

BY GOD
by
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INT. COMMUNITY CENTER FOYER - DAY

A bright blue feminine eye opens and adjusts to the light.

KATHARIA (20's), on the floor panting, dazed and confused, her ash blonde hair a halo around her alabaster face.

Her head lolls. Her body drags. Her hair smears through blood. Her ears tune into the sound of a ringing phone.

She turns to find boots shuffling through a bloody trail.

AAMIR (30's), a burly Arab American man, crawls determined toward a door. Blood weeps through his grubby shirt.

He clutches at the floor with one hand. His other drags behind, handcuffed to the handle of a gym bag, the other handle handcuffed to Katharia.

She tries to push back. Her feet slip in the blood.

KATHARIA

You let the others go?

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER FOYER - DAY - PAST

Two VETERANS (60's), and an African American GUARD (40's), set up for a veteran's meeting. Katharia nervously enters.

GUARD

You here for the veteran's meeting,
sweetheart?

She nods and stands alone.

VETERAN #1

Waiting for somebody?

She nods. The Veteran smiles. The door slams. They all snap round. AAMIR stands boldly by the door clutching the black bag handcuffed to his wrist. He sweeps a pistol around.

AAMIR

Okay this is a hostage situation.
Do as I say and nobody gets hurt.

VETERAN #2

You're holding a veterans meeting
hostage? Jeez Louise, just what the
fuck is wrong with you, son?

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - MOMENTS LATER

The blinds pulled shut. The room dark. Katharia and the Veterans sat against a wall. Aamir crosses by them, bag in one hand, pistol in the other.

KATHARIA

Look, I got a little girl, she's only five. She's getting ice-cream with my pa right now.

AAMIR

Bullshit. Be quiet!

She pulls out her cell phone and shows him it.

KATHARIA

No, here, look.

Aamir looks at the phone, freezes, and glares. She proudly smiles. Police sirens echo in the distance.

Aamir roars and throws over a table. He tugs the phone from her and stares at it. He bowls it a wall, storms around, and kicks over tables.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)

You broke it!

She gets up and grabs the cracked phone. More sirens draw in. Aamir crosses toward her. Her eyes bulge. He aims the gun for her head. She winces.

GUARD

No!

SMACK! He hits her over and over with the pistol. She screams cowering. He kicks over a chair and glowers.

AAMIR

Get back with the others!

She gets back against the wall and clutches her arm in pain. A Veteran comforts her and tries to pull up her sleeve. She snatches her arm away from him and stares at Aamir shocked.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - MINUTES LATER

The phone to Aamir's ear. He reads from notes.

AAMIR

(into phone)

-you have until the eleventh minute in the eleventh hour to meet my demands.

He hangs up.

GUARD

Your demands are crazy. They aint going to happen, no way in hell.

VETERAN #2
 Maybe that's the point.

The Veteran stares at Aamir suspicious.

VETERAN #2 (CONT'D)
 What's in the bag?

Aamir crosses over, takes a knee, and unzips the bag. They stare shocked.

AAMIR
 You have to understand that what
 I'm doing serves a higher purpose.

Explosives, a timer wired to them. One hour remaining.

The Guard takes a deep breath and bursts up at Aamir. They crash to the floor. The Guard pins Aamir down.

GUARD
 Go! I got this!

The Veterans gather themselves up. One grabs Katharia's arm.

VETERAN #1
 Come on!

Katharia holds back and stares worried. BANG! They freeze.

Aamir slithers from the Guard, gun trembling in his hand. The Guard groans. Blood pools from under him.

LOUD HAILER (O.S)
 Aamir?

Aamir stares at the wheezing Guard.

LOUD HAILER (O.S) (CONT'D)
 Aamir, what was that? We need you
 to answer the phone, Aamir. We need
 to talk to you. It's about your
 daughter. Your wife says she's
 missing. Where is she, Aamir?

EXT. FORREST - DAY - PAST

Twisted trees. Gunshots echo in the distance. A human silhouette target takes multiple shots to the neck. Katharia stares down a smoking pistol.

KARL (50's), dressed in camo gear, pats her on the back.

