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Keep You Safe

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Keep You Safe

by

Nana Okamoto

A thesis presented to the

Faculty of the Department of
Writing for the Screen
Loyola Marymount University

In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts in Writing for the Screen

April 30, 2024

FINAL THESIS

FEATURE SCREENPLAY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Student Name: Nana Okamoto

Thesis Logline: Yui, a bright-eyed Japanese woman, moves to America and thinks she finds her Prince Charming in a small Iowa town. She falls in love and into a trap, staged by his white nationalist family who use her as a pawn in their terrorist plan.

Keep You Safe

Title

A screenplay written and produced and presented to the faculty
of the Writing for the Screen MFA Program in the School of Film &

Television at Loyola Marymount University of

Los Angeles, California

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Fine Arts

Writing for the Screen

By

Nana Okamoto

Student Name

APPROVAL TO ADVANCE TO CANDIDACY

The following student has met all the criteria to advance to candidacy for an M.F.A. in Fine Arts with an emphasis in Writing for the Screen:

Nana Okamoto
Student Name

4/30/2024
Date

Karol Hoeffner
SCWR 690 Instructor Name

Karol Hoeffner
SCWR 691 Instructor Name

KEEP YOU SAFE

Written by

Nana Okamoto

EXT. JAPANESE STREETS - EVENING

Narrow houses line the streets. The yellow Sobu train WHOOSHES PAST. The streetlights illuminate the twilight skies.

A GROUP OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS squat by a vending machine and GOSSIP.

YUI HASHIZUME (Japanese, 25) strolls along the train tracks. She swings a CANVAS BAG as she HUMS "Perfect" by Ed Sheeran.

INT. THE HASHIZUME HOUSE - EVENING

KEYS JANGLE at the door and it unlocks. Yui walks through the doorway.

A DOOR SLAMS somewhere in the house.

Note: Dialogue is in English. Bracketed dialogue is in Japanese and will be subtitled.

YUI

[Mom?]

Yui takes off her shoes and lines them up neatly, next to ballet flats and a PAIR OF NIKE JORDANS.

YUI (CONT'D)

(to herself)

[When did Dad get such cool shoes?]

She smiles and sets down the canvas bag on the counter. A beautiful kimono spills from the bag.

YUI (CONT'D)

[Where are you?]

Yui heads down the hallway.

She sees the bedroom, the only room with a closed door. She KNOCKS on the door.

YUI (CONT'D)

[Mom?]

RUMIKO (O.S.)

[I'll be right out! I'm changing.]

YUI

[Okay. Did you listen to my voice message?]

RUMIKO (O.S.)
[Uhhh, not yet.]

YUI
[Well, I told you about that Japanese dance I'm doing for International Day, right? That Imai-san thought it would be nice if the staff performed too?]

She leans against the wall as she talks to Rumiko.

YUI (CONT'D)
[I tried on my kimono the other day but I don't know, I think I forgot some steps. Can you help me?]

CRASH. Yui whips back. The noise came from the closed room. It sounded like glass shattering.

YUI (CONT'D)
[What was that? Are you okay?]

RUMIKO (O.S.)
[Nothing. Don't worry, Yui-chan.]

YUI
[What's going on?]

RUMIKO (O.S.)
[It's fine.]

Yui KNOCKS on the door again.

YUI
[Open the door, Mom.]

The door opens a crack. RUMIKO HASHIZUME (Japanese, 50) peeks out, her face flushed, wearing an anxious smile.

RUMIKO
[I told you. It's fine.]

She tries to close the door, but Yui notices a shattered lamp on the floor behind her. Broken glass everywhere.

Yui barges into the room and inspects the mess.

YUI
[Oh my god, how did this happen?]

She picks up the nearby trash can and crouches down. She carefully discards the glass shards.

RUMIKO

[Yui-chan! It's fine! I'll do it.]

YUI

[I got most of the big pieces. Can you get the vacuum?]

Yui shimmies closer to the bed and picks up another shard. She lifts up the blanket and--

YUI (CONT'D)

[AHHHHHHHH!]

She falls back, her hand landing on some broken glass. She winces but doesn't take her eyes off--

The HALF-NAKED MAN (Japanese, 40s) hiding underneath the bed, shivering with fear.

Yui's eyes widen and her mouth curls with disgust.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - MORNING - ONE YEAR LATER

Tranquil Midwestern suburbia. It's a crisp fall morning. Birds sing from the orange and red trees.

In the distance is a water tower, the tallest thing in town. WAPASEEKI, IOWA is painted on it with faded green letters.

Yui walks on the sidewalk with a pep in her step.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Turn right on Washington Street.

She follows her navigation app and turns the corner.

INT. WASHINGTON STREET - MORNING

Yui passes by a BRIDAL SALON and glances at the beautiful wedding dress in the display window.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Turn left in 400 meters.

EXT. WAPASEEKI COLLEGE - ROUNDABOUT - MORNING

Yui approaches a roundabout with a stone sign in the middle: WAPASEEKI COLLEGE.

AUTOMATED VOICE

You've arrived at your destination.

There are four paths, each with a row of buildings. Yui sees TWO STUDENTS (white) walking and rushes toward them.

YUI
Excuse me. Which way is the-- uh--
(checking her phone)
Henry Ruben Hall?

STUDENT #1
The what?

STUDENT #2
Sorry, we have to get to our 9 AM.

They walk past her. Yui stares at them, her eyebrows knitted with irritation.

She fidgets with her hands, running her fingers across a SCAR on her left hand. She walks to the nearest building.

EXT. CLARKS HALL - MORNING

Yui presses her face against the window and peeks in.

MATT (O.S.)
Are you looking for your class?

She whips around and comes face to face with MATT POLLARD (white, 29). A clean-cut all-American with a perfect smile.

YUI
Actually, I'm looking for my
office. Henry Ruben Hall?

MATT
Oh, my bad. The HRH is over there.

He points to a path to his left.

YUI
Thank you, I didn't want to be late
for my first day of work.

MATT
Oh, you work in Admissions?

YUI
No, the Department of Multicultural
Affairs.

Matt lifts his eyebrows and smiles.

MATT

I can take you there if you'd like.

EXT. WAPASEEKI COLLEGE - PATH - MORNING

Yui and Matt walk on a well-manicured path together.

YUI

Ohhh, you work at the college too!

MATT

Yeah, in IT. I'm at the glass building by the roundabout.

YUI

Oh, I'm sorry, this is out of the way, isn't it?

MATT

It's nothing. I could use a morning walk anyway.

YUI

(bashfully)
Thank you.

MATT

So, what do you do at the DMA?

YUI

I'm the program coordinator.

MATT

Sounds impressive.

Yui hides her nervousness with a giggle.

YUI

It's nice that the college cares about international students. A lot of people want to come to America.

MATT

True. This town is long overdue for a change in demographics.

TWO BIRDS fly past Yui and Matt. Yui watches as they flutter through the sky, playfully chasing each other.

YUI

(softly)
If you're a bird, I'm a bird.

MATT
I love that movie.

YUI
What?

MATT
From *The Notebook*, right?

Yui looks at Matt like she's met God.

YUI
Yeah. It's my favorite movie.

Ahead of them is an OLD-FASHIONED BRICK BUILDING to the left and a fenced-off CONSTRUCTION SITE to the right.

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Yui and Matt approach the cozy brick building. Matt points to the small sign on the wall: HENRY RUBEN HALL.

MATT
Well, here we are.

YUI
Thank you, uhh. What's your name?

MATT
Matt.

YUI
Thank you, Matt. I'm Yui.

MATT
Good luck on your first day, Yui.
I'll see you around.

He winks at her and turns around. Yui gazes admiringly as Matt walks away. She puts her hands to her chest.

YUI
[Oh my god.]

She shakes her head, then takes a calming breath. She nods to herself, then opens the door.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - FIRST FLOOR - MORNING

Yui walks down the hallway with FARHANA ASLAM (Pakistani-American, 28). She exudes big sister energy.

FARHANA

It's so nice to finally meet you in person, Yui!

YUI

It's great to finally be here. It feels like a dream!

Farhana smiles apologetically.

FARHANA

Ooo, I'm sorry but I'm going to have to burst your bubble.

She looks at her watch and gestures to the staircase.

INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Farhana continues talking as she climbs briskly. Yui follows.

FARHANA

You read the emails I CC'ed you on?

Yui nods eagerly.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

Well, Rishabh wants to change the signage on the building. He's calling Kathy in a few minutes.

YUI

But I thought Kathy had already ordered the custom sign.

FARHANA

We did. It was not cheap.

She sighs. They make it to the second floor.

INT. SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

KATHY DANES (white, 50s), a high-strung white feminist, stands by the table and stares at a PRINTOUT on the table.

It's a 3D rendering of a modern building facade. Above the first floor entrance are the words MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER in huge silver letters.

Kathy looks up as Farhana and Yui enter the room. Yui bows her head to Kathy, who starts talking a mile a minute.

KATHY

Welcome, welcome to Wapaseeki! I'm so glad to have you on board.

YUI

Thank you. I'm going to do my--

A XYLOPHONE RINGTONE cuts Yui off. Kathy's phone lights up. She picks up the call and puts it on speaker mode.

KATHY

Hi Rishabh, you're on speaker mode. I have Farhana and Yui, the new hire, here with me.

RISHABH (V.O.)

You got my mockup right? How awesome is that black onyx?

Kathy opens her laptop. She invites Yui and Farhana to come look at it. Yui squints to see better.

It's another 3D rendering of the same building. The big letters are gone. Instead, there is a shiny black plaque next to the entrance, the words barely legible.

RISHABH (V.O.)

The old design feels showy, too self-congratulatory, don't you think? Something understated would be better. But still sophisticated. Quiet luxury is in, you know.

KATHY

Yes, but we've placed the order for the signage a week ago. They told me that they're ready to install it by the end of the month.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Let's put a rush order in then.

KATHY

These things always take longer than you'd think. And we're already over-budget as it is.

Yui taps Kathy on the shoulder.

YUI

Can I speak to him? Is it okay?

Kathy nods and gestures to the phone.

YUI (CONT'D)

Good morning, Mr. Munish. I'm Yui Hashizume.

RISHABH (V.O.)

(confused)

Uh, hi?

YUI

Today is my first day on campus and I got lost. I only found this building because I got some help.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Hmm.

YUI

It's already confusing to be in a foreign country. I think the Munish Multicultural Center should stand out. It should be-- a lighthouse for international students.

FARHANA

I agree with Yui. I think the big signage is the way to go.

KATHY

Yes, the MMC is a lighthouse, it's a symbol of globalization, we want everyone to know where it is and to feel like a home away from home.

A long pause. Yui holds her breath. She locks eyes with Kathy, who also anxiously waits.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Yeah, you know what? Let's keep the current design.

KATHY

Yes, that's wonderful. So, so great to hear.

She does a silent victory dance. Yui's eyes light up.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Okay, see you tomorrow night then.

The call ends. Kathy looks at Yui with awe.

KATHY

That was genius. Genius! Ugh, you're a godsend.

YUI
I'm glad I was of use.

Yui smiles. Farhana nods encouragingly.

INT. TEMPORARY DMA OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Farhana guides Yui to a corner with four cubicles.

FARHANA
This is our little corner of the
world until we can move to the MMC.

Sitting in one of the cubicles is ZION UGBOMA (Nigerian, 21),
a put-together student with a Nigerian accent. He stands up
when he sees them.

FARHANA (CONT'D)
And Zion's here now.

YUI
Oh, you're the student worker! From
Lagos, Nigeria.

ZION
Someone's done their homework.

He playfully pokes Yui's arm. Yui is surprised but smiles.

The cubicle next to his is empty, decorated with a card that
reads: WELCOME YUI!

Yui rests her bag at that desk. Farhana nods at Zion.

FARHANA
I'm showing Yui the MMC. Want to
join?

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - DAY

Yui follows Farhana and Zion out the doors.

YUI
Is Kathy always like that? Her
machine gun talk?

She sees Farhana and Zion's confused faces.

YUI (CONT'D)
She talks like-- ba-ba-ba-ba-ba!

She gestures like bullets are coming out of her mouth. Zion laughs heartily.

ZION
That's so accurate!

FARHANA
Yeah, she needs to see a therapist.

They cross the street to the--

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Yui stares in awe at the nearly complete building exterior.

A sleek facade of floor-to-ceiling windows and curvy steel beams. It's stylish and sexy.

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS in fluorescent safety vests buzz by, carrying drywall to drill into the unfinished interior.

Zion spots LOU JACOBSON (Black, 40s) and waves to him. Lou is the only worker around not wearing a vest.

ZION
Hey Lou! What's up, brother?

Yui and Farhana wave to him too. Lou smiles and waves back, then goes back to work.

ZION (CONT'D)
(to Yui)
He's the site manager. His dad is from Nigeria too.

EXT. WALMART - EVENING

Yui cruises on her bike and parks it at the grocery store.

INT. WALMART - EVENING

Yui stands in the pasta aisle. Her eye catches on the cheapest pasta: a U-shaped pasta.

YUI
[Cute.]

She takes it out and inspects the label.

ELBOWS ENRICHED PASTA

She furrows her eyebrows, confused, then looks at her elbows. She hears SQUEAKY WHEELS stop suddenly and looks up.

A SHOPPER (white, 60s) stands at the end of the aisle with her shopping cart. She stares directly at Yui.

Yui bows with her head. The Shopper continues to stare at her, unmoving. Yui puts back the pasta on the shelf and briskly walks away from the creepy Shopper.

