**Chapter:2**

**Word count:891**

“Pick…..Pick,Pick..Pick up your phone”

My ringtone got me out of my train of thoughts.However,I am not the kind of person who changes the ringtone every now and then,like a child but I like everything organized and this was Ray,it is always Ray messing up with my things and mobile screen also shows up his name.

“Hey cherrie (a french word for sweety).My house is all messed up without you”

“How come,It’s just eight hours since I left and everything is…Oh my god Ray you are such a freak”

“Yeah and you live with this freak and I am missing you.Actually,my home is missing you.Speaking of home,….Are you home now??”

“Mmmmm,I am at the airport but Don’t worry I’ll take the cab”

“Go and Get the cab.And text me when you are home”

“ok,Daddy.Good day”

“Good day,and say 'Salam' to your Dad”

Yeah,this is Ray,full of nonsense and the most caring person on the planet who told me to get a cab so I am in the cab now.

Seems nothing is changed,it’s the same type of cab we got when Iso came here and we were sitting beside each other talking all the way about our hobbies,friends,toys and my storybooks.I was always a book freak,even the most introverted girl and the only place where I could be found was library and I had almost read every book in our library when I was in 8thgrade.My curiosity has no limits and still,I am the same strong,alone,bookfreak,introverted girl I was 10 years back.I was almost 15 in 8th grade and now I am 23,while thinking about all those years,I am always slightly dazed.

How life is so unpredictable,you plan and plan again and again but your fate presses a button and everything turns upside down and you can’t do anything about…about your twisted fate.

***The only thing you can do is not to give up,***on yourself, on people you love.

However,it’s hard but thank God,I did it.

The last 5 years of my life,Iwas trying to forget all those memories but somehow, these streets make me remember the moments I spent here happily.I can easily say by the state of my mind that the coming months in Dubai will be difficult as every spot carries a memory.This was the same thought I shared with Ray and he advised me to replace those past memories and places with happy moments of present but it seems so hard,from last 5 years,I am trying to wash them out but it never works,nothing works.

I feel myself caged sometimes and I don’t know ,where the keys are.No matter how much times passes,No matter how far I go,some things will never change.I will never be able to fully move on but I’ll try my best,I always do.

“Maria”

A loud noise washed my thoughts and this is my younger sister,of 18.

I have seen her in pictures but in reality,she just looks like me,when I left Dubai at the same age.

“Maria,do you know how long I have waited.Oh,you don’t know.Don’t you have a watch to tell you right time”.My sister almost shouted in my ears.

“No greetings **Maya**? How about you open the box of your complaints some time later”

A soft voice came from behind and this is my Mom.

“Oh,my God Mama”

I exclaimed in utter happiness and quickly wrapped her in a breathtaking hug.Breaking the hug,I saw her with that most beautiful beautiful,comfortingsmile and tears in her eyes and again hugged her.

“You don’t know how much I’ve missed all of you”

I said between the hug and here,Iinhaled the most beautiful scent which wiped every trace of grief from my face and in a moment,I felt myself at peace.

“Not more than a mother dear”

Mama said and Maya hugged us from behind

“I missed you so much Maria,more than much,much,much”

She said whimpering like a child.

“Me too”.This was all I could say.My mind has lost its capacity to think and my heart is beating rapidly and abnormally fast in my ribcage because of overwhelming emotions I am experiencing.I am now like this 18 year old girl who left her mother and her whole family when she was immature and childish,Infact I was never childish but still I was so naive,I needed their love.

I thought that Maria is dead but she is still alive in there,still seeking for every bit of love she lost at a young age.

“Not more than me , Askúm”

She said and we broke the hug in giggles.

**“Note: Askúm is a turkish word that should be read as 'Ashkum'.It means 'my Love'”**

Me and Maya used to learn turkey when we were young and she loved it.

“Maria,How was your journey.”

Mama asked with concern.

“It was fine Mom, but a bit tired because I am not used to this”and mama smiled rubbing my back.

“Come on, I’ll take you to your room.”Maya said holding my hand.

As she took my hand,I noticed that thrice of us are of same height.Yeah,we got our height from our mother,even my eyes are just like her,hazel and almond shaped and same lips instead of her milky white complexion showing traces ofpurpke veins around her eyes,but me and Maya got our complexion from our father.Maya also got black hairs from my father which are now perfectly straight with a braid on the left prominent by the highlights of auburn and blonde colour.She is a fashion chic definitely,even in our daily conversations,she mentioned me that she wants to be a fashion designer and my Mom fully support her as she is always the one to carry style and in our childhood,she was always in the latest style and maya is just like her.Unlikeme,I always fall for books,reading and poetry,this is from my father definitely.

“Where’s Papa”.I asked mom thinking of him and here she is smiling.Ohyeah,they love each other so much uptil now .I wished my relationship to be like this too with Iso,but fate planned something else.

“In the lounge,waiting for you” and finally, we are in my home which is now so beautifully decorated and furnished.

“Wow,It’s very beautiful and really changed”

And mom smiled which made my heart warm”Yeah,after your grandma’s death, we thought to renovate it”

Yeah!Mygrandma,she was alive when I left and she liked it simple with no modern furnishing but definitely in such era of 5 years,it should be changed,everything is changed,I am changed, except my feelings.

“Don’t even think of doing it again or you’ll be hurt”

This is definitely dad scolding someone close to kitchen. God,I missed his scolding, the way it showed so much care though Ray also cares and beside being funny,he gets really angry sometimes being the protective brother he is but Father is father and here is my father fuming at my younger brother,Umer, of 10,but he is again laughing.Hey here!I have such a naughty brotherl.He used to hangup my calls when I used to talk to Mom grom Europe.

“Ok,Papa”,he said while rolling his eyes just then my mother piped in.

“Just leave it Raheel,You should be happy today” and he looked upon our direction

“He dad,Assalam o alaikum”.

“Oh my Dear,I was longing to see you.Finally home sweetie ?”

“I really missed you Dad”

“Me too,my most lovely daughter” and then we hugged each for a long time other until someone decided tomake their presence countable

“Let’s celebrate the litter reunion. My friends want to meet you Sisso”

“Why not,we will definitely celebrate but you are not invited”.Dad said teasing him and with a frown Umer left the room without even greeting me.So rude.

“So,finallyhome,Now,I can lead you to your room unless you want to stay here and discuss business with papa”.Maya chimed in and Mom agreed ,

“She us right ,go and freshen up.We are avout to have lunch”

I said Okay and then Maya led me to my room,there she hugged me from back and asked excitedly,

“So,finallyback.Now what?”

“What?”I asked in confusion.she definitely have something in mind.