

Chapter 22

Sumayah was expecting Ahmad within a few days. As she finished shopping one day and was waiting for a bus, Hamid stopped nearby and walked up to her.

He greeted her saying, "I have been looking for you, sister."

"What for? Have you read the books?" she asked.

"Yes, I have and I have bought new ones. I spend much of my time reading," Hamid said.

"Then you'll learn a lot," Sumayah commented.

"I have something to tell you. I have freed myself of all my hateful past." Hamid said.

"God bless you, but how?" Sumayah looked surprised. At that moment her bus arrived and she said she'd be at the park the afternoon if Hamid had something to say.

In the afternoon, Sumayah went to the park. On seeing her, Hamid came and sat near her.

He began, "I have left my wife. I tried to guide her, but it was in vain."

"How I pity her!" Sumayah remarked.

"Oh sister Sumayah, do not say that. She is not worth feeling sorry for." Hamid said.

Sumayah was surprised to hear him say her name. "How do you know my name?" she asked, "I don't remember having mentioned it to you."

Hamid said, "That's right. You never did. It is Fitnah who mentioned it to me."

Sumayah became confused, "Who is Fitnah?"

"My ex-wife. The one I have told you about." Hamid explained.

Sumayah thought deeply. Could this possibly be her cousin? She asked, "How long have you been

married?"

Hamid told her, "Four years. We spent three years in Europe and we have returned only recently."

"Oh, I see," Sumayah could hardly speak.

Hamid asked, "What is the matter? You look pale. Have I annoyed you?"

"Oh no," Sumayah assured him, "What has Fitnah told you about me'?"

"In fact, I haven't been very honest with you. Fitnah herself pushed me into following you. She gave me a very different impression about you. She lied, as a matter of fact. I was quite naive to have believed her. You know the rest of the story," Hamid said.

"Has she really done that?" Sumayah could not believe her ears.

"Yes. I swear by Allah she has done it. She described you for me so that I could recognize you that day at the airport." Hamid confessed.

"What a woman! I never thought she was so wicked," Sumayah exclaimed.

It was Hamid's turn to be surprised, "Do you know her?"

"She is my cousin." Sumayah told him.

Hamid said, "Oh, then you are the cousin she used to talk about!"

"About my old-fashioned ways and out-of-date ideas?" Sumayah asked.

Hamid replied, "Exactly."

"Why?" Sumayah asked.

Hamid explained, "That's just how she is."

Sumayah said, "Please stop talking about her. She is suffering terribly now."

Sumayah was quite amazed by her cousin. She wondered why Fitnah hated her so much. She had never hurt her.

She stood up saying, "I must leave now."

"Can I ask when your fiancé is coming home?" he asked.

Sumayah said, "He is returning next Monday, God willing."

Hamid asked shyly, "May I be with you to welcome him at the airport?"

Sumayah answered, "Yes you can. I have told him about you."

Hamid smiled, "Thank you and good-bye for now."

On the following Monday morning, Hamid was at the airport with Sumayah and her family.

"Do you think he will mind that I've come?" Hamid asked.

Sumayah assured him, "He will think of you as a brother."

Ahmad arrived and Sumayah introduced Hamid.

Hamid offered them a lift in his car. Along the way, Hamid praised Sumayah's efforts for his guidance. He mentioned his ex-wife's name and wondered what motivated her to act in such a way against Sumayah. Ahmad reasoned that she meant to have revenge and destroy his life. She never imagined that true faith and belief could protect believers. At last virtue prevails while devilish plans come to nothing.

Sumayah asked, "But why would she plan to get revenge on you?"

Ahmad explained, "She knew me years ago. I had forgotten about her, but I know it's the same Fitnah. She tried to trap me but she failed."

"Oh what a wicked woman," Hamid cried, "It's difficult to believe she's Sumayah's cousin!"

Sumayah said, "Yet she is. I really do pity her. It is not her fault. It is the deviated society that has misled her. Had she been in contact with Islamic ideals, she would not have fallen prey to any corrupted society. There are many people like her! Let us strive for their guidance and hope that Allah may help us."

Ahmad and Sumayah married soon after and Hamid became a good Muslim believer.

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