A Girl Who Saved My Life

This story is dedicated to a girl, who changed my life, who made me to get addict to the Novels and

who awaken the writer inside me.

Dear Readers, You would enjoy this Novel when you read this as the only Novel you are reading in your life. And if you read this as one of the Novels then it may leads to the disappointment because of the comparison you are making with other Novels.

**PROLOGUE**

This is a story of a girl who belongs to North India and a boy who lives in South India. This is an outcome of an incident which connects both of them like a bridge over a river. A Story which ended where it had started. A story which shows that the life is beyond the limit of our thinking and everyone must expect that unexpected things may happen in everyone’s life. This story makes them believe more, who believes in the destiny and for them it is just a co incident those who do not. And a perfect example to prove a little kindness can save someone’s life…

**Chapter 1**

Manipal Hospitals, Goa

As soon as we entered the hospital, a couple of doctors along with the ward boys took him to do the further treatment as it was an emergency case. A nurse came towards me with a pad and few papers in her hand. She stood beside of me and instructed me to complete the admit procedure. I nodded and fallowed her as she directed me to the reception area. After walking few steps, she shown a lady wearing a light blue peacock color sari who was sitting in the reception desk through her index finger and she left to carry on with her work.

I started heading towards the reception desk by counting my each steps in nervousness and it seemed like revolving around a temple to fulfill the vow. After reaching, I slightly leaned on the semicircular wooden table by resting my both hands on it. The call duration made me to come over my nervousness in which the receptionist was busy in giving an appointment to the patient. In the mean while I took a quick glance on the things which were present in front of my sight. I was trying to figure out the name written on the name plate which she had attached to her saree with a safety pin, two inch below on the right side of her shoulder.

Hi, my name is Teena Martin, how can I help you? The receptionist said in a fraction of seconds as it was her daily routine to introduce herself and to offer a service to each and everyone those who reach the desk.

Hello ma’am, I am here with a patient in an emergency condition and need to fill the admit form. I said to her in a bit low voice.

She handed me an admit form in response and said, fill all the below fields and submit it back by signing above on the Attendant’s signature.

I said okay and turned back to move towards the lounge area. Two minutes of conversation made, more than ten people to stand in a queue and it was not a surprise in such a big multispecialty hospital.

I sat on one of the 3 seater stain less steel coach which one can easily able to see in the bus stand, railway station and many more public places. I kept the form on the small table where couple of popular newspapers like The Times of India, The Hindu, and The Indian Express along with few magazines were already lying on it.

I started thinking worriedly on looking at the admit form not because of neither I did have a pen nor I didn’t know how to fill it. It was because of the thing that I didn’t know anything about him.

The task of filling an admit form seemed completely illogical to me like how it would be if someone take a surprise test on a subject which I have not studied in throughout of my life.

An old woman in her mid-fifties came and sat next to me. I sat looking towards her by slightly tilting my neck to face her. She put her left hand inside her blouse and took out a Samsung keypad mobile. Initially she hesitated a bit and said “suno beti, kya tum mere liye ek number lagake do gi?” She requested by handing that mobile to me. I thought she might get offend if I address her calling by grandmother as it is a woman tendency to hide age and not to look old. Then I choose to play a safer side and said “Ji Maaji”, in response. I asked her to whom should I call.? To my son, he’s gone to bring medicines a long time ago and I came here in search of him as my daughter in law is going through labor pain in one of the labor’s room in 2nd floor. She said in one stretch. I said okay and asked her for the number. She said, it is there on backside of the mobile. I turned back the mobile. I saw a number was written on a small chit, which was visible through the transparent back cover. I took two attempts to enter the mobile number manually in an old keypad mobile as it was out of trend to use these kind of mobiles in a modern generation. After five to six rings, a person received the call and I handed back the mobile to her quickly. She slowly stood up and moved away from her seat saying, “beta kaha chale gaye ho…..”

‘I don’t know whether it’s bad or good habit to keep the things like money, debit cards, credit cards, metro pass, driving license etc. behind our mobile back covers instead of keeping in a fancy and luxurious vanity bag’ I thought. Then an idea flashed in my mind to check his mobile too so that I could get a lead to proceed with the filling of an admit form.

I took his mobile out from my left side of jogger’s pocket. I long pressed on the power button as it was in the switched off condition. An android logo flashed on the screen along with powered by Android line below of it. And then a low battery pop up alerted in red color and again mobile became switched off. Instead of thinking about the mobile condition, I turned back the mobile. It was a hard coated mobile case and nothing was visible unlike a transparent mobile case. So I separated mobile and its cover and luckily I got a five hundred rupee note in folded condition along with an ID card. I sighed holding the ID card in my hand as I got few necessary information about him. Then I said to myself ‘its good habit to keep the things behind the mobile cover’.

I saw a man, dressed in a neatly ironed plain brown color shirt along with bell bottom trouser, seemed like a retired college professor who thought discipline in his entire professional life, sitting in front of me and noticed a pen in his shirt’s patch pocket. I stood up from my seat and headed towards him. ‘Sir, can I borrow your pen for a while? I asked him.

