

Danger and Romance in Foreign Lands

by John Halas, ScreenwritersForHire.Com

based on the book, *Danger and Romance in Foreign Lands*

by Stephen E. Eisenbraun

Logline

Scott's job as a foreign correspondent in South Asia gets him embroiled in political drama, danger, and romance.

Characters

Scott Higgins (M) - An American correspondent who becomes a college professor in his later years. In the 1970s, as a foreign correspondent, he shuttles between India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan to gather political stories. He eventually falls in love and marries an Indian lady, Rakhi.

Baxter (M) - Scott's boss at the New Delhi office. He changes Scott's job location to keep him away from challenging Baxter in reporting Indian politics.

Ahmed (M) - A local Bangladeshi journalist who helps Scott when he visits Bangladesh.

Rakhi (F) - An Indian banker whose family lives next to Scott in New Delhi. She elopes with Scott, marries him in the States, and they have a turbulent life together in Nairobi and London until she dies years later.

Three Act Summary

Act One

- Scott Higgins checks the waiting list for his history class and notices many students are waiting to sign up for his classes because he includes stories of his younger days.
- Flashbacks show Scott as a new hire of a New York newspaper as its correspondent in New Delhi, India. After recovering from dysentery, he goes to the newspaper office to report to Baxter, who sends him to Bangladesh. When he lands in Dacca, Bangladesh, Ahmed, a local journalist, picks him up and takes him to a hotel.
- A few days after Scott's arrival, he gets an invitation to a party with other expats and business and government leaders in the city. Everyone gossips away, and a married local woman invites him to her friend's house for a sexual rendezvous. He declines. After a few similar parties, he leaves Dacca.
- The next time Scott returns to Dacca, he learns of a planned terrorist attack by members of the Japanese Red Army. Being at the airport allows him to learn the inside story of the negotiations with the Japanese hijackers. He relays the information to Ahmed, who passes it to New York.
- On the third day of the hijacking drama, a shootout at the airport begins, and Scott tries to get to safety. He meets a young officer from the American embassy, and they crouch under a table together. From the officer's handheld radio, they learn that there's an attempted mutiny by Air Force enlisted men. Soon, army soldiers arrive to establish order, and the shooting stops. Scott dashes to the parking lot to meet Ahmed, and they drive to a nearby luxury hotel, the Intercon.
- As Scott arrives at the hotel, he chats with a stylish American woman for a few minutes and waits in the lobby to interview more hostages. (Years later, Ahmed arranges for Scott to have afternoon tea with Air Force vice-marshal

Mahmoud, who conducted the negotiations with the rebels, so Scott can ask questions about the earlier events.) The A Vice Marshall avoids execution, but many others do not.

- Scott attends a large national day reception thrown by the Iranian embassy in Dacca. A friendly Russian diplomat introduces himself to Scott as Vladimir, and Vladimir and his wife, Natasha, invite Scott to dinner. The next day, Scott goes to the American embassy to talk to Steve, who Vladimir had mistaken him for. Steve asks Scott to report his meeting with Vladimir while he checks Vladimir out.
- Later, Scott visits the couple at their home. Vladimir and Natasha try to put him at ease. The next day, he returns to the American embassy to meet Steve and another officer, Fred. The next Friday night, he attends another of Vladimir's events, this time at the Soviet Embassy.
- After the event, Scott reports again to the US embassy, and Fred asks him to introduce him to Vladimir, but Scott refuses, not wanting to be dragged into potential spying. He returns to Delhi, refusing to contact his Russian acquaintance again out of fear.
- Scott's first winter in Delhi appears lonely until he attends a dinner with a British couple. He meets the sultry Nasreen, who invites him to London, where she lives. The next weekend, he books a flight to London without having any means to contact Nasreen. Luckily, a public announcement comes for him asking him to contact the airport information desk. He goes to Victoria station as instructed but doesn't find Nasreen.
- After waiting for an hour, Nasreen shows up and takes Scott to her flat, where they spend the day having sex. The next night, she invites him to her restaurant, where she is a hostess, and, after midnight, urges him to go gambling with her. At the nearby Playboy club, Nasreen loses all her money and demands more from Scott, but when he refuses, she declares she will take some from the restaurant safely. She does not, however, and they go to her flat. Their lustful weekend is ruined, and Scott is anxious to leave.

