

LoveBeats
by
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Original Screenplay

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INT. TABLE TOP - BAQIR'S CHAMBERS - DAY

ANIMATION:

In a clean but aged room that's seen better times sits an old leather-tooled desk. On it, and very elegantly lit, a LEATHER-BOUND BOOK OPENS to reveal its TITLE:

LOVE BEATS

The Very True Story of Mad Master Baqir,
His Long Lost Love,
Of Jeet, His Young Apprentice, and
Of the Magic Drum.

(And Of Many Other Matters Too,
But This Title Would Then Be
The Length Of A Book)

The book's PAGE FLIPS to an Indian folk art painting of a young drummer. A MALE VOICE is HEARD. This is the voice of MAD MASTER BAQIR, who will be leading us through this entire story:

BAQIR (V.O.)

Once upon a time,
There lived, in India, a very
handsome and talented drummer.

The PAGE FLIPS again to another (Madhubani) folk painting - this one of the young drummer, playing hard... and (PAGE FLIP) breaking his drum!

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Master Baqir played so fast and
furiously that all the drums he
played broke or went up in
flames...

PAGE FLIPS ACCELERATE as Baqir builds his own drums.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

...and so he had to make his own,
stronger, fireproof drums to play
on.

The PAGE FLIPS ACCELERATE to become FLIP-BOOK ANIMATION to show Baqir's story, moving around the world as...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Baqir was the very best drummer in
the world.

(MORE)

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 And around the world he did travel,
 visiting nations and other drumming
 masters, exchanging magic beats,
 dancing great dances in every
 country.

PAGE FLIPS become SUPER 8 - style VINTAGE FILM FOOTAGE but
 still colored Madhubani folk-art-style...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 He was welcomed everywhere he went,
 and soon came to be known by the
 name of Master. Master Baqir.

EXT./INT. MONTAGE - VARIOUS DANCE STAGES - DAY

The Super-8-style footage is INTERCUT with Madhubani
 paintings of the Master's world tours as...

BAQIR (V.O.)
 His super strong drums also became
 legendary, and he soon sold his
 drums far and wide.

INT. DANCE STAGE - INTERNATIONAL TOUR - DAY

BAQIR (V.O.)
 In one of those countries Master
 Baqir was introduced to a fierce
 and very beautiful dancer named
 Zaheera.

FREEZE and CLOSE on young ZAHEERA, in Super-8 closeup as...
 a YOUNG BAQIR reacts with pleasure.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Who was, they say, the best dancer
 in the whole wide world.

SUPER-8 FOOTAGE CONTINUES as

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 The moment Zaheera looked at Baqir,
 and he looked back into her lovely
 eyes, they both knew, without any
 doubt at all, that they were meant
 to be together, like peanut butter
 and jelly.

The young couple plays and dances.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Like spinach and orange juice, they
 were also very good for each other.
 Her dances made him drum even
 better, which then made her dance
 even better yet.

MONTAGE in Super-8 of audiences, venues, dances...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Their performances were legendary
 to all, to kings and queens and
 rich people and beggars all, for
 Zaheera and the Master Baqir
 performed for all, to celebrate
 their love for dance and music.

WEDDING FOOTAGE in Super-8 as

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 They were married shortly after...

SUPER-8 FOOTAGE of BABY KADAK and proud parents as...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 ...and had a baby boy they named
 Kadak, for his strength and fierce
 voice, even for a baby's.

SUPER-16 FOOTAGE takes over as...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 But then a horrible and unknown
 disease, like the measles, but much
 worse, struck young Zaheera down.

The FILM FOOTAGE STOPS in the gate. And MELTS AWAY to BLACK.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

A MAN, 50's grizzled, eyes of flint, sits behind a metal
 table and looks directly AT CAMERA. This is the MAD MASTER
 BAQIR.

BAQIR
 And she was lost to the world, her
 love, and her son. Her dying words
 were her promise to the young
 Baqir - she would never leave him,
 not ever, not even after death.

Baqir lifts a hand. Brings it down on the table. Dong! And
 his other. Dong!! And again...

BAQIR (cont'd)
 And he promised to drum for her
 always, so she would never lose her
 way back to him.

And so, he did.

He drummed so much, and in so much
 pain, that he became quite mad.

FADE OUT.

EXT. DELHI CITYSCAPE - DAY

SUPER-8 FOOTAGE resumes...

BAQIR (V.O.)
 Years passed, and India became
 modern.

SUPER-8 FOOTAGE of the CITY TURNS INTO 16mm FOOTAGE of India
 as a YOUNG MAN, late teens, looks into CAMERA and grins.
 This is YOUNG KADAK, son of Baqir.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Kadak grew to be a tall, strong
 young man, much like his name, and
 his fierce voice had promised.

EXT. BAQIR MANSION - DAY

Establish the Baqir compound - a mansion, a workshop, a
 garden, a shop, the city, as...

BAQIR (V.O.)
 The Mad Master now lived in
 solitude in a wing of the big
 mansion he owned in the middle of
 town, drumming by himself, and
 quite scaring all of the helpers
 who worked there.

... a pretty young woman sweeps a garden path free of golden
 leaves. This is YOUNG RAINA, late 20's, radiant.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Only Raina, his long-time family friend and admirer, managed his household, served him his meals and helped clean his rooms up, and lately has been wearing ear-plugs at night in order to sleep through his incessant drumming.

In the garden, YOUNG KADAK plays drums, blocks Rain's way. Badly, judging from Raina's expression. She shoos him off and he runs away to a pretty young girl, YOUNG SUNU. They hold hands and leave.

Raina looks at them, broom in hand,

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Even though Kadak knew how to drum - how could he not? - He was more interested in having fun with his friends, going out on the town, gambling with his parents' money - for there was quite a large family fortune left to him, not even including the drum factory and shop that was still, after all these years, a quite famous place for people to buy their drums from.

EXT. BAQIR COMPOUND - DAY

YOUNG KADAK and SUNU run outside and meet a group of their FRIENDS.

BAQIR (V.O.)
 Kadak thought little about drum playing, or drum making.

He and his girlfriend the clever Sunu would help themselves to whatever money the drum shop made, until one by one the workers all left Kadak, outwardly wishing him and his Mad Master well, but inwardly wishing them good riddance.

SUPER-16 FOOTAGE TURNS INTO 35mm FILM FOOTAGE as

INT. BAQIR SHOP - DAY

The door to the garden opens and RAINA enters with a BUNCH O' DRUMS underarm. A young man follows her -- our hero, YOUNG JEET, carries more DRUMS than her. He sets his down quickly and helps her with her load...

BAQIR (V.O.)

All except one.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Young Jeet was a penniless orphan, taken in by the Mad Master himself to learn about drum making and to clean up around the drum factory and the store.

So Kadak couldn't just fire Jeet, or kick him back out into the street, much though he wanted to.

YOUNG KADAK enters, pushes Jeet aside, goes to the cash register and takes money out. He then leaves, pushes Jeet aside again. Raina, tidying the store, doesn't see this exchange.

Kadak exits, and Jeet cleans up next to Raina.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Instead, Kadak had to content himself with bossing Jeet around, ordering him to go fetch this, deliver that, and eventually to go back to the huge rubbish dumps where Jeet had come from, to look for the best pots and pans, made of a metal that could be melted down and remade into new drums.

EXT. BAQIR SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

YOUNG JEET kisses SUNU. They speed off into a MELEE of PEOPLE on a grand collection of DESIGNER BIKES and SCOOTERS.

EXT. CITY GARBAGE DUMP - DAY

Huge, city-block-sized mounds of garbage...

ANGLE as YOUNG JEET arrives on his old but clean bike, slides off, pushes it through a gap in the chain-link fence.

BAQIR (V.O.)

Every week, Jeet would go dumpster-diving in huge rubbish piles as tall as trees (but much more icky and smelly), to look for only the best pots and pans that he knew he could make into the very best drums.

There's another bike, just as old, but silver-metal colored, propped up, with a huge number-coded padlock and chain. Jeet unlocks it, puts his bike in next to the other, locks it up again, looks up at the top of the gigantic mound of garbage.

ANOTHER KID waves down at him, and he waves back, starts climbing. The other supreme dumpster-diver is Jeet's best friend, Alpesh.

His childhood friend, Alpesh (whom Jeet called just Al), would help him search through the garbage, but young Al would also take the pans Jeet didn't want, and sell them to other people for a few rupees here and there.

EXT. CITY GARBAGE DUMP - TOP OF MOUND - DAY

YOUNG JEET and ALPESH sort through rubbish very quickly, tossing silver pots and pans down the hill towards their bikes...

BAQIR (V.O.)

In time, Alpesh became very good at spotting only the best pots and pans, and eventually Jeet didn't have to look through the dumps at all.

ANGLE

As there are maybe 20,30 OTHER KIDS also looking through trash. They toss a lot of pots and pans down the hill...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Because Alpesh had become so good at collecting aluminium for recycling that he became the King of Aluminum, had lots of other kids working for him, and had changed his nickname to Aluminium Al.

EXT. CITY GARBAGE DUMP - BOTTOM OF MOUND - YEARS LATER - DAY

The aluminum scrap lands at the bottom of the mound, near a TUKTUK with a GROWN-UP ALUMINIUM AL, now teens, lording it over the younger KIDS.

His TUKTUK bears the proudly-made sign "ALUMINIUM AL - for the best in recycled Aluminium goods!"

EXT. BAQIR COMPOUND - NIGHT

JEET unlocks the alley door and pushes his BIKE, laden with ALUMINIUM SCRAP, into the Baqir shop.

BAQIR (V.O.)

Young Jeet, however, continued alone, contenting himself with his humble dwelling and his hard work, and knowing that his life would change, one day, and soon.

INT. BAQIR SHOP - FACTORY SIDE - NIGHT

MONTAGE:

JEET dumps the aluminum scrap into the top of a FURNACE, fires it up, uses the bellows to make the flames hot.

BAQIR (V.O.)

And so he worked on, melting the old pans into silver metal, and then pounding and shaping and turning that metal into a single, perfect drum shell.

JEET melts the old pans into liquid aluminum, then pours it out into molds...

He cracks open a mold, takes the rough-formed metal out, and puts it on a LATHE...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

And while he carved and beat and finished that single drum, just as he was taught, and then polished its sides until they shone in even the tiniest glimmer of light, and turned that shell into the finest and strongest of hand-made drums that there ever were - the world-famous Baqir drums of legend.

JEET, older, continues building, moves along a line of drum shells until he arrives at a finished shell, which he takes up and polishes... and builds a finished drum...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 While he did all of that, time passed and Jeet turned into a tall and very strong young man, who could make the drum, and play the drum, like few before him ever could.

INT. BAQIR'S SHOP - FRONT ROOM - DAY

JEET tunes a drum. One fingertip hit, a turn of a wrench, another hit.

The tone rises from dead thud to live ping. As it does so, Jeet finger-drums faster, building into a lively rhythm. Soon he's deep into it and then

KADIR (O.S.)
 Hey!

JEET
 Yes, boss?

KADIR (O.S.)
 Quiet, boy! You're meant to be tuning them, not pounding them to death.

JEET
 Yes, boss.

Jeet stops playing, keeps tuning.

Then pauses as he notices a very expensive clicking of high heels. A young woman enters. This is MAHTA, our troubled heroine.

MAHTA
 Play me a form.

Jeet looks up with surprise as she points a fine finger at him.

MAHTA (cont'd)
 Anything from the eight forms, please.

Jeet looks up - and meets steely eyes set in a perfect face.

He is, naturally, stunned.

MAHTA (cont'd)
I don't have all day. The
Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi,
Odissi, Kathakali, Sattriya,
Manipuri. And Mohiniyattam. Now,
please.

Jeet nods in understanding, and plays the first of the
rhythms, the Bharatanatyam.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Faster. Faster.

Then

MAHTA (cont'd)
Stop. Now the Kathak. Same speed.

JEET
But--

MAHTA
--Butts are on animals. Now play.

So Jeet plays. Faster and faster she moves her finger, until
he has finished all eight rhythms.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Now the Chhau, Yakshagana and--

JEET
-- and the Bhagavata Mela. Yes,
yes.

And young Jeet plays them all for her, very quickly.