He gave me his pen along with a puzzled look as if someone asked him his kidney. I transferred the data manually from ID card to admit form with all the mandatory fields indicated by \* symbol and signed above the Attendant’s signature.

‘Thank you Sir’, I said and returned his pen.

He nodded in response.

I had to stand in a short queue as there only two men and one woman were standing in front of me. After 5 minutes of wait, my turn came.

“Ma’am, here is the signed form”, I said.

She hold that in her left hand and took a quick glance over it. She noted few things in a thick long A4 size book, looked like a Registration book.

Then she pressed few buttons on her desktop’s keyboard and finally punched “Reported” on the form which I submitted a while ago.

A sensation of small vibration made me to take out my mobile from my pocket. I only saw a text message notification through my lock screen as the content was hidden. I unlocked my mobile just looking at the sensors which took my facial authentication. I clicked on the notification to go through in detail. A message was from an auto sender subjected as “AX-MNPGOA” and I started reading it. “Thank you for choosing one of the world best health care treatment service provider. Below are the few details of patient….”

She interrupted my attention towards mobile and said “I have sent a text message to the number which is mentioned in the Attendant’s mobile number field of admit form. The message would be having patient’s details along with patient’s ID through which you can get all the test reports, medicine details, billing information concerned to the patient now and any time in future.”

‘From where will I get all these information’, I asked with blank mind.

‘Go straight, then take right, there you will get enquiry desk’, She said without raising her head.

‘Am I in a Hospital or SBI Bank?’ I thought for a while and left the place.

Before reaching the enquiry desk I supposed to visit one more place, ‘Restroom’. I needed to empty my bladder. As it was filled, my lower abdomen was looking like I was 3 months pregnant. ‘According to me one can control laugh in funny moments or even one can hide tears in sad moments but not this in any of the situation. I was amazed with the cleanness of the hospital until I enter the restroom. As soon as I opened the door of restroom, typical phenyl smell changed my perspective towards the cleanness. Because nothing was different between this and other ordinary hospital’s restroom maintenance. “I’d suggest them to use any fragrant fluid other than phenyl or to use some kind of air fresheners if they would ask me my feedback.” I thought. I made my bladder empty and washed my face as quickly as possible. Then dried my face and hands with tissue and came out of the room. As her instructions, I went straight and took a right turn. I saw a digital board consist of more than hundreds of small led bulbs, few of them were on and off condition to represent “Enquiry” over a cubical which was partially covered by thick transparent glass along with a small peep hole. I bent my back bone to match with the height of the peep hole so that my voice could reach Medical Administrative Assistant. ‘Excuse me ma’am, I am looking for patient name called Ans...’ before I could complete my sentence, she interrupted me and asked ‘Patient Id’. I took out my mobile and opened recent text message and read out the patient id, ‘MP1726’. She took couple of seconds to search for the details on her desktop. ‘Patient name is Anshu Kundaragi, Emergency Case, Admitted at 8:20 AM on 21st July 2023. Treatment is going on in 2nd floor, Emergency ward, room number 209.’ She informed me. ‘Okay, Thank you.’ I said in response. I was curious about the way of service providing by these kind of reputed private hospitals after getting the detailed information. Because few minutes ago itself they took him to do further treatment, later I filled the admit form and submitted in reception desk and after I did enquiry about him at enquiry desk. There were no direct connection between all these as far as I could see. ‘That’s why people prefer private hospitals. I got scared as I thought about the way of treating the people and the treatment provide by the Govt. Hospitals. Then I entered the elevator which was located in few meters away from the Enquiry desk. I pressed ‘2’ among the 1-4, G, B1 buttons.

I stepped out from the elevator and I had a view of around 10 to 12 rooms in a sequential manner which reminded me of old movies scene, inside a jail with cells adjacent to each other. As I rushed towards emergency ward, I saw at least one to two people were standing in front of each rooms, few people were sitting on the coach with either in tense, nervous or with scared expressions on their faces. I saw set of wards, most of them were General wards, OT’s, ICU Wards, Obstetric wards and LDR’s.

I applied brake on my legs when I saw the ward no. 209 along with “Emergency” written on a blue color rectangular board which was fixed on the door with the help of two drilled screws. I could have entered if it was General ward. I went close enough to look inside. A small see-through portion, ‘was similar to a window, through which one can take a sky view sitting inside an airplane’ made my work easy to check out the things inside of an emergency ward.

A fully electric 5-Function bed on which he was lying along with a ventilator on his left side. A tube connected between machine and oxygen mask which was covering his nose and mouth to help him breath comfortably. On the other side few electric meters were kept in which readings were fluctuating continuously. I could only figure out the ECG machine which was displaying his pulse rate in the form of sine wave. I was tilting my neck towards left and right to check out the activities going inside. As it was difficult for me to keep a constant look on him because of the doctors and nurse who were moving around him to treat.

A sudden pulling of door from the inside made me to take a step back in reflex. Even my presence made doctor to skip his breath for a second as I was standing close enough to the door. The scene was similar to the horror movie scene in which one could get scared of ghost soon after opening the door. After couple of seconds, we were standing few meters away from the emergency ward and facing each other. He understood that I was belonged to the patient through my keenness to know about him and my presence in-front of the ward.

