

L.I.F.E (LOVE ISN'T FOR EVERYONE)

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INT. KENT STATE DORMS - DAY

The piercing sound of an ALARM CLOCK shatters the morning silence. On the bedside dresser, a chaotic collage of posters featuring Jimi Hendrix, Cam'Ron, Jay-Z, and Wu-Tang Clan decorate the walls.

RAMZ SINGH, 18, lies beneath the sheets. His arm shoots out, silencing the noise, and then falls limply at his side.

DRISH HALL, 18, wrapped in a towel with her skin glistening, enters the room.

DRISH
Wake up, Ramz. You've been late the last few weeks. How come you can't ever be on time?

Ramz springs from the bed, scrambling to his closet. He hastily pulls on a pair of jeans and a shirt before darting into the bathroom to brush his teeth.

INT. KENT STATE DORMS - LIVING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Drish is sitting on the couch. Glancing at her phone, she sends a message: "I can't today, it's our anniversary." Ramz enters the room, and Drish nervously shuffles her phone away.

RAMZ
You ready for today, Drish?

DRISH
I am. Just make sure you're on time today! You seem to be distracted with everything but me.

Ramz looks at Drish, sensing something is off.

RAMZ
Everything okay?

DRISH
Yeah, everything is fine...

Ramz, now fully dressed, approaches Drish, searching her eyes for a clue.

RAMZ
You know you can tell me anything, right?

DRISH

I know, Ramz. It's just... It's seeming like ever since classes started you haven't been on the same page as me...

RAMZ

Well, I mean, yeah, I'm just now learning how to navigate school and life. I feel like you expect me to have everything figured out already.

DRISH

I don't expect you to have everything figured out. I just expect you to act like a fucking adult.

Drish forces a smile, but her eyes betray a hidden turmoil.

RAMZ

Oh, shit, I gotta head out!

Ramz grabs his bag, gives Drish a kiss on the cheek, and walks out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

I/E. PARKING LOT - MORNING

Ramz jumps into his car. Throwing his bookbag into the seat next to him, he shoves the key into the ignition, and yanks it. The car sputters for a minute, starts, then it shuts off abruptly.

RAMZ

Fuck!

He attempts it again. The car sputters, but this time it doesn't start.

RAMZ(CONT'D)

Of all the fucking days!

Ramz pulls out his iPhone and begins to send a text message, when an email pops up. The display reads: "Student financial aid has been revoked. Please see office administrator on ground."

SMASH CUT TO:

I/E. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ramz sits in the passenger seat, frustration evident. In the driver's seat sits SAMMIE GREY, 23, with a black and mild hanging out his mouth.

SAMMIE
That piece of shit car finally died
on you, huh?

Ramz watches out the window as the car drives directly past campus and further away from the city.

RAMZ
Yeah, but, uh, you know you just
passed campus right?

SAMMIE
I got you, just gotta make a quick
stop.

Ramz gives Sammie a mean glaring look.

RAMZ
No, man, I need to get to campus as
fast as possible.

SAMMIE
It'll only be a couple seconds. I
gotta grab something from a friend.

RAMZ
Sammie, look. I promise any other
time I wouldn't have a problem with
it, but today I have to get to
class on time.

Sammie glances at Ramz, sensing the urgency.

SAMMIE
You never have a problem being late
any other day. What's so different?

RAMZ
I have to pick partners for this
project. If I'm not on time, he's
going to start assigning people.

The car pulls into a driveway and comes to a stop.

SAMMIE
Are you staying or coming in?

CUT TO:

INT. CELERON SUITES - CONTINUOUS

The duo enters the apartment and are approached by CELINE "CELL" MCGLONE, 26, a light-skinned woman with glasses and pink pigtails, walks up to them, passing a lit joint to Ramz. Their eyes meet, a spark ignites--an unexpected connection.

CELL
You smoke?

RAMZ
Sometimes...

Ramz takes the joint and does a quick in-pull, then quickly passes it to Sammie.

