

I. DEARBORN, MI

Establishing montage of shots- Warren and Schaeffer

Shot of Yasmeeen bakery in Dearborn

Shot of Fordson High School

Shot of Shatila Bakery meat market

Shot inside Popaya grocery store

Shot of Dearborn mosque

Possible shot of houses on Neckel street in Dearborn with the Israeli, Palestinian, and USA flags.

II. INT. UNIVERSITY- CRITICAL THEORY CLASS

Fade in

PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN BROWN

...So he mainly discusses the peoples of the Middle East, Said (Saeed) sought to lay bare the relations of power between the colonizer and the colonized in those texts. Said's writings have had far-reaching implications beyond area studies in the Middle East.

AHMAD, a handsome, yet somewhat nerdy-looking 24 year old, Middle Eastern- American student, raises his hand.

AHMAD

What about Said's investigation of the history and ideology of Zionism?

Before professor Brown can speak, a Caucasian, male student suddenly raises his hand and interrupts.

TAYLOR

Well I'm not too fond of Said and I agree with some critics, such as Robert Wistrich, who protested the connections Said made between Zionism and European colonialism.

Professor Brown nods and continues.

PROFESSOR BROWN

Some critics tried to refute the colonial legacies of Zionism, many Palestinians think that Said still

has not gone far enough...

TAYLOR (interrupting again)
I don't like how he says that the
Palestinians, as "the victims of
victims," have become a crucial part
of Zionism's history.

Ahmad looks at his professor with a curious, alert
expression and politely raises his hand until the professor
points in his direction.

AHMAD
You know I would argue that anyone
who has studied the history of
Palestine would easily realize that
history is the Zionists' weakest
point and that Arabs might make an
extremely convincing case that-
historically speaking- the
Palestinians they have an
indisputable right to the land
occupied by Israel.

TAYLOR (blurting out)
You say that-just because you're an
Arab, and...

PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN BROWN (INTERRUPTS)
Taylor, that's enough. Times up so
we'll continue during the next class
period. Read chapters 7-9.

III. EXT. UNIVERSITY PARKING LOT

Ahmad is leaving school with his attractive, Lebanese-
American girlfriend, Mariam, who is dressed with a
traditional head scarf. He is carrying the book
"Orientalism" by Edward Said. A large bookmark is centered
more than halfway through the book.

MARIAM
You're still reading that?

AHMAD
Yeah Edward Said really sheds light
on stuff in a new way for me-and
he's really not afraid to speak out.

MARIAM
why is that?

AHMAD (sounding professional)
Said effectively redefines the term
"Orientalism" to mean a
constellation of false assumptions
underlying Western attitudes toward
the Middle East.

Mariam gives him a confused look. Ahmad stares back at her with a straight face. A moment of silence. She yells...

MARIAM (sarcastically)
Meaningggggg!!!???

AHMAD
As far as the United States seems to be concerned, it's only a slight overstatement to say that Muslims and Arabs are essentially seen as either oil suppliers or potential terrorists.

Mariam rolls her eyes and shakes her head.

MARIAM (smiling)
ya know that sounds boring and irrelevant.... Soooo I guess I'll be seeing you later??

Ahmad has a slight grimace on his face, and quenches his eyes.

AHMAD

Yes.

MARIAM
Oh stop it. I want my parents to know and be okay with me talking to you. I wouldn't feel comfortable otherwise.

AHMAD
I know Mariam, but I'm not exactly ready for marriage either (pause) until I graduate this year

MARIAM
Of course I know, but I just don't want people finding out about us before my parents. I want to do it the right way.

IV. EXT. RESIDENT STREET -THAT EVENING

THE MAKLED'S; ALI, HIS WIFE ZEINAB, and their son AHMAD, and arrive in front of a well-maintained large home belonging to the Bazzi's. As they get out of the car, they examine the house's exterior. Zeinab looks to Ahmad and sighs as she wipes her brow with a handkerchief.

MRS. MAKLED
LOOK at this place. Very fancy. I knew I should have worn my Louis Vuitton purse.