‘Have you admitted the patient?’. As per formality and to confirm, he asked me.

Yes, Doctor. I said.

‘Are you his?’. He cut the sentence in mid with a question mark on his face before assuming or judging any kind of relation with him.

*My mind became blank for a moment when he asked me that. As I was nothing to him than a stranger at that instant. Then I thought for a generic and safe relation which would not going to cultivate any doubt in doctor’s mind.*

I gulped my saliva and said “Friend”. I am his friend. I answered him.

‘Okay. Ms.?’. Again he fired a question on me, without knowing how to address me.

*It was obvious for him to address me before interacting further. Where as it was okay for me to call him Doctor itself. There are few professions in which one can call them with their profession instead of taking their name.*

‘Nayana Mathur’. You can call me Nayana. I gave a quick response.

Okay Ms.Nayana, the patient is out of critical condition but he has not in his conscious state, I mean he is still unconscious. Doctor said.

Doctor’s verdict had put me in a confused state of mind. Like, when one could try to understand when some one say ‘congrats, you have cleared all the subjects but you are not eligible for next year’ on a result’s day.

He continued saying, ‘We have to keep him under observation until he gets conscious. Once his condition becomes stable, we will shift him to general ward.’

How much time will it take him to become conscious? I asked.

‘Ahh, that we can not surely say. In general, some may get consciousness in few minutes, some in few hours. Whereas few had taken in terms of days, weeks and few were not for their rest of the life.’ he said in a dejected tone.

*His response was like fuel to the fire which raised my scariness than decreasing it.*

Then I gathered all my courage and asked the doctor about the thing which was running in mind and about the thing which he did not bother to tell me before I could ask ‘what happened to him?’.

‘Well, As per the blood reports it contained Hemotoxin and Neurotoxin in it. The effects of these venom could vary depending on the potency of the venom and the individual's reaction to it. And the symptoms stages ranging from swelling and severe pain around the area of sting, sweating, increased heartbeat rate, sensation of vomiting, breathlessness or even death in extreme cases because of failure of nervous system or major organs failure like heart, brain, liver, kidney depending on the species of Arachnids and the amount of venom injected’, He answered and took a deep breathe.

I instantly regretted for asking that question to him after listening to the long explanation given by him. I thought like he was an extraordinary student one who would write an answer for a question more than it required. Probably that was a second hard time for me to process and understand the scenario which was going on. And obviously for the first time when I was watching the Hollywood movie called “Inception”. I couldn’t differentiate the limit of dumbness through my level of understanding or the limit of cleverness through the level of his explanation. And surely there was a communication gap between both of us. To reduce this gap, I asked him again “What was the actual cause for this condition which has been made him to go through this.?” I re-framed my question.

He took a deep breathe again and replied irritatingly ‘He got stung by a harmful scorpion or spider. I can say this evidently based on the black mark and swelling on the dorsal side of his left hand”.

‘Ohh, Okay, Thanks for the information’. I said along with the fake convinced expression on my face.

‘Its okay. Its my duty’. He shrugged his shoulders.

Further he said a sentence which was indeed in that situation and where I was little bit convinced actually.‘Luckily you admitted him in, in time. Otherwise his condition would be worse than the current one. Don’t worry he will be fine soon’.

He was about to move and I called him again, ‘Doctor…’.

Yeah…?

‘How can I reach you, if I’d need any updates on his condition.?’ I asked.

He replied and left the place on immediate basis without allowing me to drag the conversation further. ‘I will be there in my cabin in the ground floor, you can ask to any of the staff in this hospital about DR.Josef and they will help you out to reach me if required and where as about prescription and reports, I hope you know from where you could get them’.

Then I sat on a near by coach, resting my chin over my hands and putting my upper body weight on my knees through the elbows. And started rolling my eyes in the movement of a pendulum with a blank mind without having a thought about what to do next. I glanced toward either side of mine. To my Right, the same old lady for whom I dialed a number was sitting in-front of a labour ward along with his son. Where as the other side of me, a middle aged couple in which the man was comforting his wife by gently tapping his hands on her thighs, in-front of an OT. I could able to hear even the smallest whispers of theirs because of the deadly silence which had been filled in the entire floor. ‘One can control the physical actions going around but not the virtual things running in the mind.’ I thought and involved myself in doing nonsense things in my lazy time such like:checking on the amount of air going inside through each nostril, whether they’re contributing equally or not by closing the nostril through thumb of each hands one after the other, to find out the doodle nostril if so.

Opening of OT’s door made my senses aware of this world from the world in which I was travelling on the clouds of dreams without giving a damn about the reality. A doctor came out in surgical scrubs along with half of his face covered by a surgical mask. As soon as the old couple saw him, they got up from their seats and reached him hurriedly. Doctor lowered his mask to convey his words so that it could reach them properly. ‘Sorry….I hope you were aware of the patient’s condition in which he was admitted. Because of the massive impact on the head, caused internal bleeding in brain. We did our best to save the patient but unfortunately..we couldn’t save. You please complete the formality and take the body for further rituals.’ Doctor said. Whereas the other side, a lady Doctor came and announced, ‘Congratulations!!. You’re blessed with a baby boy. And I must say that there were few complications as it was natural delivery. She gone through so much of pain. But now, both mother and baby are fine and doing good.’

