

The Greatest American Hero

by

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COLD OPEN

EXT. LAKEWOOD PARK - NIGHT

CHYRON: CLEVELAND, OHIO, PRESENT DAY.

Fireflies flicker around a kids' play structure flanked by a creek. ANGLE ON: two women smoking on a park bench. MEERA PATEL (30) wears a pink rubber kitchen glove on one hand and a hoodie tightly tied around her head with only her face peeking out. SARAH GREEN (30, Midwestern) looks not insane.

MEERA

I feel like I think about Kyle
Chandler's face more than I should.

SARAH

Eff, marry, kill: "Early Edition" Kyle
Chandler, "Friday Night Lights" Kyle
Chandler, "Bloodline" Kyle Chandler.

MEERA

Marry Coach Taylor. And then I don't
know, I can't kill a Kyle Chandler!
(then, re: her hoodie)
No stray hairs peeking out, right?

SARAH

One thought: who cares? You're not
seeing your mom until tomorrow.

MEERA

Smoke smell lingers. And she'd disown
me if she knew I smoked.

SARAH

Okay, but we're 30, so you're an adult
who can't be disowned.

MEERA

I don't want to give my mom another
reason to think I'm a huge
disappointment, especially not right
before Mona's wedding. That Judas.

SARAH

It's not the 1800s, little sisters can
get married first. And your family
loves you for who you are, even if
you're single.

MEERA

Sarah, c'mon, being loved for who you
are is a white people thing.

SARAH

Well I love you no matter what, except that time you wore Crocs in public.

MEERA

They were Kyrie Irving themed and it was before I knew he was gonna be a traitor and leave the Cavs.

SARAH

Okay, if that's what you need to believe. I gotta go, it's late.

MEERA

Boooooo. Why do you always have to be so responsible?

SARAH

Why do you always have to go so hard? It's a Tuesday.

MEERA

But it's always Saturday in my heart.

SARAH

I have to take the boys to the doctor in the morning. They have hand, foot and mouth disease.

MEERA

Is everything okay?

SARAH

Yeah, I mean I was worried about them, but it sounds more serious than it is--

MEERA

No, I mean, do you have it? We drank from the same bottle earlier.

(a beat, then)

I'm kidding, I hope they get better fast. Kisses from me, but not near the mouth disease.

SARAH

I hope you get it someday. You'd deserve it. Love you.

Sarah crosses off. Meera takes a sip from a bottle of wine by her feet and is blinded by a set of bright headlights.

MEERA

(whispered panic)

Cops!

(MORE)

MEERA (CONT'D)
(then, re: bottle)
This is just lemonade!

A VOICE speaks from the lights.

VOICE (V.O.)
(skeptical)
Are you sure this is her?

SECOND VOICE (V.O.)
Harold, I triple checked.

HAROLD (V.O.)
But look at her.

MEERA
Sorry, can you please turn down the
lights? Also, what's happening?

The lights dim to REVEAL the faint outline of a UFO, but the passengers are obscured. Meera tries to run but is frozen in place. She hugs her wine close to her chest.

MEERA
Is that a UFO?

HAROLD (V.O.)
We are aliens from the planet Elysior,
which oversees the safety of other
planets in the galaxy.

SECOND VOICE (V.O.)
That's Harold and I'm Sandra.

MEERA
Hello. Hi. Sorry, but what?

HAROLD (V.O.)
Meera Patel, you have been chosen to
be the Greatest American Hero.
According to the paperwork, anyway.

MEERA
Wait. Like Captain America? Because
I'm out of shape, I'm not Chris Evans.
I would hit that though. Just FYI, if
you know him.

SANDRA (V.O.)
Please be serious.

MEERA
Sorry. I'm panicking.

SANDRA (V.O.)

Do not be fearful. We come in peace.
We have frozen you in place only so
that we can make sure you hear our
full spiel.

HAROLD (V.O.)

There is a threat against Earth and
you've been chosen to protect it.

MEERA

(shocked)
You picked me?

HAROLD (V.O.)

(still not on board)
I mean, apparently.

SANDRA (V.O.)

We are going to give you a supersuit
that will give you powers as well as
an instruction manual for training.

MEERA

A manual? You're aliens with a
supersuit, you don't have some way to
incept the instructions into my brain?

HAROLD (V.O.)

No.

MEERA

Got it, cool.

SANDRA (V.O.)

We will be in touch. Good luck.

HAROLD (V.O.)

You're going to need it.

A suit and manual appear next to a stunned Meera.

MEERA

Holy--

FREEZE FRAME ON: An unflattering still of Meera's hooded
face, her mouth forming the "sh" of the next word she was
going to say. Over that, our show title: THE GREATEST
AMERICAN HERO. As that famous theme song KICKS IN, we...

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. PATEL DINING ROOM - EVENING

CHYRON: ONE WEEK EARLIER.

The dining table is set with a full spread of Indian food: lentils, rice, vegetables, bread, pickles. Behind it, a wall of family photos. Meera sits across from her mom LEENA (early 60s, elegant, warm but blunt) and her sister MONA (25, pretty, type A), looking bored.

MONA

...I said, my wedding henna has to be organic, I'm a medical resident, my hands can't get messed up. And I told the florist no carnations...