MAHTA
Stop. Now play that drum over
there.

Again the finger.

Jeet plays that drum. And the next. And the next. And the
next.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Stop. Thank you. I'll take all of
them, Master Kadak. They sound fine
enough. I'll be at the Royal
Auditorium at two o'clock this
afternoon. See that they're
delivered promptly, please.

JREET

But Miss--

MAHTA

--No butts, I told you--

JREET

--These drums aren't for sale,
Miss. They're custom made, for--

MAHTA

--For people to buy. People like
you make these drums for people
like me to buy. And I would like to
buy these drums, please. Now.

Just then, Kadak, woken from his afternoon nap, comes into the shop and spies the young woman, and also the other very tall and pretty young woman standing behind her, as well as the very expensive limousine parked outside the shop, that Jeet has so far not even noticed at all.

KADAK

Of course, M'em-Sahib. The drums
are yours. There's just the small
matter of a rush surcharge, And the
delivery charge--

Right then, Sunu, Kadak's girlfriend, comes into the shop. She stops when she sees the two rich visitors, and then glares at the way her boyfriend Kadak is looking at them. Or at the Mercedes outside. Either way, she doesn't like it, and she

SUNU

(hisses)

as she goes back inside.

The rich young woman turns to her very tall and well-dressed assistant.

MAHTA

Please pay them, Diya.

And she clicks her way out of the tiny shop.

DIYA

Sure thing.

Diya opens her huge purse and takes out a large wad of cash.

Kadak takes it all and disappears back into his rooms.

Jeet looks at the very tall assistant.

DIYA (cont'd)
Two o'clock, the Royal Auditorium.

And then Diya, too, is gone.

Standing alone, Jeet can only nod yes.

INT. BAQIR'S FACTORY - DAY

JEET packs THE DRUMS INTO their special cloth bags and ties them to the back of his bicycle. They make a very tall package that is quite wobbly.

EXT. BAQIR'S ALLEY OUTSIDE SHOP - DAY

JEET locks up shop, then carefully pushes his bike down a very narrow alleyway.

EXT. BAQIR'S MANSION AND GARDEN - DAY

JEET and bike head down a path that leads through the peaceful garden and the mansion of the Mad Master...

EXT. HAUNTED HOUSE - DAY

Jeet passes an old, broken-down building, long abandoned.

The building is dark, the darkest building in this small compound.

EXT. CASTLE BAQIR INSIDE WALLS (VFX) - DAY

And we're in the middle of the city, surrounded by shops and buildings, but with no windows opened inward.

All the buildings around the Baqir compound face outwards, as if turning their backs to the place where the Mad Master lives.

EXT. ALLEY OUTSIDE CASTLE BAQIR (VFX) - DAY

Jeet pushes his bike through the old metal gate and into the narrow alleys -- and through them into the busy streets of the city.

CAMERA RISES to REVEAL (VFX)

From that modern, bustling, never sleeping, place, nobody can see the Mad Master's compound from outside.

And nobody can hear the mad drummer's tormented rhythms that comes from within its hidden walls.

It is as if it never existed at all.

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

JEET pedals on his bike - there seems a louder than usual commotion around him.

ANGLE as we see why: his drums are piled very high - and very wobbly. With every stroke of his bike pedals, Jeet sends the pile tipping one way, then the other.

Judging from the way the CROWD around him reacts, the people seem to think a catastrophe is both imminent and unavoidable.

Fortunately, it is neither, and JEET pedals quickly on his way.

EXT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Jeet stands in front of this splendid place, in his worn-out *chappal* sandals and torn shorts, with his old bicycle and his too-tall pile of drums, just staring up at it.

He couldn't believe his eyes, as they looks up... and up... and up.

Then a shadow falls over his face.

Jeet looks down into the scowl of a very large doorman, who looks Jeet up and down -- and then points at a side entrance, all without a word.

Jeet knows just what to do.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - DAY

Jeet carefully carries his master's drums to the huge stage that is set in front of many, many rows of seats.

On one side of the stage sit several members of a classical Indian orchestra. Absent from the players, who are settling themselves to play, is a space for the drummer, and for his drums.

Jeet looks around and soon spots the rich young woman and her very tall helper friend.

The young woman says nothing to him, just smiled, lifts one fine finger and points at the empty space on the stage.

Jeet sets his drums down, and takes them out of their special covers.

Under the stage light, they gleam the very finest of gleams.

<p>ACCORDION PLAYER (whispers) Look!</p>	<p>PERCUSSION PLAYER (whispers) Look! Mad Master Drums!</p>
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Jeet blushes, suddenly very small, as he positions the drums in a circle around him, and taps them quietly as a mouse, to make sure they are all still in tune.

Then he sees his master's son approach, and stands up to let Kadak take his place.

MAHTA
(still looks at Jeet)
Master Kadak?

KADAK
(handsomely)
Yes?

MAHTA
(at Kadak)
You're Master Kadak?

KADAK
Of course, my dear. Who else could
I be?

Out in the darkness of the audience seats comes

SUNU (O.S.)
(hisses)

Clearly, Kadak's girlfriend Sunu is displeased.

And Diya, the tall helper woman, laughs at her. She just can't help herself.

MAHTA
All right, everybody. My name is
Mahta Patel, and I comes here from
Mumbai to dance with our nation's
finest. Let's start with a Kathak.

Kadak flashes a set of perfect teeth at young Mahta.

KADAK

No problem. That's my beat.

With that, Kadak starts to play, paying no attention to the fact that the rest of the orchestra is clearly not ready.

He is flashy.

Very quick.

Kadak's drumming perfectly reflects the teachings of his father, the Master.

But, as he finishes showing off and settled down into the rhythm of the Kathak dance so that the rest of the orchestra can finally join in, Mahta looks at her helper Diya and sighs.

For Kadak's playing is all surface, no substance.

For he plays with no soul, none at all.

Diya looks at her childhood friend.

DIYA

I do feel your pain, but --

MAHTA

-- I know, I know. No pain, no gain.

And with that, Mahta takes the stage.

And with her first dance moves, Jeet is struck down.

Completely.

Not that it is unusual, for Mahta is very pretty to look at, and besides, there is that fine finger of hers.

That finger is now making shapes and movements that he has only dreamed about until now.

Jeet sees what everybody else sees. Another living legend, in the making.

For Mahta Patel, from Mumbai, is the rarest of the rare. A true dancer, born and bred, on the stage since her infancy. Spirited, powerful, nimble, graceful.

Dangerous.

A soul, bared of everything but movement.

Of dance in its purest form..

Mahta stops, and Jeet just has to clap, loudly. With joy in his heart.

And then Jeet just has to stop, because there is only him clapping, nobody else.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Again, But faster.

KADAK
But M'em-Sahib, the Kathak beat is clearly plays at this --

MAHTA
Faster!

Kadak plays again, faster.

Mahta dances, faster.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Faster!

KADAK
No, M'em-Sahib. The Kathak beat doesn't go this fast --"

And she is on him like a tiger on her prey. A cymbal crashes as she throws it across the stage, narrowly missing a stage worker skips out of its way.

She looks at Kadak, very closely.

MAHTA
Faster.

He looks back at her snarling face. Then nods meekly.

She backs up to the center of the stage.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Follow me!

And she dances faster.

And Kadak plays faster. And the orchestra plays faster.

And faster.

And faster still..

And one by one, the orchestra members give up. They just can not, or do not want to, play that quickly.

ACCORDION PLAYER
This isn't right.

PERCUSSION PLAYER
This isn't the Kathak, not at all!

They do not have to whisper any more, because Kadak is playing like a madman, trying to keep up with that dancer, that talented, beautiful, gifted, and completely wild dancer who is in her element, on that stage.

Finally, Kadak has enough.

He stops playing, stands up, holds out his arm for Sunu to come along, and leaves the stage, where he makes sure that Diya pays him handsomely for his time.

ANGLE

Jeet doesn't notice any of this because Mahta is still dancing.

She dances like a woman possessed.

Suddenly, Jeet reacts as

FLASH:

INT. BAQIR SHOP - DAY

BAQIR plays his drums as JEET watches.

The drum rhythm is the exact same one that...

RESUME:

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - DAY

Mahta is dancing to. She dances like his mad master plays his drums.

Then Mahta stops.

She stretches herself, and instantly becomes the rich young woman from that morning in the drum shop.

Jeet reacts, then looks around.

The orchestra has all left, has even left their instruments lying there on the suddenly empty stage.

Mahta sighs, and Jeet notices that she is not even breathing hard, not even breaking so much as a tiny sweat.

Mahta looks at Jeet, then cocks her head at the drums, sitting alone on the stage.

Jeet backs away, put his hands up, no, no thanks...

And Diya laughs out loud again.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Mahta and Diya busy themselves at a makeup mirror.

MAHTA

Must be getting soft. All those
guys around and nobody even ogled
any more.

Mahta checks carefully for wrinkles. Diya does the same, from a slightly higher altitude.

DIYA

It's old age. It'll get to us all,
in the end.

MAHTA

(portentous)
'Golden Lads and Lasses Must...'

MAHTA AND DIYA

"As Chimney Sweepers, Come to
Dust!"

and they laugh at the old saying like the best friends they are.

MAHTA

No, but seriously. That tabla boy--

DIYA

Ha! I knew it! But isn't he a
little...

MAHTA

What? A little what?

DIYA

Too gorgeous for you?

Mahta is a grown-up, but that is too much even for her. She wrestles her childhood friend to the ground.

With tickles.

INT. KITCHEN - BAQIR MANSION - NIGHT

Raina takes a tray of supper up from the kitchen staff to the Master's rooms, opened the door and goes inside.

INT. BAQIR'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Baqir is there, his drums playing always, sometimes very quietly, other times not so much.

He doesn't seem to notice her watch him as he plays.

Eventually, she sighs, gently sets the tray down, and turns to go.

But then, in the middle of his playing, the Mad Master looks at her, makes two gentle taps - 'Thank You! - and then continues with his work.

Raina smiles to herself and leaves.

EXT. COURTYARD - BAQIR MANSION - NIGHT

The shadows from the moon to move as a light breeze sweeps the night fog aside for a moment.

Then it is gone, and the fog and the stillness return.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - NIGHT

But there, inside the private compound, comes the banging of a drum.

Mad Master Baqir is at it again.

EXT. VARIOUS WINDOWS FACING BAQIR MANSION - NIGHT

All around the compound, people's windows closed and their storm shutters locked against the din.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - NIGHT

Suddenly, a single shadow moves, dances to the crazy rhythm, just for a moment.

And then, for a split second, it is as if the shadow has somehow come to life, and we see the inside of the abandoned room not as the wreck it now is, but as an elegant private salon, with dance, movement, joy...

Then the Mad Master's drumbeat ceases, and the moment is gone.

INT. PENTHOUSE SUITE - HOTEL - NIGHT

In a penthouse suite, high above the city, Mahta's eyes jolt open.

She shakes her head no, turns over, tries to sleep. Pulls a pillow over her head.

Nothing for a moment. Then her pillow goes flying as she bounces out of bed.

INT. BAQIR'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Mad master BAQIR, alone in his rooms and sleepless as always, tries a drum beat. No, not quite right.

He squints a little as he strikes that beat off his NOTEBOOK with an elegant pen.

He tries another beat.

No, that isn't it either, and so he tries again, and again.

He bangs on his drums in a frenzy of frustration.

The tray of food that Raina has brought in earlier sits nearby, untouched.

INT. RAINA'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

RAINA lights a prayer candle, kneels for a while, and then goes to bed.

On a wide bedside table are many framed photographs of Master Baqir - young, and so very handsome.

Many of the photos are of him with an equally young and beautiful Zaheera.

And behind some of them stand a heart-stoppingly beautiful young woman.

Raina, when she is young.

As Raina lays her old bones down on the bed, her head moves so she that sees...

On all the photos that were oh, so carefully arranged that she sees...

Nobody else, but him.

We can see by the way she looks at them how she really feels about Baqir.

Always loved him.

Always will.

She is almost asleep when the Master's drumming starts once more.

For a moment, her arm reaches out and up... and makes the most magnificent, the most beautiful, the most heart-breaking of dance movements.

Exquisite.

