

Yemeni Romeo and Saudi Juliet Get Married



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Although most international love stories have a tragic end, Yemenis were expecting a happy ending to the Yemeni Romeo and Saudi Juliet love story. Their expectations came true and the love story ended with marriage after months of separation.

The unexpected thing is that the ones who ended this story with marriage are the Houthis, who call themselves Ansar Allah, or “God Supporters.” Now, Yemenis are calling them love supporters.

On Thursday November 6th, fifteen Houthi militants stormed the Al-Amal Care Home and kidnapped Huda Al-Niran, the Saudi woman, at gunpoint. The Houthis took Huda and her lover Arafat Al-Qadi, a Yemeni, to the city of Amran north of Sana’a. They brought the judge to marry them and then held the marriage ceremony.

Al-Niran made international headlines last year when she ran away from Saudi Arabia to Yemen with the man she wanted to marry, Arafat. She met him in a mobile shop when she was buying a new phone. They fell in love with each other and were in touch for three years. In October 2013, Huda’s family refused to marry Huda to Arafat because he was Yemeni and decided to marry her to her cousin. Huda was not like other girls who accepted their families’ choices and believed that it is her life and no one has the right to control it. Both Huda and Arafat escaped to Yemen and get married.

Twenty-five-year-old Yemeni citizen, Arafat, and 22-year-old Saudi citizen Huda were arrested by Yemeni authorities at the Al-Twal border crossing between Yemen and Saudi Arabia in early October and are being held at the Migration and Passport Authority’s prison in Sana’a for Huda’s illegal entrance into the country.

This case disturbs Yemeni and Saudi public opinion alike. Some support them and their right to marry and others refuse it because of customs, traditions, and respect for the law, even if it was for love or marriage.

November 25 was the trial that marked by a demonstration in front of the court to support them. Hundreds of political and human rights activists carried the slogans *No For Huda's Deport, Love Before Border and Nationality*. The court released Arafat while Huda was granted asylum from the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Then they put her in Al-Amal Care Home until The Houthis came and released her.

Fatima Jarallah, the director of the home, said that Huda called her and told her that she and Arafat got married and she is so happy.

Although love is inevitable, many youth believe that a traditional marriage is better than a love marriage. A social study showed that only 12% of love marriages succeed. Ebtisam Zaid, a psychologist, said that traditional marriage may lack love and become routine but may be the most successful type of marriage and contain the most powerful kind of love.

For Zaid, emotional marriage is either honest and strong between a man and woman who try to get married quickly despite problems and obstacles, or it is passionate and fast, dominated by recklessness with no equivalence between the couple. This love, even if it ends with marriage, will not continue because it is an unreasonable love.

“Love is blind and when youth fall in love they close their minds and think with their hearts. Emotional impulses blind their vision, making them think that love makes miracles while in a traditional marriage they work on the success of their marriage because they know well marriage is a responsibility and involves carrying burdens,” she added.

Falling in love must be suitable, and both partners must be equal academically and culturally to have a successful relationship and to keep their hearts happy