

HOW WE GOT TRICKED BY THE SUPREME LEADER OF NORTH KOREA

Based on real events.

Written by

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BLACK

HOSTILE HOST (V.O.)

Whoa! Whoa! Are you really walking  
off--

SITI (V.O.)

You tricked us!

HOSTILE HOST (V.O.)

I'm just asking questions!

SITI (V.O.)

You're making accusations disguised  
as questions!

HOSTILE HOST (V.O.)

We all just want to know the--

SITI (V.O.)

You don't give a damn about the  
truth!

DOAN (V.O.)

Alright, let's just calm down.

SITI (V.O.)

You've already decided what you  
want to believe in, so let's stop  
pretending.

HOSTILE HOST (V.O.)

I am asking tough questions because  
that's what journalists do!

SITI (V.O.)

Oh, fuck off.

FADE IN:

INT. STUDIO IN NEW YORK - NIGHT

We're in the middle of a shouting match between a HOSTILE  
HOST and two women, SITI AISYAH (early 20's, female) and DOAN  
THI HUONG (early 20's, female). It's a trashy talk show with  
hundreds in the AUDIENCE baying for blood like they're in a  
coliseum, watching gladiators kill each other for  
entertainment.

Siti is about to storm off the stage in anger, but Doan holds  
her back.

The hostile host points to the name of the show '**INNOCENT OR GUILTY**' in the backdrop.

HOSTILE HOST  
It's called *Innocent Or--*

SITI  
--OR Guilty...which means we're either one and you don't get to decide--

A BAR CHART on the screen shows:

**INNOCENT: 46%**

**GUILTY: 54%**

HOSTILE HOST  
(stopping her from leaving)  
Hold on, hold on. Before the show started, only 46% of the audience believe your story. 54% think you're full of shit. That's why we brought you back here, 5 years after the incident, Doan, so you can tell your story--

Doan reacts with disbelief at the mix-up.

DOAN  
--I'm Doan. She's Siti.

HOSTILE HOST  
(ignoring Doan)  
--and maybe convince the 54%, along with 20 million people watching this show--

SITI  
You mean this trial.

HOSTILE HOST  
Oh, come on!

SITI  
The only opinion that matters is the judge's. Not yours.  
(to the audience)  
And certainly not yours!

BOOOOOO! The crowd hisses at her, giving her a thumbs down. They want blood. Doan steps in to calm things down.

DOAN

Listen, you promised us we will  
have a chance to tell our side of  
the story--

HOSTILE HOST

--and you did, but we still find  
that it doesn't quite hold water...

The audience agrees.

HOSTILE HOST

(sarcastically, to the  
audience)

But ok, we're going to let them  
speak and there will be no  
interruptions, OK? Behave yourself,  
people!

The audience laughs. The hostile host gestures for Siti to  
sit down.

HOSTILE HOST

OK, let's start again.

Siti reluctantly sits down again.

HOST

(to Siti)

On Feb 16, 2017, while you were  
being arrested...you reportedly  
laughed. In fact, the report says  
you were 'laughing hysterically'.  
(point-blank)

What exactly was so funny?

INT. A LUXURY HOTEL PENTHOUSE (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY

We are brought back in time 9,389 miles away to the other  
side of the world.

Siti is on a video call with her mother, MAK using what looks  
like a brand new iPhone, showing off her luxury suite.

**INSERT: 5 years ago. Kuala Lumpur.**

MAK

Tell me when.

SITI

When I get rich...

MAK

When is that going to be?

SITI

...and then we can get out of that slum--

MAK

My daughter grew up in this slum.

SITI

And now your grandson will grow up in place...

(reveals the luxury suite)

...like this! And what do you mean 'when's that going to be'? I'm working very hard and I'm going somewhere!

MAK

Money is not everything.

SITI

But everything is money!

MAK

The kids are laughing at Putra. Where is his mum, they ask.

SITI

Mak, you know why I grew up in a Tambora?

MAK

Come home and watch your son grow up.

SITI

Because you keep saying money is not everything. All our lives, we had so little. Not even enough to get by. But I'm going to be a different mum. I'm going to break that cycle. I will work very hard, make a ton of money and get him out of that stupid slum. I'm going to give him what you couldn't give me!

Mak is hurt.

MAK

I did my best to give you everything!

Realizing she's gone overboard:

SITI  
Of course I want to come home, Mak.  
You make the best bakso\*.

*\*Indonesian noodle soup*

Silence.

SITI  
10.

MAK  
What?

SITI  
You asked when I'm coming back.  
I'll be back before Putra turns 10.

MAK  
Well, you better do.

SITI  
I will.  
(easing the tension)  
Now check out my suite!

MAK  
(shouting to Putra)  
Putra. Come see mummy's hotel.  
(back to Siti)  
Please tell me you didn't pay for  
this.

Siti pans the phone around the bathroom that comes with a jaw-dropping view of the Kuala Lumpur skyline.

SITI  
There are 5 different body shampoos  
to choose from. Sandalwood, cocoa  
butter, ylang-ylang, rose...

MAK  
Did you?

SITI  
Of course not. The production  
company did.

MAK  
Siti, why would they spend all this  
money on you?

SITI

Because I'm good. People are willing to pay if you're good!

MAK

I'm sure you're good. But you're not Hollywood good.

SITI

Money will come if you do what you-- can you get Putra here, please?

MAK

(yells)

Putra! Mummy wants to talk to you!

(to SITI)

He's too busy playing with your new toy.

Siti catches a glimpse of her son PUTRA (8, male) at the corner of the screen, playing with a DOCTOR TOY SET. A fancy toy way too expensive for a slum boy.

SITI

Your daughter may be a failure in life but your grandson will be a doctor.

MAK

Don't be silly. You're there in Malaysia making money for the family and I'm proud of you. How much is this thing?

SITI

200 Ringgit.

MAK

What's that in Indonesian Rupiah?

SITI

700,000.

MAK

Oh my, you are making money.

SITI

Now you know!

DING DONG! The doorbell rings. Annoyed, Siti opens the door to find it's just a HOTEL CLEANING LADY. She points at the 'Do Not Disturb' sign. The hotel cleaning lady stares at her and apologizes. Siti slams the door.

SITI

It's the cleaning lady. This is a 5-star hotel and they hire people who can't read signs?

(seeing Putra in the background)

Hello! Hello!

Putra ignores her, being more interested in his new toy than in his mother. Siti is hurt and Mak senses it.

MAK

Maybe he's forgotten you, Siti. Kids are like that. When they don't see their parents for too long--

DING DONG! Again, the doorbell rings.

MAK

I mean, you yourself forgot Putra's own birthday. Do you even know how old he is today...

Siti feels attacked.

MAK

See? You don't even remember.

SITI

Of course I--

DING DONG! DING DONG! DING DONG! The doorbell is getting annoying. Siti opens the door again. It's the damn cleaning lady again.

But this time, she WHIPS OUT A PISTOL and barges in, followed rapidly by a train of COUNTER TERRORISM OFFICERS.

CLEANING LADY

Hands in the air! Hands in the air!

In a mere few seconds, the entire room is filled with 2 dozen masked officers in full combat gear, armed with weapons ranging from submachine guns to assault rifles.

Siti drops her phone as she is tackled to the floor, her arms twisted to the back.

MAK (O.S.)

Siti, what's happening?

COUNTER-TERRORISM OFFICER

Do not resist! Do not move!



She freezes.

Then suddenly, she bursts into uncontrollable laughter. A long, hysterical laugh. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha...

SITI  
OK, I get it. Very funny, guys.

She tries to stand up.

SITI  
You got me!

A dozen guns are pointed at her.

COUNTER-TERRORISM OFFICER  
DO NOT MOVE!

SITI  
OK, stop it. This is getting  
stupid.

She tries to stand up again and peeps into the officer's body cam, laughing.

SITI  
So small! You can't even see  
anything!

COUNTER-TERRORISM OFFICER  
DO NOT MOVE OR WE WILL SHOOT!

She speaks into one of the officer's microphone.

SITI  
You got me, James. You got me.

BAM! The officer head butts her with his assault rifle. She yelps in pain as her nose starts to bleed.

SITI  
OK, the joke's gone too far. What  
the hell is wrong with you?

A machine gun is now within 2 inches of her nose, as she starts to realize something is amiss.

Meanwhile, Mak yells hysterically through the phone, wondering what is happening, as Siti is handcuffed and lifted to her feet. An officer picks up the phone. Mak yelps at the sight of so many scary men.

Another officer puts a BAG over Siti's head and she is quickly taken out of her room.

ON SITI'S PHONE: Putra takes a peep to see what is happening, as Mak frantically calls for help.

PUTRA (O.S.)

Ma?

But Siti is gone.

EXT. KUALA LUMPUR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY

At the same time. At the busy Kuala Lumpur International Airport where tens of thousands of passengers are making their way around, Doan is trying to reach someone on the phone. A plain girl looking awkward with her fancy Dior bag.

DOAN

(leaving a voice message)

Can't get you. I'm leaving.

She hails a cab and gets in.

DOAN

Hotel Concorde.

There's a traffic jam and the taxi is barely moving. Doan continues texting, with many other messages sent for the past 3 days marked with a single tick (the messages were not read). We catch snippets of the conversation like "R we on tomorrow?", "I'm worried abt U", "Just making sure right hall", "Arrival or departure?".

DOAN

(texting)

*I m going back 2 hotel. Give me a call.*

TAXI DRIVER

You Vietnamese?

DOAN

Yes.

TAXI DRIVER

Hooker?

DOAN

Actor.

TAXI DRIVER

Oh. You famous?

DOAN

*"If you pursue acting to get famous, you're doing it wrong."*

(seeing the driver confused)

Michelle Yeoh quote. What's the number of the Malaysian police?

TAXI DRIVER

999. Why? Malaysian police...they catch the good guys and let go the bad guys.

DOAN

My friend is missing.

Doan is already dialing.

Suddenly, the taxi stops. A FIGURE in a balaclava appears right outside her window, SMASHES the glass and opens the door.

Another figure drags Doan out and pins her to the floor, yelling "Hands in the air" repeatedly. She turns and sees dozens of heavily armed COUNTER-TERRORISM OFFICERS pointing guns at her.

Another officer warns the confused taxi driver to stay in the car.

As Doan processes all this, a bag is put over her head and she is led away.

DOAN

(pleading)

Wait, wait. I'm the good guy.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY (LATER)

At a police station, the two bewildered women are interrogated separately. We INTERCUT between Siti and Doan.

DOAN'S INTERROGATION:

INTERROGATOR #1

Doan Thi Huong. 28. Female.  
Vietnamese.

DOAN

It's my visa, right? I know I'm not supposed to be working on a tourist visa, but you know, acting isn't a job. It's a mental state. I'm actually quite good at--

SITI'S INTERROGATION:

SITI

--sucking dick. Come on, I know the routine. *'I suck you off, you let me off'*.

INTERROGATOR #2

I want to know one thing.

SITI

Yes! Yes! I'll swallow.

INTERROGATOR #2

Where were you on February 13?

DOAN'S INTERROGATION:

DOAN

Trying to find a date for what would otherwise be a lonely Valentine's Day.

INTERROGATOR #1

You were at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

DOAN

Not exactly where all the single guys are.

INTERROGATOR #1

Just so you know, everything that happens in this room is being recorded.

He points at the camera on Doan's left side.

DOAN

(referring to the left side of her face)

Great! You're getting my 'good side'.

INTERROGATOR #1

What you were doing at the airport?

DOAN  
I was acting--

SITI'S INTERROGATION:

SITI  
--in a reality show. You know, like  
a prank show.

INTERROGATOR #2  
Siti Aisyah, right?

SITI  
Yes.

INTERROGATOR #2  
Why do you keep calling it a prank  
show?

SITI  
Why do you keep calling it a crime?

EXT. A SEEDY CLUB (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - NIGHT

Outside a seedy club beneath the shadows of the famous twin  
towers, HOOKERS clamor to be picked up by male customers.

A TAXI DRIVER approaches a girl. It's Siti, dressed in heels  
and a sexy outfit, trying to attract male customers. Business  
is slow tonight.

INSERT: **3 weeks ago.**

SITI  
I'm offended you asked all the  
girls except me.

They're friends.

TAXI DRIVER  
But, none of them are keen. I don't  
get it. It's easy money.

SITI  
There's no such thing as easy  
money, bro.

He points at a mysterious MAN sitting in his taxi.

TAXI DRIVER  
Go talk to him.

SITI

Talking isn't usually what men want  
me to do with my mouth.

Suddenly, Siti spots a very drunk man - an abusive customer  
she wants to avoid.

SITI

Shit.  
(to the taxi driver)  
Don't tell him I'm here.

Siti turns to escape, sees the awaiting taxi and makes a  
split-second decision. She quickly slips into the front  
passenger seat, slams the door and ducks. Thankfully, the  
abusive customer has not spotted her.

Behind her is that mysterious man, JAMES (30's male), with a  
Korean accent.

SITI

So you're the man offering easy  
money that nobody wants.

She whips out her phone and starts texting, mildly interested  
in what James has to say.

SITI

So what's the deal?

JAMES

How much do you make a night?

SITI

Depends on how long they last.  
What's the deal?

JAMES

The deal is--I'm James by the way--  
the deal is, I work for a  
production company and we  
specialize in pranks.

SITI

(still busy texting)  
Uh-huh...

JAMES

We're looking for an actor to rub  
baby oil on people from behind. To  
give them a fright.

SITI

Uh-huh...

JAMES

These prank videos are very popular these days.

SITI

Interesting.

JAMES

The actor gets paid. For wiping baby oil on people. Easy money.

SITI

Good stuff.

JAMES

So, are you interested?

