

The Devil's Circle

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The Devil's Circle

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODLAND, NATHIAGALI PAKISTAN - NIGHT (20 YEARS AGO)

A man, REHMAN YOUSUF (40) holds the dead body of a woman, YASMEENA (30). He holds her lovingly, tears in his eyes. Directly opposite him he sees a GIRL (12) wearing a red shalwar hiding in the nearby trees.

EXT. BURNING CORN FIELD - NIGHT

A raging fire consumes the entire field. A small house can be seen in the middle of the field.

EXT. SMALL HOUSE

The house is caught in the fire. The screams of a young girl can be heard from inside. A woman (30s) tries desperately to save the girl but the fire is too strong.

EXT. SURROUNDING WOODLAND - SAME TIME

As the fields burn some of the trees turn dark red. One of the trees has a CIRCLE scratched into it. At its centre is a crescent moon, flipped over.

The area dissolves into:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE, NATHIAGALLI - DAY (PRESENT)

The same area of land is now a construction site.

A large wooden sign has been erected to signify the building work and simply reads YOUSUF CONSTRUCTION LIMITED.

The site is quite extensive. Pieces of wood and concrete have been piled along what will eventually become the driveway to the main site where the house will be built. Right now all that stands is an old wooden shack which is surrounded by a natural circle of trees, some of them red.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROADS - SAME TIME

An expensive looking saloon car drives through the narrow mountain roads.

INT. LEAD CAR - DAY

Sitting in the car is Rehman Yousuf, now 60. He is dressed

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in smart casual clothes and is busy talking on his mobile phone. The car is being driven by his driver, RANA (44).

REHMAN

(Talking on the phone in Urdu)

We are going to be there in five minutes. There will be no problems; I will take care of it.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROADS, NATHIAGALLI, PAKISTAN - DAY

Rehman's car turns off onto a more narrow stretch of road. A truck coming the other way has to stop and wait for them to drive by.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE, NATHIAGALLI, PAKISTAN- DAY

The car comes to the busy construction site where numerous trucks have parked in whatever space they can find. Surprisingly all the workers are sitting in their trucks.

A wooden table has been set up right next to the old wooden shack. Sitting at the head of this table is IJAZ AHMED (38), the man in charge of the project. A chainsaw is on the table. Seeing the car coming down the driveway he gets up to greet Rehman.

The car parks just outside the wooden shack and Rehman gets out. He is immediately being greeted by Ijaz.

IJAZ

Assalaamulakum sir!

REHMAN

Screw the cheap formalities Ijaz, what the hell is going on? Why won't they work?

IJAZ

They are saying that they hear voices in the woodland.

REHMAN

Voices? That is crazy talk. You don't actually believe such nonsense do you?

IJAZ

Of course not but some of my men are very nervous.

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REHMAN

Bring them all here.

Ijaz turns and calls all the men from their trucks.

IJAZ

Everyone come here! Mister Rehman
wants to talk to you!

The men reluctantly get out of their trucks and walk down the driveway towards Rehman. They all assemble in a line just in front of him. He speaks in Urdu:

REHMAN

Alright listen up all of you. I want
this project to be completed on
time.

One of the workers puts his hand up to speak.

REHMAN

What is it?

WORKER

What about the voices?

REHMAN

It is all nonsense. All it is are
villagers trying to frighten you.
They like playing games.

WORKER

What if the voices are real?

REHMAN

For god sake, they aren't real. They
are just trying to stop us from
building here. Do you remember how
angry they were when we made the
Green's Hotel last year?

The workers all nod their heads.

REHMAN

These people feel that we are
ruining the mountainside and will do
anything to frighten you. Now get
started on the work and I promise
you that you will be paid well for
your trouble.

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The workers all cheer and get back to their trucks. Rehman turns to Ijaz.

REHMAN

That wasn't so difficult.

IJAZ

I am sorry I could not sort it out.

REHMAN

This is all a learning curve for you Ijaz. We have more to discuss so please get me a cup of tea.

IJAZ

(To one of the workers)

Faisal, please get us some tea.

Rehman and Ijaz sit down at the table and go over the plans. One of the workers, FAISAL (24) brings them each a cup of tea.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATER

Faisal, the same worker we saw earlier has just finished cutting down the last tree at the back of the site. He puts the chainsaw down and wipes the sweat from his face.

FAISAL

(To another worker)

I am just going for a piss.

WORKER

(O.S)

Okay yaar! No need to tell me.

EXT. FOREST AREA BEHIND THE CONSTRUCTION SITE

Faisal makes his way through the thick forest using a machete to clear his path. He suddenly loses his footing and slides down a steep hillside. Getting rid of his machete to prevent injuring himself he covers his face as he slides down into an open area, landing on his side.

Regaining composure he finds himself in a natural opening in the woodland. There are some trees around him. They are dark red. He touches one of them; blood seems to come onto his hands. He hears some muttering behind him.

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He turns. What he sees makes him makes him scream in terror. He runs as fast as he can in a random direction. He cries out for help but no one can hear him. His instincts tell him to follow the sunlight but he is not slowing down.

Before he can react he has already run off the side of the mountain and is plunging to his death.

Just before he hits the ground...

EXT. SUBURBS, LONDON - DAY (6 MONTHS LATER)

A car boot closes firmly. Closing it is AAMER MALIK (26). He is tall, has a round face, curly hair and is wearing glasses. With him is ZAIN (21), his younger brother. He is tall with a slim build, long straight hair, narrow face and a beard. The car is a taxi, heading for the airport.

AAMER

All set?

ZAIN

Pretty much.

They both turn to their house and wave good bye to their MOTHER (53).

ZAIN

See you soon!

They both get into the taxi. It drives off.

INT. TAXI

AAMER

Did you bring any cards?

ZAIN

No. Planned on sleeping most of the way.

AAMER

I can never sleep on planes.

ZAIN

Correction, you can never sleep.

AAMER

True. At least this way I can beat the jet lag.

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ZAIN

You still up for this whole thing?

AAMER

About Safia?

ZAIN

Who else idiot?

AAMER

Of course dick.

ZAIN

Just checking. I still don't know what we are going to do in the mountains.

AAMER

There will be plenty of stuff to do.

ZAIN

Nothing like I am used to.

AAMER

Trust me.

Zain notices Aamer is wearing something around his neck.

ZAIN

Is that what I think it is?

Aamer reveals it to be an AYATUL QURSI, a protective amulet with verses of the Quran inscribed on it.

AAMER

Mum said it's for protection.

ZAIN

I didn't bring mine.

AAMER

Typical.

ZAIN

It's all superstitious crap.

INT. ISLAMABAD AIRPORT - ARRIVALS, PAKISTAN - 9 HOURS LATER

The airport is filled with people. The weather is hot and humid. A collection of fans cover the ceiling and try to

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cool things down but it doesn't do much. A crowd of people gather around the doorway where arrivals emerge after collecting their luggage. A high metal railing keeps them in check.

Holding onto the railing at the very front of the crowd is SAFIA YOUSUF (25) and her younger brother JAFFAR (23). She is dressed in traditional Pakistani clothing. He is wearing huge sunglasses, a t-shirt and long cargo shorts with sandals to match.

JAFFAR

We didn't have to come so early.

SAFIA

If you want to wait in the car be my guest.

JAFFAR

You just can't wait to see Aamer.

SAFIA

Oh will you just stop it.

JAFFAR

I can't remember the last time you were this anxious to get here so fast.

Safia gives him a cold stare and then looks towards the doorway.

SAFIA

Wonder if he has changed.

JAFFAR

Maybe he has become gay.

SAFIA

Can we just cool it now? They are going to be out any minute now.

JAFFAR

(Looking O.S)

Already here..

Safia looks ahead and can see Aamer and Zain. Her eyes focus on Aamer. She smiles. Jaffar starts waving and shouting. The two brothers notice him and head in his direction. Safia is already heading towards the gap in the metal railing where people exit.

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Safia and Aamer stop and stare at each other for a moment. They then both smile and slowly approach one another.

AAMER

Hey there.

SAFIA

Hi.

AAMER

You look great.

Aamer gives her a big warm hug. Zain looks on.

ZAIN

Don't I get one too?

Safia lets go of Aamer and goes to hug Zain.

SAFIA

You have grown.

ZAIN

I should hope so.

She hugs Zain but it lacks the same affection. Withdrawing, Zain looks at her head to toe.

ZAIN

Nice outfit.

SAFIA

Thanks.

AAMER

Where did Jaffar go?

Jaffar suddenly makes an entrance.

JAFFAR

Yo Amigos!

He grabs both of them for a big group hug. He then comments on Aamer's hair.

JAFFAR

Nice hairdo jaar.

And then Zain's beard.

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JAFFAR

I like the Jesus Christ look. Did you get any hassle at the airport?

ZAIN

Nothing I couldn't handle.

SAFIA

We should get out of here.

JAFFAR

This way gentlemen.

Jaffar takes Aamer's trolley and leads them out to the car park. Zain follows closely behind with Safia and Aamer walking almost side by side.

EXT. AIRPORT PARKING LOT - DAY

Jaffar leads everyone to a big four wheel drive, a TOYOTA CRUSADER, the biggest and meanest of the whole Toyota range.

ZAIN

Nice car man.

JAFFAR

Thanks bro. My dad is really into his off road adventures. I call it the Socialist Express!

He opens the boot and begins loading the luggage. Safia and Aamer catch up with them. Just then a man comes and tries to help out. He is looking for some money.

JAFFAR

(In Urdu)

Get lost.

The man does not heed his warning. Jaffar physically pushes him away.

JAFFAR

(In Urdu)

I said get lost you piece of shit!

Safia can see his rage building and goes to calm him.

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SAFIA
(Quietly)
Jaffar. Relax.

The man goes away. Safia looks at Aamer. Jaffar then snaps out of it and finishes loading up.

JAFFAR
Right, who is in front with me?

ZAIN
That seat belongs to me.

JAFFAR
(In an Australian accent)
Jump in mate.

Everyone gets inside the car. Jaffar starts the engine and reverses out of his parking spot.

EXT. JAFFAR'S CAR

Jaffar exits the airport gate and heads off down the busy roads of Islamabad.

EXT. YOUSUF FAMILY HOME

Jaffar's car enters through the front gate. The house is a large bungalow made of cream coloured stone. Numerous cars are already parked up. Before they even have a chance to get out the front door opens to reveal SHAHID YOUSUF (58), Safia and Jaffar's father.

Everyone gets out of the car. Aamer is the first to meet Shahid.

SHAHID
(In Urdu)
Aamer, my boy, how are you?

AAMER
Asalaamulakum uncle. I am great, how are you?

SHAHID
Not too bad.

He turns to Zain.

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SHAHID

And look at this one! My god you have grown.

ZAIN

Wouldn't want to stay a kid forever.

SHAHID

That is true. Please come inside.

Aamer, Zain, Safia and Jaffar head inside.

INT. YOUSUF FAMILY HOME

Everyone is sitting together in the main sitting room. Aamer and Safia are sitting next to each other. A servant brings some tea and cake.

SHAHID

So the plan is that tomorrow you will rest and then the next day head into the mountains.

AAMER

That is the plan.

SHAHID

Are you sure you really want to go all the way to Nathiagalli?

Safia sighs.

SAFIA

Here we go again.

SHAHID

Come on Safia, do you really want to go all the way up there?

SAFIA

Of course Abu! Islamabad is so boring. And we haven't been in over ten years. Besides, I need some inspiration for my art project.

AAMER

Is there a problem with going to the mountains uncle?

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SHAHID

No, no problem. It's just, well, I won't be able to make it.

SAFIA

We will be fine Abu!

Just then the front door opens and in walks YAWAR (28), Safia and Jaffar's cousin. He is quite tall, well dressed and good looking. With him are IMAN (17) and HINA (23), both his sisters.

Iman is wearing an AC/DC t-shirt and has a fringe. Hina is wearing traditional Pakistani dress, very elegant and beautiful. She has short hair, green eyes and fair skin. Zain takes notice of her immediately.

YAWAR

Hey guys!

AAMER

Yawar!

Aamer and Zain get up and greet them.

YAWAR

How are you?

AAMER

Bloody marvellous!

Yawar turns to Zain.

YAWAR

And look at Zain!

ZAIN

Hey man.

They hug.

YAWAR

You guys remember Hina and Iman?

AAMER

Of course.

Hina and Zain lock eyes. They like what they see.

JAFFAR

Abu, was just trying to make us change the plan again.

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YAWAR

What?

SHAHID

I am not sure it is a good idea.

JAFFAR

It's a great idea. You know why, because I came up with it! And we will get to stay in the house Rehman uncle helped make.

SAFIA

Abu, we have discussed this a number of times.

SHAHID

Okay, calm down both of you. I was just asking that is all. What do you think Aamer?

Aamer looks at Safia then turns to Shahid.

AAMER

Whatever Safia wants uncle.

SHAHID

It is decided then.

YAWAR

Fantastic! Now let's eat!

