

Have Fun, or Boat Song

By

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1 A MEMORY - EXT. A GREEK BEACH. JUST BEFORE DAWN. 1

Still some distance from the beach, a small figure thrashes in the water. Swimming, alone, desperate.

They reach shallows, near drowned. She drags herself onto the sand; fully clothed, panicked. She pulls long, sodden hair from her face. She's slight, maybe 16, brown-skinned; ALIYA. She clears her airway and lies still, panting.

Other such 'swimmers' land along the beach, lurching inland when able.

More bodies begin to appear in the water. Pitching and rolling, lifeless in the surf. Aliya drags herself up the beach toward the forest beyond.

2 A MEMORY - EXT. FOREST BEHIND BEACH. JUST BEFORE DAWN 2

She creeps through darkness, dripping and wheezing, scanning shadows and shapes in the near distance. In fright, she moves faster, but more noisily. A man, emerging from the shadows, runs to intercept her. Aliya runs too. A second man slams into her, bringing her to the ground. She fights them.

3 A MEMORY - INT. VAN. JUST BEFORE DAWN 3

She's loaded into the van. The engine starts. The headlights' spill reveals similar faces all around her, staring back, just as broken. The van moves off.

4 EXT. CITY STREETS. NIGHT. MONTAGE 4

Neon signs flicker, reflected in wet streets and passing cars. Aliya roams, aimless, but alert for opportunity. She's skinny now, haggard and twitchy. Hair short and boyish. She clutches a TATTERED BACKPACK.

She deals drugs with regulars. She smiles and chats, they do not. She bums cigarettes; shoplifts from a 24hr supermarket.

In bars, she commandeers deserted drinks. On trains, avoiding inspectors, she eats the food of comatose commuters; watching the city slip by until the cold sun rises.

5 INT. LIBRARY. DAY 5

Aliya waits by the toilets in the quiet of the library. She pores over A COPY OF "The Art of the Deal". Glimpses of the pages reveal sub headings "**Fight back**" and "**Have fun**" amongst the text.

The toilet door unlocks, the book's discarded. She grabs her bag, certain to be the next one in.

6 INT. LIBRARY TOILET. DAY

6

The toilets are well maintained. She secures the BABY CHANGING TABLE and slips off her coat.

MONTAGE:

- Aliya pulls a BAG OF CORNFLOUR from her pocket and empties the white powder into a PLASTIC BOWL from her backpack.

- The next jar is labelled "Oral gel". She mixes it with the powder.

- She holds the bowl under the HAND DRYER, pushing the fake drug around with her fingers, exposing it to the heat. Occasionally, rubbing a little on her gums.

As she seals her 'product' in kitchen plastic wraps, the dryer stops. Silence. She catches herself in the mirror. A snapshot of her situation. Pain crosses her face.

She takes a BATTERED PHOTO from her pocket. It's of Aliya; younger, happy, embracing an older woman. They're indoors. The woman has grey hair. They're both smiling. Aliya looks again at the face in the mirror.

7 A MEMORY - INT. REFUGEE TENT. EVENING

7

The work-lights of the compound cut orange shapes into the darkness of the tent. A figure in hijab creeps gently toward a sleeping figure and rouses them. It is SITTU, the woman from the photograph.

SITTU  
(whispers)  
Aliya. Aliya.

Aliya barely wakes. *They speak in Arabic.*

SITTU (CONT'D)  
Aliya, We have to go.

ALIYA  
Sittu? What time is it?

SITTU  
I found a way. To leave.

ALIYA  
Leave?

SITTU  
To Europe. A boat. We have to go. Now.

Aliya, still waking, slips out of bed and follows.

8 EXT. PUBLIC PLAYGROUND. MORNING

8

The aging playground is deserted, save for a few children who play alone while parents smoke and peer at their phones. It's cold.

Aliya makes straight for the swings where RENA and BILLA are talking. They're late teens, perhaps. They don't acknowledge her.