She peels her eyes from her screen and realizes the abusive customer is gone.

SITI

Nope.

She gets out. This conversation is over.

JAMES

You didn't answer me.

SITI

I just said no.

JAMES

I asked how much you make a night.

She closes the door and goes to the back where James sits. He winds down the window and she leans into the car.

SITI

James. At 12, I was a slum girl working in a factory. At 17, I married the owner of the factory. At 19, I gave birth to my son and then got a divorce. At 20, I came to KL, slept with hundreds of men and I've been in and out of detention 15 times. I am not smart enough to make a lot of money but I'm street smart enough to know money doesn't fall from the sky. A deal like this, there's a catch there.

JAMES

There's no catch--

SITI

Good luck.

JAMES

If you change your mind, I'm at Starbucks, Pavilion Mall at 2pm tomorrow.

She walks away before turning back.

SITI

What's your horoscope?

JAMES

Taurus.

SITI

I'm a Gemini. We're not compatible.

She walks off and heads back to her usual spot. The taxi driver looks at her, anticipating an answer.

SITI

Nope.

TAXI DRIVER

Why?

SITI

Did you know Geminis are very good at reading people?

TAXI DRIVER

They are?

SITI

We are. And that guy? Stay away from him.

INT. A RUNDOWN BAR (HANOI, VIETNAM)

Meanwhile, at a rundown BAR on a bustling street in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi.

INSERT: **Hanoi. 1,600 miles away.**

Doan enters the bar. Her friend and bar owner THUY (30's) greets her excitedly, with a BABY in her arms. Thuy takes a good look at Doan and gasps.

THUY

No lipstick?



DOAN  
Lipstick?

THUY  
You silly girl. First impressions!

Thuy ushers Doan to a table where a Korean man, known simply as MR Y (mid 30's male), sits. Thuy leaves them to get some beer.

MR Y  
Have you heard of Nguyen Thi Tan,  
Nguyen Van Hung, Cris Phan?

Doan nods.

MR Y  
Nguyen Thanh Nam, Van Leg, Son Tung  
M-TP?

DOAN  
They're the biggest...

MR Y  
My Tham, Thien Cookie, 365daband?

DOAN  
...celebrities...

MR Y  
Bich Phung, Truon Giang?

DOAN  
...in all of Vietnam.

MR Y  
They all started on YouTube.

Thuy comes with 2 beers.

THUY  
You two have been properly  
introduced?

DOAN  
Doan Thi Huong.

THUY  
This is Mr Y. He's looking for a  
talented actress to star in a prank  
show for YouTube...

MR Y

2 billion users. Second-most visited website in the world. 1 billion hours watched every single day.

THUY

He asked if I'd like to appear in his YouTube show but I said, who wants to watch an old hag like me. Right?

(tickling her baby)

Besides, I've got this little thing to take care of. But you, you'd be perfect.

Doan gets excited: *this is an important meeting*. But, Mr Y seems thoroughly unimpressed with her.

MR Y

Look, I've been in this line for a long time and I know in 2 seconds if a girl has the X factor, and there's nothing wrong if you don't. It's not something that can be--

DOAN

Oh..I, I, actually have a YouTube channel myself.

She shows Mr Y her channel on her mobile phone. In the video, she plays a sultry doll, interviewing people on the streets of Hanoi.

DOAN

I've been told I've got a good screen presence.

MR Y

Nice.

DOAN

I was in Vietnam Idol too.

THUY

Doan is a very talented performer.

MR Y

(losing interest)

Thuy, thank you--

THUY

She can sing, dance, act.

DOAN

If you want, I can sing right now.  
Thuy, lipstick. Come on!

Thuy hands Doan her lipstick. Doan puts it on like a pro, without a mirror.

MR Y

I need actors, not singers.

DOAN

I can play sexy vixen.

She pouts her lips, lets her hair down and turns into one. She's good.

DOAN

(raspy voice)  
You don't think I have the X  
factor?

MR Y

Keep going for auditions...

DOAN

If I knew I'd be meeting a  
producer, I'd come looking...like  
this.

She twists her hair and transforms into an innocent schoolgirl. She's really good.

Mr Y looks at her: *she's not getting it, is she?*

MR Y

In show biz, when it comes to  
casting, we ask - 'Are you The  
One?'. Everyone thinks they are  
'The One'. But to be 'The One', you  
have to have the X-factor. Doan,  
right? I'm sure you will be a very  
successful actor one day--

Suddenly, Doan hits the top of Mr Y's beer bottle with the bottom of her beer bottle. KLANK! Beer bursts out like a volcano eruption. Mr Y is all drenched. Thuy is horrified. Mr Y is stunned. But Doan waits for it.

It's coming...

.. and then...

...Mr Y bursts out laughing.

DOAN  
Did you say it's a prank show?

Mr Y looks at Doan: *there's something about her.*

MR Y  
Meet me for dinner at Ta Hien  
tomorrow.

Mr Y stands up to leave, wiping himself.

DOAN  
Will there be an audition?

MR Y  
Of course there is an audition.  
There is you...and 200 other girls.

Doan watches Mr Y leave. She yelps excitedly.

DOAN  
You didn't tell me I'm meeting a--

THUY  
How am I supposed to know you're  
going to turn up like this?

DOAN  
Thuy, it's my first audition  
in...whoa, 9 months!

THUY  
(to her baby)  
Well, you've to thank this little  
thing here. If she weren't sick, I  
would have gone for the audition  
myself.

Doan is still reeling from the encounter.

DOAN  
Do you know what the Butterfly  
Effect is?

THUY  
No.

DOAN  
The Butterfly Effect says that a  
tiny butterfly flapping its wings  
far away can cause a tornado weeks  
later.

THUY

I don't get you.

DOAN

Think about it. It's because your baby is sick, that you can't audition, and that's why you introduced me to Mr Y...and now I'm going for an audition that could change my life.

THUY

Well, when you become famous, you know who to thank.

Doan pinches the baby.

DOAN

Thank you!

THUY

Hey!

EXT. SHOPPING MALL (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY

The next day. At a high-end shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur. James is having coffee at Starbucks.

SITI (O.S.)

\$40 a night.

James turns around. It's Siti. She takes a seat.

SITI

You wanted to know how much I make a night. 2 customers, \$20 each. More or less.

JAMES

I had no doubt you'd come.

SITI

Where do we start?

JAMES

I pick a target. You run to the target from behind and you wipe this on their faces.

He takes out a SMALL BOTTLE OF BABY OIL.

SITI

That's it?

JAMES  
And you get paid.

Siti thinks hard. This sounds good and James looks convincing.

SITI  
What if the target gets upset or--

JAMES  
Then you say, "It's just a prank and you're on camera". And you point at the camera. People will usually laugh along.

She's not so sure about this.

JAMES  
Let's try it.

He points at a TARGET - a harmless SCHOOLGIRL busy texting on her phone. He opens the bottle of baby oil.

JAMES  
(pointing at the end of the row)  
Do it and then run that way. I'll meet you there.

SITI  
I thought I'm supposed to tell her this is a prank and point at the camera.

JAMES  
Yes, but this is a trial run. There are no cameras or crew.

He pours baby oil on her hand.

JAMES  
Ready?

Siti hesitates.

JAMES  
Something wrong?

SITI  
No. It's just--I'm scared.

JAMES  
Count to 3 and go. Don't think. One...two...three...

Siti gets up and walks up to the student hesitantly, baby oil in her hands. She looks back at James. He nods reassuringly.

She paces towards the student from behind.

Then, Siti WIPES HER FACE WITH BABY OIL, performed in one smooth move like she's done this a thousand times. The student is startled and turns around. Siti freezes.

She apologizes profusely and runs away. The student is disgusted, wiping herself with her sleeves, baffled by the whole thing.

Siti quickly escapes towards the other end of the row, where James is waiting.

JAMES

Good job.

SITI

Did you see it? Was it OK?

JAMES

Are you sure you've never done this before?

He gives her some tissue paper to wipe her hands. She's pleased with her performance: *it wasn't that hard.*

As she catches her breath, they walk along the mall, passing luxury brands. Gucci, Prada, Hermès...

SITI

I feel so bad for her. It's so disgusting to have baby oil on your face. I don't really see how it's funny.

JAMES

It's not about whether she thinks it's funny. It's about what the audience thinks.

Siti digests all this.

SITI

How did you know I'd come?

JAMES

You have a child...

Siti stares at him: *how does he know?*

JAMES

When a mother texts her child,  
there's that special glow on her  
face. You had that glow last night.  
How old is he?

She changes the subject.

SITI

When do we start?

JAMES

You don't know how old he is?

She unloads it all onto James.

SITI

My mother wants me back in  
Indonesia to be with him but she  
doesn't get that I'm here to work  
so I don't have to struggle to  
raise him like how she struggled to  
raise me. Money is not everything--

JAMES

--but everything is money.

Siti stares at James: *he gets her.*

SITI

Exactly. I will be back before my  
son turns 10 but meanwhile, I gotta  
work hard and--wait, how many  
pranks can I do in a day?

JAMES

As many as you want. 8, 10, 12. The  
more, the better.

SITI

I get paid for each prank?

JAMES

Do you always come to this mall?

SITI

Well, it is the most expensive mall  
in Kuala Lumpur so, no, I don't  
always come to this mall.

JAMES

What do you think \$100 can buy  
here?



SITI  
(looking around)  
Probably nothing much. Gucci,  
Prada, Hermès...

JAMES  
Go find out.

James whips out a \$100 bill and gives it to Siti.

SITI  
Wasn't that just a practice?

JAMES  
We always compensate accordingly.

SITI  
I get paid for practicing?

JAMES  
Even for practicing...

SITI  
(rummaging through her  
handbag)  
I don't have any change.

JAMES  
...you get paid \$100. Per prank.

Siti takes the \$100 and stares at *it: so much money for almost no work.*

JAMES  
If you're good, the money will  
come.

SITI  
When do we start?

JAMES  
I thought our horoscopes are not  
compatible.

SITI  
Money makes us compatible.

JAMES  
Tomorrow. Same time, same place.  
We're doing more practice.

James leaves.

Siti stares at the \$100 bill. Cold hard cash. A spark has been lit within her: *she could do hundreds of these and get really rich!*

She snaps out of her daze and realizes she is standing in front of a TOY SHOP. The ultra-expensive type - the kind she'll never step foot in.

She peeps into the shop, watching a couple buy a ridiculously expensive DOCTOR TOY SET for their little emperor, who proceeds to throw it on the floor.

She walks away. It's not for people like her.

EXT. BUSY STREET (HANOI, VIETNAM) - DAY

Mr Y walks down a busy street with Doan, briefing her on the prank show.

DOAN

So it's not possible to know in advance where the cameras will be?

MR Y

No. Otherwise you'll be too self-conscious.

DOAN

(referring to her face)  
I mean, I do have a 'good side' which is the left side...

MR Y

You look ugly!

That was unexpected.

Mr Y gives her a shopping bag. She takes out the item. It's an expensive-looking PINK JACKET.

MR Y

You want to be a celebrity? You gotta look like a celebrity.

Doan stares at the pink jacket. It's beautiful.

MR Y

Do you have a passport?

DOAN

No, never flown in a plane before.

They reach their destination. Doan looks at the sign.

DOAN

Karaoke?

MR Y

In this business, you got to network. There's a man I'd like you to meet.

INT. KARAOKE (HANOI) - NIGHT (LATER)

Mr Y and Doan enter the private room. She's wearing the pink jacket, looking quite like a celebrity. There's a man waiting there - a certain Mr HANAMORI (50's, male), who will soon be watching her the entire night.

MR Y

Mr Hanamori. Good drinker, good singer, bad English.

HANAMORI

Me English good!

Hanamori looks like he has started drinking already.

HANAMORI

Can you sing?

DOAN

Can I sing? I was in Vietnam Idol.

A WHILE LATER.

They're all half drunk and having a good time.

Doan is singing her heart out, belting V-pop prince Son Tung MT-P's hit song 'Hay Trao Cho Anh' (featuring Snoop Dogg). She's good, impressing the two men with her showmanship. She reaches the climax of the song and ends it like a diva.

The two men clap enthusiastically.

DOAN

(to Hanamori)

Your turn! Choose song!

HANAMORI

(in bad English)

You are the one!

She goes to the song selector and types 'You...Are...The...', trying to find the song.

HANAMORI  
(stopping her)  
No, no.

DOAN  
Rihanna? Can't be the one by Frank  
Sinatra...

MR Y  
He meant to say - you're the one.  
You're hired.

Doan drops her microphone: *what?*

MR Y  
Mr Hanamori thinks you've got it.

DOAN  
I thought there'll be an audition.

MR Y  
This is the audition. Mr Hanamori  
is my boss and the executive  
producer of the prank show.

DOAN  
(absorbing all this)  
Oh...

HANAMORI  
(in Korean)  
Tell her I think she's got the X-  
factor.

MR Y  
You've got the X-factor.

HANAMORI  
(in Korean)  
She would look good on camera.

MR Y  
You'll look good on camera.

HANAMORI  
(in Korean)  
And she's got nice tits.

MR Y  
You're got screen presence.

DOAN  
(blushing)  
Thank you!

MR Y  
As for your passport--

DOAN  
Yeah, I told you I don't have a--

MR Y  
Yes, you do.

He hands her a passport with her name and picture on it. Doan looks at it: *how did he--?*

But she thinks nothing of it, preoccupied with thoughts of stardom and riches.

MR Y  
We start practising tomorrow.  
Are you left-handed or right-handed?

DOAN  
(pre-lap)  
Right.

MR Y  
(pre-lap)  
Then you go to the left...

