The wind was sighing and thrashing in the tree tops and the boughs moaned.

I nervously hopped out of the *rickshaw* as soon as I exchanged the notes, landing not so swiftly on the pile of the ochre brown, crusty, dry leaves; I was late. Unpunctual- it’s not usually me. I was sweating profusely. My over active imagination had already convinced me that it was going to be a terror. Already. It all depends on the beginning.

With my unease lodged like a huge heavy stone in my chest, I knew I was walking into a storm.

Although I was late, extremely late; I took a moment to pause in front of the rusty white gate. I stood there staring into nowhere. A sudden push grabbed my attention as I stumbled to balance; a slow tilt to catch a glimpse of his perfect hair-do in awe was all I got in the moment. I wanted to continue the thought of him but I rushed in with a simple notion- maybe this isn’t that bad.

Cacophony!

I looked. I panicked. I froze.

A group of hundreds of students pacing to classrooms, rummaging through the lockers and chuckling in groups. Just the typical college I expected. The diversity was astonishing. Maybe college is truly where you find your “truer” self. I wanted to embark on this rollercoaster journey too but I was scared; scared of not knowing where and what to begin with. Uncertainty wasn’t my thing until I realised that “out of your comfort zone” is called adulting. It is what life is. This was just the start.

While my mind was flooded with thoughts, I couldn't help but hear this tiny purple-haired girl overwhelming with zest and chattering without a care. Her warmth and enthusiasm comforted me with hope. Even though I completely judged her for her choice of hair colour, I was amazed with her spirit. She was truly one of those people that brighten up the room by just being in it. After babblering for at least fifteen minutes to her other friend, she turned and took notice of me. She immediately enveloped me into a bear hug and introduced herself, adding “you seem like you need to grab a bite!” with the broadest of smiles. I had already missed my first lecture so I agreed. Istill had a pit in my stomach that I was already doing all the wrongs.

But I now call her my best friend.

Later at the orientation, I sat with her and her friends but my eyes traced the entire auditorium for the guy I bumped into early. Shortly, this was interrupted by the dean who went on to explain the exhaustive curriculum and extra-circulars we needed. As she was presenting, with every line, I calculated my next step, drew up my plan, imagined my plausible future; the adrenaline rush was needed. Just the next second, I was lost in a whirlpool of anxiety and fear.

Will I be able to do this? Does it actually turn out the way we’ve always wanted? I wasn’t scared of the setbacks or my shortcomings but of not being enough. The diffidence in my gut raced.

She then stated, “If you can’t do it with feeling, don’t.’’ and for me it was like lightning struck! Do what you heart wants: fuel your passion with determination and one days the dots will connect. “You can choose to write your own destiny with your purest of hearts and intentions. Believe in you and the energy that encapsules us. ”

Lightning struck quite literally as the tumultuous, dark and ragged clouds poured once again. A flash of forked lightning and a great clap of thunder chased each other. Only this time, the rain washed off all the apprehension and tension to release the smell of sheer hope and strength from the deepest of the earth’s crust.

After a huge round of applause and hooting, there was profound silence. As everyone gathered to leave with fueled minds, exchanging meaningful glances and smiles. We all knew we were going to be just okay. And we were more than okay.

I had heard a lot about ‘first days’; meeting new people but instead this time we met our dreams halfaway. I wouldn’t change a thing about this.

When I least expected it, a few motivating words changed my thought process. In that very moment, I sensed the power of words like never before and I knew I wanted to become a writer.

A pat on my shoulder and turned to meet the same guy, this time I noticed more carefully; his big elegant eyes, his even bigger spectacles, a broad nose and thin, rosy lips. He lets me have my moment and then with in a voice i had exactly imagined,

“You want to go have *chai*?” I sighed with a grin and nodded. Just what I needed.