

ANOUSHA ZARKESH CASTING

THOMAS

26 INT. SAMARITAN LIVING ROOM - DAY 26

A large Buddha watches over THOMAS, (36) a man who's seen trouble, addiction, and come out the other side.

THOMAS

Tex has never lived here. But I encourage kids with problems to drop in. It's not all about shelter. Neglect can be psychological as well as physical.

NICK

What's his brand of problem?

THOMAS

Why?

NICK

I'd like to know who Tex is.

THOMAS

The question's not who he is, but who he could be. Right now, Tex is a lonely middle class kid, who needs help. Mother has mental health issues and father's away a lot. What's he done?

NICK

We want to talk to Tex about an assault.

In the background, street kids and strays watch on, wary.

THOMAS

Assault or fight? Boys of sixteen, seventeen, they fight, it's primal, a way of establishing strength.

NICK

And when it's a group of primals targeting single vulnerable victims, what d'you call that?

Thomas folds his arms, a shadow crosses his face.

THOMAS

Cowardice masquerading as courage? Confusion. One day you're a kid.

Powerless. And then hormones kick in.

Thomas is talking about himself now...

THOMAS (CONT'D)

You act like your false impression of a man. Macho. It's a mask. A real man knows that being a man is about emotional self awareness, discipline, mindfulness.

Nick exchanges a look with Tori. 'Real Man?'

NICK

Tex ever mentioned an Adrian Kuhm?

Thomas unfolds his arms, folds again, disturbed, trying to hide it.

THOMAS

No. But I know him. He's one of the local benefactors.

NICK

Not any more. You picked up an attitude of gay hate with Tex, or any other boys?

Thomas looks at him hard before answering.

THOMAS

What's this about?

NICK

The targeting of gay men.

Thomas wonders if he's playing with him in some way. Then:

THOMAS

If Tex has done something stupid, he must deal with the consequences.
But there is a right and a wrong way of bringing him to you.

NICK

There is only our way. The law.

THOMAS

I know how to reach these kids. Protect them.

NICK

Protect them from what?

THOMAS

Themselves. Sometimes their fathers. Father figures. Predators. You. Yeah, I know who

you are, the man on the beach.

He may as well have punched Nick in the gut