But then that same arm, that same hand, reaches over to a huge box of earplugs, inserts a pair, and curls under her pillow as she goes to sleep.

INT. JEET'S SLEEPING SPACE - BAQIR SHOP - NIGHT

We listen to Baqir's drumming as we TRAVEL along the work benches to the last one. There's the glow of a flashlight and a very soft drumming sound coming from...

Underneath the work bench, where Jeet lies on a cot, listening and working on copying his master's rhythms until he has them exactly.

Then he settles down to sleep as the drumming continues.

FADE OUT.

EXT. COURTYARD - BAQIR MANSION - DAY

Dawn lights up the ground fog in the Baqir compound's garden.

It should be quiet. But Baqir's drums continue.

And finally cease.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - DAY

JEET drums, briskly but steadily.

He is the only player on the huge stage.

All the other FIFTY or so DANCERS on stage move to his beat.

As she dances by those other dancers, one by one, MAHTA nods at DIYA, who leads one dancer after another off stage, with a "thank you" and some money.

Until there are only six left.

Mahta stands up, flexes.

MAHTA

Okay. Now relax, and watch this.

The six dancers stand around and watch, expressions and poses confident.

MAHTA (cont'd)

(at Jeet)

Eight forms.

She claps out a beat that is fast.

But Jeet is ready this time, and he starts drumming smoothly.

Mahta starts dancing, looks at the other dancers.

MAHTA (cont'd)

Join in, if you can.

They join in.

Jeet drums and marvels at the performance. Then

MAHTA (cont'd)

Faster, please. Follow me.

It isn't long before Mahta is the last one left on stage.

The other dancers are left on the sidelines, panting, dizzy, out of breath, wondering what happened.

Mahta stops.

So does Jeet.

She walks around the other dancers.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Now just watch.

Mahta simply walked up to Jeet, and put her hands on his shoulders. Looks him in the eye.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Please.

And Jeet plays for her. For just the two of them.

He plays all eight forms of the dance, then two more, and then three more he doesn't even know the names of, she just claps the rhythms and he follows.

It is magic.

Yet all too soon, it is over.

Mahta, finally and reluctantly, stops dancing.

She is glowing and out of breath. She whoops with joy.

She looks over at Jeet, who sits, suddenly very tired, at the drums. Her grin grows even wider. Then it's gone as

MAHTA (cont'd)
Enough for today. You'll do.

Mahta leaves the stage without another word.

Diya starts after her, but turns to Jeet first.

DIYA
We start here at seven a.m. sharp.

And she leaves.

ANGLE

Jeet sits on stage and watches the last of the dancers leave.

He looks at the empty stage.

MAHTA (O.S.)
So. Do you like it?

He turns around and finds Mahta as she sits on the floor cushions next to him.

She has taken off all her makeup and fancy clothes, and looks to him just like one of the other dancers, dressed in an old leotard and torn leggings.

Jeet is speechless.

MAHTA
Do you like drumming?

JEET
Yes, of course.

MAHTA
Why?

Jeet has no immediate answer.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Why are you here? Be honest.

JEET
I am here... because you asked.

MAHTA
And why is that? Because I'm
pretty? Do you think I'm pretty?

JEET
Yes, of course.

MAHTA
But in fifty years I'll be ugly and
you'll still be able to drum. What
then?

JEET
Then I'll still think you're
pretty.

MAHTA
But I'm very bossy. And I'm angry
most of the time. And I'm bitchy
when I can't sleep.

JEET
No. You're not angry.

MAHTA
No?

JEET
You're driven. You want to do
better. The temper you show to
others is to make sure they take
you seriously.

MAHTA
But I'm pretty?

JEET

Very.

MAHTA

But I'll be an old hag with a walking stick and a face full of wrinkles.

JEET

So will I.

Mahta considers that for a moment. Then:

MAHTA

Okay, prove it to me. I give you three chances to show me your true feelings for me. But be warned. With those three chances, come three challenges.

JEET

Challenges?

MAHTA

Sure. I will ask you to do something special for me. If you do it well, you will have a chance to show me your true feelings, and I will not run away. Then I will give you another challenge. And then a third. How does that sound?

JEET

I think that sounds difficult.

MAHTA

So you think that loving a person should be easy?

JEET

No, no, I know it's hard.

MAHTA

We'll see. Do you accept, tabla boy?

Jeet looks at her to see if she is joking.

But he can see, in her eyes, that she is not.

JEET

I accept.

Mahta springs up.

MAHTA

Good! Now listen to my story.

Mahta dances around the stage as she tells her story.

Not Indian dance this time, but a mixture of many kinds of dance: some ballet, then some jazz, then Noh drama, then New Zealand tribal dance, all fluidly and easily as:

MAHTA (cont'd)

I grew up in a show-business family in Mumbai. My brothers are both actors. My Dad is a piano player, my Mom is a dancer. We all worked very hard. It is very strict.

JEET

Is that why you don't often smile?

MAHTA

I've been taking dancing lessons since I is four. And that's serious dancing lessons, not kid's stuff. And that's every day, since I is four.

She strikes a pose.

MAHTA (cont'd)

In three weeks' time, I'm going to be dancing in my first Bollywood movie as a lead actress. I've already been in the back line many times before, but this is my very first, in the front line.

Another pose.

MAHTA (cont'd)

Sir, I have a problem. I need to show them I'm special. Better than the rest. Which is why I have come to Delhi when all the other girls have gone to London, or Paris, or New York. They are looking to the West for inspiration to make their dancing special.

One more pose...

MAHTA (cont'd)

But I've been there already. My parents takes us whenever they were working. I know that if the other dancers go West, I have to go East. And that is why I'm here.

Last pose, very close to him...

MAHTA (cont'd)

So here's my first challenge, tabla boy.

Face to face now as..

MAHTA (cont'd)

Give me a beat I can really dance to.

Jeet goes from entranced to concerned.

JEET

But.. you've been dancing all day, Miss.

Mahta shushes him.

MAHTA

Look, you can call me Miss when we're working in public, but when we're here, in private, I'm Mahta to you. And you are?

JEET

Priyajeet Malhotra. People just call me Jeet.

MAHTA

Good, Jeet. Give me something like a classical Indian beat - but different. You can see that just playing things faster is only the beginning?

JEET

Yes.

MAHTA

No copying other rhythms. It has to be completely original. From your own soul, to your own hands. Something I haven't heard before. Do you understand?

JEET
I understand.

MAHTA
Then go. You have one week. Impress
me.

MUSIC UP.

INT. BAQIR FACTORY - DAY

Jeet makes a drum. From scratch, from another bunch of
alumiuium scrap metal...

INT. JEET'S SLEEPING SPACE - BAQIR SHOP - NIGHT

Jeet plays more.

INT. BAQIR FACTORY - DAY

A new tabla shell. Holes are drilled...

JEET finishes drilling.

He looks around at KADAK, who is also building a drum.

Badly.

Kadak looks at it, realizes he's made a build mistake, loses
patience and leaves it.

Jeet drills on,

Jeet takes Kadak's broken drum, fixes it, sets it back.

Then starts back on his own drums.

In the background, RAINA has witnessed this entire scene.

INT. BAQIR FACTORY - NIGHT

JEET lies asleep on the factory table next to a completed
drum. His fingers beat to a rhythm he's dreaming.

RAINA covers him with a sheet.

Jeet's fingers keep on drumming.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

INT. MAHTA'S PENTHOUSE SUITE - NIGHT

MAHTA stands looking out at the city below -- and reacts as

PRODUCER (V.O.)
 (on speakerphone)
 So when will it be ready? How many
 dancers? And when are you coming
 back to Mumbai?

Diya comes into view as she replies...

DIYA
 (on phone)
 ...soon, soon, it's going very
 well. Yes, boss. Of course, boss.
 Sixteen will do, eight boys and
 eight girls. And a full orchestra.
 But the young Master will be
 playing. Yes, he's phenomenal.
 Absolutely, yes. A big hit, of
 course, boss.

INT. BAQIR'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

FOR MAD MASTER BAQIR TOO, sleep is for the birds. Only. For him, more drumming as his never-ending search for that elusive, eternal rhythm takes him by the neck and shakes him, hard.

MONTAGE CONTINUES:

INT. BAQIR SHOP - DAY

AS JEET BUILT AND SOLD HIS DRUMS by day, his pal Aluminium Al would bring him lots of different drum music from all over the world to play on the huge ghetto-blaster music box in the shop.

Customers would be astonished, and some even offended, that such music is playing out of a supposedly top traditional musical instrument shop.

But Jeet doesn't mind. If anyone objected, he'd just turn the jazz or Russian or African music down low, and then back up again after the customers has left.

EXT. BAQIR COMPOUND - NIGHT

THE NIGHTS WERE ESPECIALLY TRYING for Raina and the neighbors, who were now being assaulted in both ears,

on the one side by the Mad Master and the other by his apprentice, whom they thought is also, slowly but surely, going mad.

FOR THE MAD MASTER HIMSELF is listening to the new beats coming out of his apprentice's shop.

Listening, learning, experimenting...

AND OF COURSE that meant that young Jeet, listening to his master's rhythms, built what he heard into his own inventions.

Not even the birds has any sleep, after that.

MONTAGE ENDS.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE

She stops, right in the middle of a dance, walks right next to him and plops herself down.

MAHTA
Play it again.

He does so, then stops once more when she holds up her fine finger and sighs.

MAHTA (cont'd)
It's the drum.

JEET
What?

He plays as they talk.

MAHTA
No, it's not your playing. That is...
what it is. It's the drum.

JEET
I don't understand.

MAHTA
No, this is a good drum. A fine
drum, even. But this is not our
drum.

Jeet just looks at her.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Build me a drum, Priyajeet
Malhotra.

(MORE)

MAHTA (cont'd)
 I need a sound I can drown in.
 Build it for me and you will earn
 my respect.

INT. ALUMINIUM AL'S WAREHOUSE - DAY

Jeet sits on a pile of pans with Aluminium Al.

JEEET
 But I can't. I've been building the
 Master's drums all my life. I
 haven't even heard of the kind of
 drum she's talking about before. I
 haven't seen a drum like that
 before. How can I build a drum I
 don't know about or haven't seen
 before?

Aluminium Al puts a hand up.

AL
 Wait. Don't move a muscle. Al'll be
 back.

And with that, Aluminium Al disappears into the piles of
 metal junk behind him.

JEEET
 (to himself)
 "Al'll be back"... That's a new
 one.

And then Jeet hears clangs! And crashes! And bangs!

JEEET (cont'd)
 What on earth are you doing?

AL (O.S.)
 Just a second, it's around here
 somewhere... ah!

Then silence.

JEEET
 What 'ah'? 'Ah' what?

AL
 Ah just a second!

More silence.

Then with a raucous sound that insults everybody's ears, especially Jeet's, Aluminium Al re-emerges with a very strange instrument and some huge loudspeakers.

It looks a little like a drum.

It plays a little like a drum.

But it sounds like cattle, and geese, and chickens, all lowing and mooing and clucking and squawking at the same time.

Nothing at all like a drum.

JEET

What. Is. That. Thing?

Al proudly shows him the broken old device.

AL

Something you've never seen before.
Or heard before.

JEET

Yes. But what is it?

AL

Er.. something you have to find out
about?

Aluminium Al hands the electronic drum over to his friend.

Jeet takes it, taps a pad. A chicken crows. He presses another button at random. A whistle blows.

Then Jeet finds another button.

Drums.

JEET

Ah. Now this... can be something.

More drums. Then, finally, tabla.

But it is broken. The sounds that come out are broken.

JEET (cont'd)

Hmm. Needs a little work.

And with that, he settles down, and, still poking around the strange instrument, he starts playing it.

Al looks on. Then gets up.

AL
You're welcome.

Al leaves him to it.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - DAY

Jeet plays his new drum.

From the outside, it looks just like a pile of old electric parts, stuck to the side of a metal tabla.

Around the top of the tabla sits a circle of switches and pads.

It isn't perfect, but it is different.

Mahta listens.

MAHTA
It's not perfect. But it is different, I'll grant you that. So it's a pass.

JEET
What? I passed?

Mahta leans over and kisses him on the cheek.