EXT. GUESTHOUSE, NATHIAGALLI - SAME TIME

The guesthouse is now complete and looks very nice; it resembles an old English Cottage. An IMAM, UMAR (48) approaches the front door and knocks. A CARETAKER (37) answers the door.

CARETAKER

(In Urdu)

Hello Uncle Saab.

UMAR

(In Urdu)

Hello beta. Rehman asked me to come.

CARETAKER

Please come in.

The caretaker lets Umar enter the house.

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INT. GUESTHOUSE ENTRANCE HALL

Umar enters the house and takes a quick look around.

CARETAKER

Would you like some tea?

UMAR

That would be lovely.

The caretaker heads for the kitchen. Umar goes through the hallway and into the main entertainment area which consists of an open plan TV room together with a table to eat meals. Some of the panels of wood in the walls are red.

Two sides of the room have large windows which look out onto the surrounding forest area. Umar approaches the one of the windows and looks out. It is a beautiful day. He smiles. He prepares to give his blessings to the house.

Just then Umar feels a cold shiver down his neck. He turns around; there is nothing there. He looks around the room; still there is no one there. Suddenly he starts to feel cold. He starts to shiver. He tries to open his Quran but the cold intensifies.

He looks out of the window and sees a YOUNG GIRL (12). She is wearing a deep red shalwar kamiz, her face covered with fiery red hair. Umar is terrified. He turns away and closes his eyes. Now the girl is in front of him in the room.

GIRL

(In Urdu)

A mothers love...

Umar screams in terror. He makes for the door.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE

Umar opens the front door and runs to his car. The caretaker comes rushing after him.

CARETAKER

Uncle!

IMAM

Leave this place now beta!

Umar jumps into his car and speeds off out of the driveway. The caretaker is visibly shaken up. He enters the house again.

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INT. GUESTHOUSE

The caretaker enters the room where Umar was standing. There is nothing strange. He looks very confused.

EXT. NATHIAGALLI ROADS

Umar is driving very fast along the road. Other motorists beep in anger as he narrowly misses several cars.

INT. UMAR'S CAR

Umar is completely consumed by fear. He can't help speeding as far away from the house as possible. Suddenly he sees the girl in his rear mirror. Her eyes are black. He loses control of the car and goes off the mountainside.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE

Umar's car tumbles down the steep cliff gathering speed as it does so. It crashes into a thick set of trees. We hear the car horn continuously beeping.

EXT. YOUSUF FAMILY HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

It is a quiet night; the sky is clear.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Aamer has taken a shower and is dressed in his night clothes. He finishes brushing his teeth, rinses his mouth and washes his face. He pauses for a moment looking at himself in the mirror.

INT. AAMER AND ZAIN'S ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Zain is fast asleep and is snoring away. Aamer has his eyes wide open. He cannot get to bed. Just then his mobile phone receives a TEXT MESSAGE. It is from Safia.

TEXT MESSAGE

I miss you. X

Aamer smiles.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT

Safia is in the kitchen making peanut butter and jam sandwiches. Aamer has joined her.

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AAMER

(Speaking quietly)

It's good to see that some things never change.

SAFIA

Are you kidding? I don't know what I would do without my late night snacks. So you still have problems sleeping?

AAMER

(Whispering)

Yep. I can't figure it out but I have learnt to live with it.

SAFIA

Relax, this kitchen is soundproof. Anyway, they call it the 'second wind'. It's when your mind gets a kick start. Most people get it in the afternoon.

AAMER

In my case it is always at around 10.30 at night.

Safia finishes making two sandwiches.

SAFIA

You want a sandwich?

AAMER

Sure.

EXT. IMAN AND HINA'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Iman is standing on the balcony. She is looking at the mountains in the distance which can only be seen by the lights of some of the houses which mark out the landscape.

She takes out a joint and lights up. She takes a few drags. Hina comes out onto the balcony.

HINA

Give me some.

IMAN

A please would be nice.

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HINA
(Sarcastically)
Please.

Iman reluctantly gives her the joint. Hina takes a few drags.

HINA
Afghani?

IMAN
The best.

Hina hands the joint back to Iman.

HINA
Looking forward to the trip?

IMAN
Not really. I don't like it up there.

HINA
Iman, stop being weird.

IMAN
I get bad vibes.

Iman hands her back the joint.

HINA
Speaking of vibes, do you think Zain likes me?

IMAN
Who cares?

HINA
He is hot!

IMAN
So?

HINA
What, you think I am saving myself for marriage?

IMAN
You are such a slut.

HINA
You are such a stoner.

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INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Jaffar wakes up from a nightmare, his face covered in sweat. He catches his breath and turns on the light.

INT. KITCHEN

Safia and Aamer are still talking.

SAFIA

I wasn't sure if white would be too boring. Maybe blue is better..

AAMER

I am not the best person to talk to about this stuff.

Suddenly the kitchen door flings open and Jaffar walks in half-asleep.

JAFFAR

I have got a fucking bad headache.

SAFIA

Oh, I'll get you something.

Safia gets up to get him some painkillers. Jaffar leans on the kitchen counter and looks at Aamer.

JAFFAR

Still have trouble sleeping?

AAMER

Yep.

Safia hands him some painkillers. Jaffar approaches the table and picks up her glass of milk. He downs the whole glass along with the pills.

JAFFAR

Cheers sister.

He kisses her on the cheek and makes his way to the door.

AAMER

Is he okay?

SAFIA

He'll be fine.

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AAMER

The headaches are still happening?

SAFIA

More since we moved to Islamabad;
could be a change in air pressure.

AAMER

Hope he is okay up in the mountains.

EXT. YOUSUF FAMILY HOME - NEXT DAY

Hina and Safia are finishing loading up two Honda Civics with everyone's luggage. A few servants help them out.

SAFIA

Where are the guys?

HINA

In the back.

EXT. BACK GARDEN - DAY

Yawar, Aamer, Zain, and Jaffar are playing cricket in the back. Zain is an amazing batsman and is making short work of Yawar's bowling. A few servant boys are fielding. All of them are impressed by Zain as he hits another six.

YAWAR

You can play.

AAMER

He handles that bat like a sword.

JAFFAR

I'll get him out.

ZAIN

I'll hit you out of the park mate.

Safia comes to the back.

SAFIA

Guys! We have to leave soon.

YAWAR

In a moment!

SAFIA

At this rate we are going to get there at night.

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JAFFAR

We'll be fine!

She leaves.

JAFFAR

Let's see you hit this!

Jaffar bowls to Zain. He hits him out of the garden. The servant boys all cheer.

EXT. YOUSUF HOUSE GATE - SOME TIME LATER

The gate opens and two Honda Civics prepare to leave the house. Yawar drives the lead car. Hina and Iman are in the back. Jaffar drives the other car. Zain is in front with Safia and Aamer in the back. The gate closes behind them.

Another car joins them outside, a red TOYOTA COROLLA with three guards inside.

EXT. ISLAMABAD

The three cars drive down the streets.

INT. YAWAR'S CAR

Yawar has put on a compilation of desi beats (Asian music). Aamer sits back and admires the view whilst enjoying the music.

EXT. ROAD TO MUREE, BEGINNING OF THE MOUNTAINS

The three cars turn onto a road which starts to ascend into the mountains.

EXT. ROAD TO NATHIAGULI - SUNSET

The three cars are still in close formation. The sun is now setting. The roads have become narrower and pass through vast concentrations of forest area.

INT. JAFFAR'S CAR

Jaffar points out various things for Zain to look at: mountain views, villages, and the landscape. Hina is taking a nap. Iman is busy listening to her I-POD.

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INT. GUARD'S CAR

The guards bring up the rear and are listening to a collection of classic desi songs. One of them dances to the beat.

EXT. ROADS OF NATHIAGALLI - NIGHT

The moon is now out. The cars all have their headlights on. The roads continue to wind round the mountain side. Yawar flashes his lights every time they pass a blind corner just in case someone is coming down the wrong side of the road. The three cars continue to ascend higher into the mountains.

INT. YAWAR'S CAR

Yawar carefully leads the way. Suddenly he sees a LEOPARD standing in the middle of the road. He stops. Hina and Iman look at the leopard.

HINA

I have never seen one this close before.

IMAN

It's not a good sign.

HINA

Iman, you are always so superstitious.

IMAN

I am telling you, it is a warning.

HINA

It's times like these when I think we cannot be related.

IMAN

Shut up!

The leopard looks at them and doesn't move.

INT. JAFFAR'S CAR

Jaffar, Zain, Aamer and Safia are all looking at the leopard.

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ZAIN

Nobody said anything about Leopards!

SAFIA

So beautiful...

JAFFAR

Would love to make a rug out of that...

SAFIA

Jaffar!

INT. GUARD'S CAR

The three guards, RAFIQ (34), MUMTAZ (30) and KARIM (27) can just about make out that a leopard is blocking the road.

RAFIQ

(In Urdu)

It is a warning.

MUMTAZ

(In Urdu)

You are always so superstitious.

KARIM

(Urdu)

Turn the music up!

EXT. ROAD

After a few more moments the leopard moves off the road. Yawar and the other cars slowly drive on.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - NIGHT

They have finally reached their destination. The three cars park one after the other. Yawar steps out of the car and stretches his legs. Aamer also gets out of the car. Safia has gone to sleep.

AAMER

This place is amazing.

YAWAR

They sure did a damn good job. Go and see if the caretaker is around.

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Aamer goes and knocks on the front door. No one answers. He knocks again; still no one.

AAMER

Don't think there is anyone here.

YAWAR

Typical, I bet he hasn't even come yet. Luckily I have a spare key.

INT. GUESTHOUSE - NIGHT

Yawar unlocks the front door and switches on the hallway lights and heads inside. Aamer and the rest follow him in. Yawar switches on more lights. The house is well furnished and the interior is well decorated.

YAWAR

Okay everybody; let's operate on a finders keepers basis. But let's be civilised eh? Let the ladies have priority. And Aamer, no shacking up with my cousin!

Aamer smiles as everyone shoots off into different parts of the house. Yawar continues to switch on more lights. Safia comes back, sniffing the air.

SAFIA

Yawar, can you smell that?

Yawar smells the air.

YAWAR

Yes, it's a bit strange. Open some windows.

Safia heads off.

INT. GUESTHOUSE - MONTAGE

Hina gets the first bedroom on the ground floor.

Iman gets the smallest bedroom which is also on the ground floor but far away from all the others next to the kitchen area.

Aamer, Zain and Jaffar find a huge bedroom which has been built on the top floor. Five beds line up next to each other. They all have to share a bathroom. The room has a

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nice balcony which looks onto the driveway. The ceiling panels are all made of dark red wood.

Yawar strolls into the second bedroom on the top floor. It is a nice sized single room with a nice view of the surrounding landscape.

There are two other bedrooms in a small middle floor, which acts more like a bridge between the ground and top floor. Safia takes one of these rooms. It has red walls.

INT. LIVING AREA - AN HOUR LATER

The main living area is a large open space designed to accommodate all needs. One side has a raised landing where numerous sofas and tables are perfect for card games. Yawar can be heard on the phone.

The centre of the room has a massive L-Shaped sofa which sits in front of large television and music system. Two large glass doors lead onto balconies outside.

The boys are playing cards. Hina and Safia are watching television. Iman is sitting quietly reading a book.

Yawar gets off the phone.

YAWAR

That was Shahid Uncle. Just checking up on us.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, AAMER'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Aamer is smoking alone on the balcony. Zain joins him.

ZAIN

Can't sleep?

AAMER

As usual...

ZAIN

Only this time I can't either.

Zain lights up a cigarette.

AAMER

What's up?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN
That girl Hina...

AAMER
She likes you.

ZAIN
That obvious eh?

AAMER
The eyes never lie.

They both take a few drags.

ZAIN
When you going to, you know?

AAMER
Soon.

ZAIN
Nervous?

AAMER
A bit.

ZAIN
Maybe that amulet will come in
handy.

Aamer laughs.

AAMER
It's called an Ayatul Qursi and it's
for protection, not good luck!

ZAIN
Hey, in my world they can be one and
the same.

EXT. MOSQUE, ISLAMABAD - DAY

The mosque is very small but well kept. It has only one tower and a small green dome. An Imam, YUNUS, is saying his prayers. A young man, SHAOIB (20) enters and approaches him. The Imam opens his eyes.

YUNUS
(In Urdu)
Yes beta?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

SHOAIB

(In Urdu)

Excuse me uncle but have you heard
from your brother?

YUNUS

No, not today. Why?

SHOAIB

I have not seen him since he went to
bless the Yousuf's new house.

YUNUS

Very strange..

INT. YOUSUF FAMILY HOME - EVENING

The house is full of people who have come over for a large
social gathering.

INT. PRIVATE BAR - SAME TIME

Shahid, Rehman and RIZWAN HAQ (58) are enjoying a quiet
drink.

SHAHID

We must give our children time to
discover life for themselves. That
was a choice which I never had.

RIZWAN

This is true but sometimes they do
not know what is best for them.

