***FATE (Tentative Title)***

A young boy in the checks shirt and blue jeans with the sports shoes on with the college bag in his back standing outside the house near the entrance gate waiting for his friend to come. He was fiddling with his smartphone probably busy with the social media. His name is Raghav a good looking teenager with the long and silky hair shining in the mild sunlight, it was around 12:45 PM and the tuition time was sharp at 1’o clock. He was getting a bit irritated as his friend Krunal was taking a long time but was trying to get chilled out anyway.

A moment after Krunal tucked in black jeans and funky t-shirt comes out of the house hurriedly making innocent face when he saw Raghav’s red face. Raghav could not control his irritation says ‘Always late you asshole.’

‘sorry, sorry chal let’s go!!’ replies krunal.

They now head out in gearless bike of raghav for the tuition. While riding the bike raghav looking at the watch and sees it was already past one now he was mad at krunal again ‘It is already 1’o clock. Now?’.

‘chuck it. Let’s go watch a movie. My treat.’ Says krunal.

Raghav knew krunal would suggests something like this. He was ready for anything whenever there was krunal with him. Raghav smiles and rides towards the multiplex. Even though they used to bunk a lot they were good in studies and would cover whatever they miss in the tuitions by studying together.

Raghav stops just a little far away from the multiplex and turns his face towards krunal ‘we still have a one joint left right?’

‘yup.’

‘Let’s light it up and then go.’ Replies raghav.

Krunal steps down from the bike and takes out the joint from his bag, raghav hands him the lighter and krunal then lights it up. Even though it was a silent road and no one could be seen raghav was making sure by looking at every direction. Krunal takes a puff inhaling all the smoke and holds it in his chest, meanwhile hands the joint over to raghav and krunal exhales the smoke and smirking a bit.

Raghav does the same and they keep taking turns and hand it over to each other until the joint burns completely. They are done now and heads over at the multiplex and enjoy the film.

What they were smoking was a marijuana. It was normal for the boys at this age to be excited and wondering how would it feel like having to smoke so days ago just for satisfying their fantasy they would gathers up a courage approaches the shop and buys the cigarette and try it on. As usual coughing it up lot for a first time like every other teenager boy.

As the days would go by they had become a good in smoking but they were in control. It was just for fun and they would have it occasionally but one day while smoking, a man tries to have conversation and suggests them to try something new. The man befriends them slowly and gives them a joint of marijuana and all three would smoke together. Both of them got high and their head started spinning, everything seemed slow and would laugh it off at everything. Since then they had chucked the cigarettes and they rather chose to get high and feel good over few puffs of weed that they would buy it from that man who had introduced them to it. The man was a dealer and would target mostly the boys of this age to make them try and sell them stuff. So since then they would smoke whenever they bunk or head out for a movie. All was fun and they were not in habit of it. They would enjoy it and still would not talk about it with other boys and keep it to themselves as their little secret.

Now that the show had gotten over they leave for the house. Raghav drops krunal at his home and heads to his house as they were already late.

All goes on smoothly, the tuition, school, hangouts and once in a long time the thought would start crawling up in their head of burning a joint. One day after the school in the parking lot they decide to do it usually and they will head out to buy it from the man they usually get it, the same man who introduced them to how to actually get chilled out with a small finger sized joint.

Afternoon time and after the tuition they head out to the shop where they usually smoke and a man would be available there. In a couple of minutes, they reach there and sees the man sitting there smoking.

Raghav steps down and goes straight towards the man, krunal joins him after parking the bike.

Man upon seeing them coming ‘Welcome my friends, how is the joint treating you lately?? Pretty good I’d say huh?’

‘yeah, that’s why we are here to get it again.’ Says raghav. Raghav checks out his pockets to get the money. Krunal does the same. The man interrupts them there ‘wait wait, hold your horses….’

‘what happen?’ inquires raghav.

‘my friend the humans have been to the moon and you are still satisfied with the joint?’ says man.

‘What are you saying?’ asks krunal.

‘Try something advanced. Get to the next level I say.’ Replies the man.

‘what is that?’

‘stuff that takes you to heaven. Tablets, powder.’