ANGLE ON: Meera's face as Mona rambles on. Mona's voice fades out and Cardi B's "Bodak Yellow" KICKS IN.

CARDI B (V.O.)

*...I don't bother with these hoes /
Don't let these hoes bother me /
They see pictures, they say goals /
Bitch, I'm who they tryna be...*

MONA

Meera!

Meera snaps back to the conversation.

MEERA

Hi. Sorry, what?

MONA

I said, have you started the slideshow for the wedding? Just make sure to get the order right: my childhood years, then Raj's, then--

MEERA

--a clip from "Paddington 2", got it...

LEENA

Don't tease your sister. You will do a good job.

MONA

I just want to make sure, because Meera isn't always the most reliable.

MEERA

Hey, I'm totally reliable. Mom asked me to bring yogurt tonight and I did.

MONA

You bail on family stuff all the time. You missed my med school graduation. Even cousin Sonal made it, and she lives in Sweden!

MEERA

I was in a weird place, and I didn't want everyone to be all judgmental and have to explain to all the aunties why I quit grad school to work at Napa Auto Parts.

LEENA

You should have gone to Mona's graduation but it's true, people would talk.

MEERA

You say "people", but you mean our family.

LEENA

Of course I mean family, who would care what strangers think?

MONA

Speaking of strangers, I don't want you to bring one to my wedding. So I'm canceling your plus one.

MEERA

Don't, I'm gonna bring somebody, I just haven't had time to ask anyone yet. I've been really busy.

MONA

Doing what? You live alone in a tiny apartment, answer phones for a living, and your only hobby is karaoke.

MEERA

It's a pretty time-consuming hobby.

LEENA

You know, I have money put aside in case you decide to go to med school.

MEERA

I do know, you tell me all the time.
You write it in every birthday card.

MONA

I'm just saying, you can sit at the
singles table and not bring some rando
who works at a bicycle shop.

LEENA

If Meera wants to bring a friend to
the wedding, she can bring a friend.

MEERA

(defensive)
Or more than a friend!

LEENA

You know, Pushpa Auntie called me that
her sister-in-law's nephew is a nice
boy so I gave her Meera's phone
number. His name is Neil.

MEERA

Mom, I can meet someone on my own.

LEENA

Nothing wrong with being introduced.
Then you don't end up in a love
marriage with a *dhorio* Uber driver.

MEERA

Not all white guys are Uber drivers.
Some are also Lyft drivers.

LEENA

Always making haha jokes like your
father.

MEERA

Well he would've appreciated it and
laughed his big laugh.

The Patel women share a quiet moment. Meera glances over to
a portrait on the wall of her dad wearing a doctor's coat.
The frame has a garland of marigolds around it.

LEENA

You have to get serious soon. Mona is
settled down even though you are much,
much older than her.

MEERA

I'm only five years older.

Both Leena and Mona give sympathetic looks: "you poor thing."

INT. GREAT LAKES MARKETING - DAY

A typical office. The walls house framed posters from various marketing campaigns: Lake Erie Donuts, Tremont Books, etc. Meera sits at her desk drinking coffee. She types: "How to become an interior designer" into a Google search. A Gchat from Mona POPS UP: "More slideshow pics for the 'teen years'." Meera rolls her eyes and adds the photos to a file called: "Mona's Wedding Slideshow Kill Me". The phone RINGS.

MEERA

(into phone)

Bob Rice's office... Cool, we'll send the logo options over soon... I'm with you, Marissa, Tim Gunn should not have used his save on her. Talk soon.

Meera hangs up as a Gchat from Justin Hayes POPS UP with a link to the trailer for "An Inconvenient Truth". Meera looks up from her computer. ANGLE ON: her co-workers: JUSTIN HAYES (early 30s, adorable), TAWNIA NICHOLS (40s, think Leslie Jones), and Sarah Green (from the Cold Open).

MEERA

Um, Justin? Why are you sending me a trailer for Al Gore's documentary?

JUSTIN

Because the earth is melting and you still drink out of a styrofoam cup. Invest in a mug.

MEERA

I'm not about doing dishes at work. Can you imagine? Bob asks me for something, and I'm like, I can't, boss, I'm washing my mug. Insane.

JUSTIN

(can't help but smile)

Well I own the DVD, maybe you can come over to watch it and change your mind.

MEERA

(hesitant, then)

You know who you should invite? Tawnia. She loves documentaries.

TAWNIA

(chiming in from her cubicle)

I love them! Saw that one about the clown who's a molester? So freaky.

Meera sheepishly glances at Sarah. BOB RICE (60s, mustached, rust-belt) enters with MAX SMITH (30s, serious).

BOB

Everyone, I'd like to introduce Max Smith, our new account executive. Max, this is the team. Justin Hayes, our creative director.

Justin holds out his hand for a shake. Max demurs.

MAX

Shaking hands is the easiest way to pass germs and I can't afford to be sick right now. I'm taking a sommelier course at the culinary academy. Need my sinuses clear.

Crickets. Meera and Justin share a look. Bob continues.

BOB

Okay. Sarah Green, our art designer. Tawnia Nichols, the office manager. And Meera Patel, my assistant.

