babies listed in this study ...

D E V R A J
 Oh please...

A N D E R S O N
 Let him speak.

D E V R A J
 Mr. Anderson...

A N D E R S O N
 Quiet you!

JAGANLAL **(reads front page)** Significant amounts of MIC Methyl-Iso-Cynate, have been detected in the blood of pregnant women, causing birth defects, birthing abnormalities and deformities. This product is manufactured by Karbide International. This study shows that, while long-term health-risks are not conclusive, Karbide International has increased the production and-

DEVRAJ This research has been done by a woman you charged with kidnapping!

JAGANLAL We have dropped the charges.

DEVRAJ You told me the Canadian diplomat took her back.

JAGANLAL She is now working in the Hamidiya Hospital, and I have decided to lift the ban on her study and asked a grand jury to survey her findings.

ANDERSON **(to Devraj)** So this is the woman doctor who wants to use your girlfriend's baby as a proof against the company.

DEVRAJ She can't – Madiha is dead.
JAGANLAL And why would you think she's dead?
DEVRAJ If she hasn't been found, chances are she's dead.

JAGANLAL gives him the form MADIHA had signed for SONYA

JAGANLAL You will be happy to know has survived.
DEVRAJ She's alive ...???
ANDERSON Your girl friend?
JAGANLAL And she's signed this consent form. **(pointing at the form)** attached is a list of 16 of her research subjects who are also alive
DEVRAJ She's alive!!!
JAGANLAL She's under Labonte's care but it's only you she calls for.
DEVRAJ Can you let me out of here?
JAGANLAL No!
DEVRAJ Mister minister I need to see her...
JAGANLAL But, ... since she's already signed this form, I'll make an exception-I'll arrange for you to go Sonya's clinic, under my protections of course, to bring your woman ... to your house arrest.
DEVRAJ When?
JAGANLAL Soon, my boy, soon, trust me. Mr. Sarthi.

Shakes hands with DEVRAJ and ANDERSON, raises the study as leaving ...

ANDERSON **(calling ...)** Mr. Minister ...

JAGANLAL stops, ANDERSON walks up to him ...

Mister minister, actually...there is an area where we may talk substantially to our settlement.

JAGANLAL Yes there's an area we may talk substantially.

We see, but do not hear, ANDERSON and JAGANLAL exchanging words with intensity.

Their gestures must convey a curiosity in the minds of their audiences as to what are they saying to each other. Cross fade into the next scene...

SCENE 18

SONYA's clinic, patients in the background, SONYA is arranging charts, tables, cross-matching photographs, and histories etc ...

(Through out this scene SONYA coughs in visible pain but ignores and continues)

IZZAT Doctor...Doctor.
SONYA Izzat, not now, not now.
IZZAT He's here ..
SONYA Who's he?

Minister Jaganlal steps in ...

SONYA Mister minister, what brings you here?
JAGANLAL You don't like my presence here?
SONYA Quite the contrary -- you're quite welcome.
JAGANLAL Doctor Labonté, ... I can't believe a big corporation like Karbide would stoop that low...
SONYA But that's not the worse thing.
JAGANLAL Is there something worse?
SONYA A lot of truth is still not out
JAGANLAL Generations of survivors will be asking "why Bhopal?"
SONYA People were being used as guinea pigs

SONYA spreads out photographs in front of him, JAGANLAL stops her from showing the photographs.

This is what people are asking and that's what the world must know. What price the suffering of the old woman who cannot roll bedis today because of watering eyes and fatigue. What price the damaged lungs of children unable to play because they run out of breath. What price the loss of a child's parents or the loss of children to a family? What price a five year old who's become mother to her one year old brother? What price a people's dignity? The whole truth must be told ..

SONYA starts to cough, steps away and comes back wiping her face...

J A G A N L A L

Would you rather rest..

