

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Don't Follow Me, I'm Lost

Huma Qureshi on producing and starring in Baby Do Die Do, the privilege of 10 million pairs of eyes, and why the best artists stay a little lost.

Interview by Paul Salfen · AMFM Magazine

Huma Qureshi is proud of this one. Sitting in conversation with Paul Salfen as Netflix prepares to open *Baby Do Die Do* to a global audience on September 23, she calls it a special baby—the first film from Saleem Siblings, the production company she co-founded with her brother Saqib Saleem. She acts in it too, as a deaf-and-mute assassin who hides a gun inside a red umbrella and walks the streets of Mumbai killing people for a living. “It’s got a little bit of everything,” she says. Action, singing, humor, “just real crazy stuff.” And she made it.

FROM THE THEATER NEAR THE HOUSE

The path from New Delhi to that umbrella took longer than the trailer suggests. She grew up going to a theater close to the house, always wanting to be in front of the camera, never quite sure how someone with her background would get there. “You got to be a little bit, like, big headed about it,” she tells Salfen. “You got to just, like, keep doing it.” She did. In 2012 her first film arrived. If someone had told her then that she would work in the West, across India, on every streamer possible, and then become a first-generation producer, she says she would not have believed them. “But here we are, and dreams do come true.”

The job still surprises her. “Every single day. Every single day. I’m just like, I get paid for this. Like, seriously, like, this is the best job in the world.” People ask if the lack of privacy bothers her. She laughs. “Who wants to walk on the road? I love it.” She gets to inhabit different people, learn new skills, travel, work with writers, directors, producers, and co-stars who push and enrich her. Every few years her personality shifts because so much is happening. “And I get paid to do that. So I pinch myself, like every day saying like, oh, wow, thank you, thank you God. Like, thank you very much.”

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— HUMA QURESHI

THE EYEBALLS AND THE RESPONSIBILITY

Ten million Instagram followers means ten million potential views of a trailer, and Salfen notes the interesting balance. Qureshi has learned not to flinch. “I love the eyeballs. I think being an active part of it is also just the eyeballs and the attention.” Early on she imagined she could switch it on and off. The attention never really goes off. Instead she has learned to enjoy it, appreciate it, harness it. “I think it’s a privilege and honor to have the love of so many people who want to see your work, who are connected to you, and I feel extremely grateful for that honor.”

She treats it as a responsibility—to serve audiences with work that entertains or elevates the human condition. Promoting *Baby Do Die Do*, she and the team went into theaters. “It was so much fun. Like, it was just so much fun watching them watch the film and then interact with them after. It was like a whole different ballgame altogether.”

DON'T FOLLOW ME

People look up to her and want the same path. Her advice is blunt: “Don’t.” She expands: “I always say I think all artists are lost. Like we like to be a little lost, you know, and then find a way back. And so don’t follow me, for I’m lost is, I think, my favorite one liner.” Following someone else’s footsteps produces a poor imitation. “The idea is, no matter how flawed or how fragile or whatever it is that just be yourself. Be. You’re so unique. I think every individual is so unique, and you have to really work within to try and express who you are to people, and that’s what they connect with.”

“Don’t follow me, for I’m lost... find your own authentic voice. Be yourself.”

— HUMA QURESHI

She remembers her own early twenties, looking at screen idols and trying to emulate them. “I think that was the worst mistake ever, because at best you’re like a cheap imitation.” Listening to herself has been better. To anyone starting out she says: spend time with yourself, figure out who you are and what you want to say to the world.

WHEN THE PRODUCTION SUCKS—AND IT’S YOURS

Salfen asks about the moments when you just have to go for it. Qureshi lands on a production-day realization. “I remember one day I was like, oh my God, like, this production sucks. And I’m like, oh, wait, hang on, it’s my production. So that was humbling.” She thinks every actor should produce at least once. “It just makes them more humble. It makes them realize that the world does not only revolve around them, and it just makes them so much more respectful of the process and what everyone brings to the table.”

The last year as both producer and actor has taught her more about the nuts and bolts of making a film than all her previous years in front of the camera. “Scared or afraid or not sure which way to go. And then you look around and you think. And you look at the people you’ve collected on the way, like your tribe. And everyone’s just supporting each other. And it’s really beautiful.”

THE WORK INSIDE THE WORK

What keeps her on the path is less a slogan than a practice. “I do a lot of like self work. I do a lot of journaling. I do a lot of like meditation... I cannot recommend highly enough that everyone should have, like a therapist or someone they talk to just to like, help unravel what’s going on.” The noise and clutter around an artist are constant. Journaling helps declutter the thought process so she can express herself. “I think it’s really helped me in my journey as an artist.”

A CHARACTER YOU CAN DROP ANYWHERE

What does she want people to take from *Baby Do Die Do*? “It was just that it’s a very, very universal film. I play a deaf and mute assassin who, you know, who hides her gun in her room, and she walks in the streets of Mumbai and she kills people for a living, and that’s her job. I mean, honestly, you can take this character and put her in any country in the world or any street in the world, and it would still work.” The specificity of Mumbai sits beside something larger. “I love the fact that it’s so specific to Mumbai, but yet it’s so universal. And I think that’s what everyone’s going to enjoy. The twists and turns and the humor. And that’s the power of the language of cinema, you know, it really transcends borders.”

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Revenge is universal. So is the choice not to play the victim. “This woman does not use her disability, you know, in a way where she plays the victim, but she actually is a hero despite, you know, all the disabilities that the world looks at disabilities. And I kind of love that. I kind of like that as an idea.” She hopes the film finds audiences everywhere precisely because of that.

THE CLICK OF A BUTTON

Netflix makes the film accessible “to anyone, anywhere right now.” Qureshi is here for the streaming moment. “I love it, I’m here for this territory, Gnostic revolution that we have. Like, we’re so blessed to be living in a time where technology enables us to watch stories from all over the world at literally like the click of a button and just the world just shrinks, and it just makes us realize even more how similar we really are.” We look different on the outside. “But just the way our stories, our relationships, our interpersonal dynamics, we all feel love, we all feel hate. We all, you know, go through pain. Just, just, just the language of human beings is actually so universal. When you really look beyond all these like narrow ideas of language, race and religion.” Technology, she says, lets us sample those stories.

WHAT’S NEXT, AND WHERE SHE IS NOW

At the time of the conversation she is in Bhopal. She had been in Los Angeles for the Primetime Emmys—“I was invited, it was a lot of fun”—then flew straight to Ladakh, “the highest, most point in India,” to shoot Season 5 of *Maharani*. She plays a village woman who is illiterate and becomes chief minister. “Think of it like House of Cards for India, basically.” After that comes a release on Zee, four days after Puja, in which she plays a lawyer defending a girl falsely accused after her lover kills himself. The film examines how women are sometimes shamed for their choices before anyone has the facts.

She thanks Salfen, looks forward to seeing him soon, and signs off. The film is on Netflix. The work continues. And somewhere a first-generation producer is still pinching herself that she gets paid to keep being a little lost.

FIND HUMA QURESHI

Baby Do Die Do streams on Netflix (debuted September 23, 2026; theatrical July 3, 2026).

Also: Delhi Crime Season 3 and Toxic on Netflix; Maharani on Sony LIV; Bayaan (TIFF / Busan).

Instagram: @iamhumaq · Production: Saleem Siblings

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Paul Salfen is Managing Editor of AMFM Magazine and a veteran interviewer of film, television, music, and sports figures. He is the author of Going For It!, a collection of Hail Mary moments from the artists and athletes he has spent two decades putting on the record.