

Refused

Written by:

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Based on a True Story

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*BEGINNING*

A CAPTION: BASED ON A TRUE STORY

BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF UNIVERSITY BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

MARIAM JAMIL, a tired/weary woman in her mid-30s and wearing reasonable casual clothes, walks outside a university building towards the bus stop during sunset. She is holding a couple of books in her hands and a very few people walk past her in the street. After a while, she sits on a bench at the bus stop. She looks with her head at the ground.

EXT. MARIAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

We see an enormous flat building with many people from various nationalities who are hanging out, eating on the balcony and chatting. We also see several satellite dishes attached to the balconies. Mariam walks next to her 3-year-old son FADI JAMIL. They enter the building by taking the stairs.

INT. MARIAM'S LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Mariam opens the door of a very small flat. Fadi runs to his room, after which she closes the door.

MARIAM

Come on, hon! Put other clothes on  
and help me with dinner. I am gonna  
prepare a very delicious meal for  
you!

Mariam walks to the couch with an envelope in her hand and puts some groceries and leaflets on the ground. She opens the envelope and reads in block letters: 'Divorce Petition'.

BEGINNING OF FLASHBACK

INT. MARIAM'S LIVING ROOM - LATE MORNING

Everything is black and white and the screen is oblique. Mariam is pregnant, while she is being hit by her husband AHMED JAMIL with a bat. She is crying and screaming and eventually she falls down.

ENDING OF FLASHBACK

INT. MARIAM'S LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Mariam suddenly cries and screams. Fadi runs towards her and hugs her. Mariam stops with screaming and strokes Fadi's hair.

INT. MARIAM'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Mariam dials the number on a scratchpad and afterwards we hear a female voice.

VOICE (OFF-SCREEN)

Who's this?

MARIAM

It's your daughter...I really need you!

VOICE (OFF-SCREEN)

(shouting)

All this time and now I hear a sign of life?

MARIAM

What would you wanted me to do otherwise? Wasn't I always considered the black swan in the family?

VOICE (OFF-SCREEN)

(shouting)

Take the phone Hamed, here!

MARIAM

Please mom, wait!

Now we hear a male voice talking to Mariam.

VOICE (OFF-SCREEN)

Hello honey! Where were you all this time, please tell me, what happened? I miss you so much.

INT. HAMED'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

HAMED, a neatly dressed man in his late 60s and the father of Mariam, is sitting on a couch. Oblique to his wife NIDA who is the mother of Mariam. Nida is staring at the television in a cantankerous way, while Hamed is focused listening to Mariam and is nodding.

HAMED

Mariam, send us the invitation to obtain the visa asap. Ok, bye..

Hamed stares at Nida in a disappointed way.

EXT. MARIAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY AFTERNOON

Hamed and Nida are standing with their faces in front of Mariam's apartment. We hear the steps of Mariam running to the door, whereafter she opens the door. Her mom looks in a cantankerous way at her and then looks down to the ground. Mariam cries and hugs her madly, while Nida's position stays unchanged. With disguise Nida steps aside and walks inside the apartment, whereafter Hamed hugs his daughter.

HAMED

Habibti Mariam!

INT. MARIAM'S LOBBY - EARLY AFTERNOON

Nida and Hamed are standing in the lobby and have a look at the apartment. Mariam calls Fadi while she smiles.

MARIAM

Fadi, you evil-doer. Come here and say hi to your grandparents!

Fadi is shy and is hiding himself behind the wall in the corner. Then he slowly walks towards Mariam, Nida and Hamed. Nida slowly looks at Fadi in a surprised way with her mouth open, then her face turns slowly to despise.

MARIAM

Go give your grandmother a big hug and a kiss.

Fadi walks towards his grandmother with a small smile on his face, while still being a bit shy.

NIDA

(pointing and shouting at Fadi)

(Wordt vervolgt)

(Wordt vervolgt)

NIDA (Vervolg)

You there. You don't come near me,  
do you hear me, you Negro!

Mariam and Hamed look angrily at Nida. While Fadi approaches Nida more, she pushes him and he falls on the ground. Fadi cries.