A word ‘SORRY’ had so much power in it which shook the earth beneath of those parents. A word which was responsible for the flood of tears running through those parents eyes. Whereas A word ‘CONGRATS’ had so much power in it which made that fathers feet stable which were continuously moving here and there. A word which cheered him for which he was waiting desperately to hear that. A Mother had sorrow tears in her eyes because of his son stopped breathing and A Mother had happy tears in her eyes because of his son started breathing. There were no limits and no words to explain those feelings through which individual mothers were going through.

All the hopes, dreams of the parents shattered in a fraction of seconds who had lost their son. No one would ever guess what they had hoped from their son in their last moment of lives without ever imagining about the harsh reality that one day their son could leave this world behind him before them like that day. Whereas the other side the Father started day dreaming about his son’s future. He started listing the things in his mind which he couldn’t do in his life. He started imagining all the dreams would come true through his son. The Mother was throwing all the pain out of her heart because of loosing her son in terms of screams and tears. Whereas the Father, who was consoling his wife because of the trauma she was going through was as calm as the volcano which can be seen so silent from the outside but no one would ever know what are all things going inside of it, the amount of fire it suppressed under the layer of silence.

A Mothers Love towards her child is as high as The Mount Everest or may be higher than that too. Which one can see it with bare eyes. But A Fathers Love towards his child is as deep as The ocean. Which no one can understand without deep diving in it.

I Thought according to me ‘There are only two words in terms of Doctor’s perspective to differentiate between the living person and dead person are, Patient and Body’.

How difficult it was for him to say sorry and declares end of someone’s life. And how easy it was for her to say congrats and celebrate start of someone’s life.

If someone asks me to tell, what LIFE IS? in one sentence, Then I would answer for that, ‘*WHICH STARTS WITH A CONGRATS AND ENDS WITH A SORRY’.*

‘Why woman has to go through so much of things? Why Woman has to go through so much of pain from her birth to till the time she gives birth to another one? And is that over at this point? No, why woman has to go through all of this till the time she closes her eyes forever? Why? Why?….May be because of she is little bit Weak.? or because of she is little bit Strong compared to Man.’.

These all things, thoughts, questions and answers were running in my mind till the time the old couple started leaving the place where they got broke down. They left the place by throwing a signed copy of declaration of death given by the Doctor, in disgust.

After a minute the same paper was in my hand. I read it out loud. Only things which made me to remember about the person who lost his life because of the accident were his marital status which was marked as single and his DOB. He was barely a few years older than me. After that I thought whether he was lucky or wasn’t he? Because he couldn’t go through the pain and pleasure of life after marriage.

Finally I was witnessing the Lord Krishna’s words which I read in “Bhagavad Gita” said, “The soul passes from one body to another in the cycle of rebirth. The soul, being immortal, remains unaffected by the physical manifestations of life, such as birth, growth, decay, and death.” That was clearly evident based on the scenario which occurred in front of my eyes just a while ago.

The mother had already left but her face which was filled with sadness was still flashing in my mind. And that made me to travel a couple of years ago, actually a long time ago where the same expressions were in my mother’s face. A cube of glass kept in the centre of hall surrounded by the people in which my father was draped over with the national flag. My mother, who was not in control of neither her mind nor her body and who was continuously crying by staring at my father’s face and I was sitting beside of her, holding her biceps…..

‘Excuse me Ma’am. Ma’am, excuse me…’ Someone said right in front of me.

He was a ward boy, trying to have a convo with me. ‘Yes’, I said.

‘Ms. Nayana Mathur.? He asked me.

Yes That’s me. I said.

‘Yeah Ma’am, he is in conscious now and will be shifting him into the general ward soon. You please get the visitor’s pass from the help desk’. Ward Boy briefly gave an update on him.

I simply nodded.

‘Thanks buddy, Thank you for snatching my attention from the journey of memories in which I would never wanna travel back again.’ I said it loud enough, that it could only listen to myself.

I was being restless like one would be in when something had fallen in their eyes or something had stuck in their teeth. After the ward boy’s update on him, I was feeling the same amount of relaxation as someone would feel when that small thing removed from their eyes or teeth which caused them to be in restless.

It was indeed for me to go outside the hospital premises and inhale some fresh air as I was suffocating there because of those all obvious reasons.

I was standing at the entrance arch of the Hospital, on which “manipalhospitals, LIFE’S ON” was written. I lost touch with my hunger cues, all over the time when I was inside hospital. As soon as I came outside, rats were started running inside my stomach and I started feeling off balance. I did the same thing, which the so called “Young Generation” people would do. *Now a days people interact more with either Siri or Alexa than the people present around themselves*. *And no wonder I too belonged to the same generation.* I took out my mobile from pocket and asked, “Hey Siri, Show me near by Restaurants”. And Siri came up with a list of restaurants in which I found the top two, just away from me in-terms of steps were : ‘Top View Restaurant’ and ‘Unique Restaurant and Bar’ to my Right and Left directions respectively. I was over with this Top view and other views when I was done with my Engineering and that too in Mechanical Engineering specifically. And nothing went right in that. Hence I chose to go left to find some uniqueness in ‘Unique restaurant and Bar’.

