**Madness of love?**

By – Celestial Assault

While having lunch at the mess, I noticed a girl whose body language conveyed peace of mind. Her presence was enough to make me want to stay in that crowded place longer. It was a blessing to be able to see her with my own eyes. Days passed quickly, but I still hadn't had a chance to talk to her. Even from a distance, I was completely smitten. She wasn't the most beautiful girl I had ever seen, and she didn't have any extraordinary clothes. But her eyes were like pure crystal water to me, with no impurities or doubts. After a few weeks of exchanging greetings and work-related conversations, I worked up the courage to ask her out on a walk. I was hoping she would say yes, but I was also afraid of what would happen if she said no. I didn't want our workspace to become toxic if she rejected me. Despite my uncertainty, I asked her out anyway. As expected, she declined, saying she had some academic work to do and might not be able to go tomorrow. This was a common excuse people used to avoid going out. I was disappointed and felt down in the afternoon. I was supposed to join our research group for a meeting, but I skipped it because I didn't feel well. I told our guide that I wasn't feeling well and wouldn't be able to attend the meeting. In the evening, she texted me, "Hey, what happened? Are you feeling, okay?" I was shocked. If she didn't like me, why was she showing interest in me and asking about my well-being?

I told her that I was fine, just having a fever. She then asked me about my temperature and other things. I politely answered all of her questions. After about five minutes, she said, "Sorry, I was busy that day with some work. If you want, we can go for a walk tomorrow or the day after". I was so excited that I didn't think twice. I said, "Sure, just let me know when you are free." She replied, "Cool, then let's meet tomorrow at 9 PM at the clock tower". I was very happy and eager to finally get a chance to walk with her. The time came and we met at 9 PM at the clock tower. From there, we started talking and walking towards the faculty quarters. I was praying to God to please stop the time. I wanted to stay with her forever. But no one can stop or slow down time. So after three hours of walking, we were returning to the hostel. I said, "I like spending time with you." Then there was a weird awkward silence for two minutes. Then we reached her hostel and I said goodbye. She said goodbye politely. In the back of my mind, I was thinking that I had messed up the situation badly. And it might be my last walk with her. After getting home, I texted her, "Sorry for making things weird at the end. I didn't mean to". She replied to me the next morning, "No problem. I also like spending time with you". Then I did the dumbest thing of my life by asking her again for a walk. She ignored me and replied after five hours, "Not today. I have some academic work and stuff". I calmly replied, "Okay, cool. Just let me know when you want to go."

For a few weeks, we only met during academic meetings with our guide. Then, she fell ill and told me she was suffering from weakness and other diseases as a result. After learning about her situation, I tried to help her by regularly asking about her food and health. Sometimes, when the food was not good, I ordered food for her and cut fruits for her during the day. After two or three weeks, she was completely healthy again. A few days later, she asked me if I was free to go for a walk. I calmly responded (while hiding my inner emotions), "Sure, why not? Let's meet near Hostel B1." After ten minutes, we met and started walking towards the AIDS building. We mostly talked about her health, academics, the weather, and other random things. Suddenly, she said, "The moon looks so beautiful." Without thinking, I said, "Yeah, it looks gorgeous," while looking up at the sky. I noticed that it was a new moon, so I wondered why she had mentioned it. Then I remembered that "the moon looks beautiful" is a phrase that can be used to say "I love you". As we continued walking, I said, "The moon really looks beautiful today," while looking into her eyes. After I said this, we both smiled and there was a twinkle in our eyes. It was as if we were both lost in that moment until someone rang a bicycle bell on the road. Then we both came back to our senses. I directly asked her, "Am I thinking correctly about what you said about the moon, or am I thinking something different?" She calmly responded, "What are you thinking?". I grabbed her hands and said, "In the presence of the moon and in the presence of the light of sun, you have confessed to me that you love me, and I have also confessed that I even love you more. These two are the witnesses of our love". I pulled her towards me and kissed her on the lips. Then I hugged her calmly. This feeling could not be expressed in any number of words. This feeling was just showing in our eyes. I then grabbed her hand and locked our fingers together as we started walking again. I asked her if we could go to the Jodhpur Club instead of going back to our hostels. She agreed, and we started walking towards the club. We went up to the roof by the stairs. From there, I showed her the stars and the small mountains in the complete darkness with very little polluted air in the environment. We both sat down on the wall, still holding hands, and calmly enjoyed the view. After a while, she put her head on my shoulder. I kissed her on the head and then started patting her head. After sitting there for two hours, we returned to our respective hostels.

Everything was going perfectly fine between us. We both loved to express ourselves in front of each other. Slowly, day by day, the little barriers between us started to vanish. After a few days, we were completely open with each other. We could say anything in front of each other about anyone, and we never shared these things with anyone else. We would mostly meet in the moonlight when we both had some free time from our academic lives and our social circles. We would normally consider this as our "me time." We would express ourselves, share how our days were, what we were thinking, what we wished to do, and other things. Sometimes we would dance a little bit, and she would sing sometimes. Sometimes we would both sit quietly and enjoy the sky. This was the only time it seemed like we were merging our souls with our bodies. Then we would make out and enjoy every moment we spent together.