‘look man just give us what we are here to get and we are happy. Come on now quick.’

‘How do we take it?? I mean the powder.’ krunal was saying but then suddenly the man interrupts him.

‘come on now don’t be naïve. You watch the films and all. I don’t have to explain it to you.’ Says the man.

‘sure cool.’ He then gets out a little bag stuffed with the green grass and along with gives them another tiny packet.

‘What is in it? Look we don’t have money for that’ says raghav.

‘it’s on me. Have it. Experience the heaven right at your feet.’

Krunal takes out the packet and opens it, he sees two small pills and in micro packet white powder. Both gets nervous seeing it.

‘Don’t be tensed. Ease up and have your time. It’s on me go ahead.’

Raghav then hands over the money for the weed and they leave from there. Surely the man had given them the stuff for free even though it was expensive but he knew that they would come again. After all who does not after trying it out? And he was smiling all the way thinking he had added up new names to his customer list.

On the other side both of them were nervous about packet which had pills. They did not speak a single word until they reached at krunal’s house. They headed straight up to krunal’s room and sitting on bed thinking hard and suddenly then raghav speaks.

‘Why are we so nervous about it? Ok we are but only way not to do that is try it out, don’t you think?’ says raghav.

‘I don’t think we should do it. We should be happy with smoking this one up and that’s it.’

‘Okay. Who is saying we’ll keep taking it. He gave it to us for free right? Why should we just throw it away. Let’s try it out.’

Krunal did not know what to say so he just nodded and decided to take it up. So raghav first takes out the pills. Gives one to krunal and both wait for each other, a kind of curious smile on their faces and raghav motions him to go ahead and they gulp it down to their stomach. They wait for 2 minutes and raghav indicates taking the powder, krunal was not sure so he refused but he did not want to keep it with him so rather decided to finish it up. Anyway the quantity was very much less, probably you could do one hit in it that’s all.

Raghav takes put out the powder on the table, takes out the 100 rupee note and rolls it down just like seen in films. Gets the atm card too and sets the powder in straight line and separates it into two stripes. Raghav picks out the note and gestures krunal to go ahead and do it but krunal refuses and asks him instead to do it.

Raghav now bends down near the table puts the one end of note near his nose and the other near one of the stripes and snorts it hard. As soon as he does, it hits his mind really quick and starts rubbing his nose but was good and then he hands out the note to krunal. He follows just what raghav had done and snorts it.

First the pill and now the powder and slowly they had started feeling something in their body. They knew it is coming, coming for sure. They feel good, great actually about what was happening to them. Everything became slow, their mind started getting bit numb and they were feeling relaxed. As the time passed by the drug was getting effective more in their body.

Both of them started experiencing the hallucinations, of course differently based on how their mind would react to it. Raghav was sitting on a bed and was not moving at all and was still as if he was unable to move, he could not feel his legs and he was having such a heavenly feeling, started seeing the abstract structures on the wall with different vivid neon colors and everything else was dark, he could only see those structures, they kept changing the way he was thinking. Mountains, sky, flying birds all in different colors and sometimes shapeless blocks just moving here and there like a screensaver would when the computer is in idle mode. He was sweating heavily and was staring at the wall straight without even flinching once and was smiling all the way. He was feeling great, he never felt like this before.

The cigarettes that they smoked, the alcohol and even the weed were nothing in front of what he was feeling right now.

Krunal on the other side was lying on the bed after his body started reacting to the drugs. He was constantly staring at the ceiling fan and was getting drawn towards it, the way it was spinning, his mind also kept drawn with the speed. As the drugs started affecting more the body reacted more, He was now feeling as if his body was being pulled hard deep into the surface below him, the fan spinning on the roof was going far and far and body felt like it is travelling downstairs with much speed and feeling jittery all around his body.

If any normal person would have seen them in this state, in the room where none of them were uttering a single word, one was just staring at the wall and other at ceiling, that person would have gotten worried seeing all this as it looked so creepy and weird. One thing was good that other family members of krunal were out. Both of them were still in the same condition lost in their own imaginary world, oblivious to the reality. It would at least take couple of hours for their body to come in the normal condition.