MAHTA
Yes. Barely, but yes. Let's get to work. You have a long way to do yet, if you're going to win a girl's heart, let alone her soul.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - NIGHT

MAHTA
No. Not good enough,

Mahta listens with her eyes closed. As soon as Jeet plays, she puts a fine finger up.

MAHTA (cont'd)
No. Do it again.

ANGLE.

MAHTA (cont'd)
Faster!.... Faster!!!

Then..

MAHTA (cont'd)
 No. That drum of yours sounds good
 enough, but it's not fast enough.

JEET
 But..

MAHTA
 No butts! Jeet, there's only two
 weeks left. We do it right. Or we
 do it again!

ANGLE.

Jeet's fingers bleed as he plays.

Mahta's toes bleed as she dances.

LATER.

Diya waves her cell phone at them both.

DIYA
 Bad news, There's a cyclone warning
 in Mumbai, and production has
 stopped,

MAHTA
 Good,

DIYA
 Bad. They're on their way over
 here.

MAHTA
 What?

DIYA
 They're moving the rest of the
 shoot down here. And Mahta, Timmy K
 is coming down too. They'll be here
 later this week.

Mahta looks at Jeet.

MAHTA
 But he's not ready!

DIYA
 They don't care, Mahta. They don't
 care that he's not the real son of
 Master Baqir. They don't care if he
 can play like a god and the real
 son cannot keep time in a bucket.

(MORE)

DIYA (cont'd)
 They will come here to shoot the
 movie, and that's what they're
 going to do, starting next Monday
 morning.

INT. BAQIR KITCHEN - NIGHT

JEET
 Raina, I don't know what to do!

He is so tired he is trembling, and his worn-out clothes
 have tatters on their tatters.

His fingers are bandaged and he holds his food tray with his
 hands held upside down.

JEET (cont'd)
 Raina, I need to see the Master.

Raina looks at Jeet without saying a word, then takes up a
 pristine meal tray and leaves for the Master's chambers.

Jeet just eats in silence.

A few minutes later, she comes back downstairs.

RAINA
 Our Master has heard your plea, He
 has no words for you. But he asked
 me to give you this.

And she hands him a small package.

RAINA (cont'd)
 Finish your food and clean your
 hands before you touch it. It's
 very precious.

INT. JEET'S SLEEPING SPACE - BAQIR SHOP - NIGHT

Jeet settles in his cot, wipes his hands again, and very
 gently unwraps his precious package -- and reacts.

It is the personal notebook of Mad Master Baqir.

In it are many drawings, a beautiful series of sketches of
 Mrs. Baqir, the legendary dancer and mother of Kadak.

In it too is a sketch that Jeet is sure nobody has ever seen
 before - of Zaheera Baqir, very sick but still ephemerally
 beautiful, on her deathbed.

But Jeet's eyes narrow as he comes across one section of the notebook.

It is the Master's beat charts.

In a fever, Jeet reads, then writes, copying out the charts, then counts, plays with his hands on his thighs.

ANGLE:

He plays all night...

ANGLE:

and the next night...

ANGLE:

and the next.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - DAY

TIMELAPSE as

A huge FILM CREW fills the auditorium. Empty, to bursting.

ANGLE:

JEET is dressed in a costume that makes him look "presentable". The MAKEUP LADY puts rouge on his cheeks so he looks like a choir boy in a church.

MAHTA and DIYA appear and the MEMBERS OF THE PRESS suddenly take notice, especially since Mahta's on-screen boyfriend and off-screen studio escort, TOMMY K, or Tomothy Kapoot, is here too.

PRESS MEMBERS

Look! It's Tommy K! Tomothy!
Tomothy Kapoot! Look this way,
Tommy K!

Tommy obliges, and presents Mahta to them as well.

TOMMY K

Mahta here's the real star of this
show! And of my heart!

Jeet can't help but take notice, and realizes that Mahta is in fact half of a famous young Bollywood couple.

Even worse, if that's possible for Jeet, he sees that KADAK and SUNU are here too, looking like they belong in this crowd of GLITTERATI.

As everybody settles down to watch Mahta's dance, Kadak picks a seat in the very first row, right next to Diya.

ANGLE as

Jeet looks around at all the people -- and doesn't know what to do.

Lights are pointed in his direction.

Camera lenses swung his way.

Jeet plays.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
(on megaphone)
Stop! Stop! Not now, Master!

Jeet stops.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Wait until you hear the word
"Action!" And then you start!

The audience laughs. At Jeet.

He starts to sweat.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (cont'd)
Action!

Jeet can't play. He is paralyzed with fear.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (cont'd)
Action! Play the drums!

Jeet still doesn't move.

Finally, Mahta steps over to him, leans over him.

MAHTA
Ready?

JEET
No.

MAHTA
Too bad. Time's up.

And her fine finger comes up..

And Jeet plays.

Mahta stands there, listening.

MAHTA (cont'd)

Hm, this is new.... Not bad, tabla boy. I hear a bit of Mediterranean, a touch of jazz, a lot of Moroccan. Even some Zulu. Too bad a mix of styles is still a mix. It isn't truly original at all. Not truly. But it'll do, I suppose. Just hold that tempo and let's begin.

Jeet plays for her. Just for her.

Not for the cameras, the people watching, the crew around him, the sound man recording him, the director the producers, all those rich people watching.

ANGLE:

ALUMINIUM AL sneaks into the hall and watches from a catwalk high above the stage as

RESUME ON STAGE as

Jeet plays for Mahta.

And Mahta dances. For the cameras.

Not for Jeet. He can feel it.

And he feels... Empty. But he plays on anyway.

His rhythm is his own, mixed in with everything he has heard before, mixed in with the Master's beat charts, all the wonderful practice he has done before, leading to this moment.

And Mahta and the other dancers look just wonderful, as they dancing to the rhythm of Jeet's drum.

And then

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Cut! Cut!

DIRECTOR

It's wonderful. Print it and let's move on.

The members of the press are ecstatic. And the producers are very happily counting all the money they will make when the movie is finished.

And everybody is very happy. Except one person.

SUNU

But he's just a chappal boy! This is an outrage! The real son of the Master Baqir is standing right here, right next to me! That boy is an impostor!

JEET

But.. I never said..

Too late.

SUNU

Impostor! Fake! Disgrace!

Much discussion ensues.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

What shall we do, boss?

DIRECTOR

Let's pick it up again, but just the closeups of the drummer for now.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Good idea.

Jeet is escorted from the stage by the LARGE MAJORDOMO, his fine costume taken away from him.

Kadak is installed behind the drums, an identical costume fitted to him as he sits.

ANGLE as

Mahta has an aside with her director.

MAHTA

But he can't play! No way he's fast enough! Only Jeet can play this rhythm!

DIRECTOR

No problem. We'll just under-crank the insert shots and play back the footage quicker to match the kid's original drum track.

(MORE)

DIRECTOR (cont'd)
 (to crew)
 We can do that, right?

AUDIO TECH
 No problem. Piece of cake.

And, just like that, Kadak becomes a star.

And Jeet remains a chappal-boy, ignored by all, except for two people.

Sunu, hanging off Kadak's arm still, looks over at Jeet with triumph in her eyes. For she has, in her mind, righted a grave wrong, and has given justice where justice is due.

The other person who has noticed is...

Mahta, hanging on to Timmy K's arm, sees everything that happened to Jeet.

She beckons Diya over, and gestures at Jeet.

Diya leaves Kadak and Sunu and goes over to Jeet to comfort Jeet, but Jeet isn't having any of it.

JEET
 (at Diya)
 Enough. No more.

He stands, takes one last look around, then turns his back on everything and leaves.

INT. KITCHEN - BAQIR MANSION - DAY

Raina puts Jeet's meal tray down in front of him.

RAINA
 It's all over the newspapers.
 And the internet. What did you do?

JEET
 Nothing, Raina, I swear! I just played. That's all I did. I just played. Nothing more, nothing less.

RAINA
 It says here there you impersonated Kadak as the son of the Master Baqir.

Jeet stops eating and looks at her.

JEET

On my honor, I did no such thing. It is they who confused me for Kadak. I never said I was him. Why would I? There is only the one son of Master Baqir. And that is not me.

RAINA

Thank goodness, I say. Anyway, what shall we do now?

JEET

I don't understand. We'll just continue to do what we always have done, right?

RAINA

(waves newspaper)

But it says here that Kadak has left for Mumbai with the film crew. They want him to move there.

JEET

Yes, so?

RAINA

The Master has a list of drums to deliver. I gave the list to Kadak, and he refused. He said he has better things to do now.

Raina sighs, her chest heavy with the pain of betrayal.

RAINA (cont'd)

What are we going to do?

Jeet gobbles down his meal and stands up.

JEET

It'll be all right. I'll ask Alpesh to fill in for me.

RAINA

Your friend Al? The street boy? How will that help?

JEET

It won't help me. It will help you. While I'm gone.

RAINA

And where will you be going?

JEET

To deliver the Master's drums.

RAINA

But it's far away. Too far for you to go alone.

JEET

You'll write me directions. I'll manage somehow.

RAINA

But it will take a long time.

JEET

So what? I have nothing much to do now.

RAINA

But... but I'll miss you. I need you here. If you leave, I'll be all alone here, besides the Master. Who never speaks to me these days.

JEET

That's what Alpesh is for. He's funny. You'll have a great time, you'll see.

He puts on his chappals.

EXT. BAQIR SHOP & STREET OUTSIDE - DAY

Through the front window, a PILE OF DRUMS is tall. There are eight of them, all in the Master's most special and expensive of cases.

JEET carefully carries each one to the waiting TUK-TUK (converted scooter taxi) outside the shop, and sets it inside the little vehicle.

ANGLE as

RAINA checks through a CLOTH BAG with a new set of clothes, his money, his crisp new travel documents, and a brand new pair of chappals.

She closes the bag, hands it to Jeet and tidies him up as he takes it from her.

AL props up a nearby doorway.

JEET
 (at Raina)
 I'll be going now.
 (at Al)
 Take care, Al. Make her laugh.

Jeet squeezes himself into the tuk-tuk, which goes tuk-tuk-tuk-tuk-tuk-tuk as we CRANE UP to see the little taxi disappear into the throng as it carries him away on the biggest, and longest, delivery trip of his life.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW DELHI - DAY

SHOTS of JEET in his TUKTUK, seen from high up, as he drives to the MAIN TRAIN STATION..

BAQIR (V.O.)
 Now India is a pretty huge country.
 It is then, and continues to be to
 this very day, the seventh largest
 in the world.=

CROWDS of TRAVELERS - JEET'S DRUMS and figure look tiny as he pushes through...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 India is, and still is, second only
 to China in the number of people
 living there: nearly one person in
 every five.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - DAY

JEET checks the compartment number, brings his drums in, sits down.

BAQIR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 That is, and is, a lot of people,
 in a pretty huge country.
 But it is not, and never has been
 the only country in the world. No.
 Not even on that day.

EXT/INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

As the train pulls away, Jeet looks out and realizes that he has seen nothing of the world outside his homeland.

And knows nothing at all about traveling to... where is he traveling to?

He puts his drums safely on the plush seats of the first-class train cabin he has been escorted to, sits down on the floor rug, makes himself comfortable, and looks at the papers that Raina has given him.

JEET

(reads)

"Master Tabla-Maker Dinshaw
Balsara, Peshawar".
Where on earth is Peshawar?

EXT. ZERO POINT TRAIN STATION - AT BORDER - NIGHT

The train pulls up and stops. It's bleak and beautiful.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

A SOLDIER knocks at Jeet's door. It slides open.

SOLDIER

Papers please.

Jeet hands over his papers - all of them.

The soldier sorts through them, looks at the travel papers. Then at Jeet's crisp clothes and new chappals.

SOLDIER (cont'd)

Are you here on business? Or
pleasure?

Jeet gestures at the drums.

JEET

I'm running an errand for my
master, delivering these to drum
Master Balsara in Pesh.. Peshawar.

The soldier looks at the drums, notices the Baqir labels on them.

SOLDIER

Ah, very good. Welcome to Pakistan,
Master Jeet. We think highly of
your master's drums here.