SONYA I'm fine ...
JAGANLAL You were saying..
SONYA The truth must be broadcast...
JAGANLAL On that ... I wanted to tell you something.
SONYA Yes..
JAGANLAL My opinion is slightly different on the matter ...
SONYA On what matter???
JAGANLAL And it's a minor difference ...
SONYA But what is it?
JAGANLAL Madam doctor, timing of any information is an important thing ...
SONYA **(anticipates what's coming)** Oh my God ...
JAGANLAL ... There is this thought ...
SONYA ... you're not going to deport me are you?

JAGANLAL Quite the contrary – I want to keep you little longer in India ...

SONYA How long?

JAGANLAL Until after the conference ...

SONYA What does that mean?

JAGANLAL A side-show would be counter-productive.

SONYA A side-show?

JAGANLAL Since I'm heading India's delegation to the Montreal conference, I shall do it all by myself.

SONYA I should have known..

JAGANLAL I don't think you understand how things work...

SONYA What do I not understand? I blew the whistle on Karbide—why will I not understand ...

JAGANLAL Because ...

SONYA Because I'm an NGO? Because I'm from a different world? Because I'm doing it all for an experience ... because I'm white and white people don't know a ditty about the Third World poor ...

JAGANLAL Hold you ...tongue doctor ...

SONYA You're afraid , aren't you ??? You're one of those people who think sky is going to fall because the world would hear facts from me. You are afraid because your government knew it and didn't do anything about it

JAGANLAL You fancy yourself too much ...

SONYA Why are you ...

JAGANLAL Since you asked – let me tell you a story ..

SONYA Oh please ...

JAGANLAL But I must.

SONYA I hate stories...

Sonya starts to cough ...

JAGANLAL You want me to go?

SONYA I'm fine.

JAGANLAL I'll be brief.

SONYA coughs again But gestures that she's fine, JAGANLAL continues ...

When I was a boy I went hunting with my father and I found myself face to face with a Bengal tiger. I panicked. And in my panic I threw my spear at him. Fortunately the drummers started beating their drums and the tiger ran away. But the kind of man my father was ... he ordered me to retrieve the spear from the wounded tiger. That day I learned the lesson of my life – you don't attack a beast unless you're sure of killing him.

SONYA Even if the beast goes on killing babies...

JAGANLAL The beast must be punished for killing the babies, but you can't punish him if you have already killed him. I want to punish the beast by retrieving the damage he's caused. **(beat)** Madam doctor, for every baby that dies, a new one will be born ... I need not worry about those who died, I must pave the future for those who'd be born.

SONYA **(Coughs)** That's your idea **(more cough)** of development??

JAGANLAL Bhopal needs more than development today—Bhopal needs to look after those who're alive because that's what they want from me. So I will go to Montreal conference to assure the world that these hands **(raises his hands)** can grapple with development and disaster alike...

SONYA coughs ...

JAGANLAL ... so I'd say this once and don't make me repeat this—your presence, even at the parallel conference, would betray the trust investors have in these hands **(raises his hands again)**

SONYA Betray???

JAGANLAL ... so if you delayed your truth until after the conference, until I have restored aid and trade—I don't think I'm asking for too much from you. Beside you look mighty sick to travel

SONYA You can't stop me...

JAGANLAL I had a feeling you would say that – therefore I already informed Sauve.

SONYA What did he say?

JAGANLAL We agreed to a strategic information ban.

SONYA That son of a Sauve ...

JAGANLAL Being the host county, he sees there is an opening for Canada. Canada might succeed where Karbide failed ..

SONYA What a bloody mess.

JAGANLAL Don't be sore doctor. Truth delayed in not truth denied.

Knock ... DEVRAJ enters with ANDERSON, their faces covered with scarves in an attempt to hide their identities. They take off scarves.

D E V R A J

Dr. Labonte...

I Z Z A T

Sahib boss ...

S O N Y A

Mister Sarthi, what are you doing here?

J A G A N L A L

That was the other thing I wanted to tell you. I had arranged for mister Sarthi to take Madiha Akram with him. I hope it suites your convenience.