KARL
 Now you two go together like a lazy
 dog and a hot summers day.
 (MORE)

KARL (CONT'D)

There's a culture breeding here we have to protect you from. And no protection is too strong for my little girl.

She takes aim.

KARL (CONT'D)

And what does my little girl know about protection?

KATHARIA

Make every bullet count, and never shoot a man in the back.

KARL

And why do we never shoot a man in the back?

KATHARIA

Because the cops will know he was running and his mother will know he was a coward.

KARL

Amen to that.

She relentlessly opens fire.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY - PAST

Aamir paces back and forth fuming. The Veterans try to stem the Guard's bleeding.

AAMIR

(to Katharia)

You. Come here. Everyone must be searched.

She stares fixed.

AAMIR (CONT'D)

Now!

She crosses over and stands ready to be searched.

He crouches, pads her legs and works up to her waist. He studies her and feels around her chest. She stares ahead disgusted. He shoves her away.

AAMIR (CONT'D)

Next!

She sits back down. Her hand fumbles behind a trash can. She recovers a pistol and secludes it in the back of her jeans.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY - PRESENT

Aamir pulls Katharia across the hall toward a desk. She rolls over, clothes soaked red, unable to find any grip.

Aamir gasps, barely any energy left. They reach the desk. He props himself against it. Katharia struggles, weakens, and gives in.

KATHARIA

We can just walk out together.

AAMIR

Do you know how to defuse this thing? Do you think they will?

She stares at a knife in a pool of blood.

KATHARIA

The knife! We can cut ourselves free! Come on!

She pulls against him. He winces and pulls back.

AAMIR

You think I stand a chance out there? I'm not leaving this room alive, and I'm not leaving this body with any doubt.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT - PAST

Aamir stumbles in and tosses a beer bottle in the bin. His wife RASHEEDA (30's), tails him.

RASHEEDA

How many of those have you had already?

AAMIR

I'm blending in. To drink is normal here, to be drunk is normal here.

RASHEEDA

You are losing yourself, Aamir. Walk round the block and clear your head. All the way around.

He opens the fridge and pulls out another bottle.

AAMIR

I'll go around twice!

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Aamir strolls in the moonlight. He passes an OLD DUDE sat in a lawn chair. Funk blasts from a radio. The Old Dude raises his bottle to Aamir.

Aamir raises his and listens to the music. He dances drunk and continues walking with a swagger.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - LATER

Aamir's feet kick up dust, the town in the distance. He stops and stares at a small bar.

INT. BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Soft rock plays. Aamir enters and staggers to the bar. The BARMAN stands tall and unimpressed.

BARMAN

Boy, you need to go take a good
look at yourself and think about
where you're at.

Three SUPREMACISTS stand up shocked.

SUPREMACIST

Oh no no no hell no. Just what the
hell's this throwing a shadow
across our door?

They cross toward Aamir. He straightens up wary.

SUPREMACIST (CONT'D)

Now, I'm going to politely ask you
just once, to get back in your
taxi, or get back on your magic
carpet, and fuck off.

The Supremacists laugh and posture challengingly.

A feminine hand prods at the buttons of a juke box. A track starts, electric guitars thrash through the speakers. They all snap round.

Katharia glowers by a juke box. She locks eyes with Aamir.

KATHARIA

(shouting over music)
You here to tell us to turn the
music off?

Aamir stares confused. She bobs to the music.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)

You here to tell me I can't dance?
You here to force me to be one of
your wives?

Aamir goes to leave. The Supremacists block him. Katharia unbuttons her shirt.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)

You here to tell me to cover up?

She stares contemptuous and pulls her shirt open. A tattoo of her chest cut open, her heart branded with Odin's cross.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)

(screaming)

YOU WANT ME TO HACK UP MY CUNT? YOU
MOTHERFUCKING SAND NIGGER!

Aamir reels shocked. Karl strolls from a dark corner.

KARL

Looks like you done kicked the
hornets nest, boy.

Katharia lets her shirt slide to the floor. Her arms sleeved with Odin's Wolves, their tails coiled down her forearms.

