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MADE IN INDIA

Satinder Kaur Chohan

SAMUEL FRENCH

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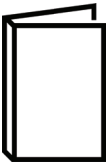
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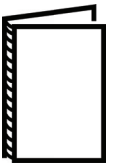
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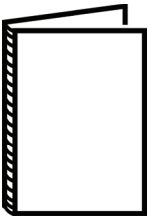
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Satinder Kaur Chohan is from Southall, West London and completed her BA in English Language and Literature at King's College London and her MA at Yale University in the US. A journalist and documentary researcher/assistant producer turned playwright, her plays include *Zameen* (Kali Theatre national tour 2008), *KabaddiKabaddiKabaddi* (Pursued By A Bear national tour 2012), *1984* (Vibrant Festival 2014 Finborough Theatre) and *Lotus Beauty*, a 2016 Sultan Padamsee Award for Playwriting Runner-Up. Satinder received OffWestEnd.com's 2013 Adopt A Playwright Award to develop *Made in India*. As Writer-in-Residence at the Centre for Family Research (University of Cambridge), she wrote *Half of Me*, first performed by Generation Arts in Summer 2016 (Lyric Hammersmith). *Half of Me* accompanies *Made in India* at select venues on tour.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Made in India was first developed as part of OffWestEnd.com's Adopt A Playwright Award, which I received in 2013. Working with my Adopted Playwright mentor/dramaturg Fin Kennedy, I continued writing the play after its commission by Tamasha Theatre Company, where Fin later became Artistic Director.

I first settled on the idea after reading a shocking article in which a middle-class English woman described an Indian village surrogate as her "vessel". With my Indian village roots, the surrogate could have been any of my Indian female relatives or if my parents had not emigrated to the UK, even me. The story of those two women was loaded with so much conflicting culture, emotion and politics, I knew I had to write a play around that complex situation, to understand its fertile terrain.

When I began writing the play, commercial surrogacy was rife in many countries. In the "surrogacy hub" of India, it flourished as an unregulated multi-billion rupee industry, with thousands of surrogacies a year. During the writing process, Thailand, Nepal, Cambodia, Mexico – and India – introduced varying commercial surrogacy bans. The proposed ban in India upended much of my original story. Yet it captured a global trend in which legislation began reeling in the rapid advance of science, especially that of Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) and the creation of "non-traditional" family forms. From being staunchly anti-commercial surrogacy, I realised the ban highlighted more than a black and white situation, especially for the impoverished women who had scant options to make as much money elsewhere.

Made in India is about gender, economics, reproductive technology and ethics. Globally and locally, we live in a market society where "everything is for sale" including health, education, emotions and bodies. Too often, morals are sacrificed for rampant financial markets. Western consumers rely on low-cost, low-paid global workers to provide the material stuff of their lives, in the cheapest, most efficient, fastest ways possible – whether a pair of trainers, or a baby. In that power

dynamic, consumers can afford to ignore marginalised workers in other parts of the world, their lives and struggles, rather than understand how we connect to them.

Commercial surrogacy felt like a fitting metaphor for it all. These (substitute Western) workers labour for profit-driven businesses and affluent global clients whether in the garment, electronics or other sweatshop industries – exploitation or empowerment, oppression or opportunity, there is still much to do to protect them. Profit is valued over workers and human dignity is sacrificed for a quick blood-stained buck. *Made in India* seeks to show how our material choices and demands shape our inequitable world.

For Tamasha's production, director Katie Posner created this world using minimal props. In pre-rehearsal drafts, I had centred the play around a (medical/dorm) bed. Katie boldly jettisoned the bed, rendering the world of the play a more fluid space. The stripped-down clinic became slightly out of time, in a sort of womb hyperreality. Lydia Denno's stunning set of cyclical and moveable fabric medical screens, made of timber-framed threaded "looms", connected the garment and surrogacy industries. The screens moved around on a central playing circle of off-white clinical tiles, bordered by a deep red Indian fabric printed floor, bleeding in. By creating this fragile womb-like interior, the set inextricably bound these three women, their bodies and emotions to each other.

The script is open to creative interpretation and a big imagination – not least in the transitions. Projections on the screens, voiceovers and music in the clinic space create both individual and collective consciousness. Prema Mehta's lighting, Shanaz Gulzar's AV designs and Arun Ghosh's soundscape beautifully textured Tamasha's production. Yet the transitions can be done simply and selectively, enough to suggest inner worlds and a bigger world outside, whilst keeping a narrative flow.