INT. HANOI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (HANOI, VIETNAM) - DAY

Passengers crossing paths under the sign: **Hanoi International Airport**. Doan is shuffling her feet like a boxer. Her training has begun.

MR Y  
...as you wipe the baby oil from the right side. Your target's first reaction is to instinctively turn right. But...he can't see you. Because?

DOAN  
I'm now on the left.

MR Y  
Exactly. You mirror him in reverse. Then, he will instinctively turn to the left, but he can't see you too.

Doan digests all the technicalities behind the movements.

DOAN  
Because I'm now on his right side.

MR Y

Yes, you mirror him in reverse. By then you're walking away from him. That's why it's called the 'left-right-left footwork'. Classic pickpocket technique.

DOAN

Reverse mirroring, left-right-left...

MR Y

Give me your right hand.

Mr Y puts some baby oil on Doan's right palm.

MR Y

Put a generous amount.

DOAN

What's a generous amount?

He squirts a little too much.

MR Y

This is a generous amount. Baby oil is great for the prank. It's sticky, it's gross but...it's harmless. Now, I want you to forget about--

We INTERCUT between Siti's training at the shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur and Doan's training at Hanoi International Airport.

SITI'S TRAINING.

James is explaining the technique.

JAMES

--the 3 A's.

SITI

Approach...

JAMES

Approach from behind confidently.

SITI

Aim...

JAMES

Aim at the place where you're wiping the baby oil on.

SITI  
Attack. No hesitation.

James nods approvingly. He then picks TARGET #1.

JAMES  
Never take things for granted,  
never put your guard down, and  
never--

DOAN'S TRAINING.

Mr Y squirts baby oil on Doan's palm.

MR Y  
--give it your best. Baby oil on  
palm, not on fingers. For maximum  
surface area.

DOAN  
Got it.

Doan approaches TARGET #2 and executes the 'left-right-left'  
move brilliantly. The startled man desperately wipes the  
strange substance off his face. It's a success!

Doan runs back to Mr Y and gives him a high-five (with the  
other hand of course).

MR Y  
Good job. How are you feeling?

DOAN  
It's good. I'm feeling really--

SITI'S TRAINING.

Siti apologizes to TARGET #3. She's panicking.

SITI  
--sorry, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.

She runs back to James. He is slightly frustrated.

JAMES  
It's really not that hard.  
(pointing at Target #3)  
That guy is literally an open  
target. He's on his phone,  
distracted. You can't find a more--

DOAN'S TRAINING.

Mr Y squirts baby oil, as he always does.

MR Y

--difficult target. Just a little tougher. For practice.

(pointing at TARGET #4)

That one.

Doan marches forward confidently. She tries to use her right hand to wipe his right side, but the angle isn't right. So she transfers baby oil onto her left hand instead but finds herself entangled with the wrong footwork. She screws up the hand-foot coordination and panics.

Target#4 catches her in the middle of the act and berates her.

TARGET #4

What's wrong with you!

He's furious and chases after her for a bit.

Doan loses him and runs back to a very displeased Mr Y.

MR Y

200 girls, Doan.

DOAN

What?

MR Y

That's how many girls we've shortlisted who would kill to get an opportunity like this. Hanamori has high standards and expects nothing but--

SITI'S TRAINING.

JAMES

---the worst. That's the worst-case scenario. You screw up, the target chases after you, you outrun them. No big deal.

Siti heads towards TARGET #5 but suddenly stops. James groans: *not again*. A PASSING MAN is crossing path with TARGET #5 and in a split second, Siti wipes the baby oil on Target #5. He turns around and sees the passing man and mistakenly berates him. It was a brilliant move!

Siti heads back towards James, knowing James would approve.

JAMES

Not bad. Not bad.



Siti is pleased with herself.

JAMES  
No resting. Next.

He points at TARGET #6.

MONTAGE (TRAINING CONTINUES)

1. Mr Y squirts baby oil as always. Doan wipes baby oil on TARGET #7 successfully. Mr Y approves.

2. Siti wipes baby oil on TARGET #8. He chases after her but Siti outpaces him.

3. Doan wipes baby oil on TARGET #9. She tries to even wipe it on the other side. Her confidence is growing.

4. Siti wipes baby oil on TARGET #10. Like a boss.

5. Doan wipes baby oil on TARGET #11. She even takes her time to look good doing it. Mr Y smiles, pleased with her progress.

6. Siti wipes baby oil on TARGET #12. Heck, she even goes for TARGET #13...and TARGET #14!

7. Doan wipes baby oil on TARGET #15. Mr Y high-fives her. Finally, some validation.

8. Siti wipes baby oil on TARGET #16. She's got it!

END MONTAGE.

Siti and Doan are now in tip-top condition.

SITI'S TRAINING.

JAMES  
I think you're ready.

He whips out another \$100. She holds the money reverently like she's getting it for the first time.

JAMES  
See you on Wednesday, 9am. We will meet at--

EXT. HANOI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (HANOI, VIETNAM) - DAY  
(LATER)

End of practice day. Doan is on the phone with Thuy, barely controlling her excitement.

DOAN  
--Kuala Lumpur International  
Airport! That's where the first  
episode will be shot!

Thuy screams excitedly.

DOAN  
My first flight on a plane and I'm  
in business class!

THUY  
You deserve this, Doan.

Doan suddenly gets emotional.

DOAN  
I never thanked you enough for  
this. For Mr Y.

THUY  
Don't be silly. This is all your  
own effort.

DOAN  
You're a good friend, Thuy. You  
are.

THUY  
Finally, your big break!

EXT. SHOPPING MALL (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY

End of practice day. Siti walks past *that* toy shop again -  
the one she didn't dare enter previously.

But today, she steps in confidently and goes straight to *that*  
toy - a DOCTOR TOY SET - the same one we saw earlier. She  
looks at the price. It's expensive. But she takes it with no  
hesitation and goes to the counter.

SITI  
Can I have this wrapped?

SALESGIRL  
Sure. How old is the child?

Siti stares at her. Silence.

SITI  
Do you ship to Indonesia?

INT. KUALA LUMPUR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (KUALA LUMPUR,  
MALAYSIA) - DAY

Doan and Mr Y arrive at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. Doan has just experienced her first flight. She's dressed like a celebrity, with her fancy pink jacket. She strolls her luggage towards...

INT. LUXURY HOTEL (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY (LATER)

...the check-in counter of a luxury hotel. Mr Y gives their passports to the receptionist. Doan spots Mr Y's North Korean passport and sees his name for the first time - RHI JI-HYON.

DOAN  
Do people call you Ji-Hyon or Ri?

MR Y  
(snapping)  
You will call me Mr Y.

DOAN  
OK.

Mr Y notices a teddy bear, a souvenir from the hotel. He gestures to the receptionist that he wants it.

MR Y  
Charge it to my room.

RECEPTIONIST  
(looking at the passport)  
Sure, Mr...

MR Y  
Mr Y.

Mr Y gives the teddy bear to Doan.

DOAN  
No guy has ever given me a teddy bear before.

MR Y  
(firmly)  
Practice on it. Your hand movements still need work.

Doan is taken aback: *what's up with this guy?*

MR Y

Then sleep early. Big day tomorrow.

INT. FINE DINE RESTAURANT (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - SAME NIGHT

Meanwhile, Siti is celebrating her birthday with her two friends CITRA and CAHYA (females, 20's). There's a balloon that says 'Happy Birthday' and Siti is wearing a paper crown. But the mood is tense. They're in the middle of an argument that's about to blow up.

SITI

It's embarrassing.

CITRA

We haven't ordered. We can still leave.

SITI

(sternly)

We're not leaving, Citra!

Siti is pissed. She snaps her finger at the WAITER.

SITI

You are both being very ridiculous. Seriously, stop making a scene--

The waiter arrives.

WAITER

Oh, it's a birthday.

SITI

(to waiter)

Actually, it's an intervention. My friends here--

(to her friends)

--my friends for 15 years--

(to the waiter)

--tricked me into coming for my own birthday party that turns out to be an intervention--

CAHYA

It's not an intervention.

SITI

(to waiter)

--because I've been apparently spending too much money. Throwing money around. Spending beyond my limits. But boy, they've not seen anything yet!

(going through the menu)

One wagyu A5, medium rare...  
Matsutake mushroom...erm, white  
pearl albino caviar...we'll take  
the sashimi...

The waiter writes down, bemused.

CITRA

OK, you've made your point.

SITI

(to the waiter)

How's your dry-cured Iberian ham?  
Good? We'll have that. Artichoke  
soup with black truffles, yes I  
want that...

CITRA

We're not that hungry.

SITI

(to the waiter)

Oh, yes we are.

(reading the menu)

Lobster Pomodoro...cured scallop  
with Urfa pepper...we'll take the  
Lobster Pomodoro. Oh, what's your  
second most expensive wine?

Citra and Cahya watch in horror.

WAITER

(bemused, checking the  
menu)

That'll be the Château Lafite--

SITI

We'll take that...and the most  
expensive wine too.

WAITER

Sure! Let me repeat your order.

As he repeats the order, the tension is palpable between the 3 women. Siti gestures he got the order right and he goes off. They're left alone now.

CITRA

There were a few times when you believed in something a little too much...

SITI

This is different. You know it.

CITRA

...and you jumped in wholeheartedly, when it is clear as day to the rest of us that they were scams.

SITI

So you want to protect me. I get it. But I've told you--

CAHYA

(imitating Siti)

*"But James is different. I'm a Gemini and I'm good with reading people."*

CITRA

\$100 per prank. Who the hell pays \$100 for doing nothing?

CAHYA

(exasperated)

This whole thing is a scam, Siti Aisyah and we're the only people who care enough to tell that to your face!

A long silence.

SITI

Every year, I pretend I don't remember my birthday. Not because I have a bad memory. But because I was too fucking poor to afford any special meals, and I'd rather act like I don't remember than to have to spend money I don't have. But today, for once, in my life, I can...so can I please just have a fucking normal birthday without you-

-

The waiter appears with the expensive wine.

WAITER

Let's start with--

SITI  
Another bottle, please.

CAHYA  
Stop it, Siti. We don't have enough  
cash for this.

SITI  
Oh, you don't have to worry about  
that.

She takes a stack of bills out of her bag and throws it on  
the table. Everyone is now watching.

SITI  
Enjoy the dinner.

She storms off.

SITI  
I won't apologize for being rich!

Citra and Cahya are left stunned.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY

In the luxury hotel, Doan is on a video call with Thuy.

DOAN  
Say it! Come on, come on!

THUY  
Stop it! I want to see the--

DOAN  
Say it!

Thuy reluctantly pretends to be a paparazzi and Doan a  
celebrity. Thuy makes clicking camera sounds and pretends to  
take photos of Doan.

THUY  
"Give me a smile!"

Doan starts posing and looks into the camera, like a pro.

THUY  
"Look over here!"

Doan is in her element. Posing, turning, smiling...

But Thuy stops abruptly.

THUY  
No difference.

DOAN  
What? None at all?

THUY  
Nope.

DOAN  
I just did a smize.

THUY  
You don't look like you're engaged  
with the camera.

DOAN  
You're blind!

THUY  
Make love to the camera!

DOAN  
I just did! Urgh, you're not  
helping.

THUY  
Now, show me the room!

Doan finally relents.

DOAN  
I present to you...

Doan points the phone to the Petronas Twin Towers, the world's tallest twin towers commanding over the Kuala Lumpur skyline that is just literally outside her hotel window.

THUY  
(seriously impressed)  
My goodness.

DOAN  
It's 30 seconds walk.

She walks to the bathroom, showing off the amenities and the jaw-dropping view. She points at a champagne bottle.

DOAN  
Complimentary.

THUY  
Have you used the bathtub yet?



She walks back to the living room.

DOAN

Not yet. I need to practice tonight. I'll have time to enjoy all this tomorrow.

THUY

You should do it now. To relax.

DOAN

No, no. Tomorrow. Tonight, I need to pick what I'm wearing.

Doan points the video to a few pieces of CLOTHES laid on the bed.

THUY

I really like the red one.

DOAN

Too sexy, no?

THUY

Haven't you seen all those Hollywood celebrities? You got to look glamorous, sexy...

DOAN

I'm not so sure if I want to look too sexy. I mean, look at Michelle Yeoh. She doesn't rely on her cleavage. She's a serious actor.

THUY

I still think you need to go for the glam look.

(to her baby)

Right? Don't you think so?

DOAN

I've actually decided on this one.

She takes a white sweater. It's a PLAIN WHITE SWEATER WITH THE WORD 'LOL' - unremarkable to say the least.

THUY

(referring to the word on the shirt)

What does it say?

Doan holds the white sweater to the camera.

DOAN

It says LOL.

THUY

No, it says 'I'm a second-rate actor destined to act in cheap movies'. That's what it says.

DOAN

I think it's ok. 'Laugh out loud'. Laugh at my pranks. Get it? Get it?

Thuy is not impressed.

DOAN

You know, Thuy. This could have been you.

THUY

It could not have been me. God wants you to do this. That's why He made me set you up with Mr Y.

DOAN

I think I know what this 'LOL' refers to.

THUY

What?

DOAN

2 weeks ago, I was tending buffalos in Nam Dinh. Today, I'm in a 5-star hotel in of the biggest cities in Asia acting in a reality show. LOL indeed.

Thuy gets it.

THUY

Life is unpredictable.

DOAN

Very. Good night and hug my little lucky baby for me.

Doan ends the call. She walks to the bathroom again and stares at the magnificent Kuala Lumpur skyline. She decides: *heck it.*

She turns on the water, throws in a couple of bath bombs and slips into the bathtub. She uncorks the champagne and sips as she admires the night view: *so this is celebrity life...*

INT. STUDIO IN NEW YORK - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Back to the present day. The hostile host continues to provoke his two guests, playing to the gallery.

