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Divorce

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She was taken to the most well-known hospitals of the metropolitan cities for disease-diagnosis which reduced her to a skeleton. In her healthy days, even after conceiving four children three daughters and a babe, she was a pomegranate with bulged, rounded hips and up risen two hills where any wanderer could forget his way. Time of patience, persistency and continuous struggle against heart-wrenching disease had taken away her redness and vitality. After every fifteen days when a Tonga with creaking sound of its hubs stopped before her home, women old and young gushed out of their homes to inquire about her health till one day Mr. Maher told the mob with bitter grief that the disease has been diagnosed as cancer. Cancer in those days was nothing but the arrival of death angel soon. Street was narrow and some blooming girls whom the parents had hobbled out of fear were trying to listen and see the bewailing shrieks with their necks up on the mud walls round their homes. The people in the beginning daily visited, the neighbors helped the girls in cooking and sweeping the house but with the passage of time, Mr. Maher became alone in the mist of pain with four kids who slept in each other's laps devoid of mother's caresses who looked at them in muteness like a lamb clutched in the lion's jaws. Some advised that she should be taken to religious preachers but to this Mr. Maher didn't agree as he was sick of religion and didn't like prostrating in humbleness before the creator. The eldest daughter eleven at that time learnt cooking after burning her hands multiple times. When a moment of Eid came and people slaughtered goats as a sign of acceptance to God's commands, he would scowl, frown, lisp and ridiculed: "what is the fault of the goat to suffer this pain". Usury he loved the most and many were under the unbearable weight of his corrupt practice. Perhaps it was the punishment meted out to him out of his ant-religious ideas, people religious minded much talked about this. One day he came late from his fields and was stunned to see his beloved wife numbed by the icy hands of death, her eyes half-opened ogling at helpless wretches of hers and the innocent ones forgetful of death's shadow enjoying sound asleep. At his lamentation people who had enjoyed half of their sleep startled, came out of their cozy mud houses and entered his home tottering with red eyes. Nothing could be done. What matters if we refuse to accept nature's command? All night the street dwellers accompanied the fortune-ridden, helpless family till the sun opened its eyes. At twelve she was

buried in graveyard in proximity to her mother's. The second in rank was "Poo" who always hugged her only brother "Nitro" and lulled him to sleep at night. He was so much infatuated with "Poo" that he ate, slept and played only with her. Nitro called her "Ma" and she hugged him hours standing in the street looking at the passer byes with orphaned eyes. She knew her existence at the twitching of younger sister "Ninoo" on such occasions. Ninoo neither laughed nor talked but simply put her eyes down before any question. The heavy slaps of time and turmoil had emboldened her to become expectations-free with a lock of dumbness. People disappeared to fulfill the chorus of life, Mr. Maher lost in the labyrinths of the furrows of his field and there left alone "Kathy" with her prematurely scarred hands to look after her siblings. She woke up with the first crowing of the cock, swept her dusty courtyard, dusted the rooms, chopped the fodder and cooked meal for her family. To each she twitched, shuddered and tired out of tries sprinkled water over them till the little ones woke with a jerk of crying. She combed their unkempt curly hair, dressed them and they reached the school with the first beating of the bell. She competed with nature's obstacles, accepted her defeat and left the school at the age of fifteen in the ninth grade. Mr. Maher remained reticent at her decision as he had no interest in their education or up bringing; his only interest was to take land on lease and ensnare the nincompoops in usury. For his unquenched thirst for accumulating money, he didn't marry for the second time lest reduction in his property should start. He sacrificed his conjugal sex and sensuality for the sake of hankering after money. His eyes were maddened at the mention of money like vultures up in the air always flying in circles to have a sight of carrion. The headmaster at the school was his bosom friend because they sipped brandy together and also he was a widower with the same number of children and the same ages. He compelled his friend to send Kathy to school but he laughed away the idea.

Practice in the village was common for girls to go out in conglomeration to answer the call of nature normally guided by some vigilant old head. In their case she was the only umbrella or a scarecrow to ward off the sexy birds from picking the ripen grains. The mango was ripened and any wandering warm air or even a straw's knocking could make it burst and it happened what was being speculated and feared. How an umbrella with natural urge for winnowing could protect the newly would-be glooming flowers which had not opened their petals fully? Mr. Peter was a skilled gardener to water the lonely and master free plants in such matters. He through his skillful machination succeeded in winning the sympathies of Kathy. In