For the Gujarati spoken by both Dr. Gupta and Aditi (in scenes involving only the two of them), a couple of lines of Gujarati can establish their mother tongue and then be followed by lines in English (to denote fluent Gujarati).

Like Tamasha's production, any staging of *Made in India* can be done impressionistically. Placing these three female lives, their stories, bodies and emotions centre stage, enables us to see all that commercial surrogacy and its biological, financial and emotional transactions entail – in all its messy complexity.

Satinder Kaur Chohan
2017

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Diana Jervis-Read
Declan Feenan

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Chris White
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Pooja Ghai
Sudha Buchar
Susie Trayling
Krupa Pattani
Charlotte Randle
Peter Singh

For their role in the development of *Made in India*

Made in India was first performed on 24th January 2017 at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry. It opened at Soho Theatre, London on 8th March 2017 with the following cast:

CAST

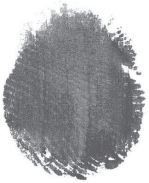
Eva Gina Isaac
Dr Gupta Syreeta Kumar
Aditi Ulrika Krishnamurti

CREATIVE TEAM

Written by Satinder Kaur Chohan
Directed by Katie Posner
Dramaturg Fin Kennedy
Designer Lydia Denno
Composer and Sound Designer Arun Ghosh
Lighting Designer Prema Mehta
AV Designer Shanaz Gulzar
Casting Director Nadine Rennie
Assistant Director Corey Campbell
(supported by the Regional Theatre Young Directors Scheme)
Assistant Lighting Designer Rachel Cleary
(supported by the Association of Lighting Designers Lumière Scheme)

PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager Dennis Charles
Company Stage Manager Laura Stevens
Technical Stage Manager Emma Atherton
Press Consultant Nancy Poole PR
Publicity Photography Sophia Schorr-Kon
Rehearsal Photography Katherine Leedale
Promotional Video Fionn Robson Guilfoyle
Production Photography Robert Day



tamasha

TAMASHA THEATRE COMPANY

Tamasha means "commotion", creating a stir. We have a 25-year-proven history of reaching new writing audiences and specialise in making new work for the stage inspired by the ever-changing cultures of contemporary Britain. We aim to spark distinctive social discourse through compelling theatre experiences that places the voices of emerging and established artists from culturally diverse backgrounds centre-stage.

Landmark productions include *East Is East* (1996), *A Fine Balance* (2006), *Snookered* (2012), *My Name is...* (2014) and *Blood* (2015), winning acclaim from audiences and critics alike.

Alongside our national tours, Tamasha continues to nurture the next generation of theatre-makers through Tamasha Developing Artists, a national artist development programme with a track record of providing high-quality training and tangible professional opportunities for emerging and established theatre artists throughout their careers. We facilitate theatre-makers to engage with communities, young people and audiences through unique engagement, education projects and creative collaborations.

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BELGRADE THEATRE, COVENTRY

The Belgrade Theatre produces and co-produces a wide range of shows, from exciting new dramas to large-scale musicals. Recent years have seen partnerships with theatre companies including Eclipse, Curve and Watford Palace, on the award-winning productions *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Wipers*. The Belgrade are delighted to be working once again with Tamasha, after their critically-acclaimed 2015 co-production of *Blood*.

As well as being a dynamic producing house, the Belgrade presents some of the very best work touring the UK. It is the only major arts and cultural facility in Coventry, and the largest, building-based professional producing theatre company in the city.

Since its opening in 1958 – an event that helped trigger the rebirth of Coventry following the devastation of WWII – the Belgrade has remained at the centre of its local communities. Having started the Theatre-in-Education (TiE) movement in the 1960s, the Belgrade continues to pioneer new initiatives in this field as well as other community and outreach programmes. The theatre won the Promotion of Diversity Award at the 2016 UK Theatre Awards.

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PILOT THEATRE

Pilot Theatre is one of the UK's leading touring theatre companies. Pilot seeks to create a cultural space where young adults can encounter, express and interrogate big ideas. Our passion is to tell extraordinary stories that properly reflect the internationalism and diversity of the UK, and that are powerfully relevant to the lives of young adults now.

