**Reworked Pitch**

Working title: great gig in the sky

Subject description:

In the aftermath of massive floods in the city of Bangalore, the municipal administration decided to take action on decades of semi-legal encroachments on the stormwater drains by private developers, deciding unilaterally to demolish structures built upon these pathways that excess rainwater had traditionally flowed through. This project takes an extraordinary event that emerged against this backdrop - the arrival of bulldozers and threat of demolition - and inserts it into an otherwise ordinary day in the life of a wealthy gated community in the city. Having retreated into an aspirational lifestyle that cushions them from precarities and everyday negotiations with the state in pursuit of legitimacy and housing security, gated community residents were shocked when the state - viewed usually as a nuisance that could be kept at arm’s length - barged into their haven in the middle of the city and prepared to demolish a set of homes. A few frantic phone calls to officials in the judiciary from well-connected residents, however, stopped the demolition in its tracks. This project views the day and its events from the perspective of a domestic worker, who experiences firsthand and on a daily basis the stark differences between the inside of a gated community (her place of work) and the outside (the city she inhabits). Apart from the event itself, the focus is thus on the contrasts between her lifeworld and that of her employers’, which stand out even as they share an experience that typically belongs to her world.

Characters - domestic worker, resident woman 1 (employer), other residents (neighbors, co-protestors), the bulldozer (non-speaking). Mentioned/brief appearance - husband & children of resident woman 1, security guards, police, journalists.

Script - (Opening panel: Bulldozer barging through the gates, ringed by police)

Cuts to - A normal morning in the Iyers’ home. Children have already left for school, husband is getting ready for work. Domestic worker (DW) enters and starts her chores. As she takes the trash out, the husband and wife also walk out of the door, the former going towards his car and the latter exchanging pleasantries with two of her female friends walking by. Bidding goodbye to her husband, the woman joins her friends on their morning walk; their conversation revolving around the lovely rainy weather is overheard by DW, who thinks back to her night of sleeping on a wet floor at home. The day passes uneventfully, full of chores for DW, till it is time for her to return home. She sometimes has the time to relax with other workers in the gated community’s smallest garden before heading out - today is one of those days. There is a sudden commotion at the gate, and she sees a massive group of police in an altercation with the security guards. They are accompanied by a bulldozer. Looking the other way, she notices a group of residents, led by her employer, rushing towards the gate. As they pass her by, she hears them discussing the situation and is stunned by the realization that these wealthy people are facing the kind of precarity that permeates her own life. As she flashes back to her own childhood home being demolished, she sees the same scenes of fighting against the police, the same human chain being formed by the women - everything but the setting and *what* is being demolished, is the same. She is caught up in a momentary sense of solidarity, till she hears someone shout out that they are there *legally*, with the implication that the usual victims of demolition are somehow illegal. She then sees a man, who had been furiously speaking into his phone, loudly thank the person on the other end. He walks up to the police, hands them the phone, and they immediately stop pushing through after receiving an order to desist on the phone. DW presumes it is some powerful official on the other end. The bulldozer backs away, and just like that, the tension is diffused. One of the residents suggests that they meet for drinks at his place, and DW, suddenly re-visibilised, starts getting looked at in confusion as the residents pass her by - what is she still doing here? Shaking her head at her own silly flight of solidarity, she walks off, keeping a safe distance from the bulldozer and police, rubbing a spot where the bulldozer from her childhood had scraped past and injured her mother on the arm.