Ahmad looks at his mom and rolls his eyes. His father tags

behind them as Ahmad knocks on the door.

V. INT. BAZZI HOME - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens, and a sweet-faced woman still tying the last piece of her traditional head scarf, steps out. Then turns back to call inside.

MRS. BAZZI
Mohammad they are here!

As she turns back to the Makleds, she questions for them to enter, but her expression momentarily dissolves in a flash. Replaced by a brief look of repulsion. She then quickly reinstates a forced smile and follows the Makleds into the house.

In the hallway, the Makled's are greeted by a stern-looking, large man- Well past 50. This is MR. BAZZI. Unliked and unsettling, he is a huge A huge pain in the ass to everyone he's ever met. Right now all his considerable talent and strength is focused on Ahmad while he holds a set of prayer beads in his hands.

MR. BAZZI
(to Mr. Makled) Al-Salam
alaykum

SUBTITLE: (May peace be upon you).

They hug and shake hands.

MR. MAKLED
Wa alaykum el salam

SUBTITLE: and peace be upon you.

Mrs. Makled clasps Mrs. Bazzi's hand and then she wipes her brow with a handkerchief once more.

MRS. MAKLED (CONT'D)
Too hot, isn't it?

MRS. BAZZI
(nodding her head) Please have
a seat.... This must be Ahmad.
hello. We have been looking
forward to finally meeting
you.

Ahmad smiles, nods and walks into the hallway.

VI. INT. BAZZI LIVING ROOM

Ahmad follows his parents into the living room. They take seats inside the newly furnished salon that looks like it has never been touched. Ahmad scans the room to see family pictures, art pieces with Quraan verses written on them and

a decorative hookah. Mr. Bazzi notices Ahmad looking around the house while his left leg is shaking. Ahmad avoiding any eye contact.

MR. BAZZI

So Ahmad. You're here to ask for permission to pursue my daughter?

AHMAD

Yes sir.

MR. MAKLED

My son is interested in your daughter, and we are here to support the relationship.

MR. BAZZI

Aha. And what is it you do Ahmad?

AHMAD

We own a gas station. And I am a student at the University in my final year. I'm about to graduate.

Mrs. Bazzi, smiling with approval, looks over to catch Mr. Bazzi's attention, but he doesn't budge or show any reaction.

MR. BAZZI

What are you studying to become?

AHMAD

I am pursuing a degree in comparative literature.

MR. BAZZI

I haven't heard of a job title concerning this.

AHMAD

I plan to get my PHD and then teach. I am currently working on my thesis and hope to get published.

Mrs. Bazzi displays a look of confusion and she frowns and suddenly seems to lose interest.

MR. BAZZI

That seems like a long way to go.

Just then, both families look up to see Mariam Bazzi walk in carrying a tray of teacups and baklava. She places them on the table. She shakes hands with the Makled's and sits across from Ahmad on the sofa next to her mother.

MRS. MAKLED (starring at the teacups)

I like your China.

MRS. BAZZI (SMIRKING)
Thank you. They were a gift from
Italy.

Mrs. Makled rolls her eyes and raises her tea. Ahmad looks at her, gives her a halfway smile and then looks over to a muted t.v. set on the Al-Jazeera news channel. Mr. Makled follows Ahmad's gaze over to the t.v. On the screen is a reporter standing on the Gaza strip with ruined building behind her.

Mr. Makled gives his wife a worried expression and points with his eyebrows towards the t.v. Mrs. Makled's gaze moves towards the t.v., a worried look comes over her face as well.

MRS. MAKLED
Please can we turn the volume on? I
need to make sure my family is ok.

MRS. BAZZI
Yes, of course. What is your family
doing in Palestine?

MRS. MAKLED
They live there.

MRS. BAZZI
You're Palestinian!?

All of the Bazzi's exchange a look of alarm, and Mariam then looks over at Ahmad. Ahmad reads her look and explains.

AHMAD
but, but we are Lebanese. My mother
is Palestinian.