S O N Y A

Yes, well ... she ... I knew she had to go, but I wasn't prepared this very moment ... you didn't tell me!

J A G A N L A L

Which means I must be paying my staff to do nothing... har ... har ... , har ...

ANDERSON steps forward

A N D E R S O N

Doctor Sonya Labonte, pleasure to meet you. **(They shake hands)** You have no idea how proud I am to thank you on behalf of Karbide International.

S O N Y A

Uh...

A N D E R S O N

Anderson, Warren Anderson.

S O N Y A

Oh my God! **(to Jaganlal)** What is he doing here? **(to Anderson)** What do you want?

A N D E R S O N

I understand your reaction and I am sorry if you find my presence disruptive. I came to support Devraj.

D E V R A J

Where is she?

A N D E R S O N

(to Devraj) Devraj... **(to Sonya)** He's upset.

D E V R A J

Can I see her?

J A G A N L A L

Could you get her please doctor? I have to send them back to their house arrest before media finds out ...

S O N Y A

Mister minister, you should have informed me.

J A G N A L A L

You'd be allowed to visit her when you want or need ...

S O N Y A

Uh ...

J A G A N L A L

Go on ... bring her here ... **(Sonya speechless)** she has to be with her family ...

S O N Y A

Yes of course – Izzat go find Madiha and bring her here.

IZZAT goes to get MADIHA , rest of them remain on the stage. It's an awkward moment.

izzat re-enters with MADIHA who is blind now. Her eyeballs are covered with a white membrane. This membrane has covered her eyes completely ...

M A D I H A

Devraj?

D E V R A J

Madiha.

Moves close to MADIHA and takes her hand.

A N D E R S O N

It's a miracle doctor Labonte, you're a genuine miracle.

D E V R A J

I'm sorry. I'm sorry to see you like this Madiha, I'm really sorry ...

A N D E R S O N

And I want you to know that Karbide International will do everything, everything in its power to ensure that you and your unborn child will live long healthy life.

M A D I H A

I hope. ... thank you. **(She takes her hand away from him)** Yes, yes, thank you. **(hands extended in DEVRAJ's direction; she calls out for him)** Devraj, Devraj....

J A G A N L A L

Go on boy, go on!

M A D I H A

Please, are people around?

S O N Y A

Please everyone, leave them alone ...

J A G A N L A L

I give you two minutes alone. ... then back to your house arrest before ...

D E V R A J

Thank you ...

All exit but DEVRAJ and MADIHA.

DEVRAJ I miss you.

MADIHA Hi.

DEVRAJ Hi -Madiha...Do you need to sit down?

MADIHA Just say hello.
DEVRAJ Hello.
MADIHA No – like when you would come bursting through my door Sunday morning, so full of life- Hello Madiha...and ran into my arms...(a little sound comes out of her in joyful remembrance) Hellooo Madihaaaa!
DEVRAJ **(Trying)** Hellooo Madihaaaa - I thought you were dead!
MADIHA Me too.
DEVRAJ It's all my fault. I told you to run. If only you didn't run...It's my fault – it's my fault. You ran right into the gas... **(stops)** I'm sorry, I'm sorry ... **(looks at her)** Say something – something – just say it.
MADIHA I love you.
DEVRAJ No.
MADIHA I love you.

She reaches out and touches him softly. He starts to cry. She kisses him, first passionately then stops. Knocks on the door, and everybody reappears ...

JAGANLAL Hurry up... .. everyone ... in the waiting car ...

All start to exit, MADIHA holds SONYA's hand in a compassionate gesture as a way to say thank you ... SONYA reciprocates. They all leave. SONYA and IZZAT are left facing each other. SONYA starts to cough ...

IZZAT What is happening doctor sahib.
SONYA I think zahreeli gas is trying to silence me too ...
IZZAT No ...
SONYA (Coughing) ...take me to the bathroom ...

