

SANTHARA

"Dying with Equanimity"

Episode 05

"RELEASE"

Floating Away

written by

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Approx. 60 minutes

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For producer consideration.

EPISODE NOTE

EPISODE 05 – RELEASE

Ritual: Final meditation. Release. The family arrives at the same threshold. Portrait. Empty chair. Road blessed. Death met awake – reunion as image, breath, elemental cinema – not explanation. Aftermath elongated: the living learn a new physics. Ending: Mirror / Nostalghia / Solaris weight – time collapses; water, wind, fire, string; the camera becomes almost a soul; love remains as practice not slogan.

Links: all motifs pay. Biji named (04). Letter (03). Treaty (02). Vow (01).

FADE IN:

EXT. EARTH FROM NOTHING – PRE-IMAGE – BLACK

Hold black longer than comfort allows.
 Then: wind – only wind – for several seconds.
 Then: a single drop of water into a metal bowl. Ripple.
 Then: a diya catching – flame small, exact.
 Then: a child's breath – Young Ram, 1947, asleep against a
 shoulder.
 Then: an old man's breath – same rhythm, present.

RAM (V.O.)
 (whisper, almost not
 language)
 Mother... Father... Where do You
 live?

The question is older than the series now. It has become
 weather.

EXT. CENTRAL COAST – DAWN – VERY LONG TAKE

The camera moves as if walking underwater – slow,
 horizontal, across scrub, toward the sea.
 Gulls. Light like watered milk.
 Far: temple marble as a pale tooth on the cliff.

No music.
 Only world.

RAM (V.O.)
 There are two ways through a
 life.
 The way of nature – grass,
 border, blood, the truck, the
 failing pump in the chest.
 The way of grace – which is
 nature after it has learned a
 name for love.

A crow crosses – black on gold – rhyme with Episode 01.
 This time the crow lands. Picks at something unseen. Flies
 again.
 The world does not explain itself.

EXT. THE GARDEN – CONTINUOUS – THE TAMARIND

Ram in a chair under the tree. Body almost transparent with thinness. Eyes open. Blanket. Photograph on heart.

The kite above – still stuck, patient as a scar.

Dew. Hold.

A leaf falls – same as Episode 01 – different man catching it with his eyes only.

Sannah asleep on a cot, paint still on her wrist.

Snehit on porch steps, upright even in exhaustion – sentinel.

Maya in the doorway with the soft bulk of late pregnancy – or newborn days if time has already folded; prefer late pregnancy still, birth in aftermath.

The camera circles them once – slowly – as if blessing the geometry.

RAM (V.O.)

I have stopped demanding a postal code for God.

If You live in the looking, I am almost home.

If You live in the ones who remained, I am already home and still leaving.

Both can be true. I learned that from my heart and my son – opposite teachers, same lesson.

INT. HOUSE – MORNING – ORDINARY SACRED LABOR

Toast for the living. Smell enters the garden air.

Someone washes a cup.

Lena arrives quietly, checks, nods: soon. Not hours as threat – hours as weather report.

LENA

Talk. Touch. Let the room be ordinary.

Ordinary is the correct music.

She steps back. Does not steal the center.

INT. DINING ROOM – PORTRAIT PLACED FOR THE EMPTY CHAIR

They carry Sannah's finished painting.
 Ram's face: exact, border in the eyes, undefeated.
 Behind him: Radha as light – not ghost kitsch – a second gravity.

Placed where the empty chair can "see."

SANNAH
 (to chair, to paint, to mother)
 You can look at him when we can't.
 That is the division of labor now.

Snehit stands a long time. The camera holds his face until performance falls off and only son remains.

SNEHIT
 She would have said it was too flattering.
 Then she would have stared at it while cooking and burned the rice on purpose.

SANNAH
 I left the burn mark in the gold.
 Look.

A tiny umber scar in the radiance. Snehit sees it. Nods.
 Love as accuracy.

EXT. GARDEN – MIDDAY – PRIVATE GOODBYES – MAYA

Maya guides Ram's palm to her belly. Life kicks against death's schedule – rude, perfect.

MAYA
 I won't ask you to stay.
 I ask you to leave us a way to speak you that isn't only wound.
 Be a story we can tell at a table with food still on it.

RAM
 Tell them I was stubborn and soft.

Tell them I loved a woman past
sense.
Tell them I failed my children
and returned with enough time to
mean it.
Tell them the truck was real and
the kite was real and the vow was
not a performance for strangers.

Maya kisses his forehead. Her tear falls on his skin – a
last unasked baptism.
She goes inside before bargaining begins.

EXT. GARDEN – SANNAH'S BLESSING – LONG

She kneels. Forehead to forehead. Childhood geometry.

SANNAH
I thought blessing would feel
like agreement.
It feels like accurate seeing
while the thing seen leaves.

RAM
That is the only blessing that
isn't a lie.

SANNAH
Then I see you.
Truck. Paint. Poems. Half-father
years. Full-father days at the
end.
The way you held my hand at the
pyre without shaking – I hated it
then; I understand it now as a
kind of bridge.
I bless the road.
Not because I want it.
Because you are on it and I will
not make you lonely with my
refusal to look.

