



# Chakli

A story written in my eyes.

Harsh Dabhi

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This story, these words, and these emotions belong to me.  
Every resemblance to real people is a coincidence or destiny.

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# Chapter - 1

## (Happy Ending?)

People say the first chapter of a book should always be an introduction.

You're supposed to tell the reader who you are, where you come from, what inspired you to write this book... all that formal stuff.

But when I think about it, I wonder-  
why should I introduce myself at all?

The only person who will ever read this already knows me more than anyone else ever has.

You already know who I am, where I live, what I'm good at, what I fail at, what scares me, what keeps me awake at night.

You know my poems, my habits, my silence, my way of hiding everything behind a small smile.

You know the version of me I don't show to the world.

So what's the point of pretending I'm writing for strangers?

There are no strangers here.

Just me... and you.

And maybe that's exactly why this book exists.

Not to impress anyone, not to become something big, not to sit on some shelf with a fancy bar code.

But simply because I needed a place to collect all the things I never said out loud.

The thoughts I scribbled on random pages, the poems I wrote at 2 AM, the stories that came from a feeling I couldn't explain.

A place to keep the things that were meant for you.

So no, I won't start with an introduction.

Because you already know everything that matters.

Instead, I'll start from the middle of everything-from the exact point where I felt the need to write this.

From the moment my words stopped being just poems... and started turning into a story.

And maybe in the end, this book will make sense.  
Or maybe it won't.  
But at least it will be honest.  
And that's enough for me to begin.

From here onward, I think I'll write this book in a mix of languages -  
Hindi, English, Gujarati...  
jaise mann bole waise likhunga.  
Because some memories don't come in one language.  
Some feelings want to speak in two-three tongues at the same  
time.

Toh chalo, me tumhe ek kissa sunata hoon.  
Pata nahi pehle sunaya hai ya nahi, shayad nahi.  
But this memory still sits somewhere inside me, bilkul wahi jahan  
pe choti-choti baatein dard ban jaati hain.

Yeh kissa mera bachpan ka hai...

Us din bhi me har baar ki tarah school gaya tha.  
Gate cross kiya, class ke raste se jaa raha tha, aur maine dekha  
log ek dusre ko friendship belt pehna rahe the.  
Tab yaad aaya,  
"Haan... aaj friendship day hai."

Mere mann me ek chhoti si umeed jagi -  
shayad koi mujhe bhi friendship belt pehnaayega.  
Thoda happy, thoda excited sa feel ho raha tha.

Par koi nahi aaya.

Bas do log aaye... woh bhi mujhe chidhane.  
Woh mere paas aa kar bole,  
"Dekh, mujhe toh mere dostone friendship belt diya hai...  
tere paas nahi hai kya? Eeye."

Mere aankhon me paani aa hi gaya hota...  
Ki tabhi mera dost aaya.  
Usne mujhe ek friendship belt di.

Mere paas bhi uss time thode bahot paise hote the.  
Toh mene bhi wapas jaake uske liye ek friendship belt kharidi aur  
usse pehna di.  
Uss moment me, me genuinely khush tha.  
Lagta tha, “Haan, koi toh hai.”

Fir me un dono ke paas gaya aur bola,  
“Dekh, mujhe bhi mere dost ne pehnaya hai.”

Us incident ke baad woh mera pakka dost ban gaya.  
School bhi agar woh jayega tabhi mai jaunga, warna nahi.  
Class me hum ek hi bench pe baithe hote.  
Roj ki masti, roj ki shararat...  
dosti din ba-din gehri hoti gayi.

Hamare aur bhi dost bane, friend circle bada hota gaya,  
par phir bhi hum dono ka bond sabse alag tha.  
Main padhai me thoda aage tha,  
surname same, roll number saath-saath.  
Exam me main usse help kar deta.  
Humari dosti school me mashoor thi—  
teachers tak example dete the:  
“Dekho, yeh dono ki dosti!”

Aur itni masti karte the ki teachers hame saath nahi baithne dete  
the.  
Par hum phir bhi kuch na kuch trick se saath hi baith jaate.

