



THE GROUP CHAT

by AI



Kavya lay in bed late at night, scrolling through her phone. Her group chat overflowed with updates: "GOT THE JOB!! 🎉", "Engaged!! 🎉", "Just landed in Paris 🎉." As she read them, her chest tightened. We all graduated together, she thought. Everyone's moving ahead. I'm stuck. Maybe I'm not doing enough.



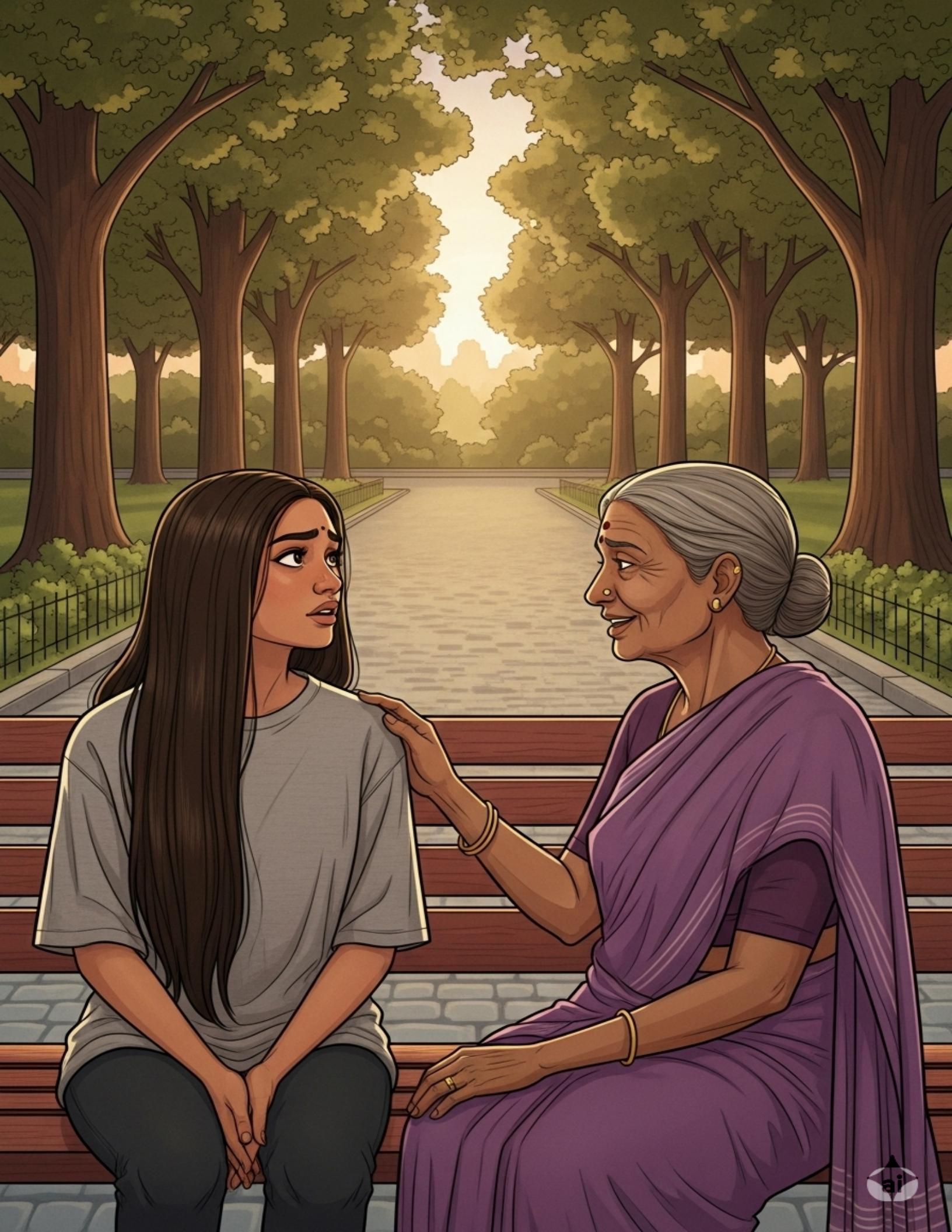
Her thoughts drifted back to graduation three years earlier. She remembered standing with her friends in their gowns, laughing as they threw their caps high into the air. They had hugged tightly, believing life would unfold beautifully for all of them. Everything had felt bright and possible.



Now, sitting alone with her phone, Kavya typed: "Finished a small freelance project today :)" She stared at the message, hesitated, and deleted it. It's too small compared to everyone else's achievements, she thought. Why mention it at all?



The next evening, Kavya sat on a bench in the park, lost in thought. An elderly aunty who knew her stopped. "Kavya beta, what are you doing these days?" she asked kindly. Kavya forced a small smile. "Still freelancing, aunty... still figuring things out." Inside, though, she felt heavy: Everyone else seems to have their life sorted. Why don't I?



The aunty gave her a gentle smile and said,
“Beta, jo log pohonch gaye hain, woh bhi
kabhi raaste mein they. Aur raasta chalna
bhi toh zindagi hai.” Those who’ve arrived
were also once on the road. And walking the
road is also life. Something inside Kavya
softened. The words felt grounding – like
permission to breathe.



Kavya looked around. Some people ran quickly, others walked slowly, some paused to rest. Everyone moved at their own pace. She realized: No two journeys look the same.

No two speeds are meant to match.



Un jour je pourrai faire ce que
tu as toujours voulu faire
peut-être à l'avenir lorsque je
aurai assez d'argent

Si tu veux que je te dise,
je suis très intéressé par ce que
tu fais

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That night, Kavya opened her group chat again. This time she typed honestly: “Still figuring things out. But I think I’m okay with that.” Her friends replied with warmth: , “Honestly, same,” and “You got this.” As she read their messages, she smiled. She no longer felt behind – she felt like she was walking her own road, in her own time.