LATER

Yui transfers her full basket of groceries onto the conveyor belt: garlic, spaghetti, ground beef, tomato sauce, hangers, detergent, laundry hamper, loofah, etc.

While the CASHIER (white, 40s) scans her items, Yui looks behind her. She sees the Shopper friendly chatting with an EMPLOYEE (white, 60s). Yui purses her lips.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The room is decorated with cardboard boxes and piles of clothes. Yui sits on the floor and eats a bowl of bolognese, using a cardboard box as her table.

Her phone is propped up against a pepper grinder as she watches The Notebook. Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams are talking in the pouring rain.

YUI
(mouthing the words)
It wasn't over. It still isn't
over.

On screen, the two characters kiss.

Yui sighs, satisfied, then takes another mouthful of bolognese.

INT. LANTZ HALL - PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - EVENING

A magnificent hanging sculpture that probably cost a fortune is suspended above the CHATTERING GUESTS.

The TRUSTEES are dressed in tailored suits, most of them white and male.

A long buffet table is lined with hors d'oeuvres and a self-serve bar. Above that is a sign that reads: MEET THE TRUSTEES

Yui and Farhana munch on some bruschetta in the corner.

YUI

Why is there such a fancy reception
for after their meeting?

FARHANA

It's technically an opportunity for
students to come talk to the
trustees but hardly anyone shows
up. But hey, free wine.

Farhana and Yui CLINK their glasses of Merlot and take a sip.
Zion joins them, holding a plate full of assorted cheeses.

ZION

Yo, they have so much cheese!

YUI

I love cheese, I should get some.

ZION

Here, try this.

He stabs some brie with his fork and tries to feed it to Yui.
She leans away from him and shakes her head.

YUI

It's okay, I'll get my own.

Zion shrugs and continues eating his cheese.

Across the room, RISHABH MUNISH (Indian, 40s) steps up to a
solid oak podium. He's well-groomed and ready to go.

Yui widens her eyes with surprise at the sight of--

Matt, who strides to Rishabh and hands him a wireless mic.

RISHABH

Good evening, everyone. My name is
Rishabh. I'm beyond excited about
this new chapter for Wapaseeki.

He smiles and his teeth sparkle brightly in the light. Yui
watches Matt as he fidgets and watches Rishabh intently.

RISHABH (CONT'D)

I remember being the only Indian in
town. Now there's an Indian
restaurant opening two blocks away!
I would've killed to have some aloo
gobi when I was a student.

Some CHUCKLES from the audience.

RISHABH (CONT'D)

The next time we'll be at Wapaseeki will be for the grand opening of the Munish Multicultural Center. It's so humbling to be recognized like this, I never thought when I immigrated here that I would have a building named after me.

The Guests WHOOP and CHEER. Next to Yui, Zion scoffs, clearly not a fan of Rishabh.

RISHABH (CONT'D)

Please join me in a toast.

The audience raises their glasses obediently.

RISHABH (CONT'D)

To Wapaseeki!

YUI / FARHANA / GUESTS

To Wapaseeki!

Yui and Farhana lift their glass. Zion doesn't.

He steps off the podium and hands his mic back to Matt.

ZION (O.S.)

That guy's so performative.

Yui turns to Zion, who keeps munching on his cheese.

ZION (CONT'D)

If he really cares about international students, he should fund scholarships.

YUI

Scholarship is a good idea!

ZION

This whole building is just some ego-stroking trophy for him.

FARHANA

I don't know if I would go there, but I do think that Wapaseeki isn't ready to accept all these international students.

Yui's eyes follow Matt across the room. He packs up the mic in a hard case and carries it into a side room.

RISHABH (O.S.)
 You're Yui, right? Thanks for
 talking some sense into me earlier
 this week.

FARHANA
 Hi Rishabh, great speech out there.

Zion raises an eyebrow, judging her.

RISHABH
 Thank you.
 (to Yui)
 So tell me, are you homesick yet?

YUI
 No, not at all. I love it here!

RISHABH
 Really? I remember when I moved
 here, I would burn incense all the
 time to make it feel like home.

YUI
 Nag champa?

Rishabh's eyes light up.

RISHABH
 You know nag champa?

YUI
 (nodding)
 There was an Indian student at the
 university in Japan I worked at
 before here. She gave some to me.

RISHABH
 Such a healing scent. I've been
 telling Kathy, we need a meditation
 room in the MMC. Help the students
 destress and everything.

ZION
 You know what would really help us
 destress? Scholarships. Like, do we
 need a big fancy party to celebrate
 a big fancy building?

He speaks in a soothing tone but his eyes aren't smiling.

RISHABH

I hear you, but I think it's important to celebrate our victories. It's not a party, the grand opening of the MMC symbolizes how far we've come.

Zion's shoulders tense as he starts to lose his cool. Yui notices this and intervenes.

YUI

I can go over the event budget and see if there is anywhere we can cut while still keeping the scale.

RISHABH

I like that. I already know that you're a go-getter. I'm sure you're going to plan an amazing event that'll make everyone happy, eh?

He glances at Zion and Farhana before looking at Yui. Zion studies Yui carefully.

YUI

Uh, thank you. I'll do my best.

Yui laughs nervously and sips her wine. Matt walks towards them, holding a glass of red wine. Yui waves to him.

MATT

Hi again!

RISHABH

You know the AV guy?

Yui knits her eyebrows and blinks rapidly.

YUI

AV?

MATT

Audiovisual. I work in IT, remember?

He smiles playfully at her.

YUI

Yes, sorry, I thought it was something else.

She downs her wine in a hurry, her cheeks flushed.

MATT
(to Rishabh)
I saw that your glass was empty so
I took the liberty of getting you
another...

He hands the glass over and Yui takes it from his hand. Matt freezes as she takes a big gulp.

RISHABH
(chuckling)
You'd get along with my wife.

Kathy sneaks behind Rishabh and taps his shoulder.

KATHY
Sorry, can I borrow you? Greg wants
to say hi.

He waves goodbye and follows Kathy away from them.

Yui turns to Matt, who types frantically on his phone.

YUI
How have you been? I was--

MATT
Sorry, I have to go. My boss needs
me. Work crisis.

He lets out a tense sigh, then rushes out the door. Yui watches him leave with worry.

FARHANA
Wow, IT seems intense.

Through a window, Yui sees Matt approaching a white van in the parking lot. He knocks on the window.

ZION (O.S.)
So, what did you think of Rishabh?

Yui turns to Zion. His face is distorted, like it's been stretched. She blinks and it's normal again.

YUI
Um, he seems nice.

ZION
No, he was fucking fake.

YUI
What do you mean? He cares so much
about this college.

ZION

That's what he wants you to think.
He's a relatable Indian man who has
pulled himself up by his bootstraps
to become a multi-millionaire
benefactor. But he's lost touch.

Yui wobbles and spills wine onto Farhana's skirt. Yui grabs a
hold of a table to steady herself.

YUI

Sorry!

FARHANA

It's okay. I'll go dab it out so it
doesn't stain.

She hurries to the bathroom, leaving Yui and Zion together.

ZION

Yo, you okay?

YUI

I, I think I need to go home.

She puts her drink on the table, nearly spilling it, then
stumbles away, her gait unsteady. Zion notices this.

ZION

How much did you drink?

YUI

Not-- not that much. I'm usually--
strong to alcohol.

ZION

Let me walk you home.

Yui focuses on putting one foot in front of the other. Zion
takes her hand. She looks at her hand and sees double.

Suddenly, the black linoleum floor seems to rise and swallow
her whole.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

A series of QUICK BLURRY FLASHES from Yui's POV:

- Yui's hands are scraped and bloody.

- Zion's hand holding hers. He stands above her, his face shadowed from her sight.

- The stars shine brilliantly in the night sky.

YUI (O.S.)
(words slurring)
No, no, no, no, no.

ZION (O.S.)
(coaxing)
Don't worry about it, Yui. Don't worry about it.

- Yui lies on the ground, the sidewalk inches away from her face. A white blob is in the background.

- Matt's face, etched with alarm and worry. He crouches next to her.

MATT
Yui! Are you okay? Can you hear me?

- Yui looks down at her body. A man's jacket is draped over her body. She pulls it off to see her unbuttoned shirt.

- Zion's face as he shouts. He sports a bloody nose.

ZION
I didn't do anything! He's fucking lying!

- The world bounces up and down as Yui is being carried in someone's arms. She looks up and sees Matt's face. He looks down and smiles reassuringly at her.

FADE TO BLACK.

NURSE (PRE-LAP)
Sweetie?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Yui's eyes fly open. She has a DARK BRUISE on her left cheek. She squints at the bright lights beaming down at her.

A NURSE (late 30s) hovers over her with a clipboard.

NURSE
Sorry to wake you.

Yui looks around the room, disoriented. She's on a bed in a sterile hospital room, wearing a patient gown.

NURSE (CONT'D)
(heartfelt)
Good news. Your rape kit came back
negative.

YUI
Rape?

NURSE
You're so lucky that they found you
before it went too far.

Yui's eyes are wide in fear. Tears well up in them and start to flow. The Nurse hands her a box of tissues.

NURSE (CONT'D)
You're free to go home now. Your
boyfriend's waiting outside.

Yui stares at the Nurse as she wipes away her tears.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Matt sits slumped on a chair, looking defeated. He mindlessly watches whatever is on the TV.

YUI (O.S.)
You waited for me?

Matt turns over to see Yui, an emotional mess. He stands up.

MATT
Yeah, I hope that was okay. I
didn't want you to go back home
alone after what you went through.

YUI
Thank you. That's, that's so nice.

He holds Yui's bag for her and smiles warmly. Yui follows him to the exit.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Yui stands in front of her doorway, a little dazed and beaten down. Matt hands her belonging back to her.

MATT
You sure you're going to be fine?

YUI
(nodding)
I feel mostly better now.

He nods and steps back. Yui gives him a little wave, then goes into her apartment.

INT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - NIGHT

An exhausted Matt comes home. He travels to the living room, where the lights are still on.

His NANA (white, 80) sits on the sofa but perks up when he enters the room.

NANA
How did it go?

MATT
Things got... complicated.

Matt purses his lips and sighs. DOUGLAS POLLARD (56) appears from the hallway and gives Matt a knowing look.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Yui lies on her bed, curled up in a ball, still in her pajamas.

DING DONG.

Yui tenses up and looks to the doorway.

INT. LIVING ROOM / KITCHEN - DAY

Yui squints through the peephole.

It's a fish-eye view of Farhana, carrying a tote bag.

Yui opens the door. Farhana sees the bruise on Yui's face.

FARHANA
Oh my god. Yui.

Yui puts on a smile and a lighthearted voice.

YUI
It's, it's not that bad! I'm--

Farhana hugs Yui gently.

FARHANA

You don't have to say that. This is a horrible thing. And you don't deserve this. I hope you know that.

Yui sinks into Farhana's arms and nods. They stay like that for a while. Then, Farhana pulls back and asks tenderly.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

Do you want some chai?

LATER

Yui sits at the kitchen table while Farhana takes the pot of chai off the stove.

YUI

There was something about him from the beginning.

Farhana puts a strainer over a mug and pours the chai through it. She pours another cup.

YUI (CONT'D)

I don't know. I'm glad that I don't remember so much from that night.

Farhana hands one cup to Yui and keeps one for herself. She pulls out Parle-G biscuits from her tote bag and opens it.

FARHANA

Here. Try this.

She takes the biscuit, dunks it into the chai, then bites a chunk out of her biscuit. Yui copies her.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

Isn't it good?

Yui nods. A small smile grows as she chews the biscuit.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

I should've been there to walk you home that night. I'm sorry.

Yui sees Farhana's somber face and her smile drops.

YUI

Sometimes, bad things just happen.

FARHANA

I know but I wish they didn't.

Farhana rummages around her canvas bag and takes out a KEY.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

Here. I want you to have this. I can only imagine how scary it is for this sort of thing to happen in a foreign country. But know that I'm always here for you.

She slides the key over to Yui. Yui grips the key tightly.

YUI

Farhana, thank you. Thank you so much. You have no idea.

Farhana puts her hand over Yui's and nods warmly.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Yui fidgets with her fingers as sits across from Kathy. Kathy speaks slowly today, walking on eggshells.

KATHY

Are you pressing charges?

YUI

I don't want to. I don't want to cause any trouble. Um...
(inhaling deeply)
Will this affect my contract?

KATHY

No, not at all.

YUI

So this could still turn into a full-time position?

KATHY

That depends on your performance. This is the first year that we're doing programming at this scale and we really need it to go well.

She purses her lips apologetically.

KATHY (CONT'D)

But regardless, I want to make sure that you feel safe at work.

YUI

Thank you. Right now, I don't think I can be in the same space as him.

KATHY

I get it. That's why I'm talking to HR about making Zion remote.

Yui lifts her eyebrows.

KATHY (CONT'D)

You won't have to see him, but he can continue helping us out.

She smiles encouragingly. Yui forces a smile and nods.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Raw chicken thighs and sliced onions on the cutting board.

Yui HUMS *White Horse* by Taylor Swift as she cracks two eggs. She turns to throw the eggshells into the trash can when she glances out the window.

Standing underneath the street lamp is--

Zion. He crosses his arms and paces back and forth, his eyes on the ground.

Yui quickly closes the curtains. She turns off the lights in the kitchen. Her breathing is loud. She trembles in terror.

PING. A text notification rings out loudly.

Yui crawls to her phone on the counter. She silences her phone, then checks the notification.

MATT: How was your first day back?

