

Chapter 2

Advice

Ranmara ran down the eerie staircase, with his haphazardly packed bag, shoe laces untying themselves and his phone, complaining that it is almost out of charge.

He jumped on the last step and fell down flat on his face, but he quickly got up and kept running. He bumped through the door, confident that he broke its hinge, but there was no time for that. He wasn't even sure what he was doing anymore, just running aimlessly. He ran out into the courtyard.

A group of elementary students were playing football. A kid who towered over all the others stood on the other side of the courtyard. He kicked the ball so high that made a majestic arch so big that it might have been for the marriage of two apartment buildings. In one kick, the ball flew to the other side of the sizable courtyard and bounced off the railing.

Ranmara, who just ran through the entrance door of the apartment was smacked in the face with the spinning ball, and hit his head on the door frame. He groaned, but quickly got up without a word and stumbled around like a drunk man. He regained his strength and kept running before the children could react. They were left visibly confused.

Ranmara walked by the side of the main road. A thought was slowly gripping him. "What on earth am I even doing? What am I even going to do?". The sun was unforgiving, and even though he wore a black jacket, he was too deep in thought to feel his skin burning. Even though the sun was setting, it was October, and the oppressive, humid weather blanketed the polluted city of Bangalore.

A few minutes later he tripped on a rock. He was snapped out of the zone, and stood in place for a minute before finally coming to his senses again. "You look lost sonny" a homeless man in bright but ragged clothes who happened to be sitting nearby said. "Life is too short, live it how you want; don't do what what everyone else wants. People run away all the time just to find a new, more exciting life. I did the same when I was your age, and look at where that got me.". Ranmara paid no heed to the man, but instead kept walking. His advice kept echoing in his head.

Ranmara decided to stop for the day near a small restaurant. The owner of the establishment had already gone home. The sun had set hours ago, and the mood of the city was slowly dampening. Besides, the clouds were threatening and it would be too risky to continue walking towards an unknown destination. He laid down on the dusty floor of the restaurant, under a table just for extra safety and privacy. He looked at his phone, just to find something, something that may hint at the whereabouts of his friend Pharia. No sooner did he turn it on than it quickly shut down. It had run out of charge. He'd have to try in the morning.