Both families now have their attention focused on the Arabic news. Footage of orphan children walking the streets, of men holding the dead bodies of other men as they weep are shown. Ahmad's mother begins to tear.

VII. INT. THE MAKLED KITCHEN- THAT EVENING

The Makled's are congregated in the small kitchen. Seated at the table are Ahmad and his father. Mr. Makled's three daughters sit upon a sofa doing homework as Mrs. Makled cooks. Mr. Makled drinks tea while reading a Dearborn newspaper. Ahmad, at the opposite end of the table, is reading about a comparative theater study abroad program in the Czech Republic brochure. Ahmad lifts up the brochure, to show a picture of the Prague Castle.

AHMAD
You see this? Look at this!
This is where I would love to
be.

MR MAKLED

(looking up) Hah. Don't make me laugh. I don't know how you can afford to go anywhere with the degree you are pursuing.

Souha, Saja and Layla look up and giggle in agreement.

AHMAD

You'll see. You'll see. Just watch... You'll be begging me to let you come visit me when I go there.

MR MAKLED

I don't know what you are dreaming about. You need to get yourself a PRACTICAL education, especially if you want to visit places like that.

MRS MAKLED

Yes. How do you expect to support Mariam!?

MR MAKLED

Why don't you, instead of wasting

your time just focusing on something that will make you money. -and it's still not too late to change.

MR MAKLED (looking back at his paper and sighing)

YOU'RE AN IDIOT

AHMAD

What do you know! Working at the Ford line, and then pumping gas.

More laughter from Souha and Layla.

MRS. MAKLED

Don't talk back, Ahmad.

MR MAKLED (CONTINUED)

Yeah, Abu Hassan's son, he's a doctor now, just bought a new Mercedes!

The Girls continue to laugh, and then Ahmad turns angrily towards his sisters.

AHMAD

Shut up! (short pause)

MR MAKLED

You see...look at you. Even the girls are laughing at you.

MRS MAKLED
Ahmad, are you ready to eat?

AHMAD
Yeah, I'm starving.

MR MAKLED
Never mind him, what about me?

MRS MAKLED
Be patient.

MR MAKLED
You need to feed the man of the house first. Give me a small bowl please. (Rubbing his stomach)

Ahmad closes his brochures.

MR MAKLED

Don't bring shame upon this family, Ahmad.

AHMAD
What? What are you talking about now?

MRS. MAKLED
Be patient. It is coming.

MR. MAKLED
Oh, what am I talking about?...What must people be thinking of this family? You have every opportunity in this country to get what you want. I am helping pay for your school. I can't believe my only son avoids going to the mosque.

AHMAD
Dad just leave me alone. I seriously could care less what the hell people think.

Mr. Makled is upset. He gets up and walks away.

VIII. EXT. DRIVEWAY

Ahmad drives up.

IX. INT. MAKLED LIVINGROOM/KITCHEN (DEARBORN, MI) - 4 P.M.

Ahmad enters the house from school. He sees his family congregated in the kitchen area of the small house. Sitting at the table are his three sisters; SOUHA, SAJA, and LAYLA who surround their mother who is seen crying uncontrollably. Mr. Makled walks into the kitchen and shuts his phone. He is very upset.

AHMAD
Mom? Dad? What's wrong? Dad why is

mom crying?

MR MAKLED (pause)
Son. Your cousins Mazen and Adel
have been...killed by an Israeli
attack. Your Uncle Youssef is in the
hospital.

AHMAD
Killed!!!! Dad what do you mean
killed!?

MR MAKLED(holding back tears)
I'm so sorry son.

While Ahmad remains standing still. He closes his eyes for a few seconds and starts breathing heavily. Mr. Makled breaks down crying. He looks around the room and then stares at his mother trying to hold back tears. Clenching his fists, he takes a seat on the couch to keep from falling over.

X. NEXT DAY- BEGIN MONTAGE

As Ahmad wakes up, his eyes are swollen and red.

Ahmad gets in his car, starts crying and banging the steering wheel.

Ahmad drives past the local mosque.