They AD-LIB hellos. Meera can't help herself:

MEERA

Sorry, just want to clarify... being an assistant is a transitional job for me. Still looking for my true thing, thinking maybe interior design, so.

Meera sheepishly moves a small, potted plant a few inches.

MEERA

That's better.

They all stare at her. Bob clears his throat and continues.

BOB

So Max is the one who brought in the new Quark account.

MAX

They've been under the radar but they're growing faster than Google. We're not gonna be Great Lakes Marketing, we're gonna be Busy Lakes Marketing, am I right?
(off more crickets)
Just a little play on words.

MEERA
(not funny)
Funny.

MAX
Anyway, it's nice to meet everyone.
Just wanted to let you know I have a
tree nut intolerance, so FYI on that.

Even more crickets as Max walks off.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Meera and Sarah sit on the sofa.

MEERA
...aren't tree nuts just nuts, why
does he call them that?

SARAH
Also: "intolerance"? Either it's an
allergy or it isn't.

BRIAN GREEN (30, Sarah's husband) enters and kisses Sarah.

BRIAN
Hey guys. Dishwasher's on, boys are
in bed, I'm gonna go watch the game.

MEERA
Sup, Brian. We can just kiss later.

SARAH
Have a good night, hon.

They smile at Brian as he crosses off.

MEERA
I gotta get me one of those. Do you
think he'd make Mona's wedding
slideshow for me? She wants to set it
to "Lady in Red" on repeat.

SARAH
It's incredible that you and your
sister came from the same parents.

MEERA
She also wants to cancel my plus one.
But I'm not rolling up solo and being
judged for my singleness. I need a
date, even a white one. Not ideal,
but better than being there alone.

SARAH

You know what I think about that.

MEERA

I'm not asking Justin. We can't date because what if we break up? We work together, it would be so weird.

SARAH

You're crazy, but fine. You know who else is single? Sam Prescott from high school.

Sarah grabs an old yearbook and finds a picture of Sam.

MEERA

Sam who's so hot he dated Kate Bosworth one summer? Come on. There's no way Sam Prescott goes to my sister's wedding. He wouldn't even go to Homecoming with me.

SARAH

How would you even know?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK

High school-aged Sarah and Meera (chunky highlights, studded belts, think: Avril Lavigne) stand at their lockers.

SARAH

You got this. Just ask him.

Meera approaches a cute guy (Sam Prescott).

SAM

Hey Meera!

MEERA

Hey Sam. Do you want to... take Katie Lawrence to Homecoming with you?
(then, spotting her)
Katie! You're so great and pretty, get over here! Do you know Sam?

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT - BACK TO SCENE

Sarah looks at Meera knowingly.

MEERA

At least I didn't get rejected!

SARAH

But you're a big girl now, so you can put yourself out there and actually try. Plus...

Sarah turns the yearbook page to pictures of Meera, who was voted "Most Athletic".

MEERA

Sure, that matters so much! Crazy I haven't been able to find my thing when I had the popular sport of field hockey to fall back on.

Sarah laughs and pulls out a pack of Marlboros.

SARAH

My baby monitor range is three and a half blocks, that gets us to the park.

MEERA

Brian's here, no monitor needed.

SARAH

I just feel like I'm a better mom if I can hear the kids cry even if I'm not the one who gets them.

EXT. LAKEWOOD PARK - NIGHT

Meera (in her shame smoking getup) and Sarah sit on a park bench. FAST FORWARD through already seen footage of: Sarah leaving, Meera blinded by lights, Meera receiving her supersuit and manual. As the aliens speed away, Meera looks stunned. She puts down the bottle of wine and picks up the suit. She then begins to root around the park bench.

MEERA

Where's the instruction manual? It's gotta be here somewhere.

Meera turns on the flashlight of her phone and roots around some more, but it's nowhere to be found.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Damn. Lost that faster than my phone in Vegas.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MEERA'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

An alarm BEEPS. Meera slaps it until it stops and shakes off her sleep. She spots the suit on a chair, picks up her phone and dials. SPLIT SCREEN: Meera and Sarah, on speakerphone.

MEERA

Girl. Something bonkers happened.
Last night, I--

Meera CHOKES on her words. She takes a sip of water.

MEERA (CONT'D)

Sorry, just woke up. So I was sitting
on the bench after you left and these--

Meera tries to talk and STARTS TO GAG.

SARAH

You okay?

MEERA

I don't know, maybe I'm too freaked
out. Like that time I auditioned for
"Les Mis" and forgot all the words.

SARAH

Or maybe you're still drunk, I'm
hanging up now, you're not gonna
remember this, gotta go, bye!

INT. MEERA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Meera eats cereal, a little freaked out. She hears a KNOCK and opens the door to find Max.

MEERA

Oh boy, I knew it. I knew when I saw
you, you have stalker written all over
your face. Listen, there's a cop that
lives upstairs--

MAX

I know about the aliens and the suit.

Off Meera's stunned look...

INT. MEERA'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Meera watches as Max swipes through a PowerPoint presentation on his iPad.

MEERA

I'm gonna be honest, I still think you might be a stalker, but at least this PowerPoint looks legit.