CELL
So, what's up, Sam?

Ramz, intrigued, spots a clothing rack with high-end luxury items and stacks of shoe boxes. He starts observing them with genuine interest.

SAMMIE
I got your money. Could I hold more until Friday?

Cell watches as Ramz effortlessly starts to put together different clothing pieces.

CELL
Yeah, that should be cool. I know you're good for it.

RAMZ (O.S.)
Ayo! Are these the Dior Jordan One collabs?

CELL
Yeah, they are. Have you ever seen them up close?

RAMZ
Nah, never in person. These cost like ten thousand dollars.

Cell pulls out a pair of the sneakers.

CELL
The bottoms are iced out as well. You ever seen something like this in person?

RAMZ
Never. It's actually impressive.

They share a smile, and Cell guides him to a special section where custom-signed clothing articles hang.

Ramz hands the sneakers back to Cell. Their hands touch briefly. Cell puts the sneakers away, her eyes still fixed on Ramz.

SAMMIE
Oh, yeah, Celine, this is my homeboy, Ramz. Ramz, this my homegirl, Celine.

CELL
It's Cell... Why do you call me that?

SAMMIE
You never complained about it before.

CELL
What's going on with you, Sam? What's your problem? Bringing randoms to cop then saying my full government. You're more and more starting to look like a fed to me.

Sammie hands over money, and Cell hands him an ALUMINUM FOIL STRIP, which he admires.

RAM
Trust me, I'm definitely not a fed.

Cell, now standing close to Ramz, glances over the outfits that he's been assembling.

CELL
These are pretty nice. You must be a fashion major.

RAMZ
Yeah, I am. First year. You must be one, too.

CELL
Nah, I'm studying Marine Biology.

Suddenly, the mood shifts as LOUIE BANDO, 19, a sharp contrast to the easy vibe in the room, enters with an air of arrogance and hostility.

LOUIE BANDO
Who's the new guy?

CELL
This is Ramz. He's cool.

LOUIE BANDO
I didn't ask who was cool. We don't need more people coming through here making this place any more hot than it needs to be.

Louie glares at Ramz, sizing him up with clear disdain.

LOUIE BANDO (CONT'D)
You better not mess with my shit, boy. This ain't a charity for freeloaders.

RAMZ
Relax, man. From the way you're dressed, I doubt any of this stuff is yours.

LOUIE BANDO
Watch your mouth, punk. You're a guest here, not a king.

CELL
Guys, chill. Ramz, meet Louie. Louie, don't scare away our guests.

Louie exits, leaving a cloud of tension in the room.

SAMMIE
Well, we have to go... Catch ya later, Cell.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KENT STATE CAMPUS - MORNING - ESTABLISHING SHOT

We see the front of the campus where students are rushing to class. Cars are parked and we see the front of the building with the word "FASHION" designed elegantly across it.

INT. CAMPUS CLASSROOM - MORNING

Ramz walks into the now empty classroom, where only his instructor, PROFESSOR AVERY, 38, is sitting at his desk.

He immediately tries to leave back out.

PROFESSOR AVERY
Mr. Singh!

Ramz hesitates, then turns around and re-enters the classroom.

RAMZ
Professor Avery.

PROFESSOR AVERY
You missed class. No email, no text. Is everything ok?

RAMZ
Sorry about that. My car died on me this morning. I meant to send you an email, but my ride ended up needing my help.

Professor Avery motions for Ramz to take a seat.

PROFESSOR AVERY
Let's talk about your project.

Ramz sits down, and Professor Avery pulls out a folder with project details.

RAMZ
What about it?

PROFESSOR AVERY
I've been thinking. Considering your eye for design, I want you to take the lead on this project. You've got potential, and I believe you can bring a fresh perspective to the collaboration.

RAMZ
Me? Lead?

PROFESSOR AVERY
Absolutely. I've seen your work, and I think this could be a turning point for you to embrace the challenge of collaboration.