Act Two

- Scott returns to Dacca, and Ahmed links him up with an elderly gentleman, Jadu Mia, and they talk politics in the old city over chai. Days later, Scott receives a message from a young boy who informs him that Jadu Mia again requests his presence.
- Scott grabs a bicycle rickshaw and leaves to visit Jadu Mia. Jadu Mia tells him of a new political party that will be created to represent all of Bangladesh. The information Jadu supplies to Scott triggers Baxter to return Scott to New Delhi. As Scott heads to the airport, he picks up a newspaper that indicates Jadu Mia is now a chief minister.
- Baxter sends Scott to the University of Delhi to unearth a story. Scott goes to the main university campus returning to familiar spots where he was a student. Scott spends the next few months traveling around India and attending events, including a dinner party in Bombay with a film producer.
- Scott rents a small townhouse in New Delhi. One day, he sees an elderly man walking along his residential lane with a young lady. Another evening, he steps out to greet them as they walk past his place. The lady, Rakhi Seshadri, and her father invite him over for tea. He visits the Seshadri family later for dinner, and his attraction to Rakhi intensifies.
- A month later, Scott goes to Rakhi's father to ask permission to take Rakhi to a nearby Chinese restaurant. Mr. Seshadri asks his driver to take them. At the restaurant, they discuss personal matters for a while. They drive back home, and Scott says goodnight to her before walking to his nearby flat.
- Scott starts seeing Rakhi more often, and her father asks him to get a vehicle. He eats dinner frequently at the Seshadri home to get to know them better. One day, Rakhi tells Scott she wants to make love to him, and they sneak

into his place. On noticing his daughter's rapport with Scott, Mr. Seshadri calls Scott to discuss his career prospects.

- Baxter sends Scott to Pakistan, where Scott stops to meet Steve in Lahore before going on to Islamabad to meet David at the US embassy in Islamabad. David takes Scott to the embassy cafeteria for a sandwich. An angry crowd gathers. They hear gunshots and must be evacuated for safety. They are locked away in the embassy vault. And soon, they learn they are trapped in a burning building.
- Just as a journalist colleague from another magazine starts writing notes, Scott starts his. After escaping the heated vault, he goes to a nearby hotel to get a room. Scott files his story to Baxter and leaves for Lahore to meet Steve for official accounts of the attack in Islamabad. After meeting with Steve to hear also about the attacks in Lahore, he takes a flight back to Delhi to meet Rakhi.
- Baxter cuts Scott's stay short, so he returns to Lahore the day after Christmas. From the airport, he goes to the home of Malik Wazir Ali. Wazir and his wife invite him to join their trip to inspect some of their lands in western Pakistan.
- Scott travels with Wazir's family first to Faisalabad, where Wazir's friend hosts them. Scott blends in with the host Ahmed Nawaz and takes a walk into the town later. One morning, in the garden, Wazir tells Scott that the Soviets have launched an invasion of nearby Afghanistan.
- Scott follows Wazir's family to a nearby village, and the women mob Wazir's wife, Nasra, and daughter, Shahnaz, asking about birth control. Later, they start their journey back to Lahore. When they arrive in Lahore, he catches a plane to Delhi to meet Rakhi.
- One night, Mr. Seshadri confronts Scott over his relationship with Rakhi, asking what future he can offer her. Scott decides to take Rakhi for a weekend trip to Kashmir. When they return, her parents are hostile toward

them. Scott takes a trip back to Lahore, meets Wazir's family again, and goes to the consulate to see Steve, the political officer who gives briefings on political affairs in Pakistan.

- Scott starts planning his departure from New Delhi to Nairobi. The night before he leaves, Rakhi comes to his house to tell him she'll go with him. He proposes to her, and she accepts his offer of marriage. She tells him to come and talk to her parents.
- Early the next morning, Scott shows up at Rakhi's house to declare his intention to her parents, who are unfriendly to him. Scott leaves and arrives at the airport at noon, with Rakhi waiting at the airport to see him off. She promises to join him. Scott checks into his Nairobi office, and his supervisor, Bob, takes him to lunch. Scott attends a few dinners with his new foreign acquaintances.
- On the afternoon of Rakhi's arrival, Scott goes to the airport to pick her up. He takes her to a luxurious hotel, where they are intimate. Later, Rakhi and Scott go to apply for a US fiancée visa. Rakhi joins the Standard Chartered Bank in Nairobi, the same bank at which she had worked in New Delhi. Then they fly to the United States, where they get married. The next day, Scott introduces Rakhi to his parents in Florida. They fly to London thereafter and eventually return to Nairobi.
- As Scott and Rakhi return to Nairobi, Scott's boss Bob sends him to Kampala, Uganda. His local contact, Robert, suggests he interview the rebel leader, Yoweri Museveni, a rising rebel leader from the Ugandan struggle with Tanzania. Robert's plan does not work out well, so Scott returns to Nairobi. On his return, Bob tells him he must take a trip to the port city of Mombasa.
- On Scott's trip by overnight train, he makes acquaintance with a Kenyan-born Indian, Mr. Patel, who invites him to lunch. When Scott steps off the train, Joe, a local African journalist, welcomes him. Joe schedules a meeting with

Ahmed, a Kenyan political leader. After the meeting, Scott calls Rakhi.

