25-Apr-12

Last night was a difficult one. I first noted the time 0630 in the morning, but I was not awake until 0745 or something. Around 0700 I had started to hear noises coming from downstairs, it was like I was hearing to Shruti, Srishti, Anu and maybe other cousins. I knew people were told to show up as early as 0600, which was why I had tried not to fall into deep sleep again the first time I was awake. I needed to get enough sleep, I needed to make sure I am alright when I get back to studying; I needed enough rest to not let anything get on my mind. I didn’t want to meet or see anyone in the first place. Just as the sun was coming up, the noises had started to come even from the school building on the opposite side of the street outside the balcony. They were singing prayers on loud voices, the tables of 2, 3, etc, and repeating poems and prayers in both English and Hindi, and maybe even Sanskrit, after the voice of the teacher. There was a lot happening in the school, I can’t even tell that here.

Sham BABU/Ram BABU-carpenter-caretaker came up to wake me. He asks me a couple of things like ‘I should have taken something to spread over the bed and not slept in dust’, ‘he asked me if wanted had to use toilet’, ‘he wishes that I go for walk with him just around here to the park nearby’. I told him ‘I was fine sleeping last night’, ‘I hadn’t eaten since last night so there was no point I was going to use toilet’, and with the thought of seeing the park I quickly said ‘yes’ to the walk. I saw the walk as an opportunity to get away from the place for a little while. I hadn’t brushed, my face and hair were perfect to tell that I had been just-out-of-bed, and before stepping down the stairs, Ram-BABU blew dust off of my back and hair.

We had passed the nursery-government-school ‘NAGAR NIGAM NURSERY SCHOOL’. It is the school where I did my nursery. We had reached near the park. There were shops and food-stalls opening up. I wished if I could wash my face a little bit, carpenter took me to the nearest food-stall and I washed me face. He then offered me to have a plate of chhole-bhature (2-pieces). I had said ‘no’ but he had pushed and even I was hungry so I ate, it wasn’t really logical for me have eaten from his money, or to even deny eating. I ate at my own pace, Ram-BABU set up a plate for himself as well, but he really didn’t finish and put off the plate with food unfinished. I was giving off R20 for the food, but the owner didn’t take from me and took from Ram-BABU. It was R20. I didn’t mind too much for that, I rather thought I was letting him treat me. We walk forth to the tea-shop in other street. Now I was offered tea. I was watching people play badminton in the circular-central park from where I was sitting with Ram-BABU on the tea-shop. There was news spread in the streets of two children missing from the government school, both were of about ten years old. They had gone to school yesterday but hadn’t returned home. It didn’t catch too much of my attention, I was rather finding it little funny inside. I didn’t mind too much for tea, though I had said that I don’t really drink tea. After this, he took me some steps back to the park and on our way we meet two people and also shows me place where he would come over to work. The two people were just the locals who knew this man. They heard about Babbu having passed and shared their experience of death, like how the local had served his father for four years, he had mental problem of amnesia, would ask for cigarette after food, and would ask for food again and again and then empty bowels in the bed.

It was only woods pieces, boards, broken furniture, and wooden clutter in the corner outside the park, next to the road-side arrangement of the barber. Ram-BABU said he comes here for work. To me, it looked like nothing, I almost thought I was being lied to; I never tried to think about it, I still don’t know if that indeed was the work-place of a carpenter.

We sit for about a minute in the park and then we head out of the park from the other side, I had known this side of the park in my memories. Ram-BABU reminds me of what he had said last night, and also the thing that caught my attention was that one hand of Sadhna is broken and she can’t make too much use of it lifting weights, that was why she needed help in taking care of Babbu all the time. Sadhna had once fractured her right hand. This put me in even more tension as of the moment.

We get back to home. We hadn’t been met anyone when we had left, I think we were only seen for some seconds when I had passed the open door of Babbu-Sadhna’s room from the street. It was crowded when I had seen inside for the moment. I see my phone and there were two missed calls from Manju buaji just two minutes before at 0815. I was stopped by Hem uncle on the entrance and inside Manju buaji was looking here; she looked at me with large questioning eyes when I cross her to enter the gallery.

I went upstairs and I see fat-dick there on the lower terrace between the two rooms. I head to Manju buaji’s old room, which was where I had memories. So, all were here except for Ghost.