IZZAT holds SONYA as she takes her out ... as they are off-stage. We hear SONYA throwing up. Move to next scene.

SCENE 19

House arrest. ANDERSON, holding a flyer in his hand. It features ANDERSON's photograph with a mark across the middle of it and some writing in Hindi. He is pacing up and down slowly. DEVRAJ enters. ANDERSON pushes the flyer in DEVRAJ's hand ...

ANDERSON What does it say?
DEVRAJ (Reads) Zinda nahi murda
ANDERSON What does that mean?
DEVRAJ Dead not alive ...
ANDERSON Wanted Anderson, dead not alive! **(Devraj is silent)** Do you know how much suffering you've caused?
DEVRAJ I'm sorry Mister Anderson.
ANDERSON Feel sorry for you woman ... What in the world you were thinking when you betted her baby with that doctor.
DEVRAJ She did that,

ANDERSON And you let her ...

DEVRAJ She did that in a fit of emotions ...

ANDERSON Or insanity.

DEVRAJ You can't take that thing seriously.

ANDERSON Oh shut up ...

DEVRAJ It happened in a closed room.

ANDERSON **(Slamming a paper on him)** It's a public knowledge.

DEVRAJ Anyway, that doctor has been barred from going to the conference.

ANDERSON Huh, ... conference, is it? **(Beat)** Isn't it a bit ridiculous to hold a conference of reluctant rich of the world and the Third World dictators, who would rather buy fighter planes and build five star hotels ...

DEVRAJ Huh...

ANDERSON ... a conference in posh surroundings of Canada when all you need to do is to take a walk into the street and see exactly who needs what?

DEVRAJ Yes.

A N D E R S O N

That's just what I did. **(with a penetrating look)** Look me in my eyes – these wrinkles are 70 years old – a total of 900 wrinkles under these baggy eyes – each wrinkle represents a Karbide plant somewhere in the world. Why? Because, God told me to go and develop those countries? Hardly! Was I trying to be an angel for the Third world poor? Huh, people are calling me ghost of Bhopal!!! So why did I go out of my way to build Karbide all over the world? Why? Because I and my men and women, have hung on a single hope—that Karbide would be a good citizen in each of those 900 towns, who, like Bhopal, would end poverty, on the realizations of their unexploited trade potential. You Mister Sarthi, have killed us. We are fighting for our life. ... All 900 of us are fighting for our lives. ...

D E V R A J

Mister Anderson, the courts have not decided anything yet...

A N D E R S O N

Corporations don't loose in courts, they loose in public scrutiny, This doctor

D E V R A J

She has been barred ...

ANDERSON What about your girl friend?

DEVRAJ What about her?

ANDERSON Do you think that doctor would leave her alone? ... I don't think so. ... Sooner or later ... **(beat)** Devraj, I serve no useful purpose by being here. So here it is what I propose to do

DEVRAJ looks at him questioningly. Anderson sits him down, holds DEVRAJ's hand, leans over him, closes his hands into his, and whisper things to him which are inaudible to the audience. It ends

with ANDERSON giving DEVRAJ an envelope.

Just think about it!!!

ANDERSON walks away ... DEVRAJ holds the envelope in his hand and watches him go...

SCENE 20

House arrest,: MADIHA enters. She has become completely blind. Her eyes are open but covered by a white membrane. She blinks unstopably and her pregnancy is beginning to show. DEVRAJ enters ...

Note – Simultaneous action will occur in this scene – at their house arrest, at the graveyard and at the conference in Montreal.

M A D I H A

Is that you Devraj?

D E V R A J

I have been thinking ...

M A D I H A

Thinking about what?

D E V R A J

About us!!!

M A D I H A

Yes...

D E V R A J

I should go back to the US

M A D I H A

You should?

D E V R A J

And you must come with me...

M A D I H A

Yes... When? How soon can we go?

D E V R A J

As soon as I'm freed from house arrest.

