

THE VINE THAT WITHERS

SYNOPSIS

The Vine That Withers follows Dalia and Layal, two friends who come together to open a small café in Toronto. Both are trying to build stability in a system that continually pushes them to the margins, but they are driven by different needs. For Dalia, whose sense of self is closely tied to who she believes she is and how she is seen, the café becomes a way to hold onto something that feels like it is slipping. For Layal, it is a matter of survival, a practical response to immediate financial pressure.

As they begin establishing the business, they are faced with the realities of operating within a system that demands experience, access, and resources they do not have. What begins as a necessary adjustment soon turns into a series of compromises. Each decision is justified in the moment, framed as temporary or harmless, but gradually these choices accumulate, shifting the foundation of both the business and their relationship.

As the café grows, so does the pressure to sustain it. Financial strain, external expectations, and the fear of failure begin to weigh heavily on both women. The differences in their motivations become more pronounced, Dalia becomes increasingly invested in maintaining an image of stability and control, while Layal focuses on keeping the business afloat by any means necessary. What once felt like a shared goal begins to reveal underlying tensions neither of them can fully articulate.

Their relationship starts to fracture as each woman confronts the consequences of their choices. Moments of doubt, defensiveness, and justification surface, exposing how far they have moved from their original intentions. The line between survival and compromise becomes harder to define, and the trust between them begins to erode.

By the time they are forced to face the reality of what they have built, the question is no longer whether their choices were right or wrong, but whether they can still recognize themselves within them. The café, once a symbol of possibility, becomes a reflection of the cost of staying afloat, and of what happens when the very thing meant to hold you up begins to wear you down.