ALIYA

Hey. You looking? You wanna buy? It's the good stuff. The best. Good price.

They mock at her patter.

ALIYA

I'll make you a deal, a great deal. It's the best.

RENA

Stinna's looking for you.

BILLA

She's onto you.

RENA

Pushing Flex on her market.

ALIYA

I don't make flex.

BILLA

Everyone knows you make flex.

RENA

You told people. Bragging all over. So dumb.

ALIYA

(stung)

It's only for the tourists.

They're all stunned by this admission.

RENA

You're so fucked.

BILLA

Stinna wants her money.

ALIYA

Fuck Stinna.

It convinces no one.

ALIYA  
 She'll get it when I'm ready. I've got plenty. More than she needs.

BILLA  
 (genuine)  
 She's gonna hurt you.

ALIYA  
 She'll have to find me.

Billa looks past her, fear in her eyes. Aliya follows her eye-line to a CAR closing on them.

Billa runs. Rena punches Aliya to the floor, holding her down. The car gains.

RENA  
 I've got her, Stinna. For you.

Aliya fights free and runs. The car accelerates after her.

9 INT. RAIL-SIDE HUT. DAY

9

Aliya slows, checking she's no longer followed. She ducks inside a hut by the rail track, listening and watching. No one comes. She relaxes and closes her eyes.

10 A MEMORY - EXT. SMALL BEACH. NIGHT

10

They wait, silent, tense; hidden in long grass in sight of the water. Industrial lights glare in the distance. The water gently rolls in and out. Cicadas buzz. They have small bags and are dressed to travel, despite the heat.

*They speak in Arabic.*

ALIYA  
 (a whisper)  
 Thank you, Sittu.

SITTU  
 (gentle)  
 Shh.

ALIYA  
 How did you manage it?

SITTU  
 I did a deal.

ALIYA  
 A deal?

SITTU  
 The best. A one time offer.

ALIYA

We're going to live a good life. We'll start a business, and get rich. And fat.

SITTU

There's more to life than money.

ALIYA

Money helps.

SITTU

It's a hard, hard journey ahead, Aliya.

ALIYA

I'll protect you.

SITTU

I know. Quiet, now.

They sit in silence, again.

11 EXT. INDUSTRIAL WASTE GROUND. DAY 11

Aliya passes abandoned vehicles and containers as she walks across the waste ground. It's deserted, but still she checks that she's alone before crouching amongst unused building materials. She produces a SMALL CLOTH BAG from its hiding place and wanders toward a large building nearby.

12 EXT. INDOOR ICE RINK. DAY 12

She peers through the door to the world inside. Children skate. Parents watch. It's busy and colourful.

13 INT. ICE RINK. DAY 13

Aliya slips inside, pop music echoes around the hall.

She watches from the barrier. The grace, the outfits, the femininity; the families, the happiness. Someone notices her. She stands out in this place. They speak to her, frowning. She's ejected.

14 INT. ELECTRONICS STORE. DAY 14

Aliya plays the computer games on display, until bored. She lusts after laptops and mobile phones. She's not looking to steal, simply fantasising.

15 EXT. STREET. DAY 15

Passing a luxury furniture showroom, she's quickly entranced. Pressed to the window, wishing. Her frown relaxes, almost a smile. It's then whipped away.

Sound up here. Ocean SFX. Voices.

16 A MEMORY - EXT. BOAT. NIGHT

16

Aliya and Sittu spy others appearing on the beach. A large dinghy comes to rest at the water's edge. People begin to scramble aboard. Aliya and Sittu hurry to join the group.

Directed by impatient men, people squeeze onboard. Too many people. The boat drifts out into the water. Sittu lifts Aliya over the side, throwing in her bag.

*They speak in Arabic.*

ALIYA

Quick Sittu. Get in. Get in.

Sittu hesitates, still in the water. She pulls Aliya close across the boat side, kissing her; crying now.

SITTU

I love you. I love you. I love you.  
This is the deal. This is the only  
way.

