

INDIANS

Written by

Diana Advani

Based on a true story

Address  
Phone Number

EXT. MOTEL VERMILLION SOUTH DAKOTA 1982 - EVENING

SURESH, a 23 year old Indian man in sandal, shorts, and a short sleeve shirt stands shivering in front of a motel with a neon vacant sign. There is snow on the ground. SURESH enters the motel. A group of dark skinned men in parkas sit in the parking lot smoking. A cloud of smoke dances between them. A thin mustache man in the group looks over at SURESH and shakes his head.

SURESH enters the motel.

INT. MOTEL - EVENING

SURESH looks around at the yellow stained walls and flickering lights.

ALAN, the man behind the front desk with a name tag, looks at SURESH. ALAN glares. SURESH is now a hairy humanoid monkey.

MONKEY SURESH looks out the window in the direction of the smoking men. They are now a pack of humanoid wolves in parkas.

ALAN gives MONKEY SURESH his keys and points to the room closest to the front desk. MONKEY SURESH walks to his room.

EXT. TRAILER - EVENING

Two monkey men are silhouettes in the doorway of a trailer. The trailer is cast in the shadow of a large house right behind it.

INT. TRAILER - EVENING

Two monkey men in their early twenties MONKEY RISHI, slender, and MONKEY NILLAN, chubby, sit on a small bed side by side. They are both wearing sweat stained white tank tops

MONKEY RISHI looks over at MONKEY NILLAN and MONKEY NILLAN shakes his head side to side and up and down, the Indian head bobble.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

MONKEY SURESH puts his suitcase on the bed, opening it to reveal a textbook inside. He opens the book and inside is a drawing of a factory with the words "Dream" underneath. MONKEY SURESH sticks the drawing through a nail in the wall. The crudely drawn factory is the only decoration in the room.

EXT. OUTSIDE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING BUILDING - DAY

MONKEY SURESH is wearing a long sleeve shirt and a pair of pants. As he excitedly enters the engineering building, MONKEY SURESH walks by a row of windows. His reflection is human although he does not notice.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

PROFESSOR SMITH, an old white man, is writing "Intro to Teaching for Graduate Students"

CAMERA FACES STUDENTS.

There are three animals in a sea of thirty white male students. MONKEY RISHI and MONKEY NILLAN, both small brown monkeys, sit together on one side of the classroom. MONKEY SURESH sits on the other side of the classroom.

MONKEY SURESH glances at MONKEY RISHI and MONKEY NILLAN. MONKEY NILLAN waves and MONKEY SURESH looks away.

INT. CLASSROOM HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

MONKEY SURESH walks by and sees MONKEY RISHI and MONKEY NILLAN are on their hands and knees scrubbing the floor of Professor Smith's office. MONKEY SURESH walks to the doorway.

INT- PROFESSOR SMITH'S DOORWAY

MONKEY SURESH  
What is this? On your hands and  
knees like servants.

MONKEY NILLAN  
Ohh ahh ahhh

MONKEY RISHI  
EHH ohhhh

MONKEY NILLAN and MONKEY RISHI stare up at MONKEY SURESH. MONKEY SURESH walks away angrily.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

MONKEY SURESH, shivering, enters his motel room with a grocery bag. He is still wearing a long sleeve shirt and pants, no jacket. He opens the bag and pull out a bag of white bread.

MONKEY SURESH puts a piece of white bread on the glass plate on the microwave and moves it back and forth as if warming up a chapati on a burner. Puts his hand on the glass and realize it's not hot. He then closes the microwave, pushes a button, and the bread explodes.

MONKEY SURESH pulls his hand over his face, exasperated.

MONKEY SURESH reaches into his pocket, retrieving a box of cigarettes. He pats his pockets for lighter, but doesn't find one. MONKEY SURESH grabs the bed spread and wraps it around himself. He walks into the hallway with a cigarette in hand.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

MONKEY SURESH walks outside and sees a figure in the distance. The figure is a skinny wolf with a very thin mustache, WOLF MANNY. He is wearing a big puffer jacket. MONKEY SURESH looks around with his cigarette in hand.

WOLF MANNY holds up his lighter and clicks on the flame. MONKEY SURESH walks over and sits next to WOLF MANNY.

The smoke from their cigarettes float into the sky. One smoke plume is shaped as MANNY in human form, the other is a SURESH in human form. SMOKE MANNY and SMOKE SURESH shake hands.

SMOKE MANNY

Where are you from?

SMOKE SURESH

India

SMOKE MANNY

You're Indian? I'm Indian

MONKEY SURESH looks at WOLF MANNY.

