

ASSIMILATED

Draft 13

Written by
Kalpita Chakote

Somewhat based on my life...

1052 Channel Drive Hewlett, NY 11557
(516) 978 1616

COLD OPEN

EXT. RAO HOUSE - DAY

The end of a driveway of a VICTORIAN HOUSE in Long Island.

Stuffed in a NORTH FACE, CHARRU RAO (12), second gen Indian American, chubby, quick-witted, waits for her school bus. She wipes fog off her GLASSES to read a torn-off notebook page.

INSERT - THE PAGE

The camera catches the words at the top of the list.

New Year's Resolution

1. Stand up to Chunk Manson.

A USED HONDA pulls up beside Charru. Inside are her sister ARYA RAO (16), a well-dressed masala-head perfectionist, and her brother KRUSHIK "KRU" RAO (14), growing into his body.

ARYA

Charru--

CHARRU

I know, Arya. You told me like a hundred times this morning to be ready for dance before you got home.

KRU

I can concur.

ARYA

Shut up, Kru.

Arya and Kru leave as the SCHOOL BUS pulls up. Charru takes one more look at her New Year's Resolutions before she folds it, zips it in her jacket pocket, and boards the bus.

INT. SCHOOL BUS (MOVING) - DAY

Charru sits ALONE. The other kids GAB. The bus is full of RICH MIDDLE SCHOOLERS. All are WHITE and JEWISH except Charru and a HISPANIC GIRL.

The bus stops. CHARLES "CHUCK" THOMAS aka "CHUNK MANSON" (12) and TWO OTHER BOYS (11-13) get on. The bus QUIETS. Chuck eyes Charru.

CHUCK

Churro. Did you go up like *five* sizes over Break?

CHARRU

Did you go up *ten*, Chuck?

CHUCK

You sure you want to play this game, Churro? We already know who wins.

CHARRU

Charru. My name is Charru, *Chunk Manson*.

Chuck grabs Charru's backpack. She pulls it back, but he's too strong. He dumps the backpack's contents out. He finds her PAPER LUNCH BAG. He pulls out the TUPPERWARE of CHANA MASALA, opens the Tupperware, and smells it.

CHUCK

Guess what, guys? Slumdog Millionaire still eats shit for lunch.

Charru SHOVES Chuck. He goes down. He's covered in Chana Masala. No one is more shocked than Charru.

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. NEWTON MIDDLE SCHOOL (NMS) HALLWAY - DAY

A Newton census would show most students are upper-middle class, white, and Jewish. It'd note the sprinkle of students who are Hispanic, Christian, South and East Asian, and Black.

Middle schoolers put books away in their lockers. Most WHITE students and some NONWHITE students wear the BAR MITZVAH SWEATSHIRT "Justin 12/23/20."

Charru spots her best friend JANNA SCHANELL (12), oddly self-aware and mischievous, shoving books in her trashed locker. Charru rushes to her. She notices Janna's sweatshirt "Justin 12/23/20."

CHARRU

You didn't tell me you were going to Justin's bar mitzvah.

JANNA

Yeah, I did.

CHARRU

Nevermind. I pushed Chunk, and he ended up with Chana Masala all over him.

JANNA

Oh, dang...You're taking your New Year's Resolutions seriously.

CHARRU

Thanks.

Janna pulls out a lunch bag and offers it to Charru.

JANNA

Peace offering?

CHARRU

Too late, Hans.

JANNA

I made brownies.

Charru grabs for the bag, but Janna pulls it back and raises an eyebrow.

CHARRU

You are my Kristoff. My one true
soulmate who will protect me and my
kingdom til the end of time.

Janna hands Charru the bag. Charru raises the brownie to her
mouth. She pauses. She drops the brownie back in the bag.

CHARRU (CONT'D)

I got to lose ten pounds.

JANNA

Arya's gotten to you.

CHARRU

You mean Aryan Race?

Janna stares at Charru, interrogating the phrase.

JANNA

Something feels wrong when you call
Arya Aryan Race. I mean she's not
trying to wipe out--

CHARRU

She wiped out my self-esteem. She
sang the Oompa Loompa song right at
me every time they appeared on
Charlie in the Chocolate Factory.

