REFERENCES TO TECHNOLOGY IN *EXIT WEST* BY MOHSIN HAMID

CHAPTER 1

“Saeed was among the most junior, but his boss liked him and had tasked him turning around a pitch to a local soap company that had to go out by email before five.” (Pag.4)

“As Saeed’s email was being downloaded from a server and read by his client,…” (Pag.5)

“The cinema they remembered so fondly had been replaced by a shopping arcade for computers and electronic peripherals.”(Pag.11)

“Their phones rested screens-down between them, like the weapons of desperadoes at a parley.” (Pag.16)

CHAPTER 2

“It was distinctively lit by what looked like a candle-filled paper lanterns, but were in fact plastic, illuminated by flame-shaped, electronically flickering bulbs.” (Pag.20)

“They had met at an underground concert, more a jam session really, with perhaps fifty or sixty people crammed into the soundproofed premises of a recording studio that specialized increasingly in audio work for television.” (Pag.30)

“They rarely spoke on the telephone and met only sporadically, and she suspected he had many other women.” (Pag.31)

“And since they had little to say to one another by phone and instant message seemed too impersonal, she decided to say it in person, outdoors, in a public place, not in his messy, musky apartment, where she trusted herself less…” (Pag.32)

“The following evening helicopters filled the sky like birds startled by a gunshot, or by the blow of an axe at the base of their tree” (Pag.32)

CHAPTER 3

“Nadia e Saeed were, back then, always in possession of their phones. In their phones were antennas, and these antennas sniffed out an invisible world, as if by magic, world that was all round them, and also nowhere, transporting them to places distant and near, and to places that had never been and would never be. For many decades after independence a telephone line in thein city had remained a rare thing, the waiting list for a connection long, the teams that installed the copper wires and delivered the heavy handsets greeted and revered and bribed like heroes. But now wands waved in the city’s air, untethered and free, phones in the millions, and a number could be obtained in minutes, for a pittance. Saeed partly resisted the pull of his phone.” (Pag.35)

“His phone could make calls. His phone could send messages. His phone could take pictures. (…) as she reclined on her toilet after emptying her bladder.” (Pag.36)

“In contrast to Saeed, Nadia saw no need to limit her phone.” (Pag.37)

“Nadia frequently explored the terrain of social media, (…) in their city in those days.” (Pag.38)

“Nadia and her colleagues spent much of that day staring the television next to their floor’s water cooler.” (Pag.40)

“Saeed’s phone had died (…) return at all.” (Pag.44-45)

“Later as they lay in bed listening to an old and slightly scratched bossa nova LP, Saeed showed her on his phone images by a French photographer of famous cities at night, lit only by the glow of the stars.” (Pag.54)

“He didn’t,” Saeed said. “He just removed the lighting. By computer, I think.” (Pag.54)

“But one day the signal to every mobile phone in the city simply vanished turned off as if by flipping a switch. An announcement of the government’s decision was made over television and radio, a temporary anti-terrorism measure, it was said, but with no end date given. Internet connectivity was suspended as well.” (Pag.55)

“Deprived of the portals to each other and to the world provided by their mobile phones, and confined to their apartments by the night-time curfew, Nadia and Saeed, and countless others, felt marooned and alone and much more afraid.” (Pag.55)

CHAPTER 4

“Neither of them had been to the other’s office, so they didn’t know where to reach one another during the day, and without their mobile phones and access to the internet there was no ready way for them to re-establish contact.” (Pag.57)

“The day after their phone signals died Saeed went to their usual burger joint at lunch time, but Nadia did not show, and the day after that, when he went again, the restaurant was shuttered, its owner perhaps having fled, or simply disappeared.” (Pag.57)

“Saeed was aware that Nadia worked at an insurance company, and from his office has called the operator and asked for the names and numbers of insurance companies, and tried phoning them all, one by one inquiring for her at each. This took time: the telephone company was struggling under the sudden load and also to repair infrastructure destroyed in the fighting, and so Saeed’s office landline worked at best intermittently, and when it did, an operator could be swatted out of the swarm of busy tones only rarely, and that operator was limited to giving out a maximum of two number per call, and when Saeed finally did obtain a new pair of numbers to try, more often than not one or both proved to be non-functional on any given day, and he had to ring and ring and ring again.” (Pag.58)