‘Paneer cheese sandwich with strawberry smoothie’, I said to waiter by pointing at menu.

‘Okay, Your order will be served in few minutes. Enjoy the ambience of our restaurant before you enjoy our food’. Waiter said and left with a pleasant smile.

There was actually uniqueness in the restaurant. A well maintained temperature, silent music was coming out from all the corners, darkness around tables except the spotlights over each individual table, foreigner’s were busy in tasting the delicious Indian food, Indian’s were busy in exploring the foreign brand liquor and many more things for one to consider the place unique. I unzipped my jacket by pulling the slider to half of its overall length *as I was not wearing anything inside jacket except sports bra* to let the air move to make my sweat body cool without worrying about the consequences of it. *Because enough amount of cleavage was visible which would make people to stare at it for certain amount of time based on their individual desire level.*

After a while, a well decorated sandwich and a glass of my favourite flavoured smoothie was in-front of me on my table in ready to have state. I grabbed it in way the hungry lion would grab a deer. I finished it in 4 bites and 2 gulps respectively. *The taste of food directly proportional to the level of appetite for food.*

‘Excuse me, Ma'am, would you like to have anything else?’. Again the same waiter asked me without eye contact as if his attention was somewhere else only.

‘No Thanks, and get me bill please’. I said along with adjusting my posture.

‘Sure Ma'am, would you like to pay in-terms of Cash/Card/UPI?’, Waiter asked.

‘UPI’, I replied.

‘Ma’am, scanner is there at counter, you can pay there itself.’ Waiter indicated towards counter.

‘Okay’. I said and took the bill from him.

I scanned the QR code through GPay, once and got Something went Wrong as response, I tried twice and thrice. Then I switched to Paytm and again it played same old cassette. *Fuck..Fuck..Fuck..* Then I tried all the fin-tech applications which were installed in my phone but none of them worked at that time. ‘*One should never rely on these apps and go out for anything where money comes into picture and there would be no such things exist where money does not play its role’ I thought.* I was so frustrated that I wish I could through my mobile in disgust but then I thought about the struggle behind buying that phone and I puked all my anger through my leg by kicking the table ahead of me as hardly as to get everyone’s attention towards me and then I instantly murmured sorry, sorry. ‘If you are facing issue with UPI, you can pay through cards, all cards are excepted here’. Counter boy suggested when he saw me with worried face. *I wouldn’t prefer to carry cards or money for morning jog. And how could I explain it to him now that how I ended up being here. ‘*You don’t look good in cleaning utensils in this restaurant’. My inner voice said to me. ‘You shut up bitch’ I said to her. *‘Oho, wait I didn’t mention anywhere that I am a introvert person and I talk more often with myself right…’* Then I thought what do I do. *‘You have 500 bucks dear, pay the bill with that money’.* My inner voice said again. I had to take her suggestion that time because I left with no choice. Then I handed the 500 Rs. Note to the counter boy and took the balance amount from him and left the place as soon as I could. I was on my way back to hospital with full stomach then a thought came across my mind about him. ‘That he might be hungry too. Because for a regular person like me, If I could be this much hungry then what about him. He almost knocked the door of Hell/Heaven. He’s gone through the near death experience. I must take something for him.’ I thought. I decided to take what most of the Indian people buy when they want to visit someone in hospital, ‘Fruits’. Then I again followed the same procedure, ‘finding fruit shop near me’. That time I was not lucky to get a near by shop for fruits. And then I started hunting here and there for small local shop which could contains any fruits by chance. The food which I consumed few minutes ago got digested but I could not get any fruit shop around the hospital area. ‘This is the speciality that one could get bar easily than the fruit shop here.’ I thought. ‘Buy Red-bull for him which would gives him wings so that he could fly from his bed…’ My inner voice said. ‘Haha, not so funny’ I gave sarcastic smile to myself. ‘Why are you taking this much load on yourself for him? Yeah, why I am taking this much load on myself just because of him? Why?’, I asked to myself for which I did not have answer for that. And I aborted the mission of buying fruits for him and decided to go back with empty hands. Then at the end of my eye sight I could able to see one coconut shop at the corner of road. ‘It would be better for him if I buy coconut water which would not take much of his energy to digest. I walked towards the shop through empty street and I bought two for him and one for me so that I could give him accompany while drinking. I paid digitally that time unlike the Unique Restaurant. I thought that too was one of the unique thing in that restaurant that ‘lack of network’. The process of buying coconut water made me more sweaty than any of my morning jogs. All the way back to hospital I had only one regret that I wish I should have bought two coconut water for me too…

A hall with series of stretchers on either sides along with a walk through passage in middle. Few of the patients were having their food, few of them drinking juice by themselves and few of them getting fed by their beloved ones and few of them were in sleep. And I was in search of him inside the ‘General ward 2’ with 3 coconut waters inside a transparent plastic bag in my hand. It was difficult to find out in one shot as all the patients were in the same unisex sky blue color gown. ‘I think, to reduce this burden only I got his bed number too through help desk along with visitor pass.’ I thought. I had gone through each stretcher by pointing through my index finger, ‘P1..P2..P3…..And here he is P6’. ‘I don’t know whether he ever got corner seat in cinema hall in his life or not but he got corner bed today in this hall, poor Guy’, said my inner voice. I had had to park those coconut waters somewhere as I was getting ache in my hands, not because they were heavy but I was carrying them from a long way. *Same like our traumas which are not heavy but we carry them intentionally or unintentionally from a long way instead of parking them at right place at right time…*