And Jeet has to nod, and marvel that his master's reputation has preceded him even to another country.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

JEET moves the drums onto another train. This time he has PORTERS do the work.

INT. NEW TRAIN - NIGHT

This train is much more modern. It looks faster. The windows are sealed shut. And JEET has a first-class cabin, all to himself.

He puts the drums on the seat, settles on the floor again, but starts as the door slides open and a CONDUCTOR enters.

CONDUCTOR.

Drums on the floor and bums on the seats please, sir. Would you like some help?

Jeet stands, and the conductor helps him move the drums onto the floor, then shows him the fold-down bed.

CONDUCTOR. (cont'd)

I think you'll sleep better like this.

Jeet marvels again, and quickly agrees.

He almost leaps onto the bed, and is asleep before the train departs.

EXT. PESHAWAR ESTABLISHING - DAY

Beautiful shot of the Pakistani city as

JEET

(bows low)

Greetings and compliments from my Master Baqir.

INT. BALSARA DRUM SHOP - DAY

Jeet presents the appropriate tabla to the Pakistani MASTER DINSHAW BALSARA as instructed.

JEET

He sends this small token of his regard for you, and begs that you share some small nugget of information with the bearer, his simple apprentice.

BALSARA takes the tabla from Jeet, and answers him - in Urdu,

BALSARA
 (in Urdu)
 Not so simple, I think. But come,
 let's speak a language we both
 understand!

Jeet can't really understand Balsara's words, but as soon as the Pakistani master plays, he understands all he needs to.

Jeet is suddenly fascinated by the master's rhythm - it is so very close to his own Indian blend, but it is different.

With permission, Jeet takes up a Pakistani drum and tries it.

Wow! This drum sure sounds different!

It looks the same... or almost the same, but when it comes to playing it...

MONTAGE as

Jeet and Master Balsara play together, trading new rhythms, take tea together, then play again, each experimenting with the other's ideas.

MUSIC CONTINUES as

EXT. BALSARA DRUM SHOP - NIGHT

JEET finally takes his leave and another TUK-TUK to the train station.

BAQIR (V.O.)
 At the end of the day, when Jeet
 finally took his leave, he wondered
 what the real purpose of this
 mysterious delivery errand could
 be...

He has most of his original drums with him, but one new one - a return gift from Master Balsara.

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

JEET enters, parks his drums, and plays to himself, quietly, but remembering and then noting down Balsara's rhythms.

BAQIR (V.O.)

Might it be that the exchange of ideas with other masters meant that the overall art of the drum could be evolved? Brought into a new age by the other masters, perhaps even my Jeet himself, for all new drummers to come?

JEET looks at Master Balsara's drum, compares its design to the Baqir drums...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

And if so, had the Mad Master really intended his son Kadak to be the true emissary for this vital task? Or had it been for Jeet to do, all along?

Jeet stops playing and prepares for sleep.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

And if that were true, perhaps the Mad Master might not be quite as mad as he pretended to be.

INT. HOTEL ROOM OVERLOOKING BOSPHORUS - ISTANBUL - DAY

JEET looks out over the banks of the Bosphorus River and marvels at the fabulous minarets and temples and buildings of the Turkish city of Istanbul.

His eyes pass over his drum collection, strangely not diminished from before - six drums still sat in their cases on the wide sofa, as before, only one of them is different from the others.

He checks to see he is taking the correct drum - this one meant for Master Ali Osman Durak - and leaves the rest of the drums secure.

INT. DURAK DRUM SHOP - DAY

MASTER ALI OSMAN DURAK reminds JEET of himself, only older, stronger and much wiser.

Jeet's eyes grow wide again when, after presenting the Turkish master with his gift, he again receives another drum in return, and this one is also a masterpiece in itself.

But then Master Durak beckons him into the back of his shop, and there, Jeet sees a metal forge and turnery much like the one in his own shop, but again, very different.

INT. DURAK DRUM FACTORY - DAY

Fascinated, Jeet examines every part of the Turkish Master's forge and lathe. Master Durak gestures for Jeet to try it.

And Jeet just can not resist.

The two of them work side by side, each not speaking the other's language in the least bit, but finding that they understand each other perfectly well anyway.

And when Jeet's new Turkish-Indian drum is completed, he polishes and polishes and polishes it until, laughing, the Master Durak takes it away from him with a hand motion that says "that's enough!", and applies the skin and tries it out.

Wow. Another new sound.

The Master is very impressed. He makes to give Jeet the new drum.

But, with ceremony, Jeet gives it right back to him instead.

EXT. ESTABLISH CAIRO, EGYPT - DAY

CAIRO, IN EGYPT, is yet another marvel for JEET to behold.

Ancient and majestic as it is, Jeet starts to see the similarities in these grand old cities, not just their differences.

MONTAGE as

Another thing is changing in him. He is becoming more used to travel.

New places and people no longer scare him quite so much.

He doesn't need the notes he is supplied with, quite so much.

Not speaking the local language doesn't bother him as much, since he's found that a hand gesture or two, a smile and a quick point at a map will in most cases do just as well.

He finds that people, in general, listen more to the way he speaks, rather than to the actual words that leave his lips.

They listen to him saying something, their heads cock in concentration, they frown a little, and then, more often than not, they brighten up suddenly, and then say something back to him, he has no idea what, and with a hand gesture, and an answering smile, they have him on his way, with a good day and a good luck.

INT. EL-FAN DRUM SHOP - DAY

In that way, JEET reaches the shop and factory of Master GAWARET EL FAN, where he duly presents his master's gift and is gifted one in exchange.

Jeet is very surprised to recognize not one, but four of his own Master Baqir's drums, sitting in Master El Fan's shop, in a place of honor.

He asks for, and receives permission to tap his own master's drums, and compares the sounds of the old originals to his own creations in his master's name.

The same, yet different.

He frowns, which makes Master El Fan notice him even more.

The master passes him another drum, which Jeet taps, and then plays...

And once more is lost in the rhythm and the sound, playing with complete strangers, yet in absolute harmony with them.

EXT. CAIRO - RIVER NILE - DAY

JEET stands in a sailboat as it sails down the River Nile..

SUPER MAP as

BAQIR (V.O.)

The next part of young master Jeet's journey was a long one, and it was by boat, from Cairo down the River Nile to Alexandria and then to the Mediterranean Sea...

EXT. MEDITERRANEAN SEA - SMALL MERCHANT SHIP - DAY

JEET rides the ocean as the MAP continues plotting his journey...

BAQIR (V.O.)

Then a larger ship past the island of Crete and then the cities of Malta, Tunis, and Algiers, before landing in Tangier in the country of Morocco.

EXT. SHIP - DAY

JEET plays with OTHER MUSICIANS, and the CREW enjoy as..

BAQIR (V.O.)

The voyage took several days, but Jeet was again surprised that his drumming was not only well received, but that there were many other musicians on board the ship, and they all liked playing together rather than alone.

EXT. TANGIER - SHIP AT DOCK - NIGHT

JEET disembarks, waves goodbye to the others.

EXT. TANGIER TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

BAQIR (V.O.)

At Tangier, Jeet transferred to the overnight train down to his next destination, which is Marrakesh.

EXT. ESTABLISH MARRAKESH - DAY

BAQIR (V.O.)

There, in another area of the old town that was as familiar as it was strange, Jeet met with Master Imad Eddine Dably, grandson of the Master Dably who was a friend of Master Baqir.

INT. DABLY DRUM SHOP - DAY

JEET and DABLY exchange drums, beats...

BAQIR (V.O.)

The exchange of drums was similar, but Master Dably's drums were wooden. Not a piece of metal anywhere to be found.

Jeet knew that he is nearing the end of his journey, not only because there is only one drum left to deliver, but because the drums he is receiving in exchange were older and older in their design, until if they got any older, Jeet felt that he might as well be drumming on the side of a tree log, like a cave man might have, many hundreds of thousands of years ago.

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - CAMEL TRAIN - DAY

JEET TRAVELED ACROSS THE DESERT to his final destination.

BAQIR (V.O.)

After many moons of travel, and playing drums by moonlight with many different players in front of many different camp fires, Jeet came to learn that when this desert land was green, there were people living everywhere, and there were many old drum designs, shapes and forms, now mostly lost to the sands of the desert and to time.

SIGHTS and SOUNDS of the desert continue as

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

But Jeet was not sad, because he realized that that is the way of things, that old things pass and give way to new, and that new, in turn, becomes old and eventually makes way for newer.

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - OASIS CAMP - NIGHT

JEET takes out his own drum and works on it.

BAQIR (V.O.)

That night, he took out his sixth drum from its cover, his own drum, not old, not new, but old and new together. He has taken it apart, many times, and has rebuilt it again, many times, but now he did so with all the knowledge and wisdom passed on to him by all the masters he has met.

JEET tunes it and taps it lightly. In the desert air, it sounds different, bolder.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)

And as he built his drum again, he sees that it has started as Master Baqir's drum, and can not be known as simply Jeet's drum, but can only be called Master Priyajeet Malhotra's drum. A creation all his own.

EXT. EDGE OF DESERT - UGANDA BORDER - DAY

JEET in a JEEP, moves on.

BAQIR (V.O.)

At last, the sands of the deserts gave way to lush green rain-forest, and, a few days after that, Jeet reached his final destination - the Royal Village of Drums, called Mpambire, in the country of Uganda.

EXT. MPAMBIRE VILLAGE OF DRUMS - UGANDA - DAY

JEET presents his master's final drum to the DRUM MASTERS of the Village.

BAQIR (V.O.)

This place was so old and had made so many drums that almost everybody here was a Master drum maker, or at least a very excellent drum player.

A Master beckons, and Jeet plays...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 And even if they didn't all know of
 Master Baqir's drums, everybody
 there knew the real thing when they
 heard it played.

The villagers all gather around they heard the Baqir drum,
 such is the magnificence of the Mad Master's sound.

They gathered around, listening to Jeet play.

He plays the style of his childhood, and they clap along.

Then he plays in the style of Master Balsara of Pakistan.

Then Masters Durak of Turkey, El Fan of Egypt, Dalby of
 Morocco, and then all the different styles he has learned on
 his long journey across the deserts of Africa to arrive here
 at Mpambire.

To them= villagers, it is like listening to a story about a
 man, come home at last, and the story of how he plays his
 drum along the way.

And when he reaches the beginning of man, the rhythm at all
 men and women feel, deep in their bones and in their souls,
 the people stop clapping and move.

They dance.

To them, dance is the most natural thing on the world.

To Jeet, dance is the most painful thing in the world.

Because it reminds him of the one thing he cannot have.

Did not have.

Will not ever have.

At the end of their dance, there is a deep collective sigh.

Jeet pauses, silent at last.

Then the Master Drum Master puts a hand on Jeet's shoulder.

And with his other hand, he points north, and far away.

MASTER DRUM MASTER
 You must go now. To where it all
 began. The very first beat.
 Mankind's very first rhythm. You
 must go to where we all began. To
 Lake Tanganyika.

Jeet looks deeply into the master's eyes and nods.

There are no more drums to give.

But his journey is not yet done.

EXT. SIDE OF LAKE TANGANYIKA - DAY

Dawn breaks of the mist of the lake. JEET steps INTO VIEW, taking it all in.

This is no ordinary lake. It is the lake where very first human beings lived. The very oldest.

And so, this is the place of the very oldest drums. Ever.

Lake Tanganyika.

Jeet looks out on the still waters, at the rain forest all around.

He settles down, listens to the sounds of the forest. To all the little animals, and birds, and big animals, and birds.

To the sounds of the leaves. To the sounds of the water, lapping at the pebbles of the shore. All the rhythms of nature.

He takes everything in.

Everything.

And then...

He starts to play. Just with his hands, on his thighs.

He plays for the summer in his city. For his poor hovel in the drum shop of his Mad Master.

He plays for his best friend, sitting on his metal trash heap.

For the girl he loved and can never have.

For all the masters who has given him so very much, in such a short time. For all the drummers and dancers he has meets along the way. For the life he is blessed to have.

And for the rhythm he is blessed to share, to bring back to the very place that all rhythms has started from.

In short,

He plays

Like a Master.

MAHTA (O.S.)

Very nice.

And a fine finger.

MAHTA

Very romantic. Took you awhile, but
I can see you did well.

