Boundary Conditions
A play in English-Hindi
in one-act
by
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CHARACTERS:

GOVIND, HUSBAND, MID-THIRTIES: He's athletic, swarthy, intellectual, somewhat rough around the edges. Walks with a confidence that belies strength. Caring but strong-willed.

SHEELA, WIFE, MID-TWENTIES: She's sensitive, a poetic soul who's engages passionately in whatever she believes. Even on her plainest days, she's a looker. But when she's dressed to kill, she kills.

TV TEACHER, A TELEVISION TUTORIAL: This actor will appear on the TV screen. He's got a somewhat virtual feel to him, as though we're not sure whether he's real or a virtual construct. Smooth, polished delivery.

THE SETTING: The entire play takes place in the living of a middle-class apartment. The couple have just moved into their own space from living in an extended-family situation in India.

Scene 1

(GRIHA PRAVESH. SMALL BUT COMFORTABLE MIDDLE CLASS APARTMENT. SHEELA WALKS IN. LOOKS ABOUT THE ROOM WORRIEDLY FOR A WHILE. SPARSELY FURNISHED, WITH A COUCH, A SMALL DINING TABLE, AND TV TABLE. GOVIND COMES IN WITH A TV. PUTS IT DOWN WHERE THE TV WILL BE. THEY ARE MOVING IN.)

SHEELA

Chalo, tv toh theek-thaak pahunch gaya.

GOVIND

Sab theek-thaak pahunch gaya, darling. Despite the potholes and traffic. So, how do you like your new home, my love?

SHEELA

Theek hai.

GOVIND

Theek? Achaa nahin lagaa?

SHEELA

Achaa hai.

GOVIND

What's wrong?

SHEELA

Pin-drop silence hai. *Vahaan bhi to achaa hi thaa.*

GOVIND

Haan, haan, vahaan bhi achaa hi thaa. Tumhaare liye especially, *ek dum* first class. Roj tum nahin chalaati ho sixty kilometers back and forth from home to work, from work to home. Voh bhi pollution *mein!*

SHEELA

Relax, Govind. *Tum khush ho, toh mein bhi khush hoon.*

GOVIND

I hope so. *Ye sab tumhaare liye hi kiya meine.*

SHEELA

Thanks, Govind. I love you.

GOVIND

Yeh bani naa baat, jaaneman! I suddenly felt *ki mere saare* savings *phaltuu mein* waste *ho gaye the.* You know how much it cost, this whole operation? Lakhs and lakhs!

SHEELA

Thank you *bola naa*, Govind. Thank you, Govind, thank you, thank you.

GOVIND

Kuch hi dér mein asli thank you *kaa vaqt bhi aayega*, Sheela darling.

SHEELA

Let me go, Govind.

GOVIND

What's this? Why so shy? *sharm aati hai kyaa?*

SHEELA

Someone will see us.

GOVIND

Yahaan koi nahin dekhe gaa, yahi to shaandaar baat hai. No parents, no *amma*, no *chachaa*, no *mausy*, no *bouaa*, , no *bhai*, no *bahen*, no *bacche bhanje bhatije*, no body. *Bas sab shaant humare liye*. We can get to know each other in peace and quiet, *sab shaanti se.*

SHEELA

Achchaa, ab chchodo na.

(HE LETS GO OF HER. SHE UNPACKS A BOX.)

GOVIND

I'm starving.

SHEELA

Phir se? Ghar se nikalne ke pehle hi to early dinner *khaye thé, aur abhi hi to chai aur samose khaa ke aaye hein.*

GOVIND

I have a tiger appetite, like that cornflakes chap. Tony the tiger. Tiger for breakfast, tiger in bed.

SHEELA

Tiger *ho to khud shikaar kar liyaa karo kabhi kabhi.*

GOVIND

Matlab?

SHEELA

Banaati houn, banaati houn. You'll have to wait. *Kitchen kaa saamaan pura nikaalaa nahin abhi tak.*

(SHEELA GOES TO KITCHEN. GOVIND BUSIES HIMSELF WITH HOOKING UP TV)

GOVIND

Our life will really change now. No more interruptions, no getting dragged into one party's argument over the other one—just peace and quiet. Except for when you know what…

SHEELA

What?

GOVIND

(laughing) You can scream all you want.

(SILENCE. SHEELA CAN BE HEARD ARRANGING KITCHEN UTENSILS ETC.)

GOVIND

Kyaa gandaa reception hai. *Bilkul bekaar tv hai. Saala* outdated black and white good for nothing box. *Naya kharidna chaiye. Tab tak doordarshan ke ghulaam.*

SHEELA (OS)

Kyaa bol rahe?

GOVIND

TV bekaar hai! I'll buy you a new tv darling!

SHEELA (OS)

Nai tv ki koi zaroorat nahin.

GOVIND

tumhaare liye hi toh kharidoonga. Mujhe kaam se fursat kahaan milti hai tv dekhne ke liye. Lekin tumhaare liye to achchaa hoga. Akeli ghar mein kabhi bore nahin hogi.

(Sheela comes back on stage)

SHEELA

Bore hone kaa time kahaan hum auraton ko?

GOVIND

New tv, that's decided.

SHEELA

We don't have the money to buy a new TV.

GOVIND

Don't worry. I'll take care of it.

SHEELA

Instead of tv, give me the correspondence course. You promised, Govind. Settle *ho te hi,* I could finish my diploma.

GOVIND

Diploma costs money. We don't have that much. We've spent so much on moving. Don't be sad, yaar. Everything in good time. First, settle *toh hone doh.* Newly wed life has just started. We have to adjust to all this first. Let us make the bliss happen, then we'll take care of your diploma-shiploma.

SHEELA

I really want to finish my diploma, Govind.

GOVIND

Haan, haan, finish *kar lena*. Even I want you to finish your diploma, darling. *Lekin pehle ghar to basne do. Kyaa maaloom, koi teesre kaa bhi dekh bhaal karna ho* soon?

SHEELA

We must do family planning, Govind.

GOVIND

Nayi shaadi mein Nirodh-shirodh ke virodh houn main.

SHEELA

Nirodh kaa zamaana kab kaa guzraa houa hai. Durex ki baat kijiye, janaab, "Let the feeling come."

GOVIND

Vah! You're full of surprises, darling. But that's what I love about you. You're an advanced girl, yaar. Durex! I wonder which box we put it in?

SHEELA

Stop joking. This is serious business. *humme therna chahiye*. We are not ready for children.

GOVIND

Life is god's gift. When it happens, it happens.

SHEELA

Budhdhu ki tarah baat mat karo. All of India thinks like you, that is the problem with this country. With some family planning, India would be much happier. And people like us should take responsibility, get educated, and think about the future before making the same mistake that Indians keep making generation after generation.