ANGLE ON: a slide with the GAH logo and a photo of Max with another MAN and WOMAN, in identical suits and Ray-Bans.

MEERA

Your parents seem intense.

MAX

Those are my bosses, Agents Lee and Diaz, I work for a top-secret division of the FBI that tracks alien activity.

MEERA

So, you're like, "Men In Black"? I saw Tommy Lee Jones once when I was interning at Ms. Magazine.

MAX

Sort of like that, but real. Sandra and Harold, who gave you the suit, come from the planet Elysior, which we've been in communication with for a long time. They requested me to be your tactical support. They'll contact me about our missions and then I'll work with you to execute them.

MEERA

I get it, I'm James Bond and you're M.

MAX

No. Because again, this is real.

MEERA

("this freaking guy")
Yeah, I know, I was just... I'm so glad we have to work together since we clearly get each other.

Before Max can respond, Meera's phone LIGHTS UP with a text from her mom: "Dear Meera, Are you receiving this? I am learning to text. The letters are so smALL BUT I'M GETTING THE HANG OF IT..." Meera stops reading and turns to Max.

MEERA

My mom just sent a four-screens-long text and almost all of it is in caps.

MAX

Can we get back to this please?

ANGLE ON: A map with the GAH logo on different continents.

MAX

There have been others in the past.
The Greatest Peruvian Hero, The
Greatest Latvian Hero, each with
something unique about them...

MEERA

What's unique about me?

MAX

(unsure beat, then)
We can talk details later, we should
get up to speed on the suit first.
Where's the manual?

MEERA

Funny story actually: I lost it.

MAX

That's not a story, that's 3 words.

MEERA

Short story.

MAX

(frustrated)
Then just put on the suit and let's
see what happens.

MEERA

I don't want to put it on! Some
strange aliens give you a suit, you
don't just put it on. It could mess
you up on like, a DNA level! You
don't know.

MAX

The aliens are far more advanced than
us. The suit will only help you.

MEERA

Fine, but if it turns me green or
something, I'm coming after you.

INT. MEERA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Meera enters the room in the suit, feeling herself.

MEERA

I know I was skeptical but I don't
even care if this suit messes me up.

(MORE)

MEERA (CONT'D)

My butt looks amazing. It's like super Spanx.

MAX

Meera, forget your butt, you're going to change the course of the planet.

This lands with her. She puts on a tiny gold headband.
MEERA'S POV: A lit-up 3-D hologram of the suit APPEARS in front of her. A male voice, RALPH, speaks. (It could be cool if this is the voice of William Katt, who played Ralph in the original series.)

RALPH (V.O.)

Hello, I'm R.A.L.P.H., your Robotic AI Learning and Preparation Helper. *Dava mate pasandagi mate abhinandana.*

MEERA

What?

RALPH (V.O.)

I said: "Congratulations on being chosen for the suit" in Gujarati. My programming indicates you are Indian-American, so I have tailored my speech and references for optimal communication and relatability.

MEERA

Okay, well I'm from Ohio and my Gujarati is almost non-existent, so.

RALPH (V.O.)

Noted. My goal is to create the most comfortable environment to help you learn to control your superpowers so that you can save the world.

A beat as Meera thinks, then:

MEERA

Holy cow, this is for real, real. I'm a freaking superhero.

She gets a big smile on her face. As "Feeling Myself" by Nicki Minaj feat. Beyoncé KICKS IN...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT./EXT. VARIOUS - FANTASY MONTAGE OF MEERA IN THE SUIT

--Meera signs autographs for adoring fans.

--Meera is interviewed by Barbara Walters.

--Meera makes out with Chris Evans as Captain America.

--Meera lifts an elephant for a group of impressed relatives while Mona sulks in the background. Meera flips her off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEERA'S LIVING ROOM - BACK TO SCENE

Meera takes a deep breath, still processing. Her phone BUZZES with a text from Mona: "More pics for the wedding slideshow from my bachelorette. Which you also bailed on."

MEERA

My sister did a group mani-pedi for her bachelorette, least fun person I know. Can't wait to see the look on her face when I tell my family about the suit.

MAX

You can't tell your family.

MEERA

I have to tell them. Look, you won't understand this because you're white. But my little sister is going to be a doctor and she's getting married.

MAX

Congratulations.

MEERA

No it's not. She's done all the right things and my whole life I've been trying to prove I'm not a total black sheep. To find my thing. But it found me. I'm a superhero, that's like 50 married doctors.

MAX

The suit won't let you tell anyone. It has built-in controls, like a consciousness that prevents bad choices.

MEERA

(realizing)

That's why I couldn't tell Sarah.

Max's phone LIGHTS UP and the "Jurassic Park" theme song begins to PLAY. Off Meera's look:

MAX

The score pumps me up, so I made it my alarm sound. We have that ad sales meeting in twenty.

MEERA

Ad sales meeting, are you nuts? We're gonna be saving the world, I've quit jobs for waaaay less.

MAX

We can't quit, we need cover jobs.

MEERA

I barely have time for the gym, let alone two jobs. That's misleading, it implies I go to the gym, I don't.

