



Red Smoke

MAISHA NAZIFA KAMAL

I appear like red smoke,
Annihilating your senses, smothering your gaze.
Breaking apart all your walls in one swift move,
Tantalising your unspoken thoughts into a loop.

I am the finesse of red smoke;
As smooth as silk, as sharp as bitterly true words.
I am one of your perfect enemies,
But a languid friend to unmask your true identity.

I hate the pungent smell of white smoke,
Crush and kill lithely the blue ones,
Call sometimes the black counterpart my ally,
But red smoke is what defines me as I pass by.
For I am a keen keeper of your dark secrets
And sometimes importantly the real secret itself.
You hate me, they fight me, everyone knows me,
Yet even so, I hate those who triumph over me.

I appear like red smoke, I bear its finesse
I am your worst nightmare, your trouble,
I am fear.

Maisha Nazifa Kamal is on a highly confidential mission to defeat all Muggles in procrastination. Join forces with her on 01shreshtha7@gmail.com



A Camera Captured It

SHOUNAK REZA

A camera captured it
My smile and yours
Ten months ago —
Against a leafy wall,
Next to a barely used pavement.
The wall is still there,
The plants are still alive-
Alive and green
And I am still breathing.
A camera captured it.
It was a bright, rarely seen smile,
You had praised it.
And I was happy,
And I was crestfallen,
The war you never fought
Went on in my head.
A camera captured it.

SUPERMAN

UPOMA AZIZ

Kabir was halfway across his second cup of tea when a sudden noise made him knock the cup across the table, and some of though tea cascaded straight into his lap as well.

He sat there, a bitter taste slowly spreading throughout his mouth. The sound outside was only getting louder by the minute, and he didn't even need to guess about the source, everyone in this neighbourhood knew it all too well.

No one seemed to be particularly fond of Mr. Rasel Afroz, the quirky, obnoxious man, who, by sheer miracle happened to be Kabir's next-door neighbour. So even when he got married, no excitement took over the colony like it usually did during a marriage ceremony. And the addition of one more human being to the colony was undeclared, uneventful as well. Mrs. Afroz came into their lives like a luminous shadow. Luminous, for she was so breathtakingly beautiful, but no one ever really got to see her, so her existence remained mostly secret. But not quite.

Kabir had sneaked a few peeks at her on rare occasions, when she'd glance out at the sky through the small slit of the window panels, and had hopelessly fallen in love with her. But, the good thing was, he knew all too well that it was a no-end case, so he did a good job in keeping the thought at the back of his head.

But it didn't help when the entire neighbourhood, as well as Kabir himself knew, that within these six months of their marriage, they'd been fighting. No one interfered, for it was, of course, strictly *personal trouble*. Kabir jumped up once more as a loud bang was heard from the home next door. He cringed as the sound of a faint wailing filled the air. Must be her.

Kabir stood up, his hands clenched into a

fist, blood pounding in his ears. He had to do *something*.

He subtly walked up and rapped on the heavy, ornate wooden door of AFROZ VILLA. Once. Twice. He had to knock three times to be noticed. The noise inside stopped abruptly, and after about five minutes, the door swung open. A burly, moustached man squinted at Kabir. "What?!" he barked.

Kabir took two obvious steps back. "I... uh, I needed to talk to Mrs. Afroz."

Mr. Afroz eyed Kabir with obvious suspicion. "What do you need *her* for?"

Kabir gently nudged the guy aside. Too surprised to act, the man made way.

"Mrs. Afroz...", Kabir started, and then it hit him. He didn't even know her name, or anything other than the fact that he was the wife of this man standing and presumably boiling behind him.

"Come with me," realising how wrong that sounded, Kabir rephrased. "I mean, I'll drop you off anywhere, but you cannot let this man treat you like this any more."

"Shayna! Stay right where you are!" the man spat.

To Kabir's surprise, Shayna stood up, and looked Kabir right in the eyes. He could feel himself melting away under her stare...

Another sudden clash made Kabir crash back to reality. He was still staring at his upturned cup, sitting in his breakfast table, when the cacophony outside continued.

"But, he's too powerful. He's strong. It's personal trouble anyway," Kabir consoled himself. He finally stood up. Ugh, he had to wash this pair of jeans right away.

Upoma Aziz is a walking, talking, ticking time bomb going off at random detonators. Poke her at www.fb.com/upoma.aziz to watch her explode.