GOVIND

(slow, sarcastic clapping) Vah! Shaandaar speech! You are really daddy's girl*, yaar!*

SHEELA

It's not a joke, Govind.

GOVIND

I am also not joking. I want to have a family, Sheela. *Ek saal ho gaya, lekin theek hai*. Like I say, life is God's gift and when it happens, it happens*. Ismein pareshaani ki koi baat nahin hai.*

SHEELA

You never understand what I say. We need savings for starting a family. *Mujhe* correspondence course *mein daal doh*, *phir mein bhi kuch kamaa paaoongi.* I will also put bread on the table. Advertising *mein* employment *kaafi* easily *milta hai.*

GOVIND

We don't have funds for correspondence course. We have to think one project at a time. We have invested in this new home and we have to settle into our new lifestyle. First, this project has to be achieved. Then after that, we can think of the next project.

SHEELA

Aur correspondence course *ki kab sochenge*?

GOVIND

Jab sahi vaqt aayegaa, tab sochenge. But first we must settle down in our new home. Aren't you excited? Our first space, just for ourselves. Our little nest. And best is, we don't have to worry about about money, honey. I got already got promotion, and now will be on my way to rising up to the top of the ladder*! Tum ghar sambhaalo, mein paise vagera sambhaal te rahoonga. Aur ek do* design development *project haath mein aa jaye, to* reputation *ban jayegi*. No looking back *ho jayega phir*.

SHEELA

Mein abhi tak nahin samjhi. What is this design developing *kaam* all about?

GOVIND

Yaar, structural engineering *ki baat hai.* Architecture *vageraa*.

SHEELA

Architecture engineering? How come both at the same time?

GOVIND

Look, Sheela, I will explain some other time. This is complicated matters. Stress-strain dynamics, structural equations and compatibility ratios, *vagera vagera, kaafi* complicated *dhandaa hai, yaar. Acchaa soun, mein kaafi thak gayaa yaar. Zabardast bhukh lag rahi hai.*

SHEELA

Always too tired to explain.

GOVIND

Ok, now tell me. What TV should we buy? Flatscreen for sure. Only question is, how many inches. *(points to a wall)* How about over here? Fifty inches of beauty, right here.

SHEELA

Flatscreen TV ki koi zaroorat nahin.

GOVIND

Absolutely *Zaroorat to hai. Haan, agar dowry mili hoti to alag baat thi. Arre, mazaak kar rahaa hoon.* You know I am against dowry-system. *Aur humaari love-marriage hi kaafi dowry hai, haina darling?*

SHEELA

Aisi cheezen ka mazaak nahin kyaa jata.

GOVIND

Arre chchodo yaar. You are a beauty and I am a lucky beast. *Tumhe bhukh lagi hai?*

SHEELA

Mujhe kuch bhukh nahin. Tumhaare liye khaana almost ready *hai*.

GOVIND

Chalo, mujhe bhi bhukh nahin. Late *ho gaya. Kal jaldi utke kaam par jaana hai.* Let's go to bed, darling. Thodaa willie-winky time ho jaye, kyoon?

SHEELA

Meine sochaa tum thak gaye?

GOVIND

That's true, but never too tired for willie-winky *jaaneman, jaaneSheela*!

SHEELA

Ek minute *chchodo, gas bund karna hai.*

GOVIND

Jaldi aana.

(GOVIND EXITS. SHEELA WATCHES TURNS ON THE TV FOR A BRIEF MOMENT. THEN SWITCHES IT OFF AND EXITS)

Scene 2

(TWO WEEKS LATER. SHEELA SITS WATCHING THE NEW FLATSCREEN TV HUNG UP ON THE WALL. IT IS THE END OF FAMILY GUY (OR MARRIED WITH CHILDREN). GOVIND ENTERS FROM WORK)

SHEELA

Hi, Honey! How was your day? *chai bana ti hoon.*

GOVIND

thak gaye, yaar. Dog tired.

SHEELA

How was your day?

GOVIND

A blur like every other day. Nothing more, nothing less.

SHEELA

Kaafi late *ho gaye aaj phir se.*

GOVIND

This is what they call ironic, Sheela. Staying here also I come home late from the office. *Ek to kaam hi aisa hai, ki koi jaldi nikal hi nahin saktaa.* And the traffic is mad everywhere. Scooter *pe bhi* traffic jam *mein atak jaate hein aajkal*.

SHEELA

aur meeting?

GOVIND

meeting?

SHEELA

haan, meeting. *Sharmaji ke saath.*

GOVIND

kyaa meeting, *yaar?* The bloody fool thinks he owns all of us. *Poora* time waste *karva diya saale ne.*

SHEELA

arre, kuch bhi acchaa nahin gaya aaj?

GOVIND

Ek cheez sirf. tum jo ho, jaaneSheela.

SHEELA

Jao, jao! Not one phone call all day!

GOVIND

You were in my heart all day, darling.

SHEELA

"all day, darling!"

(SHEELA BRINGS IN A TEA-SET AND MAKES TEA)

GOVIND

wah! chai aur samose kaa mazaa hi kuch aur hai! Lekin, no samose?

SHEELA

Sorry, I forgot.

GOVIND

Kyoon, aaj shopping *nahin gayi? kyaa baat hai? achchaa, acchaa, don't tell me. Mein samajh gaya. TV?*

SHEELA

Not tv but cable tv.

GOVIND

achchaa hai na? Look at it, Beautiful, shiny flatscreen tv! Tomorrow is sitting right here in our living room today. Look at this beast! *Vah*! Hello 50 inch DTS 7.1 beauty! *Aur kaun kai rahaa thaa tv ki koi zaroorat nahin, purane tv mein kyaa burai hai? "No need to waste money, Govind!"* I'm telling you, this free market economy is the best thing for consumer benefits. Every day one sale is trying to cut the throat of another sale. *Ek din* sanyo *ne kam kyaa daam, to dusre din* sony *ne double kam kyaa, aur teesre din* daewoo *ko bukhaar chadgaya. bukhaar utaarne ka tarika?* Blow out sale! great fun*, Sheela. Mazaa aata hai.* One day soon, I promise you Sheela, I will buy you a car. A Toyota!

SHEELA

I don't need a car!

SHEELA and **GOVIND**

"phaaltu mein paisa barbaad ho jayega!"

GOVIND

tere bina mein kahaan hota, I would be lost at sea without you.

SHEELA

achchaa, ab chchod do mujhe.

GOVIND

kyoon, koi dekh lega kyaa?

SHEELA

Bas karo, na! Sharm aati hai.

GOVIND

lagta hai hi ki shaayad Toronto jaana pade ga. Business trip.