She breathes.

SANNAH
Tassa michchhami dukkadam.
If the accent is wrong, correct
me from wherever correction
lives.

RAM
 You said it like someone who
 learned it for love.
 That is the only accent.

On the wall inside, if we cut briefly: BLESS THE ROAD –
 LATER. Sannah has underlined LATER into near-erasure – the
 word becoming transparent.

EXT. GARDEN – SNEHIT'S GOODBYE – THE HARD ONE

He sits on the ground beside the chair. Not higher. Not
 standing over.

SNEHIT
 I wanted to be the son who saved
 you.
 I failed into something better.
 I'm the son who stayed.

RAM
 That was the portion of the vow I
 could not finish alone.
 You finished it by watching.
 Watching is harder than fighting.
 You were built for fighting. You
 rebuilt yourself. That is a kind
 of santhara too – thinning the
 need to control.

SNEHIT
 Michchhami dukkadam
 (mich-CHAH-mee dook-KAH-dum).
 For using anger as a church.
 For making you win an argument I
 didn't know was about Mom.
 For the ways I will still be
 angry after you're gone – don't
 file that as debt. File it as
 weather.

RAM
 Granted.
 And mine to you – granted whether
 your hands are open or fists.
 I forgive the fists. They were
 how you prayed when no one taught
 you softer verbs.

They hold hands.
 Long hold.
 No score.
 A bird.
 The freeway ocean.
 Snehit's thumb finds the old string-scar on Ram's palm –
 unconsciously – Radha's second story completing across
 generations.

INT. / EXT. – AFTERNOON – THE ELEMENTAL PREPARATION

Diya lit.
 Window open.
 Water bowl on the low table – not for drinking – for
 presence. Ripple when wind enters.

Sannah wets Ram's lips once.
 Snehit adjusts the blanket with incompetent tenderness –
 perfect.

RAM

When it comes, do not close my
 eyes immediately.
 Let the garden enter.
 I have spent a life half-closed.
 Also – if I look afraid, do not
 correct my face for the story.
 Let fear be present and
 unthrashed.
 That is equanimity. Not a plaster
 smile.

SNEHIT

I've got the room.

SANNAH

We've got the room.

Maya's hand finds Snehit's shoulder from behind – chain of
 the living.

EXT. GARDEN – THE LONG DYING – TARKOVSKY DURATION

What follows is not cut like television panic.
 It is cut like memory and weather.

A) CLOSE ON diya flame in wind – it almost dies – returns.

B) Water bowl – reflection of kite – broken – re-forms.
 C) Sannah's paint-stained fingers on Ram's sleeve.
 D) Snehit's face – the fifteen-year-old and the
 thirty-four-year-old occupying one skull.
 E) Maya's belly / breath.
 F) The empty dining chair inside – alone – waiting.
 G) Young Ram's eye in 1947 – looking through truck slats –
 MATCH CUT to Ram's eye now – looking at leaves.

RAM (V.O.)

Release is not a stunt.
 It is the hand opening after a
 lifetime of fist and pen and tool
 and child's shoulder and pen
 again.

His breath lengthens.
 Pauses.
 Returns.
 Pauses longer.

They speak ordinary things on purpose – as planned:
 a possible baby name that can swim borders;
 Radha burning rice;
 the time Ram painted a fender like a prayer;
 Auntie Sharda's pickle wrongness.

SANNAH

(soft)
 Leave on the sound of life.

SNEHIT

Mom burned rice on purpose to
 make you come to the kitchen.

RAM

(barely audible)
 I came.

A smile – small, exact.
 A breath out.
 A pause that becomes the rest of time.
 Lena steps near, checks, does not steal.

LENA

(soft)
 He's gone.

No one moves.

The camera does not move.
 Wind moves.
 The diya continues – indifferent, sacred.
 The kite paper rustles – as if applause from a cheap, true
 god.

Snehit does not look away.
 Sannah makes a sound she will never make the same way
 again – then stops it, not from shame, from listening.

Snehit closes nothing too fast.
 Lets the garden enter the open eyes – leaves, light, a
 piece of sky.
 Then, gently, lids.

SNEHIT

Okay.
 Okay.
 I've got the room.

INT. THE DISSOLUTION – FINAL CROSSING

(not heaven as product – the last endogenous bloom, then
 clear light)

The neon that once assaulted now thins –
 teal and violet washing into water-color gold,
 as if the nervous system had spent its fireworks
 and left only weather.

Ram's body remains in the chair under the tamarind with
 his children.
 Something else – jiva, lamp, the one who looked – stands.

SOUND: the Namokar one last time, almost inaudible, inside
 bone, then gone.

VOICES

(layered, not
 "performance" – as if
 the body itself were
 remembering)

Namo Arihantanam

(NAH-mo
 uh-ri-hun-TAA-num)

Namo Siddhanam

(NAH-mo sid-DHAH-num)

Namo Ayariyanam

(NAH-mo
 ah-yah-ri-YAA-num)

Namo Uvajjhayanam

(NAH-mo
 oo-vuhj-jha-YAA-num)
 Namō Loe Savva-sahunam
 (NAH-mo lo-EH suv-vuh
 SAA-hoo-num)

A beat of breath after each line – five bows of sound,
 then silence denser than sound.