I kept them on over-bed table beside of his bed. Even that small table could not sustain the load and made a jerk sound which slightly disturbed his sleep, might be even more than that. And I sat on the chair by gradually decreasing the pace of my breathing. In one glance I did checkout on him from top to toe. Long silky hair, parting on left side, thin rounded eyebrows, a little bit long and straight nose, bow-shaped lips, early stage of beard and moustache, fair skin tone, around 6 feet height and lean body if compared to height. I was about to look at his eyes and he suddenly started rolling his eyes without opening them and in the next moment he was awake with both his eyes wide opened. He gave a mixture of expressions a person would give when someone sees a unknown person around them specially after waking up in an unknown place : ‘surprised and shocked’. Just to make him feel comfort, I kept my hand on his arm by saying, ‘Hey… relax!’. But he gave a sensation of discomfort in reflex. And I took my hands off from him. Then I said, ‘don’t be in shock, you’re in hospital and you’re safe and sound. He took few seconds and replied ‘no I am not in shock because of hospital, this is not new for me, but I’m because of you’. Then I was surprised after his stern response. Because no one would ever believe that he was a patient and undergoing through recovery, from his voice. His voice was so softer than a girl’s voice that one would address him as her if anyone hear his voice through mobile…

Then I thought to introduce myself to him in a different way and I said,

‘*Naam Nayana hey keha diya tho Number mat manga lena,*

*Delhi se hu keha diya tho dil mat manga lena…’*

And I was expecting ‘wa, wa, wa, wa, irshaad, irshaad in return’. But all I got was ‘pardon’…

‘Its a bouncer for him’, I thought. And I preferred to introduce in formal way and said firmly, ‘My name is Nayana Mathur, you can call me Nayana, and I am from Delhi. You…, You are Anshu Kundaragi, from Sankeshwar studying in Shri B. M. Kankawadi Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Belgaum-590003 college which is 50 km away from your home town, blood group is AB+’. I introduced us to us.

‘Yep, that’s right but that’s not Kankawadi, that’s Kankanwadi’, he corrected me. ‘oops, you should have pronounced it correctly’, my inner voice said to me.

‘Oho, okay my bad’, I said.

‘By the way, how do you got to know all about this?’. He questioned me.

‘One sec, I need to take this call’. I said indicating towards my mobile and went outside by crossing a nurse on my way.

After a call with duration about 10-15 minutes with my mom in which I gave updates on my whereabouts and shared what are all the things happened that morning to noon, I was back on my seat where a nurse was attending him.

*That was the only day I got a call from my mom before I do it first to her.*

He cleared his throat, before he speak and said, ‘Thanks is just a simple word and my life which you saved it today is more worthy than the word ‘thank you’ expresses’.

‘umhm, impressive one’, I said in my mind and up-skilled myself with a new way to show gratitude to someone who really deserves it.

I gave a decent smile in response.

‘By the way, how do you got to know all about this?’. That time I questioned him.

He indicated through his left eye towards nurse who was busy in going through reports and winked back to me with a Sherlock Holmes’s smile on his face.

I nodded simply.

Then he paid all his attention towards the nurse who drawn off some amount of liquid medicine from a bottle with syringe and ready to inject it into his saline bottle.

He found something suspicious and asked to nurse, ‘How much ml is that?’.

‘10ml’, nurse replied.

‘It’s a ketorolac and could you please check in the reports for the dosage prescribed by the doctor?’, he asked to nurse.

In the mean time I Googled what is ketorolac and gone through the response. And got to know that basically it’s a pain killer.

‘Oho, its 1ml, I read it incorrectly.’ nurse replied by flipping the report pages and re-injected the extra amount back into the medicine bottle.

*‘Hmm, beauty with brain, usually it applies to girls but he too deserves it’.* I said to myself.

‘New to this profession?’, He asked to nurse with a dominant voice.

‘Yes, its been a month here as an intern.’ Nurse replied to him simultaneously by injecting the medicine into his saline bottle. And she left without creating any scene thereafter.

‘Its just pain killer only, what if it would have been more, it will reduce your pain quickly right?’, I asked.

‘Are you an Engineer by any chance?’ He asked me in response to my question.

As soon as I said Yes, he gave a sarcastic smile.

How mean, I said by cracking my knuckles in disgust.

‘No no I mean to say that, the purpose of pain killer is to kill the pain and if the dosage of its increases then it kills the patient too like what people say the more is more’. He said laughingly.

‘Oho , I did not know’. I too said in a sarcastic tone.

Okay, leave it. Would you like to have coconut water? I asked him, as I was thirsty.

Yeah, why not, he said.

I borrowed knife from neighbour bed’s patient and poked two coconuts with the help of it. Inserted a straw in each and slid one towards him by saying ‘here is yours’.

