

"Why Children Did Not Knock at My Door on Halloween This Year"

By Ifti Nasim

1 There was no knock at the door
my cats were waiting in the foyer,
listening to the steps passing by.
Children were knocking at the door
5 of the apartment in front of mine.

"Trick or treat. Trick or treat"
My money jar full of quarters
looked so empty.
What happened? Who played
10 these dirty tricks on me?

Thirty-one year as a law abiding citizen

I am still a foreigner. Foreigner
with a crude face and features of
a terrorist. My color-two shades
15 darker than an average white man
is not accepted anymore.
My café ole color, once I was so proud of,
is a guilt trip for me now.
My ethnicity has become a crime.

20 Mean streets of Chicago have become meaner.
"Go back to your country. Go back to your
country."
They yell at me.
And I am a citizen of USA
with no country.

25 Airports, train stations, shopping malls, schools,
hospitals wherever I go,
I am watched and scrutinized.

I yearn for the freedom I came here for.
Right now I am worst than a black slave.
30 I am tired. I am tired.
I feel like Rosa Parks
and there is no bus for me.
because I am not only two shades darker
than an average white man
35 but I am also a Muslim.

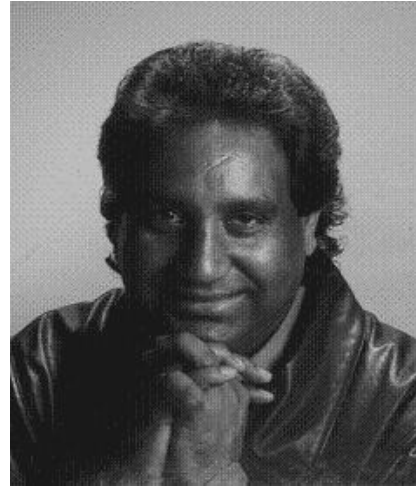


Image Courtesy of [Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame](#)

Ifti Nasim (1946 - July 22, 2011) was a gay Pakistani American poet. Nasim left Pakistan for the United States at the age of 21 to avoid persecution and an arranged marriage, eventually settling in Chicago advocating for LGBT, South Asian and Muslim communities. He dedicated his life to art and advocacy, founding SANGAT/Chicago (a South Asian LGBT organization) in 1986. He was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 1996. - source: <http://www.glaad.org/2011/07/29/ifti-nasim-celebrating-the-life-and-legacy-of-an-avant-garde-gay-pakistani-american-muslim-activist>

Nasim, Ifti. "Why Children Did Not Knock at My Door on Halloween This Year." *Asian Americans On War & Peace*. Los Angeles: UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 2002. 103-104. Print.