

Zasar CB

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

To the contrary, Miss Davis. My mother is very dear to me. I was very upset by what happened to her skin.

But I am trying to explain to you that there are acceptable limits.

ALLISYN:

For whom? All women- or just Pakistani women?

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

This is not the United States. There are systems in place that preserve the economic and social order of our country. We must all play our designated roles within this system.

(beat)

beg in

ALLISYN:

What became of your mother, Mr. Zasar?

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

She is perfectly well. They are still married- many, many years now. She is still beautiful.

(beat)

ALLISYN:

You went on to become a Consul General... surely your mother had something to do with your interest in education and diplomacy?

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

That is the point, Ms. Davis. My mother knew the risk she was taking and the consequences of her actions. She accepted her punishment humbly. Do you think I could come into your country and understand your people? Your traditions?

ALLISYN:

Were you not educated in the West, Mr. Zasar? London? And then graduate school in the U.S.?

(He nods.)

ALLISYN: (cont'd)

You're telling me that you understood none of the traditions you witnessed and participated in there?

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

I witnessed some, yes. But I did not understand them all, nor did I try. I am Pakistani, and a representative of Pakistan, no matter where I am. Just as you are an *American* journalist. Therefore you view everything through the eyes of an American.

ALLISYN:

Facts are facts, Mr. Zasar. Not everything is subjective.

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

You are incorrect, Miss Davis. Everything is indeed subjective. There is great joy and pride in Pakistan. Neither your Washington Post nor NY Times articles mentioned this.

(beat)

This country girl, with her simple life and her limited brain- why is she important to you?

ALLISYN:

Because I don't think she had a limited brain, sir. I think her family likely beat her to death in broad daylight to insure she wouldn't have the opportunity to use this brain.

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

I understand you've spent a few months in Lahore before? *(She nods.)* Yes, I know. When you drove through our Salt Range, like your male reporter friend, Ben, might be doing right now.... You saw many birds on this drive, no?

ALLISYN:

Some birds, sir, yes...

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

One sees many birds. And the urial and the ibex, as well, yes?

ALLISYN:

I haven't noted those animals myself but I am sure they are there if you say so.

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

This ibex, has a much bigger brain than this girl. This girl has less value than this ibex, this urial, this bird. At least these animals can be killed and eaten for nourishment. They make us strong. This girl, was nothing. This girl shamed her people and her people did what was their right, what must be done. That is truth.

ALLISYN:

Well, that's clearly your truth.

She gestures to the TV screen showing the rioters.

ALLISYN: *(cont'd)*

Your people are rioting in the streets.

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

It will all quiet down in a day or two.

ALLISYN:

Back to where everyone plays their designated roles within the system?

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

Correct, Allisyn.

(beat)

ALLISYN:

May I ask you something?

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

As you wish.

ALLISYN:

Is that your opinion of my brain, as well, sir? That my brain is limited and small like the white bird of the Salt Range?

Shahreyar Zasar laughs- and then thinks.

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

No, Miss Davis. Your brain is more like the jackal's. It is a tricky brain. You're sneaky and manipulative. And your skin is tough and thin, not like our beautiful birds. "Jackal-lady". That is precisely why you were not granted entrance into Pakistan. We have enough jackals in our Salt Range, already.

Her cell phone beeps: it's a new text message from Ben. They both hear it, but Allisyn intentionally doesn't acknowledge it. SHAHREYAR ZASAR cocks his head slightly.

SHAHREYAR ZASAR:

I might remind you, Ms. Davis, that anti-Pakistani activities are punished by the death penalty in Pakistan. Please ask your friend, Ben, to bear this in mind, as well. Good day, Miss Davis.

end

The Consular Agent opens the door for her imminent departure. Her phone beeps again. He turns his head and acknowledges it.