

# Innocent Murderer

A Drama based on true story, originally written by Syed Habibur Rahman  
in Sylhety dialect.

Translated by  
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England 2004

(All the character names in this drama are made up.)

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## Names of Characters

- Lina----Ahmed.Ali's daughter
- Ram----Lina's school friend
- Fozor Ali----The shop owner
- Juhor Ali----Fozor.Ali's friend
- Ahmed Ali----Lina's father
- Saeyra Begum----Lina's mother
- Zamal----Lina's husband

## ( Scene One)

( Mr Fozor Ali's first customer, Mr Juhor Ali, arrived in his grocery shop early in the morning at 10.30 am, not to buy anything, but for a chit-chat, nick-nack.)

F. Ali- Assalamalakum, Ali sab

J. Ali- Alikum salam. How are you?

F. Ali- I am ok. Have a seat. Hey, Mohamed, send us two cups of tea. What shall I say about these guys? Every one is called Mohamed, doesn't matter if he is from Iraq, or Iran or Kurdistan. Animal looking creature. It takes him six months to bring a cup of tea from there to here.

J. Ali- O, God. In that case the tea will be freezing cold by then.

F. Ali- Business is not very good brother. How can it be, if there are only eight families and sixteen Grocery Shops in a town? People are so greedy. Opening, one after one, after one Grocery shops, just because they need money.

J. Ali- How about you? You've got five Take Away businesses, ten houses and still not enough, still carrying sacks of potatoes and onions on your shoulder in this age. Alas Fozor Ali, we all forgot why we've been sent to this world. These wealth, properties, moneys what ever we have saved, all the belongings will be left behind, they will be no use for us when we die.

(Juhor Ali sings)

আমি খার বারা বা-নিলাম ভাইরে  
মিছা দেকি বারা।  
জারতে জারতে তনু ক্ষীন ছাউল নাই দু-বারা।  
খার বারা বা-নিলাম ভাইরে।

Fozor Ali, your children have grown-up, now let them take over your businesses, you just have a rest.

F. Ali- Oh no brother, I don't do this for money, I only do this to keep my body fit. Talk about my children? They don't want to do this, they are not interested in my money, one of them wants to be a solicitor, another one wants to be a doctor and another one engineer. The one who wants to be a doctor, hardly ever stays in this country.

J. Ali- Why?

F. Ali- Oh God, don't you know? He always travels around the world. His company sends him to countries like America, Germany, and Russia with their own expenses. He always travels with an aeroplane, this country can't afford to pay his wages.

J. Ali- Gosh, what does he do?

F. Ali- He makes medicines with bones of dead bodies. He can tell by looking at the dead bodies bone how old this bone is and how old the person was.

J. Ali- Really?

F. Ali- Not only that, in term of education, for him there is nothing left to learn about.

**J. Ali-** Fozor Ali, lots of properties, money, wealth and higher education are very good things to have, but there is a rumour in the community about your children is that they can't speak Bengali, they don't respect their parents, that doesn't sound good, does it?

**F. Ali-** Try to understand my status brother. People are jealous about my properties, and of course my children are different from any other Bengali children. My children are highly educated you know.

**J. Ali-** Yeah, but how about your wife? People say that she is giving you a hard time. Be careful Fozor Ali, don't let her loose in this age, it will be really embarrassing for you in the community.

**F. Ali-** Ha-Ha-Ha- I want that to happen. She can't fulfil my desire, you know what I mean? Listen, come here, come a bit closer. You didn't ask me why I want to keep my body fit. (**F Ali whispers to J Ali and starts laughing**)

**J. Ali-** What? What did you say? Are you crazy? Only last year you went to Bangladesh and married an innocent teenage girl and dumped her for no reason. You want to destroy somebody's life again? Listen my friend, don't be so selfish.....

**F. Ali-** Look, who is going, do you know her? Her father thinks he is a great leader and a great religious person. Keeps preaching every one else while his daughter behaves like an English, look at her dress.

**J. Ali-** Is that why you opened the shop in the corner of the crossed road, so that you can see who is going past in front of your shop and what dress they've got on? This is not nice at all, Fozor Ali. You will not be questioned by god about other people, but your self and your children. So don't look at other people and don't be so proud of your body, because your body is not such a thing that will last for ever. We all will die one day. The fact is that, what we are taking with us for the day of judgement. I must go now. (**Johor Ali sings on the way out, while Fozor Ali keeps laughing continuously**)

সাপে কাটবে গুরজে মারবে হায়রে হায়/  
না জানি খয়বরো অইবো কি উফায়।  
না জানি খয়বরো অইবো কি উফায় ।

**F. Ali-** Hey, Mohamed, where is the tea, you lazy Buffalo?

**Mohamed-** Here is the tea Ali sahab. The day just has started and you start calling me a lazy Buffalo, my name is Mohamed isn't it?