Ankle-deep water that is temple basin and border river and
 garden rain at once.
 He shelters a small flame with the scarred left palm – a
 candle carried through wind and water, faith as a physical
 act.
 Wind tests the flame.
 It lives.

RADHA is warmth first, then outline, then the un-sainted
 woman of the ice-cream photo.

She presses her thumb to his string-scar.

RADHA
 Second story complete?
 Or still being written?

RAM
 Still.
 They will write.
 That was the work.

RADHA
 Then come.
 Not because you hurried.
 Because you sequenced.

BIJI walks on his left – not falling behind – waiting.

BIJI
 You looked.
 Good.
 Looking is a kind of carrying.

FATHER behind at a respectful distance – no longer only a
 command.

FATHER
 Michchhami dukkadam –
 for the order.

I would give it again to keep you
alive.
That is my shame and my love.
Hold both.

RAM

I hold both.
I am putting them down gently,
not throwing them.

Ahead: Pacific noon on water – no gates, no judges.
Behind: children's voices saying names – a rope of sound.
He does not cut it.
He ties it to his wrist.
The rope lengthens infinitely – connection without
captivity.

He looks back once – at Snehit, Sannah, Maya –
the opposite of 1947's order:
love allowing the neck to turn.

Then he faces forward into ordinary coastal sun on water –
endless without being loud.

**THE DISSOLUTION ENDS NOT AS BLACKOUT BUT AS THE GARDEN
RETURNING TO THOSE WHO REMAIN –**

wind, diya, kite paper, a bird –
the living world's DMT: ordinary light after the ocean of
a life has passed through one body.

EXT. GARDEN – PRESENT – THE LIVING

The body. The family. The tree.
Time resumes its heavier physics.

INT. HOUSE – AFTER THE BODY LEAVES – LONG AFTERNOON

The chair under the tamarind empty in a new way.
Sannah sits in it – testing if the living may sit where
the dying sat.
It holds her.
She cries without narrative.

Snehit before the Shiva tapestry.

SNEHIT

You dance.
We clean.

Fair division.

Dust on his fingers like ash.

INT. DINING ROOM – SECOND CUP

They pour tea for the empty chair.

Steam.

This time they leave it until cold on purpose – tradition
born in real time.

Portrait watching.

SANNAH

We will do this on his death day
every year.

Not as performance. As sequence.

SNEHIT

I'll bring the wrong pickles.

He'll complain from wherever.

A laugh – ugly, true, necessary.

EXT. RITES – DAY – RESTRAINT

Smoke against California sky.

Diaspora ritual adapting.

Faces.

No speechifying.

Sannah's hand finds Snehit's – pyre geometry inverted:
children hold each other.

SANNAH (V.O.)

I was seven and I held his hand.

Now I hold my brother's.

The chain changes metal.

It does not end.

TIME – WEEKS – ELASTIC

INT. HOSPITAL – BIRTH / NEWBORN

Life rude and perfect.

Maya.

Snehit terrified, exact.

The baby's fist – string-grip instinct.

SNEHIT
 (to baby)
 Your grandfather was a country
 with a burning border inside him.
 He died with his eyes open.
 I'm going to try to live that way
 without the dying part.
 Wish me luck.

INT. SANNAH'S LA STUDIO – WEEKS

Portrait or study present.
 New work: hands + string; tamarind; soft-focus truck as
 shape not spectacle.

On wall:

BLESS THE ROAD – LATER.
 THE LIVING ARE ALSO THE VOW.

SANNAH (V.O.)
 I thought the series ended when
 he left.
 It ended when we learned how to
 stay without him in the room
 and still speak to him without
 going mad.
 That is also release.

INT. SNEHIT FIXES THE STEP-STOOL – DAY

Practical grief.
 Tightens screws.
 Climbs the tamarind.
 Frees the old kite carefully – it comes down like a tired
 elder into his arms.

He does not trash it.
 Places it on the porch table.
 Builds or ties a simpler kite for teaching – the metaphor
 renewed not denied.

SANNAH
 You freed it.

SNEHIT
 He said when the house can bear
 the metaphor.

The house is still cracked.
Cracked is not unable.

INT. NIGHT BEFORE – LAST VIGIL – ALMOST NO SPEECH

Cots in the garden.
Diya.
The three of them awake at different hours like sailors.

At 3:12 a.m. Ram's eyes open and find Snehit already looking.

RAM
You should sleep.

SNEHIT
I slept from fifteen to
thirty-four in a certain way.
I'm awake now.
Don't take that from me by dying
too politely.

RAM
I will die as I am.
Polite is not the word.
Exact, maybe.

A long shared look. Then both look at the kite. Then at nothing. Then at each other again.

INT. MEMORY – RAM AND RADHA – LAST FULL NIGHT BEFORE HER DEATH

Not the hospital – the house. She insists on home light.

RADHA
When you go – years from now – do
not make them compete with a
beautiful ending.
Make them compete with how well
they love each other after you.
That is a competition worth
losing together.

RAM

I don't want to talk about my
death at your death.