SHAHID

They all find their way in the end.
Some just need more time.

RIZWAN

I heard Yawar is finally working for
your company. What took him so long?

SHAHID

Like I said before Rizwan, we must
let our children discover life for
themselves. And I have a feeling
that Yawar will be just fine.

He turns to Mister Haq.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

SHAHID

After all my friend, what would life be without adventure? More peaceful, more secure perhaps. But it would also be so very dull.

They toast their drinking glasses. Mister Haq turns to Rehman.

RIZWAN

So tell me yaar, why did you get a new car?

REHMAN

I...I didn't like the other one.

RIZWAN

You just bought it a few months back! I guess a few lacs here and there is nothing for you.

Shahid and Rizwan laugh out loud. Clearly the drinks are getting to them a little. But Rehman seems a little uneasy.

EXT. NATHIAGALLI ROADS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Rehman is being driven down the mountain side in his 'old' car. It is the day he went to see the construction work on the guesthouse.

Suddenly a falling man crashes onto the road directly in front of the car. It is too late to avoid him. They run over the splattered body, the driver loses control and smashes into the road barrier, breaking the axle of the car.

Rehman gets out of his car and looks at the body. He recognises it as one of his builders. His head is still intact, a look of sheer terror across his face. Rehman looks away in horror.

INT. GREEN HOTEL, BAR - BACK TO PRESENT

Rehman is now sweating and looks deeply troubled. He drops his drink and holds his chest.

RIZWAN

Are you okay my friend?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

REHMAN

F...fine.

Just then there is a knock at the door. Shahid goes to answer it. It is Shoaib from the mosque.

SHOAIB

Salaam Yousuf saab.

SHAHID

Shoaib, good to see you. What brings you here at this time?

SHOAIB

It is Yunus's brother, Umar. He was in a bad car accident. He is in a critical condition at the medical centre.

SHAHID

My god...

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - LATE MORNING

The whole surrounding woodland is covered by a thick blanket of fog.

Yawar, still wearing his night clothes, is standing alone near the front door having a cigarette. Aamer comes from inside.

AAMER

May I have one?

YAWAR

Sure.

Aamer lights up. They share a moment's silence.

AAMER

Safia told me you have trouble sleeping too.

YAWAR

Yep. And I got bad news for you; it doesn't get any better with age.

Just then Yawar's phone rings.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

YAWAR

(In conversation over the phone)

Hello. Yes uncle. When? How? That is terrible. Please send my regards.

He puts the phone down.

AAMER

What was it?

YAWAR

A good friend of my father's was badly hurt in a road accident. He is an Imam; he came to bless the house.

AAMER

Will he be okay?

YAWAR

They are heading to the hospital. It doesn't look good.

Yarwar takes a few tugs of his cigarette.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - LATER

Everyone has emerged from their rooms and are lazing about. Aamer and Safia are not around.

YAWAR

Right troops, let's get out of the house for a while.

ZAIN

Where we driving to?

YAWAR

No driving.

HINA

You expect us to walk?

YAWAR

Come on Hina, it's good for you.

Zain smiles at Hina. She blushes.

HINA

Hey, where is your brother?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

I think he fancied some alone time
with Safia.

HINA

Interesting...

YAWAR

Let's go then. Be ready in ten
minutes.

HINA

But...

Zain holds Hina's hand. She smiles.

ZAIN

A walk would be nice.

JAFFAR

Damn right yaar! Let's go on a
safari into the unknown.

Hina and the others head for their rooms. Iman starts to
smoke a joint.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - SAME TIME

Safia and Aamer walk together hand in hand. They stop to
look at the mountainside.

AAMER

I never realised that Pakistan had
such beauty.

SAFIA

This country is a land of mystery.

AAMER

Most people rave on about India back
in London.

SAFIA

India is not better than Pakistan,
they are just better at P.R!

Aamer smiles.

AAMER

Up here, life seems so clear and
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

AAMER (CONT'D)

fresh. Wish it could always be like that.

SAFIA

Life is all about those moments we treasure in time.

AAMER

Have you ever thought about coming to London?

SAFIA

Of course, but getting a VISA these days is difficult.

AAMER

What about living there?

SAFIA

Would be difficult.

AAMER

How about living with me?

SAFIA

With you?

AAMER

Together. Our place. Our life. Our time.

Aamer holds her hand. He is nervous.

AAMER

I love you...

SAFIA

I-I know...I love you too; I've always loved you.

AAMER

Safia, would you marry me?

Safia has tears in her eyes. She pulls Aamer towards herself and kisses him passionately.

The Devil's Circle

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - SAME TIME

Yawar and the others are walking together.

JAFFAR

You know they say if you stray off the main paths you get taken by the witch of the mountain.

YAWAR

Quit scarring them Jaffar.

ZAIN

A witch?

HINA

(In Urdu)

Jaffar, stop it now!

YAWAR

(In Urdu)

That's all village crazy talk.

IMAN

(Almost whispering)

No it isn't.

JAFFAR

They say that she almost died in a fire but somehow survived. Now she comes and takes children away!

Zain looks uneasy.

YAWAR

Okay enough! Let's get moving.

Just then a WOMAN, perhaps in her early thirties, emerges from one of the side roads with a large sack of corn. She is very pleasant natured and is wearing a deep red shalwar. Her face is mostly hidden.

JAFFAR

Oh my god Iman, it must be the witch!

Hina and the others laugh. The woman barely notices and approaches them.

WOMAN

(In Urdu)

Salaam, would you like some corn?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

JAFFAR

(In Urdu)

Damn right!

YAWAR

Who else wants some?

ZAIN

Is it good?

HINA

It is divine!

YAWAR

(To the woman)

We will take five.

IMAN

(Interrupting)

I don't want any.

YAWAR

Four...

JAFFAR

Make it six; I'll eat hers and another one.

ZAIN

Don't forget Safia and Aamer.

YAWAR

Ten please...

The woman smiles as Yawar pays her and bids her farewell. They all start walking. Everyone starts eating immediately except Yawar and Iman. Zain loves it. Jaffar eats two together at the same time.

Iman turns to see the woman walk off but she has disappeared.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD, WEST - LATER

Safia and Aamer head for the guesthouse.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD, EAST - SAME TIME

Yawar and the others have almost made it to the guesthouse.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

Jaffar has eaten all of his corn. Zain and Hina are holding hands.

Just then they all see Aamer and Safia; they are going to get to the house first. Jaffar becomes animated.

JAFFAR

Hell no! You guys are not beating me.

He runs like a madman.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE DRIVEWAY - 30 SECONDS LATER

Jaffar heads for the door and wins the race.

JAFFAR

The new and undisputed Nathiagalli champion!

Safia and Aamer make it just after him.

AAMER

(Thick Pakistani accent)
You run like a tiger!

JAFFAR

(Even thicker accent)
No, more like a Gazelle!

They both hug each other. Safia comes to join them.

JAFFAR

I detect a different vibe emanating from you sis. Did you finally pop the cherry?

Safia looks embarrassed.

SAFIA

He popped something...

JAFFAR

OH MY GOD! Hey you guys, Aamer and Safia are getting married!

Everyone rushes to the house.

YAWAR

Congratulations!

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

HINA
That's fantastic!

ZAIN
About time I say.

SAFIA
You knew about it?

ZAIN
Of course.

JAFFAR
You know what time it is?

IMAN
Time you shut up?

JAFFAR
It's party time!

ZAIN
It's three in the afternoon!

JAFFAR
Fuck that, what are you, English?
This calls for a celebration! We are
going to be family!

YAWAR
Give it a few hours; we'll party a
bit later.

Yawar opens the front door. Everyone heads inside.

EXT. ISLAMABAD, SIDE ROADS - SAME TIME

Shahid's car heads down the road towards the medical centre where Umar is being treated. Rehman is sitting in the front seat. All of a sudden round the corner the road is blocked by a leopard. The car comes to a halt.

SHAHID
What the hell! They never come this
far into the city!

The leopard stares at Rehman. For a moment their eyes are locked on each other. Then the leopard slowly moves to the side and makes its way into the nearby woodland.

The Devil's Circle

EXT. GUESTHOUSE, BACK PORCH - LATER

Everyone is having lunch together.

Safia goes for a walkabout nearby and finds a collection of trees that have been cut down to make space for the guesthouse. Some of them look very old. A couple of them catch her eye. She approaches them.

They are a strange DARK RED, almost like the colour of dried blood. Aamer can be heard approaching. Safia quickly turns and walks towards him. They meet half-way between the porch and the fallen trees.

AAMER

Everything okay?

SAFIA

Yes, just some weird trees.

Both of them look out into the surrounding woodland. Nearby is a large red tree; it looks very old.

SAFIA

That tree looks really strange...

AAMER

Maybe we should go take a look...

Jaffar calls to them both from the porch.

JAFFAR

(From the Porch)

Hey lovebirds come and check this out.

Both Safia and Aamer head back to the porch.

EXT. SIDE OF THE HOUSE

Jaffar leads everyone to what he has found. It is a large AXE, heavily used but still with a sharp crisp blade. Next to the axe is a collection of wood, dark red in colour just like the tree stumps nearby. Jaffar holds one of them up.

JAFFAR

Have you ever seen wood like that?

YAWAR

Nathiagalli has all kinds of weird stuff.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

Almost looks like blood inside the wood.

Safia takes a deep breath, clearly looking a little nervous. Aamer holds her close to him.

AAMER

Where was the axe?

JAFFAR

In the garage; rather beautiful isn't it.

He pauses for a moment and then holds it up.

JAFFAR

'Here's Johnny!'

YAWAR

You plan on using that thing?

JAFFAR

Hell yeah!

SAFIA

Jaffar, please be careful.

JAFFAR

Relax sis, think of it as therapy.

YAWAR

She's right, take it easy.

Jaffar acknowledges Yawar with a simple nod and heads off to the back with the axe.

INT. GUESTHOUSE - AN HOUR LATER

Aamer, Zain, Hina and Iman are watching a film. Yawar is sitting by the window thinking.

INT. SAFIA'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Safia has set up a canvas and is sketching the outline of a picture of a woman in a forest.

EXT. BACK OF GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

Jaffar is busy chopping wood, headphones in his ears listening to SLIPKNOT. It is hard work but he is thoroughly enjoying it.

The Devil's Circle

INT. GUESTHOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Yawar stops thinking and gets up.

YAWAR

Okay, it's party time.

Everyone watching television looks to face him.

YAWAR

Go get Safia and Jaffar.

Aamer goes to get Safia. Iman goes to find Jaffar. Hina and Zain sit together.

ZAIN

You think you can beat me in a drinking game.

HINA

Any day.

Zain smiles at Hina. She smiles back. Hina leaves to get dressed. Yawar and Zain look at each other. Yawar winks at Zain. Zain smiles back.

EXT. BACK OF GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

Iman finds Jaffar chopping wood. He is sweating and looking very intense.

IMAN

(Softly)

Jaffar?

There is no response. She moves closer.

IMAN

(Louder)

Jaffar?!

Still no response. She moves even closer.

IMAN

(Top of her voice)

JAFFAR?!

Jaffar suddenly turns to face her, axe high in the air, eyes almost bloodshot. For a split second he has the look of a psychopath. Iman flinches. Jaffar snaps out of it, takes off his headphones and puts the axe down.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

JAFFAR

Shit, Iman I am so sorry.

He gives her a warm hug.

JAFFAR

I had my music on full blast.

IMAN

Party time.

JAFFAR

Yeah baby!

Iman walks slowly away, still a little shaken at what she has just seen. Jaffar looks into the forest. He thinks someone is watching him but can't see them. He heads for the house.

EXT. SURROUNDING FOREST - SAME TIME

Deep in the bushes nearby there seems to be a shadow, perhaps of a person. It starts to rain.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

The party is now in full swing. Jaffar has set up a makeshift bar with the main contenders: Gin, Vodka and Whisky along with various things to mix them with. There are also light snacks and some kebab rolls.

The music is a mixture of Asian remixes and western tunes. Jaffar and Yawar are showing off their moves along with Zain who is becoming quite a dancer. And Hina has certainly taken notice.

INT. SAFIA'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Safia continues to paint. She has finished the first piece she was working on. It is a woman wearing deep red, walking alone in the forest. The new painting is a picture of a beautiful young girl, again dressed in deep red. Her eyes are looking straight out of the painting.

INT. IMAN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Iman has rolled herself a joint and lights it up. She takes a long drag and watches the rain fall outside.

The Devil's Circle

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

Aamer helps himself to a kebab roll and a bottle of beer. As he shuffles to try and find some space Safia arrives onto the scene. She grabs a bottle of beer and downs it.

SAFIA

Hey there.

AAMER

Hi.

SAFIA

Great party eh?

AAMER

I never expected something like this.

SAFIA

What you drinking?

AAMER

Beer.

SAFIA

That's soft. Go for the vodka. This is our celebration.

Aamer smiles. Safia approaches him. She leans into him and looks up into his eyes.

SAFIA

Tonight you have to go wild.

AAMER

Okay.