Pilot is committed to innovation through using technology in its work and pursues a relationship with its audience that is often playful, interactive and participatory. Pilot nurtures emergent talent and aspiring artists from all walks of life and gives them the opportunity to share their voices and their art with the world.

In spring 2017 Pilot are touring their acclaimed co-production of E.M. Forster's *The Machine Stops* adapted for the stage by Neil Duffield. Forster's short story, published in 1909, is a chilling prediction and exploration of our increasingly complex relationship with technology.

Other work for 2017 includes an interactive co-production *Traitor* with our Norwegian partners, Teatret Vårt as part of platformshift.eu, an EU-funded programme and our large-scale community show with York Theatre Royal telling the story of York Suffragettes, *Everything is Possible* by Bridget Foreman. For a full list of tour venues and more information about Pilot and our work please visit Pilot's website.

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Satinder Kaur Chohan won The OffWestEnd.com Adopt a Playwright Award and began writing *Made in India* with the financial support of her Angels. One writer a year is "adopted" by individual donors brought together by this award to help talented new writers from backgrounds that offer little encouragement or financial support to find the time and space to prove themselves and take their place among our culture's storytellers.

Satinder would like to thank the following for their life-changing generosity:

Bill & Nini Aldridge
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Bernice Chitnis
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Debbie Cowley
Chris Crowcroft
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John Sandy
Jon Satow
Jenny Sheridan
Carol Slavid
Gael & Bob Strong
Paul & Kathy Wade
Camilla Whitworth Jones

CHARACTERS

DR. GUPTA – Indian fertility clinic owner, in her late 30s/early 40s

EVA – English client, in her late 30s/early 40s

ADITI – Indian rural village woman, 28

TRIMESTER ONE

Scene One

Indian spring.

Lajja Gauri Fertility Clinic, Gujarat, India.

Meeting room.

Street sounds cascade into a near-empty room. Political slogans and "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" ('Victory to Mother India') chants punch the air. Cars and rickshaws honk. Bullock carts roll. Cowbells jangle. Passing street vendors yell and shout, selling their wares. Bright white sunlight pushes through an iron-barred window. White paint on the walls bubbles and blisters in the heat. Posters of white mothers and babies, the Virgin Mary with baby Jesus, Krishna and Goddess Lajja Gauri cover peeling patches. A ceiling fan whirs above scattered plastic chairs. Dressed in light linen, **EVA** *wheels in a travel case, drops her bag and fans herself with a file, scanning the room. In a white medical coat over a bright sari and chappals,* **DR. GUPTA** *strides in, hanging up her smartphone.*

DR. GUPTA *(holding out her hand)* Welcome to India Mrs. Roe –

EVA *(shaking* **DR. GUPTA***'s hand)* Eva, please.

DR. GUPTA *pulls a scrunched garland from a pocket, hanging it around* **EVA***'s neck.*

DR. GUPTA – and welcome to my world-famous Lajja Gauri Clinic!

EVA *(admiring the garland)* Marigolds? So colourful. Thank you.

DR. GUPTA Actually, I didn't expect you till tomorrow.

EVA *(holding up a newspaper)* Dr. Gupta, I read about a possible surrogacy ban –

DR. GUPTA Please, don't worry.

EVA – in the car, from the airport.

DR. GUPTA Flares up now and again like an irritating rash –

EVA But it says –

DR. GUPTA – then dies down.

EVA The Government isn't introducing a ban?

DR. GUPTA Too much to lose.

EVA I've nothing to worry about?

DR. GUPTA Not so close to a state election. Thakkar has assured me.

EVA If we need to start sooner –

DR. GUPTA He's a leading election candidate. If anything changes, I'll let you know. Immediately.

EVA You're sure?

DR. GUPTA I'm sure.

EVA Ok, thank you.

EVA *puts away the newspaper.*

DR. GUPTA Mrs. Roe, I'm so honoured you chose my clinic.

EVA I'm relieved to be here – finally.

DR. GUPTA You've been so brave, fighting the British courts. Your landmark case proved how anachronistic laws fail to keep pace with science.

EVA Not without financial cost, blinding media glare, vitriolic abuse –

DR. GUPTA "Mrs. R" made seismic waves and won.

EVA Now "Mrs. R's" real work can begin.

DR. GUPTA *(pointing at the picture)* Goddess Lajja Gauri will look over you.

EVA *(admiring the picture)* She's a powerful brand image.

DR. GUPTA You think?