Uske ghar aana-jaana lag gaya.  
Use kuch samajhna hota toh main hi padhata.  
Uske parents mujhe dusra beta treat karte the.  
Aur woh iss baat ka full fayda uthata tha.

Kabhi-kabhi mere ghar ka bahana deke ghoomne chala jata.  
Baad me daant mujhe padti:  
“Tu kya dekh raha tha jab ye bahar ghoom raha tha?”

Haan, fights bhi hoti thi.  
Nayi book pe pen ka nishaan,  
badle me woh meri book pe aur bada nishaan...  
aur fir full WWE.  
Main emotional tha har fight ke baad ro deta.  
Par ek cheez kabhi nahi badli  
agar koi teesra hum dono me se kisi se pange leta,

toh hum dono milkar uski bajate the.  
Unity level max 100.

8th ke baad hum separate classes me chale gaye.  
10th me ek badi fight hui,  
9-10 din baat nahi ki.  
Woh toh dosti khatam karne hi wala tha,  
par maine hi beech me padkar dosti sambhali.

11th-12th theek chale.  
Phir uske marks kam aaye.  
Woh aur mere do dost Canada plan karne lage.  
Mujhe ghar ki financial condition pata thi,  
toh main IIT ki tayari me lag gaya.

12th ke baad milna kam ho gaya.  
Par hum raat 9-9:30 ke beech uske ghar ke bahar milte.  
Baatein, masti...  
pure purani vibe.

Ek din me thaka hua ghar aaya.  
Socha thodi der Instagram scroll kar leta hoon, mind fresh ho  
jayega.

Stories dekh raha tha...  
Aur tab maine ussi dost ki story dekhi.  
Usne hamare friend circle ki photos dalli thi,  
aur likha tha "Happy Friendship Day."  
Sabko mention bhi kiya tha.

Me apni photo dhundne laga.  
Zoom karke dekha...  
Par kahin nahi thi.  
Mention bhi nahi.

Pehle toh maine socha,  
"Chalo, shayad photo nahi hogi uske paas."  
Par phir bhi mann me sawal uthne lage —  
"Kyu nahi mention kiya?"  
"Bhool gaya hoga?"  
"Ya me hi uski yaad me nahi aata?"

Bahot sochne ke baad laga puch hi leta hoon.  
Toh mene usse call lagaya.  
"Bhai, mene teri story dekhi...  
Tune sabko mention kiya.  
Mujhe bhool gaya kya?"

Woh hasta hua bola,  
"Arre yaar, tu toh bhai hai mera.  
Tujhe aaj thodi mention karta.  
Tujhe toh Brothers Day pe mention karuga..."

Bas, woh simple si baat, woh chhed-chhad, woh assurance - sab kuch hi perfect tha.  
Kahin dard nahi, sirf woh school-time ki masti aur woh pyaara sa 'hum-bhai' feeling.  
Aur mujhe laga - yahi dosti hai: thode jokes, thode tags, aur ek promise jo hamesha hasi me nibha liya jayega.

Tum logon ne expect kiya tha ki woh aisa kuch bolega?  
Shayad tumhe laga hoga - because even I wanted the story to end like that.

Aur writer hone ka yahi toh fayda hota hai:  
jab mann chahe, apni story ki ending badal do...  
thoda sa dard kam kar do...  
thoda sa khushiyan badha do.

Lekin sach bataun?

Aisa kuch bhi nahi hua tha uss din.  
Na maine usse call kiya,  
na usne kabhi mujhe bataya.  
Aur mujhe aaj tak nahi pata ki usne mujhe mention kyu nahi kiya.

Bas tab samajh aaya -  
Zindagi ki har kahani writer-friendly nahi hoti.  
Kuch endings hum chah kar bhi nahi likh paate.  
Kuch endings hum bas *expect* karte reh jaate.

Aur yeh bhi ek aisi hi kahani thi....



# Chapter - 2

(Maybe beginning.)

