

**THE TALE
OF A
SINGLE
HONEYMOON**

OVIYA.R

The tale of a single Honeymoon

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Author's note

Dear Reader,

You are special, for I am starting to write in the hope that this book will reach someone as special as you. Many thanks for picking up this book and hope you have a good time reading this story.

May the Almighty above us, continue showering His blessings on all of us.

My hearty thanks to all who have been my constant source of support and energy; Special thanks to Amma and Chithu Akka your support and efforts in the editing of this book.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Take few moments of your time to let me know what you felt about the book, so that I can strive harder to make you feel all the more special in my upcoming works. Reach me through oviyarengesh@gmail.com.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

DISCLAIMER

This is a work of fiction. Unless otherwise indicated, all the names, characters, businesses, places, events and incidents in this book are either the product of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

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About the book

One honeymoon, two strangers. As fate would have it, only one person from each couple shows up for their honeymoon trip. When such a honeymoon trip brings two strangers together, they'll discover that the past never stays buried for long. They discover that the past has a way of catching up. This is a gripping tale of love, betrayal, and deadly consequences.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The tale of a single Honeymoon

And the journey begins...

Alisha walked into the airport with her head held high. She was dressed in a pair of denim shorts and a white crop top, her hair tied back in a messy bun. Her high heels complemented her look. She carried a designer handbag with her and dragged a medium sized trolley bag behind her.

Her heart raced with excitement and relished the idea of exploring new places, meeting new people, and discovering herself. She didn't need a man to make her happy, and she was determined to

The tale of a single Honeymoon

prove it. She smiled at the security guard as she passed through the metal detector, feeling a surge of excitement as she walked towards the boarding gate.

Rakshith stood outside the airport, nervously checking his watch for the umpteenth time. He was dressed in crisp white shirt and black trousers, his hair combed neatly to the side. He wore a dejected look on his face. He looked every bit the part of a jilted man, with a pained expression etched on his face. His eyes darted around the airport, taking in the hustle and bustle of the crowd.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

He couldn't help but feel a sense of betrayal and anger, despite the fact that he was the one who called off the wedding once and for all. He clutched his boarding pass tightly and made his way towards the check-in counter, trying to ignore the pang of loneliness that gnawed at his heart.

Alisha and Rakshith stood behind one another in the security check in queue. One look at these two and they would seem like two completely different people, and it's hard to imagine what kind of connection they could possibly have. But fate has a way of bringing people

The tale of a single Honeymoon

together. They would soon discover that they have more in common than they ever could have imagined.

At the present day, ignoring the past behind, Alisha viewed herself as a woman of modern tastes, confident and independent, yet she was unsure about how she felt about this trip. Alisha had always been a go-getter and a planner, and it irked her to not have everything in control for this trip.

To divert herself, Alisha looked around, observing the people around her. That's when she noticed a little girl, about eight

The tale of a single Honeymoon

years old, who was traveling alone. The little girl confidently approached the airline attendant and asked for assistance. Alisha was amazed by her boldness and independence at such a young age.

As she watched the girl walk away confidently, Alisha couldn't help but think about how difficult it was to develop such a sense of independence. She of all people knew what it is to be a dependent person with zero spine and then standing up for yourself. Sometimes, the bravest thing a person can do is to trust themselves and take the first step and

The tale of a single Honeymoon

that is what Alisha hoped she had done and she also hoped that she had also done it at the right moment.

Meanwhile, Rakshith was standing in line behind her. He was a man of few words, someone who had always let his actions speak louder than his words.

Rakshith had always been a keen observer of people around him, so he watched the people around him, wondering what their stories might be. He saw a woman ahead of him, standing up for honesty and refusing to pay an extra

The tale of a single Honeymoon

baggage fee, and he couldn't help but admire her courage.

He knew that circumstances could change a person, and that fate often decided the virtues that people followed. But he also knew that once someone started justifying a virtue, whether right or wrong, it was hard to come out of it. The sin of one's actions could only be taken with their soul.

As he continued to watch the woman ahead of him, he couldn't help but wonder what kind of person he was becoming. He had always believed in

The tale of a single Honeymoon

doing the right thing, but sometimes, life had a way of throwing unexpected challenges his way.

He closed his eyes and took a deep breath, trying to clear his mind of all the doubts and fears. He knew that the path he chose would define his destiny, and he was determined to stay true to his principles, no matter what.

As he opened his eyes, he saw that the woman had successfully convinced the airline staff to waive off the extra baggage fee. He smiled to himself, feeling a sense of satisfaction knowing

The tale of a single Honeymoon

that there were still people who believed in doing the right thing.

Standing next to each other, Rakshith's stern appearance contrasted with the woman's gentle smile. His eyes scanned the surroundings with suspicion, while hers twinkled with anticipation. Though they stood close together, their thoughts were a world apart. The man's mind was clouded with worry and suspicion, while the woman's was filled with determination for what was to come.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As the duo stood in the security line, a familiar buzz of excitement caught their attention. Alisha and Rakshith couldn't help but be intrigued as they noticed the excitement building in the crowd. They quickly scanned the lobby and their eyes fell on a striking woman with flowing blonde hair and a big smile on her face. She was surrounded by a group of friends, all holding up their phones, ready to capture the moment.

The woman was dressed in a stylish and colourful outfit, with a floral dress and oversized sunglasses. Alisha identified

The tale of a single Honeymoon

her as the Instagram influencer who had a large following and fan base on Instagram, with millions of followers eagerly waiting for her next post.

As the woman's boyfriend appeared in front of her, the crowd erupted in cheers and applause. Alisha and Rakshith couldn't help but be drawn into the excitement, as they watched the proposal unfold before their eyes. The woman took out a ring and got down on one knee, and the man's face lit up with joy and surprise.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha couldn't help but feel a pang of nostalgia as she was transported back to the time, she met Anubhav.

In her mind's eye, she saw Anubhav for the first time, dressed in a crisp white shirt and black pants. He looked dapper and charming, and Alisha was immediately drawn to him.

They had spent hours talking and getting to know each other. As they talked, she found that they had so much in common, and she knew that he was the one she wanted to spend the rest of her life with.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha remembered how comfortable and easy it was to talk to him, and how much they had in common. She smiled to herself as she thought about how much they had grown together and how much they had been through but sadly, her mind also reminded her where their relationship failed.

On the other hand, Rakshith was reminded of his first encounter with Sasha. He couldn't help but think about how beautiful she looked that day, in a blue summer dress that matched the clear blue sky above them.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith was immediately smitten, and they had hit it off right away. He also remembered how her hair had shone in the sunlight, and how her smile had lit up the room. He had been so nervous when he had first approached her, but as they talked, he knew that he had found someone special. They had spent hours walking and talking that day, and by the end of it, he knew that he had fallen in love with her. He remembered the days they had laughed and talked for hours, completely losing track of time.