END MONTAGE

XI. INT. ART HISTORY CLASS- THAT AFTERNOON

Ahmad walks into his Art history class and the professor turns the lights off for the power point and Ahmad takes out his notebook but his attention is pulled by loud sounds on a political protest outside. Ahmad immediately gets up and leaves.

XII. EXT. UNIVERSITY COURT YARD- MOMENTS LATER

Ahmad steps outside the building and sees a group of protesters gathered around. One student is standing in the center speaking angrily into a megaphone.

AMEER
Entering day seven of the atrocities
and war crimes on Gaza. Death toll
is at 109 INNOCENT civilians, 27 of
which are children!

Ahmad stands interested and watches. Another student grabs the megaphone from Ameer. She has tears in her eyes.

RASHA
We must work within our own
individual capacities to counteract
the Zionist-filtered media outlets.

Ahmad is agitated and is then pushed by another student in Muslim apparel trying to get to the megaphone.

ZEID

God asks nothing more from us but to

do what we are able to. Let's aid
our brothers and sisters of Gaza but
in the name of all humanity!

Agitated Ahmad slowly begins to walk away with his head down.

XIII. INT. UNIVERS.- CRITICAL THEORY CLASS-SHORT WHILE LATER

Ahmad gets into Professor Christian Brown's class. He takes a front row seat and sits straight up.

PROFESSOR BROWN

Pull out a pen paper and write this
down.

Ahmad is starring focused on the board and doesn't budge.

PROFESSOR BROWN

1919-Balfour Declaration emergence
of European Zionism.

The professor takes a piece of chalk and writes the word "Zionism" on the chalkboard. Ahmad looks down at his hand. It's now in a fist and he bursts out.

AHMAD

Howwww Fitting. The Zionist Israeli
lead war on Palestine is Fucking
bullshit!

The entire class is starring at him in utter shock, and Ahmad tries to regain his composure. Taylor Murphy, who is sitting next to Ahmad raises his hand half way and interrupts.

TAYLOR

You mean the war on Palestinian
terrorists?

AHMAD

How arrogant! You know fully well
the Palestinian people were
systematically forced out of their
homes and into the streets so the
Zionists could claim the real-estate
for their own.

TAYLOR

I'm sorry but you've been totally
misinformed about the Israeli-
Palestinian narrative. Israel is the
holy land. It belongs to the jews

and the Christians!

Professor Brown raises his hand to quiet the two young men. He tries to bring down the emotional level.

PROFESSOR BROWN

It's known throughout history that the occupying force always defends its campaign by calling the indigenous population terrorists.

AHMAD (interrupting)

yeah...and I bet you that the Pilgrims said the same thing about the Indians...

AHMAD (CONT.)

...So do you agree that there should be a two state solution between Israel and Palestine?

Professor Christian nods. Then Ahmad looks over to Taylor, addressing him directly.

AHMAD

Then why do people such as this guy right here not condemn the war and strive for peace?

Taylor jumps up and looks down at Ahmad. Ahmad then slams his hand on the desk and stands up. Taylor gets in Ahmad's face and Ahmad pushes him back making him fall over.

TAYLOR

sensitive are we?

Taylor starts to throw a punch, but Ahmad pushes him back in defense. Professor Brown runs up to break up the fight. Another student grabs a hold of Ahmad pushing him back while Professor Brown holds Taylor.

PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN

Taylor that's enough!

Taylor obeys, but Ahmad starts yelling at Taylor.

AHMAD

You're an arrogant son of a bitch! You live in this country and you only know what the media tells you. You don't live it like I do! Innocent people die you bastard, and you call them terrorists!?

Taylor is angry. The whole class sits in dead silence. Ahmad storms out of the classroom and slams the door behind him.

XIV. INT. UNIVERSITY DEAN'S OFFICE- A SHORT WHILE LATER

A large wooden desk sits in front of Dean Johnson with the name plaque engraved the words "Dean William A. Johnson." Taylor walks in with a serious and angry look. He sits down.

DEAN JOHNSON

Mr. Murphy. How may I help you today sir?

