

My Strange Addiction

MAISHA MALIHA

When I try to retrace my steps to when it all began, I wander off to the days when I had just started out as a tutor. Because I had just lost my 8th phone, I had the strongest urge to be independent and be able to not rely on my parents anymore. In short, I was determined to buy myself a phone. Whoever said, "Money is the root of all evil," couldn't be any more justified because ever since I began my journey in the world of earning my own dough, everything went South.

I walked into it completely oblivious of what it would do to me. My friend told me she needed me to go with her to buy some. I had been working non-stop for an entire year and I figured, maybe it's time I treated myself. I had never been addicted to anything before; naturally I thought I was immortal. Oh, how wrong I was...

My adolescent heart fluttered like the battered wings of a hopeful

butterfly at the very sight of it. When your crush waves at you and you melt like butter on warm toast, that's EXACTLY how I felt when I first laid my eyes on them. The moment my fingertips felt the soft material of the black denims, it was like electricity. I could see a whole new universe, a universe where I am the adult with the best looking pair of pants. Little did I know of the impending doom.

Those were the first of many pants that I now possess. One drawer is solely crammed with black pants. Jet black, matte black, washed black, black – I have all the shades of black. The first person to detect my illness was my mom. In a desperate attempt to fix me, she'd showcase all the untouched *kurtis* in the air; to emphasize her point of view she'd open the wardrobe drawer only to be disappointed at the sight of more black pants. The frustration in her face, I can never forget it. "I don't get it, so many pants... WHY DIDN'T YOU BUY

ANY TOPS TO GO WITH THESE PANTS??" Such a wise woman.

Every time I step into the malls, I can hear them. They try to woo me, lure me in to get me to try them on. I tell myself, "You just bought 3 new pairs last week. You don't need another one right now." "Then again, who needs jeggings? You could wear your raggedy black ones," said the printed maroon jeggings. Pants: "Don't you see? I will become a part of a definition of your psyche. See what I mean?"

Me: "I do, keep talking."

P: "I'd make you look slimmer, lose 10 pounds!"

M: "I do need to lose weight."

P: "You'd wear me with everything! White, black, yellow, purple – I go with everything."

M: "It would be an investment. You know what? You're right."

Before I'd snap back to consciousness, I've had already purchased 3 different shades of maroon. I looked at my accounts book, that I made myself because I can't afford to buy a legit one as I spent all my money on pants, and drowned my pillow with tears. I rushed to my dresser drawer to retrieve my savings; the moment I took out the Pringles can, I knew. I had eaten through my savings as well.

When I stay back home while my friends go to fancy restaurants to hang out, I imagine what life is like on the other side. While I cook myself a pathetic bowl of *Chacha Noodles* because I can't afford *Stakeout* burgers, I think to myself - what did I ever do to deserve this curse?

Mum figured it was a cry for help and handed me a stack of carefully calculated money to buy shirts or blouses and nothing else. She guided me through how I could avert temptations and buy tops that would only fit the budget. She'd also taken my money and stashed it away in a bank account for "future savings". It is difficult to make a full recovery but I'm getting there. Mum was enthralled to see I had brought home 4 very presentable shirts. Of course, I didn't show her the high-waist denims that I had hidden in my backpack because that would kill her. Baby steps, there's still hope for me.

If I could do things differently, I'd stop earning, kill all my friends and burn all pants outlets so that I never get tempted to buy pants. I have them all, leggings, jeggings, denims, boyfriend jeans, high-waist pants, velvet pants, dividers... I could go on but I'm afraid I might remember I don't have a particular type of pants and go hunt them down. To this day, I have 34 pairs of pants and 9 tops.

Stay safe, kids. Wear onesies.

Maisha Maliha speaks what crosses her mind in the most positive way but is often misinterpreted and thought to be a lunatic. Unfollow her at www.facebook.com/MyshoeMaliha

