

# The Forbidden View

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Lately, life hadn't been fair to him. He had this simple expectation of a peaceful and comfortable retirement life with his loving family but things couldn't have gone any worse. His fate had conspired on him. It concocted an all-proof plan to cheat on him. Lonely and miserable, he felt his final days were approaching him quickly disregarding his reluctance to call it an end. An immense shadow of anger had settled deep inside him over the years like a persistent headless ghost. He didn't want to quit with so much fire within. At dusk as the last rays of the sun disappeared, he felt a sudden urge of desire. There was so much he wanted, there was so much he needed.

Lately, his thoughts were occupied with his x-wife. Thirty years ago on a dreamy, summer night they had their vows made in a traditional Bangladeshi marriage ceremony followed by the cherished wedding night, the first time together. The beautiful and shy nineteen-year bride, younger by a whopping sixteen years, shook his world to the core. She sat quietly on the rosy bed clad in red Benaroshi – a beautiful wedding sari, too shy to even look up at her groom, while he anchored at the far end of the bed, equally shy but yet curious enough to gawk at her. Oh, those large dark doe eyes on a sharp little face! Who knew a marriage among unknown could generate such wonderful emotions! Just the thought of growing old with that angelic woman felt so overwhelming. Sitting there silently he fought hard to find something nice to say, something that they would recall years later fondly, smilingly. Time passed, his words unfound, mouth dry. Nervous wreck, he gulped a glass of water, stealthily. This prompted an instant giggle by the bride. He

should have felt embarrassed but he didn't. The melody of that first laughter had him awed. He watched and listened. In his heart he felt like Alexander the Great, a worrier, a conqueror. Just to hear that magical sound of the giggle he gulped another glass of water.

Later, still no words spoken he had turned the lights off to facilitate a good night's sleep. Lying down far from his bride, at a distant corner of the incredibly wide bed, he cursed himself for all his inabilities. He had waited for this night for so long, through painful days of celibacy – a common practice in his society, and when finally, it came, he felt scared, anxious and unprepared. He listened the rhythmic breathing of the bride, yards away, yet felt so worm and soft. The night grew older and quieter. The clouds overshadowed the stars and finally gave up into a sudden convulsion of rain bringing in some relief to the wrath of blazing tropical heat. The open windows invited the spattered raindrops accompanied by the cool breeze. The bed was getting soaked, the pillows wet.

"It's getting wet." Muttered the bride; almost in a monologue.

"Should I close the windows?" He asked, happy to finally find an excuse to say anything useful.

"Shouldn't we?" Came a soft reply.

He was off in a jiffy. The bride giggled once again. Oh, the fluid, melodious and the magical sound!

"Why do you laugh?" He could collect enough courage to say.

"I don't know." A playful answer. His silence was interrupted shortly. "Don't you want to kiss me?" A sensuous voice whispered.

He had this intense urge to embrace her petite, beautiful body in his strong arms and rock it with passionate kisses. In reality his body went ice cold. He couldn't even move a finger.

The bride chuckled. A touch of empathy and affection was clearly detectable. Her fear and anxiety of an arrange

marriage disappeared quickly. The intimacy that ensued became the beginning of a wonderful life together.

After two decades of happy, conjugal life that sweet and supportive woman, mother of their only child, their daughter, left him for a younger man, a man she briefly once described as smart, lively and enthusiastic. He had known him for years and liked him in a way. Not for once he had suspected the strange romance that bloomed so secretly yet so openly, right before his eyes. What more she wanted? He had given her everything - love, wealth, child and honor. What else might have driven her to the unknown? He didn't have the answer. He never really looked for it. Unfathomable shame and anger filled him, led him to the darker side.

Lately, he thought a lot about his daughter, their only child. When she was only six he had noticed an unusual calmness in her, an abnormal level of self-consciousness. She used to get annoyed at the company of her parents, avoided being the subject of unending attention. When faced with affection she gave this cold stare that would make anybody uncomfortable. Her strong personality made it impossible to deal with her on any account. Anything that she disapproved had to be gone or most annoying circumstances would be in the offing. Cigarette was one such unfavorable object to her. If he had ever lighted one in front of her she would look with abomination.

