**A Night To Be Remembered**

By Vedanti Kshirsagar (X PPS)

The sky was coloured with palettes of orange and purple. With the heavy bag on my tender shoulder, I was on my way towards my home. The deep cutting wind blew on the road beside the railway station of Nahur. I could see the birds flying back to their nests with the same desperate feelings to go home and rest as I had in mind. I kept walking. The road was changing its colour to a darker shade. The leaves on the trees were shivering in the chilled wind.

Still walking I was in my own thoughts. Suddenly I was stopped by a young man. He was around twenty four, he had a sharp chiselled nose, dark sparkling eyes hair drooping over his forehead. He stood six feet tall before me. I wondered what had made the young man to stop me in such a way. He introduced himself as Akash. He started blabbering about himself. Indeed I was frustrated. I looked at him for a while and asked him out of frustration. “What do you want? I have to go home!” He replied that a girl named Sara was to be operated on the next day and her parents needed some money for her operation as they could not pay due to their poor financial conditions. I suspected that the man was lying but could not prove it as that moment. A lady came and stood she was tall and had a red shawl around her neck. She too requested for the money. They showed me their collection. I tried to ignore and walk away but the young man did not allow me. I took out my wallet and gave him a fifty rupees note. He asked for another fifty. I gave him a fierce look and walked away.

It had become darker. The sky was painted with pastels of purple. The moon floated in the sky like a floating white ball thrown on the vast ocean at night. The moon walked along with me. I checked my wallet, there were only ten rupees left. I kept my wallet back in the bag regretfully. I went back to check whether the man was still collecting money. Yes, he was running from one person to another. Something over there seemed extremely strange. In one corner on a hard rock the lady with the red shawl stood chatting with someone on the cell phone. She was laughing and spoke in broken Marathi.

She stood with her back towards me. I tiptoed and silently stood behind her. Being a Maharashtrian, I was very well versed with Marathi language. She said that the preparation for a party on that day had been done and Akash was making arrangements for money. The name sounded familiar to me. I realised that Akash was the same young man who was running on the street for money, I was very sure that the young man was cheating. I went and stood before him. He lyooked at me my money back and stopped a woman who was being cheated like me from giving away her money. I told him that I had heard his friend talking about the party. Oh, but he was smart enough to pretend that he did not know anything about the party. He called the lady with red shawl and very casually asked her whether she was talking to some friend. She plainly denied and lied that it was Sara’s mother whom she was talking to. I told the woman who was there with me to check the ‘call logs’ of her cell phone. We checked. The last call was to a person named ‘Sara’.

Both of them tried to convince us that Sara was the same girl who was going to be operated. The woman denied to believe my words and was about to give money. I stopped her. I look the lady’s cell phone and called the girl whose name was saved as ‘Sara’ in her cell phone and kept the mobile on speaker mode. The bell rang. Somebody answered the call. Before, I spoke anything a female voice called out, “Hey Damini, is the money ready? We all are eagerly waiting for the party. ” I disconnected the call. Finally, the very sentence had proved the truth.

The young man and the lady looked down in shame. They returned all the money they had back to us and left. I took my money from that amount they had gathered and handed the rest to the police that stood in front of my building.