HOSTILE HOST

The question 54% of the audience in the studio, 20 million people out there watching this and the entire world following your saga are asking is this...

(smart-ass punchline)

Are you two stupid?

The audience roars with laughter.

HOSTILE HOST

Wait. You think...you actually think...

(to Siti)

That someone would pay a single-mother hooker a hundred bucks to play pranks...

(to Doan)

That someone would pluck a farm girl out of obscurity and make her a star...

(to the audience)

...because I sure want some of that delusion!

He's clearly enjoying himself.

HOSTILE HOST

Siti, I want to know--

Suddenly, Siti gets up and storms off on live TV.

HOSTILE HOST

Woops, there she goes again.

SITI

You conned us into this show!

She's gone. Doan chases after her.

HOST

Actually, the real con job was the *other* show!

The audience is in stitches now, enjoying all the drama.

HOST

Alright, let's take a break!

Music comes up and the audience applauds enthusiastically, hungry for more.

INT. STUDIO IN NEW YORK (WINGS) - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

At the wings, in the shadows away from the studio lights. Doan catches up to Siti.

SITI  
Let's go. Please.

DOAN  
We can't leave now.

SITI  
Why? We have been freed by the court of law, so what more do you want?

DOAN  
And now we must be freed by the other court.

SITI  
No, we don't. We can just walk off. Right now.

DOAN  
The news outlets, the internet, social media, the people--*those* people out there...they are more powerful than the judge. They can make innocent people guilty. And make guilty people innocent.  
(beat)  
Siti, we're never truly free till they decide we're free.

They've gone through this conversation many times before. Siti knows Doan has a point.

DOAN  
I want to be able to walk down the street and buy *goi cuon* without people going like, "Weren't you the girl--"...

SITI  
There will always be someone who doesn't believe us.

DOAN

And I don't blame them. To be fair,  
when we first met, even we  
ourselves didn't buy each other's  
story.

Siti gets it. She calms down.

SITI

When we first met...  
(recollecting)  
...we were at the top of the world.

DOAN

It was the best time of our lives.

INT. KUALA LUMPUR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (KUALA LUMPUR,  
MALAYSIA) - DAY

Back to 5 years ago. It's the big day.

An international airport filled with thousands of passengers.  
We INTERCUT between a RESTAURANT where Doan and Mr Y are,  
with a CAFE where Siti and James are.

RESTAURANT (Doan and Mr Y).

Doan is making small talk while Mr Y is busy texting and  
scanning the airport with his eyes.

DOAN

Are we working tomorrow?

MR Y

No, just today.

DOAN

When's the next prank?

MR Y

Urm, 3 days from now.

DOAN

Same place?

MR Y

Yes.

Mr Y scans the crowd. Doan points at a target.

DOAN

What about her?

MR Y  
I said, I choose the target.

DOAN  
Sure. It's just that women are less scary.

MR Y  
But men are more forgiving.

DOAN  
(referring to her face)  
So, where are the cameras? I hope they can get my good side.

Mr Y ignores her, busy texting.

DOAN  
And...after I do the prank, I run off and then meet you here?

MR Y  
Yes. I'll be right here waiting.

DOAN  
Don't I need to--

CAFE (Siti and James).

Siti and James are observing the crowd. James too is busy texting and scanning the crowd.

SITI  
--tell the target he or she is in a prank show and point at the hidden cameras?

JAMES  
Yes, you can.

SITI  
So, where are the cameras?

JAMES  
There are cameras all around.

SITI  
So, if you tell me where they are, then I know where to point, so I can tell him or her--

JAMES  
It's a he.

Siti looks around: *have we picked a target?*

James looks up and his eyes fixate on a PORTLY MAN (40's male, Korean looking).

JAMES  
That's the target.

SITI  
Can I go to the toilet first?

JAMES  
Now!

Siti stands up instinctively, having been trained so many times to follow instructions.

JAMES  
(pointing at the baby oil)  
Don't forget the--

RESTAURANT (Doan and Mr Y).

MR Y  
--baby oil! Come on, move.

Doan puts her hand out, expecting Mr Y to put baby oil on her hands, as he always does. He stares at her, not budging.

Doan is mildly confused: *he always puts baby oil for her.*

She puts the baby oil herself. Mr Y leans back like he's avoiding Kryptonite.

MR Y  
Close the cover. Come on, move.  
He's going away.

Doan puts the baby oil bottle cap back: *why can't he do it?*

MR Y  
Go! Go! Go!

The portly man is now walking towards the FLIGHT DISPLAY, scanning for his departure time.

Doan snakes her way through the crowd towards him. But, she bumps into a piece of luggage and when she looks up, the portly man is nowhere to be seen!

Siti on the other hand tries to catch up with the portly man. He has started moving again.

50 feet away....

Doan is disoriented. She's lost her target. Like a buoy floating amidst a sea of people.

Siti, eyes on the target, picks up speed and narrows the distance, her head repeating the 3A's.

40 feet away...

Doan finds the man finally. She rushes towards him, with her right hand ready to execute her reverse mirror technique.

30 feet...

20 feet...

10 feet...

Alas, a passenger blocks Doan in her track. She does the hand switch technique Mr Y was so impressed with earlier - deftly transferring the baby oil to her left hand instead.

5 feet...

BIRD'S EYE VIEW: the two women close in on their target.

3 feet...

Just as Doan is about to wipe baby oil on the portly man's face, she sees ANOTHER WOMAN approaching the man too. It's Siti.

Siti and Doan are surprised to see each other: *who is this other actor?*

Their eyes meet. They smile at each other gleefully, almost feeling guilty they're doing this.

**In one decisive move perfected through many trial runs, they wipe the man's face with baby oil.**

A clean execution. A perfect 10.

The man snaps at them angrily. He watches the two women run away while shooting each other a look: *are you part of this too?*

They escape towards separate toilets to wash their hands, pleased that it all went well.

Their first prank was over in a second.

A WHILE LATER...



When Siti and Doan head back to find James and Mr Y, they are nowhere to be found.

At the CAFE.

Siti stares at the table she was at 15 minutes ago, and it's already occupied by other diners.

At the RESTAURANT.

Doan tries calling Mr Y. No answer.

Baffled, Doan sends Mr Y a WhatsApp message - "whr r u?". But the message has only 1 tick (message successfully sent but not delivered yet).

We ZOOM into Doan's phone as we race through many messages that will be sent over the next few minutes.

*"Did u c me? I was good".*

*"whr r u?"*

*"pls pick up"*

*"I cant find u".*

*"C u 3 days then"*

Still 1 tick.

INT. DEPARTURE HALL KUALA LUMPUR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY

**SUPER: 3 days later**

We're still on Doan's phone but we now see many more messages - all of them from her and not a single reply from Mr Y. We catch snippets of texts like - *"r we still meeting?", "I'll go in case u r there", "I'm on d way 2 KLIA"*.

We zoom out and see Doan, very stressed, wandering aimlessly at the airport with her fancy Dior bag. She's already given up finding Mr Y.

DOAN

(leaving a voice message)

Hi Mr Y. You asked me to come again in 3 days and I'm here. Can't get you. I'm leaving. See you at the hotel.

She hails a cab and gets on. She talks to the taxi driver, as we saw earlier.

We are now looking from outside the taxi from a different point of view.

Three dozen COUNTER-TERRORISM OFFICERS are moving in stealthily towards Doan's taxi.

A FIGURE in a balaclava sneaks up to Doan's side of the window and SMASHES it to open the door.

Another officer drags Doan out and pins her to the floor. They yell "Hands in the air" repeatedly. Doan turns and sees dozens of heavily armed counter-terrorism officers pointing guns at her.

Another officer warns the confused taxi driver to stay in the car.

As Doan processes all this, a bag is put over her head and she is led away.

DOAN  
(pleading)  
Wait, wait. I'm the good guy.

INT. A LUXURY HOTEL PENTHOUSE (KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA) - DAY

We're back at Siti's arrest. A bag has been put over her head.

PUTRA (O.S.)  
Mak?

She is now being hurriedly dragged out into the corridor.

SITI  
James. Stop it! What are you doing?

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

We're back at the interrogations, where we INTERCUT between Siti and Doan.

SITI'S INTERROGATION.

Siti is baffled by the line of questioning.

SITI  
You know, like a prank show.

INTERROGATOR #2  
Siti Aisyah. Right?

SITI  
Yes.

INTERROGATOR #2  
Why do you keep calling it a prank  
show?

SITI  
Why do you keep calling it a crime?

DOAN'S INTERROGATION.

DOAN  
Why do you keep implying that it  
wasn't? You can call my producer Mr  
Y and verify this easily.

Police Interrogator #1 shows her a picture of a Korean man.

INTERROGATOR #1  
How do you know him?

She shakes her head: *never seen him before.*

INTERROGATOR #1  
This man is dead.

She doesn't know what to do with this information. He shows  
her a photo of herself and Siti wiping baby oil on his face.

Doan now realizes who the man is. It's the portly man from  
the prank.

INTERROGATOR #1  
45 minutes after you attacked him,  
he died.

DOAN  
Huh?

INTERROGATOR #1  
How did you know the victim?

Doan shakes her head.

INTERROGATOR #1  
How many times have you met?

She is perplexed: *what's happening?*

The questioning continues with Doan just staring blankly at him.

SITI'S INTERROGATION.

INTERROGATOR #2

A woman like you couldn't have executed this alone. Give me names. Don't take the fall yourself.

SITI

I have never even met this man before. He's a random target and I need to call my friends.

INTERROGATOR #2

Names.

SITI

Cahya and Citra.

INTERROGATOR #2

They're your North Korean handlers?

SITI

No, they're my Indonesian friends I need to call because I don't know why the fuck I'm here!

INTERROGATOR #2

Oh, you do.

DOAN'S INTERROGATION

DOAN

No, I don't! And I want to call my embassy.

INTERROGATOR #2

They're on the way.

DOAN

3 days ago I was acting in a reality show and I've never met this man--

INTERROGATOR #2

You told me that 3 times.

DOAN

Great. Then why do you keep asking?

INTERROGATOR #2

Is that your version of the story?

DOAN

Yes.

INTERROGATOR #2

You want to know my version of the story?

Interrogator #2 goes close to Doan and whispers.

INTERROGATOR #2

I think you're a North Korean agent. I think you're a trained assassin. I think you've been practicing what to say in the event you were caught. I think everything you're saying now is scripted. I think--no, I know you killed this man. What do you think of this version?

Doan breaks down: *this is all absurd.*

DOAN

I want my embassy. Please.

INTERROGATOR #2

They're getting you a lawyer and I hope they find a good one because the murder was literally caught on camera.

DOAN

I killed a man I've never met, in a murder I don't remember committing?

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY (LATER)

Siti and Doan are in the same cell, eyeing each other suspiciously. Deep mistrust.

DOAN

Are you just going to stare at me like that the whole night?

SITI

Till you talk, yeah.

DOAN

Sorry, I can't help. Because I'm in the same boat as you are.

SITI

Are we?

DOAN

Yeah, we are.

(beat)

I need to get some sleep.

SITI

Go ahead.

DOAN

I'm not sure if it's a good idea. There's a North Korean agent in the same cell. If you can kill the guy, you can kill me too.

SITI

Do you know what 'go jyeo' means?

DOAN

It means 'fuck off'. Why? I watch K-drama and I know a couple of Korean words and now I'm a North Korean agent?

SITI

No, not at all.

(beat)

Unless you're an actual North Korean agent who watches K-drama--

DOAN

Listen, I'm just an actor. If you can call someone who failed 287 auditions an actor. I was tending buffalos in a small village in Vietnam. Met a producer. Changed my life. Got cast in this show. Had my big break. Flew first class. Came to this foreign country. Appeared on a prank show for 2 minutes. The next thing I know, I'm here. That's my story.

Siti stares at her, like kindred spirits.

SITI

Me too. I just wanted to make some money. My son never had a new toy in his life. All hand-me-downs. Or whatever people would donate to us.

DOAN

All I wanted is to make something out of my life, you know? If I fail, at least I tried.

SITI  
I can relate to that.

DOAN  
How the hell did we two ordinary women to becoming murder suspects?

SITI  
It's just a clear-cut case of mistaken identity.

DOAN  
We'll be out soon. The police will finally realize their mistake. I mean, all we did was wipe baby oil on that man and he died? Doesn't make sense.

Suddenly, Siti begins clapping.

SITI  
Well done.

She continues clapping. Sarcastically.

SITI  
If you were an actual actor, you'd be very, very successful.

Doan is confused. Siti continues that slow, deliberate clap.

SITI  
That's really good. You should actually be a real actor--

She leaps towards Doan, grabs her by the collar and pushes her against the wall.

SITI  
--instead of a North Korean agent!

It's full-on rage now.

SITI  
Who are you? What have you done to that man? Why are we here?

Doan is startled.

DOAN  
I told you--

SITI  
Lies! Lies! You're one of them.  
(yelling out)  
Guards!

DOAN  
We're in the same boat, damn it!

SITI  
(yelling out)  
Guards!

DOAN  
I'm as innocent as you are!

SITI  
How do I know you're telling the  
truth?

DOAN  
I guess there's no way you ever  
will.

SITI  
If you were really in a prank show,  
where were the cameras?

Doan lets the question sink in. She knows the answer but there's a realization welling in her head. It hits her: *oh my god.*

DOAN  
(devastated by the  
realization)  
There were no cameras all along.

Siti stares at Doan. Silence as she digests the answer: *looks like she's telling the truth.*

Siti lets go of her and composes herself.

SITI  
(realization hitting her  
too)  
There were no cameras all along.

Siti straightens Doan's collar apologetically. Doan swats her hands away.