Ek Japanese phrase hai -

恋の予感 (**Koi no Yokan**)

iska english me koi exact meaning nahi hai  
Par agar thoda samjhaane ki koshish karun,  
toh iska matlab hota hai -

the premonition of love  
matlab a feeling of first meeting with someone  
with whom you will inevitably fall in love with.

matlab kisi ek insaan ko milkar  
ek ehsaas hona  
ki iss insaan ke saath shayad mujhe pyaar ho jayega,  
hua nahi hai  
ho jayega

it's not love at first sight  
ki dekha aur pyaar ho gaya,  
par ek intuition hain,  
ek sense hain,  
ki ho sakta hai ho jayega  
sayad kal,  
sayad parso

but deep down  
you know  
that you will fall in love with this person someday....

Aur sach bataun,  
mujhe tumse milne ke baad  
bilkul aisa hi laga tha.

Isliye shayad main tumse bachne laga.  
Bina kisi wajah ke roast karna,  
academics ke doubts ko bhi mazaak me uda dena,  
har possible tarika use karna  
taakki main tumse thoda aur door reh sakun.

Jaise agar door raha,  
toh shayad kuchh hoga hi nahi.

Par shayad Kanha ne  
mere liye kuchh aur hi soch rakha tha  
maybe a character arc or something else.

Aur **Koi no Yokan** ka sabse funny part yeh hota hai -  
tum jitna bhaagte ho,  
utna hi woh tumhara raasta ban jaata hai.

You know 12th ke exam ke baad mujhe laga  
chalo, ab toh na tuition jana hai,  
na tumse baat hogi.

Mujhe laga yahin par sab khatam ho jaayega.

Par result day tumhara call aaya.

Main literally freeze ho gaya.  
Why!? Why!? She is calling me...

Ek side exam ke result ki tension,  
aur ek side dil ka achanak se tez dhadakna.  
Result ka mujhe waise bhi andaza tha  
fail toh nahi hi hounge...  
aur hua bhi nahi.

Par uss din tumse baat hui.  
Aur phir uske baad,  
agle din bhi.  
Phir uske agle din bhi.

Dheere dheere roj-roj baatein hone lagi.

Usi waqt, pata nahi kaise,  
main JEE Advance bhi clear kar gaya.  
Who knows how?

Par main buddhu tha na.

Mere documents English mein na hone ki wajah se  
mera admission IITs ya NITs mein nahi ho paaya.

Waise toh 12th ka result bhi achha tha,  
koi bhi private ya government college mil jaata.

Par mujhe apne sheher se door jaana tha.  
Mujhe Gujarat ke baahar jaana tha.

Bhaiya ke support ke baad  
maine uss saal education se drop lene ka decision liya,  
aur Advance ki taiyari ke liye  
Ahmedabad chala gaya.

Wahin masi ke ghar rehna shuru kiya-  
jo dheere dheere mera doosra ghar ban gaya.

Par ghar toh ghar hota hai na.

Roz ghar ki yaad satati thi.  
Aur jaise Zakir Khan kehte hain na-  
tum chahe padhai ke liye,  
job ke liye,  
ya sirf apni zindagi banane ke liye  
ghar se door chale jao,

ghar se juda hona  
kapde ko zor se kheench ke alag karne jaisa hota hai,  
jisme dhaga toot jaata hai,  
par uske reshe reh jaate hain.

Waise hi ghar se door hone ke baad,  
uske nishaan  
andar kahin reh jaate hain...  
hamesha ke liye.

Par uss waqt  
tum mere saath thi.

Roz call,  
roz text,  
roz baatein.

Jab bhi ghar ki yaad aati,  
tumse baat ho jaati thi.

Aur shayad tumhari wajah se hi  
Ahmedabad bhi dheere dheere  
mujhe apna sa lagne laga.

Hmm...  
shayad thoda zyada emotional ho gaya.

Par tumhe shayari pasand thi na.  
Mujhe bhi-  
par pehle mujhe likhna utna nahi aata tha.

Jab se tum life me aayi,  
baaton hi baaton me  
maine tumhe apni likhi hui ek poem suna di.

Tumhe wo achhi lagi.  
Tumhari tareef ke baad  
mujhe aur likhne ka mann hua.

So Thank you,  
mujhe ek aur hobby dene ke liye.

# **Chapter - 3**

( US )

Iss chapter ki suruaat kaha se karu kuchh samaj nahi aa raha