

**SCENE 11 - EXT. EARLY EVENING - IN FRONT OF THE RESTAURANT -
WANT AN APPLE? - CONTINUOUS TAKE - (3 MINUTES 35 SECONDS)**

Camera follows Atrin coming inside. She is wearing the same clothes as the previous scene. A few hours have passed. She seems slightly better, but still shaken. She enters a laundromat carrying a basket of dirty clothes. Without hurry, she loads them into the machine and starts the cycle.

CLOSE-UP on Atrin near the washer.

She turns and sits on the bench across from the machine, staring blankly into the rotating clothes—into infinity.

A cheerful Lebanese woman, non-religious, enters while eating apple slices from a plastic container. The adjacent machine is hers. She checks it and then sits next to Atrin on the bench. After a moment of thought, she chuckles to herself. She turns to Atrin.

WOMAN

(In Arabic, smiling)

Do you want an apple?

Atrin gives a faint smile, but says nothing. The woman offers the container. Atrin declines with a subtle head shake and a "tsk." The woman pulls the container back and bites into another slice.

WOMAN

(In French)

You're Iranian, right?

ATRIN

(In French)

Yes... how did you know?

WOMAN

(Tsking back playfully)

You just said "tsk."

Atrin looks puzzled.

WOMAN

(In accented French)

Iranians, when they say no, they tilt their head up and say "tsk."

Here, people shake their head sideways. We Arabs also raise our heads. But "tsk"? That's all you. (winks)

Atrin seems suddenly pulled out of her hollow world.

ATRIN

(In hesitant French)

That's funny. I didn't even notice how I say no...

WOMAN

(In broken English)

My English not very good. We went to French school in Beirut. But I know Iranians don't like French. That's why they go to Toronto! (laughs)

WOMAN

(Continuing, in French)

But your food—so delicious...

Gourmeh Sabzi, Gheymeh Bademjan, Tahchin...

(She says the names with amusing mispronunciations)

ATRIN

(In English)

I actually like French.

I understand it well, I read well...

(In French)

And now I speak it better than before.

WOMAN

You speak both really well.

She takes another bite of her apple. They fall into silence again.

WOMAN

(Still in French, not turning her head)

Don't think too much... Something always happens. Don't worry. Just look at the world...

(She bursts into laughter)

Where we come from, if you wake up in the morning and your head is still attached and you haven't exploded, then that's a win! That's when you say: HURRRAAAAH! (Laughs again)

Atrin watches her in quiet awe.

WOMAN

(While chewing)

The world, civilization, religion, God, everything started from there. Every person who's gone anywhere, passed through there. Even the thieves and killers are ours too.

(She opens her phone, shows a map)

See? The Middle East is at the center of the world. Like the heart. (Points to her chest) Full of blood. Always has been. Probably always will be. Also full of poetry, tories, myths.

(She looks at Atrin as if casting a spell, grinning)

The heart is where the feelings live. That's why we get torn up there, our bodies shred in that land, so the world can keep feeling something. Otherwise, the world goes numb.

No more poetry. No more feelings. That's probably our job in this world...

The camera slowly turns during this speech. We glimpse Atrin's reflection through the washer door—distorted, swirling with clothes.

The entire world seems to be spinning in that machine.