EVA With those breasts and that vulva? I work in advertising.

DR. GUPTA I'm expanding my clinic. We're re-launching soon. I'd love to get your advice.

EVA I'd be happy to help.

DR. GUPTA Great! Let's carve out time later. *(Ushering out* **EVA***)* For now, don't fret, get rest, tomorrow is for you. Today is for your surrogate.

EVA *(not moving)* That's also why I'm here.

DR. GUPTA You don't need to be.

EVA You didn't receive my email?

DR. GUPTA About –?

EVA I'd like to choose my surrogate.

Pause.

DR. GUPTA Eva, leave final selection to me.

EVA You're scheduled to choose today anyway –

DR. GUPTA Meet her down the line –

EVA I rushed straight here –

DR. GUPTA – when we confirm a pregnancy –

EVA I'm here.

DR. GUPTA – when we sign a contract. Much better time for you both.

EVA I'm here.

DR. GUPTA *slides the travel case back to* **EVA.**

DR. GUPTA You've had a long journey. Why don't you head to the hotel?

EVA I'd like to / begin here –

DR. GUPTA Check in, unpack / relax –

EVA – crash at the hotel later.

DR. GUPTA West-East is more taxing than East-West. You must be jetlagged.

EVA I'm on Indian time.

DR. GUPTA When you're a day early? A day late, maybe!

EVA In London, I've been waking, eating, sleeping five and a half hours earlier –

DR. GUPTA You're joking?

EVA To be ready.

DR. GUPTA You've got a demanding few days ahead –

EVA I'm ready.

DR. GUPTA Don't underestimate how much rest you need –

EVA I haven't.

DR. GUPTA It's not all about the surrogate. It's about the real mother too.

EVA I'll leave as soon as we've chosen her.

Pause.

DR. GUPTA Eva –

EVA I want to ensure she's a good fit.

DR. GUPTA Every one of our 100 surrogates-to-be is an excellent fit.

EVA *(holding out the file)* The clinic emailed me profiles a few days ago.

DR. GUPTA Reference only.

EVA *(flicks through the file)* I'd like to meet... *(Holds up a page)* Surrogate 32.

DR. GUPTA This isn't egg donor selection.

EVA I'd like to meet *her*.

DR. GUPTA There won't be any genetic link between *her* and your baby –

EVA I know.

DR. GUPTA I'll select the healthiest uterus available. Endometrial lining inch perfect for your embryo. We've several surrogates good to go.

EVA Surrogate 32.

DR. GUPTA Surrogate 43 is prime, at the ready –

EVA *(pointing to a photo)* Is Surrogate 32 here, at the clinic?

DR. GUPTA Why her?

EVA *stares at the photo.*

Eva, medical conditions need to be optimum. I select the surrogate who best fits your cycle when we begin, so both your bodies fall quickly into sync.

EVA This shouldn't be a blind date.

DR. GUPTA We'll arrange a meeting once embryo transfer succeeds.

EVA I want to meet my surrogate before I begin. She'll give birth to my baby.

DR. GUPTA It's not clinic procedure for you to meet so soon.

EVA I'm a paying client.

DR. GUPTA Other paying clients don't want to meet their surrogates this early, if at all.

EVA I do.

Pause.

DR. GUPTA Please, have a seat.

EVA I'm fine standing.

DR. GUPTA We only discourage contact at this stage to protect you and the surrogate. If you meet now, it sets you both up for disappointment if the transfer fails. Meet her when we confirm a pregnancy. A meeting isn't necessary now.

EVA What is necessary?

DR. GUPTA You supply your eggs. Your husband, his sperm.

EVA The cryo-shipment is still here at the clinic?

DR. GUPTA Yes, it's safe with us.

Pause.

EVA *(teary)* Eleven years of failed IVF cycles. Not knowing if I'd ever get pregnant. Getting pregnant, trying to stay pregnant – three times. "No heartbeat" – three times. Then... Tom...the courts...work I need to pay for *(stops herself)* –

DR. GUPTA *hands* **EVA** *a tissue.*

I'm alone...out of time...

Pause. **EVA** *wipes her tears.*

DR. GUPTA The surrogate is only the carrier. You're "renting"her womb.

EVA "Renting?"

DR. GUPTA This is a transaction.

EVA For your other clients, maybe.

DR. GUPTA Best you see it that way too.

EVA Please, bring her in.