She puts her hands on his hips.

SAFIA

Do it for me.

AAMER

Okay.

He leans lower. The two of them kiss very briefly. Safia then goes to dance. Aamer devours his kebab and downs the beer. He looks like a man on a mission.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - A BIT LATER

The rain has stopped.

The Devil's Circle

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

Aamer fixes himself a generous helping of vodka and tops it with some orange juice. He drinks it quickly and makes himself another one. Zain comes to get himself a drink.

ZAIN

Hey bro.

AAMER

Great party eh?

ZAIN

Guess I was wrong about Pakistan.

Zain makes himself a drink and heads off. Aamer keeps drinking.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE

Two of the guards, Momtaz and Rafiq are sitting on the porch relaxing, guns by their side. Momtaz is nodding off; Rafiq is smoking and in deep thought. He notices something in the nearby forest.

EXT. FOREST - SAME TIME

In the nearby forest, a woman dressed in dark red can be seen slowly moving through the plants and trees.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE

Rafiq gets up and peers into the forest. He turns to wake up his sleeping partner.

MOMTAZ

(In Urdu)

What the hell is it?

RAFIQ

(In Urdu)

I thought I saw something in the forest over there.

MOMTAZ

You are seeing things.

RAFIQ

It looked like a woman.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

MOMTAZ

Must be your ex-wife.

RAFIQ

I am serious!

MOMTAZ

So am I, she told me she still loves you.

RAFIQ

You are such a bastard.

MOMTAZ

Relax for God sake! Have a smoke.

Momtaz hands Rafiq a cigarette. He reluctantly takes it and lights up. It eases his nerves. He turns to look into the forest again. There is nothing there but the rain has picked up.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

Everyone except Iman is dancing like crazy. Aamer is standing behind Safia and has his arms around her. She leans her head into his chest. He kisses her quickly on the lips.

Zain and Hina are also getting 'closer'. She kisses him and leads him away.

Aamer goes to get himself and Safia a drink. He finds Jaffar at the alcohol corner. He looks very drunk.

AAMER

You all right mate?

JAFFAR

You have started to dance like a true Pakistani. Let's see if you can drink like one.

He makes them both a couple of very potent whiskeys. They hold their glasses up to toast.

JAFFAR

What shall we drink to?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

AAMER

Let's drink to love and marriage.

Jaffar pauses for a moment.

JAFFAR

To love and marriage.

They take a generous mouthful each. Aamer coughs a bit.

AAMER

Your turn.

JAFFAR

Let me tell you a story about love. There was a man who lived up here in the mountains who thought he would never find love. Until one day he met a woman. This woman was more than beautiful; there was something so seductive about her. She was more than he ever dreamed of.

AAMER

Did he marry her?

JAFFAR

Poor fool did just that.

AAMER

Isn't that normal.

JAFFAR

Shut up and listen. One day they were walking in the woods when they both lost their footing and fell down the side of a hill. The man went to help his wife. As he did so he noticed a mark on her body. Something he had never seen before; something that had either been hidden or recently made.

AAMER

What was it?

JAFFAR

They call it 'The Devil's Circle'; it is a symbol that you have offered yourself to the Devil.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

AAMER

There are people like that?

JAFFAR

Many...

AAMER

Is it for real?

JAFFAR

It did not matter in this case. The man condemned her for being a witch. She lost her place in the village and was sent into exile. Only later would he realise that she was pregnant.

AAMER

What happened to her?

JAFFAR

Nobody really knows...

AAMER

Are you okay?

Jaffar is now totally wasted and loses balance. Aamer tries to hold him up. Yawar comes to the rescue.

YAWAR

Don't worry bro; I'll take care of him. You go and have fun. I think your fiancée is waiting for you.

AAMER

Are you sure you're going to be okay?

YAWAR

I've got this. Run along.

Aamer heads off. Yawar takes Jaffar away.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - FEW MOMENTS LATER

Aamer makes his way to his bedroom. He struggles to maintain his balance as he makes his way up.

He passes Iman's room, her door is open. He looks inside. Iman is smoking yet another joint.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

Do you surf Aamer?

AAMER

What?

IMAN

Do you get high?

AAMER

Sometimes.

IMAN

Come in.

Aamer enters and sits down next to her. Iman hands him a joint and a lighter. Aamer takes a few drags.

AAMER

Thanks. You okay?

IMAN

I'm good.

AAMER

Jaffar is off his face.

IMAN

As always.

AAMER

He said some strange things about a man who lost himself to love.

IMAN

You mean that story of the man and the witch? That's a village legend up here. Ignore him, he is just trying to scare you.

AAMER

Alcohol brings up stuff.

IMAN

Surprised he did not bring up his mother.

AAMER

He seems to have calmed down about it.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

No one likes talking about what happened to Yasmeena aunty. It was just bad luck. Apparently she used to love walking off the mountains paths into the woodland. One day she lost her footing and fell.

AAMER

So sad I never got to meet her.

IMAN

If you ask me, there is more to that story than we know. It was round about the time when there was a terrible fire up here.

AAMER

A fire? Where?

IMAN

Not sure. But they say a woman was burned for witchcraft.

AAMER

Shit man, this is all a bit too much for me to take in. I best be off. Hey do you mind if I take this to my room?

IMAN

Be my guest.

AAMER

Thanks.

Aamer staggers to his feet and leaves the room. He passes by Hina's room; he can hear her and Zain having sex.

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM

Jaffar has the whole of the upstairs to himself. Yawar tucks him into bed.

JAFFAR

Coming back up here, I've started thinking about her again.

YAWAR

Try not to think about it Jaffar.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

JAFFAR

You know it was not an accident.

YAWAR

Don't be ridiculous Jaffar.

JAFFAR

She was killed...

YAWAR

What?

JAFFAR

I'd do anything to see her again,
any fucking thing.

YAWAR

Some things you can never get back.
Now get to sleep.

Yawar turns out the light and heads downstairs.

INT. SAFIA'S BEDROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Aamer enters and finds Safia lying on her back in bed. She is looking at the ceiling. Aamer stands over her and gets in her line of sight.

SAFIA

Hey you.

AAMER

Hey there gorgeous.

SAFIA

You look so tall. Please come down.

Aamer sits down next to her. Safia sits up and snuggles into him.

SAFIA

Is that a joint?

AAMER

Yeah, you want some?

SAFIA

Sure.

Aamer lights up, takes a few drags and then passes it to

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

Safia. She takes a few long drags. He cuddles her and kisses her hair. They sit in silence for a moment.

On one of the walls is a PAINTING of a young woman dressed in red.

AAMER

Interesting painting.

SAFIA

I did it today. It's called 'a mother's love.'

AAMER

Nice title.

SAFIA

It came from a dream.

AAMER

She looks a bit scary.

SAFIA

She was angry in my dream.

She takes a few more drags of the joint.

SAFIA

HA! Look at me. I am so drunk and now I am getting high. So much for being the 'good girl' eh?

She passes him the joint.

AAMER

You're a great girl.

SAFIA

My father would kill me if he knew about this.

AAMER

Parents don't know the half of it.

He passes back the joint.

SAFIA

You get the same distance in London?

AAMER

Yeah. My parents don't really know me in some ways.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

SAFIA

As long as you know yourself you
will be fine.

She passes back the joint.

AAMER

I'm not even sure if I do know
myself sometimes.

SAFIA

Don't you know what you want?

AAMER

I want a lot of things.

SAFIA

Like what?

AAMER

Like you.

Safia turns to him.

SAFIA

You already got me idiot. What else
do you want?

Aamer starts to kiss her neck. She becomes aroused. She
turns to face him. They kiss more passionately.

Safia gets onto her knees and pushes herself onto Aamer. He
falls on his back. She lies on top of him. He plays with
her hair and puts his arms around her.

AAMER

Are you sure you want to do this?

She nods and kisses him. They start to undress.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE, PORCH - SAME TIME

Karim is patrolling the rear of the house. He approaches
the back door; it is open. He gets his gun ready. All of a
sudden something grabs him from behind. He barely has time
to scream as he is taken away into the surrounding
woodland.

The Devil's Circle

INT. IMAN'S ROOM - SOME TIME LATER

Iman is lying on her bed almost asleep. Her door is still open.

In her hazy half asleep state she thinks she sees a girl, perhaps in her early teens, dressed in red, standing in the doorway. She leaves no shadow. Iman tries to focus but the girl seems to 'drift' away.

INT. SAFIA'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Aamer and Safia are making love. It is slow and tender. The figure in the painting on the wall appears to move.

INT. JAFFAR'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Jaffar is tossing and turning in bed.

INT. SAFIA'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Aamer and Safia are now going faster. Safia is close to climaxing. The painting on the wall appears to distort in the background. The eyes of the woman glow yellow.

INT. JAFFAR'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Jaffar is tossing more violently and moaning.

EXT. JAFFAR'S DREAM

Jaffar is standing alone in lush woodland. The sun is shining very brightly. In front of him, standing several metres away is his MOTHER. She is quite young, perhaps in her late thirties and is wearing white.

All of a sudden the sunlight dims and Jaffar's mother transforms into a woman wearing deep red. Her hair becomes a fiery orange and her feet twist backwards. She lifts slightly from the ground and raises her arms.

She advances towards Jaffar with her arms open. He cannot move and is terrified. She is now within arms reach.

INT. SAFIA'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Aamer and Safia climax together. He rests his head on her shoulder.

The Devil's Circle

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Jaffar wakes up, covered in sweat.

INT. SAFIA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Aamer and Safia are fast asleep. Someone enters their room and moves very quickly to the foot of the bed. A closer look reveals it to be the same girl Iman saw. She approaches Safia and touches her forehead very gently.

Almost immediately Safia is visibly looking uncomfortable as if having a bad dream.

EXT. SAFIA'S DREAM

Safia sees a small house burning in a raging fire. A girl and a woman run out of the house, their clothes ablaze. The girl falls to her knees. The woman looks at Safia and points at her.

INT. SAFIA'S BEDROOM - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Safia wakes up. A few drops of sweat cover her forehead. She holds her head in her hands. There is no sign of the girl.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - NEXT DAY

The sky is overcast and there is a strong wind.

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Jaffar slowly wakes up. He holds his head.

JAFFAR

Oh man, major headache.

INT. GUESTHOUSE - MAIN HALLWAY

Everyone else is slowly coming out of their rooms. Zain and Iman meet in the hallway.

IMAN

(Sarcastically)

You guys have a good night?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

It was rather delightful.

Iman notices something on the wall just outside Jaffar's bedroom. They appear to be SCRATCH MARKS. She feels them with her fingers.

IMAN

What the hell is that?

ZAIN

Looks like an animal.

Yawar emerges from his room.

YAWAR

More like Jaffar in his drunken state. He probably had his knife with him.

IMAN

He has a knife?

YAWAR

Swiss Army knife since he was fifteen. Anyway, don't worry about it. Go get some food.

Zain and Iman head to the kitchen. Yawar stands and looks at the scratch marks. He pauses.

EXT. ISLAMABAD HOSPITAL - SAME TIME

The hospital is a modern structure with good facilities.

INT. MORGUE

Shahid and Rehman stand next to the body of Umar, the Imam who tried to bless the house. DOCTOR ANWAR (70) stands next to the CORONER (43). They speak in Urdu:

DOCTOR ANWAR

Sorry to bring you down here Shahid.

SHAHID

It's alright uncle. What did you find out?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

CORONER

The heart attack was very sudden;
something must have shaken him up.
That along with his injuries, it's
amazing he lived for so long after.

REHMAN

Did he say anything?

DOCTOR ANWAR

There was one thing, rather strange
I thought...

Doctor Anwar shows them a piece of paper. There is crude
circle with a symbol in the centre that looks like a
crescent moon.

DOCTOR ANWAR

As he lay dying in bed he
frantically drew this. He said that
you had to see it.

Rehman freezes for a moment; he knows what the mark is.

DOCTOR ANWAR

Are you alright Rehman?

REHMAN

Yes uncle...

CORONER

Any idea what it is?

REHMAN

No, not at all.

The coroner covers the body up.

CORONER

Right, I guess that wraps things up
here.

He closes the tray containing the body and slots it back
into the storage space.

INT. JAFFAR'S BEDROOM - SOME TIME LATER

Jaffar is still in bed. Next to him is some water and

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

medicine along with some buttered toast. He has not touched any of it. He lies in bed still with a headache.

Suddenly he hears a noise in his room. It sounds like someone sweeping the floor. He tries to move but it seems that he is paralysed.

The noise intensifies. From the corner of his eye he can see a young girl wearing deep red. She is sweeping the floor but her movements seem peculiar; she is moving from side to side.

She draws closer to Jaffar. He begins to sweat. She is now near him. He still cannot see her face; it is covered with fiery orange hair.

GIRL
(Whispering)
A mother's love...

JAFFAR
HELP ME!

Yawar and the rest come running in. The girl has gone and Jaffar finds that he can move again. Safia holds him.

JAFFAR
She was here, I swear she was here.

YAWAR
Who was here?

