

FIRST DRAFT

"ISTAM"

by

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FADE IN:

Black Screen.

The sound of camera flashes going off over the background noise of photographers jostling and calling out to an unseen subject for the best shot.

ISTAM

We're all celebrities now. Using money to buy respect. Money is power. Get noticed; Get paid. We ain't no little people. Ya get me?

White flashes illuminate the screen and the sound of the jostling becomes grunts of pain.

INT. FRONT ROOM. ISTAM'S FLAT. EVENING.

Tight shot of a television screen showing a computer game. It is a "first-person shoot 'em up". A gun is blowing away characters.

Istam puts the controller down on the coffee table in front of him and reaches for a joint in the ashtray next to which is a large pile of banknotes.

He lights the blunt and breathes deeply.

He switches channel on the TV.

EXT. CELEBRITIES ON THE RED CARPET. LEICESTER SQUARE. EVENING.

The same footage of celebrities working the carpet as in the other three scripts.

INT. FRONT ROOM. ISTAM'S FLAT. EVENING.

Istam kisses his teeth at something he has seen on the screen.

His mobile rings. He kisses his teeth again.

ISTAM

Bitch. Don't tell me this. Nine. Bring the bag. No, the bag behind your bed.

He takes another long drag on the joint.

ISTAM

I don't care. Wear something with pockets then. Just use your imagination Elzbieta. Don't attract attention.

He throws the mobile onto the table where it skids and falls off the other side.

The phone rings again and he reaches for it but it's out of reach.

He lunges for it and in doing so kicks the ashtray off the table.

ISTAM

Pisda!

He grabs the phone.

ISTAM

What! Who this... Aggie! No, not angry.

He retrieves the joint from the floor and lights it again.

ISTAM

... you're here in London... I know everything. Reach Leicester square. Nine-thirty. Hey... don't be late.

INT. ISTAM'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

The bright lights of various theatre signs are seen through the black square of the sunroof, their shows framed by typical lightbulbs.

EXT. LEICESTER SQUARE. EVENING.

ISTAM (32) lurks in a dark doorway nervously scanning the crowd.

Revelers jostle around the square amidst the usual luminous-jacketed police presence.

Istam watches Elzbieta walk round the square holding the lilies.

He approaches her angrily.

ISTAM

You have it? What the fuck, Elzbieta? You have it?

ELZBIETA

You know I have it.

Istam looks at her pocket-less outfit.

ISTAM

Where you have it?

Elzbieta hands him the bouquet.

ELZBIETA
You said use my imagination,
bring to you safely...

ISTAM
What the fuck I want with these,
bitch?

ELZBIETA
Is safe!

Istam looks inside the bouquet.

He quickly slaps Elzbieta in the face.

ISTAM
Stupid fucking bitch. You want
police to get me?

Elzbieta looks at him through watering eyes.

ISTAM
This is game to you? Flowers...
Red carpet. Red with your blood,
bitch.

He grabs her by the wrist.

EXT. SOHO ALLEYWAY. NIGHT.

Istam throws her against the wall. Elzbieta's face is half
in shadow.

He reaches into the bunch of flowers and pulls out a
cellophane bag of pills.

Istam's hand puts the pills into his pocket, replacing
them with a knife.

With his free hand he pins her by the throat against the
wall.

He holds the blade to Elzbieta's eye.

Her face is reflected in the steel blade, full of fear.

ISTAM
So your sister wants move to
London? She will work better for
me than you perhaps? More brains.
More...

He kisses her viciously on the lips then slaps her.

TOM (55) walks down the alleyway towards him sucking on a
Burger King shake.

TOM

Oi. Mate. You can't do that.
She's a woman.

Elzbieta's face remains in shadow, unseen.

Istam looks up at the portly security guard.

He opens his jacket to casually reveal his knife.

ISTAM

Fuck off fatty.

Tom sees the knife and quickly retreats.

A police siren is heard.

Istam pulls back, throwing the flowers into the gutter
where they mix with the rain.

ISTAM

You work for me tonight...that
is why I don't cut you now.

ELZBIETA

You break my legs then ask me to
dance?

He straightens himself up with a pimp's spider-sense and
walks off down the alley cursing to himself.

EXT. LEICESTER SQUARE. EVENING.

A CCTV camera watches over the square.

Istam looks at his watch as he moves to the central green
area.

The watch face shows 21:30

He sees AGNIESZKA (18) struggling with a black holdall bag.

AGNIESZKA

Cous! Cherche!

Istam plays it cool. He kisses her on the cheek without
cracking a smile.

AGNIESZKA

Hey! You not happy to see family?

Istam shrugs his shoulders.

ISTAM

You're in London now. Play it cool.

AGNIESZKA

Sorry, sorry.

ISTAM

That's better. Now, you need work?

AGNIESZKA

Of course.

ISTAM

Good. You will work for me...
like your sister.

AGNIESZKA

How is she? Where is she?!

ISTAM

Lazy and getting fat. She's
working tonight.

Aggie looks over at the neon sign of the Odeon Cinema.

She nods with respect.

AGNIESZKA

You think one day I will go to
premiere?

Istam reaches into his pocket and pulls out a pill.

ISTAM

Work hard and maybe. Maybe!

He touches her smiling face with his rough fingers.

ISTAM

Tonight we party. Here... take this.

Aggie takes it in her hand and studies it.

AGNIESZKA

What is?

ISTAM

Your holiday vaccination.

AGNIESZKA

I promised mother I...

Istam's eyes narrow, his tone steely.

ISTAM

Take it!

Aggie puts the pill in her mouth and swallows.

INT. SECURITY CONTROL ROOM. LEICESTER SQUARE DIVISION. NIGHT.

A hand reaches for a styrofoam cup of coffee.

The cup is lifted past a CCTV screen showing Aggie and Istam walking off.

ISTAM
Like all celebrities we are all
selling something...

EXT. CELEBRITIES ON THE RED CARPET. LEICESTER SQUARE.
EVENING.

A limousine door opens and a celebrity steps out.

INT. ENTRANCE DOOR. ISTAM'S FLAT. NIGHT.

A dirty stained door opens and Istam enters holding a
drugged-up Aggie by the hand.

ISTAM
...selling slaves.