SHEELA

kyoon? Kiske saath? Kitne din?

GOVIND

Sharma aur mein sirf.

SHEELA

Toronto mein kyaa hai?

GOVIND

Just work matters, *yaar*. Our supplier is acting funny*, aur saara kuch Toronto se hi aata hai. Phir* there's business prospect *jisko patanaa hai. Achchi* bonus *haath mein aayegi tab*.

SHEELA

Kaunsaa prospect?

GOVIND

yaar, it's complicated*, baad mein samjhaoongaa.*

SHEELA

Hamesha baad mein kehte ho.

GOVIND

Look, I'm tired, that's all. The last thing I want to do is discuss shop. One more word of engineering today and I'm going to go completely bonkers through the ceiling.

SHEELA

Theek hai. No time for me like everyday.

GOVIND

Time! I don't have time for you, I don't have time for me, I don't have time for anything. Fourteen, sixteen hours a day, seven days a week, that's what time looks like to me. Every minute, every day, every year time is flying away from me faster than Haley's comet. Eleven years have already gone in this job and I haven't had the time to wink at it. It's not a picnic in the park out there Seema. You have be like a machine, day in and day out. Just work, work, work. And that too at top speed. Otherwise a new model will come and kick you out on your backside. *(pause)* The only thing that gives me hope is you, Sheela. I come home and think of you waiting for me, and my heart gets calm. I think of our home and how one day I'll have not only you but our children to come home to, and then I can keep going. That's the only time there is some meaning to this craziness. But when you don't understand how tired I am, then I start to go crazy all over again. I swear, yaar.

SHEELA

I'm sorry, Govind. Relax.

GOVIND

Mood kharaab kar diya.

SHEELA

Chai pi lo.

GOVIND

(suggestive) Chai ke saath kuch nahin milega?

SHEELA

Samose kharidne bhool gayi.

GOVIND

garam samose ke instead *mein kuch aur garam degi?*

SHEELA

Kyaa?

GOVIND

You know what.

SHEELA

Lo, ek chummi.

(SHE GIVES HIM A DEMURE KISS, TRIES TO WITHDRAW BUT HE GRABS HER ARM, KEEPING HER CLOSE)

GOVIND

Aur chummi ke saath kuch aur garam-naram?

SHEELA

Chchodo na. Abhi naram-garam kaa time nahin houa. I have to cook dinner. I didn't do anything all day thanks to you and your black beauty on the wall. It's your fault. It's your idea, this new tv.

GOVIND

Yaar, you women are piece of cake! First you blame me for wanting to buy you a TV, then you blame me because you watch it too much!

SHEELA

I just didn't know there was so much to watch. It's fascinating.

GOVIND

Sheela, my dear, don't forget it's called the idiotic box.

SHEELA

It is a window to the world. *Jo kuch bhi dekhne chaaho, jo bhi seekh ne chaho, sab tv par hai*. It's all on cable tv.

GOVIND

Like what?

SHEELA

Like the learning channel, discovery channel, sports channel, movie channel, shopping channel, home channel, star world, star plus, star minus, star news, shooting star, American channel, French channel, Chinese channel, channel for you and channel for me. And Cartoon network and children channel, not to forget.

GOVIND

Arre, haan, batao, batao, kaise jaa rahaa hai, mune ki hone wali Ma?

SHEELA

Ya munni ki. Doh hafte hi toh hue hain. Kyaa kuch ho sakta hai.

GOVIND

Ya munni ki. Life is god's gift and greatest mystery. But you see, *yahaan par aake hi, magic ho gaya!* What we couldn't do over there for more than two years, yahaan aake first night success *banaa di humne!*

SHEELA

Okay, I am going to get ready.

GOVIND

For what?

SHEELA

Tonight is our night for going out. You forgot?

GOVIND

Arre, shit. Kahaan?

SHEELA

Movie dekhne.

GOVIND

Movie dekhne?

SHEELA

You forgot already?

GOVIND

Oh, haan. Vo isqh vali Khan-Shan movie. Yaar, I'm too tired. It's too late. Please, don't make me do this today. I've had such a long day, you can't imagine. *Aaj maaf karo,*

Sheela. Phir kabhi. Why don't we watch a movie on your movie channel*?* It'll be just like being in the movie theatre.

SHEELA

You always promise and never keep it.

GOVIND

Putting the bread on the table isn't a bed of roses, let me tell you.

SHEELA

Isn't a walk in the park.

GOVIND

What?

SHEELA

Nothing.

GOVIND

No letters in the mail?

SHEELA

Who writes these days. Everyone is on the superhighway.

GOVIND

What?

SHEELA

Everyone's on the Information superhighway.

GOVIND

Vah, yaar, kamaal ki cheez hai! Information superhighway?! Where did you hear that?

SHEELA

Science Channel. Now I don't have to ask you. When I ask you, it's *hamesha* "I'm too tired, yaar. *Baad mein bataa ta hoon."*

GOVIND

I am too tired. I'm not joking.

SHEELA

Haan, haan, relax *karo, Govind.*

(BELL RINGS)

GOVIND

Who the hell is it at this time?

SHEELA

Must be your friend only. *Aaj tak meine to kisi ki pehchaan nahin ki iss* neighborhood *mein.* All the neigborers are strange. No one talks to anybody. *Ajeeb log hein.*

GOVIND

Ajeeb kyoon?

(GOES OFF STAGE TO CHECK THE DOOR)

SHEELA

Ajib kyoon? Aapas mein hi rahte hein. Not friendly. And they all look unhappy. *Kabhi kisi ko haste houe nahin dekhaa.*

(COME BACK IN WITH A SHEEPISH GRIN)

GOVIND

It's Satish.

SHEELA

Who's Satish*?*

(GETS READY TO GO OUT)

GOVIND

He lives over the block. Works in my field only. Nice chap. *Bechaara* bachelor hai.

SHEELA

Hello? Govind? Where are you going?

GOVIND

He wants to talk about work crisis. He needs my advice. I'm just going out for two minutes.

SHEELA

Yeah, yeah. Go wherever you want, whenever you want.

GOVIND

So jaa na. Don't wait for me. Late *ho saktaa hai*. I'll be back faster than thunder!

(GOVIND EXITS. SILENCE AS SHEELA TAKES IN HER SURROUDINGS, HER LONELINESS)

SHEELA

Faster than greased lightning! Faster than a stack of tumbling dominos.

(SHEELA WATCHES TV. A SHOW ABOUT LATEST FASHIONS. FADE OUT.)

Scene 3

(FOUR WEEKS HAVE PASSED. SHEELA IS WATCHING TV, LATE AT NIGHT, A HOT ROMANTIC FOREIGN MOVIE. GOVIND COMES HOME IN GREAT SPIRITS)

GOVIND

Hello, darling! Still up? Still watching tv!

