Outside the field of Discovery
A collection of stories
FADILA MELHAG

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Dedication

To the silent fighter,
My heart!
No matter how pain's fabrics cover it,
It is good at undressing for love...
Until it left all its walls...
A dress for a moment of serenity!

Fadila
“Mathematics taught me that every unknown has a value, so do not despise anyone you do not know!”

- Ibrahim Aslan-

“I may not have amazing victories, but I can astonish you with defeats I got out of alive!”

- Anton Chekhov-

“Ignorance is always the flip side of slavery.”

- Abdul Rahman Munif-

“For most of history, anonymous was a woman.”

- Virginia Woolf-
Nakedness Garment

Once upon a time...

Truth did whatever she pleased all over the universe, totally naked. People, then, would recognize her by her scorching brightness. They would hasten to do well by her and treat her with hospitality.

Falsehood, on the other hand, moved around the universe in disguise and went as far as to wear fancy clothes and bright colors.

Despite that, he did not receive any hospitality. He rather stirred suspicion because of his hideousness which clothes were ineffective in completely hiding.

He grew more spiteful toward Truth. He felt that she was the reason why people shunned him, so he thought to kill her, burn her or break her bones so that she would end up paralyzed. He then changed his mind. He said, “People often sympathize with moaning even if it was a knife’s ecstasy! Attacking her would pit people against me and eternalize her in their hearts. Also, public confrontation is the
weapon of the stupid who devoted themselves to charity out of loyalty to honor. I owe honor nothing because it missed my birthday.”

Falsehood disguised as an old man and then crossed the path of Truth, saying: “O darling, where are you going?”

She told him in her usual spontaneity: “Where there is no falsehood.”

He hid his resentment and added in a hypocritical tone: “It is nothing harder than your being in a place where there is no falsehood. There is always someone who summons it to your whereabouts. I heartily pity you. You’re the victim of people’s unawareness of your worth.”

She told him, astonished: “I don’t see myself as a wretch or a victim. I serve Virtue, justice, and beauty. Virtue is not ungrateful. She is persistent in her struggle despite vice’s temptations and mighty.”

He realized there was no way to mislead her as long as she held on to Virtue. He was aware of the power of Virtue and their sound bonds. He shook his head and said: “Virtue requires your loyalty, not harm.”

She told him, surprised: “I am willing to die for her!”
“How many unintentional mistakes have we made in this universe? You're causing harm with your bareness. You're shocking!

You often reveal yourself to people through details that are painful at times, at others obnoxious.

You make Virtue repugnant to them. They feel that it is painful. You must respect human nature. Dress in appropriate clothes of whatever color and form. I don't think that contradicts your intentions.”

He played the wise man perfectly that Truth took his advice. She borrowed a cloud from the sky and wrapped it around her but that didn't belittle her importance to the crowd.

His spite toward her reached its utmost height. He passed days thinking of a way to get rid of her. Then an idea crossed his mind, making him dance with delight. He said: “One of human beings' foolishness is that they believe what they see. Nothing is more destructive to the truth than the gazes of the fools!”

He surrounded himself with a glass fence and lurked in the way of Truth. She was coming back from a ferocious
battle he lit the fuse for.

He realized that she would come back exhausted and unable to concentrate. Once he saw her, he crossed her path and said: “I’m surprised that Truth was unable to see herself!”

She recognized him thanks to the pile of fog surrounding him. She told him confidently: “Blindness is one of the attributes of darkness, not light. You were good at describing yourself. How miserable glass is because of you! You dimmed its crystal clarity.”

He gave a mocking smile and said: “How miserable you are because of your arrogance! Look at yourself! You came back tired and out of spirits! Your battle was devastating because my adherents are growing in number, while your followers are decreasing. Get rid of narcissism halo and face reality bravely.”

She told him in an earnest tone: “You question my bravery after all the defeats I inflicted upon you!”

He said, faking indifference: “Hhhh! If you knew humankind the way I do, you wouldn’t consider them as defeats or victories. Human beings are strange and un-
predictable creatures. They are innately carried away by their desires. They are easily allured by fantasy, luster, and temptations...and I possess all these things. I’m good at revealing myself to them through colors and forms that satisfy their desires. As for you, you care only about satisfying yourself.”

She said to him resentfully:” My time is precious. Every second in it is the size of the universe. I don’t need to hear your exploits. I know them very well and I realize that they are just a swim in life wastes.”

He hastened to corroborate what she said: “I agree with you. I’m aware that I’m staining the universe with wastes but justice requires you to listen to me and give me a cleanliness opportunity.”

“I don’t understand.”

“After reviewing my past with you, I found out that we are both victims of mankind’s selfishness and vicissitudes of their desires. We fight for the sake of their lives that do not concern us in the least. Thus, I offer you reconciliation.”
She asked him suspiciously: “What do you want exactly?”

“To agree on cleanliness.”

Truth said angrily: “I’m innate clean. I don’t need an agreement for that.”

He gave a mischievous smile and said: “O pure one, there is no doubt about that but grime might stick to you without noticing that. That’s why I suggest going together to the bathroom so that you will wash off what was accidentally stuck to you, and I will melt my old burdens. What do you think?”

This is a chance to rid people of Falsehood’s vice forever, Truth thought.

“How can I trust Falsehood?” she then asked him.

Falsehood pulled a long face in a way he would look touched. He said: “I came to you naked as I am. Look at me! I’m a mixture of the dust of weakness and vapors of breaths. I’m a pile of mist. I can wither with air blow or water drop. I took off my clothes and surrounded myself with glass. There is nothing more transparent and clear than this.”
Truth appreciated Falsehood’s going naked. She considered it a proof of truthfulness, so she went with him to the bathroom.

They each went to their suite. Truth started to pour water on herself that the cloud turned back into its liquid form and went into the cesspool.

Falsehood turned on the hot water faucet and then stepped back. He didn’t bathe. He let water vapor accumulate on the glass, then went out and exposed it to cold weather, thus forming a mist that resembled a cloud.

Truth went out of the bathroom, naked. People didn’t recognize her as they were familiar with her cloud. They thought it was one of the ruses of Falsehood, so they chased her down.

Falsehood went out, swaggering behind the glass covered with vapor that people thought he was Truth, so they welcomed him.

Truth got angry. She set to sue him everywhere, and told people that he was Falsehood.

Falsehood didn’t save any means to prove her a liar. Fights between them for affirming identity intensified, thus
people appealed to a wise man and asked him to resolve the conflict between them.

The wise man asked each of them to come and present their proofs in front of the crowd. He gestured to them to stand amid a large crowd of people and said: “Get undressed so that we can find out which one of you tells the truth.”

Truth felt shy. She did get undressed only after insistence. It didn’t show herself as it is for so long, so she appeared bewildered that people doubted her.

Falsehood, on the other hand, hastened to get undressed, thus appearing honest. His intuition was true! People saw him with their own eyes. No one paid attention to the light that was emitting from Truth or to that fog that Falsehood was shaping.

Most onlookers were accustomed to seeing Truth clad in fog but they didn’t see Falsehood naked before.

Alone, the wise man realized that it was Truth that hesitated to get undressed, with the shyness of someone who is concerned with affirming his identity, and that Falsehood was the one who hastened to get undressed
with the boldness of someone who cared only about ends, but he had to find sufficient evidence to convince others of it.

The dispute was over in favor of doubt. None of them was belied, and the argument between believers in Truth's nakedness and those in the garment of Falsehood went on.

Thus certainty lies in the essence of wisdom. The one who possesses it will know the truth about wearing clothes and that about nudity.