Just then both Rakshith and Alisha snapped back to the present when the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

crowd erupted in cheers and applause as the boy accepted the girl's proposal. Alisha and Rakshith watched as the couple walked hand in hand towards the coffee shop, followed by the cheering crowd. They both couldn't help but feel a twinge of envy and longing, as they wished that they could relive their own proposal moments with their partners.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The commotion in the airport settled down and the duo, Alisha and Rakshith made their way through the security check. Just then, a friendly voice called out to them from behind. Alisha and Rakshith turned around to see a smiling tour guide approaching them.

The tour guide came near them and gave them a warm smile. He quickly flipped the pages of the booklet in his hand and cast a surprised look as he checked their booking details.

"Wait, you two are traveling alone for your honeymoon?" he asked in disbelief.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The couple nodded, feeling a bit embarrassed.

"Well, that's certainly a first," he chuckled. "But no worries, we can still make this work. Since you've both booked through me, why don't you consider traveling together for the rest of the trip? It'll be more economical for both of you, and who knows, you might even end up making some new friends!", he suggested with a warm smile.

Alisha and Rakshith looked at each other for the first time and their eyes locked in an instant gaze. There was a moment of

The tale of a single Honeymoon

uncertainty that hung in the air. They studied each other's appearance and facial expressions, unsure of what to make of this sudden arrangement. They both sensed a feeling of anticipation and curiosity about each other. However, One of the two had a tough time trying to keep up that expression and the other was trying to take in that expression.

The tour guide cleared his throat, interrupting the silence and reminding them of the practicality of the situation. They were each unsure about the idea, but realizing the benefits of saving some money, they knew it made sense.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"But I don't even know her," Rakshith protested.

"And I don't need anyone to accompany me," Alisha added with a tinge of firmness in her voice.

The tour guide smiled. "I understand your concerns, but believe me, this will be a wonderful opportunity for both of you to enjoy this trip to the fullest. As I said you might even end up making a new friend," he said encouragingly.

Alisha and Rakshith exchanged another look. They had nothing to lose and

The tale of a single Honeymoon

everything to gain. Finally, with a sigh, they both agreed.

But still, as they turned away from each other and continued walking, their minds were preoccupied with thoughts of this unexpected turn of events.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As they boarded the plane together, Rakshith and Alisha couldn't help but feel a strange mix of emotions - fear, excitement, and uncertainty.

As Alisha reached up to put her handbag in the overhead cabin, Rakshith tried to remove his jacket at the same time, causing them to bump into each other.

"Oh, I'm sorry," they both said in unison.

Rakshith tried to make room for her.

"Here, let me help you with that," he said, but Alisha responded quickly, "No, no, it's fine, thank you."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

They both tried to move forward and backward, trying to avoid bumping into each other again.

"After you," Rakshith said with a polite smile.

"No, no, you first," Alisha replied, equally polite.

They both stopped for a moment, unsure of what to do.

"I'll go first," Rakshith said finally. "Sure, thank you," Alisha said, breathing a sigh of relief as she let the man place the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

jacket in the cabin. Then she placed her hand bag on top of his jacket and closed the overhead cabin.

They finally settled into their seats next to each other, keeping a polite distance between them.

"That was a close one," Rakshith chuckled, to which Alisha nodded in agreement, glad that they had avoided another collision.

The air hostess stood at the front of the cabin, a practiced smile on her face as she gave the instructions for the flight.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"Ladies and gentlemen, please ensure your seat belts are fastened and your seats are in the upright position for take-off," she announced, her voice clear and confident.

The man and woman both nodded absently, their minds preoccupied with their own thoughts. The man was thinking about his lost love, wondering what could have been different if he had made different choices. The woman, on the other hand, was contemplating if she had made the right choice. Neither of them were fully present in the moment, lost in their own thoughts and concerns.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith wondered what the next few days had in store for them. Alisha however knew that fate had already planned something else for them.

The engines roared to life, and the plane started moving down the runway. The take-off; a symbol of hope, of new beginnings and adventures unknown. As the plane gained speed, the passengers felt a slight pressure in their seats. The wheels lifted off the ground, and the plane soared up into the sky, leaving the ground far below. With each passing moment, the world below shrank in size,

The tale of a single Honeymoon

until the plane was soaring amongst the clouds in the skies. The view from the window changed from the airport to the clouds, and the passengers settled in for their journey.

Alisha took out her headphones and started listening to some music while the man stared out of the window, lost in his thoughts.

After a while, Alisha caught the man staring at her with a helpless look and offered him a polite smile. He smiled back.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Despite this easy smile, both were in their own worlds and both had their own insecurities on embarking their honeymoon trip alone without their partner. Rakshith was still reeling from his broken wedding and felt like he was carrying a weight on his shoulders, while Alisha felt a bit apprehensive about her decision in taking this honeymoon trip with a stranger.

As the plane soared high in the sky, the air hostess arrived with the food trolley, asking the man and woman if they needed anything to eat or drink. The man politely declined, while the woman

The tale of a single Honeymoon

requested a glass of water, which the air hostess handed over with a smile and continued moving forward down the aisle with the trolley.

As the plane encountered minor turbulence, Alisha accidentally spilled some water on her dress, and Rakshith quickly offered her a tissue.

Alisha smiled gratefully and thanked him. "Looks like I'm not very good at keeping water in my cup," she quipped, as she wiped the damp spot on her dress. This small exchange broke the ice between them.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As the flight continued on its journey, the cabin grew quieter as passengers settled in for the long haul. Rakshith and Alisha sat in their respective seats, each lost in their own thoughts. Suddenly, there was a loud noise from the engine, and the plane started to shake slightly. Alisha gripped the armrest tightly, and some of the passengers looked worried.

To break the tension, Rakshith turned to Alisha and said, "I remember reading somewhere that turbulence is just like driving on a bumpy road. It's nothing to worry about."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha looked at him, and a small smile appeared on her face. "Yeah, that's true," she replied. "I guess it's just a reminder that we're not in control of everything."

Rakshith nodded in agreement. "Absolutely. It's easy to forget that sometimes." They continued to talk about their experiences with flying, sharing stories of their favourite and least favourite flights. As they chatted, Alisha began to feel more comfortable around Rakshith, and she found herself laughing at some of his jokes.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Before they knew it, the turbulence had passed, and the plane had levelled out. Alisha turned to Rakshith and said, "Thanks for keeping me calm. I was a bit worried there for a moment." Rakshith smiled and replied, "No problem at all. It's always good to have someone to talk to on a long flight."

The flight journey came to an end.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As they waited for their luggage at the airport carousel, the TV mounted on the wall caught their attention. The news anchor's voice was urgent and serious as she reported on the latest drug bust in the city.

"The police have identified the leader of the drug mafia operating in the city as Don Vito, who has eluded the authorities for years. They believe that there are suspects within the department who are providing him with inside information. The police have urged the public to come forward and report any suspicious activities related to drug trafficking."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith's expression changed as he watched the news report. He thought about his own strange connection with the drugs. He couldn't help but wonder again if he had taken a different path, he might have been on the different side of the law.