MONKEY SURESH

How can you be an Indian?

WOLF MANNY gestures to the motel. The camera flips around. Both MANNY and SURESH appear as two blurry grey blobs smoking.

BLOB MANNY

Here, We are both Indians

INT. MOTEL FRONT DESK- MORNING

MONKEY SURESH is walking waiting behind WOLF MANNY to talk to ALAN. WOLF MANNY and ALAN seem to be fighting

WOLF MANNY hands ALAN crisp bills, he pulls out of an envelope. WOLF MANNY walks out of the MOTEL LOBBY with a bundle of signs under his arm. MONKEY SURESH approaches the front desk.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

MONKEY SURESH walk to class. He passes by a group of protesters, all wolves, holding signs that say: "GIVE BACK BLACK HILL" "WE WERE HERE FIRST" "SUCCEED THE LAND." In this group MONKEY SURESH sees WOLF MANNY. They make eye contact. MONKEY SURESH looks away.

Campus police officers approach the group.

WOLF MANNY looks in MONKEY SURESH's direction. MONKEY SURESH looks over and then walks away quickly.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MONKEY SURESH sits in the corner of the classroom shuffling a stack of papers as PROFESSOR SMITH lectures.

PROFESSOR SMITH gestures in MONKEY SURESH's direction. STUDENTS line up behind MONKEY SURESH and collect their exams one by one. One student looks annoyed after getting his paper back.

ANNOYED STUDENT glares at MONKEY SURESH and makes his way over to PROFESSOR SMITH.

ANNOYED STUDENT and PROFESSOR SMITH talk in hushed tones. ANNOYED STUDENT periodically glares at MONKEY SURESH and points at him. PROFESSOR SMITH looks at MONKEY SURESH dismissively. PROFESSOR SMITH takes the paper from the STUDENT and changes the grade from a C to an A.

MONKEY RISHI approaches MONKEY SURESH. MONKEY RISHI presses his palms together and gives a quick bow pressing his palms to his forehead.

MONKEY RISHI looks at MONKEY SURESH imploringly and a piece of paper into MONKEY SURESH's hand. MONKEY SURESH looks at it. It's a grocery list. He crumples it up and shoves it in his pocket annoyed.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

MONKEY SURESH is walking along a road. A green car approaches and slows down. The driver rolls the window down and it is WOLF MANNY.

WOLF MANNY  
Where are you headed?

MONKEY SURESH  
I need some ramen.

WOLF MANNY  
I can get you something better than  
ramen. It'll take a while to get  
there but it's worth the wait.

MONKEY SURESH's stomach growls.

WOLF MANNY opens the door to his car.

MONKEY SURESH looks down at his flimsy shoes, which are not  
holding up well in the snow.

MONKEY SURESH gets into WOLF MANNY'S car.

EXT. BLACK HILLS - DAY

WOLF MANNY and MONKEY SURESH approach the Black Hills. It's a  
steep climb and the car struggles to make it up. There a few  
cheap tents dispersed in the snow. As the arrive a large  
wolf, the WOLF CHIEF, with long black braids and dressed in  
furs approaches the car.

MONKEY SURESH and WOLF MANNY get out of the car and follow  
the WOLF CHIEF.

EXT. BLACK HILLS - DAY

Lots of dishes are laid out on picnic tables. Purple patties,  
chunky stews, jellied berries, and bean dishes. A feast of  
colors and textures. A large group of wolves all ages and  
sizes, in a variety of traditional clothes and modern apparel  
sit around the tables. The WOLF CHIEF gives MONKEY SURESH a  
cup of green mint tea. SURESH drinks it a smiles. He sits  
down at the table and begins to eat.

EXT. BLACK HILLS - DUSK

Empty plates are piled up in front of MONKEY SURESH he  
happily rubs his belly smiling.

MONKEY SURESH  
I haven't felt so full since I  
landed here.

MONKEY SURESH pulls out a piece of paper from his pants pocket and frowns. MONKEY SURESH looks at WOLF MANNY.

MONKEY SURESH (CONT'D)  
Can we make a stop on the way back?

EXT. TRAILER - NIGHT

WOLF MANNY and MONKEY SURESH sit in the car outside the trailer.

MONKEY SURESH looks at piece of paper.

MONKEY SURESH  
This is it.

WOLF MANNY and MONKEY SURESH get out of car with grocery bags. MONKEY SURESH knocks on door of trailer. MONKEY RISHI answers. He looks very happy and grabs the grocery bag, accidentally pushing open the door. MONKEY SURESH and WOLF MANNY see the inside of the trailer. MONKEY NILLIAN is laying on the ground, on a makeshift bed of blankets.