INT. GREAT LAKES MARKETING - LATER

Max is with Meera at her desk. Meera scans another text from her mom: "Meera, if Rohit Uncle asks at the wedding, tell him you're applying to law school because that's what I told him. Love, Mom." Meera sighs as an upset Bob approaches.

MEERA

You've got that look, talk to me, what'd you do?

BOB

I accidentally deleted "Grey's Anatomy" when I was trying to DVR the Cavs game and Helen's pissed.

MEERA

First, how good was that game? Second, Bob, how many times. I'm sending the apology flowers now. You cook dinner for her tonight, deal?

Bob nods and smiles and heads off. Max clocks this. Meera types "Wonder Woman's life" into a Google search.

MAX

Wonder Woman isn't real. You know that, right? It's important to me that you know that.

MEERA

Eat a tree nut and take it down a notch.

(then, grumbling)

I can't believe I can't tell my family...

(MORE)

MEERA (CONT'D)

I'm a literal superhero but they still get to judge me for being "single Meera with the ankle tattoo".

MAX

If you really need to talk to someone, you can talk to me.

MEERA

No thanks. You're mean and strict.

MAX

I feel like maybe you're not fully understanding the gravity of this.

MEERA

Yesterday I spent two hours looking up choppy haircuts. So yeah, I'm still digesting.

MAX

Well speed up the digestion because we have our first mission.

MEERA

A mission! What, we need to get an explosive device to the center of a meteor before it hits Earth?

MAX

That's the premise of "Armageddon". No, we need to secure classified files from Quark. That's why I'm working with them. They're involved somehow with the threat to Earth.

Tawnia comes up behind Max and Meera. They freeze.

TAWNIA

Hey, do you all know Julie from accounting has never masturbated?

Max looks scandalized as Tawnia heads off.

MEERA

Quark! How is it in the mix?

MAX

We don't know yet, we're trying to piece it together. Hopefully the files will give us something.

(then)

Quark is a highly-guarded facility.

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

So you're going to use mind control to get past security.

MEERA

That is the first cool thing you've said since I met you.

MAX

After work, we practice mind control. The mission commences tomorrow morning at 0700.

MEERA

Early but okay, awesome. First though, I have this thing I always do to pump myself up before anything big.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - EVENING

Meera raps "Anaconda" by Nicki Minaj into a microphone.

MEERA

*"...if you skinny bitches, what /
Hahaha RRRRRR / I got a big, fat ass /
C'mon..."*

Meera hangs up the mic and finds a confused Max at the bar.

MAX

That's your pump up ritual?

MEERA

Since high school. I did it before the SATs. LeBron throws chalk in the air, I karaoke.

MAX

Can we go practice mind control now?

MEERA

Yeah we can. Because I'm pumped. I'm also very sober even though I've had three beers and a shot of tequila.

MAX

The suit's built-in controls won't allow you to indulge in vices, like drinking to excess. You can't get drunk, the suit doesn't want you saving the world hungover.

(off Meera's horror)

Sorry, but silver lining though, you also can't get fat.

INT. MEERA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Meera wears the suit, a full Taco Bell spread in front of her, and puts a final bite of a Chalupa into her mouth.

MEERA

I've said it before and I'll say it again, Chalupas are a perfect food.
(off Max's disgust)
Oh, are you also intolerant to deliciousness?

MAX

No, I just care what I put in my body.
Let's begin, we've wasted enough time.

Meera takes a deep breath and puts on the headband.

RALPH (V.O.)

Hello, Meera. You mentioned you're from Ohio: that word originated from the word "ohi-yo", meaning "great river" or "large creek" in Iroquois.

MEERA

Great, okay, we need to practice mind control.

RALPH (V.O.)

I'm sorry but I can only assist you once you enter the verification passcodes located in your manual.

MEERA

Ralph, bud, I lost the manual.

RALPH (V.O.)

You can do an override which involves a series of security questions.

MEERA

Okay so, let's do that, I guess.

RALPH (V.O.)

State your date of birth.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEERA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

The table is littered with empty Taco Bell wrappers. Meera now lays upside-down with her legs over the back of the sofa. Max tearfully watches the TV. ANGLE ON: the TV screen, where "Steel Magnolias" is on.

MEERA

...Okay, I lied, I didn't just kiss that girl. We dated for a few weeks.

RALPH (V.O.)

You correctly answered all 644 questions. Manual override procedure complete.

Meera shakes her head and turns to a now emotional Max.

MAX

Those Meximelts are making "Steel Magnolias" feel extra intense.

MEERA

(as Sally Field)
"Drink your juice, Shelby!"
(then, back to normal)
Okay, we're all set. Ralph, let's practice mind control.

RALPH (V.O.)

Mind control engaging.

MEERA

(looking at her phone)
Max, wash my dishes.

Max just stares at her. Meera looks up and makes eye contact with him. HER POV: A 3-D hologram of Max's brain turns from blue to pink.

MEERA

Max, wash my dishes.

This time, Max goes to the sink and begins washing dishes. Meera follows, continuing to make eye contact.

MEERA

Who was your first crush?

MAX

Skeet Ulrich.

MEERA

Wait, are you gay?

