

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

**a 10-minute play
by Tom Baum**

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Characters

NATHAN

NASRUL

(Lights up on NATHAN at his computer, NASRUL at his.)

NATHAN: What do you need, my express service code or my concierge number?

NASRUL: Please, the express service code. That will be most helpful.

NATHAN: 277...191...026..98.

NASRUL: And what may I assist you with?

NATHAN: OK. This is the fourth time I'm calling about this problem. Do you have a record of my previous calls?

NASRUL: I will endeavor to find it now.

NATHAN: No, don't endeavor, I need this solved. Here's the thing: Various features of Chrome will drop out for no apparent reason, in the middle of a session. I reboot and the problem goes away and then it comes back, randomly, no warning.

NASRUL: I am sorry to hear you are having this issue and I will be solving it today. If we are disconnected, may I call you back at this number?

NATHAN: Yeah yeah. Can we skip the pleasantries in your script? I'm really slammed.

NASRUL: I will do my best to comply with your wishes. May I know to whom I have the pleasure of speaking today?

NATHAN: I'm Nathan. Today and every day.

NASRUL: I am Nasrul.

NATHAN: Well, Nasrul, I'm counting on you to fix the problem. God knows Bhabani, Deepak, and Gourab couldn't.

NASRUL: I am sorry to hear you are having such difficulties.

NATHAN: Don't apologize. Just make my system work.

NASRUL: *(tightly)* That is my goal and my sincerest hope. May I have the honor of sharing your screen?

NATHAN: I'm way ahead of you. Entering custsup1 in the address box. Click yes. Open. Now I need the code.

NASRUL: The code is 105—

NATHAN: 105—

NASRUL: —5772.

NATHAN: 5772. Press OK. “Nasrul is sharing your screen.” I’m putting you on speaker, Nasrul.

NASRUL: If you need to X out of anything, please do so now.

NATHAN: Did it already. Can we please get this done?! I’m ready to buy a new computer and it won’t be this brand.

NASRUL: (*tightly*) That is of course your prerogative. I will first eliminate your temporary files. Yes. All right. I see. Oh.

NATHAN: Oh?

NASRUL: These are perhaps the source of the problem.

NATHAN: Which?

NASRUL: I would venture to say you have a virus as a result of visiting these sites, and I will now download Superscan to isolate it.

NATHAN: Which sites?

NASRUL: There. Where the cursor is.

NATHAN: You’re very quick with the cursor. Right, I thought I cleared history.

NASRUL: There is no “clearing history.” Clearing history is a canard. You are lucky to escape with just a virus.

NATHAN: What could be worse than a virus?

NASRUL: I will tell you what could be worse. In my country it is illegal to see such sites.

NATHAN: Really? That sucks. I mean it’s surprising.

NASRUL: Why does this surprise you?

NATHAN: Well...the Kama Sutra and all that.

NASRUL: Yes. At one time we led the world in sexual wisdom, but no more.

NATHAN: Anyway, these are old sites. Haven’t been on them for a long time.

NASRUL: I see they are date-stamped this morning, but I will take your word for it. What is this one?

NATHAN: Which one?

NASRUL: Where the cursor is.

NATHAN: No idea. Why do you want to know? Please get rid of them and move on.

NASRUL: I will eliminate all the evidence, and even my government could not convict you.

NATHAN: Whoa. Are we talking about jail time?

NASRUL: A very stiff sentence.

NATHAN: So to speak.

NASRUL: Yes, ha ha, I understand. You should thank God you're an American. In my country, wives have been known to inform on their husbands for such activity.

NATHAN: Oh yeah? Not my wife. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

NASRUL: This is not in the Kama Sutra.

NATHAN: For all the good it did us. It was the only thing we had in common. I tried to interest her in basketball, but she kept falling asleep.

NASRUL: At least you had sexual activity. My Aishani was more interested in basketball.

NATHAN: She held out on you, huh?

NASRUL: For weeks at a time. And then sued me for divorce, citing my interest in pornography as a sign of mental illness.

NATHAN: Megan made me go to rehab. It was either that or divorce.

NASRUL: And did that save your marriage?

NATHAN: Well...apparently nothing can scare me off porn.

NASRUL: Ah, I see.

NATHAN: Short of tying me down and making me watch masturbating women being beheaded.

NASRUL: Please don't give my government ideas. *(pause)* Masturbating women, I take it that's your preference?

NATHAN: I'm fairly eclectic, but yeah, I'll cop to that.

NASRUL: I like hairy women myself.

NATHAN: I have no problem with that either.

NASRUL: Of which there is an abundance in my country.

NATHAN: We're running a shortage.

NASRUL: Aishani was so angry when she caught me. Why do you risk imprisonment looking at such women, when you are free to look at me?

NATHAN: They just don't get it, do they.

NASRUL: I said Aishani, I haven't seen you naked in a month.

NATHAN: I pleaded with Megan not to wax. She called me a dork.

NASRUL: My heart goes out to you, Nathan. But Superscan has resolved your issue.

NATHAN: Well, thank you, Nasrul.

NASRUL: Have I met with your expectations?

NATHAN: And then some. Sorry I went off on you before.

NASRUL: I have heard far worse, believe me.

NATHAN: Wish I could do something for you. Besides give you a good review.

NASRUL: There is something else you can do for me.

NATHAN: Name it.

NASRUL: While I am sharing your screen, would you mind going on a certain site? I cannot myself, without calling down the authorities. But if it is you who moves the cursor, I am beyond the reach of our laws.

NATHAN: Even though this conversation is being recorded?

NASRUL: Oh that is another canard.

NATHAN: Wow, that's good to know.

NASRUL: *Praakrtik aurat.*

NATHAN: Excuse me?

NASRUL: That is the name of the site. In English, Natural Woman. P,R, double A,,K,R,T,I,K A,U,R,A,T

NATHAN: Got it. *Praakrtik*—

NASRUL: —*aurat*.

NATHAN: Oh. I see what you mean.

NASRUL: Takes me back.

NATHAN: (*marveling*) Me too.

NASRUL: Nothing Brazilian about her.

NATHAN: Brazilian's for pedophiles.

NASRUL: This does not make you uncomfortable? Two men sharing a woman, as it were?

NATHAN: Hey, rock stars do it.

NASRUL: Ah, look what she's doing there.

NATHAN: Fantastic move.

NASRUL: I am indebted to you, Nathan.

NATHAN: Same here, Nasrul. Sorry I went off on you before.

NASRUL: Not to worry. I hear such outbursts every single day.

NATHAN: Americans suck ass.

NASRUL: But America is great.

NATHAN: If our wives could see us now, right, Nasrul?

NASRUL: Nathan, my friend...they would divorce us all over again.

(Both men are staring at their screens, breathing more and more heavily, as the lights fade. END OF PLAY.)