Sure it was their little try out for one time but it was in their hands how they will take it ahead, it seemed however impossible that they would stop it considering how they had felt about it. hours passed by they both came to their senses and they were completely normal but they felt great. They were smiling and for a minute they exchanged their experience, since it had been a long time raghav decided to leave for his house. While leaving they had also promised each other that it was just for one time but they had a great time indeed.

After the day ended, they went ahead and spent the days like the other boys would do, they went to school and have a chitchat after it, go home have lunch, get out and head to tuition, play football. But not everything went like every other day, there was one thing which was strange and that was their mind. They were not able to concentrate properly what they were doing, while playing football also they stayed distracted and others had to tell them not to ruin their game too, both of them were thinking about the day they tried the stuff out and how it made them feel. In a sense they were craving for it and yearning to just go and get it right away, but both of them were reluctant to express their feeling to each other, may be to escape from the thought of being the first to admit about it, but here they were could not able to just keep it in their thoughts and raghav just blurted it out and krunal right there agreed with him.

It was as if like both of them were expecting any one of them to get it out and they would go and do it but another situation was the money that they did not have as the drugs they were talking about was expensive, no wonder they are called rich people’s way of escapism, but this little money was not a problem either, raghav suggested they had the tuition money, they could use it now and later put the tuition fee out of their pocket money when they would get it. They agreed and rushed to the usual spot where they meet their drugs guy.

There they did not even bother to smoke too all they needed was the stuff from the man, but he had nothing at that moment saying he could not keep stuff like that all the time as it was illegal, he defended himself by saying ‘Of course, it would get my ass to jail if it gets find out.’ Though he suggested coming with him to his room and he would get them what they needed immediately. So now they were heading to his room.

Couple of minutes passes by and they reached there, man asks what they would like to have and they suggested the same stuff that they had got the last time. Man agreed and told them the amount, he mentioned about the money as was not sure they would get it as it was bit more expensive and also considering they were school kids. But they bought it and the man was happy so he once again stopped them and asked them to try the other stuff out but as usual he would not charge for them. They asked what was it and man explained about the drug they he would prepare and later he would inject in their veins, it was clear now that he was talking about injecting heroin but the boys were not much aware of it and they agreed on giving it a shot.

Right then man got all the stuff on the floor and preparing it right in front of them. Everything was laid out there, the spoon, powder, the injection and belt and lighter and another bottle of liquid which without a doubt was banned from being sold at regular medical stores. So now the man takes the white drug and put it into the spoon and pours the liquid and would start the lighter put it below the spoon and flames it and does it until it boils and now he takes the injection put a needle in the spoon and pulls the liquid and gets It into the injection.

Man asks them who would like to try it out first. They both were nervous and afraid, it all looked to them very scary and made them feel like criminal of sorts but could not stop themselves and raghav decided to try it out first, so the man grabs the arm, straps the belt near his most visible vein and taps multiple times on vein to get the blood circulation quickly and would pierces the needle in his arm, raghav feels it and closes his eyes, man pushes a little bit of liquid in to the vein and pulls a little bit up again which brings blood too and injects everything into the veins. Just a matter of seconds and raghav felt instantly and he feels it going and circulating in his body quickly. He would instantly at that moment falls down and gets lost in his own self. One thing was clear it was one of the strongest drug that he had taken and kick was so strong that no other drug was even closer to it and also to the kick that he had got from this one. He was having the hallucinations and was succumbed in it and was smiling a bit, indication how fucking great he was feeling.

Seeing that krunal felt a little lighter and the it was his turn now and the man prepares another hit for him and the same thing had happened to him, he was also lost in his own imagination. Now the man was making another hit for himself and he too was in the same state that other two were in. one hit and then another, then another who knows how many more like this they were going to take but one thing was clear it will not be enough for them. Until now they were the master of their own minds and decisions but not everything will be the same and they will be enslaved to their minds.

They had bunked the tuitions and had come to the sman’s room so there was no problem as they had got couple of hours, of course it was a heavy hit and they will not get out of it mere within an hour as it was also their first time too. So after living in their dream world of hallucinations they were in their senses now, both of them still somehow in their own mind space but they were conscious enough to leave for their house. They see the man had also injected and the hit and it was so strong and quick that even the needle was still in his vein along with the belt strapped to his arm. He was still not conscious, both of them decided it was better to leave as they were getting late.