MAX

On the Kinsey scale, I am a 5.8, exclusively homosexual.

MEERA

Love it. Stop mind control.

MEERA'S POV: The hologram of Max's brain turns back to blue and disappears. Max looks up from washing dishes.

MAX

It worked!

MEERA

(a little surprised)

It did! I just have to make direct eye contact. You have a little sty on your left one. I have an optometrist cousin if you need a rec.

MAX

I'll meet you at Quark at 0700, we need those files ASAP. Stay in tonight and rest.

MEERA

Night in, cool. I can start reading "The Goldfinch" for the hundredth time.

INT. MEERA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Meera sits in bed and sets an alarm on her phone. She checks her computer. An update reads: "Uploading photo 4 of 572 to Mona's Wedding Slideshow". Meera's phone RINGS, she answers. SPLIT-SCREEN: Mona and Meera, both of them on speakerphone.

MEERA

I got your pics, all 572 of them.

MONA

Good, but that's not why I'm calling. I officially canceled your plus one. I told Mom you're not dating anyone special, I don't want a random dude--

MEERA

Well, you shouldn't have told Mom that because you're wrong I do have a date.

MONA

Oh really, who?

Meera spots her yearbook. A beat, then:

MEERA

Sam Prescott. From high school.

MONA

Sounds like a white guy.

MEERA

He is but he's an ER doctor so Mom will get over his whiteness. We've been dating for a few months but haven't told anyone because we want to take it slow.

MONA

Slow and discreet? Doesn't sound like you. Fine but he better be someone special!

MEERA

He is. So special.

Meera hangs up. A text from her mom POPS UP: "Meera, there is a boy at the wedding for you to meet, an engineer!! Love, Mom." Meera looks over to the suit.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Meera passes a KID pretending to be a wizard.

MEERA

Hey kid, I like your wand.

KID

Are you an adult?

MEERA

(offended)

Yes. I'm having a super weird day but of course I'm an adult. The rent gets paid, I volunteer like twice a year, I try to be a nice person. Sure, everyone around me has settled down and I'm still figuring it out, yeah my mom has to explain me away to the family, but I'm doing my best.

KID

Okay. I'm not allowed to talk to adults without kids.

He runs off. Meera shakes her head and locates a NURSE.

MEERA

Hi, where would I find Sam Prescott?
(as she follows the nurse)
Long shift? You seem tired. Try a Luna bar, always helps me.

NURSE

I am actually tired, good idea. I like the lemon ones. Right this way.

Meera puts on her headband and touches the suit under her clothes.

MEERA

(sotto)
Ralph, access mind control.

RALPH (V.O.)

Mind control engaging.

INT. SAM PRESCOTT'S OFFICE - MOMENT LATER

Sam works at a big oak desk. The nurse leads Meera in.

NURSE

Dr. Prescott? This patient said she's your friend?

SAM

Wow, Meera Patel from high school? It's been forever.

MEERA

Hi, Sam. You're going to be my date to my sister's wedding tomorrow.

SAM

Uh thanks, but I'm not interested in dating right now. Sorry.

MEERA

Doesn't matter. You will be my date.

SAM

What?

Meera looks confused and desperately waves her hand in front of him, a la a Jedi mind trick.

MEERA

Sam and Meera are going to the wedding.

RALPH (V.O.)

You are not permitted to engage mind control in this setting.

MEERA

Are you serious, Ralph, help me out here. Turn his brain to pink!

SAM

Are you here for a psych consult?

MEERA

No, I'm incredibly sane, I just have a lot on my plate!

Meera pounds the desk and smashes it to smithereens.

SAM

(high-pitched girl's scream)

Off Meera, who is stunned...

EXT. QUARK BUILDING - NEXT MORNING

Max impatiently checks his phone. Finally, it RINGS. It's Meera.

MAX

It's 7:30, where are you??

MEERA (O.S.)

Um, just a slight delay.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME

REVEAL: Meera standing in a holding cell, holding her phone.

MEERA

So I'm in jail. They just gave me my phone back. Still waiting on the gold headband. Anyway, you good, how'd you sleep?

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Mona, Leena and other COUSINS and AUNTIES get their hair and make-up done. Leena hangs up her phone.

LEENA

She is still not answering even though I have called and texted many times.

MONA

Unbelievable. I was worried Meera would mess up the slideshow, but she's not even gonna show up. If she doesn't want everyone to judge her, maybe she should be a better person. This is a new low, even for her.

LEENA

I'm going to send a text in all capital letters. Meera told me that means yelling.

Leena begins to slowly text with one index finger.

EXT. POLICE STATION PARKING LOT - LATER

Meera and Max walk to his car. She sees multiple missed calls and texts from her mom. Meera sighs, pockets her phone, puts on a rubber glove and tries to light a cigarette.

MAX

(measured anger)

The suit. Won't let you engage in vices. That impede your functioning.

MEERA

Well the suit is broken, because mind control stopped working, but then it randomly made me really strong.

MAX

It's not broken, its built-in mechanisms kicked in. And you must've accidentally accessed super strength because you've barely practiced and don't know how to control the suit yet. You can't fly just because you own a helicopter.

MEERA

We get a helicopter?