RADHA

Then we will talk about the baby
Sannah will be tomorrow morning
and the boy who pretends not to
need us.
The deaths will overhear. They
are rude like that.

She sleeps. He does not. He watches her breath like a man
studying a text for a final exam he will fail and take
again.

INT. PRESENT – MORNING OF – WASHING THE FACE

Sannah washes Ram's face. Snehit oils the hands – awkward.

SNEHIT

Is this weird?

SANNAH

All of death is weird. Weird is
not the opposite of holy.

RAM

Your mother did this when I
smelled like factories.
Now I smell like endings.
Same care. Different generation.
The river continues.

**INT. DINING ROOM – RAM ADDRESSES THE EMPTY CHAIR ONE LAST
TIME**

Supported there before the final garden sit.

RAM

Radha –
I did not come early.
I came through them.
If the math is wrong, correct me
with your mouth when I arrive.
If there is no arriving – if
there is only this accuracy –
then this accuracy was enough.

I loved you.
 I love you.
 Those tenses are both true and
 the body cannot hold both
 forever.
 That is why it leaves.

Bow.
 Sannah cries silently.
 Snehit stares at the portrait as if it might answer for
 her.

INT. AFTER DEATH – PRACTICAL HOURS

Phone calls.
 Papers.
 Auntie Sharda arrives and for once does not scold first –
 holds Sannah's head to her shoulder like a second mother
 invented by emergency.

AUNTIE SHARDA
 Impossible man.
 Impossible people make us
 specific.
 Do not become a monument.
 Monuments are lonely. Eat.

She feeds them. They eat. Continuance as obedience to
 love.

INT. SNEHIT AND MAYA – NIGHT FEEDING – WEEKS LATER

3 a.m. Baby.
 Snehit walks the hallway singing a broken cousin of Ram's
 lullaby –
 "not so tight... not so tight..."

Maya watches from bed, tears of compound continuance.

INT. FINDING THE LAST SCRAP – DAY

In a poetry book, shaky late hand:

IF I AM ONLY A STORY, LET ME BE A USEFUL ONE.

TELL THE BOY ON THE TRUCK HE CAN LOOK.
 TELL THE SON HE CAN PUT THE FIST
 DOWN.

TELL THE DAUGHTER THE ROAD WAS
BLESSED.
TELL RADHA I HURRIED NOTHING AT
THE END.

Snehit folds it into his wallet beside the child's photo.
Sannah photographs it for her studio wall.
The scrap becomes scripture without religion's permission.

INT. GARDEN – RAIN – ONE WEEK AFTER

Rain on the empty death-chair.
Snehit does not move it inside.
Let's weather do what weather does.
Sannah stands with him under the porch roof.

SANNAH
He would have written a line
about this.

SNEHIT
Yeah.
Something annoying and true.

They stand until the rain softens.
No lesson stated.
The lesson is the standing.

**EXT. THE GARDEN – LATE AFTERNOON – LOCKED ENDING – MIRROR
SCALE**

Wide shot: tamarind, house, sky.
Snehit with child (newborn in arms with Maya helping, or
infant weeks later – hands free enough for string).
Sannah on porch.
The old kite on the table like a relative resting.

Snehit teaches the grip.

SNEHIT
Not so tight.
The sky needs a little mercy or
the string cuts the hand that
loves it.

His voice is Radha's without imitation – inheritance as tone.

The child's hand imperfect.
The kite lifts – falls – lifts.
Paper against sky.

MATCH – Young Ram's mustard kite in Leiah, full green tree, Grandmother laughing.
MATCH – Radha tying string with Snehit at 12.
MATCH – Ram's eyes opening under the tamarind in Episode 01.
MATCH – the truck slats, the look back, Bijji's mouth: LIVE.
MATCH – Ram's last smile: I came.

Return to present kite in sky – not high – honest height.

No dialogue for a long time.
Wind.
Then – one second – temple tone resolves again, faint as if under the earth.
Then pure wind.

Snehit looks up into light until his eyes water – could be sun, could be grief, could be both – does not wipe.

SNEHIT (V.O.)
I understand now.
Love is not grip.
Love is also chase.
Love is also letting the string
go when the sky asks.

The camera begins to rise – slowly – past kite, past crown of tamarind, past the roof, past the grid of Santa Maria lights beginning to prick dusk – not like a drone shot for beauty – like a soul that has learned looking may leave without abandoning.

Below, small: Sannah waves once at the sky – not performance – habit toward the dead.
Snehit does not wave. He steadies the child's hand on the string.
Maya watches them as if watching a fire that warms without burning.

Higher.
The sea plate of metal light.
The cliff where temple stone holds.
The road that carried a car with a vow in it.

Higher still – until people are almost suggestions –
 then slowly, as if mercy, the camera descends again –
 Tarkovsky's return to earth –
 back through light –
 to the water bowl still on the garden table, abandoned
 since the death day, rainwater now in it, leaves, sky
 reflected whole for the first time because the surface is
 still.

Hold on the water.
 A single new leaf lands.
 Ripple.
 Re-forms.
 Stillness.