She unlocks her phone and texts back.

YUI: Zion is outside my apt. Help me!

She carefully lifts a tiny corner of the curtain to peek.

Zion is still there. He looks directly at her with a strange, blank expression.

She quickly drops the curtain and hugs her knees.

LATER

Yui stands in a corner of her dark apartment, holding a Swiffer Sweeper in her hand like a spear.

KNOCK-KNOCK.

Yui jumps at the sound but relaxes when she hears--

MATT (O.S.)
Yui, it's me. Matt.

Yui tiptoes to the door and looks through the peephole.

It is indeed Matt.

Yui opens the door to let him in. She checks the hallway, just in case, before closing the door. Matt watches as Yui leans the Swiffer against the wall.

YUI
Thank you so much for coming.

MATT
He's gone. I checked around your building too but I didn't see him.

Yui opens the curtains again and Matt is right. Zion is not under the street lamps anymore. She sighs with relief.

MATT (CONT'D)
I was so scared that something might have happened to you. Thank god you're okay.

Yui looks up at his puppy dog eyes and her heart melts.

BZZZZ. Yui's phone vibrates. She checks her screen: RUMIKO. Her picture pops up on screen. Matt nods to it.

MATT (CONT'D)
You should take that.

Yui declines the call.

YUI
No, it's okay.

She looks down. Matt eyes the Swiffer again.

MATT
Hey, were you trying to defend yourself with that thing?

YUI
(sheepishly)
Yeah, I panicked.

Matt takes out a CANISTER OF MACE from his pocket.

MATT

I brought you some mace. It's a lot more powerful than a Swiffer.

YUI

How do you use it?

MATT

We're not actually doing it because this thing burns like the devil.

He acts out the steps as he explains.

MATT (CONT'D)

But you unlock the safety feature and aim it at their eyes. But don't forget to shield your eyes first.

He covers his eyes with his elbow and pretends to spray Yui.

MATT (CONT'D)

PSHHHH! You spray it and it'll buy you some time to get help.

Yui nods. He hands the mace to her.

MATT (CONT'D)

Now you try it on me. But remember, don't actually spray it.

YUI

So, you unlock this thingy, then aim, cover my eyes, PSHH--

MATT

AGHHHHHHH!

Matt claws his eyes, his face contorted in pain. Yui freaks out and covers her mouth.

YUI

Oh my god, I'm so sorry.

MATT

Gotcha!

He smiles mischievously. Yui looks back at him, shocked. She doesn't move. Matt's smile disappears.

MATT (CONT'D)

Sorry, I was just trying to make you laugh. You had gone through so much, I wanted to lighten the mood.

Silence.

Suddenly, Yui bursts out laughing. Matt's smile returns and he laughs with her, relieved. Yui pokes Matt's shoulder.

YUI
That wasn't funny!!

MATT
I know. I'm sorry.

Just then, Yui's stomach growls loudly. They look at each other, then burst into laughter again.

INT. SAKURA SUSHI AND GRILL - NIGHT

Yui flips through the menu and sees pictures of rolls with names like "Dragonroll Lady" and "Yellowtail Peril."

YUI
(to herself)
[There are so many toppings.]

She raises her eyebrows, amused. Matt looks around excitedly.

MATT
I've always wanted to come here. My
Dad and Nana don't like raw fish.

YUI
I didn't know you had a sister.

MATT
Huh? Oh, Nana is my grandma. We're
really close.
(a beat)
How about your folks? They must be
worried sick after what happened.

Yui's eyes waver and she takes a sip of water.

YUI
I haven't told them. We don't
really talk.

MATT
You know, I don't talk to my mom
either. She left us when I was in
high school.

Yui leans in, closer to Matt.

MATT (CONT'D)

Nana was the one who really kept the family together. Dad was uh, going through some stuff, but Nana really showed me what strong families are like.

YUI

My mom didn't leave, but she betrayed our family. That's why we don't talk.

She purses her lips and plays with a paper napkin.

MATT

Aww, Yui. You don't deserve that.

YUI

You didn't either.

She smiles faintly. Matt reaches over and rubs Yui's arm.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Matt and Yui walk down the hallway together. They approach her apartment door.

YUI

Thanks for walking me back.

MATT

Of course.

Yui reaches into her pocket.

YUI

I made this while you were in the bathroom. I wanted to thank you for dinner and taking care of me.

She pulls out an ORIGAMI HEART folded from the restaurant's paper napkin. She hands it to Matt.

MATT

Yui! This is so cute!

He hugs her tightly and gives her a peck on the cheek. When he pulls away, he sees Yui blinking rapidly.

MATT (CONT'D)

Sorry, was that too much?

YUI
No, it's just, in Japan, people
only do that when they're dating.

She smiles sheepishly.

YUI (CONT'D)
But I'm in America now, I should
get used to how people are here.

MATT
I mean, we *could* be dating.

Yui tilts her head, confused. Matt takes her hand.

MATT (CONT'D)
I like you, Yui. And it's only been
a couple of days but I feel like we
get each other.

He looks into her eyes.

MATT (CONT'D)
What do you say? Should we start
dating?

Yui's mouth slowly forms a smile and she nods. Matt lifts her
off the ground. Yui giggles.

He pulls away and caresses her cheek. Matt's gaze is serious
now. He leans towards Yui and kisses her.

The kiss is short and sweet. When they pull away, Yui melts
with a smile.

YUI
Good night. Boyfriend.

MATT
(laughing)
Good night, girlfriend.

Yui unlocks her apartment and waves to Matt before she goes
inside. He starts walking away.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Yui closes the door and locks it. She screams quietly and
stomps around with joy.

EXT. WAPASEEKI COLLEGE - HALLWAYS - DAY

Yui HUMS *Love on Top* by Beyonce as she marches towards a bulletin board. She carries a stack of posters that read: INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE, SIGN UP TO AUDITION!

She staples one onto the board and moves on to the next. Suddenly, she stops in her tracks. In front of her is--

Zion. He's watching her, thirty feet away.

ZION

Yui!

He waves to her. He has a black eye and scabs on his nose.

Yui's eyes widen with fear. She takes a few steps back. Then, she sprints as fast as she can, still holding the paper.

She hears POUNDING FOOTSTEPS. She glances back to see Zion chasing after her.

ZION (CONT'D)

Wait!

Yui rounds the corner and weaves through SOME STUDENTS. She still hears FOOTSTEPS behind her.

YUI

Don't come after me!

She throws the paper in the air.

Paper rains down on Zion and blocks his visibility. Zion slows down and catches his breath.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - DAY

Yui heaves and clutches her side as she returns to her cubicle. Farhana sees her and bolts up from her seat.

FARHANA

What happened?

Yui rummages through her work bag and pulls out the mace that Matt had given her. She sticks it in her pocket.

YUI

(out of breath)

I saw Zion, out there. He ran, after me.

FARHANA

What?

YUI

And last night, he was outside, my apartment.

FARHANA

What the fuck. You need to tell Kathy. He's stalking you!

Yui nods as she still tries to catch her breath.

BZZZZ. Yui checks her work phone. An email notification pops up: FROM ZION UGBOMA

Without reading the rest, she deletes the email quickly. Yui looks at Farhana, distressed.

INT. SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The air is tense. Yui crosses her arms, hugging herself for comfort. Kathy watches Yui intently.

YUI

So I don't feel comfortable working with Zion anymore.

Kathy leans in and whispers soothingly.

KATHY

But you won't even have to see him.

YUI

Yes, but I'll still see his name on emails. I just want to cut ties with him completely.

KATHY

You know that we won't have time to train another student, right? You'll be on your own.

YUI

(nodding)

I coordinated a lot of events for Nagoya University. I can handle it.

Kathy purses her lips but Yui looks back with determination. Kathy nods slowly.

KATHY

Alright, I'll talk to HR. Good luck planning the whole grand opening.

YUI

Thank you, Kathy. Thank you.

Her face lightens with relief.

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - EVENING

Yui stands at the curb, looking at her phone. Matt pulls up in his GMC YUKON and steps out to hug Yui tightly.

MATT

I really needed this.

He squeezes her and rocks from side to side. He pulls away.

MATT (CONT'D)

So, where are we going to dinner?

Yui shows Matt her phone. It's directions to AHMAD'S GYROS.

YUI

I wanted to try this restaurant before considering it for catering, but it's kind of far.

Matt studies Yui's phone closer.

MATT

40 minutes is nothing. Let's go.

YUI

But you're tired from work. Why don't I drive?

MATT

You can drive?

YUI

I got my international license while I was in Japan.

Matt raises his eyebrows and shrugs.

YUI (CONT'D)

I want to do something for you.

Yui opens the right car door. It's the passenger seat.

MATT
Driver's seat is the other one.

YUI
I know that. After you.

She gestures to the seat. Matt chuckles and gets in. She closes the door for him, then walks over to the other side.

INT. CAR - LATER

Yui and Matt drive through some residential streets.

YUI
The roads are so wide here.

She slows to a stop for a red light at an intersection. They wait there for a bit.

MATT
You can turn.

YUI
It's red.

MATT
Yeah, you can turn on red as long
as there are no cars coming.

YUI
That feels wrong. I want to wait.

Another car stops behind them, their blinker flashing.

MATT
There's a car behind us.

YUI
I know. They can wait too.

The car behind HONKS.

YUI (CONT'D)
Fine!

She accelerates and makes a right turn into the wrong side of the road. A PICKUP TRUCK speeds towards them, HONKING.

Matt grabs the steering wheel and yanks it to the right. The car bounces as it drives over the bumps and onto the right side of the road.

Yui pulls the car over to the shoulder, panting. She glances at Matt. His eyes are wide, body rigid with stress.

MATT

I think it's best if I drive.

Yui nods rapidly.

INT. COHEN HALL - DANCE ROOM - DAY - ONE WEEK LATER

The bruise on Yui's face has lightened considerably. It's now a sickly yellow shadow.

She sits with Kathy at a fold-up table in an empty room. Kathy taps her foot impatiently. Yui looks at her watch.

The doors SWING open and Farhana rushes in.

FARHANA

Sorry! My call ran a little late.

KATHY

We were almost going to start without you.

Farhana sits down at the table. Yui slides a printout of the audition schedule to Farhana.

YUI

Okay, let's start.

START MONTAGE:

A GROUP of SOUTH ASIAN STUDENTS. ONE STUDENT sets a tripod up and angles the phone screen towards them. She plays a YouTube dance tutorial to a Bollywood song, *NAATU NAATU*.

The students stare at the tutorial and at each other as they dance half-heartedly. None of them remember the choreography.

Yui and Farhana smile awkwardly. Kathy frowns and scribbles on her printout.

NEXT

A GROUP of AFRO-CARIBBEAN STUDENTS. They play the keyboard, steel drums, and a cajon to the reggae-pop song, *HULA HOOP* by Omi.

ONE STUDENT starts singing in a vibrant voice. Everyone seems to be enjoying themselves, feeling the beat.

Kathy lifts her eyebrows and smiles. Farhana sways to the beat. Yui nods along, enjoying the music.

NEXT

A K-POP GROUP, FOUR WHITE STUDENTS and ONE KOREAN GIRL. They dance to *OMG* by New Jeans. They nail the choreography, not missing a beat. But everyone's style of dance is so different so the balance is off.

Kathy nods positively. Yui and Farhana lock eyes with each other and raise a skeptical eyebrow.

NEXT

A MONGOLIAN STUDENT. She sits on a chair in the center of the room. She closes her eyes as she plays the sweeping melodies from *THE NIGHT OF ULAANBATAAR* on a morin khuur (horse-head fiddle).

Yui and Farhana are captivated but Kathy spaces out, bored.

END MONTAGE.

A GROUP of MALE STUDENTS enters the room. They stand in the middle of the room.

Yui looks at the audition schedule and furrows her eyebrows.

YUI (CONT'D)

Did you register?

BRYCE (Black, American, 22) takes a step forward.

BRYCE

Zion is innocent.

Yui's eyes widen. She's frozen in place.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

We know Zion, and he would never do something like that.

Kathy bristles and leans forward.

KATHY

If you're not here to audition, you need to leave.

Bryce points a finger at Yui. Farhana looks worriedly at Yui, who is still paralyzed.

BRYCE

You were the one who got him fired.
He's struggling, he can't work off-
campus because of his visa.

KATHY

Zion's actions jeopardize the
safety of my employees. His
predatory behavior--

BRYCE

Fuck you! He's not fucking
predatory!

KATHY

Leave now. Or I'll call campus
security.

BRYCE

Did BLM change nothing for you?

FARHANA

I know that you're just standing up
for your friend, but you don't know
the whole story.

BRYCE

I know that you're a racist if
you're really gonna let an innocent
Black man go down like that.

Kathy dials a number and speaks into her phone.

KATHY

Can you send a few officers over to
Cohen Hall? Immediately.

A TALL STUDENT puts a hand on Bryce's shoulder.

TALL STUDENT

Let's just leave, bro. Those Karens
aren't gonna do shit.

BRYCE

Fuck this, man.

Bryce grunts and storms out of the room, the rest of his gang
following. The door slams shut behind them.

Kathy sits down with a huff. Farhana looks over at Yui, who
trembles in her seat.

YUI

That was... a lot.

Yui forces a smile, but her eyes hold back tears.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - TEMPORARY DMA OFFICE - EVENING

Yui organizes her table and packs her work bag while Farhana rummages around on her cluttered desk.

FARHANA
This always happens.

YUI
It's because your desk is messy.

FARHANA
Not messy, *lived-in*.

