**Rewrite a Scene**

Ruiyan Maggie Huang

FP English HL 6

Philippa Anne Keene

02/19/2019

**Rationale**

The rewrite is mainly based on two scenes from the novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (Hamid) by Mohsin Hamid: Wainwright’s advice for Changez to shave his beard and the handshaking upon Changez’s resignation. Also, there are other details involved that refer to the novel. For example, Wainwright’s silence after 9-11 and Changez’s radicalness can be reflected in the narrative; the last line is a Marvel quote, since Wainwright always does so while speaking; throughout the narrative, there are also many evidences implying Wainwright’s attitudes toward cultural differences and Islam, which correspond to the original novel. All that can help shape the characters better, as Wainwright always believe in the assimilation of culture and the possibility of integration for people like him.

Also, the rewrite is in the form of an internal musing of first-person narrative of Wainwright, a black man working as an analyst in Underwood Samson, at a certain night on a street. The setting is not on any special occasion, and thus implies this kind of inner conflict can happen to Wainwright at any night like this.

Overall, the aim of the piece is to explore how different people (Changez and Wainwright), even with similar status (both are non-white and graduates from Ivy school), can have very different attitudes and values towards the US empire because of individual differences. Also, the piece attempts to reveal some inner conflict of Wainwright as a non-white in the US, and thus to explore the thoughts and perspectives of a broader group like him.

[242 words]

Why text type? Why 1st person?

Tense!!!

**Narrative**

This is my tenth year at Underwood Samson, I believe, or maybe eleventh, and I bet, I am excellent at my job. That’s not boasting; I’ve always been ranked first in the whole company, well, since that Pakistani guy left. What is his name again? I can’t remember that any more… Yes. We used to be the only two non-whites in that company.

That girl passing by, an American, is hiding her handbag. I’ve seen that thousands of times. That’s how white ladies treat black men.

Changez. I remember his name now.

In my younger and more vulnerable years, I was brought to the States. I hated the school here. Every morning, I was met by a group of older white boys, they shouted at me with insults, and laughed me at my appearance. I was not angry. I was confused, about why I was treated like that.

Father told me the best way to silence them was to keep silent. He was from Barbados; immigrated to the US in the 1970s. So I kept silent for years, with the hatred eventually wane. I finally realized the reason behind that hatred over the years. The difference, culturally and racially. I was assimilated, and I could see the bright future ahead—

I have become an American citizen.

Then I met that Pakistani.

He was, as I just mentioned, the top analyst in our company. He was the most hard-working guy I had ever met. He was a polished and interesting man who was the only one in my life to have that kind of bond with. We became great friends as well as competitors the first time we met.

It was in 2001 when 9-11 broke out. I could sense that there was something tumultuous for everyone around me. Americans were revenging like crazy. Muslims were beaten and discriminated everywhere. Still, I kept silent, but Changez was never a man like that. I noticed something changing inside him, though I didn’t know what that was and, yet, I would never believe those gossips in the company of the potential danger of Changez, or any other Muslim people.

When he went back from holiday, he was growing a beard, an Islamic beard.

“Look, man. I don’t know what’s up with the beard, but I don’t think it’s making you Mister Popular around here”, I inquired.

He looked at me with firmness and said that beard was common where he belonged.

I didn’t say anything more to him after that. I knew he must have gone through some turmoil, and that he had chosen to discard the great opportunity of staying in the States; he refused assimilation.

The last time I saw Changez was upon his leaving. He got fired, as what I had warned him about long time ago.

I walked towards him. Our last handshake was good and firm. Partly out of the sincere friendship respect, and partly for encouraging him that racial and cultural differences can always be transcended. I was never that kind of man to do things like that: shaking hand with someone leaving soon with the rest of the company indifferently staying in their seat. For this time, however, I never regret.

I’ve never seen Changez since then; we completely lost contact. Now I am thinking of Changez again. Maybe I did so whenever white ladies pass me and hide their handbags. Looking back now, he would certainly be amused by my obsession: why we need to do everything for the States regardless of our own identity and culture? After answering the question of what the Americans want me to do, he is the one who keeps me wondering: do I really want that kind of assimilation?

The night is chill, I can see my breath against the sharp air under the dim street lights. I can’t stop shivering, but I know at least I can shiver myself warm.

"That's not a question I need answered."

[666 words]

**Works cited**

Hamid, Mohsin. The Reluctant Fundamentalist. Penguin Books, 2007.