Jeet opens his eyes and takes all of her beauty in.

She too has aged, a little, but she has matured, has come
into her own power.

JEET

How did you find me?

MAHTA

Priyajeet Malhotra, where else
would you go? Where else would I
go? And where else would we have
ended up, besides right here?

Mahta Patel snorts out a laugh.

MAHTA (cont'd)

I have been waiting here for ages,
for you. The Bollywood movie was
news, for a while. Our dance was
fabulous. Kadak became a movie
star, and then I got tired of the
whole thing and wanted to dance
again, but even better than before.
Have you figured yourself out yet?

Jeet, again, found himself quite without words.

She comes right up to him and looks him right in the eye.

MAHTA (cont'd)

Come on, let's see what you've got.

JEET

All right.

He starts playing.

Her eyes pop as she starts to move.

MAHTA

Wow! Where did you pick that up?

Jeet says nothing, just plays a little faster.

Just as Mahta catches up, he changes the beat, goes faster and faster.

She catches up again. But he's even faster than that.

She stamps. He stamps back.

There's fire in her eyes now as she starts to sweat. She will not be beaten!

But, eventually, she is beaten. One mis-step on the pebbles of the lake shore and she goes flying..

Only to be caught by Jeet, and then laid gently down again.

He looks at her, eye to eye.

JEET

Well?

MAHTA

Oh, a pass. Definitely a pass.

JEET

Good. What's my third challenge?

She studies the lake for a moment, and then his eyes for a moment more. Then

MAHTA

A place. You must find us a place to dance together. To be together.

JEET

But this is a lovely place. A perfect place.

MAHTA

Yes, it is a lovely place. A perfect place. But it is a place for everybody, for all people. But it is not our place. I want a place just for us.

JEET

But I have no money. How can I build you a palace?

MAHTA

Did I say you had to build me a
palace, chappal boy?

JEET

Well...

MAHTA

No. I said you had to find us a
place. Not a palace. A place. Not
the most expensive place. The right
place.

JEET

And how will I know what the right
place is?

MAHTA

You will know.

She stands up and pulls at his sleeve.

MAHTA (cont'd)

I have a favor to ask of you.

JEET

Is this one of your three favors?

MAHTA

No, this is extra.

JEET

But --

MAHTA

-- Think of it as a bonus.

She moves on him, kisses him quickly.

MAHTA (cont'd)

-- and this...

(kisses)

... as an advance.

She kisses him deeply.

EXT. RUNWAY - PRIVATE JET - DAY

the jet takes off for home.

INT. PRIVATE JET - IN FLIGHT - DAY

And while Jeet looks out of the window at this sight, or that sight, she slowly closes her eyes...

And falls asleep on his chest.

EXT. PRIVATE JET - IN FLIGHT - SUNSET

MAHTA (V.O.)

I need you to play for me.

JEET (V.O.)

But I was already going to play for you..

MAHTA (V.O.)

Well, not like this. We're flying to the studios in Mumbai.

INT. PRIVATE JET - IN FLIGHT - SUNSET

MAHTA

It seems that young Master Kadak doesn't quite have your skills at the kind of music that I was looking for, and that is now required to finish the soundtrack of my movie.

Jeet can't help himself at that.

JEET

But couldn't they just edit it all together, as they said?

MAHTA

Don't get all huffy, you know the answer just as well as I do. No way he could ever match your talent. Not ever. But don't tell anyone I said that.

JEET

Why not?

MAHTA

Because that part is just for you. And me.

JEET

Like the last time I was on stage
with you?

And finally Mahta looks into his eyes, and finally sees the
hurt she has caused him.

MAHTA

I'm so sorry, Priyajeet. I couldn't
help it. It was out of my control.

Jeet again can't help himself. Instead, he waves an arm
around the expensive jet, at her expensive clothes.

JEET

Out of your control? It seems like
you have everything under control
here.

Mahta draws close to him.

MAHTA

Do this thing for me and I shall
tell you more about myself than I
have ever told another human being.

JEET

Really?

MAHTA

Really. And then if you want to,
you can judge me properly, and
completely. Once and for all.

EXT. MUMBAI AIRPORT - DAY

The private jet lands.

INT. VIP TERMINAL - MUMBAI AIRPORT - DAY

Awaiting them at the private terminal is a very long
limousine, and many people to carry their bags.

And even though there are very few people around, at least a
few notice the famous young actress arrive, with this
strange young chappal-man, so cell phones are active and
texts fly as the two leave the terminal and drive away.

INT. LIMO - MUMBAI STREETS - DAY

As they glide in limo-silence through the wonderful and bustling streets of Mumbai, Mahta brings Jeet up to speed:

MAHTA

The movie is almost finished. They tried to finish without you, using your music and Kadak's hands. That didn't work. So they had Kadak set up and try to record your music. 'After all', they said, 'it's only a tabla song. How hard can that be?'

Jeet smiles.
Mahta too.

EXT. MUMBAI FILM STUDIO - DAY

The limo pulls up outside a film studio. There's a GROUP OF PAPARAZZI there.

Mahta steps out.

PAPARAZZI

Mahta! Mahta! Look here, Mahta!

Many cameras point and flash. Jeet sits inside, and only comes out when she turns back to beckon him on.

High heels and *chappals*, down the red carpet together, both celebrities now.

INT. MUMBAI FILM STUDIO - SOUND STAGE - DAY

Inside a huge and modern sound stage, Jeet finds the same MUSICIANS who were there at the Royal Theater, along with all the SOUND CREW from before.

Center stage is a SMALL SET that looks exactly like the inside of the Royal Theater where Jeet played his tablas before.

KADAK, in FULL MAKEUP and REGALIA, sits at the drums, a very dressed-up SUNU next to him, and his FRIENDS around the couple.

He plays, and they dance, but it's all over the place. Typical flashy Bollywood.

ENGINEER (V.O.)
Thank you. One more take please.

KADAK
What? That was... stupendous!
Magnificent! There must be a
mistake!

ENGINEER (V.O.)
Cue it up, please. Take 182. From
the top please.

Sunu's too tired even to hiss.

INT. FILM STUDIO - GREEN ROOMS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

as Mahta leads JEET through wardrobe, hair and makeup departments, and soon he's as handsomely kitted out as before...

INT. FILM STUDIO - SOUND STAGE - DAY

..so that when MAHTA brings JEET back onto the small set, it is as if he has stepped back in time - but he now looks exactly as KADAK looks.

Kadak notices Jeet, and stops dead in his tracks.

KADAK
What madness is this?

MAHTA
Mine, Master Baqir. It's all mine.

Jeet eyes Kadak steadily.

Mahta hugs him briefly but tightly, and sits him down behind his drums.

JEET
What do I do?

MAHTA
What you do best.

Mahta gestures off-screen and Jeet hears music. His music. He nods his head to the rhythm as he remembers the beat.

He plays.

Kadak plays as well.

This time it's obvious who is the better player. By far.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SOUND STAGE - DAY

The AUDIO ENGINEERS chat to themselves, only half-concentrating on their jobs. After all, how hard is this job? Replacing one drum track with another? Piece of cake. But then...

ANGLE as

Jeet's playing starts off like before... but he can't help himself.

Kadak can't keep up.

ANGLE as

The CHIEF SOUND ENGINEER suddenly sits bolt upright as he take immediate notice, and motions his crew to quieten down.

CHIEF

No, not that drummer...

ANGLE as

Jeet's playing has become... better. A lot better.

CHIEF (O.S.)

That one.

Kadak gives up.

LATER

The engineers dance to the new rhythm.

And in the back of the room sit Kadak and Sunu.

SUNU

Wow. What happened to him?

KADAK

He became good. He became very, very good.

SUNU

But --

KADAK

Shhh.

And he hugs his love, and listens.

INT. SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Inside the studio, Jeet plays, and Mahta watches him play. She can't help herself either, and moves to the music.

ANGLE

Inside the control room, the chief engineer becomes agitated and motions for her to keep quiet.

She looks over, stops moving.

Just watches him play to the end of the piece.

Applause.

ANGLE

The engineer is very happy and comes out into the studio to shake Jeet's hand.

INT. PENTHOUSE RESTAURANT - BOMBAY NECKLACE - NIGHT

A very expensive and exclusive restaurant overlooking the famous Mumbai waterfront lights.

The CAST and CREW of Mahta's movie are all around, celebrating the end of the movie's production.

In particular, MAHTA and TIMMY K make a spectacular leading couple.

The only person out of place there is JEET.

But he's getting the hang of things.

Instead of standing to the side alone, he makes himself walk around the ballroom, nodding and smiling to everybody as if he knows who they all are.

But above his smile his eyes say "will this never end?"

But then again his eyes catch the delicious kebabs in the buffet and he goes right over to the food and enjoys the mouth-watering fragrances.

And there he meets his FELLOW MUSICIANS, and in particular the CHIEF SOUND ENGINEER and the RECORDING TECHNICIANS, who all turn out to be normal, decent fellows, more interested in the food than all the glittering celebrities.

Before Jeet knows it, he's chatting away in drum-speak, and finds, to his delight, that several of the other musicians also speak..

And when he feels a nudge on his arm - and there she is.

MAHTA grabs an arm and steers him away from his new-found pals.

MAHTA

You're getting better at this.

JEET

I guess traveling helps.

MAHTA

It's just experience. Nothing more, nothing less.

JEET

Perhaps. So what happens now?"

MAHTA

There's still one challenge left.

JEET

But -- you said three. I did three. I thought there were three.

MAHTA

Just changed my mind. Is that okay with you? I mean, do you mind? Since I'm meant to be the love of your life?

As Jeet opens his mouth to protest, she puts a finger out and quietens him down. And pulls close..

MAHTA (cont'd)

Shh. I'm just kidding. But there's something I need to share with you first, before anything goes any further between us.

JEET

What?

MAHTA

You need to see, for yourself. And judge, for yourself.

Jeet can't help but look at Tommy K, now the center of attention of a number of young and pretty starlets.

JREET
And what about him?

MAHTA
What about who?

JREET
Tommy Kaputt. Your fiance. Won't he
object?

Mahta takes Jeet's arm even tighter.

MAHTA
Tommy? No, we're not really
engaged. He's my studio chaperon.

JREET
What?

MAHTA
The studio pays him to act like
he's my boyfriend. So other guys
stay away. He's not my real
boyfriend. He's acting, can't you
see?

JREET
Oh.

MAHTA
And as you can see, he has plenty
enough to keep busy with.

JREET
Oh? Really?

MAHTA
Yes, really.

Mahta waves at Tommy, who waves back. Decidedly not a
boyfriend, and not even a little jealous.

JREET
Okay, let me see then.

Jeet looks around at the famous people eating their dinner.

MAHTA
You mean right now?

JREET
Why not?

They stand for a moment, looking at all the riches in the world.

Then:

MAHTA

Okay.

She takes his arm, they turn their backs and leave.

MAHTA (O.S.)

Here's what I want us to do.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

A Land Rover trundles up, then past.

INT. LAND ROVER - JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

Jeet and Mahta sit at the back while their driver hits the brakes and horn. A lot.

Jeet isn't too comfortable.

They pass on a little more, then

MAHTA

(different dialect)

This is it. Stop here, please.

DRIVER

(same dialect)

Sure thing, boss.

He hauls on the breaks, almost putting Jeet through the front windshield.

MAHTA

We're here.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD - DAY

Jeet looks out, sees nothing but jungle.

JEET

But we didn't arrive yet. We're in
the middle of nowhere.

MAHTA

Not exactly.

Mahta gets out of the car. She motions for her driver to
wait, and then pulls Jeet out.

MAHTA (cont'd)

We are at the edge of nowhere. And
the beginning of somewhere.

ANGLE

They walk along the country road.

Mahta lets loose her shawl and reveals very simple clothing.
The same, almost, as Jeet's.

He doesn't know what to say.

EXT. VILLAGE TEMPLE - DAY

At the end of the simple path is a temple.

Mahta leads Jeet into it.

INT. VILLAGE TEMPLE - DAY

JEET

But wait... this is a--

Jeet's words are cut off as the TEMPLE ELDER sees Mahta and
beams.