MAX

It's a metaphor, just get in my Volt!

INT. MAX'S VOLT - CONTINUOUS

They get in Max's Chevy Volt and he begins to drive.

MEERA

Can you drop me off at the Intercontinental? I'm so late, Mona and my mom are gonna kill me. I thought if I brought a doctor to the wedding it'd be a buffer from my family's judgment and that engineer...

MAX

I can't believe you! First you use the suit to try to get a date and now you're talking about a wedding. We have a mission to complete!

MEERA

Find someone else to do it.

MAX

You still don't get it, there's no one else! You were chosen for the suit.

MEERA

Yeah, but I didn't choose it! I don't want to save the world. I want to find something to make my family proud. I want to go on a great date and fall in love. I want to karaoke Sia. Even if it's not perfect, I have a whole life I still want to live! I thought being a superhero was the thing I'd been looking for but it's not. I went to jail and now you want me to miss my sister's wedding.

MAX

I'm sorry about your sister's wedding, but we have to get those files.

MEERA

Dude, I'll just mess it up. I was wrong, this isn't my thing. But you know what is? Bailing. I'm out.

The car stops in front of Quark.

MEERA

This isn't the Intercontinental!

MAX

I need you to get those files.

MEERA

What makes you even think I can?

Max turns to Meera and lays everything on the line:

MAX

Because the aliens picked you for a reason. They see something special in you even if you don't see it in yourself. They believe in you, I believe in you. I know it feels hard, but it's supposed to be hard. If it wasn't hard, everyone would do it. The hard... is what makes it great.

Meera takes this in, then:

MEERA

Is that from "A League of Their Own"?

MAX

One of my favorite movies.

MEERA

(a little teary)

Me too. I own it on Blu-Ray.

EXT. QUARK BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Meera, now wearing the suit, stands nervously at the ominous entrance. INTERCUT WITH: Max in the car, looking at a map on his computer, talking to Meera through an earpiece.

MAX (IN CAR)

I'll guide you to the vault.

MEERA

Got it. Ralph, access mind control. Also, I need some hype music: play the "Jurassic Park" song.

RALPH (V.O.)

During the manual override, you mentioned you dated a woman. Would you prefer a song by Tegan and Sara, who are very popular among bisexuals?

MEERA

What? No. Stop trying to relate.

The "Jurassic Park" theme song quietly BEGINS and UNDERSCORES the rest of the scene.

MEERA

You're right, Max, this song is the tits.

Meera closes her eyes for a beat, then approaches a GUARD at the doors. HER POV: His brain hologram turns pink.

GUARD

Ma'am, do you have your badge--

MEERA

Um, let me in?

The guard steps aside and Meera breathes a sigh of relief.

MEERA

Also, hand me your smokes please.

The guard gives Meera a pack of cigarettes. She puts one behind her ear.

MAX (IN CAR)

Don't do that-- whatever, turn left, go to the end of the hall.

Meera encounters a set of ARMED GUARDS. HER POV: Their brain holograms turn pink. She smiles, more confident.

GUARD #2

Do you have clearance--

MEERA

Bro, I don't need it. Move aside and actually, I'll take your hat.

The armed guard steps aside and gives Meera his hat.

MAX (IN CAR)

Don't take his hat, fine, head down the corridor and you'll see the vault.

Meera, now wearing the hat, spots a UNIFORMED WOMAN in front of large doors. Meera's POV: The woman's brain hologram turns pink. Meera looks totally self-possessed.

MEERA

Hey girl, your nails are on point. Also, I need the classified files on Deerfield and Hollybrook.

UNIFORMED WOMAN

Thank you! Right this way.

VOICE (O.S.)

Don't move.

Meera freezes. A nervous-looking young FEMALE GUARD presses a gun into Meera's back. Meera starts to turn around.

FEMALE GUARD

I said, don't move!

MEERA

Max, I have a gun pointed at me but I can't turn around to make eye contact.

MAX (IN CAR)

You can do this. Just breathe. They picked you for a reason.

Meera looks towards the exit, then notices the guard is shaking and breathing heavily. Meera exhales.

MEERA

Hey, don't be scared. Is this your first day?

The security guard keeps her gun pressed to Meera's back, but snuffles, crying. Meera hears this.

MEERA

It's my first day, too. At this super weird job I can't really talk about. I'm totally freaked out. First days suck. I know, I've had a lot of them. You're lost, you don't even know where the bathroom is or who's got a secret stash of cigarettes.

FEMALE GUARD

I could really use a smoke.

Meera turns slowly to face the guard. Meera's POV: her brain hologram turns pink. Meera takes the gun from the woman's hand. She pulls the cigarette from behind her ear and hands it to her.

MEERA

The guard at the front, he's got the smokes if you ever need them.

They share a smile. Meera looks down at her hand, where the gun is completely smashed into a lump of steel.

INT. MAX'S VOLT - LATER

Meera enters and hands the files and steel lump to Max.

MEERA

Oh my God, I did it!

MAX

You did it! You were amazing. The way you talked down that guard. You connect to people. That's what makes you so special.

MEERA

In my family, that's known as: "Meera talks too much to strangers."

MAX

Well it's also why the aliens chose you to be the Greatest American Hero.