SHEELA

How was your nightly hungama? Is it finished?

GOVIND

(defensive) Hungama nahin thaa. Satish is always having some problem or the other. You know the saying, yaar. Friend in need is blessed indeed. He just needed my advice.

SHEELA

Whatever. *(makes the gesture)* Talk to the hand.

GOVIND

What?

SHEELA

Whatever.

GOVIND

whatever, whatever! what is this whatever-shotever?

SHEELA

Forget it.

GOVIND

Kyaa?

SHEELA

It's late. Why don't you hit the sack? Be fresh for work tomorrow.

GOVIND

Sheela, are you okay?

SHEELA

Yes, Govind, I'm just fine.

GOVIND

Are you angry?

SHEELA

Why the hell would I be angry?

GOVIND

Look, I'm sorry. I really wanted to come home on time and take you out. I swear. But Satish called, and… *Bas, yeh* emergency *aa gayi, nahin to mein...ab kyaa bataoon?* Sheela, darling, I promise, we'll go tomorrow.

SHEELA

Don't worry. I am not upset. Really. I'm fine. And I can't go out tomorrow.

GOVIND

Kyoon?

SHEELA

kal tv pe kuch important program *dekh na hai.*

GOVIND

kaunsa?

SHEELA

nahin bataaoongi.

GOVIND

Bataa.

SHEELA

nahin bataoongi.

GOVIND

TELL ME.

(PAUSE)

SHEELA

Don't shout. Relax, Govind.

GOVIND

Is this tv more important or me?

SHEELA

Think of it as an emergency, pal.

GOVIND

Pal?

SHEELA

Friend. buddy. Homeboy. My nigger.

GOVIND

What are you talking about? What can be an emergency about watching the idiotic box?

SHEELA

Idiot. Idiot box. I'm talking about a life emergency.

GOVIND

What do you mean?

SHEELA

Matter of life and death.

GOVIND

Kyaa drama *kar rahi hai tu!* Tell me plainly what you are talking about, Sheela.

SHEELA

Nothing you'll understand.

GOVIND

TELL ME.

SHEELA

Don't shout. (PAUSE) All our projects are coming along fine, right Govind? You got another raise, Our home is settled, I'm five weeks pregnant. The only project left is my correspondence course.

GOVIND

You must be joking. Are you out of your mind? You're pregnant, you're getting sick, you're weak, you can't manage the house, you're hardly ever cooking anymore, and on top of all this you still want to do correspondence course! Are you mad!

SHEELA

I have been thinking--

GOVIND

I don't need you to think, Sheela! I do enough thinking at work. (PAUSE) I'm sorry. Thinking what?

SHEELA

Something. I can't explain, Govind. Sometimes when you are gone to the office, and I find myself alone, I start crying and cannot stop. I feel very sad, Govind, very sad. I don't understand why. Yesterday, I was watching a space show, and I thought how funny it was to think that here I was, worried about myself, worried about my baby, with so much pain inside me, thinking that it was so important, everything I feel and think, but if you started to zoom out from me, you would see this neighborhood filled with thousands of women like me, with problems and worries like mine, and worse than mine, I am sure, and if you zoomed out more, you'd see this city we live in, filled with millions of tiny people, all moving busily like organized ants with their own problems in life, each ant

SHEELA (CONT'D)
moving around with personal problems big as an atom bombs in their souls, but you would only see them as tiny, meaningless creatures. And then you could zoom out up and out of the sky, and you wouldn't even see me, or you, or anyone anymore. It would be like we never existed in the first place. And if you zoomed away more and more, soon even solar system would cease to exist because there are millions of universes to keep zooming away from. But when it hurts inside, it's like they're all trapped in my chest. It's so much pain, so much pain to bear.

(PAUSE)

GOVIND

What is this, the Discovery Channel?

SHEELA

I need to do something with my life, Govind. I can't sit around doing nothing, day after day.

GOVIND

You're not doing nothing. You are running the show at home. You are doing fine with your life. You are married, you have a home and a husband, and you are going to have our first child. You are an absolute A+ success, Sheela. You should be proud. Happy.

SHEELA

Are you proud of me?

GOVIND

Why would I be proud? I mean, yeah, obviously, it goes without asking.

SHEELA

If I am a success, and you love me, then you must be proud of me.

GOVIND

Dekho, Sheela, abhi late *ho gaya hai,* I'm too tired for all this talk.

SHEELA

You just said it. You are not proud of me.

GOVIND

I don't know what you are talking about*! Haan, kuch ajeeb* behavior *to ho rahi hai tumhaari*. You're not the same Sheela that lived in the big house. What's wrong, Sheela? I am doing everything I can to keep you happy.

SHEELA

I am tired of sitting at home, doing nothing but watching tv. I have decided to do something.

GOVIND

What?

SHEELA

Nahin bataoongi.

GOVIND

Tell me. (PAUSE) Do you think I am, stupid? (PAUSE. GOVIND NOTICES THE MOVIE ON THE TV SCREEN WHICH IN NOW A R-RATED TYPE OF SEX SCENE) What kind of movie are you watching?

SHEELA

Maaloom nahin.

GOVIND

Yeh to kaafi sexy *hai.* It's a bloody blue movie, swear to god! What channel?

SHEELA

Independent channel. This is not blue. Only romance.

GOVIND

This taking your clothes off kind of romance is called blue, Sheela darling.

(GOVING TURNS UP THE VOLUME. THEY LISTEN TO TV. SOUND OF HEAVY BREATHING, WHISPERS, ETC.)

GOVIND

Sone chalte hain. Chalo, Sheela, let's go to bed.

SHEELA

Wait. It's not finished.

GOVIND

Come on, Sheela. I'm in the mood for you know…some willie-winkie.

SHEELA

There's no need.

GOVIND

Chal naa. kitne din ho gaye.

SHEELA

Go to sleep, Govind. You must be tired. I'm going to watch the rest of this film.

GOVIND

The only reason they're showing this film is for us to get in the mood.

SHEELA

Govind, go to sleep. You have to go to work in the morning.

GOVIND

Come with me, Sheela. Let us go to bed.

SHEELA

Move. You're blocking the tv.

GOVIND

Mujhse aaj kal sidha bhi kabhi baat karliya karo, miss american heroine.

(HE TURNS OFF THE TELEVISION)

SHEELA

Don't behave like a little boy.

GOVIND

You don't start to tell me--

SHEELA

Relax, Govi--

GOVIND

(shouting) Shut up! *Kaafi ho gaya hai, relax shelax. Aaj kal to tum hi relax karte jaa rahi ho.*

SHEELA

Don't shout.