JAFFAR
A girl, she was sweeping the floor.

YAWAR
That's nonsense; we are the only ones here.

JAFFAR
Fuck you man, I am telling you she was here.

Yawar does not like the way Jaffar is speaking to him and frowns.

SAFIA
Just calm down Jaffar. There is no one here.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

Yeah man, there is nobody.

JAFFAR

I couldn't move and she was coming closer to me.

Hina looks nervous. Zain holds her.

AAMER

What you mean you couldn't move?

JAFFAR

I could see her but my body was numb and I-I couldn't speak.

IMAN

Sleep paralysis.

JAFFAR

What?

IMAN

It's called sleep paralysis. When your mind is awake but your body is asleep.

ZAIN

Yeah, I know about that. You are like in a semi-dream state. Bloody scary!

SAFIA

That's all it was Jaffar.

YAWAR

Somebody please stay with him. You guys never know your limits when it comes to alcohol and drugs.

SAFIA

Calm down Yawar, no need to be like that.

Yawar leaves. So do Hina and Zain.

AAMER

Anything I can do?

SAFIA

It's fine sweetheart.

Aamer and Iman leave together and close the door behind them.

The Devil's Circle

INT. GUESTHOUSE - HALLWAY - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Aamer and Iman walk slowly away from Jaffar's room.

IMAN

Can you keep a secret?

Aamer is surprised by her question.

AAMER

Um, yeah sure.

IMAN

I saw a girl too.

AAMER

When?

IMAN

Last night, in the hallway.

AAMER

Were you in bed?

IMAN

Yeah, but how could I see the same thing that he did? What if there was someone.

Aamer pauses for a moment. Both of them look at the scratch marks on the wall and start to feel edgy.

INT. SAFIA AND AAMER'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Safia is busy painting. A closer look at the picture reveals a woman wearing deep red standing alone in thick woodland. The woman's eyes seem to pierce through the paper and stare directly at the viewer.

On the floor and against the wall are more drawings, sketches and paintings. A closer look reveals two different figures within the pictures: a young girl and a beautiful woman, both wearing red shalwars. Their hair is fiery orange.

Safia has also done studies of individual body parts such as the hands and feet but they are only rough sketches. She pauses for a moment, as if in a trance, and takes a look at what she has done.

The painting stares right at her. She hears a voice echo in her head but she cannot make out what is being said. Suddenly there is a sound of thunder outside which helps her snap out of her trance.

The Devil's Circle

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The thunder intensifies and gives way to rain. The rain soon becomes heavier and the thunder more intense.

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM

Jaffar is lying in bed still in a very bad way and the weather outside does not help matters.

INT. HINA'S ROOM

Hina has wrapped herself up in warm clothes and sits on her bed reading a book. Zain enters and approaches her.

ZAIN

Hey.

HINA

Hey, what's up?

ZAIN

You okay?

HINA

Yeah, as good as can be.

Zain sits on the bed.

ZAIN

Listen about the other night.

HINA

What about it?

ZAIN

Well, it was amazing and I-I hope that this isn't just, you know, a sex thing, I mean I_

HINA

(Interrupting)

Just a SEX thing? What are you on about?

ZAIN

Oh, so you do feel something between us?

HINA

I like you and everything but we haven't had sex!

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

Come on, stop kidding around.

HINA

Zain, we have not had sex.

ZAIN

The other night, the party, we had sex on this bed, right here.

Both of them become agitated. Hina slams her book onto the bed.

HINA

We did not!

Zain stands up.

ZAIN

Okay, clearly you have major amnesia. I know we drank a lot and smoked a bit of weed but this is ridiculous.

HINA

Zain, I promise you I don't know what you are on about. And if we did have sex and I can't remember then I am sorry. Must have not been very good...

ZAIN

Fuck you! That isn't far Hina. Fuck you!

Zain storms out. Hina is left in a mild state of shock.

INT. IMAN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Iman is standing on the balcony looking at the rain as it shoots off the roof of the house directly in front of her like a sheet of water. She takes out a cigarette and lights up. Taking a few deep tugs she has a quiet moment.

Then the silence is broken by a GIRL'S VOICE. Iman can hear someone in her room. The voice sounds playful and friendly, speaking in Urdu.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

GIRL
(All in Urdu)
Iman...

Iman turns towards the sound of the voice. It seems to be coming from near the bed.

GIRL
Iman, come to me.

Iman walks into the room from the balcony and moves towards her bed. The voice now seems to be coming from the bathroom.

GIRL
Come closer to me.

Iman is now very frightened. She looks at the door to the right of the bathroom. Her plan is to run out of the room as fast as she can.

The voice grows impatient.

GIRL
Iman, come with me now.

Iman is shaking.

GIRL
COME WITH ME NOW!

Suddenly the bathroom door flings open. Iman runs out of the room in terror.

EXT. HALLWAY

Iman runs towards Yawar's room.

INT. YAWAR'S ROOM

Yawar is busy writing something. Iman bursts into his room, her eyes full of tears.

IMAN
Yawar!

YAWAR
What happened?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

There was s-s-someone in my r-room.

YAWAR

Who?

IMAN

A g-g-g-girl, she was speaking to me.

YAWAR

Come on Iman! This bad weather must have just shaken you up a bit.

IMAN

Yawar, I am telling you, there was somebody in my room. She sounded like a young girl, maybe twelve or thirteen. And yesterday I saw a girl in the corridor. I bet they are the same_

YAWAR

(Interrupting)

Wait a minute; you said you saw a girl in this house last night? Why didn't you say something?

IMAN

Because you'd probably say I was drunk or stoned!

YAWAR

Weren't you?

IMAN

A little...

YAWAR

Which in my language means you were off your face?

IMAN

It was real!

Aamer enters the room.

AAMER

Any of you guys hear a voice just now in the corridor?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

A girl spoke to me in my room.

YAWAR

She is getting paranoid.

AAMER

Seriously Yawar, there is something strange going on in this house. First Jaffar gets sick. Now people are hearing voices. And Safia's acting a bit strange too.

IMAN

You see Yawar; I'm telling you that there is something.

YAWAR

You are both being ridiculous.

IMAN

What about Uncle Rehman?

YAWAR

What about him?

IMAN

He told me that when he made this house some of the workers were against it. They kept saying the land was sacred.

YAWAR

It's all village superstition.

AAMER

And then the Imam dies after he blesses the house! Come on Yawar, this is more than a coincidence.

IMAN

We don't even know if he blessed the house or not.

YAWAR

People up here believe all kinds of things. Ghosts, daemons, black magic and witchcraft; they say that it is all tied in to our balance with nature.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

Building this house must have disrupted the balance.

YAWAR

Iman, you are reading too deeply into this.

AAMER

Are these people dangerous?

YAWAR

What, round here?

IMAN

It's not safe.

YAWAR

We ARE safe. There are three armed guards outside. And besides...

Yawar opens a drawer and pulls out a REVOLVER.

YAWAR

I like to keep this handy. Don't worry guys; no one is going to hurt you. Not on my watch.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - NIGHT

The rain has stopped but has been replaced by thick fog.

INT. YAWAR'S ROOM

Iman is fast asleep. Yawar sits at his desk reading.

INT. SAFIA'S BATHROOM

Aamer turns on the tap and washes his face. He notices something in the sink.

INT. SAFIA'S BEDROOM

Safia is busy drawing something; her hands are making a constant circular motion.

Aamer enters.

AAMER

You have to come see this.

The Devil's Circle

INT. SAFIA'S BATHROOM

Aamer leads Safia to the sink.

AAMER

Look!

SAFIA

What?

AAMER

Look at the water!

SAFIA

I don't see anything.

Aamer clicks his fingers in front of her face.

AAMER

For God sake Safia, snap out of it!
The water, its moving anti-
clockwise!

SAFIA

So?

AAMER

So? What do you mean 'so'? Doesn't
that freak you out?

SAFIA

Not really. Now please excuse me, I
have some work to do.

She leaves. Aamer is lost for words.

INT. ZAIN'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Zain is lying awake in bed. There is a knock at the door.

ZAIN

Yeah?

The door opens and in walks Hina. She is wearing dressing gown.

HINA

May I come in?

ZAIN

S-sure.

She closes the door and locks it.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

HINA

I am sorry about before.

She begins to walk up to him. He sits up, still lost for words.

HINA

I do remember being with you...

She unties her dressing gown to reveal nothing but skimpy underwear underneath.

HINA

And I want it again...

She takes off her dressing gown and gets onto the bed, crawling up to Zain on her hands and knees.

ZAIN

Hina, I_

HINA

Shhhh...

She starts to kiss him.

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Jaffar is tossing and turning in bed. His face is covered with sweat.

EXT. WOODLAND - (JAFFAR'S DREAM)

Jaffar stands alone in lush woodland. The sun shines brightly. In front of him, standing several metres away is his MOTHER. She is quite young, perhaps in her late thirties.

Jaffar walks towards her. All of a sudden the sunlight intensifies and he has to cover his eyes. Regaining his focus he sees a woman approaching his mother. She is wearing dark red and her hair is fiery orange. She seems to float across the ground.

INT. ZAIN'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Hina and Zain are having sex. She is riding him hard with her back to him. Her eyes start to glow yellow as she reaches climax.

The Devil's Circle

EXT. WOODLAND - (JAFFAR'S DREAM)

Jaffar's mother starts to cry. The woman in red springs forward towards Jaffar. He tries to run but she is too quick. Within seconds he is on the ground with the woman standing over him. Her face is covered by her fiery orange hair. She holds out her hands to reveal horrifically long nails.

Jaffar cannot move. The woman in red moves her index finger over his chest. She starts to scratch him. He starts to scream. She digs her fingers deeper into his chest and reaches for his heart.

INT. ZAIN'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Hina and Zain climax together. Hina's hair now has a red streak.

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM

Jaffar wakes up screaming. He looks at his chest. There are several scratch marks. They form a crude circle of blood.

JAFFAR
SAFIA! HELP ME!

Within seconds Aamer and Yawar come into the room.

AAMER
Jaffar, what's going on?

They find Jaffar covered in a blood soaked sheet. Yawar pulls back the covers to reveal a crude circle scratched into Jaffar's chest.

YAWAR
What the fuck!

AAMER
Oh my GOD!

INT. SAFIA AND AAMER'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Safia is busy drawing pictures of the woman in red. She barely seemed to twitch through all the commotion.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - NEXT DAY

The whole mountainside is covered by a thick mist. Yawar

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

stands on the porch anxiously smoking. On the trees nearby he notices some deep scratch marks. Aamer joins him.

AAMER

We have to leave this place.

YAWAR

Not with mist like this. It would be suicide!

AAMER

Let's call someone.

YAWAR

Phones are out and mobiles have no reception up here.

AAMER

Then we will walk out of here.

YAWAR

What, and carry Jaffar all the way down the mountain?

AAMER

Fuck you Yawar! Do you have any idea of the situation we are in or have you lost the plot like the rest of them.

YAWAR

Just calm down Aamer.

AAMER

I won't calm down; I am freaking out. You saw the state of Jaffar.

YAWAR

He could have done that to himself.

AAMER

What about Safia? She didn't come when Jaffar was screaming for help. All of the girls didn't come!

YAWAR

We all have our own ways of coping with things. Hina and Zain seem to have chosen sex therapy.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

AAMER

So what do you propose we do then?

YAWAR

The way I see it, we are safer in this house than out there.

Aamer notices the scratch marks on the tree.

YAWAR

Trust me.

Yawar calls to the guards.

YAWAR

(In Urdu)

RAFIQ! MUMTAZ! KARIM!

Rafiq answers his call.

RAFIQ

Yes sir?

YAWAR

Yaar, look at those trees over there. I think there could be a Leopard around. Be ready.

RAFIQ

Of course sir.

YAWAR

And Rafiq..

RAFIQ

Yes sir?

YAWAR

Where is Karim?

RAFIQ

No idea sir, I will check.

Rafiq heads off. Yawar and Aamer are left contemplating. They both look at the trees once again.

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Jaffar is awake and feeling worse. The scratch marks have now scabbed over. Safia applies a cold towel to his forehead. She looks into his eyes; they are yellow. He

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

starts to vomit and she just manages to get a bucket under him in time. Safia is deeply concerned.

JAFFAR

Thanks sis.

Safia has tears in her eyes.

SAFIA

Don't be silly.

JAFFAR

W-where were you this when I called you?

SAFIA

I didn't hear you. I-I was w-working and was lost in focus. I can't believe it. I am so sorry.

JAFFAR

I had a dream about a woman in red.

Safia is taken aback by this.

SAFIA

What?

JAFFAR

She was like the woman in your painting.

SAFIA

What kind of dream?

JAFFAR

Bad dream, a nightmare.

SAFIA

What happened?

JAFFAR

I saw her in the f-forest looking at me. But she wasn't alone. Momma was with her. The woman in red tried to hurt me. Think she wanted to kill me. Momma couldn't help me.

SAFIA

My God...

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

JAFFAR

It was almost like she was trapped.
And the woman in red felt so real.

