

Chapter 16

Sumayah decided to stop going to that particular park for some time and visited other public gardens instead. As she was strolling through a garden one day, she saw a woman begging for money and Sumayah gave her a substantial amount of money. The woman was quite happy and uttered words of gratitude as she walked away.

At that moment Sumayah heard someone say, "How generous you are, Miss...? You should not have given the beggar that much money."

Sumayah was shocked and dismayed to see the same man who had spoken to her on previous occasions standing nearby. She became pale and looked around. On seeing lot of people nearby, she felt safe and said in a loud voice, "How dare you speak to me? Why are you following me?"

Hamid stuttered, "In fact, I ..."

Sumayah told him, "You are a stranger to me, and I don't even know your name. You are very impolite to address me."

The woman beggar was standing nearby and Hamid found it difficult to explain his behaviour. Sumayah's anger confounded him, and he didn't reply.

"Why don't you answer?" Sumayah asked. "I swear by Allah I would have called the police, had not it been for this wedding ring on your finger. I pity your wife."

Sumayah left the park, and Hamid saw the woman beggar pick something up off the ground.

He grabbed her hand and shouted, "Thief!"

Then he quickly asked the waiter to follow Sumayah, since the beggar had picked up a gold coin near where she had been sitting.

Sumayah returned and confirmed in front of everyone that she herself had given the coin to the destitute woman.

Hamid was very embarrassed and surprised by Sumayah's behaviour.

He thought deeply about her and said to himself, 'In fact, I am not a good person. How worthy it is to do good for others! I never thought such virtuous girls existed.'

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