TAYLOR

I'm filing a complaint against Professor Brown. I am also pressing assault charges against a student whose outrage was supported by Professor Brown in class.

DEAN JOHNSON

What happened?

TAYLOR

Mr. Brown stated his opinion on Zionism yesterday in class and failed to give me a chance to explain. He stood there as another student, Ahmad Makled, raged and verbally and physically abused and embarrassed me in class.

Dean Johnson waits and thinks for a moment.

DEAN JOHNSON

This is a serious matter..It may have to be taken up with the provost and university ambudsman. I would like you to write a formal complaint.

TAYLOR

Whatever you have to do, sir.

Taylor gets up to leave, and shakes the Dean's hand.

XV. EXT. THE MAKLED RESIDENCE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Ahmad arrives to his driveway and parks. His eyes are red, and his face is pale as he walks towards his porch. As Ahmad reaches the door handle, his sister Souha opens it. She is dressed all in black, reaches for him and hugs him.

AHMAD

Where are you going?

SOUHA

The mosque. Mom and dad are there praying. The whole family is going there tonight. I can wait for you to

change if you want to come.

AHMAD

No. You go ahead.

Souha rolls her eyes and shakes her head.

SOUHA

UGHHH.

XVI. IN. THE MAKLED KITCHEN -THE NEXT MORNING

Ahmad turns on the Al-Jazeera T.V. station which plays muted on the t.v. He turns on the coffee pot, he notices a red blinking light on the message machine set on the kitchen counter. Ahmad presses the button. The answering machine responds with, "You have one new message."

(CONTINUED)

DEAN JOHNSON

Hi this is Dean Johnson calling from the University for Ahmad Makled. We need to speak on an urgent matter and I would like him to come to my office immediately.

DISSOLVE TO:

XVII. INT. MAKLED DINING ROOM- SHORT WHILE LATER

Ahmad, looks worried as he approaches his father reading a newspaper.

AHMAD

Dad...I got into a fight at school.

MR. MAKLED (surprised)

WHAT!..You?

AHMAD

I was so angry and this evangelical Christian fanatic provoked me.

MR. MAKLED

Come on... I don't spot any bruises on you.

AHMAD

Nothing that you can see. I have to go see the Dean now. I'll explain later.

MR. MAKLED(teasing)

Here...You should take a box of Shatila sweets with you to give to him.

Ahmad stares at him blankly and shakes his head.

XVIII. INT. DEAN'S OFFICE- LATER THAT MORNING

Ahmad walks into the Dean's office. Professor Brown is standing at the door. He turns around and smiles at Ahmad, and they both take a seat.

DEAN JOHNSON

We have had a serious complaint regarding your lecture on Zionism and it was taken to the Executive Committee...and to summarize it was determined that there may have been serious academic improprieties.

Mr. Brown nods. Ahmad frowns and stays quiet.

DEAN JOHNSON (to Ahmad)

And as for Mr. Makled Mr. Murphy is filing an assault charge with the police department, but I am recommending a temporary suspension pending a hearing with the school ombudsman might be appropriate. I am disappointed in your professor who allowed the conversation to even get carried as far as it did.

AHMAD

I'm sorry sir. It's a very sensitive issue for me. You see... my cousins were killed overseas and I am personally affected about it... I guess I just took my frustration out.

DEAN JOHNSON

I can understand that. But your peers don't know that. You can't just attack another student.

Dean Johnson stands up and gestures to the door.

DEAN JOHNSON

I will be in contact with you, Mr. Makled.

Ahmad and Professor Brown shake hands with the Dean, and as Professor Brown walks out of the office, he pats Ahmad on the back.

PROFESSOR BROWN

I'm sorry for your loss.

XIX. MONTAGE- WEEKEND

1.AHMAD STUDYING.

2.AHMAD HAVING DINNER AT THE BAZZI RESIDENCE.

3.MARIAM IS MAKING HIM TRY ON TRENDY CLOTHES, HE SHAKES HIS HEAD IN DISAPPROVAL AND SHE IS FRUSTRATED.

