

AISHA (CONT'D)
Hello, I'd like to make a
reservation for three please. 7pm
this evening.

Beat.

AISHA (CONT'D)
...Smith.

Beat.

AISHA (CONT'D)
Yeah, see you then.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Mo enters the frame and turns the corner to his room. A big
sigh. A drop of a bag.

We see pictures of the three of them hanging on the walls.

SCENE 1 / 2

START

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

Mo sits on the bed and pulls off his tie. Aisha paces.

AISHA
I will not have him be
disadvantaged because of his last
name.

Rohaam is seen coming around the corner but then steps back
unnoticed. He overhears their conversation.

MO
This is my families name, a history
of strong men in my lineage!

AISHA
There will be a stigma around
Hussain, Syed, Ahmed, Khan. All of
these names we are familiar with
but are foreign to them.

MO
(resolute)
I'm not going to change it. Rohaan
needs to carry on my legacy.

Mo unlaces his shoes and throws them to the side.

AISHA

What if he runs for a government office one day? They would question him, is he going to have to explain himself for the rest of his life?

Mo stands to meet Aisha eye to eye.

MO

I won't let other people dictate how I'm going to live my life. This is *my name*. That will not be taken from me!

AISHA

I will not have Rohaan be looked down upon, marginalized, or treated with disrespect. He's just a child and needs protection. If the entry to belonging is a last name change for him then so be it!

END

EXT. STREET - THE NEXT DAY

Rohaam looks down both sides of the street waiting for his friends to come.

He sits on the curb and waits a minute more.

Finally, he stands and begins his walk towards school alone.

SCENE 2 / 2

INT. HOUSE - LATER

START

Rohaam closes the door and puts his backpack down now having come back from school.

Mo and Aisha are now dressed in business attire, reading through documents in a manilla folder.

ROHAAN

What's happening?

MO

(defeated sigh)

Your mother and I have decided that we need to do whatever it takes to protect you during this time. So, we need to change your last name.

ROHAAN

Why?

Aisha and Mo both look up to Rohaan.

Mo hands him the manilla folder.

AISHA

It carries... a weight to it now. I don't want you to be judged for something that isn't your fault.

Rohaam looks at the pages briefly but doesn't pay attention to any of the writing.

ROHAAN

Why am I being punished? No one else has to do this.

MO

It's for your safety. We don't want their ignorance to be a reason why you fall behind in life. We started over when we moved to this country. Think of it as a new start for you.

ROHAAN

But I don't want a new start.

MO

Well, you don't really have a choice. This is happening. Learn it. Accept it.

CONTINUE

~~EXT. DRIVEWAY - LATER~~

~~Rohaam is now dressed in a suit as are his parents. As they solemnly walk together in the house.~~

~~INT. HOUSE~~

~~Rohaam crosses to the kitchen table and sits down.~~

~~Rohaam looks down at the court documents. He reads his new name: 'Rohaam Harris'.~~

ROHAAN

What are my friends going to say?

AISHA

Those who know you as Rohaan, will see you as *Rohaam*. And those who don't, well, it's not their life to live. They will understand. Eventually.

END