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ALIYA

Get in!

Sittu backs away from the boat. Aliya makes to climb out. Another passenger grabs her, a mother, holding her tight. Aliya struggles. The engine starts.

ALIYA

(to the mother)

Get off me!

(to Sittu)

Sittu! No!

SITTU

It's ok. Come back for me. Get money.  
Come back. I love you. I love you.

ALIYA

No, Sittu. No!

The boat accelerates. Aliya struggles, but cannot escape. Now Sittu runs into the water, desperate.

SITTU

Aliya. No. No. Come back. Aliya.

The boat disappears. Sittu falls, sobbing in the dark churning water.

17 INT. SPORTS CENTRE TOILETS. DAY.

17

MONTAGE:

- She locks the door and empties out CRACK BAGGIES and CASH on the toilet lid.
- She counts her cash. Then counts it again. It's not enough.
- She counts out crack baggies. Again, not enough. Does sums on her fingers. It's bad news.
- She pulls out a rusty old razor blade, shaving bits off larger rocks to make new piles.

The results aren't good. She's barely made 2 extra piles and the others are now very small.

She pulls a CRACK PIPE from her bag, but hesitates, flicking the lighter. She catches her reflection in the mirror. She stares, but no answers come.

18 EXT. TRUCK STOP AT THE EDGE OF TOWN. EARLY EVENING

18

The stop is almost empty. A truck pulls away, headlights blaze. She tries another truck; no sale.

HENRIK approaches from the shadows. He's older, well dressed in urban attire; tough, yet approachable.

ALIYA

You want something?

HENRIK

What have you got?

ALIYA

Base. Good stuff. The best.

He looks past her. A DRIVER strides toward them.

DRIVER

You! What is this shit?

The driver pushes her against the truck. Hitting her head, hard, she falls to the ground in a freezing puddle.

The driver thrusts his hands in her pockets, pulling out money. Henrik hauls him off her, pushing him clear. A SECOND DRIVER is coming now. Henrik pulls her to her feet.

HENRIK

Go. Run.

There's blood on her hand. Her head is bleeding. She hesitates, confused, then runs.

The driver lunges at Henrik, who swings back, connecting well. The man is down. Henrik runs after Aliya.

19 INT. BAR. EARLY EVENING

19

A dimly lit refuge, not much more. The few other drinkers keep themselves to themselves. Aliya is hidden in the darkest corner, trying to be invisible. Dabbing her head with napkins.

Henrik sets down drinks. She drains hers before he's sat down. He pushes his toward her. It disappears.

HENRIK  
Ripping people off. It's not smart.  
And addicts? Insanity.

ALIYA  
They don't know the difference. It's  
business.

HENRIK  
He knew.

ALIYA  
He got lucky.  
She got lucky.

HENRIK  
And your boss?

ALIYA  
Don't have one.

HENRIK  
Really?

She straightens up. Business talk.

ALIYA  
I'm an entrepreneur. A start up. I buy  
in cheap and make a profit. Maximise  
my options.

An odd phrase. She tries more. She's clouded.

ALIYA (CONTD)  
I know my market. I need to leverage.  
Use my leverage.

HENRIK  
Leverage?

She pushes on.

ALIYA

I fight back. And have fun. It's fun.

Henrik examines her for signs of 'fun'. She tries to be okay with it. He tops up her drink from a hip flask.

HENRIK

Stinna told you not to do it.

Aliya panics, looks for exits. He smiles.

HENRIK (CONT'D)

She's not here. Just me.

She tries a smile. She drains her glass.

HENRIK (CONT'D)

So, how much?

ALIYA

How much do you want?

HENRIK

For you.

She hesitates, caught off guard; angry with herself.

ALIYA

I don't do that.

HENRIK

That's not what Stinna said.

He catches her eye. His point made.

HENRIK (CONT'D)

I'll pay. Something. I'm not a monster.

She tries to hide her horror.

EXCERPT ENDS