DOAN  
Go jyeo!



INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

HISYAM TEH (50's male) and GOOI SOON SENG (50's, male), two of the top criminal lawyers in the country, walk down the corridor for a meeting with their clients Doan and Siti.

Both men are dressed in their legal robes but on closer inspection, Hisyam's is crisp and well-ironed but Gooi's looks like he just took it out of the dryer. There's a bit of a competition going on with these two good friends.

HISYAM

They say lawyers are liars but have they met murder suspects? They won't offer anything but point-blank denial.

GOOI

I thought you don't do murder cases.

HISYAM

But the Vietnamese embassy said I should meet her and decide for myself. They said--

GOOI

--"This case is much bigger than it seems".

HISYAM

(realizing)

So, the two embassies have been talking.

GOOI

Well, that's good news. The bigger the case, the more billable hours I make.

HISYAM

So why did you take up the case?

GOOI

(emphasizing)

The bigger the case, the more billable hours I make.

Hisyam laughs.

HISYAM

You know that joke... 'why do sharks not eat lawyers, coz sharks don't eat their own?' You're the reason for this joke.

GOOI

Hey, everyone loves money. You don't love money?

They reach the door to the prison meeting room.

HISYAM

I hate to burst your bubble, but this is a straightforward case. They killed the man. We appeal for a lighter sentence if they reveal who they work for. I don't think your billable hours are going to be that long.

GOOI

Damn, why am I wasting my time then?

INT. PRISON MEETING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

They enter the room and see Doan and Siti sitting handcuffed.

GOOI

Good morning. Your embassies have made arrangements for legal representation.

(to Siti)

Gooi Soon Seng. I'm your lawyer.

HISYAM

(to Doan)

Hisyam Teh.

They take their seats. Gooi takes out his laptop.

GOOI

You're being investigated for murder.

SITI

A murder we don't remember committing.

Gooi plays a couple of CCTV recordings.

CCTV RECORDINGS PLAYING.

The first one shows the portly man looking at the flight schedule. We've seen this earlier. Doan and Siti watch themselves run out from two different directions to rub baby oil on his face. He snaps at them as they escape.

Siti and Doan now see the continuation of what happened: the visibly annoyed man tries to wipe away the baby oil. He then goes to a POLICEMAN, gesturing that he has been attacked.

He follows the policeman to a clinic for medical treatment. By now, he is gasping for air. Within mere minutes, he goes into a coma; his face grimacing in extreme pain, suffering immensely during the last few minutes of his life.

GOOI

Meanwhile, this happened...

Another CCTV shows Mr Y and Hanamori coming out of a toilet with DIFFERENT CLOTHES and boarding a plane. They look almost unrecognizable.

GOOI

That plane left Kuala Lumpur.

Another CCTV shows an ambulance being called and medical staff putting the portly man on a stretcher.

GOOI

He didn't survive. As you know.

CCTV RECORDINGS END.

SITI

All we did was wipe baby oil on him.

HISYAM

So you're saying you both had no idea he died.

SITI

I know *I* didn't kill this man.  
(gesturing to Doan)  
I'm not sure about her.

DOAN

(ignoring Siti)  
We both didn't know he died.

HISYAM

You've no idea who this man is?

Siti and Doan shake their heads.

HISYAM

His passport says 'Kim Chol'. But  
that wasn't his real name.

We are transported to--

INT. NORTH KOREAN STATE TV (PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA) - DAY

A North Korean news studio where an air of great grief hangs  
in the air.

**INSERT: North Korea. 6 years ago.**

The STATE TV NEWSCASTER, in black, fights back tears as she  
announces with a patriotic voice:

STATE TV NEWSCASTER

I am announcing in the most woeful  
mind that our Great Leader Kim Jong-  
il...

A PUBLIC SQUARE IN PYONGYANG.

A sea of North Korean citizens waiting anxiously for news.

STATE TV NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

...passed away...

The crowd erupts into hysteria, beating their chest, pulling  
their hair, jumping in disbelief, hugging each other in  
unrestrained grief...

STATE TV NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

...due to a sudden illness on his  
way to a field trip on December 17,  
2011...

CLOSE UP ON INTERVIEWEES.

NORTH KOREAN WOMAN #1

(in disbelief)

We cannot accept this news  
because...

NORTH KOREAN OFFICIAL

(with great sorrow)

...it is impossible our Great  
Leader has died.

NORTH KOREAN MAN #1

Our general was always working for  
the people's happiness...

NORTH KOREAN MAN #2

...and this was what he was doing  
when he died, working as he always  
does, travelling on a train...

NORTH KOREAN WOMAN #2

Now the people are without their  
leader...

VARIOUS SCENES.

...of school children screaming, soldiers collapsing from  
grief, ordinary men and women kneeling in front of the statue  
of Kim Jong-il...

STATE TV NEWSCASTER

Under his son Kim Jong-un's  
leadership, we will change sorrow  
into strength and bravery...

KIM JONG-IL'S FUNERAL.

Surreal scenes of American-made 1950's cars in a convoy with  
a gigantic photo of Kim Jong-il, in a FUNERAL PROCESSION in  
snow-covered Pyongyang.

International journalists report the scene.

REUTERS NEWS ANCHOR

...it was not immediately clear  
after his death whether Kim Jong-un  
would in fact take full power, and  
what his exact role in a new  
government would be...

Walking alongside is a young KIM JONG-UN, the future dictator  
of North Korea. Crowds of anguished grieverers are held back  
from rushing towards the hearse in their last moment with  
Dear Leader. The soundtrack: more wailing that looks more  
staged than real.

Kim Jong-un is spotted grieving in the mausoleum, looking  
lost, unsure about everything that is happening.

BBC NEWS ANCHOR

...some saw Kim Jong-un as being  
too inexperienced to immediately  
lead the country...

KIM IL-SUNG SQUARE.

A sea of people in black in front of a giant screen, watching  
in anticipation the inauguration of their new leader.

AL JAZEERA NEWS ANCHOR  
 ...but the propaganda chief  
 directly names Kim Jong-un as the  
 new Supreme Leader...

PROPAGANDA CHIEF  
 ...the great successor to the  
 revolutionary cause of Juche,  
 outstanding leader of the party,  
 army and people, respected comrade  
 who is identical to Supreme  
 Commander Kim Jong-il, a great  
 person born of heaven, we vow with  
 bleeding tears to call Kim Jong-un  
 our Supreme Commander, our  
 Leader...

NUCLEAR LAUNCHES.

Kim Jong-un, now a confident leader of North Korea, announces  
 nuclear plans.

NBC NEWS ANCHOR  
 ...and the unpredictable behaviour  
 that affects not just America but  
 the global community...

A series of nuclear launches, one after another, causing  
 global anxiety. World leaders react.

ASSOCIATED PRESS NEWS ANCHOR  
 But little did they know then, Kim  
 Jong-un would one day cement his  
 name in history, testing 4 of North  
 Korea's 6 nuclear tests, including  
 the biggest one at 150 kilotons.  
 Just to put things in perspective -  
 the atomic bomb in Hiroshima was at  
 a mere 15 kilotons. He also  
 launched nearly 90 ballistic  
 missiles - 3 times more than his  
 father and grandfather combined...

Kim Jong-un watches yet another nuclear launch, clapping his  
 hands, surrounded by generals.

REUTERS NEWS ANCHOR  
 Today, North Korea has up to 60  
 nuclear weapons and ICBMs capable  
 of hitting the continental United  
 States.

CNN ANCHOR  
 But there's a small problem...

BBC NEWS ANCHOR  
 ...his half-brother Kim Jong-nam...

KIM JONG-NAM.

Family photo of Kim Jong-il and his family, with a young boy that is Kim Jong-nam.

AL JAZEERA NEWS ANCHOR  
 ...although Kim Jong-nam was the eldest son, he was considered the black sheep in the Kim family dynasty.

ASSOCIATED PRESS NEWS ANCHOR  
 He was initially the first in line to be leader of North Korea, but events took a different turn.

Still image of Kim Jong-nam in disguise at Tokyo airport.

REUTERS NEWS ANCHOR  
 He was caught trying to enter Japan with his son and two women using a fake passport to visit Disneyland Tokyo. The much-publicized incident is said to have deeply embarrassed his father.

Paparazzi tailing Kim Jong-nam, in disguise in China.

CNN ANCHOR  
 He's said to have tried to convince his father to reform North Korea too. This further hastened his exile to China and Macau.

BBC NEWS ANCHOR  
 Eventually his half-brother Kim Jong-un was named Supreme Leader instead.

Two images of Kim Jong-un inaugurated and his brother Kim Jong-nam in exile, juxtaposed for dramatic contrast.

AL JAZEERA NEWS ANCHOR  
 Kim Jong-nam never had ambitions to challenge his younger brother for the throne. But he does represent a question of legitimacy. Who should be the real leader? The older brother or the younger brother? Naturally, this causes Kim Jong-un extreme paranoia.

We now realize that we have been watching a DOCUMENTARY playing at the...

INT. STUDIO IN NEW YORK - NIGHT

...and we're transported back to present time. We're at the point right before Siti first attempted to storm off. At this moment, Siti and Doan are still calm, unaware of the trap that's been set for them by the host.

The screen shows a picture of Kim Jong-un, surrounded by generals.

HOSTILE HOST

We're talking about a guy who executed at least 360 officials, sometimes for trivial reasons such as half-hearted clapping and sleeping in a meeting. Including the second most powerful man in North Korea, Jang Sung-thaek in 2013.

Picture of Jang Sung-thaek appears.

HOSTILE HOST

His body was torn apart by anti-aircraft machine guns and then incinerated with flamethrowers. He was Kim Jong-un's own uncle.

Picture of KIM JONG-NAM. This is the first time we see his face properly. A portly, bespectacled man of 40 plus, not very handsome, unremarkable to say the least.

HOSTILE HOST

If his brother could do this to their own uncle, Kim Jong-nam knew one day, his day would come. And that day did come. He was killed on February 13, 2017 at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in full view of thousands of people. By none other than Siti Aisyah and Doan Thi Huong.

House lights come up. The audience is still reeling from the incredible story.

HOSTILE HOST

But all this is just the back story. We already know the facts. But what we do not know is...



(referring to Siti and  
Doan)  
...are *they* merely gullible pawns  
or are they actually trained North  
Korean assassins?

Siti and Doan protest, but are cut off by the host.

HOSTILE HOST  
Let's start with a simple question.  
How can we be sure you're telling  
the truth?

INT. PRISON MEETING ROOM - DAY

Back to the prison room in the middle of a heated argument  
between Doan and Hisyam.

DOAN  
How can you represent me if you  
don't believe me?

HISYAM  
It's not a question of believing.

DOAN  
Are you here to defend me or to  
accuse me? I want a new lawyer.

HISYAM  
I can't defend you if you don't  
tell me everything.

DOAN  
I told you everything!

HISYAM  
Not everything.

Doan contemplates. Long and hard.

DOAN  
(really reflecting)  
Why did I take the job? I...I just  
wanted to be famous. The  
limelight...the cameras...the  
fans...the awards...the  
prestige...that was all.

Hisyam stares at her: *there's something about her.*

Doan stands up and leaves.

DOAN

Big breaks don't come often, so I took it. And now my life is over.

Doan is gone.

Hisyam is silent, thinking.

SITI

Our embassies...surely they can help.

GOOI

Let's put it this way. As a communist country, Vietnam has good ties with North Korea. They are not sacrificing that for one insignificant woman. As for Indonesia, I can't even get anyone to pick up the damn phone. I'd say, forget about diplomacy, focus on a good fight in court.

A PRISON WARDEN enters.

PRISON WARDEN

Time's up.

SITI

You got to get me out of here.

Siti leaves, frightened and confused.

The two lawyers are now alone.

HISYAM

I'm sorry I was wrong on two things.

GOOI

What two things?

HISYAM

I expected them to deny point-blank. But they didn't. Instead, they had an incredible story. Guilty people can't make up such elaborate stories, with so much certainty.

GOOI

What's the other thing?

HISYAM

That your billable hours will be short.

Gooi celebrates. But he notices Hisyam is deep in thought.

HISYAM

Gooi, the two accused are charged with murder they do not know they committed. This happens only in law textbooks. This is not a straightforward case.

GOOI

Sounds like you're taking this case.

HISYAM

The case is bigger than I thought. The kind you can only dream of. Think of the prestige.

( 'talking' to Doan)

You're right Doan. Big breaks don't come often, so...

(to Gooi)

...yeah, I'm taking the case.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

That night, Siti and Doan reflect on all that has been happening.

DOAN

Every time we practice, Mr Y would put baby oil on me.

FLASHBACK TO RESTAURANT (Doan and Mr Y).

Doan puts her hand out, expecting Mr Y to put baby oil on her hands, as he always does. He stares at her, not budging.

DOAN (V.O.)

But that day, he didn't.

Doan is mildly confused. She puts the baby oil on her palm herself. Mr Y distances himself from her, like he's avoiding Kryptonite.

MR Y

Close the cover. Come on, move. He's going away.

DOAN (V.O.)  
He didn't want to touch it.

Doan puts the baby oil bottle cap back: *Why can't Mr Y close the cap himself?*

MR Y  
Go! Go! Go!

BACK TO PRESENT.

DOAN  
Something seems off.

SITI  
I did ask--

FLASHBACK TO CAFE (Siti and James).

SITI  
--where are the cameras?

JAMES  
There are cameras all around.

SITI  
So, if you tell me where they are,  
I know where to point...

James ignores her.

SITI (V.O.)  
I don't remember why I left it at  
that.

BACK TO PRESENT.