On the other hand, Alisha watched the report with a heavy heart. She thought about how drugs had destroyed her life and the lives of those around her. She couldn't help but feel a sense of responsibility to make things right and to help put an end to the drug trade.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

But neither of them revealed their inner thoughts to each other. Instead, they silently collected their luggage and headed towards the exit, ready to start their trip, completely unaware of the twists and turns that awaited them.

As they exited the airport, they stood awestruck taking in the beauty of the island. The island, with its lush greenery and sparkling waters, was a paradise unlike any other and the island welcomed them with embraced hands. At that moment, one of the two knew that this island would change their lives forever.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

They boarded the cab to the resort. The woman couldn't contain her excitement at the beautiful scenery while the man remained stoic, seemingly unimpressed.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As they reached the resort, their tour guide greeted them, handed them a map and explained the various sightseeing spots. He further suggested they visit some of the local sights together to save on costs. Alisha and Rakshith exchanged a tentative glance, but agreed to tag along.

They further went inside the resort to the reception with their baggage to collect their room keys. The manager greeted them warmly and informed them that unfortunately, there was only one room available due to an unexpected renovation. The manager suggested that

The tale of a single Honeymoon

they could share the room since they had already booked together for the tour. The man and woman looked at each other with a hint of reluctance, but they knew they didn't have much of a choice. Finally, they agreed unwillingly to share the room for the night, hoping that it wouldn't be too uncomfortable.

Rakshith and Alisha walked into their resort room, dragging their heavy luggage along with them. The room was spacious with large windows that let in a lot of sunlight, making the room feel warm and inviting. The walls were painted in light shades of blue and pink,

The tale of a single Honeymoon

giving a soothing and calming feel to the room. There was a small seating area with two comfortable armchairs and a small coffee table in the corner of the room. The double bed in the middle of the room caught their attention, and both let out a sigh of relief when they saw that it could be split into two single beds.

Alisha excused herself to make a call, and Rakshith began to explore the room. He opened the curtains, letting in more natural light and scanned the room, making sure everything was in place.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

A few minutes later, Alisha was out in the corridor, looking worried and tense as she spoke on the phone. Rakshith saw her and became concerned, but she quickly cut the call and excused herself, returning to the room.

As she entered, she noticed Rakshith had changed his clothes and looked much better than he did in the morning. She wondered how men could dress up so quickly.

Rakshith gestured towards the room, and Alisha understood that he wanted her to freshen up as well. She quickly went into

The tale of a single Honeymoon

the bathroom, changed her outfit, and stepped out.

Rakshith was now scanning the environment outside the room, and Alisha couldn't help but wonder what he was up to. She was impressed by how quickly he had changed and felt a bit nervous about her appearance. However, she was relieved when Rakshith smiled at her.

Rakshith couldn't help but notice how her dress had changed from what she was wearing at the airport. Her hair was still tied in a messy bun, but now she was

The tale of a single Honeymoon

wearing a casual summer dress that hugged her curves perfectly. The light blue fabric had small white flowers embroidered on it, giving her a soft and delicate look. Rakshith couldn't help but feel a flutter in his chest as he took in her appearance. He wondered how someone could look so different in just a change of clothes.

Alisha noticed Rakshith's gaze on her and couldn't help but feel a little self-conscious. Recently, she had been tomboy and preferred comfortable clothes over fashionable ones. But that day she had decided to dress up for the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

day out wanting to lift up her spirits. She smiled at him and asked if he was ready to go and he nodded.

They began discussing their plans for the day, with Alisha suggesting they visit the museum, and Rakshith proposing the beach. Unable to decide, they flipped a coin, and the beach won.

Alisha jokingly remarked, "What if our fate is decided based on a flip of a coin?" Rakshith replied, "Maybe it's true. We just flip the coin in life, but we are made to believe we are in charge of the result." They both smiled and headed out of the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

room, ready to explore the beautiful beach.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Once at the beach, Alisha kicked off her shoes and felt the sand beneath her feet. "This feels amazing!" she exclaimed. The man smiled and agreed. They walked along the beach, enjoying the warm sun and the sound of the waves crashing against the shore.

And as they strolled along the beach, toes in the sand and the gentle breeze blowing through their hair, they felt a sense of freedom and lightness they had never experienced before.

Despite spending a lot of time together, they both avoided getting too close. They

The tale of a single Honeymoon

were both trying their best to hide their true identities and their motivations for being on the trip.

As they strolled along the shoreline, Alisha and Rakshith couldn't help but marvel at the beauty of the sea and the surrounding landscape. The soft sand and gentle breeze made for a tranquil atmosphere, and they felt completely relaxed and at peace.

As they walked and walked, they lost track of time, enjoying the stunning view and the sounds of the waves crashing against the shore. Before they knew it,

The tale of a single Honeymoon

the sun had started to dip towards the horizon, and they realized they had been lost in the moment for hours.

As they walked back from the beach, their stomachs began to grumble, reminding them that they had been so engrossed in the beauty of the sea that they had forgotten to grab a snack along the way." So, they stopped at a local café to have some snacks.

As they were having snacks, Alisha noticed that the couple at the table next to them kept glancing over in their direction.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Suddenly, the woman leaned over and whispered something to her partner, causing him to smirk and nod in agreement.

Alisha couldn't help but feel self-conscious. Did they have something on their faces? Was their conversation too loud?

Before she could dwell on it for too long, the couple stood up to leave. As they walked past Alisha and Rakshith's table, the woman stopped and turned to them.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"You two make a cute couple," she said, her tone laced with innuendo.

Alisha's face flushed with embarrassment, while Rakshith let out an awkward chuckle.

"Actually, we're just friends," he said, trying to diffuse the situation.

The woman didn't seem convinced, and Alisha could feel the weight of her gaze as she and her partner made their way out of the restaurant.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As soon as they were gone, Alisha turned to Rakshith, frustration etched on her face.

"Why do people always assume that any man and woman who are talking are a couple?" she asked.

Rakshith shrugged. "I guess it's just the way we interact with each other. We're comfortable around each other, and people pick up on that."

Alisha let out a sigh, feeling both annoyed and amused at the same time

The tale of a single Honeymoon

and Rakshith grinned back at her for a brief moment.

They continued eating. As they ate, they talked about other places to visit on the island. They soon discovered that they both loved adventure sports, and decided to try snorkelling the next day. They then returned to the resort to retire for the day.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

On day two, they woke up early. The man and woman were dressed in comfortable yet practical clothes suitable for the activities planned for the day.

Rakshith wore a white T-shirt paired with khaki shorts and sandals, while Alisha had put on a light green sundress with a denim jacket and flip-flops. Both of them had sunglasses on and had a small backpack with them containing some essentials like sunscreen, water bottles, and snacks for the day. Overall, they looked casual and ready for a day full of adventure.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The couple headed to the beach excitedly, ready to explore the underwater world. They wore their snorkelling gear and dived into the pristine blue waters. As they swam deeper, they were greeted by a magnificent sight. The water was so clear that they could see every detail of the underwater world.