GOVIND

The household has gone to the dogs. You don't care about the house, you don't care about me. *Aajkal*, you're just looking out for your number one and the rest of it can go to hell!

SHEELA

Looking out for number one.

GOVIND

What?

SHEELA

You remember the delicious food I cooked for you two days ago?

GOVIND

Vo chinese khana?

SHEELA

It wasn't Chinese. It was Thai.

GOVIND

Thai-shai whatever. What does that have to do with anything?

SHEELA

I got the recipe on the cooking channel.

GOVIND

So?

SHEELA

It was aphrodisiac recipe.

GOVIND

Afro *kyaa? Pehle Thai ke rahi hai, ab* African! *Kuch samajh mein nahin aata hai aaj kal!*

SHEELA

Aphrodisiac, means getting you in the mood kind of food.

GOVIND

Oh. You should have told me. I thought it tasted funny.

SHEELA

You told me it was delicious.

GOVIND

Yaar, that was just to get you in the mood. I just said that kyoonki tumne itna kaam kiya thaa. But it was strange tasting, to tell you the truth. You want to make a real aphrodish, then make good old fashioned desi style *khaana*—I'm telling you, it will blow my fire for you. But that thai-chinese rubbish is useless.

SHEELA

Ok. I won't make it for you again.

GOVIND

You haven't told me. Why can't you go out tomorrow night?

SHEELA

That's my secret.

GOVIND

You must tell me.

SHEELA

Why?

GOVIND

I'm your husband, that's why. You have to tell me everything!

SHEELA

I can't go out because I have to watch something important on tv.

GOVIND

What? You must tell me what!

SHEELA

Govind, are you jealous of the TV?

GOVIND

Don't talk nonsense! You should be ashamed of lying to me.

SHEELA

How am I lying?

GOVIND

You're not telling me the truth.

SHEELA

What about?

GOVIND

Tomorrow. Watching. What.

SHEELA

That's my secret.

(GOVIND GRABS HER ROUGHLY)

GOVIND

What is your problem? Why can't you talk in straight line?!

SHEELA

Leave me.

GOVIND

Tell me what you're going to be watching!

SHEELA

Please! I'm going to throw up!

(HE LETS HER GO, SHE KNEELS AND THROWS UP ON THE FLOOR.)

GOVIND

Oh, shit. Shit. Sheela, Are you okay? I'm sorry. I'm so sorry!

(HE HELPS HER UP TO THE SOFA, RUNS TO GET A NAPKIN WHICH SHE USES TO WIPE HER MOUTH. HE RETURNS WITH A GLASS OF WATER. SHE DRINKS)

Feeling better? You've turned that morning sickness upside down to midnight! Should I make you some lemonade? How are you feeling, darling? Just relax. Watch some tv.

GOVIND (CONT'D)
You'll feel better. *Look,* I'm exhausted. I have to sleep. I can't take all this drama after an exhausting day at the office. Are you listening, Sheela? Okay, goodnight. Wake me if you need anything.

(GOVIND EXITS. SHEELA INCREASES THE VOLUME TO HEAR A BEACH FITNESS PROGRAMME)

Scene 4

(SHEELA IS WATCHING "TV TUTOR" ON TV. THIS NEEDS TO BE RECORDED WITH AN ACTOR PLAYING THE PART OF THE TV TUTOR)

TV TUTOR

TV TEACHER will continue after these brief messages from our sponsors. Stay tuned, we'll be right back.

(THREE ADS FOLLOW, ONE FOR CONDOMS, LINGERIE, SEX ENHANCEMENT)

TV TUTOR

Welcome back. Now, before we wrap up tonight's lesson, let's do a speed review of the five major aspects of differential calculus. Remember, there is no substitute for conceptual clarity. If you cannot answer the following questions correctly, or find yourself unsure as to why the answer appears as it does, please call twenty four hour TV TEACHER helpline, and follow the easy touch-tone directions to find answers to your calculus problems. As TV TEACHER, we are pleased to provide this service to all our student members at no additional charge. First questionWhat is the derivative of the function f(x)= x raised to the power n?

SHEELA

dy/dx = n times x to the power n-1.

TV TUTOR

The derivative of the function f(x)= x raised to the power n equals n times x raised to the power n-1.

SHEELA

Yes!

TV TUTOR

Question number 2what is the derivative of the function f(x)= sin(x)

SHEELA

Cos x!

TV TUTOR

Cos x is the right answer! Question number 3In the integration of f(x)dx, we express the result at F(x) plus the constant C. Why must we add constant C and what determines the value of constant C?

SHEELA

Yaar, ek minute*, ek* minute *bataati houn*, let's see, *jaldi, jaldi*, because, because because because

SHEELA and **TV TUTOR**

in computing the derivative any constant terms which have derivatives equal to zero have been lost and the value of constant C is determined by the boundary conditions of the problem at hand.

SHEELA

I knew it! ten out of ten!

TV TUTOR

If you've kept up this far, congratulations--you're well on your way to obtaining the engineering degree of your choice. You've also probably noticed that that was two questions disguised as one, so here's the final question of the dayQuestion number 5What is the integral from a to b of f(x)dx?

SHEELA

That's easy! It is F(b)-F(a).

TV TUTOR

That is correct! the right answer is F(b)-F(a)! If you have any concerns, please call our hotline at 352-2242 for assistance. Before we part, it is time to give you your weekly homework please copy the five equations from the screen. Solve them for next time. I look forward to seeing you with the right solutions. Until next time, this is Prof. G.W. Isaac signing off, good night!

(SHEELA SWITCHES CHANNELS, AND WATCHES A STEAMY MUSIC-VIDEO, REAL LOUD. GOVIND ENTERS MOMENTS LATER)

GOVIND

How can you listen to all that noise? Less volume, please.

(SHEELA TURNS IT DOWN)

GOVIND

Honey, I'm home. (PAUSE) Aren't you happy to see me home so soon from work?

SHEELA

How come so early?

GOVIND

Dekho, aaj mein kaam pe pareshaan hi rahaa. That's why I came home early, boss *se* special permission *leke. Mujhe dekh kar khush nahin ho?*

SHEELA

I'm thrilled. Ecstatic.

GOVIND

Let me have a cup of tea. Then we'll sit down and plan something for the evening.

SHEELA

Make your own tea.

GOVIND

What did you say?

SHEELA

Arré, mazaak kar rahi thi. Chill, Govind. I put the kettle on already.

GOVIND

These are not joking matters.

SHEELA

I'll make you your tea. Chill. Sit down.

GOVIND

How was your day?

SHEELA

Fine. How was your day?

GOVIND

Fine. (PAUSE) Shopping *kaisa rahaa?*

SHEELA

I didn't go out today.