NIDA

Are you out of your mind! What is going on with you? Are you going to tell me that his case has a relation to you? This was the thing that I would have never and never ever expected from you!

MARIAM

(shouting)

What are you doing here then, what are you looking for?

NIDA

Not this thing that you probably got while doing haram!

MARIAM

You watch out what you say! I never did haram and will never do haram. This is my son, my pure son out of my flesh and blood. If you disown my son and see him as dishonor, then I want to be disowned as well and I don't need you anymore in my life.

Mariam grabs the child while crying in an angry way, walks towards her bedroom and closes the door of her bedroom. Hamed talks to Nida with a noisy voice while they are standing.

HAMED

Are you out of your mind? What happened to you? Have I ended up in a 'psychotic nightmare'?

NIDA

No, you haven't. If it's up to me, she can do whatever she wants, even if.. But not creating this deformed thing!

(Wordt vervolgt)

HAMED

Are you out of your mind!?! Allah is the one who created him and there is no difference between him and any other boy in the whole world!

Nida looks at Hamed in a more devastated way.

HAMED

Do you remember Bilal? Bilal ibn Rabah, the Ethiopian young who is considered the first person worldwide to lead and recite the call to prayer at the mosque, and was chosen by the prophet himself? Who was one of the closest persons to him and had a beautiful voice?

Nida becomes more angry.

NIDA

Are you going to behave in a religious manner now? You're an insecure guy whose vision is too naive and unrealistic for these days!

INT. MARIAM'S LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

The doorbell of Mariam's apartment rings. HELMUT, a tall man in his early 50s is standing next to his wife SOFIE who is in her mid-50s and their son CHRISTIAN who is the same age as Fadi. While Mariam opens the door, Nida runs towards the door and pushes Mariam away while she is having a big smile. Nida hugs Christian as the first one and walks with him towards the living room while she is lifting him up.

NIDA

What a big surprise my friends! Long time no speak or hear since you visited us in our hometown! You Christian, I am gonna treat you well today. What have you become big!

HELMUT

Ja, das ist war.. Haha! I am sorry, traveling all around the world for work, speaking all the languages haha, it makes you crazy!

INT. MARIAM'S LIVING ROOM - LATE EVENING

Helmut, Sofie, Nida and Christian who lies on her lap, are sitting on the couch oblique to Mariam and Hamed. Mariam and Hamed hardly smile.

HELMUT

Well guys, I think it is time for us to leave..

We hear Helmut's voice in the background, while he lifts up the sleepy Christian and talks to Mariam and Hamed. While Helmut, Christian, Mariam and Hamed stand up, Nida asks Sofie in a non-verbal way to sit down. Nida whispers while talking to Sofie.

NIDA

(whispering)

Listen Sofie... Do you have by coincidence a portrait photo of your son that I can have?

SOFIE

(whispering)

I do have one, but what do you need it for?

NIDA

(whispering)

Please don't get sensitive, and there is no need for that at all.. But I need it to bring it back with me to my country, I simply can't acknowledge the existence of the child who my daughter sees as her son.

SOFIE

I do have one for you, only because you get so along with him. But listen very carefully. My husband will be for a couple of days next season in your hometown for work. If you dare to pretend like Christian is your grandson and people believe it, I will tell them the truth and all the contact between us will be over. You hear me?

Sofie taps Helmut on the back and tells him that they should go. They walk away. Mariam talks to Hamed.

(Wordt vervolgt)

MARIAM

Father, have you heard Fadi's voice  
while they were here?

HAMED

No, I haven't!

INT. FADI'S BEDROOM - LATE EVENING

Mariam runs to the bed that Fadi is sleeping in. She puts her hand on his face that is full of sweat, and eventually she screams.

MARIAM

(shouting)

Father..Mother, come here!

Hamed runs towards Mariam, while Nida stays in the living room being disdainful and uninterested.

HAMED

Mariam, his breathing is not well.  
We should call an ambulance!

MARIAM

It won't help, this has happened to  
him before and he almost died. We  
should go out and look for a  
pharmacy that is still open!

HAMED

Ok, Fadi stays with his  
grandmother.

MARIAM

Ha ha. His grandmother you say? I  
won't let him near her at all!