The woman's eyes widened as she saw a school of colourful fish swim by. The man captured the vibrant hues of the fishes and the beautiful patterns of the coral reefs through the lens of his eyes.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Suddenly, the woman pointed towards a starfish lying on the seabed. The man was quick to capture this breath-taking sight through the lens of his eyes. The starfish was a vibrant shade of orange, and its arms were outstretched, as if reaching out for the sunlight. It was a moment that they would never forget and sadly it reminded Rakshith and Alisha of their partners.

As they surfaced, they couldn't stop thinking about the incredible sights they had just seen. The woman was amazed by the sheer beauty of nature, while the man was thrilled to have captured these

The tale of a single Honeymoon

moments in his heart. It was an experience that they would cherish for a lifetime.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Later that day they decided to go hiking in the forest nearby and stay overnight in the tree house in the midst of the forest. Alisha and Rakshith were both excited about their tree house stay in the forest.

As Alisha and Rakshith hit the narrow mud road towards the forest, they could feel the rush of excitement building up within them. The wind was blowing gently, and the sun was shining bright. But suddenly, there it was, a faint sound, barely audible. It was so unusual and made them uneasy.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"What's that sound?" Alisha asked as she turned to Rakshith. "Do you hear that?"

Rakshith strained his ears and listened intently. After a few moments, he nodded in agreement, "Yes, I can hear it too. But it's probably nothing, just the wind rustling through the trees."

As they continued their journey, the sound grew louder and more ominous. It sounded like something was following them, creeping closer and closer. They tried to ignore it, but the more they tried, the more it seemed to intensify.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha shuddered and said, "I don't like this sound. It's making me feel uneasy."

Rakshith tried to reassure her, "Don't worry, Alisha. We're in this together. I won't let anything happen to you."

Despite his words, Rakshith too was feeling the fear creeping up on him. The sound was getting louder and closer. He tried to keep his focus on the road but found himself glancing into the rear-view mirror frequently. They parked the car in the parking lot and started taking the walk into the forest.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Once they started walking towards the forest entrance, their backpacks felt heavy on their backs. But they continued walking persistently. The forest was quiet, and they could hear the sound of their own footsteps as they walked. The trees around them were tall and majestic, their leaves rustling in the gentle breeze. The sun was shining, casting a warm glow on everything around them.

But as they walked further into the forest, the sound of something strange and unsettling caught their attention. It was an eerie noise, like the sound of a howl or a scream.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

They paused for a moment, unsure of what to do next. Was it an animal or some kind of supernatural force? Their hearts were racing, and they looked at each other with fear in their eyes.

Alisha took a deep breath and suggested they keep walking. Rakshith nodded in agreement, and they moved forward with caution. The sound grew louder and more intense, causing them to quicken their pace. They tried to shake off the feeling of unease and fear that was creeping over them. The forest had become darker, and they were struggling to see in the dim light.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Suddenly, the sound stopped, and the silence was deafening. Alisha and Rakshith looked at each other, their hearts racing. They didn't know what was going to happen next. They continued to walk, their eyes scanning the forest floor for any signs of danger. As they walked, they realized that the noise was getting louder again. It was like someone or something was following them.

They both started walking faster, their adrenaline pumping. They were terrified of what could be behind them. Alisha's backpack slipped off her shoulder, and

The tale of a single Honeymoon

she quickly put it back on, afraid to stop even for a moment. They kept moving forward, and the sound grew even louder. They could feel their hearts pounding in their chests, and they knew that they were in trouble.

Finally, they emerged from the forest into the clearing, and the sound stopped. They both took a deep breath, relieved to be out of that experience. They looked back, wondering what had been making that eerie noise, but they could see nothing. The forest was still and quiet once again. Alisha and Rakshith

The tale of a single Honeymoon

exchanged a look of relief and continued their journey towards the tree house.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Finally, they reached the tree house. Alisha and Rakshith couldn't help but feel a little nervous as they climbed up the ladder to the tree house.

The view from the top was stunning - the trees stretched out as far as the eye could see, and the chirping of the crickets and the rustling of the leaves filled the air. The housekeeper welcomed them with a warm smile, but Alisha noticed a hint of hesitation in his eyes.

As the sun began to set and darkness descended upon the forest, the noises grew louder and more unsettling. It

The tale of a single Honeymoon

started with just a few twigs snapping, but soon they could hear what sounded like heavy footsteps, followed by a low growling sound. Alisha could feel her heart pounding in her chest, and Rakshith's grip on her hand tightened.

The housekeeper tried to reassure them that it was just the sounds of the forest and nothing to worry about, but his words fell on deaf ears. The couple could feel an eerie presence surrounding them, and the hairs on the back of their necks stood up. The housekeeper suggested that they all retire for the night, but Alisha and

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith couldn't shake the feeling of unease.

As they settled into their beds, they could still hear the strange noises - this time it sounded like whispers in the wind. Alisha tossed and turned, unable to sleep, while Rakshith tried to calm her nerves. Suddenly, they heard a loud crash, and the tree house shook violently. The housekeeper rushed in, explaining that it was just a fallen branch, but the couple couldn't shake off the feeling that something sinister was lurking outside.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Both Alisha and Rakshith tried to sleep, but the noises kept them awake. The discomfort was too much to bear and the housekeeper suggested that they sleep in his tiny tent while he would keep watch in the tree house.

Alisha and Rakshith reluctantly left the tree house and followed the housekeeper to his tent. It was a small and cramped space, barely enough for two people to lie down. So, the housekeeper returned back to the tree house.

The couple lay down in the tent, trying to get some rest, but the sounds from the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

forest continued to echo in their ears. They could hear the rustling of the leaves, the chirping of the crickets and the hooting of the owls. The darkness added to the eeriness, and Alisha shivered with fear but she tried to get some sleep amidst that.

In the middle of the night, Rakshith woke up feeling cold. He had forgotten his sweater in the treehouse and silently decided to go back to retrieve it hoping to avoid waking Alisha up.

As he reached the tree house, he heard strange noises coming from inside. He

The tale of a single Honeymoon

cautiously entered the tree house and was shocked to see four to five people digging out something from under the floorboards.

The housekeeper was with them, helping them in their task. Rakshith was taken aback, and when he confronted them, they told him that they had been using the tree house as a hideout to stash their loot.

Rakshith was horrified, and the situation quickly escalated when the group tried to harm him. Just as things were about to turn deadly, Alisha arrived, wielding a

The tale of a single Honeymoon

stick she had picked up on the way. The couple fought fiercely, overpowering the group, and tied them up.

Alisha and Rakshith knew that they had to get out of there as quickly as possible. They decided to take the rogue's car and drove to the nearest police station to report the incident.

As they sat in the car, both of them were lost in thought about each other. Alisha wondered if Rakshith was really just a regular guy on a vacation, while Rakshith couldn't help but think that Alisha was not just a regular woman either.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

They finally reached the police station and handed over the robbers. As they returned back to the resort, both of them were still lost in thought about each other.