SAFIA

Don't say that Jaffar. You are being
crazy now.

JAFFAR

I am telling you. It felt like she
wanted me to be hurt; she wanted my
heart...

SAFIA

Your heart? I don't understand...

JAFFAR

There is more too. I hear voices at
night coming from the forest. Female
voices; and they know my name...

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

Yawar is still smoking. Zain comes to join him.

ZAIN

Mind if I have one?

YAWAR

Be my guest.

Yawar hands him a cigarette and lights it for him. Zain
takes a long drag.

YAWAR

Good night?

ZAIN

Oh yeah...

YAWAR

Never thought Hina was the type.

ZAIN

I am not complaining...
Why is the house so dark?

YAWAR

Electricity is out, so are the
phones.

Zain notices the scratch marks on the trees.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

What the hell are those?

YAWAR

Could be a Leopard.

ZAIN

For fucks sake, what the hell are we going to do?

YAWAR

I have told the guards to be alert. As long as we stay inside we should be fine. They only come out at night.

ZAIN

You seem so calm in all this. How do you do it?

YAWAR

I have to be. I'm the one looking after you guys. No use me losing my nerve now. In Pakistan you have to stay calm amidst the chaos. It's the only way we know how to live.

Zain feels some reassurance from what he says. They both enjoy a quiet smoke. The mist looms large in front of them.

INT. REHMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rehman is in the study reading. The desk is covered in several old books. Some of the pages are coming out. One page in particular grabs his attention: a picture of a circle of blood similar to what Umar drew. By his side is a glass of scotch.

Shahid enters.

SHAHID

What are you doing Rehman?

REHMAN

I lied to you about the marks on Umar's chest.

Shahid approaches the desk.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

SHAHID

I already knew that.

REHMAN

How?

SHAHID

You're my brother, I know you better than any man alive. So what is it?

REHMAN

Black magic...

Shahid is motionless. He looks at the picture of the circle along with the other books.

SHAHID

Where did you get all this?

REHMAN

Let's just say I decided to do some research after what happened to us all those years ago.

SHAHID

You mean the woman in red actually did practice black magic?

REHMAN

She was a real witch.

SHAHID

And we killed her...

REHMAN

Or maybe we didn't kill her... Maybe she is still alive...

SHAHID

I think I need to sit down I-I...

Shahid loses his balance and collapses into one of the chairs opposite the desk.

REHMAN

Do you want a drink?

SHAHID

Sure.

Rehman gets up and fixes Shahid a drink. Shahid sits down and studies the symbol. Rehman comes back with a drink.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

They both sit opposite each other at the desk and take a sip of their whiskies.

REHMAN

The woman who owned the land; she had a large corn field.

SHAHID

You burned it to the ground.

REHMAN

And then purchased the land.

Shahid realises a shocking discovery.

SHAHID

Oh my god, where exactly did you build the house?

REHMAN

On the land we took from her.

SHAHID

Are you crazy Rehman?

REHMAN

It was the best place for a new project.

SHAHID

And Umar?

REHMAN

It was no accident. He was murdered by the witch.

SHAHID

But she is dead, we killed her.

Rehman points to the circle symbol.

REHMAN

This circle, it is called 'The Devil's Circle'. It is used in black magic to break living souls. It draws power from only the darkest sins and channels that power into the living world.

SHAHID

Rehman, you are losing me. Are you saying that she is still alive?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

REHMAN

I never believed any of the village talk. But there were people saying that she was a witch. And she used her corn to spread her black magic. She was not alone; she had a daughter.

SHAHID

You never told me about a daughter.

REHMAN

They both deserved to die for what they did. That bitch killed your wife to protect her satanic rituals.

SHAHID

We never knew that for sure.

REHMAN

She was a witch god damn it! And she killed Yasmeena!

Rehman has a few large mouthfuls of whisky. He pauses for a moment.

REHMAN

When we were building the house the workmen said that they heard voices. I dismissed it as village superstition, but now I...

SHAHID

Oh my god, it all makes sense now.

He grabs his phone and dials up Safia's mobile. There is no signal. He tries the landline at the guesthouse. Again there is no signal.

SHAHID

We have to go back up there.

REHMAN

But the weather is so bad...

SHAHID

It can't wait. I have to leave now.

He heads for the door.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

REHMAN

Wait!

Shahid turns around.

REHMAN

I am driving. My children are up there too!

EXT. REHMAN'S HOUSE - TEN MINUTES LATER

Rehman and Shahid head for one of the cars. All of a sudden a leopard appears and blocks their route.

SHAHID

Don't move Rehman!

Rehman freezes. The leopard stares at them both.

SHAHID

There is no doubt any more, this is black magic.

He takes a knife out from a case on his side and moves a few steps to his right. The leopard notices him.

SHAHID

I want you to get to the children.

REHMAN

Shahid, no!

SHAHID

Do as I say!

Shahid runs to his right. The leopard follows him and pounces.

SHAHID

Save the children!

Rehman runs for the car and watches in horror as his brother desperately tries to fight off the leopard. As he starts the car he can see Shahid falling.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

The mist is still very thick and the temperature now begins to drop. Yawar emerges from the house, wearing a jacket, and starts to collect some fire wood. All of a sudden he hears a GUNSHOT. He drops the wood in his hands and goes to investigate.

The Devil's Circle

EXT. GUESTHOUSE, BACK PORCH

Yawar finds Mumtaz standing over the dead body of Karim and a leopard. He is only about ten metres from the house.

YAWAR
(To Mumtaz in Urdu)
My God...

MUMTAZ
I found it eating him sir.

The gunshot has alerted the others. Aamer and Zain come outside.

AAMER
My God!

ZAIN
Is he dead?

AAMER
A leopard, this close to the house?

ZAIN
(To Yawar)
Thought you said that they don't
come this close.

YAWAR
They don't. But as long as we stay
inside we should be fine.

ZAIN
Should be fine? That isn't good
enough for me. I want to get the
fuck out of here Yawar.

YAWAR
We can't Zain. The mist is too thick
and with leopards about the best
place is the house. We have no
choice.

ZAIN
Like hell we don't.

AAMER
He's right Zain, we are stuck.

ZAIN
Fuck you both!

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

Zain makes his way to the cars. Aamer follows him. Yawar is left with Mumtaz.

YAWAR

(In Urdu)

Mumtaz, you and Rafiq stay in the house tonight.

MUMTAZ

Don't be silly sir; this is no problem for us. We will shoot them on sight.

YAWAR

Whatever suits you best my friend. Take care.

Yawar goes to get Aamer and Zain. Mumtaz is left alone with the dead leopard. Rafiq comes to join him.

RAFIQ

(In Urdu)

This is not a good sign.

MUMTAZ

(In Urdu)

What?

RAFIQ

Leopards never come this close. This is not natural.

MUMTAZ

Here we go again...

RAFIQ

I am telling you, this is black magic.

MUMTAZ

Look, just help me bury Karim okay. You can enlighten later.

Both of them pick up the body and remove it from the porch area.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE DRIVE

Zain tries to open the doors of the cars. They are all locked. Aamer tries to calm him down.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

I want out of here now!

AAMER

We can't leave Jaffar.

ZAIN

Forget him.

Yawar arrives.

YAWAR

I never ditch my family.

ZAIN

You stay then and give me the keys!

YAWAR

You'll never make it down alone.

AAMER

Zain please, I know this is all
fucked up but we can't do anything.

ZAIN

That guard was fucking killed!

Suddenly a leopard approaches them. Yawar takes his
revolver out. Another leopard appears.

YAWAR

Head back to the house NOW!

Aamer and Zain run back to the house. Yawar fires a few
rounds. The leopards disperse. He runs back to the house.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone is sitting in the main room except for Jaffar. A
small fire has been lit using whatever logs Yawar was able
to find. The electricity is still off. Candles and portable
lights form the only light source.

Yawar is walking around with a torch making sure that all
windows and doors are locked. Zain is smoking heavily and
looks nervous. Aamer holds Safia tightly. Iman seems the
calmest, as usual.

IMAN

So let me get this straight; one of
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN (CONT'D)

the guards is dead, there are leopards about and we have no fucking electricity or phone reception.

There is silence.

IMAN

Come on people, might as well spell it out.

YAWAR

Iman, just keep calm okay?

IMAN

And what is your solution to our situation?

YAWAR

I am working on it.

IMAN

Take your time...

HINA

Iman, why don't you go and smoke a joint?

IMAN

I've run out...

HINA

Too bad, you're better stoned.

IMAN

You're better with a dick in your mouth.

Hina takes serious offence. Zain chuckles to himself.

ZAIN

(Quietly to himself)

That was harsh...

HINA

(To Iman)

What did you say?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

You suddenly turned deaf now?

HINA

A slap across the face will shut that mouth of yours.

YAWAR

(Interrupting)

Girls, can you cut it out now please?

HINA

Not until she apologises!

ZAIN

You started with the low blows.

HINA

Shut up Zain!

AAMER

Everybody calm down okay!

All of a sudden there is a strange smell in the room.

IMAN

Shit, what the hell is that smell?

ZAIN

It smells like sewage!

SAFIA

Like death...

Everyone holds their noses. Hina covers her face with a cushion. Suddenly all the candles go out together at the same time.

ZAIN

What the hell was that?

AAMER

At the same time!

Yawar is speechless. The fire dims and turns a peculiar yellow. Everybody is now panicking. They hold onto to each other. Yawar's eyes are transfixed on the flames.

The fire begins to brighten and dim as if in rhythm with a heartbeat. A faint whisper starts to emanate from it. A girl's voice:

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

GIRL

(In Urdu)

A mother's love...

Then a shadowy figure of a woman starts to emerge from the light of the fire. She points her finger at Safia.

All of a sudden, Yawar, Hina, Iman and Safia are covered by drops of blood. It is on their hands and their faces. Iman starts to scream. Aamer and Zain start panicking and try to wipe the blood but it will not go away.

Hina starts laughing hysterically and covers her face with the blood. Zain cannot believe what is happening.

ZAIN

Hina! What the hell has gotten into you?

Yawar is caught in some kind of trance as the panic spreads around him. Safia too remains motionless.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

The mist clears and there is suddenly a heavy downpour and the sound of thunder. Through the darkness a leopard makes its way into the house.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The leopard makes its way upstairs.

INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Jaffar is having another nightmare. He seems to be physically struggling to wake himself up. The leopard enters his room. Soon the struggling eases up and he becomes calmer. The tension on his face vanishes. The leopard disappears into Jaffar's body.

Jaffar opens his eyes. They are glowing the same peculiar yellow as the fire. Jaffar smiles and then starts to laugh. It is a wicked laugh. Soon it becomes uncontrollable.

The ceiling of the room starts to bleed.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

The mist has cleared and the weather is quite calm. The sun

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

even seems to come through the light cloud cover. Yawar emerges out of the front door. He lights a cigarette. The sound of everyone rummaging about and collecting their things can be heard from inside.

INT. GUESTHOUSE - MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

Everybody has gathered their things and put them near the main door. Iman is visibly the most shaken out of everybody. Aamer goes to help her.

AAMER

You okay?

IMAN

Fine the second we get the fuck out of here.

AAMER

What happened yesterday?

IMAN

I saw blood all over me. It was real damn it! And that woman, you saw her didn't you?

AAMER

Yes.

IMAN

What the hell is going on Aamer?

AAMER

I have no idea.

IMAN

We have to get out of here now!

Yawar comes in.

YAWAR

Already onto it Iman.

AAMER

Thank God for that!

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

Yawar calls out to the guards.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

YAWAR
RAFIQ! MUMTAZ!

Both of them come to the front-door.

RAFIQ AND MUMTAZ
(Together)
Yes sir?

YAWAR
Take all of the stuff to the cars.
We are getting out of here.

RAFIQ
Very good sir.

Both of them head into the house to collect all the bags. They emerge very quickly with a handful of stuff to take to the cars. Yawar lights up another cigarette. Zain comes to join him.

ZAIN
I saw your face. You know whose voice that was.

YAWAR
Just cut it out Zain.

ZAIN
No, you know who that was.

YAWAR
I said just leave it okay.

ZAIN
Who is she?

At that moment Aamer emerges from the house.

AAMER
What the hell is going on?

ZAIN
He knows who that woman was.

AAMER
Is that true?

YAWAR
No comment.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

Zain is visibly more tense and agitated. He is finding it difficult to control himself.

ZAIN

Listen here pal; I have had enough of this elusive shit. If you know what's going on you better come clean because I am tired of this shit.

YAWAR

Take it easy Zain.

Zain edges closer and starts to invade Yawar's space.

ZAIN

Who is she? What does she want? Tell me!

YAWAR

Zain, I_

Zain loses control and lashes out at Yawar. He hits him across the face. Yawar instantly grabs Zain and twists his arm behind him. Zain struggles to break free. Amer tries to separate them.

AAMER

Easy guys! Break it up, break it up!

At that exact moment they hear Rafiq shouting.

RAFIQ

(Off shot)

YAWAR SAAB!