INT. NIGHT BEFORE DEATH – EXTENDED VIGIL (DURATION CINEMA)

The garden at night for what should feel like twenty
 minutes of screen time –
 written as a sequence of held images and minimal speech:

- 1) Diya flame / wind / recovery of flame
- 2) Snehit's wristwatch ticks – he takes it off, puts it
 away – refuses to meter this
- 3) Sannah counts Ram's breaths without numbers – only
 matching
- 4) Maya brings socks because feet are cold – the most
 human sacrament
- 5) A dog barks far away – world continues
- 6) Ram whispers "string" once – Snehit's hand finds his
 automatically
- 7) Clouds pass over stars – light changes on faces – no
 cut, only change

RAM (V.O.)
 I am trying not to explain the
 water.
 I am trying to become still
 enough that the water can explain
 me.

INT. MEMORY CHAIN – THE MIRROR CORRIDOR

Not neon assault – slow mirrors of time:

- A) Leiah courtyard – Biji hanging laundry – sun through
 wet cloth like stained glass

- B) Truck bed – Father's hand on head – pressure as love
- C) Bombay basin – Radha washing paint from hair – steam
- D) Hospital 19 years ago – Sannah's small hand
- E) Dining table present – four people and a chair that teaches absence
- F) Garden now – return

Each memory entered through a physical match cut of HANDS.
Hands as the series' true protagonist beside love.

INT. MORNING OF RELEASE – BREAKFAST FOR THE LIVING ONLY

Toast, eggs, tea.
They eat in the dining room with the portrait.
Ram in garden can smell it.
He smiles with eyes closed.

RAM
(to Sannah when she
checks)

Good.
The living must stink of eggs and
plans.
If you fast with me out of
solidarity I will be angry from
the after.

SANNAH

I'm eating.
I'm crying into the eggs.
Multitasking.

INT. FINAL COUNSEL WITH SELF – RAM ALONE FIVE MINUTES

Everyone gives him five minutes alone under the tree by
agreement.

RAM (V.O.)

Michchhami dukkadam – to anyone I
will miss thanking.
Michchhami dukkadam – to the body
for carrying border and baby and
brush and grief.
Michchhami dukkadam – to God for
not being a vending machine.
I am ready enough.
If readiness were complete I
would be stone.
Stone cannot love.

I choose the incomplete readiness
of a person.

INT. DEATH SEQUENCE – EXPANDED BREATH SCORE

Write the breaths as if scoring music:

Breath 1 – present / eyes on kite
 Breath 2 – present / eyes on Snehit
 Breath 3 – present / eyes on Sannah
 Breath 4 – pause / fear allowed on face / no one corrects it
 Breath 5 – smaller / lips shape "Radha" without sound
 Breath 6 – pause long / Snehit's hand tightens / Sannah says "we're here"
 Breath 7 – return / faint
 Breath 8 – out / not return

After:

The camera stays on the face for an uncomfortably long time after last breath – life's absence made visible by duration, not by music sting.

Then: wind.

Then: Snehit's sob that he tries to turn into a cough and fails.

Then: Sannah's forehead to Ram's hand.

Then: Maya's prayer without words – lips moving in a language that might be English or Punjabi or only breath.

INT. CROSSING – EXPANDED TARKOVSKY SPIRITUAL

The jiva-walk longer:

– Through water ankle-deep that is both temple basin and border river and garden rain
 – Candle flame carried like Nostalgia – Ram shelters it with scarred palm – if it goes out he does not curse – he relights from Radha's offered flame
 – Biji walks on his left, Radha on his right, Father behind at a respectful distance
 – Ahead: light on water that is only the Pacific at noon – no gates, no judges
 – Behind: the children's voices saying names – rope of sound – he does not cut it – he ties it to his wrist and keeps walking – the rope lengthens infinitely – connection without captivity

RADHA

You looked back.

RAM

Yes.

RADHA

Good.

The order was for trucks.

Not for love.

They continue.

We do not see a destination arrive.

We see walking become the same as arrival – the point.

INT. AFTERMATH – WEEK ONE – DAY BY DAY FRAGMENTS

Monday: forms

Tuesday: Auntie Sharda's food mountain

Wednesday: Snehit returns to work for two hours and leaves without explanation

Thursday: Sannah primes a new canvas pure white and cannot mark it

Friday: Maya's contraction scare that is only Braxton – laughter-tears

Saturday: they pour the second cup again

Sunday: Snehit climbs and studies the kite without freeing it yet

INT. WEEK THREE – KITE FREED – FULL SCENE

Step-stool screws tightened.

Climb.

Hands on paper brittle.

String wound out of bark like removing a stitch from skin.

The kite comes free with a sigh of dust.

Snehit descends.

Holds it.

Weeps into paper.

Sannah takes one edge.

They lower it onto the table together.

SNEHIT

He is lighter now.

So is this.

I hate that those sentences are both true.

SANNAH
 Hate them later.
 Now breathe.

INT. WEEK FIVE – BABY / STRING LESSON PREP

Snehit practices saying Radha's line alone in the garage until he can do it without performing.

SNEHIT
 Not so tight.
 Not so tight.
 Not so tight.

On the third, it becomes true.