The adventure had brought them closer, but they both decided to keep their true identities a secret. However, they couldn't shake off the feeling that there was more to each other than meets the eye. And more importantly the gut feel inside them told them to understand the other person furthermore. The darkness would soon dissipate, replaced by the bright rays of a new dawn.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The dawn of a new day was upon them, casting a warm glow upon the horizon. Both Alisha and Rakshith overslept, thanks to the awful experience of the previous night.

Alisha woke up first but she quietly started to get ready not to wake Rakshith. Rakshith woke up a few minutes later when his mobile rang. It was his aunt calling and he knew that it was yet another condolence call regarding his marriage and he swore that he was better off without that call the first thing in the morning.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

He cut the call and sat on the bed when his eyes fell on Alisha ordering coffee for the two. That day, she had picked out a stylish yet comfortable flowy yellow sundress to wear.

As she spoke on the phone, Rakshith noticed that Alisha caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror through the corner of her eye and smiled. She loved how her tanned skin glowed in the soft morning light, and her curly hair cascaded down her shoulders in natural waves. When she realized Rakshith glancing at her, she shyly turned away from the mirror

The tale of a single Honeymoon

and decided to concentrate on the coffee order.

Meanwhile Rakshith started to get ready for the day. He settled for his favourite pair of navy-blue swim shorts and a black muscle tee, which showed off his toned physique.

After having the traditional breakfast on the island, the duo started sightseeing for the day. They went on long walks, visited the local markets and also captured some ecstatic clicks on their mobile. There was a difference in air that day, the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

awkwardness that had been looming around them faded away slightly.

Alisha and Rakshith found themselves sharing more about their interests, hobbies and past experiences. They talked about their favourite movies, books, and music, and before they knew it, the day was over. Both realized that they had more in common than they initially thought.

Gradually, they started to enjoy each other's company. Alisha was impressed by Rakshith's sense of humour and his ability to see the silver lining in tough

The tale of a single Honeymoon

situations, while Rakshith was drawn to Alisha's confidence and intelligence. They found themselves talking about everything from their childhood dreams to their favourite books to their deepest fears. Everything under the sun was discussed, but they both sensed an unspoken topic looming between them—their past life.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

They finally took a hike up a small hill to a scenic overlook to watch the sunset. As they started climbing the steep hill, feeling the strain in their legs and the weight of exhaustion on their shoulders, Alisha and Rakshith exchanged a knowing look and began to hum a tune in unison, their voices blending together in a harmonious melody.

At one instant during the hike, Alisha stumbled and almost fell, but the man caught her just in time. "Thank you," she said, blushing and they resumed their hike.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Determined to ignore their weariness, the duo continued to sing, their feet pounding the ground in time to the beat. But they both sang out of tune. "We are terrible singers!" the man joked.

After the forty-five-minute hike, the hill was conquered and the view from the top was worth every ounce of effort.

The sky was painted in hues of orange and red, and the sun was slowly descending towards the horizon, signalling that they had arrived just in time to witness the breath-taking sunset.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As they watched the sun set over the turquoise waters of the ocean, they sat side by side on a rock, lost in thought.

They sat there in silence watching the sun dip into the horizon, casting the sky in shades of orange and pink. They were lost at the moment, taking in the beauty of nature. It was their final evening on the island.

The island had a name, and it was called "Serenity Island."

As they watched the sunset, they found themselves lost in the moment, the sound of the waves and the beauty of the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

sunset enveloping them. For a moment, they forgot about their past troubles and were simply two strangers enjoying each other's company.

Alisha asked, "Do you believe in fate?"

Rakshith smiled, her eyes still fixed on the sunset. "I don't know. I used to think that everything happens for a reason, but after everything that's happened, I'm not so sure anymore."

Alisha nodded thoughtfully. "I used to think that too, but after meeting you, I'm starting to believe that maybe there is such a thing as fate."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith turned to her; his eyes curious.

"Why do you say that?"

Alisha smiled at her. "Because if it weren't for our cancelled honeymoons, we wouldn't be here together, experiencing this beautiful sunset."

Rakshith's heart skipped a beat as she looked into his warm eyes. He felt a strange connection with her, one that he couldn't quite explain.

Rakshith tried to divert this strange connection and said, "What should we name this island?" Alisha asked, turning

The tale of a single Honeymoon

to Rakshith with a playful grin. "How about Serendipity?" Rakshith suggested. "Because that's what this trip has been for us - a happy accident."

As the sun started to set, casting a warm orange glow over the ocean, the man and the woman sat, watching the waves roll in and merging with the sky over the horizon.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"You know, we've been talking for hours, but we don't really know each other's stories yet," Rakshith said, turning to face Alisha.

She in turn looked at him, a hint of curiosity in her eyes. "What do you mean?" she asked.

"I mean, we've talked about our likes and dislikes, our travel experiences, but we haven't really talked about what brought us here. I want to know your story," he said.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The woman nodded, "Alright, fair enough. But you have to go first," she said with a smile.

The man chuckled and replied, "Well, that's a long story. But let me guess about you first. You seem so independent and confident; I'm guessing you probably cancelled the marriage because of some disagreeable term?"

The woman laughed and shook her head. "No, that's not true at all."

Rakshith continued with a little bit of embarrassment. "I thought you stopped

The tale of a single Honeymoon

the marriage because some man tried to subdue you in the name of marriage."

The girl laughed. "And why would you think that?"

The man shrugged. "I don't know. You just seem so independent and confident. Like you wouldn't let anyone tell you what to do."

The girl smiled. "You're not entirely wrong."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The man raised his eyebrows in surprise.

"Really? I was not way off, then. Okay, your turn to guess about me."

The girl leaned in closer. "Well, you seem so innocent and pure. I bet some girl used you for her own gain and left you for someone else."

The man laughed. "That's not exactly what happened. But I appreciate the sentiment."

The woman thought for a moment, then said, "You seem innocent and practical,

The tale of a single Honeymoon

like someone who got cheated into a marriage and was left for someone else."

The man laughed, but shook his head.

"No, not at all. I was the one who cancelled the wedding, actually. But I guess we both got each other wrong."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As they sat there, they both knew that they had a lot to learn about each other. As the last of the light faded, Rakshith turned to Alisha and said, "You know, we may have guessed wrongly about each other. But I have a feeling we'll find out the truth soon enough."

There was a moment of uncomfortable silence. Alisha then took a deep breath and looked at Rakshith, "I have always been a people-pleaser," she said. "I lived my life according to what others wanted from me. I come from a conservative family, and my parents arranged a marriage for me. I barely knew the man,

The tale of a single Honeymoon

but he was good and we were getting along well."

The woman took a deep breath and began to speak more about her own partner. "He was perfect for me," she said wistfully, "we had so much in common and shared a deep love for each other. He was the CEO of a startup and had so much pressure on him. He succumbed to that stress and he turned to something terrible to cope with stress, and I failed to notice how it was affecting him."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

She paused, her eyes clouding over with emotion and she was lost for a moment. But she recovered soon and her story was not back on track. "We were just about to get married when he fainted a few seconds before our marriage. We rushed him to the hospital but he was declared brought dead".