Yui shoulders her work bag. Farhana takes out her work phone and opens Find My iPhone.

FARHANA (CONT'D)
Thank god for technology.

She presses the PLAY SOUND button. A MUFFLED RINGING sounds from the desk.

Farhana finds her phone in one of the drawers. It hides under a stack of papers. She digs it out and shows Yui proudly. Yui raises her eyebrows, judging.

FARHANA (CONT'D)
Don't judge me! I get distracted if
I don't hide it.

Yui shrugs, still judging, and starts walking to the staircase. Farhana chases after her.

INT. EXERCISE STUDIO - DAY

Yui and Farhana are dressed in workout clothes. They face each other, with a menacing expression on their faces.

YUI
Back off.

FARHANA
BACK OFF!

They stand in front of TEN STUDENTS, mostly women. AN ATHLETIC INSTRUCTOR (30s) watches them from the side.

INSTRUCTOR

Nice, Farhana. Yui, make sure to really raise your voice. We need to alert as many people as we can. Let's do it again.

YUI

BACK OFF!

FARHANA

BACK OFF!

INSTRUCTOR

Again.

YUI

BACK OFF!!

FARHANA

BACK OFF!!

INSTRUCTOR

Exactly! Remember, prevention is the best self-defense. Always be on the lookout for danger.

Yui and Farhana nod.

INT. THE BURGER SHACK - EVENING

Yui sits with Farhana, a half-eaten burger and a heaping pile of fries in front of each of them.

YUI

It felt nice to raise my voice like that. People stare at you in Japan if you talk loudly.

FARHANA

Yeah, shouting is so cathartic. Sometimes, I run through the cornfields and just shout at the top of my lungs.

YUI

Why?

FARHANA

Why not?

She chuckles and takes some more fries.

YUI
 Hey, how quickly do people
 introduce their girlfriends to
 their family?

FARHANA
 Oh my god, are you meeting Matt's
 family already?

Yui nods sheepishly.

YUI
 This weekend. It feels soon.

FARHANA
 Yeah, it took me two years to
 introduce my ex to my family. And
 even then, my dad didn't talk to me
 for a day afterward.
 (shrugging)
 But I guess it's different for
 white people.

YUI
 I just hope they like me.

FARHANA
 Don't worry. They will.

She pats Yui's shoulder. Yui looks up and smiles coyly.

YUI
 How else am I gonna get that green
 card?

FARHANA
 Yui!

Yui bursts out laughing and Farhana playfully nudges Yui.

EXT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - DAY

It's a typical Midwest farmhouse surrounded by fields in all
 directions.

Matt pulls up into the gravel driveway. From the passenger
 seat, Yui admires the house.

YUI
 This is a palace.

He smiles as he looks over at her.

INT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Yui, Matt, Nana, and Douglas sit at the dining table. Muffins and coffee on the table. Yuit takes a big bite from a muffin.

YUI
This is delicious, Nana.

NANA
Oh, I'm so glad. I didn't know if you would like this sort of thing.

YUI
I love it.

She smiles politely at Nana.

NANA
What's it like in Japan? I heard it's really safe there.

YUI
It is. Even when I walked alone at night, I never felt scared. It was so normal. I didn't appreciate it enough when I was living there.

NANA
Wow, that must be so nice.

Yui nods and glances at Douglas. He stares at her while drinking his coffee. Yui blinks uncomfortably.

YUI
Uh, so Douglas, Matt told me, you own a construction company?

He nods, still stone-faced.

YUI (CONT'D)
How is that going?

DOUGLAS
It's fine.

Yui forces a smile and glances at Matt for help. THUNK. Douglas puts his coffee mug down on the table.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
What made you want to come to America?

YUI
I was offered a job here.

DOUGLAS

But you were the one who applied
and accepted the job. Leaving your
country, that's a big decision.

Yui fidgets with her hands. Matt eyes Douglas apprehensively.

MATT

Dad...

YUI

I always wanted to live here. I
felt pressure in Japan, mm, be
quiet, work harder, and I felt, uh,
stepped on.

Douglas raises his eyebrows, still watching Yui like a hawk.

YUI (CONT'D)

I love American movies and I don't
know, I thought people seemed so
free here.

NANA

It is the land of the free.

Douglas looks at Nana, then turns to Yui.

DOUGLAS

I want to show you something.

He stands up and beckons Yui to follow him. Matt watches Yui
nervously.

INT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - GUN ROOM - DAY

Yui's eyes are wide with fear and curiosity. She stares at
VARIOUS GUNS displayed proudly in secure cabinets. The cold
metal glints in the light.

DOUGLAS (O.S.)

Does it scare you?

Yui turns around to Douglas, who hovers behind her.

YUI

(nodding)

I've never seen a gun before.

DOUGLAS

This is normal here. It's called
the Second Amendment.

Yui smiles nervously.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

You were right about Americans being free, you know. We can't let anyone compromise our freedom, that's why we have the right to defend ourselves.

She nods as she stares at the nearby GLOCK 19.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Do you want to try?

Douglas's mouth curls into a smile. Yui lifts her eyebrows, considering his offer.

INT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Yui strides excitedly to Matt, who watches college football on the sofa. He perks up when he sees her.

YUI

Your dad's teaching me how to shoot a gun.

Matt tenses up.

YUI (CONT'D)

Relax, we're just shooting some cans. I told him that I could never kill something.

MATT

I'll go with you.

Nana pops her head from the kitchen doorway.

NANA

Matty, could you give me a hand?

YUI

It's fine. We'll be right outside.

(whispering)

And I think your dad is finally starting to like me. I want to impress him.

She pats Matt's shoulder. He smiles back nervously.

EXT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - FIELD - DAY

Douglas hands Yui a duffel bag full of EMPTY TIN CANS. He points to a worn wooden bench thirty yards in front of them.

DOUGLAS

Can you line these up over there?

Yui nods and she marches towards the bench. Her back is against Douglas and in the distance, the Pollard house.

Douglas takes out a pistol and loads it with bullets. He glances up at Yui, who sets the first can on the bench.

Douglas' finger glides on the curve of the trigger.

INT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Matt stands on a step stool as he unscrews the bulb of the light fixture. He switches out the old one for a new bulb.

As he starts screwing it in, he looks out the window at Yui, who is setting up the cans.

NANA

Matty, you're distracted.

MATT

No, I'm not.

Nana switches on the light. The bulb lights up and Matt immediately takes his hands off the lightbulb.

MATT (CONT'D)

Are you trying to electrocute me?

NANA

You are distracted. You didn't even turn off the breaker.

Matt stares at her, shocked.

NANA (CONT'D)

You better watch yourself. Remember why we're doing this.

She switches the light off.

EXT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - FIELD - DAY

A THUNDEROUS BANG rings out.

Yui lowers her pistol. A can has fallen from the bench. She turns to Douglas, ecstatic.

YUI
I hit it! Wow!

He proudly pats her on the shoulder. Yui beams.

YUI (CONT'D)
I can't believe I hit it.
Beginner's luck, I guess.

DOUGLAS
No, you hit it fair and square.

He smiles at her for the first time.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
I drove past that new college
building the other day. Is it
nearly finished?

YUI
The outside is. The interior still
needs a lot of work.

DOUGLAS
Looks like a mighty fine building.

Yui glances at Douglas as he polishes a pistol.

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - DAY

Yui opens the construction fence to let Douglas and Matt in.
Douglas admires the building facade.

YUI
I'm not supposed to bring people in
so this is out secret, okay?

INT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - DAY

Douglas roams around the floor, taking scribbling furiously
in his notebook.

Yui leans into Matt and whispers.

YUI
I think your dad likes me now.

MATT
Sure seems like it.

Douglas circles back to Yui. He points at the main doors.

DOUGLAS
Are these the only exits?

YUI
There's a fire escape in the back
and another in the basement too.

DOUGLAS
Can I see those?

Yui nods.

BASEMENT

The basement is a work in progress. Some walls are covered with drywall, but most walls are bare with exposed plumbing.

Douglas touches the columns as Matt and Yui float near him.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
Concrete columns. Good, good. This
must be the load-bearing wall.
(to Yui)
It's much easier to see what the
structure is here.

Yui's phone VIBRATES. She pulls it out of her pocket. It's from MOM. Yui silences the call and puts it away.

YUI
I can't believe that the grand
opening is in a month. It feels
like I just got here.

DOUGLAS
Rishabh Munish will be there?

YUI
He would never miss it. He's put so
much into this building.

DOUGLAS
I hear he's a great man.

YUI
Would you like to meet him?

DOUGLAS
Isn't the grand opening invitation-
only?

YUI

It is, but you're talking to the program coordinator. I can pull a few strings.

She smiles. Douglas nudges Matt, who is very quiet.

DOUGLAS

Oh, this is gonna be dynamite.

He chuckles and Yui laughs with him. Matt purses his lips.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - MORNING

Yui is on the phone, looking at a budgeting spreadsheet on her monitor.

YUI

Twelve ninety-nine? That includes the delivery fee? Ahhh, okay.

She types in some numbers on her computer and grimaces.

YUI (CONT'D)

I see. Unfortunately, our budget for the flowers is a thousand. Ahhh. What if we picked it up? Okay. How about just the flowers, no need for the arrangement?

There's SHOUTING outside. Yui turns her head. Farhana gets up and walks to the window.

YUI (CONT'D)

You would? Oh, that's amazing. Thank you so much. I'll put in an order right away. Thank you.

She hangs up the phone. Farhana stares out the window.

FARHANA

Look...

Yui rushes over to join her and sees--

A SMALL CROWD OF STUDENTS gathered outside the building, including Bryce and his friends.

They hold SIGNS that say "JUSTICE FOR ZION," "HE'S INNOCENT," "STOP POLICING BLACK MEN," "KARENS FUCK OFF," etc.

PROTEST CHANT

Justice for Zion. Justice for Zion.

Yui's mouth hangs open with shock. Just then, Kathy steps out from the conference room.

FARHANA

Kathy?

She beckons Kathy over to the window. Kathy rolls her eyes and sighs at the sight.

KATHY

This is ridiculous! What do they think they're going to accomplish?

FARHANA

Should we talk to them to see what they want? Maybe there's a way to settle this peacefully.

(turning to Yui)

What do you think?

Yui looks at the Protestors, then at Kathy's annoyed expression. She nods at Farhana.

YUI

We can try.

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - DAY

Farhana and Yui step outside and are greeted by a SMALL CROWD of PROTESTORS. They wave their signs angrily. Zion is absent, but his friends, including Bryce, are there to show support.

Farhana steps in front of Yui, as if to shield her.

The Protestors crowd around them.

PROTEST CHANT

Justice for Zion! Justice for Zion!

SOME BYSTANDERS watch the drama unfold from a distance. Some students take out their phones and start filming.

BRO PROTESTOR

We don't want much, we just want our boy Zion to get his job back.

FARHANA

I understand, it's a difficult situation, but we can't have him compromise our work environment.

Yui taps Farhana's shoulder.

YUI

I think we should go.

FARHANA

No, this isn't right.

(to the Protestors)

Look, you have your side of the story, Zion's side. I thought he was a great guy too. But people have a lot of different sides to them, sides they hide.

She takes a step towards them.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

And you haven't seen my friend's bruises. Yes, it's a fucked up situation but Yui also deserves to feel safe in her workplace. Don't you think?

The Protestors just stare at her and Yui, at a loss for words. They can't make up their mind on what to say. Yui steps closer to the Protestors.

YUI

Please, could you stop this? We need to get back to work.

Yui pulls Farhana back to the office.

INT. SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Yui neatly organizes the printouts on the desk. She looks at the clock. It's 4:08 PM.

The DOOR OPENS. It's the Mongolian Student, SERCHMAA (19).

SERCHMAA

Sorry I'm late.

YUI

It's okay. Do you if the other group is on their way too?

Serchmaa seems uncomfortable.

SERCHMAA

Uh, I heard that they dropped out.

YUI

Is it because of the--

She gestures outside to the protestors. Serchmaa shrugs. Yui inhales sharply.

INT. EXERCISE STUDIO - DAY

The Instructor walks around the room. STUDENTS pair up and practice with dummy torso.

Yui wraps her elbow around the dummy's neck in a chokehold while Farhana watches her.

INSTRUCTOR

Now, remember to target the sides of their neck, not their throat. We're restricting the blood flow, not the airflow.

The Instructor walks around the groups. She sees Yui's hold.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)

You would've killed her with that.

FARHANA

(jokingly)
Ooo, that's not good.

Yui doesn't react and Farhana clocks this. The Instructor adjusts the angle of Yui's elbow.

INSTRUCTOR

Here, see how it's now targeting the neck. And squeeze. Now, that's the sleeper chokehold.

Yui squeezes the dummy's neck. The Instructor nods and drifts to the next group.

FARHANA

Hey, did I overstep today?

YUI

What?

FARHANA

Today with the protestors. I was just so mad. They're completely discrediting your trauma.

YUI

No, I actually wanted to thank you for that. I didn't know what to do. I just feel like it's all my fault.

FARHANA
It's not--

YUI (CONT'D)
I know it's not. But I still
can't help it.

Yui smiles hopefully.

YUI (CONT'D)
But now that you've said that, I
don't think I need to worry about
the protest anymore.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - MORNING

FIERCE FACES OF PROTESTORS. There's more of them now.

A NEW GROUP of mostly women hold "BELIEVE IN WOMEN!" "YUI
DESERVES TO FEEL SAFE!" "ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ZION"

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - TEMPORARY DMA OFFICE - MORNING

Yui stares out the window in disbelief. Kathy walks by and
stops when she sees the protestors.