GOVIND

But I called and you weren't home. I kept getting the answering machine all day.

SHEELA

I was home but busy.

GOVIND

Too busy to answer the phone! Doing what?

SHEELA

Just watching an important program.

GOVIND

What if it was an emergency?

SHEELA

I'm sorry, Govind. I'll pick it up next time.

GOVIND

Kyaa ho gaya tujhe? You're completely crashing through the ceiling. All you're doing with your life is watching this useless TV. All day long. I should never have bought it.

SHEELA

Chill.

GOVIND

Don't say that word to me again! I am sick of it!

(SILENCE)

SHEELA

I have a big surprise for you.

GOVIND

What?

SHEELA

I can't tell you for another 7 months.

GOVIND

Bache ki baat kar rahi ho? Lekin vo to mujhe maaloom hai. And that is seven and half months from now, not seven, by the way.

SHEELA

I'm not talking about that. It's something else but don't ask now, I won't tell you.

GOVIND

You don't tell me anything these days, Sheela. The water must be boiling.

SHEELA

It'll whistle.

GOVIND

Our kettle doesn't whistle.

SHEELA

I fixed one on the nozzle.

GOVIND

Where did you buy it?

SHEELA

I made it. Saw how to do it on TV. It's quite easy.

(WHISTLE SOUNDS. SHEELA EXITS TO KITCHEN)

GOVIND

Look, you didn't even ask *ki mein kaam par pareshan kyoon thaa aaj, ki mein aaj ghar jaldi kyoon aaya, Sheela.*

SHEELA

(offstage) Why?

GOVIND

Sheela, something is not happening right. Ever since we moved here. *Aaj pure do mehne ho gaye*. Two month anniversary of moving into our own home aparment. *Tum to bhool gayi hogi. Haina, Sheela?* Two full months. I thought that we would be happy in this nest, for us. But something has changed.

(SHEELA COMES IN WITH TWO MUGS OF TEA AND GIVES HIM ONE. THIS IS A VISUAL CONTRAST TO THE EARLIER SCENE WHEN SHE GAVE HIM TEA IN THE MARRIAGE TEA-SET.)

SHEELA

What has changed?

GOVIND

No Samosas?

SHEELA

Govind, you walk by the Indian Restaurant on your way home every day. Get your own Samosas if you want them so much. Now, tell me, what has changed?

GOVIND

You. You have changed. Us. We have changed.

SHEELA

Me? How?

GOVIND

Something. I can't put my hand on it. You have become...different. Not like you were before, when we used to live all together. *Aaj kal ghar aata houn to* trepidation *hoti hai mujhe, ki tumhaare vaje koi ajnabi milegi.* A stranger in a strange house, that is what I feel, Sheela. Before we got married, before we came here, also, we had a special electricity between us. I used to die to spend time to with you, to find us alone for a moment in that super crowded and busy home. You used to look at me with a love in your eyes which made my heart melt like candle in the wind. Where has that look gone, Sheela? Don't you love me anymore? Every passing day makes you a stranger. You look at me these days and I feel that you are looking from another planet and in between us there is only thin ice waiting to crackle. How can it be that now when we have all the time for us, and no relatives around to bother us, I feel like the magic has melted away from our lives? Almost every night we end up arguing and fighting with each other. We are soon going to start a family, Sheela. I want a happy family, loving family. I wonder sometimes if you still love me. Do you love me?

SHEELA

Govind, I am very happy now. I am happy for coming here.

GOVIND

Really*?*

SHEELA

Sachi, Govind, sachi.

GOVIND

Why?

SHEELA

How can I explain? I know you're doing the best you can, given who you are, your circumstances. And I agree, we should stop fighting. But you don't know me. You have to give me my time and space.

GOVIND

What do you mean, time and space? I don't see you day after day, all day long.

SHEELA

Govind, you are settled into life but you have to give me time and space to settle also.

GOVIND

Settle? I don't understand. We are both settled together. Man and wife. Job, house, and soon, and in seven and a half months, one child. Then one or two more. This is the road we are settled on as man and wife. What is the question of time and space in this issue?

SHEELA

I need time and space to settle into my life, into who I am.

GOVIND

Time and space, space and time! How did Albert Einstein come into the picture! I don't know you, you don't know me! If I don't know you by now, then who knows you?

SHEELA

I don't know myself, Govind. But I have started to discover and that is why I am happy.

GOVIND

What the hell are you talking about?

SHEELA

Don't get angry, Govind. Relax. Yaad hai, no more arguing, no more fighting? Look—it's time for your favorite hot babes on the beach running around rescuing strangers show.

GOVIND

I don't feel like watching.

SHEELA

But this is your favorite show.

GOVIND

We haven't finished our discussion.

SHEELA

Okay, what else?

GOVIND

I don't know. I don't know.

SHEELA

Let's watch tv. We can talk later. Come on, darling, sit next to me. You'll feel better in a moment, I promise.

(THEY START WATCHING A PROGRAM SUCH AS BAYWATCH. TIME PASSES. GOVIND AND SHEELA SIT COZIER TOGETHER IN THE COUCH, LIKE A RELAXED COUPLE)

GOVIND

Vah, kyaa body *hai. Kyaa kapde pehni houi hai! Mazaa aa gayaa!* Yes, that's the way to run, baby! *Ab paani mein koodke gili bhi hoja! Wah! kyaa batayaa maine! Mujhe saalon ko employ karna chahiye, kya scriptein likhoonga unke liye. Kya bolti, Sheela?*

SHEELA

These boys also have hot bodies, isn't it?

GOVIND

haan, haan, theek hai.

(SOME MORE TIME ELAPSES. NOW THE AUDIENCE CAN SEE/HEAR A PASSIONATE LOVE RECONCILIATION AT THIS STAGE IN THE TV STORY, SEXY AND FULL OF SUGGESTION. GOVIND AND SHEELA WATCH)

SHEELA

(*breathless*) Govind?

GOVIND

Hmm?

SHEELA

Let's go to bed.

GOVIND

What is this? Today you are the feeling like the johny in charge?

SHEELA

Okay, forget it.

GOVIND

No, No. Let's go to bed, darling. If all your surprises are going to be like this, I can't wait for the seven month surprise.

(THEY RISE AND HOLD EACH OTHER FONDLY. BLACK OUT)

Scene 5

(A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER. IT IS THE NIGHT OF KARVACHAUT. SHEELA FINISHES WATCHING ANOTHER SEXY MUSIC VIDEO. SHE RISES AND WE SEE THAT SHE IS CLAD IN A SEXY MINI OUTFIT WITH HIGH HEELS, LATEX/LEATHER LOOK a la BDSM. SHE ADJUSTS HER LOOKS IN THE MIRROR, AND POSES AND POUTS. SHE LOOKS HOT AND SHE KNOWS IT. SHE GOES TO THE PUJA SECTION AND ARRANGES A PUJA THAALI, COMPLETE WITH DHOOP, FLOWERS, ANJALI, ETC. SHE SITS DOWN. SILENCE. GOVIND COMES HOME FROM WORK)

GOVIND

Sheela? Sheela, I'm home.