“Nadia hefted two laptop computers in their carrying cases and her floor’s flat-screen TV, but in the end she did not take the TV because it would have been difficult to load on to her motorcycle, and passed it instead to a somber-faced colleague who thanked her politely.” (Pag.67-68)

CHAPTER 5

“A partial calm descended, broken by the activities of drones and aircraft that bombed from the heavens, these networked machines for the most part invisible.” (Pag.81)

“Because of the flying robots high above in the darkening sky, unseen but never far from people’ minds in those days.” (Pag.83)

“Saeed and Nadia enjoyed a degree of insulation from remote surveillance when they were indoors.” (Pag.88)

“As soon as they stepped outside they could be seen by the lenses peering down on their city from the sky and from space.” (Pag.89)

CHAPTER 6

“What one might hear if one were a communications satellite, or a spymaster tapping into a fiber-optic cable under the sea.” (Pag.100)

“When they woke Saeed tried to call his father but an automated message informed him that his call could not be completed, Nadia tried to connect with people via chat applications and social media, and an acquaintance who had made it to Auckland and another who had reached Madrid replied right away.” (Pag.103)

“Nadia and Saeed sat next to each other on the ground and caught up on the news, the tumult in the world, the state of their country, the various routes and destinations migrants were taking and recommending to each other, the tricks one could gainfully employ, the dangers one needed at all costs to avoid.” (Pag.103)

CHAPTER 7

“They clicked on a television to see if they could discover where they were”

“The television with its intermittently apocalyptic news they felt oddly normal”

“ […] and subsequently he had taken out his phone to call the authorities” Ater

“ […] and Saeed was looking at his phone, when they heard shouting up ahead and saw people running “

“After the riots the talk on television was of a major operation […] and the social media chatter was of a coming night of shattered glass.”

“In their small bedroom after sunset they listened to music on Nadia’s phone, using the phone’s built-in speaker. It would have been a simple matter to stream this music from various websites, but they tried to economize in all things, including the data bundles they had purchased from their phones, and so Nadia downloaded pirated versions whenever she could find them, and listened to these.”

CHAPTER 8

“The co plexities of London’s electricity network were such that a few motes of night-time brightness remained in Saeed and Nadia’s locality […] where an enterprising migrant had rigged together a connection to still active high-voltage line.”

“Every day a flight of fighter aircraft would streak through the sky […] of their technological superiority of their opponents.”

“ armored vehicles and communication arrays and robots that walked or crawled like animals.”

“ the drones overhead […] suggested an unstoppable efficiency, an inhuman power.”

“a thriving trade in electricity was under way in dark London […] and Saeed and Nadia were able to charge their phones from time to time.”

CHAPTER 9

“In exchange for their labour in clearing terrain and building infrastructure and assembling dwellings from prefabricated blocks, migrants were promised forty metres and a pipe: a home on forty square metres of land and a connection to all the utilities of modernity.” (Pag.167-168)

“She was also, not long after, and to her considerable surprise, a witness to their very first kiss, which she captured, without expecting to, through the lens of her camera, and then deleted, later that night, in a gesture of uncharacteristic sentimentality and respect.” (Pag.175)

“They put their lack of conversation down to exhaustion, for by the end of the day they were usually so tired they could barely speak, and phones themselves have the innate power of distancing one form one’s physical surroundings.” (Pag.185)

“And so when she suggested one day, out of the blue, under the drone-crossed sky and in the invisible network of surveillance that radiated out from their phones, recording and capturing and logging everything.” (Pag.188-189)

CHAPTER 10

“Wireless data signals were strong, and they secured a solar panel and battery set with a universal outlet, which accepted plugs from all around the world, and a rainwater collector fashioned from synthetic fabric.” (Pag.191-192)

CHAPTER 11

“several people on her shifts began chatting with her a lot more after that.” (Pag.214)

“and there was no record player, and no scope…” (Pag.215)

“some were calling… different view.” (Pag.216)

“One day she showed Saeed a little device that looked to him like a thimble.” (Pag.220)

“She called him the following evening, again a brief call, and after that they messaged or spoke to one another on most days.” (Pag.220)

“Neither much enjoyed catching unexpected glimpses of their former lover’s new existence online, and so they distanced themselves from each other on social networks.” (Pag.222)

CHAPTER 12

“She was informed of the proximity of Saeed, and after standing motionless for a considerable moment she communicated with him, and they agreed to meet.” (Pag.227)