DR. GUPTA Eva –

EVA Please. Please.

DR. GUPTA *pauses, then exits.* **EVA** *removes the garland and drinks dry her bottled water. She paces around, slapping mosquitoes on her naked skin. The door sounds.* **EVA** *wipes her face, smoothes her hair.* **ADITI** *shuffles in behind* **DR. GUPTA**, *head bowed, barefoot, adjusting the hanging pallu of her best sari over her face and bun. She wears gold earrings, a nose stud and mehndi on her hands. She carries a scrunched plastic bag.* **DR. GUPTA** *lowers the pallu, revealing* **ADITI**'*s face.* **EVA** *is transfixed by* **ADITI**, *who keeps her head bowed.*

DR. GUPTA *(presenting* **ADITI***)* Surrogate 32.

EVA *(to* **ADITI***)* Hello. What's your name?

DR. GUPTA Ah-dithi. Or call her Ada. Or Addy. Or Adith. Like Adith Piaf!

EVA A-ditty?

DR. GUPTA *nods in encouragement.* **EVA** *offers her hand to* **ADITI**.

Hello, I'm Eva.

C*onfused,* **ADITI** *turns to* **DR. GUPTA**.

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI***)* "Madamji".

ADITI *(pressing her hands together for* **EVA***)* Namaste Madamji.

EVA *(quickly presses her hands together)* No – ma – stay.

DR. GUPTA *moves to get a chair for* **ADITI**.

Thank you Doctor. I can take over now –

DR. GUPTA – and communicate how?

EVA She doesn't speak English?

DR. GUPTA Not yet.

EVA Any English?

DR. GUPTA She will soon. I run daily intensive English classes for all my surrogates. Plus computer, internet, sewing, knitting,

yoga, hair and make-up classes, all in the dorm upstairs. I even set up bank accounts in their names. Surrogacy isn't just for one baby or five. It's to set up these women for life. *(To* **ADITI***)* Bhaito.

EVA You really take care of them.

DR. GUPTA We spoil our surrogates 24/7 for nine months.

As she sits, **ADITI** *drops her bag.* **EVA** *hands the bag to* **ADITI**, *who clutches it without looking at* **EVA.** **EVA** *sits opposite* **ADITI**, *taking a sheet from her file.* **DR. GUPTA** *takes the bag from* **ADITI**, *placing it under* **ADITI**'s *chair.*

EVA *(holding up the sheet)* Just a few questions –

DR. GUPTA I have to get to a meeting, so...

EVA Aditi, how old are you?

DR. GUPTA That information is in the profile.

EVA Can I hear the answers from Aditi?

DR. GUPTA This is a busy clinic –

EVA I don't want to waste time.

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* Age?

ADITI *(in Gujarati)* 28.

DR. GUPTA *(to* **EVA***)* 28.

EVA *(to* **ADITI***)* Pregnancy sweet spot *and* light years younger than me!

EVA *looks to* **DR. GUPTA** *to translate.* **DR. GUPTA** *does not translate.*

(To **ADITI***)* Are you married? If you are, what does your husband think about the surrogacy? Did he or anyone else pressure you to do this?

DR. GUPTA Again, have you read her profile?

EVA Can you ask Aditi?

DR. GUPTA "Ah-dithi".

EVA So it's not just dry data.

DR. GUPTA Or "Ada" if that's too difficult.

EVA *(repeats)* Ah – ditty. Ah – ditty. Ah –

ADITI *looks up at* **EVA.** **EVA** *smiles at her.*

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* Married?

ADITI *(in Gujarati)* My husband was a fruit and veg seller. Crushed under his cart by a rich drunk in a big speeding car. Bhagwan *(points upwards)* looks after him now.

DR. GUPTA Husband is dead.

EVA She's a widow? *(Holding up the profile.)* This says "*Not* married"...

DR. GUPTA Breadwinner of her family now.

EVA Aditi, what happened to your –?

DR. GUPTA Not fruitful to visit the past.

EVA Please tell her I'm so sorry about her husband.

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* She offers condolences**.**

ADITI *lifts her eyes to meet* **EVA***'s, nodding her head in thanks.*

EVA Aditi, how many children do you have?

DR. GUPTA Two daughters.

EVA Can you ask Aditi please?

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* How many children?

