**THE UNSPOKEN BOND**

“I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU LOVED ME WHEN I COULDN’T LOVE MYSELF.”

This is absolutely a love story , the most beautiful love story I have ever heard or read. All the words used to describe the most immortal love stories of all times, will fail to portray this one. We have to experience it to believe it and believe it to live it.

It’s Gazalla’s love story; she is as beautiful as her name, when you see her for the first time, you will surely say ‘Oh God, how beautiful she is!’ but the very next moment, you will lift your eyes to the same Heavens and exclaim, ‘Oh God , why her?

She is Gazalla , the star of my love story. Fair, slim , beautiful, her eyes like the reindeer’s, her lips like the dew-clad rosebuds in early spring. When you see her, you rejoice in her beauty, but your heart grieves in her pain.

She is twelve years old Gazalla of my special school . A victim of profound mental retardation. The words we speak convey no meaning to her, she smiles

when she is happy, and sobs when she is not. She can walk with support, but her hands are delicate and frail.

I saw her for the first time in the school hall just before the school wound up

for the summer holidays. She was sitting aloof from all the rest of the children , and talking to the wall. I just looked at her and continued looking. Her lips quivered without any words, but her eyes spoke volumes. I knew she was totally handicapped, physically and mentally. I went home with a heavy heart and asked God the same question, ‘why her ?’

“ Someone comes into our lives leaving footprints on our heart and we are never the same.”

Gazalla did not know what love is till he came in her life and gave it a meaning. He is Shubham, an eleven year old boy, tiny, timid and also a differently abled child.

She saw him for the first time and it was a spectacular moment which had to be captured for eternity. Her face lit up and I saw a thousand stars twinkling in her

eyes, almost the whole galaxy.

‘Shubham” she uttered his name with complete clarity and conviction. we all were completely taken aback. Nobody had taught her to say this word. They looked at each other as if they were friends from time immemorial. This was the beginning of their magical bond. We as educators ,wondered where this friendship is going to lead them .Their future was as blink as their present and their past.

Their care and concern for each other is just amazing. He holds her hand as she slowly climbs the staircase and she helps him as he struggles to put his bag on his back.

Whole day she usually sits quietly in the classroom and talks to herself, no words only by gestures. Sometimes she gazes out at the clear blue sky and begins to cry. But , in the break time, the moment she catches a glimpse of Shubham, her whole

world changes .There is a glow on her tear-dried face, her damp eyes brighten up and her joy knows no bound.

She can’t bear him going out of her sight, her eyes follow him everywhere. The moment he goes home her whole world crumbles down. Since she is in the day care she stays in the school much longer time than him and no one can bring back that smile on her face again.

This beautiful bond between them bears no tag, it doesn’t fit in the frame of any relationships, there are no apprehensions, no expectations, no conditions no conceit.

They are too ignorant and innocent to define love; but God must have surely brought them together and given His beautiful touch to this unspoken bond.

**Curie Pereira**