“Dad, don't smoke. I hate it.”

“Just one, sweetheart.”

“No, not a single one.”

“I am cutting back, you know. Long time habit, not so easy to quit.” He reasoned.

“Spare me that pathetic monologue.”

Such unusual rudeness had equally surprised and hurt him, forced him to watch every minor thing he did or said at her presence. Many sleepless nights passed worrying about her.

During her college years she stayed home for a little

while, in the beginning. Despite all the differences he had always enjoyed her company. A child was a child, through disrespect and sardonic times. Nevertheless, one day she announced coldly that she was moving to a residential hall.

“Why?” Shocked, he asked.

“I hate to stay here.” The answer was abrupt, precise. “I hate everything here. You, mom, this big house - everything.”

He was hurt deep inside. For long eighteen years he had given her unconditional love. The usual coldness he could take, even the occasional rudeness but this went far beyond. He and his wife had known her well by then. None objected.

The girl didn't have a great time in the residential hall. He received frequent letters from the authorities – “Your daughter is confused about her sexuality. Talk to her. “

In a conservative Muslim society homosexuality had no chance. Confused and clueless, he rushed to see her, repeatedly. She wouldn't see him. Eventually she left the residential hall and later the college. She didn't come home. Not then, not ever. Soon after, his dearest wife had followed. There was no 'Dear John' letter, no discussions, no phone calls. He received papers for divorce, few days later. That was it.

He had loved these two women so dearly but neither he understood them nor could become anything more than a stranger. Often, he felt his misfortune had started right at birth when her mother had died in the hand of a village mid-wife who handled the normal cases perfectly well but were clueless with exceptions. A young wife's life was exchanged for the baby boy, the light of the family. The guilt that he carried all his life had never faded. Every time life took a low punch at him he absorbed quietly. It was payback time.

Lately, he reminisced his early teen years. During that time of unusual and often uncomfortable physical changes came along sudden rush of strange but very overpowering feelings.

Alone in a room, walking fully naked and observing the novelty of a sudden hardness would fill him with intense pleasure and satisfaction! One unfortunate day, one of his uncles accidentally walked on him. The need for privacy for a child was not a requirement. The uncle, seeing what he saw, had created maximum commotion.

“What’s wrong with you? Why are you going around naked? Are you turning into a jungle boy or something? Do we now have to release you in a forest?” His sarcasm had no bound.

Ashamed and confused he zoomed out of the house and stayed hiding until very late. Uncle had a blast at his cost. Everybody in his joint family had known every tiny detail of that encounter. Soon, he became the center of gossip for every female in the house. His sightings invariably met with chuckles, giggles and whispered remarks. For months he moved through the house stealthily.

The next spring one of his aunts, a young wife at her early twenties came to visit them after several years. Since the wedding few years ago her beauty had become a popular topic of talk in the surrounding villages. With her unusual milky white complexion, waist long dark black hair and the big clear dark eyes she looked stunning, a portrait of a divine beauty. It was love at first sight. No courage to talk, he followed her around secretly. Her mere presence left him with pounding heart and a drowsy mind with only a fuzzy understanding of sexual emotions.

The women had a separate bathhouse, a tradition that was only afforded by the respected families. Located at the back of their spread out dwelling the small brick floored roofless entity surrounded by bamboo fences was barely a bathhouse. However, it did offer some privacy to the women of the family from the gawking public eyes. Maid servants carried water in round clay containers. Even little boys were barred from going there. It was disrespectful and a sin alike. But weren’t the rules created to be broken? In an irresistible urge he resigned to his

killer curiosity and traveled over the dense hedges with sharp pointed spikes and rotten marshes to make his way to the women's bathhouse. Standing alone, he waited quietly until the right moment came. His heart into his throat, breathing fearfully loud he braved his own cowardice and finally put his eyes on a small hole. Unsuspecting and carefree she hummed a popular song as her beautiful pale hands danced through her clothing, facilitating them to slip through one by one, revealing slowly and steadily the mystery of the universe.