JANNA

Wait, are you calling Willy Wonka
anti-Semitic?

CHARRU

No. I'm saying I'm fat.

Charru strides away while Janna figures out if Willy Wonka is
anti-Semitic. (He is. Well, Roald Dahl was.)

INT. ARYA'S CAR - DAY

Arya parks her car in NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL'S (NHS) parking lot.
She unlocks her phone. The lock screen: a photo of her
boyfriend BRYAN LEVITZ (16), golden boy, kissing her cheek.

She texts Bryan:

Just parked. Waiting for you in the Car emoji. Kissy Face
emoji.

She presses send.

Arya, peeved Kru is chillaxing, shoves Kru out the door.

ARYA
Bryan's gonna be here any second!
Move your slow ass out of here.
Out! OUT!

KRU
Okay. Control-freak.

Kru grabs his backpack and SWIM BAG. He looks out the front window. He stops.

KRU (CONT'D)
Isn't that Bryan and Ali?

Bryan and Arya's best friend ALI MATZA (16), put-together, chill, loud mouth, climb out of his RANGE ROVER. They converse. Laugh. Bryan checks his phone and stuffs it in his back pocket.

Arya BITES her nails.

KRU (CONT'D)
Your date to second base seems to
be canceled.

Arya fake sneezes to stick her middle finger up. She points the middle finger at the door.

Kru bestows Arya a side glance before getting out of the car.

INT. NHS HALLWAY - DAY

Arya touches her hair and make-up in her locker mirror. Her locker is full of photos of her with Bryan and her with Ali.

Students surge around her. Bryan and Ali walk towards Arya. He shows Ali something on his phone.

Arya bites her nails, realizes she's biting them, and stops.

Ali sees Arya, skips to her, and hugs her.

ALI
ARYA! BRYAN
Hey, Babe.

Bryan goes to kiss Arya on the cheek. She sidesteps him.

ARYA
Hall monitors. Don't want to get a
detention and ruin that high school
transcript.

ALI
Since when did you become a prude?

ARYA
Since when did you become so rude?

ALI
Lighten up. Why not send Bryan a
nude?

Arya rolls her eyes at Ali. Arya turns to Bryan.

ARYA
Bry, could you not find my car or
something this morning?

Bryan looks uncomfortable. Ali fidgets.

BRYAN
Oh, you know--

The bell rings.

ARYA
(under her breath)
Saved by the bell.

INT. NHS CLASSROOM - DAY

Precalculus HONORS.

Arya sits front and center. She lines her PENS up at the top right corner of her desk, making a PEN RAINBOW.

MRS. BIALT "BEE" (40s), hard-ass with a heart, walks in and puts her stuff down.

BEE
Your exams from before Break
sucked. So here's an extra credit
quiz. Merry Christmas!

Everyone reaches for their pencil cases in their bags while Arya picks up a pen, ready.

INT. NHS CLASSROOM - DAY

The bell rings. Bee hands back exams. Everyone collects their things except Arya, engrossed in her 98.5. She walks up to Bee. Bryan and Ali notice but continue walking out.

ARYA
Beeeee?

MRS. BIALT
Arya.

ARYA
On question three, I changed my
answer to five. I just didn't erase
properly, so it looks like a seven.

BEE
(without looking)
Arya, it's a seven.

ARYA
Bee, you didn't even look.

BEE
Fine.

Bee glances.

BEE (CONT'D)
Seven.

ARYA
Come on.

BEE
It's worth half a point.

ARYA
So?

BEE
Arya, go to your next class.

INT. NEWTON MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

PAN the cafeteria. It's dotted with students wearing "Justin
12/23/20" sweatshirts.

Janna hands Charru a peanut butter sandwich. Charru puts her
hand up.

CHARRU
Too many calories...Well, was it
fun?

JANNA
What?

CHARRU
The bar mitzvah.

JANNA
Not really.

Charru's stomach growls.

JANNA (CONT'D)
Ok. I gotta see the list that's
taking over your life.

CHARRU
The list that will *transform* my
life.

Charru holds her list like an old dude reading a newspaper,
pulls her glasses to the brim of her nose, realizes she can't
read the list, and pushes her glasses back up.