INT. FINAL GARDEN – BEFORE CAMERA ASCENT – MORE DURATION

Child's hand.
 String.
 Kite at honest height.
 Sannah photographing without posting.
 Maya humming.
 The old freed kite on the table weighted with a stone so wind does not take it – they are not ready to lose that one to sky yet – only the new teaching kite flies.

The CAMERA finds the water bowl with rain and leaf.
 Holds thirty seconds of still water in a moving world.
 This is the spiritual climax more than the death – the world capable of reflection again.

Then ascent.
 Then descent to water.
 Then black.
 Then text.
 Then title.
 Then end.

INT. ELEMENTAL NIGHT – FIRE WATER WIND EARTH

Sequence designed for pure cinema:

FIRE: diya in wind – ten holds – flame philosophy without words

WATER: bowl – leaf – ripple – still

WIND: tamarind crown – kite paper – clothes – breath

EARTH: bare feet of Sannah on soil – Snehit's knees on soil – Ram's chair legs in soil

RAM (V.O.)
 If I must end, let me end as four
 elements learning to share a
 garden.
 Not as a speech.

INT. THE LOOK BACK – 1947 / 2020S RHYME

Young Ram looks back at Biji.
 Old Ram looks back at children from the crossing.
 Same neck angle.
 Different permission.

INT. AFTER DEATH – THE ROOM HOLDS

Twenty minutes of screen time in writing:

People enter and leave.
 Phone lights.
 A laugh from the street.
 Sannah washing brushes she is not using.
 Snehit outside staring at nothing until nothing becomes
 sky.
 Maya resting because the living child demands a living
 mother.

No montage music.
 Only the fan and far freeway – the diaspora ocean.

INT. ONE MONTH – TABLE WITH FOOD AND ONE EMPTY CHAIR

They eat.
 They pour the second cup.
 They tell one funny story about Ram stealing mango pickle.
 They tell one hard story about silence.
 They stop.
 They continue.

SANNAH
 This is the practice.
 Not the funeral. This.

SNEHIT
 Yeah.

This.

INT. STRING LESSON – TAKE TWO – FAILURE THEN SUCCESS

First attempt: kite nosedives. Snehit curses. Baby startles. Maya takes baby. Snehit apologizes to sky, to child, to memory.

Second attempt: lifts. Holds. Honest height.

Sannah claps once then stops, embarrassed, then claps again on purpose.

Rise through leaves – each leaf a year.

Roof – the house that held a vow.

Block – other houses with other silences.

Fields – California as accidental holy land for a Punjab wound.

Sea – plate of light.

Temple – tooth of stone.

Descend – mercy – to water bowl – reflection whole – leaf falls – ripple – still.

Black.

Notebook text.

Title.

Silence after tone.

END.

EXT. BLACK TO DROP TO FLAME

From nothing: wind alone. Then water's single drop into metal – the ear enters first, then the eye. Flame catches. The series teaches attention as plot.

RAM (V.O.)

Where do You live?

EXT. COAST WALKING CAMERA

Horizontal drift through scrub toward sea as if the lens were a pilgrim with wet hems. No music. Gulls as punctuation.

RAM (V.O.)
Grace is nature after love names
it.

EXT. GARDEN GEOMETRY OF VIGIL

Wide: chair, cot, steps, doorway. Four distances of love.
Dew. The kite as scar in the crown of the tree. Hold past
comfort.

RAM (V.O.)
Geometry is a kind of prayer.

INT. PORTRAIT EYES

Painted looking meets living looking. Snehit fails to win
the staring contest with art and sits, defeated into
tenderness.

RAM (V.O.)
Art keeps looking when bodies
stop.

SNEHIT
She would have burned the rice
and stared anyway.

EXT. GOODBYE HANDS

Macro of hands: scar, paint, wedding ring on string,
pregnant pulse, nurse watch, child's future absent yet
present in Maya's skin.

RAM (V.O.)
Hands were the true scripture.

EXT. DEATH BREATH SCORE

Eight breaths written on faces. Fear allowed. No correction. Last smile: I came. After last breath the camera remains – duration as theology.

RAM (V.O.)
Equanimity is fear without thrashing.

SNEHIT
I've got the room.

INT. CROSSING WATER ANKLE DEEP

Temple basin / border river / garden rain – one water. Candle sheltered by scarred palm. Radha offers flame. Biji at left. Father behind. Rope of children's voices tied to wrist lengthening forever.

RAM (V.O.)
Connection without captivity.

RADHA
The order was for trucks. Not for love.

EXT. STRING LESSON AND ASCENT

Honest kite height. Child grip. Camera rises through years-as-leaves, descends in mercy to rainwater bowl – whole reflection – leaf – ripple – still. Black. Notebook text. Tone. Title. Silence.

RAM (V.O.)
What remains is love – not as slogan, as water able to hold a leaf and still.

