**AMAZING GRACE**

*“All kids need a little help, little hope, and someone who believes in them.”*

“Teacher, you spread sunshine in my life”

“Teacher, I have always the comfort of knowing that you’re always there for me.”

Every year , on the Teacher’ Day I get lots and lots of such cards which express deep love, respect and faith in me.

Sometimes I am a source of wisdom to them sometimes I nurture them, at times I add colour to their dreams.

But do I to live to their expectations? Have I always tried to know them beyond their innocent face? Have I always tried to understand their strange and unacceptable behavior? I often fail to get an answer to my questions.

It was the English class with the seventh grade students. I was just testing their writing skills and their sense of creativity .

I gave them an essay, “ Most memorable day of my life”

Most of the students had completed their essays. I collected them and took them home to read peacefully.

Most of them had written about their birthday celebrations, a foreign trip, or when they were awarded a certificate of excellence.

But one essay completely left me stunned. I quickly saw the name of the writer, it was Nimmi, Nimmi Gavde. The girl who was never attentive in the class, everyone called her good for nothing, a pain in the neck….She was punished almost every day and unfortunately my name too was very much there in that list.

I had expected everyone to write about their sweet memories they would forever cherish. But Nimmi had none. She had only experienced moments of dismay , discontent and despair.

As I read her moving tale, every word seemed to stir deep down in my soul. I was also equally responsible to add to her unending woes.

Nimmi came from a broken home. Right from her childhood she was conveniently shuffled from one house to another .she neither enjoyed her father ‘s love nor her mother’s warmth. She was a burden wherever she went. She was shunned and ridiculed all the times. And school, it was a torture for her.

She never got any respect here too.

Was I fair enough to her? Or did I too add to her miseries ? Knowing the real reason behind her unruly behavior I felt extremely guilty.

As soon as the mid break was over I went to her class .As usual she was punished and was standing behind the benches.

Nimmi, can I have you just for a minute?

She was too terrified.” Now what happened? “Was her silent question.. why am I pulled out? She wanted to ask but couldn’t do so.

“Nimmi, I am so sorry , I never tried to understand you, ‘ I am really so sorry.”

I had lots to say to her but she didn’t need any explanation for it. All teachers treated her in the same way. I Knew I was answerable for my behavior.

“ Nimmi, can you pardon me please ?

She was dumbfounded. How could a teacher ask forgiveness from her pupil? She could not believe her ears.

“ Do you really like me mam? Can I become your friend?

Yes Nimmi , you can trust me . I will always be there for you.

That was the turning point in her life and my life too. Nimmi had found a shoulder to lean on, a friend to cheer her up; and me I was filled with a sense of contentment for seeing beyond the horizon.

It was indeed a great moment for both of us. A moment of amazing love, amazing friendship and amazing grace. Time stood still as both of us held our hands together and wept for joy.

**Curie Pereira**