4.PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN RECEIVING A LETTER SAYING "The University will not be renewing a teaching contract."

-end montage-

XX. INT. PROFESSOR BROWN'S OFFICE- SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Christian Brown is grading papers when there's a knock on the door.

Come in.

PROFESSOR BROWN

AHMAD

Hey professor, do you have time.

PROFESSOR BROWN

Of course. What's up?

AHMAD

Well, I was wondering what other comparative literature courses you'll be teaching next semester?

PROFESSOR BROWN

Hmmm...well I won't be...It appears that my contract has expired and the university will not be re-newing it.

AHMAD

Please don''t tell me this has anything to do with what happened with me in your class.

PROFESSOR BROWN

Well (pause)...we may never know. It's very hard to tell about these kinds of things.

Ahmad's face goes pale.

AHMAD

I'm sooo sorry professor! This is all my fault, I know it!

PROFESSOR BROWN

It is not Ahmad. Don't feel responsible... It is very hard to teach a topic and not have an opinion on it, but I should have known better.

AHMAD

They CAN'T DO this! I want to do

something to help you keep your job.

Professor Brown smiles.

PROFESSOR BROWN
such as what?

Cut to:

XXI. BACK AND FORTH MONTAGE

1. Ahmad sets a booth outside and hands people a clip board and they sign it.

2. Ahmad is in his room researching information on his laptop regarding tenure, and academic freedom

-END MONTAGE-

XXII. THE MAKLED RESIDENCE- EVENING

The Makled's have invited the Bazzi's over for dinner. Mariam and Ahmad are bickering with low voices.

MRS. BAZZI
What is going on with you two!?

They both sit quiet and don't say anything. Mariam looks over at Ahmad.

MARIAM
Please tell them. I really wanna hear their opinion on this.

The entire table is quiet and all their eyes are focused on Ahmad.

MR. BAZZI
tell us what?

AHMAD
I am going to give a speech tomorrow on academic freedom.

MR MAKLED
Don't tell me... this is because of that crazy student and the incident with your professor?

AHMAD
yeah...the professor tried to defend me when that fanatical student started attacking me. I have to defend him now!

MR. BAZZI
I don't understand...Why do YOU need to get involved in such things. We're Americans now...and don't associate and cause trouble...

AHMAD

I've already made up my mind and gotten in contact with the university paper and radio station, I will be addressing the issue during the student faculty senate meeting tomorrow.

Outraged Mr. Makled suddenly slams his hand on the table.

MR MAKLED

Son. I forbid you. He will find another job!...and if you go through with this, forget another dime for tuition from me.

MRS. BAZZI

What if you get kicked out of school?

MARIAM

I told you so!!! I don't even know why you care so much about this stuff.

Mr. Bazzi looks at Mr. Makled sitting across from him who looks annoyed by his statement.

MR. BAZZI (CONT.)

I completely understand your son is in love with my daughter but if they want to get married its gonna take more then a gift of the Koran.

Mr. Makled looks over at his son, then Mariam looks over at her father and puts her head down. She gets up and starts clearing the table in frustration.

AHMAD

You don't have to do that.

Mariam ignores him and continues to clear the table.

XXIII. MAKLED RESIDENCE- MOMENTS LATER

The Bazzi's are getting ready to leave and put their coats on. Mr. Makled opens the door to lead them out. Mariam stops Ahmad.

MARIAM

If you go through with this. We're done!

Ahmad just looks at Mariam and does not respond.

XXIV. FACULTY STUDENT SENATE MEETING- THE NEXT DAY

A large lecture hall filled with students including Taylor, including Professor Brown, and the university press.

The university Provost is at the podium speaking.

PROVOST

The floor is now open for anyone who has questions and concerns.

Just then a young man dressed in a nice shirt and tie, raises his hand.

Yes? Ahmad stands up.

PROVOST

AHMAD

I have an issue I would like to address.

PROVOST

Your name?

AHMAD

Ahmad Makled sir. I am a graduate student in comparative literature.

PROVOST

The floor is yours.