I held mine with both my hands and started slurping through straw. I took breath when I got air instead of water from straw. Then I raised my head and I saw him staring at me without blinking his eyelids.

‘Don’t you want?’ I asked.

He requested by saying ‘could you please call any nurse behalf of me?’.

‘Why, what happened?’, I asked.

‘Even though having my both hands, I became Thakur today’. He said looking towards his left and right hands which were covered by bandage and IV drop respectively.

‘oho okay’. I said funnily.

I saw here and there but I could not found any nurse in the ward at that time, as it was visiting hours. I thought its better to lend a hand than going out and check for nurse. ‘Its okay I’ll assist you’, I said.

‘I’d owe you for this’, he said.

‘Okay in which way you wanna?’ I asked him by keeping empty coconut around the corner of bed.

‘In any of the way you’d prefer to receive’, he said and shrugged his shoulders.

‘Definitely, I will in my ways. By the way I think you are fan of johnny sins’, I said by picking up his coconut.

Somehow he managed to rest his shoulders to backside of his wall on his own by taking support of his back. He said ‘No, I believe in make in India and I would love to stand for made in India things, #ifyouknowyouknow’.

I raised my both eyebrows and said ‘tit for tat ahh’. And leaned towards him to match the level of his bed by holding coconut, near to his mouth.

And he too responded to my action in a way a good kid which obeys all his parents words.

And then we both were in a phase, based on which many Bollywood movies are made, ‘eye to eye contact with no words exchange’. After few seconds we both realized what were going on and to avoid that I moved my hair strand behind my left ear and rolled my eye balls accordingly. And he lowered his gaze hesitatingly and got distracted completely. At that instant I got to know the reason behind his hesitation but not for distraction. I turned back and quickly pulled my jacket’s zip a little upward and sat on chair again. We both were quiet in awkwardness for some time but not my inner voice.

*‘What the fuck is going on and why did u let that to happen?’*

*‘What?, letting myself to help him or looking into his eyes?’*

*‘Everything, You dumb ass…’*

‘Hmmmm’. I nodded to myself.

He broke the awkward silence between us by asking,‘Did you say something?’.

‘Ha? I mean no, not really’, I said.

‘Okay, and how come you are here in Goa, that too far from Delhi?’, He asked.

“FUN”. ‘It can be another name for GOA. Yeah, so I am here for it. And if I am not wrong then you are here too for the same’, I said.

‘You are right, we are here with same intention but a different name called INTERNSHIP’, He said.

We?

‘A group of Pandavas. I mean me and my friends’. He said.

And where are the other four?

‘Renuka, might be in her home, Aaditya, Sadhana and Praveen could be in search of me in and around the resort’. He said doubtfully.

I shrugged my shoulder by giving a puzzled look and asked, ‘Renuka.., Sadhana.., and Pandavas..?’

‘Yeah, Renuka, Sadhana, Praveen, Aaditya and me. We five, Pandavas. Oho wait, Pandavas means, its just a group name of five people in our college’. He gave a clarity on his statement.

‘Okay… It would be better if you let them know about you and your condition’. I suggested.

‘Yep, but I don’t remember their contact numbers. I do remember only my parents and my sister’s contacts details which I fed in my memory before buying my own mobile’, he said and smiled with his mouth closed.

‘Okay, let me dial for you. Tell me any of your parent’s number’. I said by opening dial pad of my mobile.

‘No, no. I can’t let them know about me and my situation right now, they will be in panic unnecessarily, and my internship program and all plans will be fucked up. Its better to keep this behind their back’, he said worriedly.

I nodded and said by killing the phone tab in my mobile, ‘I can understand’.

‘By the way, your mobile is with me, but its battery is dead’, I showed him his mobile by taking it out from my pocket.

‘I may sound like self centered, though could you please charge it.’ He asked me nodding towards charging point.

Well, in that case I’d like to become a altruistic person.’ I said and started stepping out from my seat.

‘Already you are..!’ He said with a polite smile.

I gave an affiliative smile in response to him.

‘Password is my mobile number.’ He said after I switching on his phone.

‘But it’s a pattern.’ I said turning phone’s screen towards him.

He winked and started pronouncing with 9,6,2,4,7,5,1,3,8,0 without even a second gap in between the digits, as if I know his number.

I did unlock his phone without asking him to repeat, and said, ‘You are single right?’

‘Fortunately,Yes.’ He said and asked me, ‘How did you guess that?’

‘Through the complexity of password’, I said and winked.

‘Yeah, I thought its much better to have a complex password than a complex life.’ He stated.

‘Okay, now tell me to whom should I call?’ I asked.

He said, ‘to Praveen.’

‘There are many, with name Praveen, any surname?’ I asked.

‘One with a Bhima in brackets and keep it on speaker and please reduce the volume to half.’ He said and normalized the criteria of search.

I said sure and dialed as his instructions. One ring and the person received the call at other end.

‘You asshole bastard, where have you been, without telling us? Have you gone behind any Russian? All alone you mother fucker. Will you say something or have you taken someone’s dick in your mouth?’ His friend took out his all frustration on him with the good words like above.

