

## Raseen Haider

### A Portion of My Hunger

Sometimes I feel like I am a twenty-four-year-old woman. Last night, I dreamed myself as a long-haired Rubenesque, wearing flowery shalwar qamiz cussing someone about something that I cannot recall right now. I woke up feeling awkward and ashamed. My poor wife noticing my flushed face looked at me with concern and asked what was going through my head. I could not tell her about my dream. I feared the idea of having seen myself as a woman. They say that what one cannot be in real life, one becomes that in dreams. I wonder if she had ever dreamed herself with a dick. Sometimes when she looks at me with her keen eyes I fear that she knows something. That makes me anxious and I make more love to her.

This is not the first time I have been confronted with this situation. I have reached this point in life more than often. You choose what sort of music you like, what foods are your favourite, what kinds of people you want to spend your time with, and how you move about in life. But the question is, can I choose to be something that I am not or that I am but don't know about. If I do not know about it, would it make it any different If I do not think about choosing. Because not knowing does not offer any burden of choice.

But can I really choose? I am a father now but even that was not a conscious choice from my side to be one. I had sex. It just happened one day. Nine months later there it was. The reality staring at me,

with bulging little eyes, wrinkled skin and mouth gaping to suck in the first fumes of life. Honestly, I was scared. being held responsible for a new born human being on one hand and having to bear the guilt of bringing another life to this world on the other. These two things don't go together. I have not been able to forgive my parents for doing the same for me. If I hadn't been born I would not be confronted with any of these dilemmas. It looks like a pretty-easy choice to make if one does not know what the real world is like. Not knowing something makes it easier to reject.

I feel very nauseous after every such dream. It is like something is stuck in my throat and it does not matter what I do to get rid of the feeling it does not go away. It is like there is a mouse trying to come out of my mouth, pushing and gnawing on its way, but is stuck somewhere in the middle. Unable to find its way it is nibbling around. It may come out of my chest this very instant, but nothing happens. I try to push it down by gulping large amounts of saliva down a number of times.

I think of going out. But then decide against it. I have been very lazy recently. I take a leave from work every year. I do not do much in this time, other than that I am spending plenty of time on watching porn. Muscular hunks rimming away make me drool. The mix of ecstasy and artifice with an occasional 'oh God' resonate in my imagination for hours. I have not looked back since I first started watching it. There is something curious about it. I wonder what it felt like getting fucked. I also wonder how detailed the porn industry is. How is it able to cater to the fetishes of almost every little bugger out there!

Between the cries of my child and anticipation of seeing porn I heard the Azaan. The call for prayers. That was a signal for the believers. I am a firm believer. I believe nothing can happen without his will. I take shower the right-way. Because if one does not do it the right way one is not purified. I feel refreshed and pure afterwards. I must hurry now. I must be marked present.

I go out of the house. I walk towards the mosque. I meet my neighbours on my way. Not much changes around me. The bunch of rascals, that I see here every day, is still standing on the edge of the corner that turns a little to the left towards the mosque. My blood boils to see them laugh around and share suggestive glances after what must be a very dirty and juicy joke. I envy them; therefore, I hate them. Their dads should have had a masturbation instead of sex, so I won't have to see them while I go to see my creator. They are a disgrace. All of them.

They greet me though. I smile in return. I want to ask them to come with me. Their lord is waiting for them. I slow down a little. I then try to think of something nice to say to them without making them too uncomfortable. I can see that they have anticipated my actions. They try to huddle behind each other. But then I refuse to say anything. After all it is about time. I don't want to be late for my prayers.

"I will talk to them when I come back. They will still be here anyway". I reassure myself.

I enter the mosque. I see all the familiar faces. We all exchange silent greetings. I notice a few new adolescents' faces too. I can imagine their soft skins under their jeans.

"It is a disgrace". I feel angry.

"They must not wear jeans in the mosque. They need to have a Muslim dress". I take a mental note to remind them that it is such an un-Islamic dress.

Their loins and glutes are almost visible. If I imagine a little more I can even see the soft coat of hair getting replaced at places. I look at them, they look back at me. I try to remind myself if I knew them. In the meantime, the assembly begins. I take my usual spot.

Even before the first takbeer my head is filled with images from the films I watched in the morning when my wife was in another room feeding my child.

“Those bastards, imbecilic, godforsaken stupid sons of bitches have made me think of such nonsense”. I murmur these between the prayers and pauses. I forcefully close my eyes and the images are superimposed. I wonder how someone can have such a beautiful uncut penis.

“God is forgiving. I’ll ask for it and he’ll grant it to me”. I remind myself.

At the same instant I recall that I have saved those videos in my phone. As soon as I remember that, my attention focuses on the phone that I can feel touching my skin in my side pocket. I always keep it silent. Afterall it must not disturb the fellow faithful. Music is Haram anyway, so the ring must be kept silent.

By the time I push the porn out of my head the Salat ends. I asked for forgiveness right after. I am not in my control. I must try harder.

Soon after I finish the rest of the prayers, I meet the fellow faithful. All the elected members of the township are here. I wonder if the town committee elections were near. The mosque gets especially crowded around those times. I shake hands with them and the Imam. He is a nice guy. He thinks about the local community with only honest concern in his heart. He also shares my worries about the bunch I had just met on my way. We need to discuss this.

I suggest that there is something important that needs his attention. He has the kindest face. He softly shakes hands with the others. This takes a few more minutes. He says his final greetings to the rest of the fellow Muslims then follows me out of the main hall and into the courtyard. The cold marble tiles have a curiously pleasant feel to them. It is donated by a local businessman. People say he only owns an import-export firm. What he exports is altogether a different question. I don’t believe those people. All the colony has seen young girls going into his house every now and then. He takes care of them, feeds them. People also say they don’t come out of his house as often as they go in, but I refuse to believe that. People say all sorts of things.

I feel the cold marble tiles under my feet and wonder what the paradise would be like. They say that they will have houris with skin as white as pearls, thunder-thighed, curvy and sensuous, waiting for the pious, reclining on soft pillows. Among these thoughts I feel his hand touching my arm and when I look at him I see concern.

“Is everything alright?” He asks

“Yes. Of course,”. I say hurriedly. “I don’t want to waste time.”

“Yes yes”. All he could say.

“There is something important we need to talk about.” I say this a little louder. I want the people entering the corridor to hear me.

He looks at me with more concern. I can see anticipation in his eyes.

“We can talk in my chambers if you want”. He asks me this, but he already knows my answer.

We both walk to his chambers. I enter first.

He pauses for a moment. Turns around and calls somebody.

A young boy of fourteen years appears from a corner. He asks him to bring something. The boy enters the room. I look at him. He is a little shy. But I know how to make him feel comfortable. I extend my hand towards his shy face. The images of houris flash in my head. My phone vibrates, and I think of the film clips I have in my phone. The imam bolts the door behind him leaving the two of us inside. Alone, under the protection of God and his servant.

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**Raseen Haider**, as an amateur painter, has been learning the craft as well as the art for a few years now. As a writer, he believes that stories are not created in isolation. Every story carries with itself an explicit comment, therefore he writes stories whenever he finds enough courage to say something he really wants to say. Professionally he has been affiliated with a number of organisations.

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