Evening time and both of them at their own houses thinking about the same thing, about the time they were in their mind trip. They were slowly getting addicted to it, they were craving for it. Next day they were silent and even if they were talking they did not talk about the drugs but after the school raghav confessed he wanted to go and have it again as he was in awe of it and how he had felt about it, krunal agreed as he was in a same state so without any delay they went and again had the stuff injected. Now it had started and they were doing it every day. Taking out the money from their tuition fee and they were not even going to tuition anyway, no chance they would go, they were in short of money to pay the fee there.

The man was happy that he had got his regular customer now in form of raghav and krunal but their continuous drug consumption was ruining them slowly even though they were feeling great. Since it had been a long time, it was now not just about fun and how they felt but it was now their habit and if they would not get it, their body yearns for it and without it they feel worse. When one does not get drug after regularly taking the body craves for it and all the withdrawal symptoms starts showing up such as worse migraines, body pains, mood swings, irritation and worst of them were nightmarish hallucinations. They were now in that stage and slave of their own habit. They had no money left but still they went to him for the hit.

They reach there and sees two fellas were drugged and lying on the floor.

‘We need it badly, but we do not have the money.’ Says raghav to the man.

As soon as raghav mentioned about no money, the man’s face changed and he refused giving the drug ‘no money, no drug. Sorry.’

‘come on, you had given us the hit for free when you were urging us to do it. We are broke now, we’ll get the money for the next time sure.’ Replies krunal.

‘sorry can’t help you.’ Refuses the man.

Both of them were angry but they could not do anything as he was the only one who could arrange it for them. Suddenly raghav realizes he had his phone, he shows it to him and asks if he is good then he could get the phone in place of the drug. The man initially rejects that too but later after checking out the phone he accepts and gets them the hit, both of them head home after it. This time they somehow did it but will not be able to do it for every hit they would want. They were worried but they needed the drug too.

Raghav drops krunal at home, there krunal stops him for a while.

Krunal about to cry, with teary eyes ‘what have we become raghav? This was all just for fun. Look at us. We look pathetic. This habit is ruining us.’

Raghav had nothing to say and becomes sad.

‘we are unable to play with concentration, we are not going to tuition, cannot even talk properly without drugs.’ Continues krunal. ‘we need to stop this. We will not do it.’

‘I agree. We will not do it. Promise.’ Emotional raghav says and he leaves.

They knew they were in trouble but it was not easy for them to get away with it so easily. Next day school went ok and during the tuition time they were simply sitting in a park in corner and did not speak anything about it. Both of them were trying to control themselves. They were changed. Their faces were pale and were completely tired. They were not at all interested in doing anything, they were looking dull and feeling worse but they were still trying to control. They depart as their tuition time finishes. They were at their worst at home, krunal had a severe headache and sweating heavily and do not even eat and was in the bed only. Raghav too was in a same state, he was craving badly for drugs. He could not sleep and just kept lying down in bed and was shivering badly. Somehow makes it until the morning then raghav had changed his mind he would go straight and get a hit but he needed money. He takes out the money from his father’s purse without anyone seeing. He picks up krunal and tell him that he could not handle it and heading straight to the man’s room. Krunal joins him too with promising themselves to take this last hit and they were set for sure. Even if they had got the drugs in their veins they were not at all feeling good, they were just now taking it for their body, they were feeling shame for themselves for what they had become. They would just get a hit and go home and sleep, this was the only thing they do.

Now they were trying to just arrange the money and inject themselves, that is what they all were doing, but now it was impossible for them to arrange the money as they had spent all the tuition money, their pocket money on it and they had started stealing the money from their parents too but they could not do it every day. Krunal stole the mobile phone of his father and with raghav went to the market sold it, while in the shop when shopkeeper was busy raghav had secretly stole another mobile phone from there and went away. Slowly they started stealing stuff and whatever money they arrange would give it to the man for just one hit.