We planned a trip to Udaipur for four days, just the two of us. We were fully prepared for the trip. While travelling, I suggested we play a game in which we had to say something about ourselves and the other person had to guess whether it was true or false. I proposed this game to get to know each other better and to love each other in the way we wanted. Nobody knew about this trip because we both had lied to our family and friends. While playing this game, we both enjoyed and explored more about each other. At first, we learned about each other’s past life, interests, and what we loved or hated about each other. We guessed most of the answers correctly. Then suddenly she said, “I am on my period” and I replied false, with a reason that I knew her dates and they were 10 days away. Then we both laughed and then I said I would love to make out on a train. She said false and then I laughed and said she was wrong. Just after saying this, she kissed me and pulled me into her embrace. It was night time so most of the people were sleeping and we were on the top berth. So, the probability of having any uncertain event was quite low. Then while making out, I did something unexpected and she got turned on and she started to squeeze my body with her hands and legs. Then I opened her hands and said no, control yourself, while laughing. After this, she slapped me and we both laughed and then suddenly she said she was not expecting that I would have these kinds of kinks. I said nor was I expecting you would be this much aggressive. Then we both laughed and enjoyed ourselves and then I went back to my seat. After two hours, we reached our destination and then took a cab and reached our hotel which was previously booked.

For four days, we explored the city of Udaipur and ourselves. We lived like a normal couple, cooking food, doing laundry, and practicing for our future lives. We enjoyed all the quality time we spent together and learned different things that make us angry or happy in our daily routines.

Nobody knew anything about us until we arrived in the same cab on campus. Then our friends asked and we told them that we had gone on a trip. Later, after some days, we met under the moonlight with no artificial light around. There she confessed that she would love to marry me. I felt the same for her. We had many differences in our cultures, but we were dedicated to each other and willing to do anything for each other. Time went on and we got more and more attracted to each other. One day, we were talking about our families and their cultures, and I sensed that she was not very close to her family. Then I asked her “why” and she said that she did not get love and affection from her family. Then I consoled her and did not ask her any more questions about it because she had started crying. Then I promised myself that I would never talk about her family ever again.

Our college life was about to end and we both got jobs in the same city, but in different companies. After staying together for about a year, we decided to get married and convinced our parents. Her parents agreed easily, but convincing my parents was a little hard. After some arguments, our parents finally consented and we got married in Pune itself. During this time, I could sense that her love and emotions for me were growing day by day. I felt so overwhelmed. She made it clear that I was her world, her day started and ended with me. She was cutting off all the connections from the outside world and just focusing on me. When she got pregnant, she quit her job and devoted herself to me and our baby. Whenever I visited some of my family or friends, or someone came to visit us, she seemed unhappy. I asked her many times what the problem was, whether she didn’t like them or had some other issue. She always said there was no problem. She never told me what was really bothering her. As her due date approached, my mother came to help us and I also took leave from work to take care of her. I noticed that her behaviour was changing. She got angry whenever my mom came near me or fed me.

Finally, the day came when we were in the hospital. She was in the ward and we were all praying to God for a healthy child. But this time, God did not listen to us. Our baby got stuck in her nerves. The doctor said they could only save one of them. I was shocked and unable to respond. My mom spoke for me and said to save her. The doctor saved her and my mom broke the news to her after she woke up from sleep. She told her that our child was dead and explained the whole situation. She said that I had agreed to save her. As time passed, I could sense that there was tension between my mom and my wife. I had no idea why. I asked them both many times, but my mom didn’t know anything. Then one day, she tried to attack my mom. Luckily, I was there and stopped her. I sent my mom back to her hometown and talked to my wife about it. She said that my mom was the one who killed our child and that she was trying to take away all my loved ones from me. I was also not in a calm state at that time because she had attacked my mom. In anger, I slapped her. Later, I tried to talk to her, but she didn’t respond. At night, she tried to kill me with a knife and stabbed me in the hand. She kept saying that nobody loved me, that my mom had taken my wife and child away from me. She said she couldn’t save our child, but she would kill me. She said that nobody would love me or be loved by me again. I tried to calm her down, but she wouldn’t listen. I called the ambulance and locked her in the room. I went to the hospital to get bandaged for my wound. The next morning, I brought her breakfast, but she tried to stab me with a knife again. Then I made a tough decision and called an ambulance. I took her to the hospital where the doctor said her mental state was not good. He said she had to stay in a mental hospital for a few days. I tried to bring her back home and convince the doctor to let me treat her at home. But after seeing her condition, the doctor said no. He said he couldn’t allow it. I agreed with the doctor and sent her to the hospital. She was furious that I agreed to send her. She said that my mom had brainwashed me and that I didn’t love her anymore. After a few days, I got news from the hospital that she had committed suicide by banging her head on the wall. She bled to death. When I heard this news, I was shattered and went into a coma for a while. After that, I performed all the rituals for her and then I killed myself by drowning in the sea. Nobody was knowing about this event. I have to do this because I promised herself that I will join her at any stage and at any place in this entire endless cycle of born and death