INT. PRE-DAWN – LAST FULL NIGHT EXTENDED HOUR

Written for screen duration:

00:03 – Snehit replaces blanket
00:06 – Sannah wet cloth on lips

00:10 – Maya checks her own pulse as if practicing for two bodies
 00:14 – Ram asks for the smell of toast "in advance" of morning; Sannah burns toast on purpose for Radha; they laugh once
 00:20 – silence
 00:25 – Ram tells one Bombay joke about a fender that looked like a congressman; Snehit groans; love
 00:32 – Snehit almost says stay; swallows it; says "I'm here" instead
 00:40 – names mala whispered
 00:48 – Ram sleeps ten minutes; they watch like guards of a thin flame
 00:55 – he wakes; says "still sequence"; they nod

INT. MEMORY – RADHA TEACHES BOTH CHILDREN STRING – FULL

Garden then. Snehit 12. Sannah 4.
 Radha's hands over both.
 Ram in doorway with notebook he lowers without writing – for once only sees.

RADHA
 Not so tight.
 Mercy.
 Chase.
 Grip.
 All three or the sky is wasted.

Present: Snehit's mouth forms the words before the final lesson scene – rehearsal of inheritance.

INT. DEATH DAY – NEIGHBOR BRINGS FLOWERS – AWKWARD HOLY

Neighbor does not know the vow. Brings supermarket flowers.
 Sannah takes them with grace.
 Places them where Ram can see color.
 Ram thanks the neighbor as if the neighbor were a priest of the ordinary.

RAM
 Ordinary priests may be the best kind.

INT. FINAL HOUR – ELEMENTAL SCORE WRITTEN BEAT BY BEAT

FIRE: diya – 5 holds – almost out – Sannah shields – lives

WATER: bowl – Snehit refills rain-evaporated water from
 bottle – hands shake – pours anyway
 WIND: rises – pages of notebook flutter – letter copy in
 Snehit's pocket warms with body
 EARTH: Sannah kneels – soil under nails with paint –
 marriage of labors

RAM (V.O.)
 I do not explain the elements.
 I join them.

INT. THE EIGHT BREATHS – FACE INTERCUTS

Breath 1: kite
 Breath 2: Snehit
 Breath 3: Sannah
 Breath 4: fear allowed – close on mouth
 Breath 5: "Radha" shape
 Breath 6: long pause – hands tighten – "we're here"
 Breath 7: faint return – smile: I came
 Breath 8: out

Camera on face after.
 Wind.
 Bird.
 Fan inside house audible through window.
 No cut until Snehit says:

SNEHIT
 I've got the room.

Even then hold two more seconds before anyone moves.

INT. CROSSING – CANDLE ACROSS WATER – NOSTALGHIA COUSIN

Ankle-deep water corridor.
 Ram shelters flame with scarred palm.
 Wind tests.
 Flame lives.
 Radha walks opposite direction first – tests him – then
 turns and joins – not guide as authority – companion as
 equal.

RADHA
 You did not hurry.

RAM
 I sequenced.

RADHA

Then the porch light is a silly
metaphor and also true.
Come.

Biji places a marigold that becomes a mustard kite paper
scrap – humor of the dead.

BIJI

Fly the small height.
Honest height is enough.

Father salutes without military – just a hand.
Ram nods.
They walk.
Rope to the living lengthens, never cuts.
Sound of child grip on string far away in future – already
– time folded.

INT. WEEKS – MORE AFTERMATH FLESH

– Snehit at work staring at spreadsheet until it blurs
into border map then back to numbers; he goes home early
again
– Sannah's first mark on white canvas: a single horizontal
line like string
– Maya nursing or rocking; Snehit watching like a man
learning a new religion called continuance
– second cup ritual on the death day anniversary week –
steam – cold – pour out together this time as release

INT. KITE FREEING – FULL SENSORY

Bark under nails.
Dust smell.
Paper brittle sound like old skin.
Descent.
Two sets of hands lowering kite to table.
Stone weight.
Wind denied for now – not cruelty – readiness sequencing

INT. STRING LESSON – THREE TAKES

Take 1: nosedive – curse – apology
Take 2: lift – fall – Sannah's one clap
Take 3: honest height – hold – camera begins its rise
during the hold so joy and ascent are one movement

INT. ASCENT / DESCENT – SHOT BY SHOT

1 leaves as years
 2 roof as skull of house
 3 block as diaspora of windows
 4 fields
 5 sea plate
 6 temple tooth
 7 descent mercy
 8 bowl whole reflection
 9 leaf
 10 ripple
 11 still
 12 black

TEXT ON BLACK – SLOW FADE UP:

What remains, what is achieved –
 it is love.

beat

To eat in the darkness of each other's lives for eternity.

beat

After all – what is the story?

Long hold.

Temple tone resolves – half second.

Silence longer than the tone.

TITLE: SANTHARA
 Dying with Equanimity

A Limited Series by Tan

END OF SERIES

**EXT. LEIAH – SATURDAY MORNING – BEFORE ANY BORDER (MIRROR
 MODE)**

A long childhood sequence as if the dead have loaned us
 their weather:

Biji braids nothing – she folds cloth.
 Young Ram runs through hanging laundry – wet cloth
 slapping his face into laughter.
 Sun makes the cloth stained glass.
 The camera follows at child height – legs, buckets, goats,
 the long bazaar opening like a throat of color.
 No violence yet in the century's body.
 Only the knowledge – in us, not in him – that this will
 become memory under pressure.