(HE SEES SHEELA IN SILHOUETTE, AND THAT SHE DOESN'T RESPOND IMMEDIATELY)

Sheela, are you deaf? I said I'm home.

(SHEELA GETS UP AND FACES GOVIND. HE REACTS UNCERTAINLY, A MIXTURE OF SHOCK, DISAPPROVAL, CONFUSION, AND DAWNING EXCITEMENT)

Kyaa--what, Sheela what's this? What the hell are you wearing?

SHEELA

Surprise.

GOVIND

Why? Surprise for what?

SHEELA

Tonight is your night, darling. *Aaj karvachaut hai*. I have fasted all day for you. I want to make you happy tonight.

GOVIND

*Yeh kapde? Yeh to kaafi...*American *kapde hein*. Where did get this costume*?*

SHEELA

You like it? You like me like this?

GOVIND

Yes. I mean, I...don't know...

SHEELA

Aaj karvachaut hai. Meine din bhar tumhaare liye vrat rakhaa aaj. Aaj ka din tumhaare liye hai. Aaj ki raat tumhaare liye hai.

(SHEELA BRINGS THE PUJA THAALI AND STARTS TO PERFORM THE KARVACHAUT ANJALI AT GOVIND. SHE SINGS THE KARVACHAUT HYMN, ASKING THE GODS TO LOOK AFTER THE FORTUNES OF HER HUSBAND, AND FOR HER HUSBAND TO LOOK AFTER HER FORTUNES, HER SUHAAG, ETC. SHE FINISHES THE WHOLE ACT BY TOUCHING HIS FEET. THROUGHOUT THIS CEREMONY, GOVIND STOCK STILL)

Well, won't you say something?

(SILENCE FROM GOVIND. WHILE SAYING THE FOLLOWING LINES, SHEELA PERFORMS A SERIES OF SEDUCTIVE GESTURES AND MANEUVERS WHICH ARE MEANT TO AROUSE HIM)

You don't look happy. What's wrong? Bad day at work, honey? Don't worry, I'll make it all right for you, I'll send all your troubles far away. Just relax and let me be good to you. Here sit down. let me take off your shoes, there you go, isn't that better? Just sit back, honey, and let my magic touch work on you.

(SHE UNDOES HIS SHIRT BUTTONS)

There, aren't you feeling better, honey? Just sit back and let me make you happy. Let me make you more comfortable, first.

(SHE UNDOES HIS BELT AND STARTS FOR THE TROUSERS. GOVIND SPRINGS OUT OF HIS BEING MESMERIZED AND REACTS WITH SELF-RIGHTEOUS ANGER)

GOVIND

Bas karo! Stop it! Stop it at once! Either you have gone mad, or I have gone mad.

SHEELA

Relax, Govind! Come back, here. I am doing this to make you happy. You don't like my surprise?

GOVIND

You are dressed in this, this western nonsense, looking like a vulgar whore and behaving like one, what do you expect from me? Are you mad? Wearing clothes like this and doing a puja with our gods?! *Aur aise kapde pahan kar puja kar rahi hai, paagal ho gayi kyaa! Kuch aur tarikaa nahin mila humari shaadi kaa mazaak udané ka?*

SHEELA

What are you saying, Govind?! I'm doing all this for you. What's wrong?

GOVIND

What's wrong is that you have become mindless! This not a way for a married woman to behave, to dress! This is not the way women of our culture behave. *You're a housewife living life, not a wife on a sex show on TV!* Have you lost your shame down the toilet? I don't believe this! Go and take off these clothes!

SHEELA

That was part of the plan, but you're too stupid to know a good thing when you see it.

GOVIND

Don't call me stupid! You better watch it! You are a mockery of our culture, so you better shut-up now!

SHEELA

I'm sorry, Govind. This is going all wrong. Look, Govind, just chill. I want to look after you, I want to make you happy tonight. Relax darling, come, sit here with me. Why are you so angry?!

GOVIND

I come home tired from work and you behave like an escapist from the lunatic asylum, that's what's wrong!

SHEELA

Why are you so Angry, Govind?

GOVIND

Why am I angry, why am I angry?! What is this nonsense! I don't have time to keep a watch on you all the time and this is what craziness happens in my home. And now tell me, what is TV TEACHER?

SHEELA

What?!

GOVIND

Don't lie to me! Tell what this TV TEACHER is all about?!

SHEELA

How do you know?

GOVIND

How do I know? Because this bloody bill has come to my office today! From TV TEACHER, Inc. HereSee? And listen what it says "Dear GOVIND SEHGAL, congratulations on choosing TV TEACHER for your educational needs! You are now embarked on a voyage of discovery and achievement that will take you to all those places you have always cherished to go. Your dreams are now on their way to becoming reality!" *Vagera, vagera, bakvaas, bakvaas, haan*, and here's the clincher "please pay up your overdue monthly installment or we will be compelled to seek the assistance of a collection agency, whose actions might damage your credit rating in the future." Who is

GOVIND (CONT'D)
this bloody TV TEACHER? Who the hell have you been seeing behind my turned back? Tell me the truth, Sheela!

SHEELA
Chill, Govind! It's not a bad secret. It is the surprise I was telling you about. You were going to find out soon.

GOVIND
Soon?! *kab* soon? How soon? And what is this billing surprise? *Pati ko kangaal kardo vali* surprise surprise *nahin hoti hai, jhoot hoti hai.*

SHEELA
Govind paise mein de doongi. Installment *meine apne savings se hi diye thé.*

GOVIND
Vo savings *humaare* future *ke liye rakhe gaye thé.* That money is not for you to spend on stupid things like TV TEACHER bakvaas and you're prostitution uniform. What is this bloody TV TEACHER?

SHEELA
Engineering correspondence course.

GOVIND
What?!

SHEELA
It is affiliated with M.I.T. in USA and the TV TEACHER engineering program is accredited by the international chapter of the American Engineers Association, AEA.

GOVIND
Bakvaas! Absolute nonsense! They're stealing your money!

SHEELA
It's not nonsense. It's a legitimate correspondence course.

GOVIND
Have lost your mind? You think you earn a bloody degree in engineering by watching that idiotic box all day?

SHEELA
I am learning engineering, Govind. I want to finish my college. In two years, I will have an engineering diploma and can apply for an engineering degree. After that two more years and I can also go to work and bring money home.