KATHY
Oh no. No, no, no. There's more?

Yui grimaces.

KATHY (CONT'D)
Did you say something yesterday to
provoke them?

YUI
No, I don't, I didn't think so.

KATHY
Listen, we need to fix this ASAP.
Rishabh can't know about this.

Yui nods rapidly.

KATHY (CONT'D)
Yui, you're such a good problem
solver. Can you, uh, handle it?

Yui sees the intensity behind Kathy's eyes. It's less of a
question and more of a plea. Yui nods hesitantly.

INT. TEMPORARY DMA OFFICE - DAY

Farhana glances at Yui, who spins mindlessly on her chair. She reaches over and grabs the chair, forcing Yui to a halt.

FARHANA

Enough. What's going on?

YUI

What if Kathy doesn't renew my contract over that?

She gestures to the protest outside.

YUI (CONT'D)

I just want it to end. I can't believe that there are people out there, protesting for *me*. I never asked them!

FARHANA

I wonder how Zion feels.

Yui squints her eyes, thinking.

YUI

Maybe he never wanted this either. It's weird that he's not there protesting with everyone.

Farhana shrugs. Yui sighs softly.

YUI (CONT'D)

I think I should talk to him.

FARHANA

Are you sure you want to do that?

YUI

I don't know. I think I should try. I can't just sit here, trapped.

FARHANA

I'll go with you and if he tries anything, I'll show off my self-defense moves.

She swiftly kicks the air to prove her point. Yui nods, pursing her lips.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Matt leans forward, glued to the TV. Yui hugs her knees and wraps herself up in a blanket like a cocoon. She covers her face with her hands, peeking through her fingers.

On screen, *Audition* by Takashi Miike is playing.

A CREEPY WOMAN sits on the floor as a TELEPHONE RINGS. She smiles unsettlingly. Suddenly, a GIANT POTATO SACK behind JERKS to the left.

Yui yelps at the jump scare.

YUI

I don't want to watch this anymore.

Matt turns and sees her all wrapped up. He wraps his arms around her and squeezes her.

MATT

How are you so cute? I just want to eat you!

He pretends to gobble her up and she giggles.

YUI

(whining)

Why can't everything have a happy ending?

MATT

Because I'm tired of watching your rom-coms.

He plants a kiss on her, then turns to the TV again. Yui nuzzles his neck repeatedly.

MATT (CONT'D)

Is this a ploy to stop watching this movie?

YUI

Is it working?

Yui smiles coquettishly.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHTMARE

Yui's eyes are wide open. She lies paralyzed on the pavement.

Above her, the stars shine brilliantly in the sky.

Suddenly, Zion's head appears right above her face. He is straddled over her. He drags his nose along her neck.

ZION
Fuck, you smell so good.

Zion kisses her on the lips.

Tears fill Yui's eyes, about to overflow. She closes them shut, hoping that all of this will go away.

KISSING SOUNDS. Then--

MATT (O.S.)
(moaning)
Yui.

Yui opens her eyes with fear. She sees--

Zion's bruised and bloody face hovering right above hers. He opens his mouth, his face morphs to Matt's.

MATT (CONT'D)
You like that?

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Yui's scream pierces through the room. Matt is on top of her. They're in bed together, fully clothed, still in foreplay.

Matt looks back at her in shock.

MATT
What is it? Did I do something?

YUI
Oh my god. I'm so sorry.

MATT
It's okay, we can take out time.

YUI
I'm so sorry.

Matt rolls over and lies down next to Yui.

YUI (CONT'D)
I think I'm nervous about talking to Zion and it's bringing back bad--

MATT
Wait. Zion?

Matt bristles up instantly.

MATT (CONT'D)
Why would you talk to that lunatic?
What if something happens to you?

YUI
It's okay, I'm meeting him in a
public place and I'm hoping that
it'll make the protests stop.

MATT
You need to stay away from him!

Yui blinks and shakes her head.

YUI
Why are you getting so angry?

MATT
I'm not, I'm just worried. He's
caused enough harm already.

YUI
Matt, that's really sweet, but I
can handle it.

MATT
I just would feel better if you
didn't talk to him.

Yui rolls to her side and cuddles against Matt as the little
spoon. She takes Matt's arms and wraps them around herself.

YUI
But Kathy needs me to stop the
protests.

MATT
Kathy is being unreasonable. She's
compromising your safety. Promise
me you won't talk to him?

YUI
Fine.

MATT
Good.

He buries his face into Yui's hair as he hugs her. Yui's lip
twitches with uncertainty.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - BATHROOM - DAY

Yui shudders when she exhales. She taps her face with her fingers as she looks at herself in the mirror.

YUI
[You can do it, Yui. You can fix
this. It'll be alright.]

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - BACK EXIT - DAY

Farhana opens the back door and checks outside. No one is there. Yui follows her outside.

Together, they sneak behind the HRH toward the campus center.

Near the main entrance, Yui sees the Protestors waving their signs in the air.

PROTEST CHANT
Justice for Zion. Justice for Zion.

EXT. CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Yui and Farhana stand by the entrance.

Through the window, they see Zion sitting at a table, a half-empty Americano next to him. He types furiously on a laptop.

FARHANA
Are you sure?

YUI
(nodding)
He might be more willing to
negotiate if it's just me. I just
need this to end well.

FARHANA
Okay, I'll be right here then. Wave
to me if you feel even a little
uncomfortable, okay?

YUI
Thank you.

She hugs Farhana, then marches inside.

INT. CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Yui walks up to Zion, who looks up from his screen.

YUI
(cheerily)
Hi, Zion.

ZION
Hi.

He is not as enthusiastic but he closes his laptop. Yui sits down across from him.

YUI
How are you doing?

ZION
Let's skip the small talk. Why did you want to meet all of a sudden?

Yui notices that her hands are shaking so she sits on them. She takes a deep breath.

YUI
I've always wanted to come to America. There seemed to be so much here that there wasn't back home. But I guess you never know what it's like until you try it out.

ZION
What are you on about?

YUI
Not everything is good. It's hard sometimes but you just have to try to make the best of the situation.

ZION
Is this about that night?

YUI
No, I wanted to ask--

ZION
Do you actually believe that I would try to rape you?

He looks at her, hurt. Yui looks down. She can't meet his eyes. He sighs, frustrated.

ZION (CONT'D)
I was only walking you home. You tripped, Yui, you tripped. You fell to the ground, that's how you got hurt.

(MORE)

ZION (CONT'D)

That's when that fucking white guy came out of fucking nowhere and punched me.

YUI

Matt? You're wrong. Matt would never do something like that.

ZION

What the fuck, Yui!

YUI

Look, Zion. I forgive you. Everyone makes mistakes. The important thing is to learn from it and--

ZION

I'm not a fucking rapist!

Everyone in the cafe turns towards him. He lowers his voice. Yui twitches but still tries to keep calm.

ZION (CONT'D)

You know, I tried to talk to you. I tried to tell you the truth. I never fucking assaulted you, you're not even my type.

(a beat)

Sorry, I didn't mean it like that.

They pause. An uncomfortable silence.

YUI

Are you doing okay with money? I know that it's been hard after Kathy fired you.

Zion shrugs. He doesn't want to talk about it.

YUI (CONT'D)

Maybe I can talk to financial aid or something and get you another work study. But can you tell your friends to stop protesting?

Zion stops.

ZION

Oh, that's what this is about. I never wanted to be part of this! I told them, I just wanted to graduate in peace. Everyone has a fucking opinion about me now! I'm so sick of this fake-ass college.

He stands up and puts his laptop in his bag.

YUI
Wait, let's work something out!

ZION
Leave me the fuck alone.

He storms out of the coffee shop.

EXT. CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Zion flings open the door with gusto. Farhana watches warily as he stomps away.

Moments later, Yui comes out. Farhana sees the defeat in Yui's eyes.

FARHANA
Do you want to talk about it?

YUI
No.

She sighs and her shoulder deflates.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - TEMPORARY DMA OFFICE - EVENING

Yui's eyes are lifeless like a fish in a supermarket as she stares at her computer. She's designing a DIGITAL INVITATION:

**You are invited to the
Grand Opening for the Munish Multicultural Center**

She clicks through the different font options and settles on a cursive typeface.

PING. An email notification from Serchmaa.

Yui clicks on it and skims through the email. Then, Yui sinks into the desk, resting her head against the cold surface with a THUMP. Farhana turns around.

FARHANA
What now?

YUI
Serchmaa dropped out. I don't have a performance for the grand opening anymore.

FARHANA

Well, fuck. Everything is just falling apart today.

YUI

(annoyed)

Hmmm.

FARHANA

You look tired, you should go home and rest.

YUI

No, I need to figure out what to do. I should contact more students.

FARHANA

No one's checking their emails. Everyone left for Thanksgiving break.

Yui drops her head, trying to hide her frustration.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

By the way, what time should I pick you up tomorrow?

Yui turns to look at Farhana blankly.

FARHANA (CONT'D)

The food bank? You said you'd volunteer with me.

Yui lifts her eyebrows, genuinely shocked.

YUI

I thought I told you. I can't make it anymore.

FARHANA

Why?

YUI

I told Matt's family I would do Thanksgiving at their house.

FARHANA

But you promised.

YUI

I'm so sorry, but Nana asked me to help her cook. It hurts her back to stand in the kitchen all day so I want to be there for her. Sorry.

FARHANA
That's fine then.

Farhana hides her disappointment with a smile.

EXT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - DAY

Yui holds a BIG BOUQUET OF AUTUMNAL FLOWERS. Matt carries a bag of groceries and opens the door.

INT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Matt sets the groceries on the kitchen table. Yui looks around. No one is there.

YUI
Where are they?

MATT
They must be getting the turkey.

YUI
You don't lock the door?

MATT
It's fine, our neighbors know not to mess with us.

He playfully bumps his elbow against Yui.

MATT (CONT'D)
Come on, let's get started.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Three vases of gorgeous flower arrangements decorate the table. Yui looks up as she adjusts one of the arrangements.

Nana walks in and gasps with delight.

NANA
This is exquisite, Yui! These flowers are going to make the Thanksgiving spread look gourmet!

Douglas follows behind Nana, carrying a pecan pie. Matt pokes his head out from the kitchen.

MATT
Where's the turkey?

NANA

Carter and Jared are bringing it.

Matt raises his eyebrows.

MATT

I thought they weren't coming this year because of... you know.

NANA

Matty, they're family. Of course, they're coming to Thanksgiving.

Matt locks eyes with Douglas. Douglas shrugs.

LATER

A full Thanksgiving meal is displayed on the table: a perfectly roasted turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, and a green bean casserole.

Yui cuts a piece of turkey on her plate and glances at--

CARTER (white, 20s), an intense man with a shaved head. He has BIBLICAL FACE TATTOOS and very thick eyelashes.

Sitting next to him is JARED (white, 20s). He flashes a grin and Yui sees that he has a few teeth missing.

JARED

You likey the turkey?

MATT

Jared.

He eyes Jared sharply, who still sports the toothy grin. Douglas and Nana dig into their meals. Yui forces a smile.

YUI

Yes, uh, it's delicious.

JARED

We shot and skinned it ourselves.

DOUGLAS

Yui's actually a pretty good shot.

CARTER

(under his breath)

I'm sure she is.

Douglas puts his fork down and clears his throat. Jared and Carter meet Douglas' death glare.

Matt rubs Yui's hand underneath the table. Yui looks at him and nods gratefully.

Nana's eyes land on a decorative cornucopia on the table.

NANA

Yui, do you know why we celebrate Thanksgiving?

YUI

Uh, not really.

JARED

Storytime!

NANA

Long long ago, some settlers called the Pilgrims set sail from England to America on the Mayflower.

MATT

Mayflower is a ship.

YUI

Ah.

Jared and Carter lock eyes and smirk.

NANA

After a treacherous journey, they landed in America, which was so different from what they'd known. The Pilgrims didn't have enough food to last them through the winter. Until some nice Indians showed up and invited them to a meal. And that's the start of Thanksgiving.

Yui nods as she processes this story.

YUI

Wow, I always thought it was Native Americans. I didn't know that there were Indian people in America then.

Nana, Jared, and Carter burst out laughing. Yui blushes.

MATT

Indians are Native Americans. Not Indian like Farhana.

YUI

Farhana's Pakistani American.

JARED
 Potato, potahto.

DOUGLAS
 The point of the story is that the
 Indians helped the Pilgrims make
 America into the great country it
 is now.

CARTER
 Or that it used to be.

NANA
 You're right, it's too messy now.
 (to Yui)
 It must be so nice in Japan with
 only your people.

YUI
 What do you mean?

NANA
 Japan is of the Japanese, by the
 Japanese, for the Japanese. It
 makes sense that way.

JARED
 None of that race-traitor bullshit
 we have here.

He stares directly at Matt, who glares back.

YUI
 I think Japan is suffocating. I
 like it here so much more.

Douglas stands up.

DOUGLAS
 I think we're ready for pie.

YUI
 I have a separate stomach for
 dessert.

She doesn't notice that Jared and Carter watch her like a
 hawk. Matt looks between them uneasily.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jared and Carter sit on the sofa, Matt and Douglas in their
 own armchair, all fervently watching the football game.

JARED
Come on, Rodriguez! Get it!

On screen, a FOOTBALLER sprints down the field with the ball.

SPORTSCASTER (V.O.)
Tyler Rodriguez from the 25, he
breaks out of a tackle, takes it
down the sideline, HE STAYS ON HIS
FEET, HE SCORES!