She strides over confidently. Two huge inked iron wings run down her back, stemming from an eagle atop of a swastika.

KATHARIA

You here to beat me? To rape me?
That what you want?

Aamir frowns appalled.

KARL

(preaching)

You husbands in the same way, live
with your wives in an understanding
way, as with someone weaker, since
she is a woman, and show her honor
as a fellow heir of the grace of
life, so that your prayers will not
be hindered.

Katharia taps the point of her boot on the floor.

KATHARIA

Amen.

She kicks Aamir the crotch. Aamir buckles to the floor.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)

Welcome to America! Thanks for
visiting! Now get the fuck out!

SUPREMACIST
 WHOOOO! You camel fucking jihad
 motherfucker! We're going to kick
 the Koran out of you boy!

The Supremacists kick and punch Aamir as he cowers.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY - PRESENT

Katharia seethes with contempt and lunges at Aamir. He holds her back. They wrestle exhausted. She claws at his face. He grabs her arm and twists it down.

KATHARIA
 LET ME GO! LET ME GO!

She tries to release her arm and looks to the door.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)
 HELP ME! PLEASE! SOMEBODY HELP ME!

She wriggles out his grip and slithers to the extents of the cuffs. She looks back to where they've slithered from. Two pistols lie in a pool of blood.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY - PAST

Aamir on the phone. He sweeps his eyes across his captives.

AAMIR
 (reading from notes)
 Despite your refusal to meet my
 demands and choose these civilians
 lives over money, I am now
 sweetening the deal. In ten minutes
 two hostages shall be released.

He places the receiver down.

VETERAN
 Well that's two saved, that's some
 compassion, I guess.

GUARD
 Delay tactics. The more he shows
 he's willing to negotiate the
 longer they're going to hold back,
 try and reason with him, cut a
 deal. Then boom.
 (to Aamir)
 You're sick, I hope you know that.

VETERAN
 So, who goes?

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY - PAST

Aamir alone on a bench. He studies a newspaper. Karl slumps down by him with a large black bag.

Aamir realizes who it is and goes to leave. Karl pushes a secluded pistol against him.

KARL

Now you listen to me, boy, you're going to do exactly as I command.

Karl heaves the bag over to Aamir's lap.

KARL (CONT'D)

Now that aint a bag of bibles. What's in there could blow you all the way back to Islamabad.

Karl plucks out the notes from his pocket.

KARL (CONT'D)

Now here's your script.

Karl hands over the notes. Aamir studies them perplexed.

KARL (CONT'D)

And here's your motivation.

CLICK. Aamir looks down. Handcuffs on his wrist running to the handle of the bag.

Karl stands up and checks around. He sneaks out a pistol and puts it in Aamir's hand.

KARL (CONT'D)

I already popped one in the chamber for you, you can just squeeze and go with that thing.

Aamir holds the pistol pointed at Karl. He stares conflicted. Karl smiles unfazed.

KARL (CONT'D)

I strongly advise you don't do what you're thinking. We still got a big surprise for you up our sleeve.

Karl stands up and goes to leave.

KARL (CONT'D)

Give my regards to Beelzebub when you see him.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY - PAST

The Veterans ease the Guard to his feet. Katharia takes him on her shoulder. She gazes up at the clock and smiles smugly at Aamir.

INT. BAR - DAY - PAST

The Supremacists, Karl, and Katharia drink round a table.

KATHARIA

Once our person on the inside is out, we let it run its course. Nobody ever suspects the hostages. And once the place is blown to bits, they wont have a thing on us.

KARL

Now that, gentlemen, is the plan of plans.

SUPREMACIST

Well this aint kicking a few heads to the curb, this is big league. We should take this higher up, the Resistance, no the Defense League, no, the Klan.

KATHARIA

Klan really isn't so tough, especially now. So time everybody witnessed America's real terrifying supremacists. Carry out our own lynchings.

SUPREMACIST

So who goes inside?

KATHARIA

I do. I'll make it so everyone thinks they're calling the shots. This is just telling lies and batting eyes, and when it comes to that, it takes a woman's touch.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY - PAST

Katharia smiles. She watches clock tick forward.