GOVIND
Yeh chaar saal kaa paise barbaad karne vala program *to firstclass dhandaa hai.* What is the use of your learning engineering? One engineer is enough for the house. And no one

GOVIND (CONT'D)
is going to give you a job if you tell them you have learnt your work from Mr. TV TEACHER. They will die of laughing at you and your stupid TV Teacher!

SHEELA
You are not giving me support I need, Govind.

GOVIND
How dare you waste your time and my money with this nonsense! I should thrash some sense into you.

SHEELA
It's not your money.

GOVIND
Everything is my money. Don't forget that!

SHEELA
But the program is very good. I have already learned a lot.

GOVIND
Like what?

SHEELA
In the last lesson I learned how to perform calculations with three variable infinite integrals, which have an application in stress-strain dynamics such as calculating the maximum resilience of suspension bridge structures.

GOVIND
What do you know about...(mutters)

SHEELA
I am happy with what I am doing, Govind. You have to be happy with me.

GOVIND
You have to be a wife and mother! You are forgetting your duties. Engineering is not for a woman in the house. Engineering is for me, the macho man of the house. You have to worry about your baby. You have to prepare for birth. You have look after the baby, the house, and me. And you don't have money to waste on stupid things like TV TEACHER-phateacher.

SHEELA
No.

GOVIND
No?

(SHEELA TURNS ON THE TV. VIOLENT AMERICAN MOVIE NOISES CAN BE HEARD)

SHEELA

I don't agree. I also have rights.

GOVIND

You don't have any rights! You have duties. Duties as a wife and as a mother. You have duties to me, to our home, to our family. This rights business is only for TV-people living in TVland, don't forget that, miss TV engineer.

SHEELA

I have a duty to myself and I am not going to let you take that away from me.

(SHEELA LIGHTS CANDLES IN THE ROOM AND THEN TURNS OFF THE LIGHTS)

GOVIND

What are you doing? It's not Diwali.

SHEELA

They're scented. It's for peace and calm.

GOVIND

My head is about to explode and your lighting peace candles?

SHEELA

Govind, I don't think that we are on the same wavelength.

GOVIND

Wavelength-*shavelength ki baat mat kar mujhse!* I think your bloody antenna has gone kaput.

SHEELA

I don't know if I can go on living like this.

GOVIND

There is no other way to live. We live in a culture that is thousands of years old and every woman has her proper place in it. You are going to be mother soon and you should start getting ready. Maybe I made a mistake by deciding to come to our own home. Before coming here your head wasn't messed up like this. You've completely lost your senses.

SHEELA

I want my mind to grow, I want to taste life, I want to live and feel alive. Why can't you understand?

GOVIND

There's nothing to understand.

SHEELA

Do you understand what do I want? What makes me happy? Can you answer me that, Govind?

(SILENCE FROM GOVIND)

Do you understand why I keep acting this role of Mrs. Sheela Sehgal, day in and day out, while it's killing me inside? Because I don't.

GOVIND

Not only are you dressed like an American whore, you're talking like one.

(HE MOVES MENACINGLY TO SHEELA)

What are you trying to do to me?

(HE GRABS HER)

You want to make me happy tonight? Okay then, make me happy!

(HE TEARS HER BLOUSE OFF AND KNOCKS OVER THE CANDLE. IN THE PITCH DARK, NOISES OF A STRUGGLE ARE HEARD AS SHEELA TRIES UNSUCCESSFULLY TO RESIST GOVIND)

SHEELA

No! NO! Let me go! let me go!

GOVIND

Shut up, bitch! Make me happy! That's what you wanted, right?

SHEELA

LET ME GO!

GOVIND

SHUT UP! I'm going to give you what you really want!

(NOISES OF FORCED SEX)

Scene 6

(THE DAY AFTER. THE ROOM IS DARK AND EMPTY. GOVIND WALKS IN CAUTIOUSLY. LOOKS AROUND FOR A SIGN OF SHEELA. SHE'S NOT IN. EVENTUALLY, HE SITS DOWN IN THE COUCH AND TURNS ON THE TV AND CHANNEL SURFS. HE SWITCHES BETWEEN A VIOLENT MOVIE, A SEXY GAMESHOW, AND A GERALDO TYPE TALKSHOW ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS. TIME PASSES. SHEELA ENTERS SILENTLY. GOVIND HEARS HER AND GETS UP WITH ALACRITY, NOT KNOWING WHAT AWAITS OR HOW TO HANDLE THE SITUATION. THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER, BATHED IN THE LIGHT FROM THE TV SCREEN)

(SHEELA REMAINS SILENT DURING THIS SPEECH BY GOVIND AND HER SILENCE MAKES IT MORE AND MORE AWKWARD FOR HIM)

GOVIND

I was worried about you. Where were you? Where did you go? Are you okay? Sheela, I--don't know what to say...for what happened...for what I...did...last night. Look, I'm sorry. I'm very sorry. It will never happen again. I will never let it happen again. I don't know what happened to me. I was tired and confused by everything. Say something, Sheela. Talk to me. Look, I was thinking about your correspondence course, and maybe we can follow up on it, after you get settled with the new baby and everything. Until then, don't worry about money, I'll take care of it for the family...Sheela?...Are you feeling Okay?...Are you still angry with me? I said I'm sorry. Sit down and relax, Sheela, let me make you a cup of tea, would you like that?

(SHEELA REMAINS STANDING)

Where did you go? Where are you coming from?

(IN THIS SCENE, SHEELA SPEAKS WITHOUT ANY EMOTION IN HER VOICE)

SHEELA

I have important news.

GOVIND

What?

SHEELA

I went to the clinic.

GOVIND

(FEARING THE WORST)
No! No. What clinic? Why? No! What did you do?

SHEELA

The abortion clinic.

(GOVIND SINKS DOWN ON THE FLOOR)

SHEELA

I am not ready to become a mother. You are not ready. This is not the right time.

GOVIND

What have you done...

SHEELA

I will give life when I am ready to give life. It will happen only then.

GOVIND

What have you done? I don't know what happened to me. Last night.

SHEELA

We both know.

GOVIND

How could you do this to me, Sheela?

SHEELA

Move out of my way, Govind, there's a program I need to watch.

(SHE SITS DOWN ON COUCH AS GOVIND STANDS UNCERTAINLY TO ONE SIDE. SHE TURNS ON THE TV AND BEGINS TO WATCH AN INSTALMENT OF TV TEACHER)

TV TUTOR

Welcome to TV-TEACHER. I am sure you've done some great work over the last couple of days and aced all your homework problems. Remember, those who work hard earn their destiny! Now, let's start with problem number one.

FADE TO BLACK