A few seconds later they all see him running towards them.

RAFIQ

(In a panic)

Sir, the cars, the cars have been vandalised.

Yawar lets go of Zain.

YAWAR

What are you talking about Rafiq?

RAFIQ

Sir come and see, sir come and see.

The Devil's Circle

EXT. DRIVEWAY - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Rafiq leads Yawar, Aamer, Zain and Iman to the cars. Mumtaz is standing in front of the cars; the bags he was carrying have been dropped by his sides. His face is frozen, as if gripped by shock.

AAMER

My God...

A closer look at the cars reveals that all their tyres have been slashed. Deep scratch marks cover the sides and there are some large dents on the bonnets.

RAFIQ

She came in the mist, we couldn't see her.

ZAIN

(Interrupting)

What the fuck are they saying?

MUMTAZ

She is here sir; the witch of the mountain is here.

YAWAR

Come on Mumtaz, you don't believe in that stuff.

MUMTAZ

But I can now see it sir.

ZAIN

(Interrupting again)

Tell me what they are saying.

AAMER

Zain, just cool it.

ZAIN

No, I won't. We are fucked man. What the fuck are we going to do now?

AAMER

Keep it together.

ZAIN

Fuck keeping it together.

YAWAR

Look, this is all just a group of vandals.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

You don't seriously believe that do you?

YAWAR

Look at this moment my main concern is to get us out of here. I need you all to stay fucking calm.

He pauses and takes a deep breath.

YAWAR

(To Rafiq in Urdu)

Rafiq, you pull yourself together and go and find some help.

Rafiq is shaking. Yawar grabs him.

YAWAR

Do you hear me, wake up! Go and get some help.

RAFIQ

Y-y-yes sir, of course sir.

YAWAR

Head for the hotel.

Rafiq gathers himself together and leaves. Yawar grabs Mumtaz.

YAWAR

Mumtaz, take all the stuff back to the house.

Mumtaz nods and starts taking the bags back. Yawar addresses the others.

YAWAR

Everyone head back to the house.

ZAIN

Fuck that shit! Let's go to the hotel too.

YAWAR

Are you insane? You saw the leopards before. God knows how many there are out there.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

AAMER

Besides we can't leave Jaffar.

ZAIN

Let Safia take care of him.

AAMER

Come on Zain, let's head back inside.

Aamer tries to put his hand over Zain's shoulder but he moves away.

All of them reluctantly head back to the house. As they get closer to the house, Safia comes out of the front door, looking distressed. Aamer runs to her.

SAFIA

Jaffar is up and about.

AAMER

What?

SAFIA

He just got up and went to the back.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE PORCH - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Yawar and the others make their way to the back. Only Hina is missing. Jaffar is chopping wood. He looks surprisingly strong and is doing a great job, completely ignoring all of them.

ZAIN

Talk about a quick recovery.

Jaffar ignores him. Then they notice that he has his headphones on.

SAFIA

JAFFAR!

Safia pulls off Jaffar's headphones.

JAFFAR

Sorry chaps did not see you there.

YAWAR

How are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

JAFFAR

Couldn't be better bro.

ZAIN

One minute you are dying in bed now
you are up and about?

JAFFAR

Look, I am busy. Do you guys mind?

YAWAR

We don't need any wood.

JAFFAR

I'm not doing this to get wood. I am
just practicing...

SAFIA

Jaffar, you're not making much
sense.

He sticks his headphones on and continues to chop wood.
Safia looks concerned; Jaffar is acting strange.

YAWAR

Its okay Safia, leave him be.

Everyone heads into the house. As they do so the wind
starts to pick up. Jaffar is impervious to it.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD

The wind picks up very suddenly. A tree falls onto the
road. A passing car narrowly avoids it.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

Yawar stands in front of the television. Aamer, Zain and
Iman are sitting around him. He takes out a pack of
cigarettes.

AAMER

Can I have one?

ZAIN

Me too.

Yawar takes a cigarette for himself and then tosses the
pack to them. He lights up.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

Sorry about before.

YAWAR

It's in the past. Where are Hina and Safia?

AAMER

Safia is asleep.

ZAIN

Hina has been in her room for ages.

YAWAR

Anyway, forget them.

He takes a few tugs of his cigarette.

YAWAR

I haven't been totally honest with you guys.

ZAIN

I knew it!

YAWAR

Take it easy tiger.

He takes a few drags of his cigarette.

YAWAR

When we built this house, the workers said that they heard voices.

IMAN

Rehman Uncle knew about it?

YAWAR

He dismissed it as superstitious nonsense.

ZAIN

So you brought us up here knowing this stuff? You bastard!

AAMER

Are you saying that the Imam might have been killed?

YAWAR

Maybe it was a coincidence.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

ZAIN

What about the woman?

YAWAR

That I can't explain.

IMAN

She pointed at Safia.

AAMER

Yawar, with all that has happened to us, to the house and to Jaffar, you'd think that maybe it means something more than coincidence.

IMAN

Maybe she's a ghost.

ZAIN

Who?

IMAN

The girl I saw. She could be someone who died here.

ZAIN

I say we leg it.

YAWAR

The wind is picking up. We don't have any cars. But we have guns. We stay for one more night. By then Rafiq will be here with some cars to get us out of here.

ZAIN

I don't know who is more crazy, you or Jaffar.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE PORCH - SAME TIME

Jaffar is still chopping wood. The wind has become very strong. He almost seems in a trance as he continues to chop, increasing his intensity and now breaking a sweat.

All of a sudden the wind stops. Jaffar pauses for a moment. It is almost like he is dreaming again. He hears a whisper.

Jaffar turns towards the voice. He sees a beautiful woman wearing red standing in the nearby forest. Jaffar blinks his eyes. Now she is closer. He rubs his eyes. Now she is

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

right next to him. Her hair is a fiery orange, her eyes are black.

WOMAN

(In Urdu)

My poor sweet Jaffar.

She carcasses his face.

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

Iman can hear whispering in the background. She looks out of the window towards Jaffar. She sees him continuing to chop wood. The whispering continues but she cannot find where it is coming from.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE PORCH - SAME TIME

Jaffar is still locked in his trance like state, clearly unknown to Iman. The woman in red looks into his eyes.

WOMAN

(In Urdu)

You were sick my sweetheart. But now you are better. I know that you have been hurting for many years.

Jaffar's eyes start to fill with tears. The woman smiles.

WOMAN

You can be with your mother again.

Jaffar's eyes focus.

WOMAN

All you have to do is one thing for me. Kill them, kill Rehman's children!

The woman vanishes. Jaffar finds himself chopping wood once again. The weather has now become even worse.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - SAME TIME

Rafiq is totally lost. Somehow he is in the middle of nowhere. He walks further down the winding path. Before him stands the woman in red.

He turns to another direction. Again she appears. He panics and tries to shoot her. Nothing happens. He starts running. He falls to the ground. The woman is upon him. He screams. She slashes him with her nails.

The Devil's Circle

INT. GUESTHOUSE, MAIN ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Yawar, Aamer, Zain and Iman are gathered together in the main room. Zain is holding a cricket bat like a sword. He is on edge.

YAWAR

There is more to the legend of this witch. Her name is Zulzalaar.

ZAIN

(Interrupting)
Here we go again!

YAWAR

Please be quiet Zain. Anyway, it is all just village hearsay. People talk of a woman who roams these mountains. Twenty years ago she was almost killed in a fire. But the Devil saved her soul.

AAMER

How?

IMAN

It must be the forest. Everything here seems to be acting against us.

AAMER

What do you mean?

IMAN

What if there is a connection?

ZAIN

Like what?

IMAN

I don't know, like maybe the witch's power is in the forest?

AAMER

And we have been using wood from the trees for the fire.

ZAIN

Yawar, we should get out of here.

YAWAR

We could walk down the mountain path. It would be dangerous but...

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

AAMER

Staying here could be even more dangerous.

YAWAR

You're right, we leave at first light.

IMAN

Thank god!

Hina suddenly comes in.

HINA

Zain, want to join me for a shower?

Zain looks lost.

ZAIN

A shower?

IMAN

What's with your hair?

Hina heads for her room. Zain gets up.

IMAN

Zain be careful!

Zain raises his bat in the air and goes to Hina's room. Yawar takes out his gun.

YAWAR

Everybody do what you've got to do. We leave at sunrise.

INT. SAFIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Safia is fast asleep and dreaming.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - NIGHT

It is a calm clear night. Mumtaz nervously patrols the perimeter. He hears a few sounds coming from the nearby woodland. Every little noise makes him jump.

Some rummaging in the bushes by the porch catches his attention. He approaches with caution, gun at the ready. It is nothing more than large frog. Mumtaz smiles and chuckles to himself; what an idiot he is.

All of sudden he is struck from behind by an axe.

The Devil's Circle

INT. SAFIA'S ROOM

Safia opens her eyes.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

The blow kills Mumtaz instantly. Jaffar stands over the body. His eyes are wide open, his mouth bears a sinister grin. He heads back to the house.

INT. HINA'S BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Hina is taking a shower. She takes a few deep breaths and holds her hands out against the wall. The steam from the water has filled the bathroom.

A hand appears on the other side of the shower door.

Suddenly the water turns to blood and the floor is covered with burnt leaves. She does not seem to mind; in fact it makes her happy. She covers her body in the blood.

The hand wipes away some of the condensation to reveal a girl dressed in red, her eyes glowing yellow. Hina puts her hand in line with hers on the other side of the shower door.

The girl vanishes. Hina smiles and continues to wash herself with the blood which is now slowly turning back to water. Soon everything has returned to normal.

INT. HINA'S BEDROOM

Zain is pacing back and forth waiting for Hina to come out. He still has his cricket bat for protection.

ZAIN

Hina, we need to have a talk. You've been acting real strange. I don't think you are yourself anymore.

She does not respond. All of a sudden he notices one of the curtains is moving.

He gets up and draws his bat ready. Approaching the curtain he pulls it aside to reveal Jaffar. His eyes glowing yellow, axe in hand.

He charges Zain who barely has time to defend himself. He manages to parry the axe with the cricket bat. Jaffar is

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

physically very strong but Zain is very quick. He is able to dodge Jaffar's strikes.

Unseen by Zain, Hina emerges from the bathroom with a pair of scissors in her hand. She stabs Zain in back. He falls to the ground. Hina looks at Jaffar, her eyes glowing yellow. Jaffar smiles at her.

INT. YAWAR'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Iman is lying in bed. Yawar sits at the desk, his gun within arms reach.

IMAN
(Whispering)
She is coming for us. Be ready.

YAWAR
Are you stoned again?

IMAN
(Whispering)
Not at all.

Yawar hears some creaking in the floorboards in the main hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Jaffar walks slowly towards Safia room.

INT. SAFIA ROOM - SAME TIME

Safia is showing Aamer what she has been drawing for the past few days: a series of sketches and paintings depicting two figures in red; a young girl and a woman. Both of them bear strong resemblances to the people they have all seen.

AAMER
Just as I thought, it's the same woman. Zulzalaar!

SAFIA
They were a family who lived on the land before us.

AAMER
And this girl must be the girl Iman has been seeing.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

SAFIA

She died in the fire.

The door suddenly flings open. Jaffar walks in, covered in blood, still holding the axe, his eyes are glowing bright yellow. Aamer and Safia freeze at the shock of seeing him.

Jaffar tries to slash him but Aamer is quick and able to dodge him.

Aamer manages to grab the handle of the axe but Jaffar is too strong for him. He flings him across the room. Aamer smashes into the glass door leading onto the balcony. It shatters.

Jaffar closes in to finish Aamer off. But the impact reveals Aamer's amulet. Jaffar is powerless to move any closer. He turns to his sister. She is motionless.

SAFIA

A mothers love...

Jaffar stands in front of her, axe by his side. His face is completely emotionless but his eyes are still bright yellow.

SAFIA

...is never ending.

She reaches out and holds Jaffar's hand.

SAFIA

Don't do this Jaffar. You won't see her again even if you kill everyone.

JAFFAR

He killed my mother, now I am going to kill all his children.

AAMER

Jaffar, what the hell has happened to you?

SAFIA

It's all lies Jaffar!

JAFFAR

It's the truth!

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

YAWAR

(O.S)

Jaffar!

Jaffar turns to the door to see Yawar taking aim with his revolver. Yawar closes in. Jaffar moves towards the balcony.

Aamer holds Safia in his arms. Safia reaches for Aamer's amulet and touches it. He looks down at it.

SAFIA

(Whispering)

This will keep you safe...

Aamer grabs her hand and hold it tightly.

AAMER

Safia, what's happening to you?

SAFIA

I love you Aamer...

I have always loved you...

Her eyes roll back. She is falls unconscious. Aamer holds her tightly. Yawar still has Jaffar at gunpoint. Jaffar starts to laugh.

YAWAR

Jaffar, what the hell is going on?

JAFFAR

Come on cousin, deep down you know the truth.

Yawar looks confused; sweat starts to drip from his forehead and he tries to keep the gun on Jaffar.