the beginning, she aloofed from her sisters, wept bitterly in Peter's lap who wiped away her trickling down tears or simply licked them with his tongue. Gradually the tears swapped with unstopped laughter and future prospects of marriage. Mr. Peter on the other hand always thought of entering deep down this alluring building to enjoy each inch of its area but to every assault Kathy succeeded. He was much worried at this. Two years passed by and Kathy became eighteen. One day Peter assured her with a shower of swears accompanied by his hands to search each and every corner till he succeeded in finding out his treasure. He entered the valley clearing every hurdle with the mastery of a skilled hand and enjoyed fully till he heard the deep downed sound "Masochism." After this practice, it became a daily routine for both of them to wait anxiously for future time to accept defeat before their temptation. The building was badly trampled till the time this news reached Mr. Maher one day and he was pale with anger at the daring heart of his daughter. He didn't whisper a word to any living soul till one day during his visit to his fields he found Peter playing with splashing water at the village tube well. He beseeched on his knees before him to spare his motherly daughter. His sighs punctured Peter's heart and he agreed never to visit his daughter again. Kathy got married to her cousin "Lindo" who was an alleged sootier, sadomasochist and his salacious urge always compelled him to hanker after beautiful boys. Before her marriage Kathy requested her father not to marry her with Lindo and gave a threat of elopement but he turned a deaf ear to her sighing requests and trapped her with him to suffer perpetually for her clandestine relations with Peter. Kathy and Lindo led a cat and dog life as the combination was the beauty and the beast. She conceived a baby "Sparkle" and to get rid of "Lindo" scuffled herself to death by hanging down from a tree. The Lindo families refused to accept "Sparkle" as her facial features were exact prototype of Mr. Peter who died in a road accident owing to over drinking. Mr. Maher took her to his home where everybody loved her as a memory of departed soul. Ninoo and Nitro got married lived happily but "Poo" burned in the fire kindled by her own hands. She was married to her distant relative teaching in a school. Mr. Maher's joy knew no bounds at this match and before marriage he used to say "I have given gold to a gold maker." At the first night Mr. Cheapo was proud of his selection and in his seventh heaven to have a crimson hand of "Poo." The house was perfumed and decorated lavishly for this elf to be admired by everyone. She was well-known in all her relatives for her chastity, droop-downed eyes, compromising behavior and respect for all. No one could suspect of even a stain on her character. At twelve at night, Mr. Cheapo, when everybody

in the home slept, entered her room with parched lips and thumping heart to enter his heaven. With her silky body and round plumped face, she was awakening with red creases in her eyes. At the crevice of the door she sprang and covered her dress. Mr. Cheapo was in a hurry but she was devoid of passion and as cold as death. He spread a white sheet to enjoy his legal right and show the stains of blood to the family as a token of her chastity as was a custom for times unknown there. She wept bitterly and told Mr. Cheapo: "I am no longer chaste." Mr. Cheapo startled as if current had thrust into his body. "How it happened tell me swiftly." Poo burst into tears and enumerated: "he was a student of second year when I got admission in "Women College." His father was a gambler and gambled away all his property in this heinous game. He was adopted by his uncle in England as a foster child. "What was his name?" I don't want to mention this dog, replied she. "Oh! I see you chopped the bones together and now you bitch call him a dog. What a beautiful explanation. You bitch and he a dog, I see. Ok carry on." This "Dog" hankered after me like a child after strayed kite till he succeeded in catching my thread. He wrote me a letter to die of strangulating if I didn't accept his love. "A letter doesn't have wheels to roll down your house. Tell me who played the role of conveying this letter to you and don't camouflage reality." It was "Daisy" who came to me with millions of connotations of his parched love. She herself was lavish and spend-thrift in giving away alms of sex whoever prostrated at her altar. "And you also learnt this art from "Daisy." You know we were orphans and those having no mothers and with elder sisters like Kathy cannot refuse the slaps of time. "I will promulgate in the tomorrow's newspaper that the orphans are not to be blamed for staining their chastity. What a nice logic for not being chaste?" Till my intermediate I had no chance of meeting him in seclusion and was pure you know. "Leave this "purity" as it doesn't suit your tongue and go ahead as I have to decide this moment." After my intermediate, my father's friend a headmaster advised him to send me to "Teacher's Training Center" for school teaching certificate. "Which city was that center, tell me honestly." Please don't needle and salt my healed wounds as I don't want to mention this repugnant city. "Ok I advise all people to call a city Repugnant City if your reasoning mind commits a blunder. Secondly your wounds have been healed at the cost of my wounds. You are the perpetrator of my ruin." On Sunday at the week end, he came to Training Center and met me with a bribe offered to the sweeper. "I object your calling him "he" instead call him a rapist and you the adulteress." You have right to call me whatever you deem better but let me complete my heart and I will not refuse to accept any storm

falling upon me. You men have right to do what you please and it is we who have to be slaughtered at the altar of justice. You are fortunate by nature to have an upper hand: No instrument has been designed to verify men's crow like nature to prick at every dried crunch of bread. I accept we soft sexes are easily hoodwinked by the machinations of deceptive men. Tell me please: if I believed in the face value and ruined what was my fault? "Not fault but unpardonable blunder you committed to ruin my future dreamful life. I don't wish you should conceive a baby to be slandered and ridiculed in the whole village because of your adulterous relations with your Dog. By the way where is your Dog these days leaving behind this debris?" Should I complete my "mistake" or swirl like a flexuous straw swirling up and down at intervals? "Oh! I forgot to wet the knife already fast. Go ahead now." He took me to his "mon ami" and while I was reclined on a sofa with *etourderie* mind pounced upon me to quench his thirst. At first I endeavored to ward him off but under the mastery wand of his hand I forgot me and my body. He was in his seventh heaven to fit the jewel in ring and desperate efforts of mine bore no fruit. After three months he appeared again and rapped me in the imaginative and cozy cottage of marriage—the only bait men use to hoodwink us. Now he is with his foster father in England. I am up to you now to be slaughtered at the altar of truth or be given a chance to repent and make amends"

Mr.Cheapo wept bitterly and slept with her on the same bed. A sturdy stature wraith came in his dream like a judge and started rebuking and chiding him."How would you live with this dunghill? Is the world empty not to prefer for another? Oh! Nincompoop, society will sneer at and rip your heart open with spears of criticism, better to get rid of this nuisance full of filth and slander. No sooner did he have up than to divorce her having no muscular strength to suffer this burden in society of false customs. Poor Poo went to the same home with dejected heart to suffer the gales of society till the whitening of her hair.