

## COVER STORY



*Heera has been an iconic figure in the modelling industry, ever since she made her big-time debut in the 2008 edition of 'Lux Channel i Superstar'. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, she talks about her illustrious career, spanning over a decade.*

**Rafi Hossain:** Welcome to *Uncensored* with Rafi Hossain. Today we are here with the renowned model and actor, Heera. She is like family to us. So tell us, what have you been up to lately?

**Heera:** I have just been a little busy



# THE SHINING SOLITAIRE

lately. And you said something very true when you said that *The Daily Star* is very close to me. *The Daily Star* has been with me since the beginning of my career.

**Rafi:** So, 12 years of your career in this industry have passed. That is a very big milestone. Did you start your career with ramp modelling?

**Heera:** In 2008, I was in *Lux Channel i Superstar*. But, I started modelling in 2007.

**Rafi:** What position did you secure in 'Lux Channel i Superstar' 2008?

**Heera:** The thing is, whichever position I placed, it doesn't matter because no one else from that year could make their career in modelling. I did not win, but everyone just assumes that I was the winner because I am the only one that is still here in the industry.

**Rafi:** Did you have any specific reason to want to do ramp modelling?

**Heera:** When I left *Lux Channel i Superstar*, *Dhaka Fashion Week* was taking place. Tupa apu used to organise and choreograph it. So, I did a canvas shoot, which became a cover. After seeing that cover, Tupa apu reached out to me. Later, I did a ramp show for *Dhaka Fashion*

*Week*.

**Rafi:** Did you start modelling with 'Dhaka Fashion Week'?

**Heera:** No, I did quite a few ramp shows before that. I started doing shows in 2007. So, after leaving the competition, I got a lot more recognition, and that really helped me.

**Rafi:** When did the interest for acting bloom?

**Heera:** I came into acting much later in my career. I really never had much interest in acting, if I am being honest. I was enjoying modelling so much, that I never really could find time or have the desire to act in a drama. I then signed a contract to do a series, and had a very bad experience. I got very bored, and did not like going to the shooting spot at all. Later, I suddenly felt that the modelling industry had deteriorated in quality. Shows were taking place, but they seemed to lack in quality. After that, I started to shift into dramas. I did quite a few dramas and shows. I worked with a few senior artists. And now, I am enjoying acting.

**Rafi:** You previously did not enjoy acting, but you seem to be enjoying acting now. What

changed?

**Heera:** Now, I have to shoot daily. I am involved in it all the time. I am doing it as a profession, so I have to be comfortable with it.

**Rafi:** Did you get offers for films?

**Heera:** A lot of offers came. But, I am very specific about my projects. Before acting in something, I have to like the script. For films, I have not received any good offer yet. But, if any good offer comes my way, I will do it. Another thing is, the film industry was at a very bad place at one point. Due to that, I used to think that I would never do movies. But since the industry is improving now, I am very open to do films.

**Rafi:** So, have you expressed your interest to any filmmaker?

**Heera:** They know that I am interested, and I will do it if I get an offer for a good project. But, I have never really reached out to people to do things. I have always worked after getting offers, even when it came to modelling. I got an offer from Amitabh bhai, but somehow, couldn't work with him. I will do a film when I

you think that the ones that shift from modelling to acting cannot do that well?

**Heera:** I think one main reason is that, models do not feel much interest in acting. Another reason might be that the roles offered are not interesting. They think that since they are models and not actors, they cannot be given big roles, as it is a risk. In my own personal experience, it used to feel like an exam when I first got a script. I had to take it very seriously. If someone does not take acting very seriously, they cannot play a character well.

**Rafi:** But, do you think that your acting has matured since you first started?

**Heera:** I am very lucky to have received the guidance and help from many senior

am completely comfortable with the project. I'm not going to rush into the project without thinking it through.

**Rafi:** Many women are coming out with the '#MeToo' movement worldwide; in your 12-year long career, did you face any problems like that?

**Heera:** Well, I have faced things and had to handle them strongly myself. But no, I was never a victim who was exploited by someone.

**Rafi:** Heera, why do



actors. So, with that help and guidance, I have improved. But, I always continue to learn more, and will continue to give it my all. The works I have done, I somehow made the characters very memorable. I receive a lot of messages on social media from people, telling me that a character I played was good.

**Rafi:** Many of your fans write to us and say that you resemble Kareena Kapoor. Do you hear that a lot?

**Heera:** I have to hear that a lot, and I am fed up of hearing that. I am Heera; that is my identity. I believe that I am better than her, even though I might be wrong.

**Rafi:** Then tell me, who would you be happy to be called similar to?

**Heera:** I do not want to be called similar to anyone. I do follow a few certain icons, like Gigi Hadid or Angelina Jolie. I also really look up to Kajol. Her acting is very natural.

**Rafi:** But, if someone were to say that you are like Kajol, would you like that?

**Heera:** No. If someone said that I am like her, I would not like that. But, the thing is, since everyone says that I am similar to Kareena, I have to accept that I am similar to her in some way. People actually had been saying that I am similar to Kareena Kapoor even before I started modelling.

**Rafi:** Heera, can you name five new models and five senior models that are doing well?

**Heera:** I would prefer not to name anyone, but some are doing very well. All the models that are working with good brands, are doing well. The problem is that they just cannot seem to stay in the industry. You will see someone doing very well, but soon enough, they just fade away.

**Rafi:** Why do you think this is happening?

**Heera:** I feel that we used to be willing to struggle, while the new models just want to get good things immediately, without struggling much. They are very overconfident, and many of them stop paying their complete attention to modelling.

But, many amazing faces are in the industry now. Models like Riba and Trino are doing great. Choreographers like Azra and Luna have also been helping models for a long time now.

**Rafi:** You are single, meaning you have had a breakup recently?

**Heera:** That is very personal, and I would prefer to keep it that way. I am very reserved when it comes to things like these. I would very much prefer to keep this topic away from the media (laughs).

**Rafi:** You're not planning on marrying someone extremely rich and quitting the industry, right?

**Heera:** I have no such plans. I am not a materialistic person, so I'm not going to marry someone for their wealth. I will only marry someone if I truly love them.

**Rafi:** It was really nice talking to you, Heera. Do you have any special message for your fans?

**Heera:** I am very grateful to all of my fans. I would request everyone of you to support me in whatever venture I take, and I would ask all of you to keep me in your prayers.

Transcribed by Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub