

SCENE FOUR*Trisha Sugarek*SAMPLE

(AT RISE: Later that week, at the end of the school day.)

(AAMIR is walking to the room where his chess club meets. HE is carrying the box that holds his chess pieces. TAG, STEVE AND JIMMY are waiting around a corner. As AAMIR walks by THEY jump out and surround AAMIR. TAG knocks the box out of AAMIR's hands and scoops it up.)

AAMIR. *(grabbing for the box)* Hey! That's mine. Give it back.

TAG. Not anymore it ain't.

STEVE. Yeah, it's ours now.

(TAG opens the box, all the time avoiding AAMIR's attempts to get it back. TAG pulls out a very beautiful, wood carved chess piece.)

AAMIR. Don't touch those.

STEVE. Who's gonna stop us?

TAG. Hey, guys, look at the little statue. What does the Bible say about graven images? You worship graven images back in the jungles where you come from, four-eyes?

AAMIR. Those are chess pieces, Taggart. *Not* graven images. Now give them back!

TAG. Why should I?

STEVE. Yeah, why should he?

JIMMY. Come on, Tag, give 'em back. We're gonna be late for practice.

TAG. Shut up, Jimmy. *(To Aamir.)* So what's the deal? Is this where you hide the explosives? Let's crack one open and see.

STEVE. Yeah.

AAMIR. NO! My father gave me that chess set.

(It is AAMIR's prize possession. Suddenly, AAMIR makes a grab for the box and inadvertently strikes TAG in the chest.

EVERYONE is absolutely still for a beat.

TAG tosses the box to STEVE and rushes AAMIR.)

TAG. Did you just hit me, ya little faggot? bv

(TAG begins to strike AAMIR in the face and body. AAMIR tries to cover HIS face and finally falls to the ground and curls up. As TAG hits AAMIR....)

TAG. Huh? You want to fight me?? You got it, ya little douche-bag! *(hit)* Gook! *(hit)* Slant-eyes! *(hit)* You don't belong here. America is for Americans!

(TAG doesn't appear to be able to stop hitting. JIMMY pulls HIM off of AAMIR.)

JIMMY. Tag! That's enough. Cut it out! We're gonna get into trouble. Come on, stop!

(JIMMY pulls TAG away. AAMIR stays on the ground. TAG straightens HIS clothes and swaggers over to STEVE. HE takes the box from STEVE and throws it down on top of AAMIR. Chess pieces scatter everywhere.)

TAG. Come on, guys, let's get outta here. I gotta wash my hands after touching this faggot.

(TAG and STEVE saunter off, laughing together as THEY exit. JIMMY has stayed behind. Slowly, JIMMY begins to pick up the chess pieces and puts them back into the box. AAMIR sits up and when HE sees that only JIMMY remains, HE stands. JIMMY hands the box to AAMIR.)

JIMMY. Here, I'm not sure I found them all.

(AAMIR checks the pieces in the box.)

AAMIR. There's two missing.

(The BOYS look around and each find one of the missing pieces. JIMMY hands the piece he found to AAMIR.)

AAMIR. Thanks.

JIMMY. 'welcome. *(beat)* Your cheek is bleeding.

(AAMIR takes out a white handkerchief and wipes HIS face.)

Does it hurt?

AAMIR. Not too much. But my ribs hurt like the devil.

(JIMMY laughs nervously. And after a moment, AAMIR joins in.)

AAMIR. *(holding his side)* Oww! Laughing hurts.

JIMMY. Look. I'm sorry, okay? This got way out of hand.

AAMIR. Yeah.

JIMMY. We were just horsing around on the computer, teasing guys, not just you. Then, well, Tag....I don't know....he kinda got all focused on you for some reason. *(beat)* I'm sorry you got beat up. I had no idea it was going to go this far.

AAMIR. I'm not a terrorist.