Ramz nods, a mix of excitement and nervousness on his face.

PROFESSOR AVERY (CONT'D)
Now, about Pasha, your partner--

RAMZ
(interrupting Professor
Avery)
Partner?!

PROFESSOR AVERY
Yes, partner... I want you two to
sync up. This project has the
potential to elevate both of your
portfolios.

RAMZ
If we work together, there won't be
a portfolio.

PROFESSOR AVERY
That's the beauty of this project,
it's all about collaboration. I
want to see you two work together,
and if you can't... well both your
grades will reflect it.

CUT TO:

INT. DIMLY LIT FINANCIAL AID OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Ramz sits across from an over-sized SECRETARY in a cramped, dimly lit office. The hum of the fluorescent lights flicker overhead, casting a gloomy ambiance. The air is heavy with the shared desperation of students seeking financial solutions.

SECRETARY
So, what can I help you with?

RAMZ
I got an email earlier today
telling me that there has been a
lapse in my financial aid coverage.
I just wanted to check out what the
problem was.

SECRETARY
Ok, what's your name?

RAMZ
Ramz, R-A-M-Z, Singh, S-I-N-G-H.

The secretary, surrounded by stacks of paperwork, types away on her outdated computer. The keys clacking with an almost mocking rhythm.

SECRETARY

It says here that we have implemented some new policy changes, and they have drastically affected your balance. Your scholarships and loans do not cover enough.

RAMZ

So, what can I do? Is there any other grants or programs?

SECRETARY

I'm afraid not. Without additional funding, your account will be short by fifteen thousand. You should try reaching out to a parent and seeing if they can help you out.

RAMZ

If it has anything to do with my parents, I'm telling you now they won't do a thing for me.

SECRETARY

Well, you're going to have to figure something out. You have to be moved out by five o' clock today.

As Ramz absorbs the news, he glances around the office. Other students, hunched over, occupy worn-out chairs. Their faces reflect the same mix of anxiety and despair.

RAMZ

Well, is it anything I can do to prevent it?

SECRETARY

Move off campus and commute, drop the classes until you are able to afford them. As I said, you could also try speaking to your parents.

RAMZ

None of those options sound good enough.

SECRETARY

Well, I don't know what else to tell you.

She reaches into her desk, pulls a sheet of paper out, and places it down.

SECRETARY(CONT'D)
Here, give them a call, and see if
any of these places have an
available spot for you.

Ramz looks down at the paper.

RAMZ
This is a list of homeless
shelters.

SECRETARY
You could either sleep there or
speak with your parents. There is
nothing else I can tell you.

As Ramz leaves the office, the flickering lights and the
buzzing sound echoes louder in his ears.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KOONCE HALL APARTMENT HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Ramz paces along the dimly lit hallway, his voice echoes in
the emptiness.

RAMZ
Yes, ma, the money on the account
doesn't cover it, so I had to move
out of my dorm room today... Not to
mention that my car isn't starting
either.

MOTHER (O.S.)
Well, have you spoken to your
father about any of this?

RAMZ
No, I called him earlier, and he
didn't answer. I left him a
message, though...

Ramz stares out of a large window overlooking the campus
parking lot. His silhouette is framed against the navy blue
sky. The distant glow of streetlights reflects off the glass.

RAMZ(CONT'D)
What about you... You talked to dad
since... well, you know?

MOTHER (O.S.)
I haven't... & I don't plan on it
either.

A beat of silence goes past.

RAMZ

Well... Are you going to be able to help me out at least?

MOTHER (O.S.)

So, how much is it that needs to be covered?

RAMZ

15 thousand.

MOTHER (O.S.)

(scoffs)

Fifteen... Please, I don't have that type of money lying around. You better ask your father.

RAMZ

What about a loan? You could take one out and let me pay it off for you lat--

MOTHER (O.S.)

(interrupting Ramz)

Are you crazy? I am not taking out any loans on behalf of you. What happens if you don't finish school?