Alisha felt the tears welling up in her eyes, but she quickly blinked them away and took a deep breath to compose herself. She gazed out at the horizon, lost in thought. The man noticed her solemn expression and asked, "What's on your

The tale of a single Honeymoon

mind? You can share if you want to. I am all ears."

Without hesitation, the woman began to open up. "I lost him due to drug addiction," she said softly, her voice laced with sadness.

At the mention of drugs, the man's expression changed. His face became tense and he stiffened up. However, he quickly masked his reaction and tried to act nonchalant.

The woman noticed his sudden shift in demeanour, but decided not to probe any

The tale of a single Honeymoon

further. Instead, she continued to speak about her past.

"I wish he had come to me for help, but he didn't. It made me realize that we all have to live for ourselves, no matter how much we love someone else. It was a hard lesson to learn. I thought I could save him but I could do nothing", she said, her voice breaking. "Addiction is a powerful force, and it eventually consumed him. I was left alone and heartbroken."

Rakshith listened intently; his eyes fixed on her. But something else was running

The tale of a single Honeymoon

through his mind. After a few moments, he realized that she was silent.

He knew it was his turn to speak now. "I'm sorry," he said softly, reaching out to take her hand. "That must have been really tough for you."

Alisha smiled weakly, grateful for his understanding. "Thank you," she said, looking up at him. "It means a lot."

Alisha continued, "What if he had died after the marriage? My life would have been lost grieving for someone I barely knew."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"But it also made me realize that life is unpredictable, and you have to live it on your own terms. So, I decided to take control of my life and be independent,"

As she finished her story, Alisha took a deep breath and looked over at the man, a small smile on her lips. "That's my story," she says softly. "What about you? What's your story?"

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith began his story or rather his version of his story.

"I'm an orphan. My parents died when I was young and I've been on my own since then. But I always wanted to make a difference in the world, so I became a police officer. I worked hard, and I was good at my job. Few months back, she came into my life. Sasha. She was the love of my life."

"The one who made everything in my life feel worthwhile. She was always there for me, through thick and thin. She was the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

one who proposed to me, in fact and we were supposed to get married."

As Rakshith was narrating his story, the woman listened intently, but a part of her was waiting for the tragedy she believed was sure to come. She couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement building up inside her as he spoke, even though she knew it was wrong to anticipate someone's pain. It was almost as if her brain was wired to expect the worst, to crave the drama that came with human suffering. Despite these conflicting thoughts, she tried to remain present and

The tale of a single Honeymoon

focused on the man's story, hoping that it would have a happy ending.

Rakshith took a deep breath and paused for a moment. To Alisha, it seemed like he was struggling to compose himself, but she tried not to read too much into it. Perhaps he was simply gathering his thoughts before continuing with his story.

Alisha waited patiently, trying not to let her mind wander too far, but couldn't help but notice that he seemed almost rehearsed in his delivery. Still, she

The tale of a single Honeymoon

brushed off the feeling and waited for him to speak.

He continued, "I never knew she had another side to her life. It turned out that she was involved with a drug cartel, and on the day of our wedding, she tried to kill me right on the stage. I had to defend myself, and in the end, I had to kill her." Rakshith's voice was flat and had lost all emotions as he fell silent.

Alisha gasped, surprised at the man's revelation. "I'm so sorry," she said, placing a hand on his shoulder. "That must have been hard for you."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith shook his head. "It's okay, I've learned to live with it. But it's a reminder that you can never really know someone, no matter how close you think you are to them."

"I completely agree with you on this, you never know", Alisha smiled wryly. At that point, the police man in Rakshith had a feeling that there was an underlying message in her words. But he kept his suspicion to himself and gave a faint smile.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha smiled back, trying to establish a connection with the man. "I think we both have something in common," she said. "We both have had our lives impacted by drugs. It's a small world, isn't it?"

The man nodded in agreement. He fell silent for a moment and then managed, "Yes, and I am glad I am in a position to do something to stop this drug menace." "I am sure you do", Alisha smiled. But Rakshith felt that there was more to her smile than that met the eye, something sly or secretive.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

They both sat in silence, watching the waves crash against the shore as the sun began to set.

Rakshith looked at Alisha and said, "I'm glad we decided to be honest with each other."

"You do?" Alisha's voice was laced with disbelief as she asked. A shadow seemed to pass over Rakshith's face, and she sensed a sudden tenseness in his posture. It was as if something in their discussion had made him uneasy.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

She deftly changed the topic and said, "Yes, it feels good to talk to someone who understands," she said.

They both sat there in silence, watching the sun go down, feeling content and at peace. Alisha, wanting to extend the conversation, turned to the man and said, "I never imagined I would be watching a sunset with a stranger on a honeymoon trip."

Rakshith smiled and replied, "Neither did I, but I'm glad we are here together."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As they walked back to their room, they both knew that they had developed a connection with each other, something that neither of them had expected.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As they lay down to sleep that night, both Alisha and Rakshith couldn't shake off the thoughts of their past and the bond they had formed during their trip. They both lay silently, lost in their own thoughts. The man couldn't help but think about the girl he had lost and the betrayal he had faced. While the woman, on the other hand, couldn't help but think about the man she never really had and the life she wished to have.

As the night progressed, their thoughts kept them awake, and sleep eluded them both. The man couldn't believe the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

connection he had formed with someone so quickly, and he wondered if he was ready to let go of his past and move on. The woman, on the other hand, couldn't help but wonder if she was ready to take the chance that awaited her the next day.

There were other thoughts in their mind too. Rakshith couldn't shake off the feeling that there was something off about the woman. He had been trained to be suspicious, to trust no one, and to always be on his guard. And there was something about her that made him uneasy.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

He couldn't quite put his finger on it, but he felt like she was hiding something. Maybe it was the way she looked at him, or the tone of her voice, or the fact that she seemed too good to be true. Whatever it was, he couldn't ignore the nagging feeling in the pit of his stomach.

Meanwhile, Alisha lay beside him, thinking about what she was going to do the next day. She had made up her mind to confront the man. She couldn't let him get away with what he had done, and she was prepared to do whatever it took to bring him to justice.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

But as she lay there, she couldn't help but feel a twinge of doubt. What if she was wrong about him and she was about to do something terrible? She tried to push the thought out of her mind, but it kept coming back, like a persistent itch she couldn't scratch.

They both lay there, staring at the ceiling, lost in thought, and the night slowly passed away. As the sun began to rise, the woman turned to the man and saw that he too had been awake all night, lost in his own thoughts. They both smiled weakly at each other, knowing that the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

day ahead would be their last day on the island.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The next morning, after a refreshing shower, they both dressed up in comfortable clothes, mildly dressed as they had to leave for the airport after breakfast. Alisha chose a loose-fitting floral dress that matched the tropical vibes of the island, and Rakshith opted for a casual shirt and shorts.

When Rakshith completed dressing up, he was surprised to find Alisha in the kitchenette in their resort room. She had a determined stern look on her face.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As she began cooking, Rakshith went up to her and stood nearby taking in the aroma of the food. Seeing him, a forced smile escaped her lips but Rakshith was exactly not in the mindset to notice it. His mind was already back in his city and in his world of police and crime.