* Shruti, Anu, Srishti would sometimes come around in the room to just see it and what is there that might evoke some memories from the back of their minds. They would love to take things up, look at them, try to recognize them, pull up some old memories, then show it the next person, rejoice old memories. Then pick another one, give the previous thing in the hand of the other person, forget about it, and then the other person will either put it off just like anywhere, or pass it on to the next the person, ultimately there will be disorderliness and chaos in the things.
* That is not the end yet, they might even take away a few small things which they might find worth using even now, what-the-hell.
* Fat-dick never came into the room when I was there. Ankur hadn’t said a word yet, Shruti never anyways says any. Though they were able to get busy with fat-dick, or with Srishti. I couldn’t have given it attention. I was on bed getting more rest and space than anyone else alive around here in the whole house.
* Ram-BABU had spread a blanket on the bed in the morning when he had come up; it became a thing of both pride and comfort by the time when everybody was here. I was seeing people roam here and there. Seeing me lying on the bed must be give them jealousy, I hoped playfully somewhere inside of me.
* I hadn’t opened any cupboard, or even touched anything around. I had in mind that I should not lose myself up to reproducing memories which may mean more or less nothing as of today or tomorrow. I didn’t want to hurt myself in anyway.
* These people, especially Anu, had opened and touched everything up by now. I was free and there were books, books, and dust in the cupboards around. I was free and so just saw what Anu had thrown on the bed out from the cupboard above. These were some novels. I picked them up, from the cover they all looked worth reading for the moment, but then I was not in the mood to read any novel that might not make me anything, other than creating suspense for fun-part to which I might not even reach in this little time and chaos.
* Then I found a book on Russian revolution for bringing socialists to power. It was based on “Lenin”.
* There wasn’t much change in attitude of anybody, maybe there was never supposed to be any change in the attitude, because these foolish people don’t know how to act in different situation while still being true to the selves. When fat-dick had asked something about cremation to Ankur, it did evoke a negative-feeling but it wasn’t logically right of me, I had to get myself off and out to and for myself alone.
* The noise and lively building of the school outside of the balcony was really a big lifter in this environment. The color of the building was light green as that of new leaves of a plant. That is actually not even a color to put on a building, but it is alright here.
* I was just busy in reading the book on “Lenin” and lying in the bed with everyone standing and roaming around. It made me feel real special. When I was not doing anything I was not worth attention of anybody, and with the book in hand and attention into it set me even higher than these faggot asses hovering around here in search of something. Ankur and Anu had come around to see what was so interesting that I was reading.
* Before getting busy with Lenin, I had gone down after giving missed call to Manju buaji. I told her that I have to go; it is my exam on Monday. She retracted, ‘are you mad’, she told me to wait until the Ghost comes and the cremation-process of the body is over.
* At some point of time, there came call that Ghost had come and that now was the time for me to go down. I hadn’t gone down on that first call. I waited for a second one. I went down and the first room open to the gallery was filled with women. The second room where body lay was filled with men around the body lying in the center and they were dressing the body for cremation. I stood on the door, almost like blocking the view of those behind. I didn’t move a step forth or backwards. Anu was coming on and off next to me to see the proceeding. She was seeing those men cleaning the naked body. She would come on and break into tears, would take a step back and I was hearing amma and buaji saying to her to shut her up. I had not much to show.
* We take the body on the wooden carriage- of the form of stretcher. Amma had broken down when we had taken the body out of the door, she had come outside the door on the street, and throw hands on her chest. I had given shoulder from the middle and not in the first place, the first place was being switched by people. I was first only for a second in the beginning; I was otherwise second at all times. The process of cremation happened in the way it happens for cloth-restraining-Jains.
* It was near the end of the process, when I was here amid these people where people could have sat. The two sons of sister of amma, who had been of help during the lifetime of Babbu, Hem and one other relative were there. They were pointing to ASHU, I looked and coming in the view was Ghost. ASHU is a giant, heavy weight, dark complexion; everything is huge about him, at 6-feet and about 3 to 4 inches in the full body height. Ghost was looking at me, what the hell, I got a feeling that I was sitting with the opposition by his looks. This was the first time that we had shared a glance. I get up and sit behind babaji’s back without letting him know. The crematory was on my right in this position, and I was not looking to it, I was looking down. I knew that if I would match eyes with anyone, I might let out a laugh by seeing their funny faces. It was a right thing that I look down and stay to myself.
* When we had reached the street, amma was standing there and crying, surrounding by the other women, looking in the direction of the street.
* I was upstairs. I come down and then babaji calls me to him in the room of Babbu-Sadhna. I told him that I would now go to Mayur Vihar, badi buaji refused, I spoke to myself ‘I need to finish the files’, I told babaji that it is exam time for me. Manju buaji knew what I was saying, she was saying in my support. Babaji said he will take me with him tomorrow, I question with sarcasm ‘why, is it exam time for you too’. Amma came up quick, ‘see how he speaks’, and Ghost spoke, ‘he should go’. I didn’t know what that was for; he was not required to speak. It was a deal done against badi buaji’s wishes, fufaji was going to go to leave sometime now and those who wanted to go were to get along. It was fat-dick and me.
* *I heard fat-whore talking on phone to somebody from her family, and she was saying that Babbu was 52 years old. This is how I learn his age for the first time since yesterday.*

