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2011 Willamette Writers Kay Snow Award

Indian Errand Day

a screenplay by Mahesh Raj Mohan

Logline

A young Indian-American man leaves behind his white girlfriend to travel with his overbearing father to England for a wedding. While there, he uncovers family secrets that lead him to reconcile the clash of cultures, confront his father, and follow the dictates of his heart.

Synopsis

Vijay can't wait to spend Spring Break with his girlfriend Diane. But he must first endure another "Indian errand day" with his overbearing father – running multiple and unrelated errands that use up Vijay's free time. Vijay is bright and athletic, but his father pushes him to "study harder," and he enjoys embarrassing Vijay in front of strangers. His parents have no idea that Vijay has a white girlfriend.

Circumstances force Vijay to give up his Spring Break plans with Diane and accompany his father to England for his cousin's wedding, which deeply disappoints Diane. Vijay is out of his element in England; he can't speak Hindi and doesn't understand his family's internal politics. Fortunately, Vijay meets an ally – the alluring Neela – who helps him navigate the different cultures.

Over the course of a week, Vijay narrowly avoids a bar brawl, becomes his cousin's best man, goes on a pub crawl with Neela, and meets his father's younger brother, who is estranged from the family. This meeting brings him into conflict with Suresh, his father's eldest brother, leading to a confrontation where Vijay and his father are expelled from Suresh's house. This dramatic shift brings father and son closer together, but also leads to more turmoil when Vijay's cousin disappears. Vijay leads the search for the groom-to-be, while realizing he has strong feelings for Neela. Vijay must repair the rift between his father and uncles, reconcile his true feelings, and help salvage a wedding. These are multiple and unrelated errands that only Vijay can solve.

About Mahesh Raj Mohan

Born and raised in Oklahoma, Mahesh understands the conflicts that many first-generation Indian-Americans experience. He has wanted to be a professional writer since he was eight years old; aside from a brief stint as a canvasser, all of his paying jobs have been related to writing or editing. His reviews have been published by Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper *The Oregonian* and Hugo-nominated website *Strange Horizons*. Mahesh lives near Portland, Oregon with his wife Sara.