M A D I H A

You will be

D E V R A J

Depends on what Labonte does?

M A D I H A

What does she have to do with us going to the US?

DEVRAJ Do you know how determined that woman is?

M A D I H A

I signed that paper, didn't I? I'll prove her wrong...

DEVRAJ But do you have any idea what that woman's research is about?

MADIHA You're confusing me ...

DEVRAJ Do you...?

MADIHA Some nonsense about the factory? About the factory!!

DEVRAJ What about the factory?

MADIHA I don't know, ... about women, babies, animals, I don't know ...

DEVRAJ Why do you think we paid for all those dead animals?

MADIHA It's bec...the Animal Charity ... Oh my God...

DEVRAJ My nightmare is growing in your belly..

MADIHA You lied to me... ...

While their conversation continues, we see IZZAT walking in slowly to a different part of the stage, and sits by a sand hump which has semblance of a grave. She has with her, the basket that she used to carry.

She caresses the grave with her hands. Her lips move but no words are heard.

DEVRAJ I'm sorry

MADIHA You told me ...

DEVRAJ Can you forgive me?

MADIHA Forgive you? What do you want me to forgive you for?

DEVRAJ This baby ...

MADIHA You want me to forgive you for your own baby?

DEVRAJ This baby may be ...

MADIHA May be what?

DEVRAJ You saw Izzat's baby...

MADIHA Oh no, not my baby...

DEVRAJ You've got to abort him ...

MADIHA No

DEVRAJ You have got to...

MADIHA You don't care.

DEVRAJ I don't want to loose you.

M A D I H A

It's that easy, isn't it? ...

D E V R A J

What?

M A D I H A

Unless I abort, ... I'll get lost.

D E V R A J

You don't understand...

M A D I A H

You don't understand ... **(Madiha takes few steps with her blindness)** That night, I thought I was dead. I started to weep and pray, I have never prayed in my life but that night I prayed, "God please do this for me. Save me today." ... I said to myself, "God if I live past thins night, I'll prove ...

DEVRAJ But you've agreed to become a proof of my failure in Sonya's eyes...

M A D I H A

I didn't want to prove anything to Sonya. No, that was never in my mind. I wanted to prove to myself -- what you told me before the accident was the truth.

M A D I H A

Sonya was right. At least she spent her time telling the truth. What have I been doing? Spending all my time being in love with you. Wasting it.

D E V R A J

(Shows her a paper) Sonya -- she won't go to the conference ...

M A D I H A

Conference, conference, conference, ... not a word about the conference ... I am tired hearing about that conference.

D E V R A J

If you don't want to hear, I'll wait. I'll go, have a word with him

M A D I H A

Who?

D E V R A J

Jaganlal.

At another distant corner of the stage, JAGANLAL appears. He positions himself as if getting ready to give a speech.

M A D I H A

The man who's barred her from going to that conference?

D E V R A J

The man who would free me.

M A D I H A

What?

D E V R A J

Because he is going to that conference

M A D I H A

How would she harm you now?

D E V R A J

Not because you are carrying our child.

M A D I H A

I don't understand you.

D E V R A J

That's what I am trying to tell you. Maybe it was a wretched fastidiousness, ... I had myself convinced that I was doing something good for my country. I thought people would eat and children would play and go to school. I thought I was bringer of progress. I really thought that. I know I have made some mistakes but I really thought that I was making mistakes for a good cause. Many things have changed since I came back but I have not changed. That you have a poisoned child inside your womb, that doesn't matter. Every child is a wanted child. Even if our child is deformed, I'll accept her just the condition she is born.

M A D I H A

You said something else a moment ago.

D E V R A J

How should I explain to you? ... What would the world say? Rather what would Dr. Labonte want the world to say about our child?

M A D I H A

I don't suppose she will have anything to say.

D E V R A J

She will remind our child, through news papers, conferences, lectures, all her life that she's deformed because of her father. I don't suppose you should permit anybody, least of it Dr. Labonte to use our child against me. Can you imagine jolt I'll receive.