AAMIR

(regretfully)

Okay, go.

Katharia limps the Guard toward the door. Aamir watches with contempt. She glances across at him and slyly winks.

She eases the Guard through the door into the foyer. He winces in pain and struggles to keep moving.

Aamir takes Katharia's cracked cell phone from his pocket. A picture of his daughter. His anger builds. He stares pained at the photo and thinks.

He screeches his chair back. The Veterans jolt surprised.

He stands up ashen-faced, looks at the pistol in his hand, and marches to the door.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Katharia limps the Guard toward the entrance doors. Aamir sweeps out behind them pistol raised.

AAMIR

Stop!

She stops, the Guard's bulk leaning on her.

She turns back and stares vacant. Aamir glares back down the barrel of the pistol.

She grits her teeth, grabs the pistol from her pants and ducks round the Guard. She sweeps the pistol round ready, pops round the other side and stares down the sights.

BANG! Aamir flinches back and drops his pistol. He grabs his gut and falls to the floor in pain.

Katharia lowers her smoking gun and stares down remorseless. The Guard collapses at her feet.

Blood weeps fast from Aamir's gut.

KATHARIA

(under breath)

This is now what's going to happen.
I'm going to trot my sweet little
ass out there, squealing like a
scared little girl about how I just
saw you in a shootout with the
security guard, and how I had to
run for my life.

Katharia takes his pistol from the floor.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)

And when I tell them about the
shootout-

She cocks the slide and shoves the gun against his wound.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)

-the coon was winning.

BANG! Aamir screams. She exhales and closes her eyes satisfied. CLICK. She opens them.

Aamir's hand grips her wrist. He releases to reveal handcuffs clipped to her wrist and the handle of the bag.

She looks at Aamir deplored. He struggles a wry smile back.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)
You just signed your daughter's
death warrant! Happy now?

Katharia spits in his face, pulls a knife from her boot, and hacks at the bag handle. Aamir reaches out, grabs her foot, and pulls hard. It slips easy on the blood.

She flips back and reaches out. CRACK! She hits her head hard on the floor and passes out.

Aamir lies panting. He looks back to the hall. The Veterans stare stunned.

AAMIR
Get out! Quickly!

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY - PRESENT

Katharia lies staring at the pistols in the pool of blood. Aamir adjusts himself against the table in pain.

AAMIR
How were you going to let your
friends know you were okay?

KATHARIA
A phone call.

AAMIR
And then they'd release my
daughter?

She nods. He ponders for a few moments.

AAMIR (CONT'D)
Make the call and you shall be
freed.

KATHARIA
Seriously?

He nods surely. She shuffles upright.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)
I need my cell.

AAMIR
It's broken, use this.

He tugs the phone off the table and hands it over. She pulls up her blood soaked sleeve and studies a number hidden within her tattoos.

KATHARIA

I do this and I'm released?

AAMIR

You shall be released.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A pickup sits parked by the sidewalk on an empty street. A Supremacist on a payphone. He hangs up.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

The Supremacist walks up to the truck. Karl in the back, two others in the front.

SUPREMACIST

It's done.

KARL

Alright, go round the corner and cut the kid lose.

The Supremacist hurries away. Karl and the others watch him disappear round a corner.

They wait in silence for a few moments. Sirens draw in. They sit up and exchange concerned glances.

SUPREMACIST

Oh no no no no no!

The sirens get louder. Their eyes bulge. Tires screech. They adjust their positions and draw pistols.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)

You in the pickup! Drop your weapons and come out with your hands over your heads!

Karl cowers behind the front seats and readies his pistol. The Supremacists duck and cock firearms.

KARL

How'd they find us?

SUPREMACIST

She's turned us in!

KARL

My little girl wouldn't do that!

SUPREMACIST

Who else knows we're here? We just released the kid, didn't we? She's cut a deal! She said it herself, telling lies and batting eyes, that's what she's good at!

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)

Come out now or you will be fired upon!

The Supremacists search around for a way out. BANG! A tire on the truck blows.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Get out the vehicle now!