AHMAD

Over the course of decades, many books, essays, and policies have been written and published about academic freedom. We have learned how to apply it to pedagogical, technological, cultural, and political realities that did not exist when the concept was first defined...

AHMAD (CONT.) Sometimes academic freedom is invoked in situations where it doesn't actually apply. But many within and without higher education are not well-versed in all the protections it does provide.

PROVOST

What is this regarding?

Ahmad turns around and from his POV we see Professor Brown seated in the room shocked.

AHMAD

...I'm talking about academic

freedom! Tenure offers a job protection professors have from their colleagues and the unique problems created within an academic democracy. This has led to a situation in which one of my professors has been denied his academic freedom and is now suffering severe consequences being uncontinued employment at this university.

PROVOST

Yes. Today there are new and genuine threats to academic freedom that have contributed to a deterioration of constructive dialogue on all campuses.

AHMAD

There is a troubling increase in

anti-Muslim and anti-Arab incidents. On some campuses, a climate of intolerance has been exacerbated by attempts to target individual scholars with calls for their censure or removal. In this case, it has been Professor Brown.

PROVOST

And yet Professor Brown has been using incendiary rhetoric within his classroom.

Ahmad holds a piece of paper high up in the air and begins to speak louder.

AHMAD

Even while another student takes liberty and attacks a Arab student in class? Mr. Brown was simply trying to mediate, and I have witnesses in class that can testify and a petition here that says that we want Mr. brown reinstated.

Professor Brown sits in shock. Ahmad walks the petition over to the Provost. She looks it over and flips through pages of signatures.

PROVOST (slowly)

We expect all students and employees to be respectful in the school environment and for all teachers to maintain professionalism in the classroom. But this incident should serve as an education for all faculty to reflect on their interaction with students. Due to

confidentiality policies however, we cannot discuss this matter publicly at this forum at this time.

A moment of silence echoes through the room. Ahmad nods his head. He turns around to see Mariam leave the room angry, but he sees his parents are standing there smiling over at him.

PROVOST
Any other new business?

No one says anything.

PROVOST
Very well. This meeting is adjourned

XXV. INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY- MOMENTS LATER

Professor Brown walks over to Ahmad as his parents look on.

PROFESSOR BROWN
Hi Ahmad.

Hey.

AHMAD

PROFESSOR BROWN

I just wanted to congratulate you for what you did.

AHMAD
Do you think it will work? And Are you going to be teaching next semester?

PROFESSOR BROWN
Unfortunately no but I already have another position. The main thing is that I strongly believe the matter was handled appropriately. Your comments will make a difference. I believe you can be the next Edward Said.

Professor Brown smiles at Ahmad who is beaming.

Ahmad walks over to his parents who are standing by the door. His mother hugs him his father shakes his hand proud.

XXVI. EXT. MAKLED RESIDENCE - A FEW DAYS LATER

Ahmad is in front of his house getting the mail from his mailbox. He opens a letter from the university.

-VOICEOVER-

AHMAD

After some careful consideration.
All charges have been dropped.

Ahmad closes his eyes and smiles in relief. He turns around and Professor Brown is walking up the steps.

XXVII. EXT. UNIVERSITY PARKING LOT- NEXT DAY

Ahmad pulls into the university parking lot. He parks his old car. Just then Mariam parks her new Mercedes next to him. She gets out of her car. She stands face to face with Ahmad and waits for him to say something. But he doesn't. She gives Ahmad a mean look and walks away stomping with her

heels. Ahmad looks after her shaking his head. As he turns around to walk towards the building, he sees a man holding a notepad and a pencil in one hand, a tape recorder in another.

REPORTER

Mr. Makled? I'm from the University Press. I was present at the meeting where you discussed Academic Freedom.

Yes...

AHMAD

REPORTER

I'd like to sit down with you to do an interview.

Sure.

-INSERT TEXT-

AHMAD

Academic Freedom Act:

"A member of the academic staff of a university shall have the freedom, within the law, in his or her teaching, research and any other activities either in or outside the university, to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favorable treatment by the university, for the exercise of that freedom."