Matt pumps his fist in the air. Jared and Carter whoop and yell. Douglas downs his beer and stands up for another.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Yui wipes down the counters with a paper towel. Douglas comes in and opens the fridge and pops open a Miller High Life.

DOUGLAS
Sorry about those guys.

He gestures towards the living room.

YUI
It's okay. They're not that loud.

DOUGLAS
No, I meant earlier. At dinner.
They were disrespectful.

YUI
I didn't feel disrespected. I just
thought that they didn't like me.

DOUGLAS
They're young and stupid.1
(sucking his teeth)
I used to be a lot like them.

Yui tilts her head, incredulous.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
I didn't know what to do with my
life, just hung out with my buddies
and drank like a fish. One night, I
blacked out at the pub and this guy
started attacking me. The next
thing I knew, I woke up in jail.

Yui gasps, covering her mouth.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

My buddies saw the whole thing,
said I was just protecting myself
but the guy fell and hit his head.

A moment of silence. Yui glances at Douglas.

YUI

Did he... die?

DOUGLAS

He did. And I paid for it.

Yui's eyes waver uneasily. Douglas takes a sip of his beer.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Going to prison changed me. It
taught me a lot. People see you
differently when they know you've
been to prison. No one's hiring me
for jobs anymore. It's like I try
and try and nothing comes out of it
and I'm to blame.

Yui's eyes widen and she nods.

YUI

I feel that way too, at work right
now. Nothing is going the way it's
supposed to and it's all my fault.

DOUGLAS

It's hard, but I'm just trying to
do good for my family.

YUI

We're in this together.

She looks up at him and they share a smile.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

A very detailed architectural model sits on a workbench. It's familiar, it's the Munish Multicultural Center.

Above the workbench is a floor plan of the MMC.

There are three chairs in the middle of the room. Douglas sits in the middle chair, shaking his leg impatiently.

Jared stands around, drinking a glass of whole milk. Carter opens a cardboard box and takes out a WHITE PLASTER MASK.

He passes one to Jared, who holds it in front of his face.

JARED
These are sick!

Carter grabs one of himself and gives the other to Douglas.

The basement door opens again. Nana comes down, followed by Matt, who holds a DSLR camera in his hand.

DOUGLAS
Took you long enough.

Matt mounts the DSLR to a tripod and aims it at the chairs. He switches on a projector, which takes a minute to warm up.

Nana stands by the wall while Carter and Jared take a seat on either side of Douglas.

CARTER
How's the timing device? Everything is going as planned?

DOUGLAS
Matt and I tested it out back last week. That baby was right on time.

JARED
I can't believe we're doing this. That Chinese cunt was a fucking score! Right, Matt?

He smirks at Matt, who is tight-lipped.

NANA
Couldn't agree more. She's really a blessing in disguise. This is much bigger than just Munish now.

The projector is up and running. Matt connects it to the laptop nearby and it casts the words:

WE ARE THE ARYAN STATE

Matt adjusts the camera to frame the shot. Douglas, Carter, and Jared put on their plaster masks. It's terrifying.

Matt gives a thumbs-up to Douglas. Douglas clears his throat.

DOUGLAS
Alright, start the camera.

Matt presses record.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
We are the Aryan State.

Matt clicks on the laptop. Douglas reads off the next slide.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
We are fed up with the current
state of affairs. The white race is
being flooded with the third world
all over America.

Matt keeps a straight face as he clicks to the next slide.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
But we refuse to be invaded in our
own homes. The white race has a
right to live.

Matt's mouth quivers slightly. Nana clocks this.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
Destroying that woke building is
only the first step. We won't stop
until all the filth is wiped clean
from our streets. Stop white
genocide.

JARED / CARTER
Stop white genocide!

Matt's eyes are filled with tears but he forces himself to
not let them fall. He stops the recording.

DOUGLAS
Should we do another take?

MATT
No, I think we got it, Dad.

Nana studies Matt. She walks over to him as the rest of the
crew chat to themselves.

NANA
What's on your mind?

MATT
Do we need Yui to be in the
building? Can't we just pull her
out before?

NANA
We can't let anyone suspect a
thing. It'll be unnatural if she
leaves in the middle of the event.

She grabs his wrist with a tight grip.

NANA (CONT'D)

Remember what's important, honey. I think you're getting a little distracted playing pretend.

Matt inhales deeply, then nods.

Meanwhile, Douglas, Carter, and Jared take their masks off.

CARTER

Yo, did you hear about that stupid protest at the college?

DOUGLAS

What protest?

CARTER

Some lazy nigger was fired and wants money or something. If only it were that easy.

Douglas raises his eyebrows. The gears in his head turn.

DOUGLAS

Carter, do you still have that leftover paint?

The corners of his mouth turn up into an eerie smile.

KATHY (PRE-LAP)

WHAT THE FUCK!

INT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - MORNING

Kathy roams through the empty building, her heart rate through the roof with stress.

KATHY

What the fuck happened here?

The walls are covered with red spray paint, spelling out "#BLM," "JUSTICE FOR ZION," "EAT THE RICH," etc.

Shattered glass litters the floor.

Yui and Farhana stare at this sight, enraged. A CAMPUS SECURITY OFFICER stands nearby.

CAMPUS SECURITY OFFICER

We couldn't identify who exactly did it from the security footage.

KATHY

Oh, we all know who did this.

She shares an exasperated look with Yui and Farhana.

KATHY (CONT'D)

I thought it would fizzle out after the break, but enough is enough.

She crosses her arms and grunts angrily.

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - MORNING

POLICE OFFICERS wearing black helmets stand menacingly in front of a GROUP OF SHOUTING PROTESTORS.

Bryce stands close to a SHORT OFFICER. He gestures with his hands as he makes his case.

BRYCE

We're not doing anything wrong!

SHORT OFFICER

You need to disband immediately.

Protestors continue to CHANT and wave their signs angrily at the Police, who just glare at them.

PROTEST CHANT

Justice for Zion! Justice for Zion!

Students film the action on their phones.

Yui, Farhana, and Kathy stand huddled next to the building. Kathy tears off a chunk of dried mango with her teeth.

Yui watches in horror as--

The Short Officer grabs Bryce's arm and turns him around.

SHORT OFFICER

That's enough!

He slams handcuffs on Bryce's wrists. Bryce's face twists with anger, but he doesn't resist the arrest.

BRO PROTESTOR

What the fuck, man! Get your hands off him.

Farhana turns to Kathy.

FARHANA

Isn't this a little extreme?

KATHY

Hey, we can't arrest them for vandalism, might as well arrest them for trespassing.

Yui notices that in the background, CONSTRUCTION WORKERS pack up their vans. She nudges Farhana and points to them.

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - MORNING

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS load their equipment into vans. The site looks empty without supplies scattered everywhere.

Yui squeezes through the fence and spots Lou. She dashes over to him.

YUI

Lou! What's happening here?

Lou stops in his tracks, then looks long and hard at Yui.

LOU

We're done here.

YUI

What? Why? You can't leave now.

LOU

I can't?

He raises an eyebrow, testing her. Yui nods nervously.

YUI

Yeah, the building isn't done yet.

Lou shakes his head, then starts walking away.

YUI (CONT'D)

Lou!

LOU

What? You going to arrest me too?

He keeps walking away. Yui stands there, mouth agape. Then, her face lights up as an idea strikes her.

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - DAY

NEW CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, a group of intense white men with Jared and Carter among them, unload supplies from the van.

Douglas stands proudly with Yui, Farhana, and Kathy.

DOUGLAS

Thank you for taking a chance on us. You have my word that we will try out damn best to fix this disaster, alright?

Douglas shakes Kathy's hand heartily. Kathy slowly smiles, impressed. Farhana stares at Douglas, inspecting him.

EXT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - DAY

For the first time, there are no Protestors outside. Yui, Farhana, and Kathy walk back to the office. Kathy pats Yui on the back.

KATHY

I'm so glad you could find someone so quickly. That was so impressive.

Yui beams at her. Farhana raises an eyebrow.

YUI

Thank you. And it seems like we probably will still finish before the grand opening.

FARHANA

Inshallah.

KATHY

The protests have been cleaned up. The MMC is in good hands. And just in time for Rishabh's debriefing!

She balls her hands up with excitement.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Yui, Kathy, and Farhana sit at the table, facing a wall monitor. Rishabh Zooms in through the screen.

Yui refers to the document in front of her as she presents.

YUI

Since this is a multicultural celebration, I've ordered Chinese from Chong's, Mediterranean from Ahmad's Gyros, and Indian from Anar, which is your favorite restaurant in Iowa, right?

She points to Rishabh. He nods excitedly.

RISHABH (V.O.)

How did you know?

YUI

I read it in one of your interviews.

Rishabh beams, impressed by Yui's research.

YUI (CONT'D)

And on the day of, Farhana has agreed to pick up the decorations and food. I've negotiated and we came in nearly nine hundred dollars under budget.

KATHY

W, wow! That's amazing!

YUI

So, after the guests have had their food, Kathy will do her speech. Then, Rishabh, it's your speech. And then, uh, it's the entertainment part of the night.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Does this mean you're finally doing your Japanese dance?

Yui purses her lips.

YUI

What?

RISHABH (V.O.)

Kathy had sent me a video of your dancing. For some performance day?

KATHY

I saw it on your school's homepage when we were reviewing candidates. You looked so beautiful in your kimono.

FARHANA

You dance?

YUI

I used to. But I thought it would be best if the students performed.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Sure, that's fine too. What do you have planned?

YUI

Actually, we had some surprises so it's uh, still undecided. I'm talking to a few students now.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Wouldn't it just be easier if your dance was the entertainment?

KATHY

People would go crazy over it.

Yui looks between Rishabh's hopeful face on the monitor and Kathy's hopeful face next to her. She forces a smile.

YUI

Sure, I think I can do it.

RISHABH (V.O.)

Lovely. It's going to be great!

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

VIDEO FOOTAGE of Yui performing a traditional Japanese dance. She's in an embroidered kimono and moves with elegant precision.

Matt rests a laptop on his legs, watching the video. Yui rests her head on his shoulder. She looks tired.

YUI

My mom made me take dance lessons when I was in elementary school. It was worth something, I guess.

MATT

So you're performing this?

YUI

That's the plan. I think I can learn this dance again.

MATT

But is that a good idea? I thought you wanted to get students for the showcase.

YUI

I still do. But they wanted me to do it so what choice do I have?

MATT

You're going to be stuck at the grand opening all night?

His lip twitches. Yui nods but furrows her eyebrows.

YUI

That was always the plan. Why would I leave the event I'm planning?

Matt looks at the laptop again, at Yui in her kimono.

MATT

But it's going to look weird if you don't wear this... this...

YUI

Kimono? Yeah, it would.

MATT

Yeah, exactly, you don't want to embarrass yourself. Just tell Kathy and Rishabh that you can't do it.

Yui sighs loudly and sinks further into the sofa.

YUI

I don't think the grand opening is gonna go well. Something's gonna happen.

MATT

What, what makes you say that?

He is alert, listening to her carefully.

YUI

I don't know, there's always something that goes wrong. I was talking to your dad about it. One thing goes right, another thing goes wrong.

She turns to him, shaky. Her eyes water.

YUI (CONT'D)

If this doesn't go perfect, Kathy's not going to renew my contract. I'm gonna go back to Japan, I know it. I don't know, do you think we can do long-distance? Would you still want to date me?

Matt hugs Yui tightly.

MATT

We won't have to be long-distance. There are other ways for you to stay in this country.

He takes her left hand and kisses her ring finger.

YUI

Really?

MATT

Yui, I don't want this--
(gesturing to him and her)
to have a deadline. I want us to be forever.

Yui's eyes twinkle. She leans in and kisses him. He grabs the back of her head and kisses her back.

Her hands inch down and tug up his shirt, taking it off. Yui grabs his shoulder and pulls him down so that he is lying on top of her. Matt props himself up on his elbow.

MATT (CONT'D)

Are you sure?

YUI

(nodding)
I trust you.

Matt and Yui kiss again, harder this time.

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - MORNING

Yui skips by, humming happily. She sees and stares at the dress in the store window. It's a beautiful Cinderella gown with a sheer overlay.

COLETTE (40s, white) opens the doors to put out a sign that reads: Come on in! Try out the dress of your dreams today!

Yui locks eyes with Colette. She smiles.

COLETTE
Do you like the dress?

Yui nods, mesmerized by the dress.

COLETTE (CONT'D)
You can try it on.

YUI
But...

COLETTE
Come on, when do we get to live in
our fairytale?

She tilts her head, gesturing Yui to follow her as she goes back into the store. Yui looks at her, then takes a step in.

INT. BRIDAL SALON - DAY

Yui opens the dressing room curtain. She steps out in the dress from the store window. She's breathtaking.

COLETTE
And just one more finishing touch.

She takes out the veil and places it on Yui.

COLETTE (CONT'D)
There! You're radiant, my love.

YUI
I look like a princess.

She admires her reflection and twirls around, her dress moving elegantly with her.

COLETTE
Do you want to show this to anyone?

Yui nods, pauses for a bit, then nods again, more slowly.

A CHEERY RINGTONE echoes in the dressing room. Yui holds her phone with one hand, fidgets with her dress with the other.

RUMIKO (V.O.)
[Yui-chan! You called! I was so
worried about you!]

YUI
[Can you turn your video on?]

On screen, Rumiko's face pops up. She's in bed, in her pajamas, hair tied up in a bun. The room is dark but her face is lit up by pure joy.

