

SCENE 9

(J, R and Q at a bar.)

R

Well J knows all the places, he's been here a while.

J

(Doing a little laugh) I have, yes. And actually it's our official suggestion right now that Country Y citizens avoid local, Country X establishments. At least for the next few weeks.

Q

How come?

R

Tensions. There've been tensions lately.

Q

You didn't tell me about that.

J

It's normal. That's how it goes here: Things rise up, then they settle down. Comes in waves.

Q

What happened? / What...

J

A local boy, imprisoned, over theft. He stole.

Q

What did he steal?

J

And the law is clear. You steal, you go to jail. That's / the--

Q

But what did / he--

R

But I guess it doesn't matter, right? (To J) That's what you're saying, the / law's the law.

Q

Okay, just asking.

J

Batteries. He stole batteries.

(Slight beat.)

Harsh right? Thrown in jail over batteries?

Q

I uh...

J

(Mock outrage) Yeah what are they *doing* over there, locking locals up over *batteries*!

Q

(Playing along) Yeah what *are* you doing?

J

(Still playing) *What are we doing in Country X??*

(Slight awkward beat)

It's a good question. No it is. I've read the articles, I know what some people are saying back home. But guess what-- that question? Not my problem. The only question *I'm* responsible for is: are we going to enforce the law or not. And guess what: It's *their* law-- you steal, you go to jail-- that's on *their* books.

Q

But it's how you choose to *enforce* the law, right?

J

We enforce the law equally. We're strictly by the books.

R

Their law, / on *their* books.

J

Their law, yes. *Their* laws, *their* government, *their* courts.

Q

But I guess / what I'm--

J

We're playing by their rules.

Q

Playing by their rules to take advantage of them. Right?

R

(Trying to laugh it off) That's not...

Q

I mean, / that's what--

J

(Mock horror) Take advantage! My god, lock up your daughters...
(R laughs.)

Q

(Mimicking the mocking tone, mock overly sensitive, to J) I don't mean you *personally* are taking advantage, or (to R) *you*.
(Pause)

R

But you are kind of saying that, right?

Q

What.

R

That it's us personally?

Q

No, I--

R

We *are* Country Y.

Q

Yes, I know.

R

And this is-- I mean it's the globalized world. If you engage with another country through legitimate means, then that's... that's legitimate! There's / *no other way of--*

Q

Yeah but-- but it's using the *guise* of legitimacy to pretty much *usurp* a country.

J

Guise of legitimacy? What does-- it's legitimate or it's illegitimate. / Guise? What does..

Q

Well I'm...

J

Their President is in power, so...

Well... Q

Well what? R

President K? Come on. Q

What's wrong with president K? J

(To Q) Okay / look. R

(To J) Are you serious? Q

Look, / you don't-- R

Yeah, what's wrong with him? J

He's a puppet, right? Of ours? Q

Look, you don't know what you're talking about. R

Excuse me?! Q

But you don't, you don't. I mean we all used to read about, about all the terrible things Country Y is doing in Country X, but it's just not true! When you're *here* it's just not-- R

It's (okay)... J

You can't pass judgment! You're passing judgment. Again! / R

I'm / not passing-- Q

On, on his *job*, his *livelihood!* /

R

/ It's okay.

J

And mine too! No, it's not okay. I apologize to you on her behalf.

R

Don't apologize for me!

Q

But what you're saying is not *valid*. It's just embarrassing.
(A stunned beat.)

R

How dare you.

Q

(Q abruptly leaves.)

It's like you two are gonna be married or something.
(R follows after her.)

J

SCENE 10

(R catches up to Q a block or two outside the bar.)

R

Hey, hey!

(He grabs her arm. She pulls away.)

Hey I'm sorry. I'm / sorry for--

Q

No, no!

R

I was out of line.

(He moves towards her, she backs away.)

What more do you want me to say?

Q

You're-- you're--

R

What?

Q

You're a completely different person.

R

I'm not a completely different person.

Q

No, you are. You are. You'd *never* say those things to me back home. You are a completely different person.

(Beat)

R

I'm the same person I always was. Hate to break it to you.

(Pause)

Q

Then I guess I'm very confused.