The Supremacists FIRE out the window. SHOTS fire back. Karl thinks and shakes his head in disbelief.

KARL

She betrayed me? She betrayed me!

BANG! A round punches through a Supremacist's throat. Blood splatters Karl's stunned face. He wipes it away.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)

Get out of the vehicle!

The injured Supremacist gasps his last terrified breaths. Karl stares shocked.

BANG! The other supremacist's chest explodes.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Karl throws the door open, fumbles out, and cowers behind it. Shots reign in. BANG! He takes a hit in the arm. His pistol flies out his grasp. He spins and stumbles down.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)

Stay down.

He grits his teeth, struggles up, and hobbles down the street away from the police.

BANG! He freezes, slowly drops to his knees grimacing.

He stares ahead, pained with betrayal. He slumps to the asphalt. Blood weeps from his back.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER HALL - DAY

Aamir struggles to stay conscious as he sits waiting with Katharia. The phone rings. He grabs the receiver.

AAMIR
(into phone)
Yes?

He stares at her as he listens. She looks back confused. He sighs deeply. His whole body relaxes.

AAMIR (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Thank you.

He lets the receiver hang and looks into the bag. The timer flicks past the two minute mark.

KATHARIA
What did they say?

AAMIR
They've found my daughter, she's safe.

KATHARIA
How'd they find her so fast?

He looks at the phone. She stares at it and works it out.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)
They traced the call?

He shrugs, feigning innocence. She dwells a few moments. The news sinks in. She shakes her handcuffed hand in his face.

KATHARIA (CONT'D)
RELEASE ME! NOW!

AAMIR
Oh, I don't have the keys for those.

KATHARIA
We had a deal! You said you'd release me!

AAMIR
Don't you believe that's exactly what I've just helped you do?

She screams furious and pulls desperately at the bag handle. She shrieks, leans into the bag, and gnaws at it.

Her head whips back, blood weeps from her gums. She lurches across the floor and tries to drag him with her.

He pulls against her and holds her back. She slithers frantically, body writhing, her nails scratch on the floor.

She gasps, gives in, and laughs to herself with disbelief, the cuffs stretched to their extents between them.

KATHARIA

I don't need your help, I know exactly where I'm going. You probably think this means you're going to get your seventy two virgins or whatever it is. You're so wrong, so fucking wrong.

AAMIR

Maybe I will, but that's not what I believe will happen. I don't believe in an afterlife, I believe we all come back as what we deserve to be. And we get another chance to better ourselves.

She rolls her head to one side sullen.

KATHARIA

Then I hope you come back as a nigger or a spic.

AAMIR

And would that be my punishment or reward?

She rolls her eyes. He clutches his wound in agony for a moment.

She clenches her eyes shut and clasps her hands together.

KATHARIA

(whispering to self)
Heavenly Father, please bless Trooper, who brought so much joy into my life, by the power of your love enable him to live according to your plan. Amen.

AAMIR

Who are you praying for?

KATHARIA

My dog.

He smirks to himself. They gaze up.

AAMIR

You know your religion says animals don't have an afterlife? So by your own beliefs you'll never see your dog again.

KATHARIA

(spitefully)
Does it hurt knowing you'll never see your daughter again?

Blood weeps between his grasping fingers. He winces.

AAMIR

Right now my heart hurts more than anything. But what matters is I know she's okay.

KATHARIA

Well, at least I'll have taken one of you Muzzies out with me.

AAMIR

Would this be a bad time to tell you I'm not actually a Muslim?

She bites her lip and shakes her head crestfallen. He chuckles to himself and looks at the counter. Less than one minute remaining.

He sits back peaceful and content. She blinks back tears.

KATHARIA

I will see my dog again, and I'll see my daddy too.

AAMIR

I'm not questioning your beliefs and, if you're correct, there's no doubt you'll see your father again. I only question where you'll meet him.

She gazes back wide eyed.

AAMIR (CONT'D)

So for your own sake, I sincerely hope you're wrong.

She regretfully stares back. A tear trickles down her cheek and drips into the blood on the floor.

The milliseconds on the counter race to zero.

THE END