ADITI *(in Gujarati)* Two girls. Both very hard-working at school, home, in the fields. Madamji, the eldest wants to be a doctor like you, helping the helpless. The youngest wants a cell phone and to work in a call-centre. She likes to talk. I'll

buy them an education with this money. A future. Then they can be whoever they want to be.

DR. GUPTA Two daughters.

EVA That's all?

DR. GUPTA That's all. Two daughters. No sons.

ADITI *(to* **DR. GUPTA** *in Gujarati)* Madamji, my answers are ok?

EVA She has a question?

DR. GUPTA No questions. Just wants to know your next one.

EVA *(to* **ADITI***)* Did you go to school?

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* You didn't go to school...?

ADITI *(shaking her head, then in Gujarati)* Not for long. I had to stop to work in the fields with my mother. I'm a daughter of the soil.

DR. GUPTA High school graduate.

EVA But she shook her head / to say no –

DR. GUPTA She'd have gone to university / if her family could have afforded it. Thanks to you, she'll be able to send both her daughters to university.

EVA *(smiling at* **ADITI***)* I really hope so.

DR. GUPTA Next question?

EVA Aditi, you live close to the clinic?

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* You live where?

ADITI *(in Gujarati)* Padri. Two hours by bus. We live in a mud hut, with a leaky roof, where the rain runs in. I'd like to fix it or buy a new brick house –

DR. GUPTA *(interrupts)* Small village. Short bus journey away.

EVA If you move to the dorm here, will someone look after your daughters?

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* When you move here, who will care for your daughters?

ADITI *(in Gujarati)* Their grandmother, in her village. Not my mother, my husband's mother. My mother is furious that I –

DR. GUPTA *(interrupts)* Paternal grandma in her village.

EVA *(to* **ADITI***)* Your children won't be far?

DR. GUPTA So close, they can visit on designated family days. Occasionally.

EVA *(to* **DR. GUPTA***)* That's reassuring. Aditi, do you work?

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* Occupation?

ADITI *(in Gujarati)* I milk cows, do chores on a dairy farm – when I get work.

DR. GUPTA Dairy farm labourer. Gujarat might be a dry state for alcohol –

EVA This is a dry state?

DR. GUPTA – but thanks to our famous White Revolution, it's a fertile state for milk. Milk *and* surrogate capital of India!

EVA No booze?

DR. GUPTA Bootleg always available. For a small fee.

EVA Thank God.

DR. GUPTA Eva, Gujarat has made much of its vast wealth from milk. Aditi is one of the women who makes the milk flow here. And you'll make the money flow for her. In nine months as your surrogate, she'll earn what it would take her ten years to earn as a labourer.

EVA I'll make that much of a difference?

DR. GUPTA Life-changing. You'll lift her and her daughters out of extreme poverty, give them opportunities – university, jobs – they'd never have. *You.* Now *(moving towards the door)* –

EVA Just a couple more questions –

DR. GUPTA *(speeding up* **EVA***)* My meeting?

EVA *(to* **ADITI***)* Any problems with previous pregnancies? Miscarriages? Personal or family health issues?

DR. GUPTA Clean sheet.

EVA If you could…

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* Any problems giving birth?

ADITI *(smiling, in Gujarati)* Both daughters slipped out like butter.

EVA *(smiling)* What did she say?

DR. GUPTA This virgin surrogate says she'll deliver a healthy bouncing baby for you. Strong uterus like that, she's got more surrogacies in her yet! Ok, you've more than enough information and should really rest –

EVA Can I have time with Aditi? Alone?

DR. GUPTA And communicate how?

EVA *(holding up her phone)* Google Translate?

DR. GUPTA She's answered all your questions.

EVA Only a few minutes.

DR. GUPTA My meeting.

EVA I'll pay her, for her time.

DR. GUPTA *(to* **ADITI** *in Gujarati)* Bhagwan, she's a fussy one… Smile. A lot. *(Exiting, to* **EVA***)* Five minutes.

ADITI *(calling after* **DR. GUPTA***)* Madamji? Madamji?

ADITI *grabs her bag and scuttles after* **DR. GUPTA**, *who slams the door shut.* **ADITI** *faces the closed door, turns slowly and sits back down, avoiding eye contact with* **EVA**, *who taps into her phone.* **ADITI** *clutches her bag close.*

EVA Typical. *(Stops tapping)* No reception.

EVA *puts away her phone. Silence.* **EVA** *smiles at* **ADITI.** **ADITI** *averts her gaze.*

Aditi? You chose to be a surrogate? Why?

ADITI *stares at the floor.*

Money, yes. But why else? You, a surrogate –

EVA *repeats actions of a protruding stomach.*

– why?

ADITI *raises her head slightly, eyes downcast.*

Are you happy to do this *(patting her stomach)*?

ADITI *lowers her head again.*

Ready, to do this *(patting her stomach)*?

EVA *crouches in front of* **ADITI.**

Aditi, look at me.

ADITI *lowers her head.*

Look at me.

ADITI *fiddles with her bag.*

Is this how you'll bring my baby into the world? Without looking at me?

ADITI *interlaces her fingers and bows her head.*

"Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb". *(Pause)* Look me in the eye. I won't hurt you. Not after everything you've been through. Everything I've been through. Everything lost.

Pause. **ADITI** *levels eyes at* **EVA.** *Lights out. A magic lantern projection of syringes, overflowing with blood, circles the clinic walls to the music of a Catholic hymn. The music underscores an election rally speech "With*

our technological tools, let's plant miracle seeds of the future, in the fertile soil of our dreams. To make a New India that grows and prospers. An India reborn."

Scene Two

Procedure room.

A loud ringing phone. **EVA** *answers, half-way through undressing and slipping on a medical gown, as* **DR. GUPTA** *waits, an open medical file in her hand.*

EVA Hi Mike, how are you? No, not a problem to speak. No, it's not interfering. I'm meeting him in Mumbai next week. Yes, I'll send that on. Ok great. Thanks Mike. *(Hangs up)*

EVA *resumes putting on her medical gown, back to front. An IV is inserted into her hand.* **DR. GUPTA** *resumes reading from the file.*

DR. GUPTA You've completed thirteen days of hormonal treatment. You were away for most of it?

EVA About ten days. I travelled to –

DR. GUPTA – kept up with all your fertility shots?

EVA Injected between the nausea, lassi cravings –

DR. GUPTA Had your final trigger shot at midnight?

EVA Has hard-boiling eggs ever been more painful?

DR. GUPTA You and Aditi are cycling in sync. Her uterus is ripening perfectly.

EVA*'s phone rings.*

EVA *(glancing at her phone)* Great. I'll be here for any embryo transfer –

DR. GUPTA We can discuss any transfer by phone, should fertilisation work.

EVA I'd like to be with Aditi if it happens –

DR. GUPTA You don't need to be.

EVA But I –

The phone stops ringing. **EVA** *glances at her phone.*

DR. GUPTA Eva, focus on your job first.

DR. GUPTA *snaps on a pair of latex gloves and reaches towards* **EVA.**

Relax. It's all very straightforward –

EVA *(stopping* **DR. GUPTA***)* Blood...blood...on your gloves.

DR. GUPTA *(checking her gloves)* A mere spot. Easily dispensed with.

DR. GUPTA *throws away the gloves and reaches for a new pair.*

EVA *(pointing)* Blood...blood...on the box.

DR. GUPTA *wipes the box with a tissue and throws it away. She snaps on the new pair of gloves.*

DR. GUPTA Nurse will be reprimanded. It won't happen again.

EVA Do you change the sheets every time?

DR. GUPTA Lie down. Please.

EVA *hugs herself.*

Lose more time, we'll have to delay your treatment, begin again, midnight trigger shot and all –

EVA You're going inside me, with surgical instruments, to extract my eggs –

DR. GUPTA I've done this procedure thousands of times –

EVA What if your equipment is dirty?

DR. GUPTA Our equipment is / state of the art, clean –

EVA I get infected?

DR. GUPTA You've never seen stray blood in a UK clinic?

EVA Not when I'm paying thousands for my treatment, no.

DR. GUPTA Then don't let it affect you. You won't see it again.

EVA Outside, I can deal with the dirt, the stench, sewage, defecation – but this isn't the Indian roadside. If you're taking out the few eggs I've got left, this should be a spotless, sterile clinic.

Pause.

DR. GUPTA *(taking off her gloves)* Ok, let's cancel.

The phone rings again. **EVA** *is caught between* **DR. GUPTA** *and her ringing phone.*

EVA What?

DR. GUPTA I'm cancelling. Good luck finding what you need out there.

EVA Dr. Gupta –

DR. GUPTA *hands* **EVA** *her belongings and her ringing phone.*

You can't.