JAFFAR

If only your father was a good man.

AAMER

What have you done to Safia?

JAFFAR

Me? I did nothing. You should look at yourself mate.

Jaffar tries to head for the balcony.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

YAWAR

Don't move...

JAFFAR

You can't kill me Yawar. We're family.

A strong breeze builds up through the house. Doors start opening and closing at will. Yawar struggles to keep the gun aimed at Jaffar.

A woman enters through the balcony window, dressed in red. She is quite young, in her thirties. She hovers slightly off the ground. Her face is partly covered by fiery orange hair. Her feet are twisted backwards. She tilts her head and smiles. Her eyes are black. It is Zulzalaar.

YAWAR

I remember now...

AAMER

Remember what?

JAFFAR

Tell him cousin...

YAWAR

Jaffar, I_

JAFFAR

Tell him!

Yawar turns and recalls the past.

FLASHBACK SCENES:

EXT. OPEN WOODLAND, NATHIAGALLI - 20 YEARS AGO

We see a young Shahid and Rehman surveying their land. A young Yawar, only seven years old is walking with them.

YAWAR

(V.O)

I remember my father and Shahid Uncle trying to buy the land.

REHMAN

(Low voice)

I'm telling you this place is going to pick up in the next twenty years.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

SHAHID

(Low voice)

What about Zulzalaar?

REHMAN

I'm sure we can convince her.

INT. ZULZALAAR'S HOUSE

Zulzalaar, a beautiful woman wearing red is talking with Shahid and Rehman. A girl plays in the background. The discussion becomes heated. Zulzalaar points to the brothers and tells them both to leave.

YAWAR

(V.O)

There was a woman and a girl. They had a large plot which they refused to sell. The woman threatened to curse the family.

INT. SHAHID AND REHMAN'S HOUSE, NATHIAGALLI

Rehman and Shahid are arguing. Their wives, SOFIE and YASMEENA are also there. A young Yawar is secretly listening in the background.

YAWAR

(V.O)

My father was furious. He had lost it. He threatened to kill the woman and child.

EXT. WOODLAND

Rehman is having an argument with Yasmeena. It becomes very heated and she runs away from him. He follows her. Yawar is very frightened and runs back to the house.

YAWAR

(V.O)

I saw my father and Yasmeena aunty arguing. I couldn't hear what it was about. She looked afraid.

INT. SHAHID AND REHMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rehman brings Yasmeena to the house. She is dead. Shahid breaks down.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

YAWAR

(V.O)

My father brought her to the house.
He said that she had fallen. They
thought it was black magic.

EXT. ZULZALAAR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rehman covers the house in gasoline and sets it on fire.

YAWAR

(V.O)

They took revenge...

EXT. CORN FIELDS

Rehman takes same gasoline and sets fire to the fields. He
leaves.

END OF FLASHBACKS:

INT. SAFIA'S ROOM - PRESENT

Zulzalaar opens her hands. A group of wasps fly from both
of them. The wasps encircle Yawar. Soon he is covered by a
cloud of wasps. Jaffar takes the opportunity to jump
through the balcony window. Yawar tries to shoot him but it
is too late. The wasps disappear.

Yawar looks at the broken balcony window and then at Aamer
and Safia.

YAWAR

Are you alright?

AAMER

Forget me, what is wrong with her?

YAWAR

It's a spell; she is being taken
slowly by her.

AAMER

What? By whom?

YAWAR

The witch...

The Devil's Circle

EXT. BALCONY

Yawar heads out onto the balcony and looks down. Jaffar is lying on the ground, apparently unconscious or perhaps dead.

INT, SAFIA ROOM

Yawar comes back in.

YAWAR

I should go and check him.

AAMER

They killed her and her daughter just to get the land?

YAWAR

No, because she killed Shahid uncle's wife.

AAMER

But they didn't have proof.

YAWAR

My father saw her jump from a cliff. He said that she had gone crazy, saying that she saw blood all over her body.

AAMER

You saw them?

YAWAR

Yes but not all of it. I remember seeing him run after her and bringing her body back.

AAMER

And the woman in red, she is the same one from back then?

YAWAR

Yes. She is Zulzalaar, the same witch they burned years ago.

AAMER

Jaffar...

YAWAR

He has become possessed by her. But the thing I do not understand is
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

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YAWAR (CONT'D)

that the only way that she could do that was if she was drawing power from a terrible sin committed on this land. A sin committed by someone other than her..

AAMER

Her and her daughter were killed here, surely that's enough of a sin to draw on.

YAWAR

But why would she have gone so far as to kill Yasmeena? It doesn't fit...

Yawar walks back and forth.

YAWAR

I saw something in those scratch marks upstairs. It looked like blood..

AAMER

What does that mean?

YAWAR

I don't know, but if Safia does not look too great and Hina has been acting strange...

Aamer looks at his amulet.

AAMER

This keeps me safe... That's why I have not been affected by the magic.

YAWAR

She must have used the corn to spread the magic. But you were unaffected. Hmmm...And I didn't eat any, neither did Iman.

AAMER

A mothers love...

YAWAR

What?

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

AAMER

My mother gave me this.

The sound of a car can be heard outside. Aamer turns to look out of the balcony window. It is Rehman.

INT. CAR

Rehman sees the sabotaged cars. Then he sees Jaffar's body.

REHMAN

Jaffar?

INT. SAFIA ROOM BALCONY

Yawar sees both of them making their way towards Jaffar.

YAWAR

Father! Be careful.

REHMAN

Yawar, what the hell is going on?

YAWAR

It's the witch!

Rehman looks terrified.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - SAME TIME

Rehman approaches Jaffar's body.

INT. SAFIA ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Aamer tries to get Safia to move.

AAMER

Safia! We have to get out of here!

She is still lost in a trance.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE

Rehman turns Jaffar over. All of a sudden he opens his eyes and takes out a Swiss Army Knife from his side pocket. He slashes at Rehman's leg, causing him to fall to the ground. Rehman screams. Jaffar rises to his feet.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

JAFFAR

So, you have come to pay for your
sins!

He charges Rehman. The two of them become locked in battle.

INT. SAFIA ROOM

Aamer takes Jaffar's axe and then struggles to get Safia
out of the room.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE

Rehman continues to fight off Jaffar. Hina comes out to
join them.

REHMAN

Hina?

HINA

Not anymore!

REHMAN

It-it can't be...

HINA

Recognise my voice Rehman?

REHMAN

You're dead! We killed you!

HINA

Soon you shall join Yasmeena, like
you always wanted.

Hina goes back into the house. Jaffar attacks Rehman.

INT. HALLWAY

Aamer has managed get Safia out of the bedroom but she is
still lost in her own world.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE, BACK PORCH

Aamer and Safia make it out of the house.

AAMER

I have to go back for Zain and the
others.

Safia says nothing. Aamer notices the dead body of Mumtaz
and grabs his gun.

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INT. JAFFAR'S ROOM

Yawar enters.

YAWAR

Iman?

He sees Iman sitting with a girl dressed in red. A single candle lights the room. The girl looks at him.

GIRL

(In Urdu)

Leave us alone, we are playing.

YAWAR

Iman!

All of a sudden he is stabbed in the back by Hina. She is covered in blood and has a pair of scissors in her hands. Yawar drops the gun and turns to face her. She tries to stab him again but he holds her arms. The girl starts laughing.

HINA

Your father must pay for what he did.

YAWAR

Hina, snap out of it!

Yawar's strength starts to ebb away. Hina is gaining the advantage. She holds the scissors above his chest, inches away from making contact.

All of a sudden Zain appears. He is holding Yawar's gun. Hina turns to face him. He shoots her and then collapses to the ground. The girl vanishes. Yawar rushes to help him.

He turns to Iman. She has snapped out of her trance.

IMAN

Yawar?

YAWAR

Iman, we have to get out of here now!

IMAN

It's the wood, it's the red wood, it is cursed. It bleeds with her child's blood. We must destroy the house. Now!

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

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Iman grabs the candle and throws it onto the bed, setting it alight. The fire spreads quickly.

Aamer appears. He helps everyone gather themselves together. In a chaos he drops the guard's rifle. The room burns.

EXT. FRONT OF THE HOUSE

Jaffar and Rehman are still locked in battle. Rehman has a branch in his hand to try to parry the knife.

JAFFAR

You killed her you bastard!

REHMAN

Jaffar, I-I...

JAFFAR

You killed her and blamed it on Zulzalaar.

REHMAN

I-I loved her.

JAFFAR

Now all of your children will suffer the consequences.

He stabs Rehman. Rehman falls back. He continues to stab him.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE PORCH

Aamer and the others emerge from the house. Suddenly Hina appears, her face badly burnt.

Zain turns to fight her but she is physically much stronger than him. Yawar runs towards her but he is very weak.

Aamer runs to help both of them. His amulet protects him from Hina's attacks but he cannot stop her from hurting his brother and Yawar. Hina goes after Yawar and starts to mark his chest with a circle.

Zain takes aim with the revolver. He fires twice. The bullets go right through Hina but she does not die. One of them strikes a piece of red wood.

Iman looks at the wood; it is bleeding. She suddenly realises something.

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

CONTINUED ()

IMAN

Aamer! Look for the red tree!

Aamer runs heads for the trees. Hina chases him. Yawar goes back inside.

INT. MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

Yawar spills vodka and whisky all over the furniture. He is about to set the place on fire when Jaffar suddenly appears and tries to stop him.

JAFFAR

You must pay for your family's sin.

YAWAR

I don't answer for my father's sins.

Yawar strikes Jaffar across the face and then throws him across the room. He then sets the alcohol on fire. Soon the room is consumed by flames. Yawar runs out of the house.

EXT. NEARBY WOODLAND

Aamer has made it to the red tree. He strikes it with his axe. Hina appears and stabs him with her scissors but Iman arrives on the scene and fights off her sister. They become locked in an intense stand-off.

Aamer becomes dizzy. The forest around him becomes very bright. Zulzalaar appears before him.

ZULZALAAR

Aamer!

Aamer looks at her.

ZULZALAAR

(In Urdu)

Have mercy on me. I did not kill Safia's mother. My daughter did not deserve to die.

Aamer pauses for a moment.

AAMER

Two wrongs don't make a right.

He strikes the tree. Zulzalaar's wrists rip open and blood gushes out. At the same time suddenly Hina loses her

(CONTINUED)

The Devil's Circle

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strength and Iman is able to stab her with the scissors, tears in her eyes as she does so.

Zulzalaar falls onto her back. Her blood starts to seep into the ground. Soon she is dead. Her body becomes clay and starts to break into several pieces.

Aamer is now completely exhausted. He has lost a lot of blood. He limps towards Zain and the others. He looks at Safia and Iman. Both of them are returning to normal. Aamer goes to Safia.

SAFIA

Aamer...
What happened?

Aamer has tears in his eyes. He collapses to the ground and holds Safia. Iman is in tears.

IMAN

That tree was filled with Zulzalaar's life force. She had chosen this tree to harness the power of the mountain after her daughter was killed. By using witchcraft on nature her very life force began to enter the very core of the land, hence the appearance of blood in the wood. Without the tree she can't exist.

Yawar is standing alone leaning against a tree.

YAWAR

Where's Jaffar?

All of a sudden Jaffar appears from behind one of the trees, his skin badly burnt and he is quite weak. He stabs Yawar in the chest. He then turns to face the others. Zain tries to use the revolver but it is empty.

IMAN

Jaffar!

Jaffar turns to face Iman.

IMAN

It is time.

Iman, with tears still flowing down her face, rushes towards Jaffar and forces him off the side of the cliff. They both fall to their death.

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CONTINUED ()

SAFIA

Iman!

Safia starts to cry. Aamer holds her. Zain breaks down.
Yawar is dead.

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

The sun is rising. Aamer, Zain, and Safia are sitting next to what is left of the guesthouse. Smoke can still be seen coming from the dying fire.

Aamer looks towards the surrounding woodland.

EXT. WOODLAND - 20 YEARS AGO

Rehman chases Yasmeena through the forest.

REHMAN

Yasmeena, you can't run away from
this anymore.

YASMEENA

Rehman, you are crazy.

REHMAN

I am crazy, crazy about you. I have
always wanted you. You know that!

YASMEENA

You are insane.

Rehman catches up with her and holds her against a tree.

REHMAN

Look into my eyes and say you don't
love me.

YASMEENA

I don't love you...

REHMAN

And what about what happened before?

YASMEENA

A mistake...

She struggles to get free. Rehman loses his temper and

(CONTINUED)

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pushes her. She loses her footing and falls forward, tumbling off the cliff face. She is dead.

Rehman holds her dead body in his arms and starts to cry. Suddenly he sees the girl in red in the nearby trees. He runs after her but she has vanished.

ZULZALAAR
(V.O Whispering)
A mother's love...

EXT. GUESTHOUSE - PRESENT

Close up of Safia's stomach. A faint heartbeat can be heard.

ZULZALAAR
(Whispering)
...is never ending...

FADE OUT