RUMIKO (V.O.)
 [Okay, I did. I can't see you though. Anyway, how are you? How is America? Are you settling in--]

Yui turns on the video on her phone. She shows her reflection in the mirror, wedding dress and all.

RUMIKO (V.O.)
 [WHAT? Are you getting married?]

YUI
 [No, I just thought it would be fun to try out a dress. Relax, Mom.]

RUMIKO (V.O.)
 [I don't get it. You're not getting married?]

YUI
 [No. But I did meet someone. He really cares for me.]

RUMIKO (V.O.)
 [Are you engaged then? You haven't even been there for two months. Do you know what you're getting yourself into?]

YUI
 [You're really going to tell me about marriage?]

RUMIKO (V.O.)
 (remorseful)
 [Sorry, I'm sorry. I'm just worried about you.]

YUI
 [And relax, I'm not even engaged.]

A silence.

RUMIKO (V.O.)
 [It doesn't matter what you do or who you're with. As long as you're happy, that's all I care about. I'm really glad you called today, Yui.]

Yui looks around the store, suddenly rushing.

YUI
[I have to go now.]

RUMIKO (V.O.)
[Wait, Yui. You look beautiful.
Like a princess.]

YUI
[Bye, Mom.]

RUMIKO (V.O.)
[Can we talk again soon?]

YUI
[I don't know. I'm pretty busy.]

RUMIKO (V.O.)
[How long are you going to stay mad
at me?]

Yui cuts the call. Her phone VIBRATES as Rumiko calls again but she silences it. She sinks into a nearby chair. Silent tears fall from her eyes. She inhales deeply, shuddering.

INT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - DAY

Yui, Farhana, and Kathy wander around the finished building. The window is repaired and the walls are clean.

KATHY
This is phenomenal. I can't believe
you finished so quickly!

DOUGLAS
I gave you my word, remember. The
Pollards always get the job done.

KATHY
It's like seeing a phoenix rise
from the ashes.

YUI
Thank you so much, Douglas. We
can't thank you enough.

She shakes hands with Douglas.

DOUGLAS
We'll be coming around to do some
safety checks in a few days.

KATHY
Amazing! Thanks again.

Douglas turns to his crew and gestures for them to start packing up.

FARHANA

How did they finish so fast? Lou's company's estimate said that it would take another week, even without the vandalism incident.

KATHY

Oh, don't be such a killjoy, Farhana! You should just be happy that Yui found this amazing crew!

Yui beams at her. Farhana looks back at the crew, squinting her eyes with suspicion.

INT. HENRY RUBEN HALL - BATHROOM - DAY

Yui looks in the mirror and touches up her lipstick.

YUI

Have you ever bought anything from Facebook Marketplace?

FARHANA (V.O.)

Duh! I hate Zuck but Facebook Marketplace is where it's at!

YUI

I found a yukata on there. A Japanese woman in Altoona is selling hers. I think it's going to work for the dance.

FARHANA (V.O.)

Oh my god, that's great! Do you need a ride there?

There is a FLUSH and Farhana comes out of one of the stalls.

YUI

No, Matt is taking me.

FARHANA

Of course.

Farhana smile falters a bit as she washes her hands.

YUI

I'm just so glad that everything is falling into place. Even the protestors haven't come back.

FARHANA

Who would want to mess around when Kathy calls the police on them? And Douglas' crew looks like they kill cats for fun.

YUI

Is that a saying?

FARHANA

No.

YUI

Well, don't judge a book by its cover. See, that's a new saying I learned. They're nice people.

Farhana raises an eyebrow as she washes her hands.

YUI (CONT'D)

Douglas said that prison really opened up his perspective and he learned--

FARHANA

He went to prison? What? For what?

YUI

(nodding)

He was trying to defend himself but there was an accident. It wasn't his fault.

FARHANA

Hmph.

She purses her lips and she processes this.

EXT. ALTOONA HOUSE - EVENING

Yui stands on the doorstep of a typical suburban house. Inside is SACHIKO (60s, Japanese), a petite woman with salt-and-pepper hair. She holds a folded yukata.

YUI

[Thank you so much. You've really helped me out.]

SACHIKO

[Not at all. It's so nice meeting a Japanese speaker. My kids were never that good or interested.]

YUI

[I sort of understand them. I feel like I'm losing my Japanese the more that I'm here.]

SACHIKO

[You're not losing it, you're letting it go. You have to make an effort to hold onto that part of you.]

She hands the yukata to Yui.

SACHIKO (CONT'D)

[Good luck.]

Yui bows as she accepts the yukata from Sachiko.

Matt watches them from the car as he speaks in a hushed voice over the phone. He stares at Yui forlornly.

INT. CAR - EVENING

Matt grips the steering wheel tight and focuses on the road. Yui studies his face.

YUI

Are you okay, Matt?

Matt lets out a nervous laugh.

MATT

I'm fine. I'm fine.

YUI

Something's wrong. You've been weird about this yukata thing.

Matt's face twitches. He puts his hazards on and pulls up to the side of the highway. Yui looks at him, concerned.

YUI (CONT'D)

What is it? Tell me.

Matt turns to her with a serious expression.

MATT

Let's go somewhere, just us two.

YUI

Where?

MATT

I don't know. Anywhere, but
somewhere far from here! We, we
could get married!

YUI

Are you proposing?

Matt takes her hand.

MATT

I love you, Yui. I didn't think I
would feel this way but I do. And I
don't want to lose you.

Yui studies his face. His eyes sparkle. Slowly, she nods.

YUI

I love you too.

MATT

(hopeful)
Yeah?

They share a loving kiss. When they pull away, Yui looks at
Matt and smiles.

YUI

Let's start planning our wedding
during winter break.

Matt's face falls.

YUI (CONT'D)

Did I say something wrong?

MATT

I wanted to leave today.

YUI

Today?

She blinks rapidly, not processing.

YUI (CONT'D)

But the grand opening is tomorrow.
I worked so hard on it. Why would
you ask me to leave today?

A heavy silence in the car.

Matt lets go of her hand and nods. He puts the car back in
drive and merges back onto the highway.

MATT

Yeah. Yeah. You're right. The grand opening first. It's coming up.

Yui furrows her eyebrows and looks at Matt, confused. He speeds up and keeps his eyes on the road.

INT. FARHANA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Her home is definitely lived in, with artwork covering the walls and junk mail and knick-knacks on every surface area.

Farhana sinks down onto her velvet green sofa with her laptop. She opens it and types in the search bar:

Douglas Pollard prison

She skims through the search results. They all seem unrelated. She tries again.

Douglas Pollard prison Iowa

Bingo. She clicks on a headline from The Des Moines Times.

A Bar Fight Gone Wrong: Suspect Arrested in
Des Moines Sports Bar for Manslaughter

On the website, there's a photo of a Black man, smiling with his wife.

Farhana scrolls down and her eyes open wide.

It's Douglas' mugshot. His head is shaved and he has a crazed look in his eyes. In his side profile, he sports a swastika tattoo on his scalp.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Yui hangs up the yukata on a kitchen doorway. A water in a fabric steamer BUBBLES nearby.

Yui's phone VIBRATES and she picks it up.

YUI

Hello?

The steamer HISSES and lets out steam. Yui picks up the steamer with her free hand and runs it over the yukata.

YUI (CONT'D)

I'm at my apartment. Yeah, Matt's here. We just got back.

A DOOR UNLOCKS and Matt comes out of Yui's bathroom.

YUI (CONT'D)
I know... What? A neo-Nazi?

Matt freezes. He stares at Yui, who continues steaming.

YUI (CONT'D)
He told me all that. He's changed now... This is exactly what he was talking about!

Matt sneaks to the kitchen and tries to overhear the conversation. But he hears nothing over the steamer.

YUI (CONT'D)
Farhana, I thought you would be more understanding... I'm tired. Let's talk tomorrow? Good night.

Yui cuts the call and throws her phone to the sofa. Matt pokes his head from the kitchen.

MATT
Was that Farhana?

Yui nods, letting out an exasperated sigh.

YUI
She's starting to annoy me. I don't think she gets me.

MATT
Hmm.

She turns off the steamer and sets it to the ground.

YUI
You're staying over tonight, right?

MATT
No, I'm heading home. I don't want to interrupt your beauty sleep. You have a big day tomorrow.

He gives her a peck on the lips.

MATT (CONT'D)
Sweet dreams, Yui.

Yui watches, her eyebrows knitted with worry, as Matt walks to her apartment door.

EXT. FARHANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Farhana locks her door, now dressing in running gear. She takes out her phone to open her "Angry Playlist" on Spotify. She clicks shuffle and *Fuck The Girls (FTG)* by Doja Cat starts playing.

She takes off into the night.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - NIGHT

Farhana pounds the pavement and breathes heavily. She approaches an intersection and sees BRIGHT HEADLIGHTS coming towards her.

FARHANA
(muttering)
Turn your fucking high beams off.

It's a white van and Douglas sits in the driver's seat. He doesn't seem to notice her.

Farhana comes to a stop, suspicion etched into her sweaty face. She pivots and starts running behind the van.

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - NIGHT

Farhana pants as she jogs closer to the building. She ducks behind a hedge and peeks through the floor-to-ceiling glass.

A light dances inside the building. Douglas holds a flashlight and rolls a cart with a cardboard box on it.

He sets it near the stage and takes out the contents of the box. It's a TIMED BOMB.

FARHANA
(under her breath)
What the fuck...

SLAM. Matt appears from the shadows and bashes Farhana's head into the wall. She has blood running down the side of her head, but she is very much lucid, her eyes wide with fear.

She opens her mouth to scream, but Matt clamps his head around her mouth, muffling her cries for help. Matt winces as he sees the blood running down the side of Farhana's head.

INT. YUI'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Yui yawns as she comes out of her bedroom and screams when she sees--

A DARK SHADOW near the kitchen.

She turns her head slowly to see that the shadow is just her yukata from yesterday, still hanging in the doorway.

Yui breathes a sigh of relief and smiles to herself.

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - DAY

Yui strides towards the building. TWO CAMPUS SECURITY OFFICERS are there, one on a ladder, inspecting the security camera, and the other supporting the ladder.

YUI
Good morning. Is something wrong?

CAMPUS SECURITY OFFICER
Morning, miss. Yeah, the cameras here are out.

YUI
Hm, strange.

Yui purses her lips but keeps walking inside.

INT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - MAIN HALL - DAY

The hall is barren, save for the dozen high tables scattered to the sides of the room.

Yui dials Farhana's number and rests her phone on a high table as it RINGS. She drags the heavy table towards the center of the room.

VOICEMAIL (V.O.)
The person you're trying to reach isn't available right now.

The call ends. Kathy rolls in a huge tub of assorted flowers, clearly irritated.

YUI
Thank you so much for getting these!

KATHY
Still no word from Farhana?

Yui shakes her head.

KATHY (CONT'D)
I swear, if she's late again...

Yui checks the time. It's 11:32 AM.

YUI
I think I'm going to check on her apartment.

KATHY
(re: the flowers)
But what about these?

YUI
I'll arrange them later. Can you borrow the vases from Facilities Management? I'll be right back.

KATHY
Yui!

But Yui rushes out of the hall.

EXT. FARHANA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Yui knocks on the door.

YUI
Farhana? It's Yui. Are you up?

No response.

She gets out her key ring and searches for Farhana's key. She tries it in the lock and turns it. CLICK.

INT. FARHANA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Yui opens the door and enters. She takes off her shoes as she wanders around the apartment.

YUI
Hello? Farhana?

She finds the bedroom, but her bed is empty. Yui scrunches her eyebrows.

She calls Farhana's phone.

VOICEMAIL (V.O.)

The person you're trying to reach
isn't available right now.

She cuts the call. She tries Farhana's work phone. Immediately, she hears it RINGING. Yui follows the sound and finds the phone in Farhana's work bag.

She takes it out and opens it. She finds the Find My iPhone app and opens it.

She sees Farhana's personal phone and looks at the location. Yui tilts her head in confusion.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Yui pedals really fast on her bike.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Turn right on Hamilton Ave.

Yui's face clouds as she recognizes the house at the end of the road. It's Matt's family home.

EXT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - DAY

Yui checks Find My iPhone on Farhana's work phone. The blue dot overlaps with the iPhone location icon. Strange.

She knocks on the door.

YUI

Hello?

She tries the door and it opens. It's always open.

YUI (CONT'D)

Farhana? Are you here?

INT. THE POLLARD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Yui steps in and closes the door behind her. No response.

YUI

Is anyone home?

Yui texts Matt: **Do you know where Farhana is?**

She opens Farhana's work phone and sees the PLAY SOUND option. She presses it and she hears a faint ringing.

She spins around slowly. Where is the sound coming from? She crouches down and tilts her ear close to the floor. The RINGING SOUND seems to be louder.

INT. GUN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The sound is a little louder here. Yui walks slowly, pressing her ear to the cabinets.

On one of the walls, the sound comes out loudly. She runs her fingers across the wall and feels a slight dip. She presses on the molding and it moves.

A secret staircase opens up. Yui's eyes widen. The ringing echos clearly from the dark basement.

She takes a step, then another step. The RINGING gets louder.

A distant ring sounds from deep inside the house. Yui tracks the sound to the gun room. She looks around and finds a secret staircase to the--

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Yui scans the room. She spots FARHANA'S PERSONAL PHONE on a workbench and turns off the RINGING feature.

She furrows her eyebrows at the sight of an architectural model of the MMC on the workbench. She picks it up, perplexed.