*I was not sure whether his friend was mad at him because he was not around with his friends or because of his friend’s thought that he went behind a Russian all alone without taking him into the accompany.*

‘Listen, I am in hospital’. He said

‘Hospital.!, but today is week off you dumb ass’ His friend said.

‘Not our internship hospital’, he cut his sentence in middle and asked me quietly. ‘In which hospital we are?’

I too replied with a same frequency, ‘Manipal Hospital’.

And then he completed his sentence, ‘I am in Manipal hospital’.

‘Manipal Hospital? with whom you’re fucking there?’

‘Listen, I’ll share the location in whats app and you just come here, I’ll explain it to you later’, he said.

His friend ended the call with saying, ‘Okay, okay.’

I was just hiding my laugh along with holding his mobile through out the conversation between him and his friend without any expression on my face. Then he asked me what are all the languages I know to ensure whether I understood the convo between them or not as it was in Marathi.

‘English and Hindi’, I replied.

‘Oho Okay, then u did not get any of our conversations right?’ He asked me in embarrassment.

‘Yes, except few words.’ I lied.

And then I asked, ‘What was your friend saying and what did you say?’

‘Nothing much, He asked me, where I am and I said I am here and I’ll share the location and asked him to come over here that’s it.’ He too lied a bit.

‘Oho, Okay.’ I said still holding on my laugh.

‘Could you please share this location to him?’ He requested again.

‘You’re going to be a doctor right, I can be your assistant.’ I said.

He said sorry and dropped his eyes.

Hey, I was just kidding. I said and opened his whats app and shared the location with his friend, even though knowing it’s not a good manner to enter someone’s privacy, despite of his permission to access his whats app. *And it was like someone would welcome me inside their home even before knocking the door and still I would be uncomfortable to be comfortable.* His friend reacted within a flash seconds with a thumbs up emoji. I shown it to him and again brought elan into him which he had a minute ago.

‘By the way, in which resort are you staying?’ I asked casually.

He said, ‘Resort GOA…,’ and ‘on the way to Heaven’ we both in unison.

‘Hey, don’t say that you are staying in that resort too.’ He said laughingly.

‘Of course, not. Actually I wanted to be, but there were no rooms vacant. So I am staying in ‘Stone Wood’ resort, the other side of the hill.’ I replied.

‘That must be an expensive one right? Because I gone through the reviews and price of the resort in which you’re staying before settling to the one we are.’ He asked me curiously.

Yeah not much but it’s okay to spend more for yourself once in a while. And it’s not my in law’s town to come often or to stay permanently here you know.

Oho okay, then where is it?

What?

Your in law’s home?

‘Hun?’ I gave a sly look.

‘Arey don’t mind just kidding.’, By the way how far is our resort from here? He asked me.

I said let me check and opened Google maps and entered starting point and destination. ‘It show’s approximately 30 km, around 40-50 minutes as per the current traffic.’

‘You might be getting bored here now, and I am sorry for ruining half of your day. And sorry and thanks for the trouble you took because of me’. He said with a genuine expression on his face.

I said and sighed, ‘ufff, I was not getting bored but right now I am, after listening to your formal speech.’

‘Sorry’, He said again.

‘Its okay. Well I have something to ask you, as you are a medical student, so I can expect a relevant answer for my question.’ I asked him for which he was unsure what to reply.

Then he said, ‘Okay, what’s that?’.

‘Is the human brain lives on for 7 minutes after death?’, I asked.

‘Yes, Even after death, the human brain lives on for 7 minutes to replay it's best memories’. He gave an quick answer as if the viva is going on.

I just nodded my head in response for his answer.

‘Why did you think on this suddenly, by the way?’, He asked.

‘No, not suddenly, actually this thought occupied a tiny space in my brain, since the time I gone through this on social media’, I said with my eyes on the walls, side to him.

‘Seems like you don’t agree with this point, ahh how come you, you’re an Engineer…’, he was about to say further and I gave a side eye.

Then he added and finished his sentence. ‘I mean you were an Engineering student, am sure you might have not studied about this’.

‘Hmm, that’s why I asked you, as I said in the beginning that I can expect a relevant answer from you’, I said with a strong voice instead of saying my inner voice *‘you dumb ass’*.

He went along with my words, ‘yeah, you’re right’.

‘So I can borrow your 7 minutes. However I’ve to kill the time till your friend reaches here’, I said.

‘Sorry?’.

I elaborated my point. ‘I mean you can also replay your best memories.’

He shrugged his shoulder and said, ‘but I am still alive’.

‘Sorry but you were almost near to death’, I said.

‘Hmm’, He said in a convinced manner.

He added further, ‘But with a condition’.

‘Okay and what’s that?’, I asked curiously.

‘After each memory I’ll ask a question based on that, if you answer correctly, then only I’ll move to the next one, what you say’.

‘Okay but what’s the point of questioning and answering here?’, I asked.

‘That’s because you must pay attention, otherwise what’s the use narrating the memory?’, He said.

‘Sounds like Vikram and Betaal, isn’t it?’.

‘Hm, kind of you can say’. He said, ‘Then shall we commence?’.

I said, ‘what are we waiting for’…….