As there was no proper place where I could have found a place to sit in the crowded downstairs, I went upstairs again. Fat-dick calls my name up, it was a strange thing. Next minute, driver, fat-dick and I were heading for somewhere I didn’t know yet. I thought it was our car. No, it was Salil fufaji’s car. We drop the woman from the crowd back there, whom fufaji had agreed to offer the lift, after half-an-hour of travelling. Fat-dick was falling on me during the last half-an-hour of travelling. We reached society after about over two hours. Again, QUDRAPOP had come out to be great-holy-avail. As a matter of fact, I had even scored the high-score for first place crossing a mark of 50K for the first time.

At home, I was busy in thinking about how the time had passed. I was not in a condition to take up the books and just forget everything and start studying. Anushka and Prachi were to come here after 1400, which is when the school timing gets over. Fufaji had gone home to refresh, he was going to come back here and maybe take Prachi and Anushka to Tri Nagar. He came here and he took Anushka, Prachi, Srishti, and Fat-dick for lunch outside, Srishti had come to ask me as well but I was seriously busy with writing about the day.

It was extremely tiring to write continuously about a day when every second is supposed to matter. It was mentally-tiring; I went out in the evening to just enjoy in the park. I played cricket, and then Anushka (little cousin) came outside. I was with her to take her to the swings. The women with their little kids were seeing me with confused, questioning and surprised eyes.

I wasn’t expecting Mahima to be down today. Esha had called her and Ishi for badminton. I went over to just say ‘hi’ and then I complimented Mahima for her new hair-cut, which I had first noticed yesterday. I was just welcome here, Ishi doesn’t mind, and Mahima had been nice. They were playing with a whack shuttle-cock so I asked them if they would want to play doubles, I would bring two more rackets. They said ‘yes’ to it, and I appeared again in a minute only to find that Esha had left already. Ishi also went in a little while, when her mother came over to call her. Ishi is really sweet and can’t deny her mother of anything. Mahima would taunt her for taking so much tension, and being so nearly dead. I was telling her to push her mother to give her five more minutes when she would come to call. Ishi did, but then she couldn’t have done when her mother repeated her say.

I was playing with Mahima and her sister, and then Agrima came over. This girl was telling intelligent jokes. It was fun. Mahima and her sister had to leave early today around 1930; their mother had come down to call them for the party they were going to go today.

Though it wasn’t even worth paying attention to the Ghost when it had said ‘he should go, let him’ for me before badi buaji, Manju buaji and babaji. It wasn’t the first time that something so trivial had stuck in my head. Yesterday, when I had gone to get my file checked to Preety Dhaka, she had let me in and asked me to show the file. She should have herself moved the things from the table, instead of making noises and woos, when I had mistakenly let down the empty plastic container of her coke.

In the evening, Rekha buaji had called and Srishti had picked up. Srishti had told that Rekha buaji was going to call when I was alone at home and they had gone out with fufaji. I pull off the telephone wire during that time. Even now, I tell Srishti to tell that I am not at home and have gone out to play. Srishti told her that I was asleep, and then came to tell me that buaji must be angry now. It is not the first time that I put down a phone. Some days back I had put down Amogh’s call while playing with Mahima. It had got Amogh really angry and he even showed his anger in name to Hardik, and all the mutual friends.

I had given my shoulder in carrying the cradle of Babbu in the morning. My shoulder was now showing pain, and some sign of swelling up if I don’t take of it. I put pain-reliever cream and go to bed.

-OK