**The Many Surprises of Life**

The smoldering fire igniting the east, the shriveled orange in a sky gone black, the gleaming lights stretching across the bowl of midnight sky, waking up at dawn feeling energized, alive and kicking. If you had taken all of them for granted, do realize that these are surprises, surprises, surprises bestowed by the providence and which we have failed to realize, cherish and wasted.

In the present day, due to advancement of technology many people are under the delusion that they have control over every aspect of their lives. But let’s not forget Life is full of surprises one can never say when the creator can shower or he can snatch it away. Taking a cue from nature, we also need to spring surprises into other people’s lives, give them moments to cherish forever and make them feel extra special. I mean good surprises here. One person I totally and completely enjoyed springing surprises was on my father as he used to radiate the abundant child-like joy and celebrate them those moments as festivals.

Once for his birthday, my Father expressed his desire to call his friends whom he had known for ages. Leave aside celebrating, he was shocked to see that I did not wish him on the date. Since nothing was planned, my parents decided to spend the day in a temple. I picked them up later in the evening. Enroute to house, a palpable silence hung in the air and if a pin had dropped, it might have sounded like an explosion. Pain and disappointment were writ large over his expressive face.

The moment he walked into the threshold of the house, he was caught totally caught off-guard to see the house full of people and simultaneously the decorative lights lit up the entire house and big cheer went up to welcome him. He was shocked and delighted to see all his friends swarming around him and that moment which followed made me realize that how true the saying goes “true friends are never apart, may be in distance never in heart”. While all were at loss of words and hugged each other, my eyes swelled with sea of tears of joy and satisfaction. Sometimes I do think life should allow us to rewind, not to correct the past but to relive and cherish some of our most precious moments in our lives.

## As it is rightly said, fathers can do it better and he did outwit me. It was one of those week where I had planned a surprise of reaching home unannounced on Friday night. Two days prior, on a Wednesday, my father called me while I was at work. Since I was occupied, I said I would call him back. So, he hung up the phone saying “okay, call me back”. Later assuming it to be late back home I did not call. On Thursday, it slipped my mind to return the call and later in the evening while driving home from work, I received a call from my brother. Something in his voice ran a chill down my spine and hit me like a bolt when he said that “Dad was no more”. Those words tore my heart and then I realized my chance of talking to him gone - lost forever.

Next ten seconds of my life were lost on me as I remained frozen, only when the cars behind me honked at the traffic signal did I wake up from the trance.

I wondered then why this had to happen to me? I was a firm believer of the saying in Tamil “thayir sirandha kovilum illai, thandhai sol mikka mandhiramillai” which means, there is no sacred temple than one’s own mother and no powerful mantra than one’s own father’s wishes, and I always ensured that his wishes remained fulfilled.

Probably I had developed an elephant sized ego in a pea sized brain to such levels, hence God decided to spin a surprise on me, as after fulfilling all his wishes I could not fulfill his last simple wish “CALL ME BACK”

**Life is full of surprises, not all of them are pleasant but do rejoice in the pleasant ones, a**nd for unpleasant ones they will turn out to be opportunities to see things in new ways to grow.