Stealing was getting normal, they started stealing every day, they would get anything they find, while riding the bike on road other rider on bike were talking on their phone, they would snatch it and run away, in school they would steal of their friends. Watches, ipods etc. etc. They were still not caught though.

One day in afternoon, both of them are standing near the street, no people around, silent atmosphere, raghav was aggressive, he wanted to do drugs and was constantly looking at road and not speaking at all, krunal was standing with him smoking, he too was in the same mood as was raghav, right at that moment he sees one boy approach the same road and was walking, he looked elder to them probably by two years around and from the looks looked like belonging from well settled family. Krunal taps mildly on the left shoulder of raghav and shows him the boy approaching towards the direction they were standing. Raghav then starts walking towards him and krunal throws the cigarette and crushing it with his leg follows raghav.

The boy sees two of them coming opposite of him but he does not feel any strange or any danger so casually walks on, As they all passes each other krunal from behind grabs the boy and pushes him hardly and before the boy could fall , he again grabs him and drags him near the building in the corner side, raghav during all this quickly looks around all the direction and makes sure no one was around for a moment and after getting assured he goes near two of them, krunal hits in his stomach hard and the boy falls down on the floor. Krunal insisted the boy to not get up as he was not liking doing it, raghav goes for the purse and opens it, handful of money was kept in it, he takes it and scans other pockets in a hope of getting something but krunal urges him to run away before anyone could see.

The boy grabs the leg of raghav when they were about to run, both krunal and raghav delivers few punches and kicks and the boy gives in now and they run away straight to the man for the drug. Things had gotten too much now for them and they were increasingly stealing a lot with their growing addiction. But not every day they would get away from all of this stealing, one day was to come when all of this would turns against them.

After few days, just like every time they had gone out for stealing and decided to steal from someone who was coming out from the jewelry shop and they tried to snatch the bags away, krunal successfully got his hands on the bag and ran and krunal too immediately started running but the guard was running behind them, now both of them running and ended up on the street and kept running and some of smaller parts of jewelry was also falling on the road and along with the guard running behind them, other people also joined. While running a person sees from far what was happening and he suddenly came and grabbed both of them but after aggressive juggling raghav somehow was able to get away from his grip and he ran but krunal was caught.

Raghav was running hard and kept running until he had left behind them. He now stops running but panting heavily. While walking he checks out the bag and sees what is in it, keeps walking while doing it, he passes by a shop and there the boy sees him, the same boy who was robbed by the two of them a few days ago, this time he was not alone and was with several other friends, seeing raghav passing by there, he quickly recognizes him and calls out his friends, tells them about raghav was one of them and they all run behind him. Raghav unaware about this but while walking he looks behind and sees the boys were running after him, he again starts running. Keeps running, the boys where behind him. Raghav then takes quick right turn towards the street and he disappears, the boys still running behind, they disappear too following him and they all were gone.

Who knows what might have happened, whether he was caught or not, if he got caught had they beaten him severely and turned him over to the police? Same for the krunal, does the crowd had mercilessly beaten him up or just handed them to police?

What would their family members will do when they would come to know about their kids being drug addict and thief? Will they support them and be with them in their difficult times? Or thinking about what society would say or how their reputation will be affected they would just leave them in jail thinking about what kind of criminal they had become?

Will the parents support them and help them come out of their dreadful situation?

Who knows? But one thing was certain, their life was ruined yes, but not that completely ruined that they would not get back to their normal life again, it would take time yes, there will be difficult time but they will come out of it eventually if their parents will be with them.

At the end one thing that remains somehow true is that, people with drug addiction are often perceived as a criminal and they are discarded. But no, not everyone is the criminal, there are people who are victim of these and not just petty criminal, they can still be taken out from all of it and can be encouraged to lead a normal life.

The same would happen with two of these friends. It is up to the consciousness of the people, their parents how their ahead of life will turn out.

Meanwhile at the shop the man was sitting and smoking and nearby three young boys were smoking with excitement.

The man calls them out ‘Would you all like to try something else new or happy with just cigarette?’

All of the boys gets nervous and looking at each other.

Man sitting there patiently looking at them waiting for their answer.

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