**F. Ali-** No, your name is Goat, you are a goat.

**Mohamed-** No Ali sahab, I am not a goat, I am Mohamed. If you had a bad argument last night with Bhabi saheba I mean your wife, that doesn't mean you have to be angry with me in the morning. You called me a goat, I am leaving your job, I had enough of you.

**F. Ali-** Wait Mohamed, wait. You can't leave me like that. Every one wants to leave me, you Idiot. (**Mohamed leaves the shop**)

## (Scene Two )

(After Friday's pray since 3 0' Clock, Hazi Ahmed Ali is waiting for his daughter Lina (Real name Laily Begum) to come back from school to ask her something.)

Ahmed Ali- Lina, where have you been?

Lina- At School.

Ahmed Ali- Don't tell me lies. You don't go to school. Uncle Fojoor Ali saw you go past his shop the other day in school time. Someone was with you, who was he? Who was he, tell me. (Lina's mum Saeyra comes in)

Saeyra- What's the matter? She just entered the house and you started to ask her about----

Ahmed Ali- You don't need to interfere, OK?

Saeyra- Lina, you go up stairs and get change. (Lina goes away) Why in such a hurry, why so tempered with her? Do you know how old is she now? You don't, do you? Because you never bought a birthday card for her.

Ahmed Ali- Birthday Card? It is Infidels, non-believers, kafirs, and nasaras who celebrate birthday, not me, not in my house, OK?

Saeyra- OK,OK. You are not bothered about her education either are you? You never take children to school or pick them up from school, do you?

Ahmed Ali- Education? In Infidels country? We came here for money, not education.

Saeyra- This September Lina will be leaving school, she is sixteen now, do you know that?

Ahmed Ali- So what? Do you think I should be running after my children to see how they go to school and how they come back? Haven't I got anything else to do? I manage the Community Centre, I am the president of the Mosque, I attend so many important meetings every day, you don't understand that do you? I told you so many times that my nephew has grown up in Bangladesh. He is old enough to marry now, let's arrange Lina's marriage with him over the telephone. You said no, Lina will not accept it, she wants to take a higher education. Now what has happened? Every body is talking about our family, about Lina, about me. She be came a great prestige concern for me.

Saeyra- I know the solution, I know how to stop people talking about us, if you listen to me.

Ahmed Ali- What?

Saeyra- Call that boy's father in to our house, and we will talk about this with him. ( Ahmed Ali turns round his face up in the ceiling not paying any attention to his wife)The boy is not that bad as people say about him. I knew him since he was five. Lina and he were in same school, in same class since they started going to school. Lina used to talk about him that

he was a good friend of her and he was always a help to her. He started acting differently since his dad sent him to Madrasa, the religious school. Are you listening to me?

Ahmed Ali- Yes I am. (Said angrily)

Saeyra- Poor boy couldn't settle in that school. How could he? He was born and brought up in here and that Madrasa was miles---

Ahmed Ali- I am not interested to hear about that boy. (Paused for a few seconds) Did you know that boy's great granddad was my grand dad's servant. If his dad wouldn't come to England they still would have been somebody's servant and after all, they are not from our village, they are foreigners.

Saeyra- Foreigners? How can they be? Well then in that case you are married to a foreigner, aren't you?

Ahmed Ali- Yes, that was the biggest mistake of my life.

Saeyra- What, what did you say?

Ahmed Ali- You've heard what I said. You gave Lina too much freedom, it is you who damaged my reputation. (Lina comes down, heard her parent's conversation)

Lina- Dad, I want to tell you something (A distant thunder music goes on)

Ahmed Ali- What? What did you say? You want to tell me something?

Saeyra- Lina, you move from here.

Lina- No mum, I will not go away today. I must say what I need to say **now**, otherwise it will be too late. I have heard every thing. Dad wants to arrange a marriage for me. A man from Bangladesh wants to buy me over the phone. I am your daughter dad, your own child. I am not a property that, you can sell over the phone. This is my life, not yours. It is for once and all, the biggest decision of life.

Ahmed Ali- You nasty bi--h, came here to give me a lecture. I will teach you a lesson. ( Ahmed Ali takes a stick in his hand)

Saeyra- For god sake, don't hit her. The police will take action against you. ( Ahmed Ali keeps whacking his daughter. Lina runs off to her mum with blood- stain on her dress. Mum and daughter keep crying while Britney Spear's "Hit me baby one more time" played in the back ground.)

### ( Scene Three )

(A few days later, at the school break-time Lina goes out to meet her boyfriend Rambo (Real name Roman Ahmed) who is waiting for her in his car).

Ram- Have you told the teacher that you are not going back to class today?

Lina- No, I have got no interest in school any more. School is boring, I want to stay with you.

Ram- Its OK, but--

**Lina-** But what? Let's go some where, where nobody can see us, I am prepared to run away from home.

**Ram-** Don't be stupid Lina, have you gone crazy? Listen carefully. It will be better for both of us if you forget about me. You will not be happy with me. People call me drug-addict, alcoholic and so and so. You are a good and talented student, you have received many awards for your school. Didn't you say that, you would take higher education after you finish GCSE?

**Lina-** Don't talk about that. It was a dream, a bad dream.

**Ram-** So, what do you want to do now?

**Lina-** I want to become mad. Have you got some drugs with you, I want to try it.

**Ram-** Stop it Lina. Don't destroy your valuable life. Shall I sing that song to you- *রূপের মাইয়া একবার চাইয়া গো ---*

**Lina-** Don't try to make me feel happy. I will never be happy without you. I will be carrying a scar of your love all my life.

**Ram-** What do you mean? I never beat you.

**Lina-** Do you want to see?

**Ram-** See what?

**Lina-** Nothing.

**Ram-** You have really gone crazy. It must be something wrong with you.

( Lina thinks for a few seconds, should she tell him or not, then shows the un-healed scar on her back)

**Ram-** How has it happened? Who did that? Tell me Lina, you've got to tell me now.

**Lina-** You know the old man in the corner shop, he told my dad that one day he saw us together go past his shop. Dad asked me the other day about us two and----and---and----

**Ram-** You bloody old man I'm gonna kill you ba\*\*\*rd, you're finished, you evil man, you're finished. (Ram gets in to his car and sped away)

**Lina-** No- Ram No- Please don't do that, please don't.

### (Scene Four)

(Muhamed just started to put the shutter up to open the late Fozor Ali's shop. Mr, Zuhor Ali came in, with a very sad impression on his face)

**Muhamed-** Hello, Assalamualaikum Hazi sahab, how are you this morning?

**Zuhor Ali-** Sad Mohamed sad, very sad.

**Muhamed-** What has happened to the boy?

**Zuhor Ali-** A Life sentence.

**Muhamed-** Really? Why did he do it though? (Lina's father Mr, Ahmed Ali comes in)

**Ahmed Ali-** There, you are here uncle. I went to your house looking for you.

**Zuhor Ali-** Why, anything important?

**Ahmed Ali-** Yes, I need your help. You know, all the relatives of uncle late Fojor Ali are asking me to do something about his widow wife. I know there are so many people eagerly want to marry her but, then I thought—

**Zuhor Ali-** Thought what?

**Ahmed Ali-** I mean, you know I have got only four daughters of my own, no sons at all, you know what I mean. I know in terms of relation before, I used to call her aunty but that shouldn't be a problem now, should it?

**Zuhor Ali-** Is there anything else you would like to do, to fulfil your selfish desire? Go on do it.

**Ahmed Ali-** But uncle, you are not trying to understand me. If I didn't do it, someone else will do it. I can name, at least ten people standing by—

**Zuhor Ali-** Stop it please stop it. I don't want to hear anymore about this.

**(Paused for a few seconds)** Its not even two months yet, People have gone mad to marry a mother of fourteen kids. the whole community is busy making Fozor Ali's widow wife a big issue. Money, wealth, properties that's all they are after. A man from our community just has been murdered, a boy has been sentenced to a life-long imprisonment. Nobody is bothered, nobody is concerned about it.

**Ahmed Ali-** Well, if some one commits a crime, should get the punishment, isn't it right?

**Zuhor Ali-** Yes, you are absolutely right. And many times the real criminal slips out trough the net. It is very hard to justify between good and evil now the days. Mohamed, I am going, its time to go to the mosque.

### (Scene Five)

--Ahmed Ali took his daughter Lina to Bangladesh. Lina is now married to her cousin Zamal (Ali's nephew). After one year Lina comes back to England with her dad and managed to get a job in a nursery school. She had to save every penny to buy a two bed room house. It took Lina about one and half year to get her husband to England. Two years later, one night---

**Zamal-** I come back from work, she is in bed. When I wake up, she is in school, what a life. Bloody dog life. **(Lina comes down, her eyes are half closed.)**

**Lina-** What is the matter? Are you calling me or talking to your self?

**Zamal-** Ah- after all, the queen wakes up. Is it possible for the queen to make a cup of tea for me?

**Lina-** Is that why you shouted so loud so that you could wake me up? A cup of tea at 2'o clock in the morning? Do you not realize that I have to wake up early in the morning to go to school?

**Zamal-** What have you decided about going to London?

**Lina-** Oh, I am tired, I am going back to bed.

**Zamal-** I need an answer. **(Lina comes back)**



**Lina-** What bothers you being in here? You've got a job, I've got a job, we need money, we need the jobs. Do you not understand this?

**Zamal-** Yes, yes, I do understand. I understood you even in the first night of our wedding. In the night, so called honey-moon night. Since I came to England, my understanding became more clearer that why my dear uncle, I mean your father was in such hurry to complete our marriage and then brought you back to England in one month time.

**Lina-** I don't get it.

**Zamal-** You know very well what I mean.

**Lina-** Honestly I don't understand, explain to me.

**Zamal-** You had a boyfriend who is in jail now. You or your parents never disclosed that to us. Is it right, is it?

**Lina-** He was just a friend, nothing else. Oh, my god. After two years you have just found out that I wasn't virgin at the time of our marriage, is it what you mean?

**Zamal-** Yes, it is true isn't it?

**Lina-** It is hard to believe how some one can be so rude, cruel, and nasty, since he is being educated. I never asked you if you had any girlfriends.

**Zamal-** Hah- You are not comparable with me. You and I are not the same. Who would bother to marry you if you were not British?

**Lina-** I've had enough, for god sake please stop it now. (Zamal goes to bed, Lina bangs her head down on the table) Is this the reward I get, after all those sacrifices? I did so much for you, and in return what have I got? I can't bear this, I can't bear this abuse any more. (Lina's face and eyes become red, she starts crying and at this time a hindi music comes on-Iaad aa roha hai—while Lina looks back in her imagination to her happy school time with Ram)

### (Scene Six)

(Next day at 11'0 clock, Zamal with telephone on his hand)

**Zamal-** Is it dad? Come quickly in to our house. Something terrible has gone wrong. (Paused). I can't tell you over the phone. (Zamal puts the phone down, images, looks through the window. A few minutes later Lina's father Ahmed Ali comes in)

**Ahmed Ali-** What has happened? Why is she lying on the floor?

**Zamal-** Lina has committed suicide.

**Ahmed Ali-** No she didn't. It is you murder her, you, you, you. (Lina's mum Saeyra comes in) Here, you stay in here. Don't let this murderer run away, I am going to call the police. (Ahmed Ali goes out)

**Zamal-** I swear by the name of god I didn't do anything.

**Saeyra-** Oh, my god. What have I done wrong, what have I done? Lina you can not leave us, you can not leave us, you can not. (Music comes on মরিলে কাঁদিসনা আর দায়--and at the same time, outside the house the police siren is being heard)



## (Scene Seven)

(Mr Juhor Ali is not feeling well today, couldn't go to the shop or to the mosque. Ahmed Ali comes in)

Ahmed Ali- I didn't see you in the mosque in the afternoon pray.

Juhor Ali- I am not feeling well. The rheumatism gets worse when the weather gets cold. What has happened to your nephew Zamal?

Ahmed Ali- Don't worry about him. He will be deported very soon, I will make sure he doesn't stay in this country.

Juhor Ali- Ahmed Ali, I and your aunty tried our best to convince your wife all night in vain. She has decided that she is not going back home, she wants a divorce.

Ahmed Ali- Did you tell her that I will be leaving the other woman if she comes back home.

Juhor Ali- Yes I did, but ----(Ahmed Ali's wife Saeyra comes in)

Saeyra- You don't need to divorce that woman. I know you are lying. Go and lick her feet, please her, the way you want to or lift her on your head and dance with her.

Ahmed Ali- You are mistaken my dear. You don't know your future. Where will you be going?

Saeyra- I am going no where but staying in my house.

Ahmed Ali- Your house? Where? You may think I am stupid, but not that much stupid to keep any property in your name.

Saeyra- So you are going to kick me out of the house.

Ahmed Ali- Well, no, but if you seek any legal advice, I think you will be doing more bad to yourself, rather than doing any good.

Saeyra- I am not thinking about my future at the minute. All I want now is divorce from you. Is that clear?

Ahmed Ali- The society has accepted it, the religion accepts it, why not you? What have I done wrong?

Saeyra- You are the cause of uncle Fozor Ali's murder, a boy spending all his life in jail because of you, it is you made our own daughter's life hell, and you destroyed your nephew's life. Yet you have done nothing wrong. You may be innocent in the eyes of law, in the eyes of religion and society, but to me, you are a murderer, an innocent-

**Murderer murderer murderer murderer murderer murderer**

## *The End*

*(Was Lina murdered or did she commit suicide remains a mystery to the police and Zamal has been deported to Bangladesh after staying six months in the Immigration custody. Lina's mum Ms Saeyra Begum managed to get a council flat where she is happily living, with her three daughters)*