He said more as a formality, "Alisha, you don't have to strain yourself. We can go to the restaurant for breakfast," he said.

But Alisha insisted, "No, Rakshith. I enjoy cooking, and it's the least I can do for us."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith smiled and sat down on the couch, taking out his phone to check his emails. As Alisha cooked, Rakshith spoke on the phone with his colleagues about the cases he had to take up after returning. Alisha listened intently from the kitchen as she prepared the food.

"Okay, I'll see you in the office then," Rakshith said, ending the call. Alisha turned around and gave him an all-understood smile.

They both sat down to eat for breakfast. Alisha took a plate, placed two dosas and some chutney and handed it over to

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith. Rakshith accepted it with a slight smile and waited for Alisha to serve herself.

Alisha then poured herself a cup of coffee from the kettle and started sipping.

"What about your breakfast?", Rakshith enquired.

"I would like to begin with a coffee, you carry on", Alisha replied calmly.

Rakshith had a few pieces of dosa and then looked up from the plate. Alisha's smile caught the man off guard. "What's

The tale of a single Honeymoon

so funny?" he asked, trying to sound casual.

She replied, "I just realized that we both did a good job of hiding our true stories from each other." The man's expression shifted, and the girl noticed it immediately.

"What's wrong?" she asked.

Rakshith took a deep breath and said, "What did you hide?"

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha took a sip of her coffee before speaking. "My story of marriage was all true, but I stopped my story midway. I realized that I should take control of my life. I decided to avenge the death of that one man who loved me dearly. I joined an undercover operation as an agent of the police department to prevent drug abuse, and we've been doing our part for a year now."

Rakshith looked quizzical. "Why are you here on a honeymoon trip then?" he asked.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"To meet you," Alisha had a hint of apprehension in her eyes. "I planned all of it to accompany you on the trip. I won't lie that I hated it. I enjoyed my time with you. Because you never know...."

Rakshith's expression changed again, and Alisha continued, "Leave my story. Let us talk about you. How conveniently you twisted the story saying your fiancé was a part of the drug mafia, and you became the hero in your story.

"What- what do you mean?", Rakshith stammered.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha continued, her voice soaring,
"You're the bad cop, and your fiancé
decided to kill you to save her life from
you and also to deliver justice to the
number of lives lost because of you. But
you killed her in the name of self-defence
and suddenly you are the celebrated
hero who is trying to eradicate the drug
mafia. You twisted everything in your
favour."

Rakshith's eyes widened in shock and
confusion. "What are you talking about?
How do you know about my fiancé?" he
asked, his voice shaking.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha's expression remained calm and collected as she replied, "We are both part of the same team, Rakshith. We were deputed together to work against drug deals. Sasha also lost her father to drugs and she was a selfless agent who decided to sacrifice her own honour and life to eradicate the drug mafia."

But Rakshith knew the truth but he wasn't ready to accept this yet. He took a step forward, his fists clenched in anger. "I don't believe you," he growled.

Without warning, he lunged at Alisha, attempting to choke her. But Alisha was

The tale of a single Honeymoon

quick to defend herself. With a swift move, she pushed him away and he stumbled to the ground. Rakshith felt strange. He experienced something he could not express. There was a sudden block in his throat and his eyes started to blur.

As he struggled to regain his balance, Alisha calmly pointed to the breakfast on the table. "That was your last meal, Rakshith," she said, her voice chillingly quiet. "Your last meal of love. I poisoned it."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Rakshith's eyes widened in horror as he realized what had happened. "Why?" he gasped, struggling to breathe.

Alisha's expression remained stoic as she replied, "Because you betrayed the trust the society placed on you. All along you had been working with the enemy, Rakshith. And you were willing to put the entire society in danger."

Alisha couldn't hold back any longer. She needed this outburst. She turned to Rakshith and confronted him with an agonizing expression on her face.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"Rakshith, do you know the ill effects of drugs in our society? It destroys not only individuals but also families and communities. If the one person I knew, Anubhav, an educated CEO, lost his life to drugs, what kind of impact will it have on society?"

Rakshith tried to protest, but his words were choked by the poison coursing through his body. Alisha watched in silence as he writhed in agony, his life slipping away. And as the light faded from his eyes, she knew that she had done what she had to do.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha quickly packed her things and left the resort, leaving the man to die. Her duty was done. The government would take care of what needs to be done to Rakshith.

As she walked away, she couldn't help but feel a sense of satisfaction, knowing that she had avenged both her fiancé's death and the countless other lives that the man had destroyed with his involvement in the drug trade.

As she walked further away from the resort, the familiar weight of the past year's events slowly began to lift off

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha's shoulders. She breathed in the fresh, crisp air, feeling the sun's warm rays on her skin. It was a new day, and with it came a new sense of purpose.

She knew that her journey as an undercover agent was only just beginning, and that there were many more battles to fight. But for now, she was content in the knowledge that justice had been served. It was a difficult mission, fraught with danger and uncertainty, but she had emerged victorious.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As she continued to walk, Alisha reflected on the events that had led her to this point. She thought about the sacrifices she had made, the risks she had taken, and the people she had met along the way. Some of them were allies, some were enemies, but all had played a crucial role in this case.

Despite the challenges and hardships, Alisha remained committed to her cause. She believed in the power of justice, and the importance of upholding the law. She knew that there would be more battles to fight, more obstacles to overcome, but she was ready for whatever lay ahead.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

With renewed determination, Alisha set her sights on the horizon, ready to face whatever challenges came her way. She was an undercover agent, and she was always ready for whatever came next.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The tale of a single Honeymoon

THE GIRL
WHO
FORGOT
HOW
TO SMILE

The tale of a single Honeymoon

One year later.....

Alisha woke up to the gentle sound of the spring breeze rustling through the leaves outside her window. She opened her eyes slowly and stretched her arms, feeling the warmth of the sun on her skin. The room was bright and airy, with soft pastel-coloured walls and floral curtains that swayed with the wind. Her bed was neatly made, and a few books lay scattered on the bedside table.

Alisha rubbed her eyes and reached for her phone on the table. The screen lit up with a notification from Preetish, asking

The tale of a single Honeymoon

her to meet him for breakfast. She smiled and felt grateful for his presence in her life, especially after the turmoil she had faced in the past year. She got up from her bed and headed to the bathroom.

After a refreshing shower, Alisha rummaged through her wardrobe, wondering what to wear. She finally settled on a simple yet elegant white cotton dress that fell to her knees. She paired it with nude sandals and minimal jewellery, wanting to keep things light and comfortable.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

As she stepped out of her house, she felt a cool breeze brush against her face, making her hair flutter. She smiled and took a deep breath, enjoying the peace and quiet of the morning. The café was just a few blocks away, and she decided to walk there, enjoying the sunshine on her skin.

As she entered the café, she saw Preetish sitting at their usual table, sipping a cup of coffee. He looked up and smiled at her, and she felt a sense of comfort and familiarity wash over her. They greeted each other with a formal hug.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha couldn't help but notice how handsome he looked. His sharp features, his perfectly groomed hair, and his warm eyes that always made her feel comfortable. She smiled at him slightly as they took a seat.