DOAN  
(referring to her face)  
I too wanted to know where the  
cameras are, to get my good side.  
(reflecting)  
Everything was planned, nothing was  
real, everything was a set-up and  
we fell--  
(a stirring realization)  
Wait. What is the one thing we both  
have in common?

SITI  
(searching for an answer)  
The one thing--the baby oil?

DOAN

Yeah...

SITI

No. How does baby oil kill a grown man?

DOAN

I don't know but that's the only thing we have in common.

SITI

If the baby oil killed him, it would have killed us too.

This is going nowhere.

SITI

How the hell did we end up here, Doan? You know, the night before, my friends organized an intervention. They were worried I'd get conned. I told them I'm a Gemini and I'm a really good people reader. But misreading people has always been my trait. I misread my ex-husband, I misread James, I--

DOAN

I'm sorry, Siti.

SITI

About what?

DOAN

I'm a bad people reader too. I thought you were one of them. A North Korean agent.

SITI

I would have thought the same.

Silence.

SITI

There is an Indonesian saying - *bagai aur dengan tebing*.

DOAN

Which means?

SITI

It means 'like the soil at the river bank and the bamboo root'.

They need to stick to each other,  
otherwise, they'd both be swept  
away by the water.

Siti reaches out her hand and holds Doan. Kindred souls in  
the same boat.

SITI

We need to stick with each other.

Doan holds her hands tight.

DOAN

You know. This is such a crazy  
story. Two women in a reality show  
who realize the whole thing was a  
lie and they were used to kill the  
brother of the North Korean  
dictator. One day, Hollywood is  
going to make a movie about this.

SITI

No, they won't.

DOAN

Why not?

SITI

Movies have to make sense. Our  
story doesn't.

Silence.

SITI

You know what else doesn't make  
sense?

(sitting up)

Mr Y and Hanamori were caught  
boarding a plane. But where is  
James?

Doan is trying to follow.

SITI

James wasn't caught on camera  
trying to escape. So where is he?

DOAN

He could still be in the country  
then.

SITI  
If we can find James, and force him  
to confess--

A PRISON WARDEN appears at the cell and opens the door.

PRISON WARDEN  
Siti Aisyah. 10 mins.

SITI  
--then he can prove that we were  
just scapegoats and he used us--

PRISON WARDEN  
Siti Aisyah, your time starts now.

Siti rushes out the corridor, accompanied by the prison warden. She sees other inmates. Pathetic, inhumane, crowded cells.

She reaches a...

PHONE BOOTH

...quickly grabs the receiver. All we hear is Siti's mother's distraught voice. Siti is restrained, putting on a brave face.

SITI  
Mak. I'm fine, I'm fine. Food isn't  
good though. Can't wait to get out  
of here and eat your bakso.

We continue hearing Siti's mother's muffled voice asking a million questions. Siti takes it all in, quietly.

Slowly she starts to sob and all of a sudden, she bursts into tears and turns into a helpless child.

SITI  
Mak, get me out of here.

EXT. PRISON BUILDING - DAY

Hisyam is waiting in front of the building when he hears the sounds of engines roaring. A fancy sports car approaches and stops right in front of the building. Gooi gets out. Hisyam gives an approving look at the car.

GOOI  
Sorry. Was caught up.

They walk into the building. Gooi is busy texting.

HISYAM  
Your star witness isn't coming out.

GOOI  
He can stay in there forever if he wants. Meanwhile, it's ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching...

They march down the...

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

GOOI  
Every hour he's in there, it's 300.

HISYAM  
What? I charge 250.

GOOI  
You don't have my track record.

HISYAM  
I definitely have your track record.

GOOI  
82 cases out of 100.

HISYAM  
85 out of 100. How the hell do you get to charge 300?

GOOI  
It's all about branding. The Indonesian embassy said, "Keep Siti out of jail" and I said, "That's 300 per hour. They said, "You're too expensive" and I said, "Then go find Hisyam Teh. He's cheaper."

HISYAM  
Bastard.

Hisyam notices Gooi is busy texting.

HISYAM  
Daughter?

GOOI  
Big fight. That's why I was late.



HISYAM  
She needs to live her own life.

GOOI  
She wants to be a lawyer!

Gooi huffs as Hisyam trails him.

GOOI  
Don't mean to be crude, but many kids out there don't have rich parents to send them to the best business school in the world. But she does. She has a dad who works very hard to make a lot of money, so she doesn't get to say no to life-changing opportunities...

He trails off, busy texting.

GOOI  
Stanford is expensive, you know?

HISYAM  
What do you want her to study?

GOOI  
Anything but law.

INT. PRISON MEETING ROOM - DAY

Siti and Doan are waiting nervously, with Doan pacing around. The door opens and their lawyers enter.

DOAN  
I said I wanted a new lawyer.

HISYAM  
I'm all you have.

DOAN  
I want a lawyer who trusts me.

HISYAM  
Listen, Doan. You don't really have a choice. Your embassy called every lawyer in town. No one would touch this case. Do you know why?

Doan does not answer.

HISYAM

Because they are afraid of what Kim Jong-un could do to them. But I took on the case. Not because I'm stupid enough to say yes, but because I'm the best criminal lawyer in the country.

GOOI

Second best.

HISYAM

Murder carries a mandatory death sentence under Malaysian law. You need someone really good because you're in deep shit right now!

Silence.

SITI

What kind of deep shit?

GOOI

(to Siti)

For starters, our star witness James is hiding in the North Korean embassy.

SITI

We got to get James. He can vouch for me...

GOOI

Have you heard of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations before?

SITI

James is the only person who can vouch for me...

GOOI

An embassy is under the jurisdiction of the host state. The North Korean embassy in Kuala Lumpur basically sits on land that belongs to North Korea.

SITI

I don't understand and I don't care. Please, just get James...

GOOI

At this moment, the embassy is surrounded by two dozen special forces. James can hide in there as long as he lives and not a single Malaysian police can enter the compound.

SITI

So what are you saying?

GOOI

James can hide in there as long as he lives.

The gravity of the situation slowly dawns on Siti.

HISYAM

Well, every hour he's in there, it's ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching...

Gooi looks at Hisyam: *what the hell?*

HISYAM

What? Transparent billing.

DOAN

What about Mr Y?

HISYAM

Mr Y is back in North Korea. He's gone. The chances of having him in a Malaysia court to testify against himself is less than zero. That's expected. But what I did not expect is this...your friend Thuy--

DOAN

Thuy is going to testify, right?

Hisyam shows her an AFFIDAVIT by Thuy.

HISYAM

(reading)

"I need to help my husband to manage Hay Bar, which is open for business every day. It is our only source of income. I have a young baby. I need to look after him when I am not working at Hay Bar; and my husband does not allow me to come to Malaysia."

DOAN  
This is not Thuy.

HISYAM  
It is Thuy.

DOAN  
Thuy is my--

HISYAM  
I confirmed. Not signed under any  
duress.

DOAN  
Does she know I'll be hanged if I  
am found guilty?

Hisyam does not answer but the answer is clear. Doan is shocked beyond belief, hurt by the betrayal. Siti holds her hand.

DOAN  
You'll never really know your--do  
you know what the Butterfly Effect  
is?

No one does.

DOAN  
A tiny butterfly flapping its wings  
far away can cause a tornado weeks  
later.

They're following her.

DOAN  
Thuy's baby was sick, so she  
couldn't audition, and that's why  
she introduced me to Mr Y and  
that's how I got the job.

She reflects on the absurdity of all this.

DOAN  
And now I'm thousands of miles away  
from when the butterfly first  
flapped its wings...on death row. A  
real tornado.  
(chuckling in disbelief)  
Isn't this so funny?

Siti comforts her. Bad news after bad news. Hisyam gets her.

HISYAM

A butterfly flapping thousands of miles away can also cause a flower to bloom. There is hope.

GOOI

And we can hope on 2 possibilities. First, we tried to get your embassies to pressure the Malaysian government to drop the charges.

HISYAM

But, both embassies only sent legal counsel. That's all they can do. Without looking like they're interfering in the judiciary of another country. Plus, no one wants to offend North Korea.

SITI

So, they'd rather let us go to jail.

HISYAM

I wouldn't say they'd rather let you go to jail. But yes, they'd rather let you go to jail.

DOAN

What's the other one?

GOOI

We mount a legal challenge so good, the prosecutor drops the case. You see, the prosecution is framing this as a political assassination. We need to prove you were made pawns, tricked into this.

HISYAM

A lot of North Korean agents are actually forced to do these things. Otherwise their families will be killed.

GOOI

(to Siti)

You have a son. Putra. We could angle it as a mother who is merely doing this to feed her own son. How old is he?

Siti is quiet. Gooi looks at her, waiting for a reply.

GOOI

You didn't forget your son's age,  
did you?

Siti remains quiet, in deep thought.

GOOI

While you try to recall his age,  
here's our strategy. Now, the  
burden of proof lies in the  
prosecutors. This means *they* have  
to prove you knew what you were  
doing. To do this, they will call  
witnesses to prove their narrative.  
Our strategy is simple: cast doubt  
on their witnesses. Find logic  
gaps, question assumptions, create  
doubt, shake their credibility. If  
we succeed, then the judge won't  
call for you to enter your defense  
and--

SITI

(quietly)

8 years, 3 months, 21 days.

They look at her: *what?*

SITI

(emotions welling)

That's how old my son is. 8 years,  
3 months, 21 days. I didn't forget  
his age. I just didn't realize it's  
been 789 days since I last saw him.

She wipes tears from her eyes.

SITI

I promised him I'll be back before  
he turns 10. That's another 619  
days.

(beat)

He never had rich parents to give  
him good things in life. But I  
wanted to at least give him *some*  
good things in life. So he doesn't  
have to grow up in a slum like me.

Gooi stares at Siti. Something stirs in him. A fellow  
parent's instinct.

GOOI

We'll get you out, Siti. We have a really good chance of not having to enter defense.

SITI

How sure are you?

GOOI

Take it from a lawyer who won 82 out of 100 cases.

HISYAM

I won 85.

EXT. KUALA LUMPUR HIGH COURT - DAY

The big day. Siti and Doan, donning bulletproof vests for fears that they might be assassinated, are brought into the court under heavy police protection - men with enough arms that can put down a small rebellion.

HISYAM (V.O.)

In order for the prosecutors to establish a case against you two, they need to prove 4 ingredients that make a murder.

Doan and Siti look around, bewildered by the world outside prison. There is a MASSIVE CROWD of international journalists and curious on-lookers trying to get a glimpse of the two infamous women who have been hogging the front page for weeks. It is the trial of the year.

HISYAM (V.O.)

If they fail to prove beyond reasonable doubt even just one of the ingredients, you will be acquitted without having to enter your defense.

Siti and Doan now stand before the judge, holding hands, scared stiff with all that is happening.

The JUDGE (late 50's, male) takes his seat. Siti and Doan watch him closely: *he doesn't seem very friendly.*

The PUBLIC PROSECUTOR (50's male) stands up and begins.

HISYAM (V.O.)

The prosecutor will call witnesses who can further his narrative.

All we need to do is to cast enough reasonable doubt on their testimonies.

From here onwards, we rapidly RACE THROUGH THE WITNESSES.

A SERIES OF QUICK INTERCUTS.

WITNESS #1: POLICE INVESTIGATOR #1 testifies.

HISYAM (V.O.)

First ingredient - the prosecutors must prove that Kim Jong-nam died. This is a known fact, so we'll let them score the first goal.

A picture of Kim Jong-nam is shown.

PROSECUTOR

Could you identify the deceased?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR #1

His name is Kim Jong-nam.

WITNESS #2: AIRPORT CLINIC DOCTOR testifies.

PROSECUTOR

Tell us about your encounter with Kim Jong-nam?

AIRPORT CLINIC DOCTOR

He had severe pain in both eyes, sweating profusely, secretion in his mouth. And there was an unpleasant smell. Blood pressure was at a dangerous level. Suddenly, he started twitching and then he lost consciousness.

PROSECUTOR

What did you do?

AIRPORT CLINIC DOCTOR

I gave him 1 ampoule of adrenalin and 1 ampoule of atropine intravenously. I called an ambulance but he died before he reached the hospital.

The prosecutor ends, satisfied with his first win.



HISYAM (V.O.)  
But it's the second ingredient -  
*that his death was directly caused*  
*by you* - that's where we will mount  
a good challenge.

WITNESS #3: A PATHOLOGIST testifies.

PROSECUTOR  
What was the cause of death?

PATHOLOGIST  
Kim Jong-nam died of acute VX  
poisoning.

PROSECUTOR  
Could you tell us more about this  
VX?

Siti and Doan sit up to listen attentively. This is the  
moment of truth.

PATHOLOGIST  
VX is the deadliest nerve agent  
ever created, classified as a  
weapon of mass destruction by the  
United Nations.

Shock and horror rip through the court. Reporters frantically  
try to Google about VX. Siti and Doan are stunned they absorb  
this.

PATHOLOGIST  
It is a weapon of choice for  
dictators like Saddam Hussein,  
Bashar al-Assad. North Korea has  
the third-largest stockpile, after  
the US and Russia.

PATHOLOGIST  
How dangerous is this VX?

PATHOLOGIST  
VX penetrates the skin and disrupts  
the transmission of nerve impulses.  
Just one drop can kill in minutes.

PROSECUTOR  
If I wanted to kill someone with  
VX, where is the best place to wipe  
it on?

PATHOLOGIST  
I'd wipe it on the face and eyes  
where absorption would be maximum.

Defense cross-examines:

HISYAM  
What did Kim Jong-nam have for  
breakfast?

PATHOLOGIST  
I don't know.

HISYAM  
Do you think his breakfast killed  
him?

PATHOLOGIST  
No, VX killed him.

HISYAM  
Autopsy findings showed 6 different  
drugs were found in his  
bloodstream. Could any one of the 6  
drugs have killed him?

WITNESS #4: A CHEMIST testifies.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR  
When you ran lab tests on Kim Jong-  
nam's face, eyes, clothes, blood  
and urine, what did you find?

CHEMIST  
I found traces of VX.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR  
When you ran lab tests on Doan Thi  
Huong's white jumper, fingernails,  
what did you find?

CHEMIST  
Traces of VX.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR  
When you ran lab tests on Siti  
Aisyah's sleeveless T-shirt, what  
did you find?

CHEMIST  
Traces of VX.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

Could we then conclude that the common thing all 3 of them had was VX?

GOOI

Objection. If someone got murdered and I was holding a knife, that doesn't mean I killed him.

Defence cross-examines.

GOOI

Were Siti Aisyah's nail swabs sent to the lab to test for VX?

CHEMIST

They were.

GOOI

And?

CHEMIST

No traces of VX were found.

GOOI

She supposedly wiped VX on Kim Jong-nam using her hands, yet no VX was found in her nails?

CHEMIST

Yes.

One point for the defense. Siti and Doan are pleased: *they're putting up a good fight.*

WITNESS #5: A TOXICOLOGIST testifies.

PROSECUTOR

What was found in Kim Jong-nam's bag?

TOXICOLOGIST

Atropine. It was handwritten on the label. Atropine is a kind of drug used as an antidote to nerve agents.

PROSECUTOR

Why would a normal person carry atropine around?

PROSECUTOR

Poisoning is one of the tactics North Korea would use. It is a well-known fact dissidents carry atropine in case of a chemical attack.

Defense cross-examines.

GOOI

Do you read Korean?

TOXICOLOGIST

No.

GOOI

The label on the bottle - what language was in it?

TOXICOLOGIST

Korean.

Siti and Doan are pleased. Their lawyers are on a roll.

HISYAM (V.O.)

The third ingredient - intention. *The prosecutor must prove you intended to kill Kim Jong-nam, that you knew what you were doing. We will win on this point for sure.*

WITNESS #6: POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2 testifies.

Defense cross-examines.

GOOI

Do you have any CCTV recording showing Siti Aisyah going into the toilet? To get rid of the VX after the supposed attack.

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

No, we have a recording showing her coming out.

GOOI

So you didn't see her going in?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

It's inferred that if she came out from the toilet, she must have gone in first.

HISYAM

In the original batch of evidence, there was a footage showing Doan adjusting her glasses. Why was that not included in the evidence?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

We didn't think it was material evidence.

HISYAM

My client is accused of applying VX, and she adjusted her own glasses with her 'VX-stained hands', yet you don't think this crucial piece of evidence is important?

Doan smiles, pleased with how this is going.

HISYAM

Did Doan Thi Huong wash her LOL shirt or cut her nails?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

No.

HISYAM

Did she dispose of the LOL shirt?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

No.

HISYAM

So, she went back to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport three days later wearing the same pair of shoes and shirt, and had the same bag, on the day she purportedly smeared VX?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

(sheepishly)

Yes.

DOAN

(to Siti)

They're good.

Siti nods, pleased.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

After smearing Kim Jong-nam with VX, what did Doan Thi Huong and Siti Aisyah do?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

They went into different toilets, presumably to wash their hands. To decon, as they say.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

Sounds like a Hollywood movie. Someone is going to make a movie about this.

DOAN

(to Siti)

Told you.

Defense cross-examines.

HISYAM

After the supposed attack, Doan Thi Huong went to the toilet at level 2. Where was the nearest toilet from the place of the attack?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

That would be Level 3.

HISYAM

So, why did Doan purposely go to a toilet that is way farther, knowing full well she has the world's deadliest chemical weapon in her hands?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

I can't speculate why.

HISYAM

How long does it take to decontaminate VX?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2

Around 15 mins of vigorous hand washing with soap and water.

HISYAM

So when Doan went into the toilet that is *way farther* and to wash her hands for 15 minutes to decon--

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2  
She stayed for 69 seconds.

HISYAM  
So when Doan went into the toilet  
that is *way farther* and to wash her-  
-I'm sorry, what?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 2  
She was in the toilet for 69  
seconds...

HISYAM  
(deliberately)  
...to decon the world's most  
dangerous chemical weapon that  
normally takes 15 minutes?

BOOM! Murmurs ripe through the court. The defense just scored big.

Outside the court, a massive crowd of international media gathers, frantically writing notes.

HISYAM (V.O.)  
The fourth ingredient - the  
prosecutors will try to prove that  
*you knew the North Koreans and were  
involved in the active planning.*

WITNESS #7: POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3 testifies:

PROSECUTOR  
Who did Kim Jong-nam meet 5 days  
before he was murdered?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
An American man. He met him in  
Langkawi.

PROSECUTOR  
Who is this man?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
We're considering a hypothesis that  
he is an American CIA agent. Kim  
Jong-nam has been known to pass  
sensitive data on North Korea to  
the Americans via CIA agents.

PROSECUTOR  
What do you think is the motive?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
Evidence seems to point to a political assassination. North Korean agents together with the 2 accused committed the murder.

The public prosecutor shows CCTV recordings of James and Siti at a cafe and Mr Y and Doan at the airport restaurant, moments before the attack.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR  
Can you name these 2 men?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
They are Rhi Ji-hyon or Mr Y. And O Jong-gil, also known as James.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR  
What are they doing right here?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
They are talking in two separate restaurants with the two accused. It is likely they were discussing how to execute the murder.

Defense cross-examines.

HISYAM  
Could you turn up the audio?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
There is no audio.

HISYAM  
So you didn't know what they were talking about.

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
No.

HISYAM  
So how did you know what they were discussing the murder? For all you know, they could be talking about how bad the coffee is.

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3  
It is inferred.



HISYAM

So two people in a restaurant talking, they must be planning a murder? How many people talked to the North Koreans that day?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR 3

I don't know.

HISYAM

You should. After all, if talking to the North Koreans amounts to conspiracy, then you need to round up every single person who talked to the North Koreans!

We end the RAPID-FIRE DIALOGUE MONTAGE.

Siti and Doan look at their lawyers, unsure of how they did. The lawyers give them a 'don't worry' look.

Outside, reporters continue reporting on the trial. Politicians and analysts from South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, the United States, China and Japan are weighing in on the geopolitical repercussions of the trial.

The judge is about to give his judgement.

**This is the moment of truth that will change Siti and Doan's lives.**

The Judge reads his judgement. Siti and Doan hold hands.

JUDGE

Suffice to say that at the close of the prosecution's case, I have undertaken a maximum evaluation of the evidence adduced...

JAKARTA (INDONESIA)

People watching with bated breath across the country. On the streets, protestors are carrying signs, chanting slogans for Siti's release.

In Siti's mother's home, she is surrounded by family members, watching the news anxiously.

JUDGE

...and I find that the whole of the evidence presented by the prosecution at this juncture is credible for the court to safely accept, give due weight and act upon...

Putra comes over to lie on Mak's lap, oblivious to the whole thing.

HANOI (VIETNAM)

Thuy watches the TV in her empty bar that's about to open. Her husband watches with her, putting his hand around her to comfort her. It's hard to know how she is feeling.

JUDGE (V.O.)

...I am satisfied that all the ingredients of the charge against the accused persons that need to be proved have been established by the prosecution...

OUTSIDE THE COURT: the crowd gearing up for the explosive decision.

JUDGE

..I must accordingly find that the prosecution had made out a prima facie case against the accused persons and I must therefore call upon them to enter their defense.

ACROSS VIETNAM, INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, SOUTH KOREA, CHINA, JAPAN, THE UNITED STATES: we hear official reactions intertwine with scenes of ordinary men and women reacting with disbelief.

JAPANESE ANALYST

...had been expecting the court to release the two women...

SOUTH KOREAN OFFICIAL

...they were deceived and did not realize at all...

MALAYSIAN OFFICIAL

...that they were being manipulated by North Korean intelligence...

SOUTH KOREAN OFFICIAL  
 ...threatens to blow into a full-  
 scale geopolitical scandal...

MAN IN THE STREET 1  
 (protesting)  
 They just wanted a scapegoat...

MAN IN THE STREET 2  
 (protesting)  
 They're easy targets because the  
 real culprits got away. And they  
 were women... defenseless women...

REX TILLERSON  
 ...designate North Korea as a state  
 sponsor of terrorism...

HANOI: Thuy hugs her husband.

VIETNAMESE OFFICIAL (V.O.)  
 We will protest the decision...

JAKARTA: Mak becomes weak in her knees and breaks down,  
 comforted by family members. Putra is still oblivious.

INDONESIAN OFFICIAL (V.O.)  
 ...and protect our citizen against  
 miscarriage of justice...

In court, Doan and Siti stare dumbfounded as they are led  
 away in handcuffs.

They are now facing the gallows.

INT. KUALA LUMPUR HIGH COURT - DAY (LATER)

The dust has settled. Hisyam and Gooi are alone in the  
 courtroom - defeated men contemplating what went wrong.

HISYAM  
 This really screwed up our track  
 record.

GOOI  
 But we still get paid.

He pauses at how wrong that statement is.

GOOI

You made a joke about sharks not eating lawyers because they'd be eating their own. And you said I'm the reason for this joke.

HISYAM

I was kidding.

GOOI

The thing is, I never apologized for loving money. Everyone loves money. The big mansion, the fancy cars. But since I had my daughter, my reason for making money has changed. Because, let's face it, the world isn't fair. Money does open doors. It gives you opportunities that others don't have.

He stands up and paces around.

GOOI

Me and Siti, we're the same, you know? We want the best for our kids. So I work hard, make tons of money, get my daughter to business school, so she can network, start her own company--

HISYAM

Why didn't you want her to do law?

He contemplates. He's been thinking about this.

GOOI

My law professor once told the class, "Laws are spider webs. The big flies fly past and the little ones get caught".

(beat)

We seasoned lawyers know the big flies always get away. We know the ones who get caught are the little ones.

HISYAM

The world is an ugly place.

GOOI

But my daughter...she doesn't know that yet.

She doesn't know that we live in a world where a bunch of North Korean agents can commit murder and get away. Just fly past the spider webs. But for Siti and Doan - there is no escape. My daughter doesn't know that yet.

Hisyam knows what Gooi is getting at.

HISYAM

We know there is no such thing as perfect justice.

GOOI

But I can't tell her that. I can't tell her some people get all the sunlight, some people get all the shadow. So, no, I don't want her to do law. I don't want her to know her dad fails half the time to stop innocent people from going to jail.

(beat)

That wasn't why I went to law school for.

HISYAM

You are in law for the money.

GOOI

But it didn't start off like that. It was to save the small flies.

INT. PRISON MEETING ROOM - DAY

The tension is palpable. Siti and Doan stare at their lawyers, demanding answers.

HISYAM

Under normal circumstances, the judge would have ruled in your favour.

GOOI

But this is a very unique case.

SITI

Don't hold back. Just give it to us.

GOOI

To start with, North Korea has been very aggressively trying to get Kim Jong-nam's body and James back. Obviously, Malaysia isn't going to allow that.

NORTH KOREAN EMBASSY, KUALA LUMPUR: A gated compound with gates locked, surrounded by a dozen armed policemen. There is no way James can escape.

GOOI

The North Korean ambassador to Malaysia has been giving daily press conferences.

HISYAM

You mean daily propaganda speeches.

Standing in front of the embassy, KANG CHOL (40's male), the fiery North Korean ambassador to Malaysia gives yet another strongly-worded press conference. The tussle for Kim Jong-nam's corpse and James (O Jong-il) has begun.

KANG CHOL

Malaysia is desperate to blame North Korea when the cause of Kim Jong-nam's death was merely a simple heart attack.

GOOI (V.O.)

They wanted two things...

KANG CHOL

...the body of our citizen Kim Jong-nam to be returned to us...and O Jong-il to be given safe passage back to North Korea.

GOOI (V.O.)

James is now the bargaining chip. Obviously, Malaysia would have none of this nonsense. So it declared Kang Chol *Persona Non Grata*, the most serious form of disapproval a country can apply to a foreign diplomat. He had 48 hours to leave the country.

Expelled, Kang Chol leaves the embassy in a car, as reporters swarm around it, shouting questions.

## SOUTH KOREAN REPORTER

What will North Korea do if  
Malaysia refuses to give in to your  
demands?

Kang Chol winds down his window.

## KANG CHOL

The Malaysian government is  
colluding and playing into the  
gallery of external forces to  
defame the image of the DPRK,  
spreading false propaganda.  
Malaysia will pay a heavy price for  
this collusion.

He gestures for the driver to leave as reporters chase after  
the car.

## GOOI (V.O.)

Malaysia did pay a heavy price.  
Normally, governments expel  
foreigners who enrage them. North  
Korea did the opposite: take them  
hostage.

GRAINY VIDEO of a group of distraught Malaysians looking into  
the camera pleading.

## GOOI (V.O.)

A group of Malaysians were held and  
barred from leaving North Korea.

## MALAYSIA HOSTAGE

We plead with the governments of  
both--

A VOICE angrily scolds the man in Korean. The terrified man  
repeats, this time louder.

## MALAYSIA HOSTAGE

We plead with the governments of  
both countries to resolve their  
diplomatic disagreements...

## GOOI (V.O.)

They took 10 Malaysians hostage. In  
retaliation, Malaysia barred 1,000  
North Koreans from leaving.

## HISYAM (V.O.)

The North Koreans were playing a  
dangerous game they think they'll  
win.

They were determined to get Kim Jong-nam's body. Because next morning...

MORTUARY: A small commotion at the mortuary. There has been an attempted break-in. Heavily armed special police forces have been deployed to beef up security.

HISYAM (V.O.)

...the lock was broken and the body was moved a couple of metres. Someone had tried to snatch the body. No one knew how. The place was guarded 24/7 and at least 20 cameras were pointed at the mortuary. It's one of those things with North Korea.

VISUALS: A jubilant NORTH KOREAN NEWSCASTER announce patriotically the success of a hydrogen bomb test - a device many times more powerful than an atomic bomb.

HISYAM (V.O.)

And in the same week...

NORTH KOREAN NEWSCASTER

...defied UN sanctions and international pressure to develop nuclear weapons to perfect success...and to test missiles which could potentially reach the mainland US.

VISUALS: footage of Hwasong-15, a new type of intercontinental ballistic missile.

HISYAM (V.O.)

Under normal circumstances, North Korea would have been slapped with multiple sanctions. Instead...

VISUALS: DONALD TRUMP and KIM JONG-UN at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), a line that demarcates North Korea from South Korea, walking to each other, smiling. Trump shakes Kim's hand hard. Both leaders smile. It's a historic meeting.

KIM JONG-UN

(via translator)

Good to see you. I never expected to meet you at this place.

He points at the border and gestures for Trump to step over into North Korea. Reporters are tripping over each other to photograph this extraordinary moment.



KIM JONG-UN  
 (via translator)  
 You're the first US President to  
 cross over.

Trump steps over gently. The whole thing was over in half a second. Trump and Kim clap and pose for a photo op. Trump pats his back.

HISYAM (V.O.)  
 It was a big win for North Korea.

TRUMP  
 Big moment...big moment...big  
 progress...tremendous progress...

HISYAM (V.O.)  
 And just like that, Kim Jong-nam's  
 murder was forgotten, reduced to a  
 side note.

MORTUARY: Kim Jong-nam's body is taken out into a vehicle.

HISYAM  
 Unwilling to escalate further,  
 Malaysia relented to North Korea's  
 demands.

The vehicle is driven off.

NEWSCASTER  
 Kim Jong-nam's body is expected to  
 be flown back to North Korea later  
 today...

NORTH KOREA EMBASSY IN KUALA LUMPUR: Footage of James leaving the compound, like a hero. The embassy is finally closed, ending 48 years of diplomatic ties.

HISYAM (V.O.)  
 And James walked away scot-free.

AIRPORT: James boarding plane, surrounded by police.

HISYAM (V.O.)  
 After all the arm-twisting, North  
 Korea won. They literally got away  
 with murder.

James enters the plane, turns and flashes a smile.

BACK TO PRISON MEETING ROOM:

SITI  
When I said, "Don't hold back"...  
you really didn't hold back.

GOOI  
Sorry, we couldn't bring you better  
news.

Doan and Siti are dejected, even if they've expected it.

GOOI  
The real murderers have escaped.  
Only you two are left.

SITI  
The ones who will pay for this.

Silence. No words are needed.

GOOI  
Justice needs to be seen to be  
done. Otherwise, it'll--

DOAN  
--send the wrong message. I get it.

SITI  
And our embassies?

GOOI  
I don't want to sound pessimistic,  
but we're on our own now.

Doan stands up to leave. At the door, she turns back.

DOAN  
(full of bitterness)  
All I wanted is to be an actress.  
To be famous. No one should hang  
for wanting some fame.

She leaves. Siti follows her out.

SITI  
Doan...

Gooi and Hisyam are alone. Quiet, reflecting.

HISYAM  
A long time ago, when I was a young  
law student, my lecturer asked why  
I wanted to be a lawyer. I said I  
wanted to uphold justice. The usual  
cliche.

GOOI

But we all know it's for the money.

HISYAM

Actually, for me, it was because I saw *Anatomy Of A Murder*. One of the greatest courtroom dramas of all time. I watched the lawyer...can't remember what's his name...and I wanted to be like him, you know? To be the centre of attention. The adrenaline of owning the floor.

(beat)

No one should hang for wanting some fame, Gooi. No one.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Siti and Doan lie in bed, struggling to comprehend the predicament they are in.

DOAN

Did you know before they hang us, they let us choose our last meal?

SITI

I'd ask for Korean.

Doan laughs. Siti laughs too. It's been a while since they laughed like that.

SITI

Actually, I'd ask for my mum's bakso\*. She makes the best bakso in the world.

*\*Indonesian noodle soup*

The laughter dies down and they're back to their sombre mood. There's a lot in their minds.

DOAN

Thuy was my best friend, you know?

Siti extends her hand to Doan.

SITI

Well, you found another. What's your horoscope?

DOAN

Aries.

SITI

I'm a Gemini. We're compatible.  
*Bagai aur dengan tebing.*

DOAN

You seem very calm. I can't stop thinking about the hanging. Being dragged to my execution, screaming, while they put a noose around my neck.

SITI

Listen, focus on the good. We still have a fighting chance. It's a 50-50 thing. Think good things. Think miracles. Think about what you'll do when you're out. For me, I'm going to go back to Jakarta, get a crappy job and watch my kid grow up.

Doan nods.

SITI

Tell me your plan.

EXT. KUALA LUMPUR HIGH COURT - DAY

It's D-Day. Siti and Doan are led into the court, pushing through a massive crowd. It's loud, it's dizzying.

DOAN (V.O.)

Me...I don't know. Maybe go back to Nam Dinh.

SITI (V.O.)

Are you sure? There's nothing but buffalos there.

A large group of reporters flashing their cameras, shouting questions, pressing towards them. It's total chaos.

SITI (V.O.)

No more acting?

DOAN (V.O.)

No. I'm starting to hate cameras.

Snap snap snap snap! Cameras everywhere.

REPORTER

Give us a smile, Doan Thi Huong!

Doan puts her head down, ignoring the reporters.

INT. KUALA LUMPUR HIGH COURT - DAY

The judge takes his seat. He scans the large piles of documents. Hisyam and Gooi are ready to fight.

JUDGE

We will resume with the defense stage of the proceedings where the first and second accused will take the witness stand.

The prosecutor stands up.

PROSECUTOR

Your Honor, there is some new development we'd like to update the court.

Siti and Doan look at their lawyers, who are just as clueless.

PROSECUTOR

We would like to inform the court that the prosecution had been instructed to withdraw the charge against the first and the second accused.

There is an uproar in the court. Siti and Doan hold each other's hands. Confusion.

PROSECUTOR

May we approach the bench?

JUDGE

(gesturing to Hisyam and Gooi)

You two also.

They approach the bench. There's a serious conversation going on. We hear an overlap of voices from the studio in New York.

HOSTILE HOST (V.O.)

Did you know what was happening?

SITI (V.O.)

We did not know it at that time. But what was being discussed has to be one of the most shocking things to have taken place in a Malaysian court.

DOAN (V.O.)  
Or any court.

The lawyers go back to their seats.

JUDGE  
After much deliberation, with the prosecutor dropping the charges, we have no choice but to give you a discharge not amounting to acquittal.

The lawyers flash Doan and Siti a smile. Big thumbs-up.

Doan and Siti are dumb-founded. Their handcuffs are taken off. It's surreal. What's happening?

They walk out of the court. The mob outside turns into an uncontrollable frenzy.

FLASHFORWARD.

JAKARTA (INDONESIA). Crowds gather to celebrate the shocking acquittal.

SITI'S HOME in JAKARTA.

Siti's supporters are jubilant. There's a huge banner welcoming Siti home.

SITI (V.O.)  
It turns out that this has gone beyond just an ordinary murder case. It's now a global diplomatic scandal. So Indonesia and Vietnam had to do something.

Siti arrives, getting a hero's welcome.

SITI (V.O.)  
To let two innocent women hang would cause a huge public backlash. Both governments couldn't afford that.

Mak runs out to hug Siti. It's a tearful reunion. They cry their hearts out, almost crushing each other in their embrace.

SITI (V.O.)  
So they both pulled strings behind the scene and got Malaysia to drop the case.

Mak points at a huge bowl of bakso on a table. Siti laughs, wiping her tears.

Behind the curtain is a shy Putra, hiding, confused with all that is happening and all these people in his house.

Siti opens her arms. Putra is hesitant.

SITI (V.O.)

There would have been a huge diplomatic fallout if the case ended with a guilty judgement.

Putra slowly recognizes his mother and runs towards her. She kisses him and hugs him tight.

SITI

(to Mak)

I told you I'll be back before he turns 10.

BACK TO PRESENT TIME.

INT. KUALA LUMPUR HIGH COURT - DAY

The dust has settled. Everyone is gone. In the quiet court, Hisyam and Gooi reflect on the unexpected acquittal.

HISYAM

Well, we did restore our track record.

GOOI

Feels good.

HISYAM

So you're still not letting your daughter do law?

GOOI

Nope.

HISYAM

But the little ones escaped the spider web.

GOOI

Well, they were lucky. But we know that's not how the world works. The big flies always fly past and the little ones always get caught.

HISYAM

But you see, although thousands of little ones still get caught and will continue getting caught, these two little ones escaped. We made a difference in *their* lives.

Gooi gets what Hisyam is trying to say.

GOOI

But the answer is still no.

INT. HANOI AIRPORT (HANOI, VIETNAM) - DAY

Upon landing back home, Doan gets mobbed by cameras and flashlights. She's a celebrity now in Vietnam. She looks around: *so this is how it feels like to be famous.*

VIETNAMESE REPORTER #1

Give me a smile. Come on, give me a smile. 1, 2, 3...

She stares at the reporter, but couldn't muster a smile.

VIETNAMESE REPORTER #2

What does it feel like to be the most famous Vietnamese?

She stops and ponders for a while. They wait for her answer.

DOAN

I don't really like it.

She jumps into a waiting limousine, with 2 police escorts on motorcycles. It's an entourage befitting a celebrity.

INT. CAR - DAY

The limousine driver is excited to see Doan.

DRIVER

We're bringing you to ICE.

DOAN

The exhibition centre? What are we doing there?

DRIVER

I don't know. The press will be there. Big government officials to welcome you home.



Apparently, they're putting you at Grand Plaza Hotel. Expensive hotel. There'll be a big banquet in the evening. I think the Prime Minister will be there too...

Doan zones out as he continues yakking. She video calls Siti. Siti picks up.

SITI  
Hello, my friend.

DOAN  
How's life in Jakarta?

SITI  
Eating bakso, working on a crappy job that pays \$100 a week. But mostly just running after this little monkey.  
(calls Putra)  
Say hi.

Putra says hi, sticking to his mother. They're happy.

SITI  
Life is boring. Nothing as exciting as being a North Korean assassin.

They laugh.

SITI  
So what are you going to do?

DOAN  
I don't know.

SITI  
It's so bizarre, isn't it? This whole thing. Who would have believed us?

Silence. There is no need for words. Two kindred spirits. They're just really happy it's all good now.

DOAN  
Is it ok to kill a man even if we weren't aware?

SITI  
I don't know. I don't want to think about it.

DOAN

You've never thought about Kim Jong-nam?

SITI

No.

Doan notices a road sign. The capital Hanoi is straight ahead. A LEFT TURN leads to some small town-sounding names. Doan taps the driver on the shoulder.

DOAN

Turn left.

DRIVER

No, ICE is straight up.

DOAN

No, take left. Just do it.

DRIVER

The city centre is--

DOAN

I am Vietnam's biggest celebrity. I tell you where to go. Left!

The driver turns left. Immediately, the driver's walkie-talkie is filled with sounds of panicky voices. It is the police escort, frantically asking what's happening.

DRIVER

(through the walkie-talkie, in Vietnamese)

I'm just following orders from...Vietnam's biggest celebrity.

Doan smiles and goes back to the video call.

SITI

What's happening?

DOAN

Going back to Nam Dinh. To tend buffalos.

She turns off the phone.

We see the limousine veering off to a dusty road and into the horizon and the police escorts frantically catching up.

INT. STUDIO IN NEW YORK - NIGHT

We're back in the studio.

HOSTILE HOST

Before the show started, we polled the audience. Only 46% said they believe your story. Let's see how many people you brought to your side.

Gesturing to the voting device in front of the audience:

HOSTILE HOST

Are you ready? One, two, three!

The audience starts to vote with the devices. There is a giant screen showing the numbers. The poll is split into 'Guilty' and 'Innocent'.

The bar chart starts appearing. It's an exciting moment, like an election night.

Click! Click! Click! Click!

And...the results are out.

**INNOCENT: 55%** (up from 46%)

**GUILTY: 45%**

The audience reacts. Some delighted, others in disbelief.

HOSTILE HOST

And we have it. 9% more people believe you after you told your story!

DOAN

(to Siti)

Told you.

HOSTILE HOST

After all that, 45% still think you're guilty.

SITI

Can I say something?

HOSTILE HOST

Sure.

Siti summons her courage.

SITI

People will always believe what they want to believe. Facts are just an inconvenience. But you know what? The only opinion that matters is the judge's. Not yours.

(to the host)

And certainly not yours.

(to the audience)

Whether you like us or not, we're walking free. So to the 45%...go *jyeo!*

HOSTILE HOST

What does that mean?

SITI

It's Korean for 'fuck you'.

The 45% boo them. They are turning hostile.

HOSTILE HOST

Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!

SITI

And go *jyeo* you too!

Siti grabs Doan's hand, and amidst the pandemonium in the audience, they stomp off the stage together, into the wings and out the exit. Vindicated at last.

FADE OUT.

INSERT:

**Doan Thi Huong is tending buffalos in Nam Dinh, Vietnam.**

**Siti Aisyah is raising Putra as a single mother in Jakarta, Indonesia.**

**Kim Jong-nam's body is with the North Koreans.**

**James, Mr Y and Hanamori were never charged.**