DR. GUPTA Mrs. Roe, you arrived a day early, unannounced.

EVA I was worried about the ban / wanted to meet –

DR. GUPTA Breaching clinic policy, I let you select your surrogate on the spot –

EVA I'm so grateful –

DR. GUPTA I also allowed you to use your dead husband's sperm –

EVA – you've been incredibly compassionate –

DR. GUPTA – when most clinics in India, in fact, the world, would not –

EVA – and understanding.

DR. GUPTA You're delaying your treatment. My other clients' too. My clinic adheres to global standards but if you think it's dirty, unhygienic –

EVA No, no, I don't, not at all –

DR. GUPTA – take your business elsewhere. I can pick and choose my business. As you can. Don't like my service? Find a cleaner, cheaper, more flexible option elsewhere. That's the real beauty of New India.

The phone stops ringing.

EVA *(joins her hands together)* Please, forgive me. This is the right clinic. You're the right doctor. You've done so much for me already. It's just…the hormone shots, bloated ovaries, bruised womb…always reaching for Tom but…he's never there…keeping order when I feel so messed up – I'm just – not thinking…because…all I'm thinking is…what if…what if… I don't have…any eggs left? Any eggs at all?

Long pause.

DR. GUPTA We'll only know when we try.

DR. GUPTA *places* **EVA**'s *belongings back to one side. She reopens the file.*

On your ultrasound, you have seven mature follicles – five more than when you began. A growth spurt. Must be a few eggs to be needled out.

EVA You're doing your job. Tom has done his. Aditi is ready to do hers. Only if I do mine will I be a real mother. A real woman.

EVA*'s phone rings again.*

(Picking it up) I'll switch it – *(looking at the screen).*

DR. GUPTA Eva, your eggs are only fresh for a limited time.

EVA Not if work over boil them first.

DR. GUPTA I've several caesarians lined up after you. But if you'd rather –

EVA *puts away her phone.*

EVA Sorry. *(Deep breath)* Let's crack on with my Easter Egg hunt.

DR. GUPTA *(reading the file)* We should extract five or six eggs, at least –

EVA Only five or six?

DR. GUPTA Magic numbers for a woman over 40.

DR. GUPTA *jabs the IV line into* **EVA***'s hand.*

Only takes one golden egg to make a baby.

DR. GUPTA *flaps* **EVA***'s gown.*

But maybe put this on the right way first.

EVA *(looking at her gown)* Oh, I didn't...

DR. GUPTA *helps* **EVA** *with her gown, distracted by a tattoo on* **EVA***'s naked back.*

DR. GUPTA What is that?

EVA A Hindu good luck symbol. Henna. Fading already.

DR. GUPTA This? For good luck?

EVA Sweetest little girl clung to me till I got it.

DR. GUPTA You did it round here?

EVA The Ganges. Stayed in the same hotel from my honeymoon.

DR. GUPTA An Indian honeymoon?

EVA Tom backpacked around India before uni. Insisted we come here. He took me to Rajasthan, Goa, Kerala... But he loved the mad Ganges.

DR. GUPTA Ah, the murky brown water, burning flesh, naked sadhus –

EVA He loved it all... So I took him back there. On a long boat. Poured milk, floated flowers and candles, priest chanting, naked sadhus dancing, demonstrators shouting, emptied him into the flow. I did what I needed to do.

DR. GUPTA You will here too.

DR. GUPTA *hands* **EVA** *a hairnet, which she puts on.*

To reiterate, we enter with a very fine needle, insert it through the vaginal wall –

EVA Know it like a Catholic hymn.

DR. GUPTA When you come round next door, you'll see other clients recovering next to you –

EVA Other clients?

DR. GUPTA Once we've finished expanding, we'll have new procedure rooms, new birthing rooms, a new dormitory, a restaurant...

EVA Tom ran a restaurant. A small, organic one. He sold it, so we could have a baby.

EVA *makes the sign of the cross, as* **DR. GUPTA** *looks on.*

Lapsed Catholic. CEO. Christmas and Easter Only.

DR. GUPTA It's important to have faith.

EVA Even when it's been worn away?

DR. GUPTA Best time to find it. *(Pause)* Half hour. You won't feel a thing.

EVA The sheet...it's –

DR. GUPTA *stops.*

– clean.

DR. GUPTA Relax. Count down from ten to one for me...

DR. GUPTA *puts on her surgical mask.*

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