MEERA

I guess if I'm gonna be a hero, I have to man up and face my worst fear...

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - LATER

CLOSE ON: a furious Mona and Leena. The wedding reception is in full swing. A video of a fearful Mona doing a zip-line PLAYS on a loop on a screen. Meera, the suit under her sari, self-consciously approaches from across the room.

LEENA

Meera, where have you been?!

MONA

You didn't do the slideshow, so cousin Sonal found this video of me zip-lining in the cloud forest. I look terrible in a helmet! You let me down, you're more selfish than I gave you credit for.

MEERA

I'm really sorry. I messed up, no excuses. You're right to be angry.

Mona and Leena are taken aback by Meera's candor. Meera heads to the stage and awkwardly takes the microphone from the DJ mid-song. The music cuts out and all the guests turn to her. A group of aunties begin to whisper. Meera takes a deep breath and steels herself.

MEERA

Hi, I'm Meera, Mona's big sister. A lot of you haven't seen me in a while. I've been avoiding these events and your judgement. You know, because I'm not a doctor and I'm unmarried and sometimes I smoke. Sorry, Mom.

Leena glances around and smiles nervously to the family, mouthing: "she doesn't, she's kidding."

MEERA

But I'm learning that I have things about me to be proud of, even if they're not as obvious. And I have to start showing up if I want a chance to succeed. So here I am, putting myself out there more. I want to show up for my family even if people talk. I've bailed on stuff way too often because I didn't want to look like a big loser compared to my impressive little sister. And that's not okay.

Meera and Mona share a look. Mona begrudgingly smiles.

MEERA

Mona has done so many things to make my parents proud. Which I'm grateful for, because I haven't always.

(then, to Mona)

You're so accomplished and amazing and, like, organized. Even your underwear drawer is color-coordinated.

The crowd laughs.

MEERA

I'm proud of you. I know it's late, but I did do the slideshow. It's only like, five pictures because something came up, but I added a special touch, hope that makes up for it a little.

A 3-D hologram of Chris de Burgh singing "Lady in Red" appears. The five photos rotate around him. As the wedding guests "ooh" and "aah", Meera walks off the stage.

MEERA

Thanks for helping me out, Ralph.

RALPH (V.O.)

You're welcome. It's good we are building trust.

(MORE)

RALPH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Also, avoid table eight, the engineer your mother wants you to marry is seated there.

MEERA

Good looking out.

Mona approaches.

MONA

That was a really nice speech. Thanks for sort of doing the slideshow.

MEERA

Least I could do. I'm sorry I missed the ceremony, Mona. I really am.

MONA

Well I'm glad you're here now.

MEERA

(surprised)
Really?

MONA

Of course. You're my big sister.

Meera reacts, touched. It's a sweet moment. Then:

MONA

And I want you to be here to see that I'm winning.

MEERA

I'm going to try to remember this moment without the last part.

INT. PATEL DINING ROOM - SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER

Meera and her mom have dinner, just the two of them. She shows Meera her phone.

LEENA

Mona texted some small stickers from her honeymoon.

MEERA

Those are called emojis.

LEENA

Emojis. I like them.

(then)

You made a nice speech at your sister's wedding. You're a good girl.

MEERA

I don't know about that. I know you wish I was more like Mona.

Leena regards her daughter. A beat, then:

LEENA

You know what your dad would say? That you couldn't fit inside the box. I told him you had to learn. But he said that you were unique and we had to accept it. That you would do great things but it would take you longer because you had your own path. He called you our late bloomer.

MEERA

He did?

LEENA

He was always proud of you. I am the one who has a harder time. But I am learning, you are just different. That is you. And your dad was right, you are already doing good things.

Meera looks moved. She and her mom share a smile.

LEENA

Remember Neil who I told you about?

MEERA

Mom. I don't want to call Neil.

LEENA

Good, because I heard he has adult acne. You are not in good shape marriage-wise, but we are not that desperate yet.

Meera smiles at her mom.

MEERA

Yeah, I don't think we are either.

It's just enough of a tiny victory for now. Off Meera, we...

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INT. QUICKEN LOANS ARENA - NIGHT

Meera intently watches a Cleveland Cavaliers basketball game. Max sits down next to her, holding a white wine.

MAX

This is how you want to celebrate our first mission? A basketball game?

MEERA

Where did you even find Chardonnay?

MAX

Now might be a good time to tell you I'm gay. And I'm not a sports gay.

MEERA

I know. During mind control practice, you told me about Skeet Ulrich.

MAX

Oh, good, I hate coming out speeches.

They share a smile. Max's phone BUZZES and Siri LIGHTS UP.

SIRI (V.O.)

The Greatest American Hero, Agent Max Smith, this is Sandra and Harold. We have your next mission.

MEERA

Wow. I guess we're really doing this.

MAX

Are you ready? You nervous?

MEERA

A little. But whatever super villain we deal with can't be worse than my sister.

(then)

We gotta talk to Sandra and Harold about getting better seats.

REVEAL: They are at the very top of the arena looking down.

MEERA

I wish I could tell LeBron who I was. He'd probably let me sit courtside.

END OF EPISODE