HAMED

Are you crazy Mariam? Do you think  
it helps while we run and carry the  
boy away to make it worse for him?  
He stays here. And listen you Nida,  
who sits outside. I swear on my  
grave if anything risky happens to  
him, I will kill you with my bare  
hands!

Hamed runs outside the bedroom and leaves the house, while Mariam leaves the door of Fadi's bedroom open. Before Mariam leaves as well, she stands in the hall and looks at Nida in a cautionary way who sits in the living room, then she leaves.



EXT. HOSPITAL'S PHARMACY - MIDNIGHT

Hamed and Mariam walk out of the hospital's pharmacy on their way to the main street.

HAMED

And you tell me that the ambulance would have been more late than we will be? Here you have no late busses, no cabs, no nothing. This way we will lose our dear!

MARIAM

Do you really love him dad? I am afraid that mom can do something to him!

HAMED

What are you saying now? We need to find transport, before it's too late!

WE START HEARING THE SOUND OF A CLOCK TICKING IN THE BACKGROUND.

INT. MARIAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nida sits on the couch. She stares and keeps looking at Fadi's bedroom. She slowly walks towards Fadi's bedroom on the top of her toes, without making noise. While she stands in front of the bedroom, she looks angry and enters the room. Nida closes the door of the bedroom behind her.

NOW THE TICKING OF THE CLOCK IN THE BACKGROUND STARTS GETTING FASTER.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

An unknown person is driving a car, while Hamed sits next to him and Mariam on the left side at the back. Hamed and Mariam are sweating and Mariam is carrying medication packages. Afterwards Mariam continues making frustrated moves with her hands and starts sweating more. All of a sudden, she gets angry and yells at the driver while pointing with her hand at the freeway.

MARIAM

(yelling)  
Come on man, drive faster, ignore the red traffic lights!

NOW THE TICKING OF THE CLOCK IN THE BACKGROUND STARTS GETTING MORE FAST.

INT. FADI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nida slowly continues her walk on the top of her toes towards Fadi's bed, who is moaning and sweating more and more at the same time. Nida tries to put her hand on Fadi's forehead, but hesitates a couple of times. Afterwards she puts her hand on the sweaty forehead of Fadi.

NIDA

Ya Illahi..

The ticking of the clock stops, there is a total silence. After a couple of seconds, the ticking of the clock on the background continues while being faster. Nida grabs a random t-shirt that she finds around her and wipes all the sweat off his body and changes his diapers. Immediately afterwards, Nida runs to the bathroom where she picks up a towel and grabs cold water from the refrigerator. She runs to Fadi's bedroom, cuts the towel in four pieces and lays them all four down in the bucket with cold water. She puts one piece on his forehead, one on his stomach and two on his legs.

EXT. MARIAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A car stops, where Mariam and Hamed step out of and leave the doors open. They enter the building immediately.

INT. MARIAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mariam opens the door while carrying the medication and Hamed runs behind her.

WHEN NIDA AND HAMED ARRIVE IN FRONT OF FADI'S BEDROOM AND NIDA OPENS THE DOOR OF THE BEDROOM, THE CLOCK TICKING STOPS.

INT. FADI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

While Mariam almost breaks the door by opening it loud, she sees Nida sleeping next to Fadi while laying her arm around him. He is breathing normally again and there is no sweat on his face.

TITLECARD (IN ENGLISH/AS WELL IN ARABIC): "O PEOPLE, YOUR GOD IS ONE AND YOUR FOREFATHER IS ONE. YOU ARE ALL FROM ADAM AND ADAM IS FROM DUST. AN ARAB IS NOT SUPERIOR TO A NON-ARAB, AND A NON-ARAB IS NOT SUPERIOR TO AN ARAB. A WHITE HAS NO SUPERIORITY OVER A BLACK, NOR DOES A BLACK HAVE SUPERIORITY OVER A WHITE. YOU ARE ALL EQUAL. NOBODY HAS SUPERIORITY OVER OTHERS EXCEPT THROUGH PIETY AND GOOD ACTION." PROPHET MOHAMMED (570-632)

FADE TO BLACK: