

SOUL JOURNEY

by

Omar Raza



INT. LOCATION #1 - KAMMY'S BEDROOM. AFTERNOON.

Kammy's bedroom has a very split energy. It's generally very Western but has small elements of his culture and faith scattered about. We see Kammy on his prayer mat with his prayer hat on. He turns his head right and then left. His hands then spread out in front of his face. He silently speaks. Kammy then washes his hands over his face. The prayer is finished. Kammy folds over the prayer mat and dumps his prayer hat on top. He stands up and travels to the radio that's on the shelf.

KAMMY

I'm running outta time. If I don't  
get this answer now I'll have to  
settle for a fortune cookie.

Kammy turns on the radio.

RADIO STATION

And here's a flashback to 2006:  
it's Girls Aloud with 'Something  
Kinda Ooooh'.

The song starts playing.

KAMMY

Now that's a sign. A sign of a good  
song.

Kammy sings along and busts a few moves. His dancing tapers off.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

A song Dad couldn't stand (BEAT)  
I'm struggling to make a decision.

Kammy turns off the radio. From a flash, we then see and hear the rhythmic beeping from a hospital machine.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

See, my Dad's at death's door.

We cut to a shot of Kammy's Dad in a hospital bed. We continue to hear the hospital machine beeping.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

We've not crossed paths for over 2  
years. He's refused to see me.  
Unless I change and fully embrace  
his desired path. But I'm only  
going to visit him, to follow that  
path, if this prayer Istikhara  
gives me a sign.

Kammy indicates to the prayer mat.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

Just did my 7th Istikhara prayer in  
2 weeks. And still no sign.

Kammy picks up the Rubik Cube on the shelf. He sits down on the bed and plays with it. Whilst playing, he sings the chorus of 'Girls Aloud Something Kinda Ooooh' with real conviction.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

I could've brought shit-loads to  
Girls Aloud. I'd gladly have been  
judged on a talent show instead of  
my community. I still visit Mosque.

Kammy playing with the Rubik Cube begins to taper off. He let's it roll around in his hands.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

But it doesn't mean I don't *still*  
fall in love with the back of my  
brother's heads. I become that  
confused child again. Those days: I  
wore a metal whistle tied to my zip  
jacket. Banging loudly. Spoke in an  
American accent too. Anything to  
grab their attention.

An app on Kammy's phone, which is charging on the edge of his bed, activates. It's the call to prayer for 'Asr' (the 3rd prayer of the five daily Islamic prayers). We hear the Arabic being recited.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

Faith should've been my focus. And  
it was, until Dad found out about  
me. "You'll dance in fresh flames  
forever Kamran". But he was the one  
that really burned me (BEAT) He  
binned all the cutlery and dishes I  
touched.

Kammy hears animated laughter from outside. Kammy heads over to the window and sees two men walking down the street. Kammy finds himself staring at the back of their heads. One guy casually puts his arm around the other guy as they continue relishing in each other's company. Kammy ponders if this is a sign. As the laughter slowly vanishes, he turns around from the window to refocus his attention on the Arabic recitation i.e. the call-to-prayer playing via his phone.

Kammy then bends down and smooths out the disheveled tassels with his hand and picks out bits of stray fluff on the mat and puts it in the bin.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

Despite that shame about staining my family's Islamic home with my 'sin', I prayed harder. Cause it wasn't enough constantly hearing I'm the spitting image of Dad. I wanted to echo his devotion. To make Dad proud. And I didn't care what price I could pay for that.

We see another flash shot of Kammy's Dad in the hospital bed and hear the bleeping noise. We cut back to Kammy. He sits back on the bed, picks up the Rubik Cube and indicates to it.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

Dad bought me this. It was my incentive to stop skipping Mosque after school.

Kammy stares at the Rubik Cube in his hand.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

"Goodness towards (one's) parents is the greatest obligatory act". That Hadith is my duty. It's an Islamic tradition from our beloved Prophet Muhammad Peace-Be-Upon-Him.

Kammy continues playing with the Rubik Cube.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

My faith can be beautiful to have but don't I have a duty too? To honour my happiness. By honouring the man who instilled his own version of belief in me. Not just Dad. The other man in my life I love. The man who stopped me being this rainbow in mourning, constantly blue.

Kammy glances at the multicoloured Palestinian scarf hanging on the door.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

To stop feeling like that is a whole new beautiful faith to have. They're both important people.

From his bed, Kammy looks at the English translation of the Quran on his shelf.

KAMMY (CONT'D)  
One man taught me Arabic.

Kammy, once again, glances at the multicoloured Palestinian scarf that's hanging at the door.

KAMMY (CONT'D)  
But this other man has made me  
feel. Maybe a kind of love that  
speaks beyond any language or faith  
I could ever learn from?

Kammy observes all the colours blending together on the Palestinian scarf.

KAMMY (CONT'D)  
We've never gone all the way  
because I've been scared of that  
confirming the man I really am.

With real determination, Kammy concentrates on developing the Rubik Cube whilst talking.

KAMMY (CONT'D)  
Shakeel totally gets it and gets  
me. Shakeel's Mum also gets us  
*both*. I'm so grateful. Most old-  
school parents, like mine, aren't  
like that.

Kammy gets into a solid rhythm with the Rubik Cube.

KAMMY (CONT'D)  
Right from the start, he never made  
out that we're living a double or  
triple-life.

Kammy stops playing with the Rubik Cube for a split moment.

KAMMY (CONT'D)  
*We were.*

Kammy continues again with the Rubik Cube making really strong progress. He wears the faintest smirk.

KAMMY (CONT'D)  
...and even so, it strangely and  
finally felt my life was simple.  
Like crossing a deserted road. I  
was just a grateful man in love.

After several more assertive twists and turns from Kammy he then throws the Rubik Cube up in the air. Kammy catches it with two hands, out of shot. He opens up his hands. Kammy lightly shakes his head with a faint smile at the Rubik Cube hidden in his hands.

Suddenly, a gust of wind blows through the open window and makes the multicoloured scarf, hanging on the door, ripple. The wind however doesn't touch the prayer mat on the floor - or even the tassels. He stares at the scarf intensely as it composes itself. Could this be the sign.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

No.

Kammy's looks inside the palm of his hands. The wind blows again, moving the scarf once more.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

No. No. No!

Kammy then heads to the window and slams it shut. With the Rubik Cube in his hand, Kammy then heads over the drawer next to the window. He opens it up the drawer and we hear the sounds of Kammy rearranging stuff inside it. On top of that, we also hear the bleeping sound of the hospital machine getting stronger and faster.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

Dad's not got long left. Islam says my actions can control my parent's afterlife. I'm proud I never clock-watch to avoid queues in Mosque. I always leave last. Still doesn't change Dad's special skill of holding a grudge until the next life. Believing faith is the sole vehicle to cement perfection.

Kammy stares outside from the closed window.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

Even the way I am, I can't fully be part of the colour and culture in the community I grew in. What I've become? They constantly ration respect.

After a few more rummaging sounds, Kammy stops organising his belongings inside the drawer. He stares inside the drawer.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

This is it. I have my sign.

Kammy puts a finally completed Rubik Cube on top of the drawer. He places it in between two photos frames that are facing down (so they don't interfere and null when performing Islamic prayers). As Kammy lifts up each photo frame they reveal the following: a picture of Kammy as a small boy with his Dad. The other picture is a photo of Kammy and Afza: Kammy's wife.

We hear the sound of a car honking from outside. Kammy puts on his jacket. He then walks over to the multicoloured Palestinian scarf and touches it.

AFZA

(V/O) Hun, the taxi's here!

Kammy quickly takes the scarf off the hook and begins folding it up.

KAMMY

Just coming, babe!

Kammy folds up the multicoloured scarf and heads over to the drawer.

KAMMY (CONT'D)

In the end, being a Muslim is a solo journey and it's my soul.

Kammy places the folded multicoloured scarf inside the drawer. Inside the drawer has a small jewellery tray. Kammy puts on his wedding ring before leaving with his wife Afza, to visit his Dad in the hospital.

Inside the drawer, we also see the packaging of the freshly opened Rubik Cube. The packaging rests next to the real incompleated Rubik Cube Kammy had been playing with. Kammy had always fabricated what the Istikhara sign was. Therefore deciding to cheat himself from being the person he would truly like to be.

THE END