Janna rolls her eyes and grabs the paper out of Charru's
hands. Charru grabs at it, but Janna dodges Charru's hand.

JANNA
1. Stand up to Chunk Manson. 2.
Stand up to Aryan Race.

Janna gives Charru a look after "Aryan Race."

CHARRU
Give me back my list!

Charru tries and fails to grab the list back.

JANNA
3. Lose 10 pounds. 4. Quit dance.
Oof, Kriti is not going to like
that. Remember when you hid under
my bed and--

CHARRU
I swear I'll go on your Insta and
heart all of Brett's old photos.

JANNA
You wouldn't. Otherwise I'd never
speak to you again.

Charru finally succeeds in grabbing the list back.

JANNA (CONT'D)
What's the big deal? We tell each
other everything.

CHARRU

Oh, like you telling me you were
going to Justin's bar mitzvah.

Charru struts away.

JANNA

(calling out)

It wasn't even fun. Okay, well,
Heather M. and Lindsey C. made out,
but that's it!

INT. NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Kru and his best friend SAM APPLEBAUM (14), always wishing he
was on the "in," walk towards their table. Sam spots the
SENIOR VARSITY SWIM TEAM and SENIOR GIRLS.

SAM

(nudging Kru)

Go say hi.

KRU

And be the awkward freshman. No
thanks.

Kru takes a swig of ice tea and ambles in the opposite
direction. Sam pulls Kru back. Sam nods at BECCA ANDERSON
(18), hottest girl in school. She drinks water. Her eyes
glance over them. She wipes her mouth.

SAM

Derek says Becca Anderson swallows
cum like a champ.

Kru chokes on his ice tea. Sam hits Kru on his back. Kru
spits his ice tea right onto DANA MAZZEO (14), upfront, put-
together, popular but nice.

KRU

Dana. I'm so sorry.

Kru reaches into his lunch bag, grabs a napkin, and starts
dabbing all over her shirt. Then realizes what he's doing.

KRU (CONT'D)

Sorry...Personal space.

Kru and Dana finish cleaning up without Sam's help.

KRU (CONT'D)

You wanna borrow my hoodie?

Kru starts taking his HOODIE off.

DANA
Don't worry about it.

Dana leaves. Kru and Sam look after her.

SAM
I saw what you did. Touching her
boob. Smooth.

KRU
What? No. It's Dana. We ran around
butt naked in the sprinklers.

Kru and Sam walk to their table.

SAM
So you've seen *her* naked. How were
her tits?

KRU
We were *three*.

Kru and Sam sit down at their table.

SAM
And she's seen *you* naked. Derek
says--

KRU
I don't want to hear what your pedo
brother has to say.

SAM
All *I*'ve got to say is it's sad you
got more action in diapers than you
do now.

KRU
You weren't potty-trained when you
were three?

Sam, irritated, looks at Kru who is biting into his sandwich.

PAN TO the other side of the cafeteria. Arya, Bryan, Ali,
Bryan's best friends MARK and SIMON (16), lax-bros, think
they're D1, really they're D3, saw the whole thing.

ALI
Looks like Kru's got a little
crush, Arya.

ARYA

Huh? Good. I was starting to worry.

ALI

You know he's quite the looker.

ARYA

Ew. He's my brother.

BRYAN

(changing the subject)

So Dylan's this Friday?

ARYA

Shoot. Dance try-outs Saturday.

MARK

Bryan showed us some of your dance stuff on YouTube.

Mark mocks Indian music and dance. Simon joins in. Mark jumps on the table. Simon dances around Arya. The entire cafeteria watches. Kru, slouched over, pulls his hood over his head.

LAX-BRO #1

Shake that tight ass, Mark!

LAX-BRO #2 whistles.

LAX-BRO #3

Have my baby, Simon!

Mark and Simon get hyped by their lax-bros. Arya shoots Bryan a nasty glare.

BRYAN

I was just trying to share my girlfriend's culture with them.

Arya grabs her things and flees. Ali messes up Bryan's WELL-GELLED HAIR.

ALI

That's for thinking those idiots could appreciate culture.

Ali rushes after Arya.

END OF ACT ONE