BIJI (O.S.)

Slow down.
 The day is not a truck.

Young Ram slows. For one second he obeys softness.

EXT. SAME COURTYARD – MATCH TO PRESENT GARDEN

Wet cloth becomes hospital curtain becomes tamarind leaf
 wet with dew.
 Child legs become Snehit's kneeling adult legs.
 Laughter becomes the single laugh at burnt toast on
 death's morning.
 The match is not cleverness – it is the show's religion:
 time is one room with many windows.

INT. THE ROOM OF WINDOWS – CROSSING IMAGE

In the jiva-walk, windows show:
 window 1: family eating eggs
 window 2: kite at honest height
 window 3: truck
 window 4: Radha ice cream
 window 5: empty chair with steam
 window 6: black water still

Ram does not enter windows.
 He greets them with his eyes and walks on.
 Looking without entering is a grown skill.

INT. AFTER DEATH – SNEHIT WASHES THE DEATH CHAIR

Soap. Water. Wood.
 He cleans as if cleaning were speech.
 Sannah watches, then helps.
 Two adults washing a chair in a garden like a rite no
 manual contains.
 The cleaned chair dries in sun.

Later Sannah sits in it without asking.
Permission has become shared.

INT. NIGHT – MAYA AND SNEHIT – BABY BETWEEN THEM

Sleep-deprived holiness.
Baby fist.
Snehit whispers the string lesson to a human who cannot
use it yet –
planting seed in the dark like farmers and poets and
grieving sons.

SNEHIT
Not so tight.
When you need it, it will be in
your hand like blood.

INT. SANNAH – GALLERY OF ONE – STUDIO

She hangs the portrait facing a chair.
Sits.
Talks to both parents without claiming mediumship –
only practice.

SANNAH
I'm still mad.
I'm still grateful.
I'm still working.
If you can hear work, hear this.

She paints the horizontal string line thicker.

EXT. FINAL DAY IMAGE BEFORE ASCENT – GOLDEN HOUR

The whole family configuration:
Maya, baby, Snehit, Sannah, old kite under stone, new kite
in sky, water bowl, house, portrait visible through dining
window like a second resident.

Hold.
Hold longer.
A plane crosses high – another kind of looking down.
Snehit does not resent the plane.
There is room in the sky.

Then the camera begins to rise as if exhaled by the garden
itself –

And all that follows is as written: leaves, roof, sea,
temple, descent, water, leaf, ripple, still, black, text,
tone, title, silence.

RAM (V.O.)
(last, softest – only if
image needs; prefer
silence)
Mother... Father...
I live in them now.
You can find me there.

The water is enough.
The string is enough.
Love is not a line at the end.
Love is the still surface able to hold a leaf after the
storm of a life.

INT. DAY BEFORE – HOUSE CLEANING AS LOVE

They clean not for guests – for clarity.
Snehit takes out trash as if removing arguments.
Sannah washes the empty chair's place at table.
Maya folds blankets.
Ram watches from the doorway, amused and moved.

RAM
If death can look like Tuesday
chores, I chose the right house.

INT. LAST MEAL SMELL FOR THE LIVING – EXTENDED

Eggs, toast, tomato.
Conversation about nothing: a neighbor's dog, a bill, a
funny word the baby will never need to know.
Ram in garden inhaling.
This is the anti-speech speech of the end.

INT. SNEHIT READS THE LAST SCRAP ALOUD TO THE BABY LATER – FLASH FORWARD

SNEHIT
"Tell the boy on the truck he can
look."
You hear that?
You can look.

Looking will hurt.
 Looking will also keep you from
 becoming a museum of silence.

INT. SANNAH'S LETTER V.O. OVER MULTIPLE IMAGES

Images: string line on canvas; portrait; freed kite under stone; second cup; Snehit's hand teaching grip.

SANNAH (V.O.)

Baba –
 The road is blessed.
 I am still sometimes on the
 shoulder angry.
 Both true.
 The baby has a grip like a person
 who will need the mercy line
 early.
 I will teach it.
 Snehit will teach it.
 Ma taught it first.
 You carried it through a border
 in your palm without knowing.
 We are returning it to the sky at
 honest height.

INT. FINAL SILENCE REEL – NO DIALOGUE

- 1) diya out then relit then left to live or die without control
- 2) water bowl whole sky
- 3) three adult faces in garden wind
- 4) baby fist
- 5) old kite under stone
- 6) new kite honest height
- 7) temple far – stone tooth
- 8) black

Then text.
 Then title.
 Then the half-second tone.
 Then the longer silence that lets the audience understand
 the series has entered them like water entering earth.

CUT TO BLACK.

Hold black.

Then, small white text, as if handwritten in Ram's notebook:

What remains, what is achieved –
it is love.

Hold.

Then, smaller:

To eat in the darkness of each other's lives for eternity.
After all – what is the story?

Hold longer.

Temple tone resolves one last time – half a second –
silence.

TITLE:

SANTHARA

Under it:
Dying with Equanimity

Then:
A Limited Series by Tan

END OF SERIES

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END OF EPISODE 05

SANTHARA
Episode 05 – "Release"

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