RAMZ

Ma, please.

MOTHER (O.S.)

I don't want to speak about this anymore. Plus, I have to go. Give your father another call.

CLICK!

As the call ends, Ramz pockets his cellphone, turns, and walks through the door into the apartment.

INT. KOONCE HALL APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS

Ramz enters, and the warm, cozy apartment stands in stark contrast to the cold uncertainty outside. Inside, Drish stands in front of a full-length mirror, preparing for the couple's anniversary night out.

DRISH

I know that look. What's going on?

Ramz, sinks onto the couch.

RAMZ
It's just... A lot. My financial
aid's fallen through, and my
parents are no help at all.

DRISH
Oh, that sounds tough, but you'll
figure it out, right?

RAMZ
Yeah, I mean I should be able to,
but I just don't have many options.

Drish, applying makeup in the mirror, pauses for a moment.

DRISH
Have you tried talking to your
advisor or something?

RAMZ
Of course, but it's more
complicated than that. I was...
actually hoping we could talk about-
-

DRISH
(interrupting Ramz)
Let's just focus on tonight right
now. It's our anniversary. I want
us to enjoy every moment of it
without any worries. These are the
important moments in our life.

Drish goes back to applying makeup in the mirror. Ramz walks
behind her, pulling her close to him, slowly kissing her neck
and face.

RAMZ
I guess you're right. Let's just
not worry about anything else. It's
just you and I, baby.

Ramz gets a notification on his phone from Pasha that reads:
"I've been here waiting for 35 minutes, WHERE ARE YOU!!?"

RAMZ(CONT'D)
Oh shit, I forgot I have to meet
with my new partner tonight. I will
see you later, beautiful. Make sure
you are ready by 7:30.

DRISH

Hey, Ramz, you should be able to sort it out, though. Maybe after tonight?

Ramz grabs his bag and kisses her on the cheek as he walks out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ramz and PASHA JONES, 20, stand over a FABRIC SWATCH BOOK sprawled across the table. The book is filled with different textures and materials, providing a visual reference for their designs. On the table sits a BOUQUET OF FLOWERS, A BOX OF CHOCOLATES, and an ANNIVERSARY CARD.

PASHA

So, I was thinking we should use velvet and leather as the materials for the handbag.

Ramz flips through the swatches, examining each one.

RAMZ

Who said we were making a handbag? I was thinking of something more unique--infused fabrics, maybe a shirt that has skin healing properties.

Pasha snatches the swatch book out of his hands.

PASHA

Infused fabrics? Come on, Ramz, that's too experimental. We need something classic and elegant. This project means a lot to me. It's not just an assignment, it's a stepping stone to where I want to be in fashion.

RAMZ

This idea is a perfect stepping stone. I think it's the future. Imagine garments that not only look good but have unique functions.

Pasha rolls her eyes.

PASHA
This is a fashion project, not a
sci-fi experiment.

RAMZ
Well, fashion is about pushing
boundaries, right?

Pasha sighs in annoyance.

PASHA
Look, let's stick to what we know.
Our grade depends on it. Plus, you
have a date tonight, so the longer
it takes us to agree on something,
the longer it'll take to get
started.

Ramz picks up a pencil and begins sketching on a blank sheet
of paper.

SUPERIMPOSED: A few hours later...

INT. PASHA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ramz, now more stressed, glances at the clock on his phone
which displays: 7:45 P.M.

RAMZ
Damn, we've been at this for hours.
Give me a second.

He steps away to make a call. The phone rings a few times
before the HOSTESS answers.

HOSTESS
Hello, this is Bellini Bistro. What
can I do for you?

RAMZ
Hey, I'm calling because I made a
reservation for two under the name
Ramz Singh. I just wanted to let
you know I may be running a bit
behind tonight.

HOSTESS
Singh, right?

Ramz glances at Pasha, who raises an eyebrow.

RAMZ
Yes, that's right.