

ISSN: 2278-9529



GALAXY

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

January 2018 Vol. 7. Issue I

www.galaxyimrj.com

Editor-In-Chief- Dr. Vishwanath Bite

About Us: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/about-us/>

Archive: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/contact-us/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.galaxyimrj.com/faq/>



Hidden Moon

Manzoor Ahmad Mir

Lecturer in English,
Department of School Education,
Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Late Spring. The evening sun, resembling an orange-red ball, flashing its rays, made that part of the sky look colourful and spectacular. Perhaps you have experienced the richness and variety of such fine and definite evenings. A middle-aged couple were watching from their kitchen window a curious band of children engaged in various playful activities. The gentle laughing of the kids and the chanting of birds mingled in the evening air, making the atmosphere musical and charming.

The scene inside was quite different. A profound silence had engulfed the couple. For some unknown reason the balmy evening didn't attract their senses. They appeared to be lost in their own land of dreams. The husband seemed more introspective than ever. Far from keeping him cheerful, life had always shown him its sordid side.

The bygone days came pell-mell to his mind. After what seemed a long time, he turned towards his partner and said, 'The world I think has almost run its course. Imagine someone gifting his daughter a car, an Apple I Phone, an automatic washing machine and a refrigerator and sundry other items in dowry.....' Zareefa cut him short by retorting 'You are always jealous of your neighbours. Always grumbling in the same way....'

Unfortunate husband! He was considering his own mean resources and was now being charged of envious feelings towards his next door neighbour.

Qasim thought it dangerous to speak to his wife the second time. So, instead of giving outlet to his heart, he contemplated, "Where have gone the good old days? On my wedding day the suit had to be borrowed. A few thousand rupees were more than sufficient for a marriage. Some people would just distribute dates on these auspicious occasions. There was no menace of dowry to trouble the weak people. And borrowing? It was a dreaded word just like present day's 'ISIS/terrorism' ...'

Qasim's was a large family: a son and two daughters. The lone son had left no stone unturned in sucking his father's blood. The previous year this 'loyal' son had made a humble request of a bike in order to look impressive in his co-ed college. Qasim had to sell his only cow, a few trees from the backyard and borrow the rest from here and there. A few months later the house had been flooded with angry lenders to get their money back.



The poor man was again compelled to sell a share of his remaining little possessions to pay his debts.

Like their brother, the fashion crazy colleens too had played a role in making their father bald. They had squandered everything that they could lay hold on regardless of their father's wretchedness.

That night when all of them had gone to sleep, Zareefa was seen wailing and weeping hysterically. Qasim tried to know the secret of her tears, whereupon she jumped like a wild cat and shouted, 'My son had only asked for a new smartphone, not anybody's head! All his friends have..... My only son.... Kashif must have a new phone by tomorrow or I will....'

The husband, already half-extinguished, utterly lost his head upon receiving the deadline and dangerous warning. "Tomorrow!? Where from to get Rs 15000", he thought. The only answer to this bewildering query that seemed nearest to him was but a futile effort to make his wife understand his bare-handedness and miserability. But the frailty remained persistent and unmoved in her demand.

Sleep refused to visit Qasim's eyes that night. He kept turning the sides and thinking about 'tomorrow'. He must have been the first person to wake up the other morning. Hardly had he finished his prayers, when he went straight to the house of a dealer, on whose fields he had worked for the past few months. A few hours of requests and implorations over, Qasim enabled himself to get the required amount.

Rushing home, he began the usual search of his son who was as difficult to trace as the moon hidden behind the clouds on the eve of Eid.

Kashif was gifted with another talent as well and it was his obsession for watching cricket. What would he not do to watch a cricket match? He would walk miles together to get a glimpse of the game. And like many villages here, there was no playground in Kashif's village.

Having made up his mind to play truant that day, Kashif had headed towards a neighbouring village to slake his thirst. He saw a crowd of people gathered in a sports ground. He saw some army men also. When he went near, he asked someone, 'When is the match going to start?'

'What match?' was the curious reply.

'What rubbish are you speaking?' replied another man.



Kashif looked around and realised the gravity of the mistake he had made. He had dug a deep pit for himself. The village had been cordoned off by the army after inputs of the presence of rebels in it came. A thorough house to house search for rebels was going on. These people had been taken out of their houses and assembled in the playground.

Suddenly, a gunshot was heard from the village which heavy firing. While an encounter was going on between the army and the rebels, nobody was allowed to escape from the gathering. The security forces checked I-cards and Kashif was found without one. He had left it at home. The gallery of his phone contained photographs of a recently killed rebel. Kashif tried to explain to the army chief but in vain. As often happens in these circumstances, he was beaten so severely that his legs failed to support him.

The gunshots could be heard in Qasim's village as well. Somebody had informed Qasim that his son had gone in the same direction. The father turned impatient and he hurled himself in the direction of danger. When he reached the spot, the gunfight had already ended. Beholding his disfigured son in such a painful condition, he instantly shouldered him to a nearby health centre. X-rays revealed several nasty fractures. Medical tests diagnosed serious injuries. Qasim kept thinking of the money he had borrowed that morning and the purpose it was now to serve.