TEMPLE ELDERS

Sunira! Sunira! You have come back!

A SMALL CROWD of DANCERS and others gathers around the two,
but mainly around Mahta...

INT. TEMPLE STAGES - DAY - MONTAGE**START DREAM/ANIMATION SEQUENCE:**

This is a STYLIZED MUSICAL DANCE MONTAGE with elements of LIVE ACTION, SUPER-8, 16mm and BADHUBANI-STYLE ART as seen in the opening sequences of our movie:

JEET settles down to watch as the lights go down and MAHTA start her dances for him.

BAQIR (V.O.)

In the middle of these greetings,
and across a temple, two, three and
more, Jeet finally understands what
Mahta is showing him. Her life.

Mahta MORPHS into MADHUBANI ART as

Her very beginnings, as a poor
orphan girl in Tamil Nadu, growing
up in a temple and dedicating
herself to being a temple dancer.

Mahta seen as

A Deva Dasi.

INT. VILLAGE TEMPLE - STAGES - DAY - CONTINUOUS MONTAGE**DREAM/ANIMATION SEQUENCE CONTINUES:**

Mahta dances for Jeet, but with the other dancers, in all of their different costumes, and styles, only she remains highlit in his eyes. He doesn't really see anybody else.

BAQIR (V.O.)

Mostly male members of the audience
would pay the temple for their
performances, and try to pay for
extra services from her, but she
would point to Jeet and tell them
no, not today, not ever.

INT. VILLAGE TEMPLE - BACKSTAGE - MAKEUP LIGHTS - CONTINUOUS

DREAM/ANIMATION SEQUENCE CONTINUES:

MAHTA removes stage makeup. JEET sits nearby.

MAHTA

The Deva Dasis' souls are married to the God. Their bodies literally belong to the God. And since the God is a man, the temple law says that the head of the temple is the temple dancer's God.

JEET

What?!?

MAHTA

Shhh. Yes, it's true.

JEET

But then.. what happened.. to you?

MAHTA

Oh, don't you worry. I never believed a word of it.

INT. ANOTHER TEMPLE - DANCE AREA - DAY - CONTINUOUS

DREAM/ANIMATION SEQUENCE CONTINUES:

Another dance style, another performance for Jeet.

BAQIR (V.O.)

When the men in the temple started making improper demands, She did not do what the other girls did. She did not give in to the men and their gods. She just ran away.

INT. ANOTHER NEW TEMPLE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

DREAM/ANIMATION SEQUENCE CONTINUES:

Yet another dance...

BAQIR (V.O.)

To another temple, another state, another language - and another dance.

(MORE)

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 As she entered a new place, she
 would find the local temple, and
 make friends with the dancers
 there. Learn the language, and the
 dance.

And find the richest and most
 powerful men.

And again turn the tables on them,
 take their money (which, since she
 was a temple dancer and the money
 belonged to the temple anyway, she
 didn't think was any worse than
 what was being done to the other
 dancers), and then journey on to
 other states, other languages,
 other dances.

INT. TEMPLE STAGES - MORPH VFX - DAY - CONTINUOUS

DREAM / ANIMATION SEQUENCE CONTINUES:

As she dances, MAHTA MORPHS from a girl into a beautiful
 young woman...

BAQIR (V.O.)
 From there, as she grew up to be
 more beautiful and smarter, and a
 better dancer, it was just a matter
 of time before a young film
 producer noticed her and helped her
 out from the temple life into
 Bollywood and the movies.

MORPHS back into PRESENT-DAY MAHTA as she finishes her
 dance.

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 And that was how a young orphan
 girl called Sunira became a
 mysterious movie star called Mahta.

END DREAM/ANIMATION SEQUENCE.

EXT. TEMPLE - DAY.

JEET and MAHTA walk hand in hand out of another temple and back to their waiting Jeep.

MAHTA

Now you know. I'll kill you if you tell another living soul, I promise you. Then I will take your body and kill you again.

Jeet holds his arms out.

JEET

No need. If I tell a living soul, you can gladly kill me. And then I'll kill myself after you're done. Okay?

Mahta looks at him a long while. Then holds out one slim finger.

MAHTA

So? Now that you know everything about me, what do you say?

JEET

Say? About what?

MAHTA

About me. What do you say about me? With you?

And Jeet takes that finger in his hand, and softens it, and holds her hand in his.

JEET

Yes. I say yes.

They hug against a magnificent sunset.

EXT. BAQIR SHOP - DAY

Raina, Master Baqir and Aluminium Al stand by the door and applaud as Jeet and Mahta bring out all the drums from all the Masters.

Aluminium Al in particular is very surprised to see Mahta.

AL

I thought she was done?

JREET
Three challenges? I thought so too.

AL
Well then?

JREET
One more. It's four. I think.

Jeet sighs as they take the packages inside.

JREET (cont'd)
For now. I guess I still have a lot
to learn about women.

Al laughs.

AL
Don't we all?

He slaps his childhood friend on the shoulder.

AL (cont'd)
Welcome home, my friend, Welcome
home.

INT. BAQIR SHOP - DAY

Jeet unwraps the last of the gift tablas from his journey.

JREET
And this one's the oldest, from
Master Drum Master in Tanganyika.

Baqir peers very closely to take the craftsmanship behind
the precious drum.

His eyes are failing him -- but not his hands.

They pass over the drum, back and forth, feeling everything
about it, tapping here, lightly, there firmly.

Then he pulls back and nods at Jeet.

BAQIR
One strike only.

Jeet understands completely.

He settles himself, takes a deep breath, and plays just one
note.

Master and apprentice sit with eyes close as they listen to the sound of the drum.

BAQIR (cont'd)

Again.

Jeet plays another note.

Behind them stands Raina, her eyes also closed.

BAQIR (cont'd)

Again.

Next to Jeet, on the floor, sits Mahta, classically dressed and attending the small ceremony with grace, and at peace.

The Master sighs deeply.

And then, a long moment later, he signals his apprentice to proceed.

Jeet set the drum aside, and, very carefully, re-wraps it.

ANGLE

Mahta watches as Jeet places this last of the gift tablas into a new glass display case in the drum shop.

Around him are the OTHER WORKERS at the shop and Raina, who stands at the back, observing all.

Jeet closes the display case, takes a step back, and admires the drums.

Then he takes his own drum, still wrapped in his Master's drum case, and slings its carrying strap over his shoulder.

JEET

(to Mahta)

Okay, let's go.

They make their farewells and leave.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - DAY

MAHTA

Let's begin.

JEET

No.

Mahta looks at him.

MAHTA

No?

He gestures around the huge and empty stage.

JEET

Not here. I don't like this place.

MAHTA

You don't like this place? What's wrong with this place?

JEET

Meet me at the shop, day after tomorrow, at sunset. I'll show you a better place to dance.

MAHTA

It had better be better than here.

JEET

It will be better than here. It will be our place.

INT. DANCE STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

JEET lets MAHTA into the old abandoned house.

She looks around in wonder.

Yes, it is still old, and yes, it is still a little icky around the edges if she looks too closely at anything, but Jeet has cleared a walkway and lined it with petals, and the main hall is cleaned up and lit with candles.

It doesn't look haunted any more.

It looks magical.

Mahta paces the floor and smiles to herself. But she takes care to make sure that Jeet doesn't see her smile.

Instead:

MAHTA

How very romantic. Let's dance.

JEET turns a pair of HUGE LOUDSPEAKERS ON.

He starts to play...

But the sound is crackly. It doesn't sound good at all.

From behind the wall comes a voice:

AL (O.S.)
Oh! Ah, please wait a moment. One
moment, please. It has to be, yes...

A big THUMP!

And Aluminium Al pokes his head from around a corner.

AL
Ah.. Try it again.

Jeet taps his drum again, and this time it sounds just fine.

Aluminium Al gives him a thumbs-up, smiles hesitantly at Mahta.

AL (cont'd)
That never happened, I was never
here.

And he ducks out of sight behind the wall.

AL (O.S.)
Carry on.

INT. BACK STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

Aluminium Al takes his place next to his huge electric box. There is a huge on-off switch on one side, and only one volume knob, set to 11.

Next to him, a graceful and immaculately-dressed Diya, Mahta's helper and best friend forever, examines both Al and the box with slightly horrified interest.

AL
What? Never seen a beat-box before?

And Diya, as usual, just has to chuckle out loud at that.

INT. DANCE STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

And so Jeet starts in his last challenge.

He has won her respect by playing a beat she can dance to.

He has won her heart by making her a drum that takes her completely.

And he has found them a place to be, where they can unite their souls forever.

All that is left... is to do it.

JEET

Piece of cake. By all that is holy,
please be a piece of cake.

FOR JEET, IT WAS, INDEED, a piece of cake.

Mahta is lifted, powered, prodded, pushes, whisked, turned and twizzled.

The power of his playing, combined with the perfection of his new drum design, and all that studying from the world's top masters, is undeniable.

Mahta doesn't really stand a chance.

EXT. BAQIR COMPOUND - NIGHT

THE ENTIRE BAQIR COMPOUND shakes to the power of Jeet's drum.

The people in the houses all around stop, and listen.

INT. BAQIR'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

THE SOUND OF JEET'S DRUM wakes the Mad Master from his sleep, and makes him move.

INT. RAINA'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

It makes Raina move as well.

INT. BAQIR'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

She gathers her Master up and

EXT. BAQIR COMPOUND - NIGHT

together they run to the abandoned house where Jeet plays - for love.

INT. DANCE STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

MAHTA dances like a woman possessed.

She pushes back at Jeet's power like a lioness claws at a hurricane.

She is doomed to failure, but it is simply not in her nature to give up.

She knew nothing else but to push back, harder.

The very floor under her feet starts to move... to writhe to the rhythm of Jeet's mighty drum.

It is loud enough, and powerful enough, to raise the dead.

And, at this very moment, raise the dead it does.

INT. BACK STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

BEHIND THE WALL, Aluminium Al helps Raina settle the Mad Master into a chair in the part of the hall that used to be for drums.

The electric machinery that powers Al's huge loudspeakers is staring to smoke, so loud and commanding is Jeet's drumming.

Al turns to watch as Mahta dances, and Jeet plays...

Then Al notices something strange.

He can no longer see Mahta's feet touch the ground.

Because they aren't.

She's dancing on thin air.

INT. DANCE STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

Jeet plays on, ever harder and faster... looks Mahta dead in the eye.

And that's why he misses her feet completely.

AL

Ah. Something's going on here.

But the Mad Master doesn't need telling.

He can see for himself.

Mahta is dancing like a demon is inside her.

Because there is, in fact, a demon inside her.

Well, not a demon exactly, but something definitely not on this earth is giving her more power, rising up from the ground, and making her moves into a blur.

Suddenly, as in a real Indian dance, Mahta sprouts a second set of arms and hands.

But, unlike a real Indian dance, where there is simply another dancer standing right behind her, behind Mahta is standing... nothing.

Nothing Al can possibly see.

But, impossibly...

Someone else is there. Definitely.

BAQIR

She's here. Dear God, he brought her back. She's here!

Al looks at the Master.

BAQIR (cont'd)

It's my love. Zaheera.

And, as Al looks, he sees a ghostly spirit, standing right behind Mahta, but somehow linked to her, and using Mahta like a puppet.

MAHTA

(TWO VOICES)

Jeet!

Jeet finally looks up. Stops playing.

MAHTA (cont'd)

No! Don't stop!

While Jeet looks on, he can see that Mahta's body is becoming faint, as if she is disappearing.

He starts playing again.

Mahta's body comes back again.

She stops dancing. Snaps still.

MAHTA (cont'd)

(points at Jeet)

Mine. You are mine. I know your beat. I have waited for you. I vowed that we would never part...

BAQIR

Zaheera!

The Mad Master makes his way into the hall and faces her.

She does not notice him, has eyes only for Jeet, who is still playing his drum.

BAQIR (cont'd)

Zaheera, it's me!

ZAHEERA

Do not try to deceive me. I know the rhythm. That beat is mine.

BAQIR

No! No, it's not! It's not!"

Baqir turns to Al.

BAQIR (cont'd)

Please go and bring me my drum.

Al departs in a hurry.

ZAHEERA

It's been so long... So long. But you are here, my love. And so am I.

BAQIR

I've grown old. But you have not. Still as beautiful as the dawn.

ZAHEERA

Do not try to deceive me. I know our beat, old man. He beats it. You do not.

BAQIR

Zaheera, it's me, Baqir! Leave them alone. They are not for you! I am for you!

ZAHEERA

You are a Liar!

BAQIR

No. I am not lying to you. You shall soon see.

Aluminium Al returns with Baqir's drum.

BAQIR (cont'd)
Now. Let me show you. Let me show
you who you really are.

And, with that, Baqir settles down next to Jeet, and plays.

At the first beat, Jeet reacts as he is instantly transported back, back to his childhood, when he has first heard his master's drum.

ANGLE: FLASHBACK

INT. STAGE - DAY

He is perhaps five, six years old, but can completely and vividly remember sitting at his master's side, watching his master's hands rise and fall on that magnificent drum..

RESUME SCENE:

And then Jeet has to wake up and play again, because as the ghost dances to her master's drum, Mahta is starting to fade away again unless Jeet continues to drum.

So the two drummers play on, and try to figure out what to do next.

Between Jeet and Master Baqir, they soon find out that if the Mad Master plays louder, then the ghost becomes clearer.

And if Jeet plays louder, then Mahta becomes clearer.

But no way will the ghost of Zaheera let go of Mahta's body, though.

It is a real conundrum.

And then it becomes worse, and in a hurry too.

Mad Master Baqir's hand seizes up from all the sudden, and very quick playing he is doing.

Instantly the ghost, and Mahta, moves closer towards Jeet.

And then Jeet finds he cannot stop playing, because then both Mahta and the ghost begin to fade away.

So no matter how tired Jeet becomes, he can not stop playing.

And as his beat falters, the ghost of Zaheera, in the body of Mahta, dances ever closer to him..

Yikes!

He drums more furiously than before, and the ghost is driven back.

But even as he drums, Jeet knows that if he does not come up with a solution, and fast, he will eventually run out of stamina, like the old Master, and then lose everything.

INT. BACK STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Behind the scenes, Aluminium Al is worried.

There is SMOKE, coming from his huge electric box that is powering the even huger loudspeakers through which Jeet is playing. A lot of smoke.

AL

Uh-oh.

Suddenly, there are SPARKS. And BANG!

INT. DANCE STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jeet's drumming cuts off.

Jeet's eyes grow wide as he tries to play louder, but without Aluminium Al's huge loudspeakers, his drum sounds puny in comparison.

And the body of Mahta dims perilously close to nothing.

Jeet keeps on drumming.

JEET

Al... Al?

INT. BACK STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

AL works furiously.

He scrambles around inside the huge electric box, not even noticing as his hands are burned by the sparks flying and the flames burning inside it.

Meanwhile, DIYA rips off a piece of her skirt, pours some water onto it, and hands it to Al.

He uses the wet cloth to put the sparks out and finds the main power cable that has melted into two parts.

AL

Ah! I see it! Just have to...

Al pulls the ends out, and joins them together...

Too short.

He frantically looks around for a desperate, last-ditch solution...

And again it is Diya who hands him one of her hairpins, right in front of his face...

He snatches it from her, wraps one end of the short wire around one end of Diya's hairpin.. and the other around the other end.

AL (cont'd)

Just long enough! Go!

She turns the box back on.

INT. DANCE STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jeet's drum sounds come back, loud and powerful.

But it isn't enough.

His beloved dancer and the ghost within her are almost totally gone.

No matter how hard Jeet plays, it seems that his beat has been gone for just too long...

But then, the Master's hand recovers and he plays again.

And that makes the difference.

Both Mahta and Zaheera come back, and after a while, all seems to return to normal - that is, if the sight of a ghost dancing inside a woman can ever, in anybody's wildest imagination, be called normal.

Jeet is then able to stop playing for just a moment, for long enough to think.

To work something out...

Anything...

He moves over to his Master, who plays furiously away and honestly not looking too well as he did so.

Jeet makes some hand gestures to his master: together, then apart.

Together, then apart...

Master Baqir's forehead is all squinched up in thought.

Then it smoothens out suddenly as he realizes what his apprentice is trying to tell him.

He shrugs to Jeet as he plays on. Maybe, his shoulders say. Maybe not.

Then the Master looks at his apprentice and rightful heir.

His eyes say: let's give it a go.

Jeet nods and moves back behind his drum.

And plays - the exact same rhythm as the one his Master plays.

But louder.

The dancing ghost looks over at Jeet's playing, and then at Master Baqir's playing.

The two drummers are playing the exact same beat. Only the loudness at which each master is playing is different.

And since the loudness of each master goes up exactly as the other's goes down, the ghost is drawn, first to one drummer, then to the other.

Like a snake, the ghost of Zaheera dances.

Like a snake, the body of Mahta moves along.

Then Jeet looks at his Master, and his master nods.

And Jeet's rhythm starts, beat by beat, to break away from his Master's rhythm.

Beat by beat, measure by measure, bar by bar, Jeet's rhythm becomes not his Master's rhythm, but his own rhythm.

And, beat by beat and still moving sideways like a snake as they dance together, the ghost of Zaheera starts to separate from the body of Mahta...

But not without a fight.

ZAHEERA

No!! No! I will not give you up!
Never!

And the ghost pulls back into Mahta's helpless body and continues to dance towards Jeet...

Baqir's eyes grow huge as he puts in an incredible, superhuman drumming frenzy -

And again the Mad Master pulls the ghost of his love towards his own rhythm, his own drum, leaving Mahta dancing on her own.

The ghost of Zaheera dances on its own, her lovely and infinitely sad face visible for the very first time.

BAQIR

Zaheera! Zaheera, it's me! Not him!
Me!

Zaheera looks at Jeet, and then at Baqir.

This time there is no mistaking the two, not for her.

BAQIR (cont'd)

Zaheera, you are making a mistake.
This isn't right, no matter what.

ZAHEERA

But... I promised! We promised!

BAQIR

Yes, we promised. But not like
this.

And then Zaheera is very, very sad.

ZAHEERA

Yes, my love, you're right. But
then... what happens... to me?

She cries out loud.

It is very loud.

Her cry rattles the bones of everybody in that house..

EXT. BAQIR COMPOUND - NIGHT

and of everybody in the houses around the abandoned old building.

Because everybody has heard that cry before.

It is the very same cry that has kept Mahta awake all those nights.

It is the very same cry that Master Baqir had heard, inside his head, every day and night.

It is the cry of a lover, separated from her love for eternity.

This is the woman prepared to give up her immortal life, for the love of a young man she doesn't know and a young woman whose body she doesn't own.

INT. DANCE STAGE - ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

But then Zaheera's cry becomes something else.

It becomes -- a laugh.

Mahta laughs and starts to draw Zaheera's spirit into her own body.

Zaheera tries to resist, but in the end, she is a ghost, and only has power in the real world when near the vibration of a living being.

And Zaheera and Mahta's vibrations are close.

Very close.

MAHTA

I know what you are doing,
Priyajeet Malhotra! You cannot fool
me.

And she SNAPS her body back into Zaheera's and the two start dancing twice as fast as before.

MAHTA

Now I can beat you! I will beat
you! I am the best that ever is,
and ever will be!

And Jeet looks at her and sees it - she is right.

He is beaten. He looks over at his Master, both still playing..

All is, it seems, lost forever.

But then -

RAINA
 Zaheera! No!

Raina, faithful childhood friend of the family and Master Baqir's unsung hero, steps forward.

 RAINA (cont'd)
 Zaheera, it's Raina! Stop now!

Zaheera hesitates, pauses.

 ZAHEERA
 Raina.

 RAINA
 Yes, Raina. We who are still alive, have grown old. You are outside our time, and eternally young. But you know who we are, inside!

 ZAHEERA
 No!

 RAINA
 Yes. Watch me now.

And Raina... dances.

 RAINA (cont'd)
 This is your dance, and the dance of Master Baqir.

Raina is old and not a world-class dancer.

But she can dance. Her talent and style are unmistakable, even for a ghost.

 RAINA (cont'd)
 This is your dance, Zaheera! I have watched over you and Baqir, for years. I knew you then, and you know me now!

Raina stops.

 RAINA (cont'd)
 I tell you now, Zaheera!

Raina indicates Jeet...

 RAINA (cont'd)
 This is Jeet, Baqir's disciple!

... then shows Zaheera her man.

RAINA (cont'd)
 And this is your Master! Our Master
 Baqir!

 BAQIR
 Raina is correct. I am yours, and
 you are mine. We make a promise,
 Zaheera. Come to me now!

And with that, the Mad Master matches Mahta's dance.

It is an impossible task for any human being.

Not even Jeet, with all his new-found might and power, can
 match the rhythm his Master plays.

No living human being can, not for long.

For Mad Maser Baqir, now quite clearly no longer mad, plays
 a rhythm not quite of the living.

He puts his very life essence down through his palms and
 into his special drum.

He is literally dying as he plays his last beats.

 ZAHEERA

 NO!

Zaheera is torn away from Mahta's body and screams towards
 Baqir as...

Jeet plays even louder to hold his Mahta inside herself, as...

Baqir's very last life force finally fails him as...

His spirit leaves his body, through his drum, and starts to
 dissipate, as...

Zaheera's spirit surrounds his, keeps it from dissipating
 as...

Her spirit melds with his, the two together at last, as
 promised.

As it was meant to be.

Mahta collapses into a heap.

Baqir collapses at his drums.

Jeet stops.

And silence falls, at long last, over all.

INT. GREY BACKGROUND - DAY

BAQIR, contemporary dress, faces CAMERA.

BAQIR

And so ends the story of Mad Master Baqir.

It was in some ways a sad story, don't you think? Two lovers promising to be together but then split apart by death for such a very long time.

But it's a happy story too, for we are, at last, reunited.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR INTO MAHTA'S ROOM - DAY

We MOVE into MAHTA's room as she wakes up. JEET is by her side.

BAQIR (V.O.)

It was also happy for Jeet and Mahta, for Mahta did eventually recover from her collapse, and when she finally woke up in her hospital bed, there was Jeet, waiting by her side.

JEET

Before you say anything, know that I love you, whatever it is you will say.

She reaches out for him. Their hands meet and hold fast together.

And she points a fine finger at him.

MAHTA

I love you too. And I want a rematch.

Jeet reacts.

INT. ROYAL AUDITORIUM - STAGE - DAY

RAINA, in closeup, and out of character, dances...

BAQIR (V.O.)

Raina took over my compound as mistress for Master Jeet and Mistress Mahta.

CAMERA pulls very slowly back, revealing MAHTA and JEET as they join in...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 They cleaned up the place and
 restored the old abandoned
 auditorium so that Mahta and Jeet
 can dance there together, forever,
 just as his Master and her love did
 before them.

... KADAK and SUNU are revealed as they dance...

BAQIR (V.O.) (cont'd)
 My son, now superstar tabla player
 Kadak and his goodwife Sunu do
 visit from time to time, but never
 for long, for Mumbai and Bollywood
 awaits, and its lights are always
 much brighter than in plain old
 Delhi.

... they chat and laugh with AL and DIYA, who dance in traditional Indian wedding costume...

BAQIR
 Not for Mahta and Jeet, though.
 For them, as well as for newly-
 coupled Aluminium Al and Diya,
 their little compound is home
 enough. Well, perhaps after a world
 tour or too.

... CAMERA pauses for a moment on the principals, then MUSIC SWELLS as KID DANCERS and YOUNG DRUMMERS are revealed, dancing and drumming with the REST OF THE CAST...

BAQIR (cont'd)
 And, in due time, there came many
 young drummers, and also many young
 dancers, who ended up dancing on
 the big stage together, and having
 fun together, and celebrating life
 together.

... CAMERA ends pull back on the ENTIRE TROUPE, now surrounded by CREW as they end their dance.

BAQIR (cont'd)
 Because that, it seems, is what
 dancers and their drummers do.

IMAGE MORPHS into FLIP PAGE ARTWORK as...

Cast and Crew take their bows.

Curtain falls. PAGE FLIPS SLOW until...

The BOOK's final page FLIPS and reveals...

THE END.