MONKEY NILLIAN gets up to make more room. MONKEY SURESH and WOLF MANNY can barely fit inside the trailer with the groceries.

A CAR ENGINE backfires in the distance. MONKEY NILLAN and MONKEY RISHI look around frantically. WOLF MANNY looks around cautiously.

MONKEY SURESH (CONT'D)  
Go! I can walk home.

EXT - OUTSIDE THE TRAILER - NIGHT

WOLF MANNY drives away as a figure with a flashlight approaches the trailer

MONKEY SURESH exits the trailer and PROFESSOR SMITH shines the flashlight in MONKEY SURESH's face.

PROFESSOR SMITH looks around nervously. He plasters on a forced smile onto his face. MONKEY SURESH curls his fist and PROFESSOR SMITH'S fake smile drops. PROFESSOR SMITH goes into the trailer and sees MONKEY NILLAN and MONKEY RISHI eating dry ramen while sitting on the singular bed. PROFESSOR SMITH gestures to them.

MONKEY RISHI and MONKEY NILLAN transform into two even smaller monkeys happily eating ramen.

MONKEY SURESH looks at them and they are two miserable looking Indian men scarfing down a package of dry ramen.

MONKEY SURESH (CONT'D)  
This isn't right

PROFESSOR SMITH  
This is none of your business. You should be grateful I brought you here.

MONKEY SURESH  
You keep them here like they are slaves.

PROFESSOR SMITH  
I am a professor. You are just an Indian student here on a visa. Be careful what you say.

MONKEY SURESH  
Yes, we are students from India, but we are also human beings.

MONKEY SURESH looks at NILLAN and RISHI, both afraid looking Indian men. They avoid eye contact. MONKEY SURESH walks away.

MONTAGE of MONKEY SURESH talking to WOLF MANNY outside of the MOTEL. Both MONKEY SURESH and WOLF MANNY look determined. MONKEY SURESH and WOLF MANNY taking to the WOLF CHIEF in the Black Hills Camp. WOLF CHIEF puts his hand on MONKEY SURESH's shoulder and nods. MONKEY SURESH in the Black Hills Camp with a group of wolves sitting criss cross making signs.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MOTEL - DAY

MONKEY SURESH and WOLF MANNY are smoking with a bunch of signs by their feet.

EXT. MECHANICAL ENGINEERING BUILDING - DAY

WOLF MANNY, and MONKEY SURESH stand in front of the Mechanical Engineering Building the with signs that say "Smith Abuses Indians" "Professor Smith Exploits His Grad Students."

WOLF MANNY looks at MONKEY SURESH as a student approaches.

Gradually students join as they head towards the building. As students join SURESH and MANNY transform into men. NILLAN and RISHI, also men, join as well. PROFESSOR SMITH approaches the building and whips his head around when he sees the signs.



PROFESSOR SMITH looks at all students gathered together. The crowd looks back now an unified angry blob. PROFESSOR SMITH shrinks into a tiny bug the blob tramples.

NILLAN and RISHI look at SURESH gratefully. They give him a hug and SURESH stands awkwardly accepting their embrace. MANNY laughs at them and puts his arms around NILLAN and SURESH.

Montage of SURESH and MANNY helping NILLAN and RISHI move out of the trailer. SURESH helps NILLAN and RISHI move into his motel room. SURESH sleep in the room during the day. NILLAN sleep in the afternoon and evening. RISHI sleeps in the night and morning. SURESH sits at a 24/7 Dinner during the night.

EXT. BLACK HILLS - DAY

MANNY, CHIEF, SURESH, RISHI, NILLAN, and others are gathered around an outdoor table. All the characters are now human. A variety of Native American and Indian dishes are spread out before them. SURESH, RISHI, and NILLAN are already sampling the food and enjoying themselves.

SURESH

These corn cakes are delicious. I had no idea there was some much corn in South Dakota

MANNY

They are Grouse Corn Cakes. Put some juniper berry on it. (Pointing). What's that dish

SURESH

It's Pahadi Curry. Be careful. Indian food is very spicy and you may not like it.

MANNY (SMILING)

Didn't I say that here we are all Indians?

MANNY scoops up some of the Pahadi Curry with his hand and eats it. MANNY looks pleased at first and then his eyes grow wide, tears streaming down his face.

RISHI

I told you man. He wasn't going to be able to handle the heat

NILLAN

But he's an Indian too, and we can handle anything! Right?!?!

MANNY gulps down water as SURESH, NILLAN, and RISHI laugh.