Stunned, he gaped at the amazingly round, smooth and firm entity with a pair of beautifully crafted pink nipples. The unexplainably pretty milky white breasts, so white that they looked almost anemic, momentarily overpowered his body with a unique reaction. His heart still throbbing so hard as to break out of his ribs, he felt an irresistible rising between his legs, unlike any other casual hardening. He sat there frozen, lethargic in the torturous gushing of blood through his body, abnormal but yet so desirable, as the sumptuous feelings resonated through his body, from head to toe, repeatedly.

Then the unthinkable happened. She saw him. This horrifying discovery, to his utter surprise, was met with an indulgent giggle, a touch of embarrassment topped with almost psychiatric patience. She said in a low, jocular voice, "Silly boy! Watching me secretly!"

He leaped away like a cub sensing trouble in a playful hunting session and ran over the hedges, the marshes and into the thick bamboo grove at the backdrop of the village. Still extended and hard, he took his pants off in an attempt to release the uncanny burden, crying silently, anxious about the consequences as his body crept back to normalcy. To his amazement, his fears proved unnecessary. Before boarding her cow pulled cart on her trip back to her home, a day's worth of travel, she had hugged him affectionately, whispering secretly into his ears, "Take it easy! It'll be okay!"

Lately, a pretty young woman had won over his affection. Whenever time permitted he arranged meeting with her, often in motels, sometimes in his lonely house. The youngster seemed to like him as well, as she, amid her busy schedule working for an escort service, always found time to be with him. Often, she attempted to inundate him with her enviably beautiful, curvy and petite body. She felt obligated to make the generous but melancholy elderly gentleman happy, with only asset she had ever known about - her sensuality. But even her brazen efforts to please him, her tight and luring body, the tanned small but extremely fascinating breasts with all its desired impoliteness, smoothness and sexiness failed to bring back the stormy feelings that once overpowered him in seconds. With soft, expressionless, dreamy eyes he observed the young body, the curves shifted layer to layer, up to bottom, smoothly converting into waves after waves. Like a genius mathematician her body had found an innovative way to mix adorable beauty with her otherwise mundane appearance. When together, his time passed observing her, examining every detail of her body, feet to hair, again and again, like a persistent astronomer searching through space for undiscovered celestial bodies. These simple observations illuminated him, something he believed he had never felt even during his happy days with his loving wife. He appreciated the opportunity that life had spared him, once more allowing him to rediscover the beauty and excitement of the world, in his own leisure, in his own terms.

But lately even this young beauty misinterpreted him. He wanted peaceful, quiet company in private settings. No making love, no throbbing hearts, no rummaging through each other's body in unstoppable stimulation. The young woman, confused and lost, had very little clue about his actual needs. Her otherwise risky lifestyle clashed with his demand for candle light dinners with Mozart or Beethoven playing at the background.

Lately, he had been thinking of death. Amusingly, the

thought of dying rekindled his desire to live. The hidden resentment and grudge that he fostered over the years had a reverse impact on him. Deep inside, he felt rebellious and silently demanded reconciliation from life, a full phase make out. Nevertheless, he struggled to keep away the bitter memories, to resist the nostalgia, to let the resentment drip out. Despite his tumultuous past he longed his final farewell to come on a tranquil note. But often his fruitless struggles threw him with disdain into even deeper ocean of contempt and sorrow.

Lately, however, just the way at the end of a scorching summer day on an ocean comes the cool, inviting night with its star-studded sky and the dark ghostly silhouettes spreading out itself softly with a touch of passion, indulgence and intimacy, the memory of that pair of milky white, extravagantly beautiful and unforgettably exciting breasts emerged silently into his mind. Peeking through a shapeless hole of time he watched the forbidden view with endless fervour. Tears rolled down his eyes as he slowly lost himself in the curious mind of a little silly boy, remembering his first sense of love.