I still remember the good days, which I fondly called the Golden days. We used to walk up the hill road to Robert’s Height every weekday, and the weekdays were six in number. Me and Her. Like a moth building a cocoon, starting from a single strand, we two had started off from a very clichéd common interest, to get wings. It could be clichéd for anyone, but not for me, nor for her either. We liked astronomy, no, not the song, but the subject that is rarely talked of in the place we dwelled. Sometimes, someone’s utopian retreat is someone else’ bottleneck. It used to be pleasant talk. We looked forward to talking to each other every day. Though we used to travel together in the jeep also, we seldom talked with other people around.

I used to be a brisk walker. She always used to have company, oh popular, that she was, still is. She used to joke while we walked together, *“Someday, you will start to walk slowly, like a snail like me”*. I used to laugh it off. Little did she realize how many people we had started to overtake while walking. The world really slowed down those mornings.

Monkeys used to be a problem for girls, they held much more expertise at eve teasing when compared to men in that area, which was literally nil. Though they did not snatch snacks or pick pocket anybody, but their million dollar grin while we passed along was enough to think of the possibilities.

Sometimes, I used to kick a stone or a pine cone along the ascent while she used to nag me *“Stop being so childish”*, though she is younger than me. I liked walking in silt deposited on the edges of the roadside canals, and she literally used to pull me out of it. I never succeeded in cajoling her to try it, soft silk like soil.

We used to talk, about teachers, about childhood, future, theories of science, rockets, space and my *journey endless*. I wasn’t any writer, but when she used to be upset was I realized how the words lent themselves easily into strings forming chorus or rhymes, and that too with a left hand (Your left is my right).

Those fifteen minutes ascent, or maybe five, that I am not too sure of, were pure delight. Her father was a strict man, and I was really apprehensive of what he thought of me. I thought that he would never trust his daughter with any stranger. Oh yes, it did matter to me, what he thought of me, though I never asked. For me, his attitude towards me was impenetrable. And I easily believed the worse. It was her mother who later told me that she talks of me on the dinner table too often. I wanted to go hoola hooping round the square or jump from a height when I came to know of this. He trusts me, as she says.

It was one of those fine mornings, when her mood was grave. With a stern look on her face and a resolve in her eyes had she asked me, *“If I asked you a question today, would you put your heart in and answer me truly?”*. Though a little curious about what could be troubling her, I tried to assure her in the nonchalance of our walk that I would. She tried to reconfirm my answer and my faith in it. I turned towards her and just nodded. She signaled me to bend a little so that she could put her mouth near my ear and asked, in a very hushed tone:

*“Bhaiya, Ye melody itni chocolaty kyun hai?”*

*(Brother, Why is melody so chocolaty?)*

And burst out in a heartful laughter. I covered my eyes and joined in. An era came to pass, we’re still the same.