Next to it is Matt's computer. She opens it and a video of three men with creepy plaster masks pops up. She hits play.

DOUGLAS (V.O.)
 (distorted voice)
 But we refuse to be invaded in our
 own homes. The white race has a
 right to live.

The voice has been distorted throughout the whole video.

DOUGLAS (V.O.)
 Destroying that woke building is
 only the first step. We won't stop
 until all the filth is wiped clean
 from our streets. Stop white
 genocide.

JARED / CARTER (V.O.)
 Stop white genocide!

Yui looks between the architectural model and the video.

She hears TIRES ON GRAVEL outside. She quickly turns off the RINGING noise on Farhana's phone and peeks out the small window.

There's a WHITE VAN parked outside of the house. It's the van from her flashbacks.

YUI
[Oh shit.]

She quietly sprints up the stairs but--

Nana appears at the top of the staircase, disappointed. A look of pure shock on Yui's face.

YUI (CONT'D)
Where's Farhana?

NANA
You shouldn't have gone down there.

She shoves Yui and sends her tumbling down the stairs.

THUD. Yui lands on the floor on her back.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. BASEMENT - LATER

Yui slowly opens her eyes. She takes a second to realize where she is, then sits up immediately. She winces as she touches her throbbing head.

She slowly stands up and returns to the laptop. She rewinds the video and plays it again.

DOUGLAS (V.O.)
Stop white genocide.

JARED / CARTER (V.O.)
Stop white genocide!

The video ends with a title card:

6 PM. The revolution starts today.

Yui checks her watch. It's 4:39 PM. Her lip quivers and she closes the video on the laptop to see--

Matt's desktop image. It's a picture of him and Yui, smiling like they don't have a care in the world.

Yui's eyes fill with tears as she shudders.

She runs up the stairs and BANGS on the basement door.

YUI

Matt! Matt! Let me out!

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Matt shakes his leg impatiently as he desperately tries to block out Yui's voice.

YUI (O.S.)

If you love me, please! Let me out!

Nana slaps Matt's leg and stops it from shaking.

NANA

Don't listen to her siren song. She was fun, but never could be family. We have other things we need to do.

Douglas comes in, holding the floor plan of the MMC.

DOUGLAS

Well, let's get going.

MATT

What's going to happen with Yui?

DOUGLAS

Look, we can keep her in the basement if you really want her around. But can we please focus on the plan today? We can't have another fuckup.

Matt takes a deep breath.

MATT

I think I should stay here. You should be able to do it on your own. They know my face and when Yui doesn't come back, they'll probably ask me about it.

Douglas and Nana share a look, incredulous.

MATT (CONT'D)

Relax. I'm not sabotaging the plan.
You've known that I never wanted
her to die. This way, she'll be
safe in the house.

Douglas raises an eyebrow, but nods.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Paint cans, deflated footballs, cornhole, etc. She stops by a shelf with containers of junk.

She finds a container full of construction paper. She chooses a pink piece of paper and sets it aside.

She opens another container. Her eyes gleam when she sees what's inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Matt watches the white van leaving the house from a window. He trudges to the--

INT. GUN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Matt knocks on the locked door.

MATT

Yui. Are you there?

Silence.

MATT (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I can't let you out but
I thought you at least deserved to
know the truth.

He hears the staircase creaking.

MATT (CONT'D)

Everything is going to be better
now.

YUI (O.S.)

You're blowing up the MMC tonight,
right?

MATT

We see it more as a political
statement.

YUI

But everyone in it would have died.
I'm supposed to be there.

MATT

I was going to drag you out before
the bomb went off.

YUI

But Farhana would have died. Is she
dead already?

Silence from Matt. He fidgets with his shirt.

MATT

It was an accident.

YUI

Was Zion attacking me an accident?
Did he even attack me?

MATT

Sort of, it was a situation that I
took advantage of.

YUI

He told me that he was just walking
me home and you came out of nowhere
and punched him.

MATT

It's a little more nuanced than
that.

YUI

You know, I was so dumb. I thought
I was going to marry you. I
pictured my life with you and it
was all a lie.

MATT

It wasn't a lie. I did love you. I
still love you.

YUI

No, stop it. Just tell me the
truth. You were just using me.

MATT

No. Maybe at first, you were more
of a tool, but you became someone
really special to me.

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

If, if you help us with this, if you get on board with our mission, I'm sure Dad and Nana will accept you.

YUI

Do you think so?

MATT

You're my family too.

YUI

You know, I really only wanted to be loved by you.

Matt sees something wriggling underneath the door. It's an ORIGAMI HEART, made from a magazine page. He picks it up.

YUI (CONT'D)

It wasn't over. It still isn't over.

MATT

Yui...

Matt unlocks the door and swings it open.

Yui sprays him with mace. She shields her eyes with her elbow.

MATT (CONT'D)

AHHHHHH! Fuck! Fuck!

She keeps spraying him as she comes out of the basement.

YUI

I'm sorry.

Matt claws at his eyes, tears streaming from his bloodshot eyes. He stumbles towards Yui, but loses his footing at the stairs.

MATT

AHHHHHH!

Matt tumbles down the stairs and then, a heavy THUD.

Yui turns around to see Matt on the ground. Blood is gushing from the side of his head.

MATT (CONT'D)

Fuck, Yui...

He holds his head and sees the blood.

YUI

I'm sorry. Please don't die!

She locks the door, leaving Matt in darkness.

She slides the gun cabinet into place again and looks at the guns inside. She finds a hunting trophy and smashes the glass, taking out a handgun.

ENTRY WAY

Yui looks around and spots a pair of car keys hanging from the hook.

GARAGE

BEEP BEEP. Matt's GMC Yukon lights up.

Yui looks at it and grimaces.

EXT. STREETS - EVENING

The engine ROARS as Yui zooms past the empty roads. She instinctively puts the blinkers as she turns right.

The windshield wipers come on instead.

Yui yelps and quickly resets the wipers.

INT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - EVENING

Only half of the room is decorated. Flowers are scattered on the table haphazardly.

Kathy taps her foot furiously as she struggles to keep a smile on her face. She presses her ear to her RINGING PHONE.

The room is full of TRUSTEES and STUDENTS. Rishabh laughs boisterously on one side of the room.

A MUSTACHIOED CATERER comes up to Kathy.

CATERER

Do you want the hors d'oeuvres next to the drinks or the food?

KATHY

I don't care.

VOICEMAIL (V.O.)

Hi, this is Yui. I can't reach the phone, please leave a message after the tone.

KATHY

Yui, where are you! You said you'd be back two hours ago. Where the hell are you?

Rishabh finds Kathy and waves her over. Kathy cuts the call and puts on her smiles again.

RISHABH

Kathy!

KATHY

Hi Rishabh! Great to see you!

RISHABH

(whispered)

What's going on? It looks like shit. This is so unprofessional.

KATHY

Sorry, we've been having some... issues. I need to have a serious talk with my employees later.

RISHABH

We'll talk about this later. But I'm not happy about it.

INT. NEARBY ALLEY - EVENING

Yui parks the car in the parking lot. She swiftly pulls into a space. She takes the handgun from the passenger seat and tucks it into her pants.

She gets out and runs around. She sees the white van parked in the parking lot of the MMC. She sneaks up to it and sees Nana, playing hangman on her phone, completely oblivious.

Yui takes a deep breath in, takes out her gun, then swings the door open. She points the gun at Nana.

YUI

Where's the bomb?

Nana raises her eyebrows, then smirks.

NANA
No more playing the deer in
headlights, honey?

YUI
Nana, where's the bomb?

NANA
Don't do this, Yui. Are you really
going to kill an innocent old lady?

Yui puts her finger on the trigger and aims the gun at Nana.

YUI
Come on, I mean it. Tell me where
the bomb is.

NANA
(smiling)
This isn't for you. I know you
can't kill me. How will you live
with yourself knowing that you
killed me?

Yui fidgets with her shirt hem and breathes deeply.

YUI
Don't test me.

NANA
You Japanese are so polite.

Yui takes out the mace from her pocket and sprays her. But there is only a small spray left. She misses, it doesn't get on Nana.

Nana reaches for the glove compartment and Yui shoots her hand. BANG.

NANA (CONT'D)
Fucking cunt!

Blood spurts out of Nana's hand. Yui looks nauseous and squirms. Nana uses her other hand to reach the glove. She opens it and there's a KNIFE in it.

Yui takes the seatbelt and wraps it around Nana's neck. She pulls on the seatbelt, strangling Nana, who tries to reach the knife but it's too far.

Yui locks Nana's head in a sleeper choke hold.

YUI
Just the blood, not the air.

Nana's movements slow down until she doesn't move anymore. Yui lets go. She takes the knife from the glove and puts it in her pants too.

Then, she checks Nana's pulse. She breathes a sigh of relief.

Yui opens the back door and finds some wire. She wraps the wire around an unconscious Nana as quickly as possible. She twists it to secure it into place, then fastens a seat belt over Nana.

She finds a tote bag and slips it over Nana's eyes. She looks at her watch. It's 5:31 PM.

Yui presses the lock button on the car and closes the door shut. She tries opening the door, but it's locked.

She nods, satisfied, then runs towards the MMC.

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - EVENING

Yui gets close to the building and peeks through the window. It's pretty packed.

She sees a stressed-out Kathy and ducks. She sneaks into the back entrance and goes in from there.

INT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - EVENING

Yui tiptoes down the staircase and into the--

BASEMENT

There are three doors in the hallway. She opens the first door. It's the water boiler. The second door has nothing.

She opens the third one. Her face crumples with despair.

Inside is Farhana's body, sprawled on the floor, bloody. Yui crouches down to check her pulse. No pulse. She's cold.

YUI

I'm sorry, Farhana. I'm so sorry.

Tears fall from Yui's eyes as she holds the gun steady in her hands. She advances to the main open space.

YUI (CONT'D)

Load-bearing wall.

She runs to the wall that Douglas showed a particular interest in. There's nothing. She feels the walls and sure enough, there's a soft foamy patch of uneven wall.

Yui digs in her fingernails and pulls it out, revealing the timed bomb.

YUI (CONT'D)
[What do I do?]

She inspects all the wires that intertwine, but it makes her even more confused. She hyperventilates from stress. Upstairs she can hear APPLAUSE. She looks up.

MAIN HALL

Kathy stands on the stage, tense and jumpy. She speaks into the microphone.

KATHY
I want to thank you all for coming here today. We are all witnessing a new era for Wapaseeki College unfold right in front of our eyes.

Yui sprints onto the main stage. Kathy is shocked to see her.

KATHY (CONT'D)
Where have you been?

Yui ignores the question and snatches the mic from her. Everyone is staring at her, confused.

YUI
Leave the building now! There's a bomb. Run!

Kathy tries to wrestle the mic away from her. Everyone looks at Yui, confused. A TRUSTEE leans over to Rishabh.

TRUSTEE
(whispering)
Is this part of the show?

KATHY
What the hell are you doing?

YUI
I'm serious! There's a bomb. Get out of this building.

Yui pulls out the handgun. BANG BANG. She fires two rounds into the ceiling. SCREAMS ERUPT.

GUESTS stampede to the doors but it's bolted shut. They POUND the doors but to no avail.

YUI (CONT'D)

Get back!

Yui shoots the windows and the glass shatters dramatically.

Guests throw chairs, food trays, whatever they can get their hands on at the windows to create a bigger opening.

Yui looks around. Most guests are making their way through the windows and pouring outside.

From the corner of her eye, she sees Douglas forcing Rishabh into the staircase. She hides behind the podium and takes her aim.

BANG. A bullet whizzes past Douglas' side and into the wall.

BANG. Douglas loses his balance. Blood squirts out from his left calf and stains his pants. He keeps walking away with Rishabh.

Yui charges after them, yelling as she does.

YUI (CONT'D)

Stop! I'll shoot you!

She stops a few steps away from them and aims her gun at Douglas' head. Rishabh trembles like a dog.

DOUGLAS

You can't shoot me.

YUI

Don't test me. I'm not afraid anymore.

DOUGLAS

But you're also out of bullets.
Don't you know that you're supposed to count them as you go?

Yui's panic shows on her face. Douglas sneers. Rishabh turns to him.

RISHABH

What do you want from me? Money? I can arrange that, you know.

DOUGLAS

Shut the fuck up. You were supposed to die earlier!

Douglas is psychotic and can't see his surroundings clearly. Yui takes out the knife she was hiding and charges at him.

YUI

Ahhhhh!

It goes into Douglas' gut. Yui takes Rishabh's hand and sprints out of the MMC, towards the broken windows. They get closer and closer.

Suddenly, a GIANT SHOCKWAVE sends them flying out the windows.

EXT. MUNISH MULTICULTURAL CENTER - EVENING

A MASSIVE EXPLOSION engulfs the MMC and the structure crumbles underneath itself.

Yui looks back and sees debris flying. She checks if Rishabh is alive. He is.

Red and blue lights flash everywhere. Yui squints, blinded by the bright lights. When her eyes adjust, she has multiple guns trained on her. COPS surround her.

Yui puts her hands up in defeat.

INT. JAIL - DAY

Yui has bags under her eyes as she waits in her cell. She looks worse for wear. Her lips are chapped but she keeps licking them.

A GUARD approaches her.

GUARD

Yui Hashizume?

Yui nods. The Guard gestures to someone on the outside.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Come on in.

Rumiko steps through the doorway.

RUMIKO

[Yui-chan.]

Yui locks eyes with Rumiko. Yui takes a deep breath in.