- The next day, Scott meets Patel at the Mombasa club lobby, and Patel introduces him to Erol, who offers to host him if he desires to explore north to the exotic island of Lamu near the Somali border. Meanwhile, Scott explores the town's old harbor and notices strange and menacing faces shadowing him before he returns to Nairobi.
- In Nairobi, Scott tells Bob that he had been followed. Scott and Rakhi start preventive measures. Scott decides to investigate recently released prisoners following Patel's suggestions. He learns of police abuse and develops stories about it. He starts receiving threatening notes in his office, and when he shows them to the police, they warn him to stop interviewing released prisoners.
- Scott decides to take Rakhi to Mombasa and buys a range rover for the road trip. Scott and Rakhi drive out of Nairobi. On their way, they divert to a deserted road and run into a herd of dangerous buffaloes. The buffalo block their path for a while. When the two manage to escape, Rakhi is furious with him for taking risky adventures.
- Scott and Rakhi eventually arrive in Mombasa. Scott settles to cover an event while Rakhi focuses on meeting wealthy Asians. The couple book a sea view room at the Nyali Beach hotel and snuggle into each other's arms to sleep. The next morning, they take a beach walk before preparing for their duties.
- Rakhi goes for her meetings while Scott goes to the Missions to Seamen, which is busy with American sailors from a visiting aircraft carrier in port. Scott seeks out the Porthole, a dive bar in the harbor, and an attractive African girl solicits him for sex, but he dismisses her. That night, the chaplain of the missions to seamen gives him a lead on a story. He follows it and learns that a local prostitute had died of a drug overdose.

- Scott quickly returns to the Nyali beach hotel to write his dispatch. Scott and Rakhi check in with Erol to take her up on her offer of using her family's house on the remote island of Lamu.

Act Three

- Scott takes Rakhi on a trip to Lamu island. Although Rakhi is angry in the beginning due to the risks of driving alone on deserted African roads, she eventually enjoys the island. They return to Nairobi, and Scott continues to receive threatening letters to stop seeking out released prisoners. Rakhi is assigned her first foreign business trip. On the morning of her departure, Rakhi is abducted by unknown hostile men.
- Later in the day, Scott finds an anonymous letter mentioning his wife's kidnapping. The kidnappers demand ransom, while Rakhi tries unsuccessfully to appeal to their emotions in her captivity. Rakhi's father flies into the country to facilitate her release and pay a ransom.
- Rakhi is eventually released, and her husband learns that someone wants him out of the country. The next morning, after many debriefings with the Kenyan police, Rakhi leaves with her father to New Delhi while Scott returns to the hotel room alone.
- Scott goes to Bangkok to wait for his Indian visa. After ten days of missing Rakhi, he calls her to tell her he's coming over. In India, he meets Rakhi's mother, who questions him about the attack before returning to his hotel room. Two hours later, Rakhi comes to his hotel room.
- Rakhi's parents invite the couple to dinner. After the dinner, Rakhi indicates her wish to have a proper honeymoon. Scott decides to take her to Paris. She tells everyone that the London headquarters of her bank has offered her a position. Mr. Seshadri offers the couple \$20,000 as a wedding gift.

- Rakhi and Scott arrive at the Plaza Athenee hotel in Paris, and Scott takes her to see fancy locales. They go to a high fashion shop, but Rakhi shows no interest in skimpy outfits. Rakhi and Scott say goodbye to their Parisian trip before heading to London.
- Rakhi reports to her job and learns her new responsibilities from her superiors, Williams and Jenkins. Scott and Rakhi reconvene for lunch to discuss the details of Rakhi's job as a salesperson to work with ultra-wealthy clients in other countries.
- Rakhi arrives early the next morning to take over her new office and meet her assistant, Eunice. After her briefing, Rakhi is told that she must change her dress style from Indian saris to Western business clothes and take several finance tutorials. Rakhi changes her style with Eunice's help. Williams schedules her for her first trip abroad, and this angers Scott because they are still new to London.
- Rakhi's first trip to Dubai is successful, and she returns home to report signing on an important Arab client. Williams invites her to lunch to celebrate and tries to make advances on her, but she firmly rebuffs him. Rakhi grows in her job and starts a travel routine that often keeps her out of the country. Scott and Rakhi drift apart. Williams attempts to rape her after she repeatedly turns down his advances. When she gets home, she pushes Scott away when he tries to touch her.
- The next day, Jenkins offers Rakhi William's position after she makes a report. Rakhi cannot find Scott to talk about the promotion, so she takes herself out to lunch while Scott has a rendezvous with his old friend, Nasreen. That evening, they meet up at home, and Rakhi tells Scott she's celebrating a promotion.
- While Rakhi's mother insists on her having children, Rakhi starts having a sexual relationship with a Chinese client in Singapore. Scott and Rakhi's life improves materially, but they drift apart and start living double lives.

- Rakhi's father dies, and she and Scott travel to New Delhi for the funeral. Before they leave New Delhi for London, they have a deep reflection on their married life. Scott offers to fly Rakhi to Paris before they arrive in London. She is not very interested. When the couple return, they eventually adopt a baby that Rakhi's mother helps them raise in London
- Years later. Rakhi's mother dies, and Rakhi follows soon thereafter, dying suddenly of pancreatic cancer. Back to the present, Scott adjusts a picture of his family on his desk and leaves to meet his college class.