

Chapter 13

Sumayah and Ahmad exchanged letters regularly throughout their separation. He wrote of his love for her and his longing to see her. She wrote to him about how she spent her time reading or taking walks.

One day Sumayah went to the public park and sat on a bench in a quiet corner. As she was reading a book, she felt that someone was standing near her, but she paid no attention.

A stranger sat next to her on the bench and said, "Good afternoon."

Sumayah frowned and did not reply. She resumed her reading.

"What book are you reading?" asked Hamid.

Not wishing to be rude, Sumayah told him, "A novel"

Hamid remarked, "I'm certain it is a love story. Love is the most wonderful and sacred thing in life."

"I do not agree. Religion and faith are the sacred things in life," Sumayah said.

Hamid disagreed, smiling, "Love and wealth are essential elements. Love without money is tragic, and money without love has no value."

Sumayah decided to find another bench to sit on, but first she told the stranger, "You are quite mistaken. Money, which you consider to be so important, misleads people and causes regret in the end. Human dignity cannot be found with wealth and a person without dignity is deprived of all things."

She then got up and left the park. Hamid was surprised by her stance. He expected her to be easy prey, and he became more determined to win her.

Hamid told himself, 'How stubborn she is! Nevertheless, I know how to seduce her.'

He also left the park and drove his car up to the gate. Sumayah was standing at the bus stop. Hamid saw her and decided to follow her home.

'I must learn where she lives,' he told himself.

Sumayah boarded a bus and Hamid followed it at a distance. She soon got off the bus and entered a tailor's shop. Hamid was disappointed, but he felt sure that he would get her one day.

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