M A D I H A

You are afraid, the truth will come out.

D E V R A J

You have to choose. What can you do in a case like this? There are no winners. You have to choose what is better for the child. I believe you do want good for the child.

M A D I H A

Yes I do.

D E V R A J

Then think about it—is it good for us to go back to US with few spots on my character or let Dr. Labonte tarnish me for the rest of the life using my own child.

M A D I H A

I'm tired Devraj, I don't know what you want from me?

DEVRAJ pulls out the envelope ANDERSON had given him

DEVRAJ I want to bring you back with me to America.

MADIHA What will America do to me? Will it give me back my eyes? Will it give me back what's growing inside me.

D E V R A J

This one will be aborted. You will start your life with me.

M A D I H A

Will you be free to go?

D E V R A J

If you use your head.

M A D I H A

You have really mixed me up real bad...

D E V R A J

Do what is practical.

M A D I H A

Sonya said all abortions will be recorded.

D E V R A J

That if we stay in Bhopal.

M A D I H A

Suppose something happens to me.

D E V R A J

What could happen?

M A D I H A

Izzat said, a woman died a horrible death in the hands of a doctor outside Bhopal.

D E V R A J

What kind of talk is that? Are we poor, uneducated clods to leave such matters to some two cent clinic outside Bhopal. Dr. Weil will take care of it. . **(holds her hands)** Give me your hand. ... I think you made a good decision. We'll be okay...

M A D I H A

Stop, I don't know. I haven't made a decision.... I want to think about it.

D E V R A J

Shush... Sleep... We need to sleep. You will see the sense of it in the morning.

MADIHA I don't know your words...I don't know your words.

**DEVRAJ pushes the envelop in her hand and closes her hands...
MADIHA drops the envelope.**

M A D I H A

I don't know what do you want from me. You have mixed me up. I don't know what should I choose.

MADIHA sinks down on the floor, and closes her eyes. He sits a little distance away holding his head between his hands.

Suddenly MADIHA wakes up, convulsed with cramps, and moaning in pain.

MADIHA Oh my God! What has happened! What has happened!

Thick, dark, rubbery clots dot the inside of her saree. She bends down with agony ... She manages to get up, folds a piece of old cloth into a thick pad and tries to tie it around herself. She feels blood soaking through the cloth. Her moan wakes up DEVRAJ.

D E V R A J

(moving his hand tenderly over her) What is it darling?

M A D I H A

Nothing. Nothing ever caused so much pain!

DEVRAJ puts his hand on her forehead, and feels perspiration.

D E V R A J

You couldn't be hot.

He sees cloth, by now well soaked in blood. He pulls his hand away from her.

Why didn't you say anything?

From the Montreal conference – JAGANLAL delivers his speech

J A G A N L A L

Dear Delegates.... There is no love left in Bhopal. There are ten thousand sick babies. Dying babies, orphaned at birth. What may I do? Cry for one baby? No. Will I cry for the dead? No. I cannot afford to cry for them. I know for every child that dies, a new one will be born. There is no time to mourn their deaths; I must pave their way to the future.

Back at the house arrest

DEVRAJ

Don't worry, Dr. Weil will take care of it.

Madiha lies down.

M A D I H A

I'm going to die.

D E V R A J

You'll live.

M A D I H A

(Clenching her thighs) I can't stop the blood.

D E V R A J

(Goes to phone) Let me call Weil.

MADIHA pulls the blood soaked cloth into a bundle and holds it like she's holding a baby in her hand. DEVRAJ comes back, looks that the bundle....

D E V R A J

And you thought you're aborting a child. This is no child. See. No child. No child. That's all it is. We are free.

At the graveyard – IZZAT starts stroking the grave as though she is slowly removing sand/mud from over it. We begin to see head of a baby, whose eyes are stretched open ..

I Z Z A T

