

Source: redbubble.com

Eve Teasing

Tawsif Saleheen

LET me tell you a little story. I like to call it 'Of Dogs and Men'. This is how it goes:

Shawon was a twelve-year-old boy who went to a school close to his home. Since his parents didn't have a car and the school was only at a short distance, Shawon usually walked to school all by himself. He didn't mind the walk. In fact it was his favourite time of the day. While most of his friends were depended on their cars, or on their parents, Shawon could go to school all by himself. It made him feel independent. It made him feel powerful.

Then a bunch of dogs came into the picture. No one knew where exactly they came from. A couple of them probably came from the sewers nearby. Couple of others looked to have a better upbringing, but had somehow fallen off with the worst. There were four of them, all with their jaundiced eyes, and dirty yellow teeth, and that incorrigible stench that comes from living in the sewer.

At first they would just loiter around the local shops hoping some one would toss stray food at them. No one paid them any heed back then. Soon they started getting bolder, and louder, until it got to a point where they started jeering at every passer by.

Shawon first saw the dogs on his way to school. He was enjoying the walk when one of the dogs spotted him and started barking. He ignored it and kept walking. But soon the other dogs joined in. They started following him while barking away in an ugly unison. At first, Shawon thought that the other people in the street would come to his help. No one did. As he realised that he was all alone in the street, a cold fear ran across Shawon's spine. His steps quickened and in the end he was literally running towards his school.

Since then it had become a routine of sorts. Each morning, the bunch of dogs would follow Shawon, intimidating, barking, and threatening to bite. He was helpless. He didn't enjoy walking in the street anymore. He didn't feel independent. He still walked to his school alone, but he was scared all the times. At times he would get so frustrated that he just wanted to pick some stones and throw them at the dogs. But one of his friends had tried it a few weeks back and got bitten instead. The fear and the insecurity had increased so much that these days Shawon felt traumatized every time he saw a random dog in the street.

There was a time when Shawon loved going to school. That was before a bunch of sewer dogs robbed him out of his freedom...

Now let's imagine the story with the protagonist Shawon being a sixteen-year-old girl, instead of a twelve-year-old boy.

The bottom line is, irrespective of their age, their background and their social status; eve teasers are no different than a bunch of sewer dogs. May be, we shouldn't always let them bark away. May be when they are staring away or passing a lewd comment at a girl, we can say something to stop them, instead of completely ignoring the scenario. You know, just a thought.

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