The waiter came over and Alisha ordered breakfast for both of them. As the waiter left, Preetish couldn't help but admire Alisha. "You look beautiful as always," he said. "Your smile is the most beautiful ornament of all."

Preetish continued talking.....

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha heard the compliment and also at the back of the brain realized that a person was sitting in front of her and talking but her mind was elsewhere.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha's mind was in a flurry as she struggled to gather her thoughts. She felt a sudden rush of emotions as the memories of the drug case came flooding back to her.

Flashbacks of the case played in her mind like a movie, the fear and adrenaline rushing through her veins. Her mind was into how hard they worked to bring Don Vito to justice. She remembered the sleepless nights and the constant pressure of trying to keep everything together. She was glad that justice had been served, but the

The tale of a single Honeymoon

memories of the case were still fresh in her mind.

Alisha shook her head trying to revive back to reality and she realized that Preetish had been talking for quite some time now and seeing her distracted he had stopped talking and was staring at her.

"I'm sorry," she said, breaking the silence. "Something else was running in my mind."

Preetish gently nudged her with a smile. "I could sense that. Hey!! I started to

The tale of a single Honeymoon

speaking by complimenting your smile. You didn't react to that," he said, trying to lighten the mood.

Alisha's mind became blank again as her brain relived the memories from her childhood. Preetish snapped his fingers to bring her back to the present, and she blushed slightly. "I'm sorry, I was just thinking about the story behind my smile," she explained.

Preetish nodded understandingly, but could tell that there was more on her mind. "I see. And now, your smile has a

The tale of a single Honeymoon

story behind it? What's that all about?" he asked, curious. Alisha was quiet.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Preetish pressed further, "What's on your mind?"

Alisha took a deep breath and said, "Yes, my smile has a story behind it, and whenever someone mentions it, I can't help but share my story."

Preetish smiled and said, "I'm all ears."

Alisha started to tell her story, "In my childhood, I had a friend named Devesh. We were very close, and one day while playing, he fell down, and I started laughing at him. He got offended and said that my smile was infectious and a

The tale of a single Honeymoon

bad omen. I felt bad, and we got into a fight. I went back home, and the next day was my birthday. I was very happy, and we were all smiles and laughter. That same day, we lost my grandmother, and I was psychologically affected and depressed that it was all because of my smile. I stopped smiling after that, and Devesh and his family shifted elsewhere, but the wounds of his words stayed with me."

Preetish was listening intently, and as Alisha paused for a moment, he asked, "And then?"

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"Years later, I got engaged to Anubhav," Alisha continued. "He was worried that I would never smile, and he took efforts to track down Devesh and brought him to our marriage. Ironically, he became a world-renowned photographer, photographing great celebrities by saying "Smile please".

"The moment I met Devesh, I broke down. I could not bear the happiness I held within myself all those years and they all came gushing out like the water stored in the dam. He asked for forgiveness and told me that my smile was one of the most beautiful things in

The tale of a single Honeymoon

the world and it was childish of him to comment on my smile and that he didn't not expect it to make such a devastating impact on me."

Preetish was now extremely curious to know the end.

Alisha continued, "Finally, I smiled after eighteen years. It felt so therapeutic and wonderful. I realized that emotions are meant to be expressed. Like sadness becomes a burden when you keep it within yourself, happiness can also become a burden when you are unable to express it to your heart's content."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Preetish was amazed by the story and said, "It must have been ecstatic."

Alisha's words grew fainter as she said, "But my smile did not last long. I lost Anubhav before our marriage due to his drug addiction."

Preetish was surprised to hear this and asked, "What happened?"

Alisha looked down at her hands and took a deep breath. "I don't know the full story. All I know is that he got into drugs and couldn't get out of it."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Preetish looked at Alisha with concern, his eyes full of sympathy. "There's another way to look at it," he said.

"Fate had different plans for you, and it wanted to give you permanent happiness and success. I want to tell you the truth."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha felt her heart racing as Preetish uttered those words. She felt a sense of dread, wondering what the truth could be. She took a deep breath and composed herself, looking at him with a mix of curiosity and anxiety.

Preetish took a sip of his coffee, his gaze fixed on Alisha. "Anubhav's case," he said, his voice serious. "I handled it before you became an undercover agent."

Alisha's heart skipped a beat. She had always wondered about the circumstances of Anubhav's death, and

The tale of a single Honeymoon

here was Preetish, offering to shed light on it. She leaned in, listening intently

"He wanted to expand his business to drug deals," Preetish continued, his eyes never leaving Alisha's. "He started to try drugs himself before selling them. It wasn't an addiction to cope with stress. He knowingly went into drugs. He chose drugs over life with you."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha felt a lump form in her throat as she heard those words. Anubhav had been her first love, and she had always believed that his addiction had been a result of stress and anxiety. But now, hearing the truth, she felt a mix of anger and sadness.

Preetish could see the emotions playing out on Alisha's face, and he waited patiently for her to speak. She wiped away a tear and took a deep breath.

"Thank you for telling me the truth," she said, her voice trembling. "I had always

The tale of a single Honeymoon

wondered what had really happened. It's hard to hear, but I'm glad I know now."

Preetish reached across the table and took her hand. "You deserve someone who sees your smile and tears as your emotions," he said softly. "Someone who is ready to share them with you your entire life. You will find such a person, Alisha."

The tale of a single Honeymoon

Alisha looked into his eyes, feeling a warmth spread through her body. She realized that Preetish had always been there for her, through thick and thin. He had helped her through the drug case, and now he was offering her comfort in her moment of grief.

As she gazed at him, she felt a sudden rush of emotions. She realized that she had always been drawn to him, and that he had been the one constant in her life. Without a second thought, she got up from her seat and went down on her knees in front of Preetish.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

"Preetish, I don't want to lose you," she said, her eyes fixed on him. "I know this might sound sudden, but I have always felt something for you. Will you marry me?"

Preetish was taken aback by her sudden proposal, but as he looked into her eyes, he realized that he felt the same way. Without a second thought, he said yes, and they embraced each other, feeling a sense of joy and relief.

As they walked out of the cafe, hand in hand, Alisha realized that sometimes, life had a way of throwing unexpected twists

The tale of a single Honeymoon

and turns. But she knew that with Preetish by her side, she could face anything that came her way.

They walked down the street, their hands tightly clasped, and Alisha couldn't help but feel grateful for the man by her side. She knew that they had a lot to talk about, plans to make, and decisions to take. But for the moment, all she cared about was the fact that she had found the one she wanted to spend the rest of her life with.

As they turned the corner, Alisha looked up at Preetish, and he looked back at her, a smile on his face. They knew that their

The tale of a single Honeymoon

lives were about to change forever, but they were ready for it. They were ready to face the world, hand in hand, and with love in their hearts.

The tale of a single Honeymoon

The tale of a single Honeymoon

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.... THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME...