

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE GARDENS - DAYTIME - CONT

BOT is surrounded by a small group of people. They huddle around her, as she reads to them. NOUR is keeping her distance, dutifully observant.

NOUR

Ban often spoke of her kind-hearted friend that would one day join us, but the real person turned out to be a lot more different than in Ban's stories.

BAN walks up to Bot and sits down, wearing a big smile on her face. BOT smiles back, but her eyes read differently. Nour watches them with a frown.

NOUR

The two would often be seen together, and every time, Bot had the same irritating expression on her face when looking at Bun. A kind variety of pity.

NOUR

At this point in the story, I should probably describe in great detail how the Bodhisattva has, in small increments, eventually persuaded every single soul here to go back to the mortal realm and strive for enlightenment.

The people around Bot look at the audience.

NOUR

I'd mention how she started holding daily lectures. How she shared wisdom about life and our universe. How she ruthlessly raised awareness that our eternal heaven is bound to expire. How her proof was a single wilted leaf, which would never exist here. How Ban tried to come up with explanations, but none of them were as convincing.

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE GARDENS BENCH - DAYTIME

NOUR sits on a bench that overlooks the garden. BAN lies with her head on NOUR's lap, indulgently playing with the priestesses' hair.

NOUR

I can't describe it, though, since I don't know how it really went. I stayed as far away from the Bodhisattva as I could. My deity was compelled to feel joy for those who chose to leave. Being free to choose your own destiny is a blessing, she told me.

BAN turns around to nap. NOUR's hand lies gently on her shoulder, ready to provide comfort.

NOUR

Over the last 2000 moons, most of our people left. I watched as my goddesses eyes filled with questioning, and her lips started murmuring quiet pleads as her gardens grew wild with abandonment.

Among them, as I found out, was also Tik Khan.