

# Blissful Ignorance

SAMIN SABAH ISLAM

The soggy bread tasted as stale as the pallid lily pink walls and the mirthless tedium that had dawned upon Sena's latter days. Gone were her days of playing busy bee, skimming through her daily errands and skittering by the back yard, gardening or watching her children play about. The golden days of single handedly hosting garden parties and vacationing in Bali were withering memories at the back of her mind, safely pinned, somewhere Alzheimer's hadn't reached out to yet. The wrinkles sagging her cheeks didn't help with her mindset of still being at the age of forty-six, so mirrors were safely tucked away, for the sake of both hers and the neighboring dweller's sanity. All things forced to surround her reflected the dejection and dispiritedness in her very self these days, as if her lousy routine wasn't reminder enough.

A twist of the door knob and a faint crackling signaled the entry of the ward nurse, a sweet girl of a petite frame, who would avoid all sorts of eye contact and kept speech to a minimum.

"Good morning. How're we doing today?" the girl in her probable twenties questioned with a sweet tint in her reluctant tone. Sena would often wonder if she was always this timid or if she had some sort of lack of appreciation for Sena.

"The migraine is manageable, it's the sleeplessness that wears me down," Sena complains, as if the ward nurse could solve her medical problems when the doctor didn't have much effort to put.

A flicker of concern played through the girl's face which was quickly draped by phlegm.

"I'll remember to leave some warm milk before bedtime, or perhaps chamomile tea?" She uttered lowly, surprising Sena with her enthusiasm, which was benumbed but it certainly exceeded her modal expression of emotion.

"That would be kind," Sena smiled gratefully, "Who taught you the remedies to cure sleeplessness, then?" Sena inquires



insisting to keep as much as the conversation she gets throughout the day going as possible.

The girl looks up to meet Sena's gaze as something flickers through those stolid thundercloud eyes. Not sadness, no, that's not what it was. Neither was it regret or fatigue. It was a fleeting whirlpool of reminiscence, perhaps sweet, perhaps not. Perhaps something dug deep behind her mind wavering about, provoked by the question.

"Grandmother," the girl hastily uttered breaking her gaze with the other set of orbs and gaining a grip. "I'll come back for the dishes," she said clearing her voice and exiting the room leaving behind the regular silence and clattering of silverware.

At a sudden, a throbbing headache pinched through Sena's head as the fork dropped to her plate. Dark eyes, chamomile, tight smile and a particular melodious voice flooded her head and

recollections deluged down her mind, and she knew. She recognized those dark eyes, for they were her very own. She accepted the reason behind the girl's refusal to look her square in the eyes and knew the magic chamomile recipe that helped her find slumber many, many years throughout. She understood the pain in the reluctance and saw the love amidst the

concerned eyes. The past ten years came back rushing and made her dizzy.

"Is everything alright?" the same melodious tone came back to inquire.

Sena looked at the girl at awe. How much this angel had grown since she remembered. She couldn't help but feel utter pride in the selfless figure before her, for devoting this many hours behind a crippled mother with an unfortunate flaw to even be capable of acknowledging her.

"Yes, it's all good," Sena faintly said in a dismissive tone and watched the girl of more than one relation walk away.

In that moment she decided ignorance was bliss. She wouldn't tell her that she remembered or even at the least that she loved her. She did though, she loved her very much and perhaps that's why the concealment. Perhaps because of her embarrassment of being a troublesome patient, and furthermore, an amnesiac absentee mother. But mostly because she didn't see the point in giving her a short lived hope, for she knew tomorrow she'd wake up to face the timid young ward nurse, and not her very own daughter.

