

Triggers/ Content warning !

CONTENT WARNING: This work is appropriate for readers of age, 18 years and above, due to explicit references to some sexual acts, and strong language.

Also, though, this is a dark comedy, there won't be any offence to any of the races/religions/genders. All the dark comedy is done on the characters, and highly specific to the characters, and there won't be any generalisation.

## **Prologue**

***21<sup>st</sup> April, 2022, Sumant's bedroom...***

*Four more strokes, I guess I'll cum like never before. Certainly, this is my longest masturbation session.*

*Oh God! This is heaven.*

*What? Can't bear to see me naked?*

*There's no rush, I'll pull up my pants after panting.*

*I have to get my phone that's in silent mode, but I don't remember where I put it.*

*52 times! He called me these many times!*

*I called him back.*

“Hello, Rohit!”

“How many times should I call you, Sumant? We agree that we made a mistake. I apologise now, on their behalf too. We’re sorry.”

“The phone was in silent mode.”

“Oh!”

“Tell me. Did you really call me these many times, to apologise, out of the blue, after 5 years of no contact? If you tell me anything but truth, I’ll hang up.”

“Yes, we’re sorry.”

*No. I sense a lie. I swear. Wanna check?*

“I accept your apology. Is that the true reason you called me?”

“ Yes. No ulterior motives.”

“ You, sure?”

“ Yes.”

“Ok, then. Bye.”

“Hey, hey, hey, wait, wait, wait. Please, don’t hang up.”

“ Why?”

“ Please, don’t refuse. You have to do something very important to me. I’m stuck in a very serious situation.”

*See. I told you all. Why do these people act so dumb? He could’ve spoken casually, then, may be after a day or two, he could’ve asked for my help. Just see that sugar rush to seek help shamelessly after 5 years of no contact, and leaving you unanswered. I told you, that it’s a bluff that he called me only to apologise. How amateur way of lying! How pathetic he is!*

*I really don't want to confront him for lying, because I'll really die of cringe, listening to the disturbingly dumb reasoning that his brain cooks up, to destroy the blissful afterglow of a heavenly session.*

“Are you busy? Like, I called you 54 times. You didn't answer.”

*From where on earth, did he add those 2 extra times he never called? Why am I even listening to him? Do I feel that much longing for all those ghastly stick figures from my past to show up again in my life? Am I that lonely, now?*

“Yes. I was recording.”

*Hasn't he just said that he stuck his ass in serious situation? Why does he speak about me, now?*

“Oh, great!”

*Does he even know what I was recording 2 hours ago, when he called for the first time?*

“What's the matter, Rohit? Why did you call me?”

*For respecting your intelligence's sake at least, he shouldn't say that he called me to apologise.*

"To apologise to you."

"Ok. Then, bye."

*I cut the call. He calls again, shamelessly.*

"What's the problem? Why do you cut the call? Please, speak to me."

*I never pleaded anyone like him, not even to any of the girls who left me. If I had done, forget about their re-entry into my life, I'd be sitting in a police station for harassment case.*

"Asshole! You're the one with problem. You called me for help. Cut straight to the point."

"Sorry. Are you busy?"

*I wish he gets erectile dysfunction right when his wife calls him for having sex.*

“ I have to upload that recording on a website.”

“ Wow, that’s nice! What’s the recording about?”

*Nice? Wow? What the fuck?*

“ Morning, when I was basking in sunlight on our terrace, I saw two dogs copulating. I got camera real quick, and recorded that sacred act. It was interracial. A black dog fucking a white bitch.”

“ You’re crazy! That’s repulsive.”

“ So, please, don’t seek the help of a mad man.”

“No, that’s not what I intend.”

“ What?’

“ You’re wasting your potential. You’re not applying what you studied to earn. Why don’t you forget everything and move on?”

“If I hadn’t moved on, I wouldn’t have called you back.”

“ No, I’m sorry. I don’t inte-“

“ What do you want?”

“ Just curious. Where do you upload that video? Who would even watch such stuff?”

*Now, I doubt that Rohit gets aroused to such stuff.*

“ What?”

“ Usually, normal people get aroused seeing humans having sex, right? What’s the point in uploading this weird stuff? How can it even be sold?”

*That’s for normal people, Rohit. Not for you. As long as people like you exist, stuff like this gets sold.*

“ Well, there are some wildly perverse people who’ll be turned on by such stuff.”

“ Oh my God! For real? Do such people exist?”

*It can't sound faker than this. The probability of him, getting aroused to the dogs fucking, has increased ten fold.*

“ Yeah, I did upload once before, on a popular porn site. But that wasn't interracial. The video quality was poor. Yet, it managed to garner decent number of views. Some people watch it for amusement, but, there's definitely a section of wildly perverse people out there, waiting to watch such stuff.”

“ Why do you upload them?”

“Just for fun. I find fun in experimenting to know the mindsets of wide variety of people. They amuse me.”

*Even Rohit amuses me with his stupidity.*

“Ohhh!”

*Has he just moaned, now?*

“Can you share me the link to the video after you uploaded it? I really want to check out how many views it'll get, so that I too can know how many weird people are there?”



*No doubt, Rohit gets aroused seeing such stuff.*

“Now, tell me what your problem is.”

“ My wife...Pavani...”

“ Aren’t you divorced yet?”

“ Be serious. I’m asking for your help, so that we won’t get divorced.”

“ What makes you fear that you’ll be divorced?”

“ She isn’t like the same woman whom I married 3 years ago.”

*Why does he sound like a person with Capgras syndrome\*, now?*

“ Why do you feel so? “

“ She isn’t spending quality time with me.”

*How do you expect that when you’re so dumb and untrustworthy, Rohit?*

“ Go ahead.”

“ She’s not showing interest to have sex.”

“ See, Rohit, usually, you don’t have to let me know this thing. Moreover, I’m not a marriage and family counselor or relationships therapist.”

“ You are. You are. If you hadn’t given up, you’d have been psychiatrist by now.”

“ Rohit, do you remember the most common question I pose before making any new acquaintance?”

“ The difference between psychologist and a psychiatrist question?”

“ Yes. Forget about pursuing psychiatry post graduation, I don’t even hold an e-certificate for online counseling psychology course too, now.”

“ But, you know the stuff, right?”

“ No. I don’t.”

“ Liar. Since when have you started lying, Sumant?”

*How does he know?*

“ What? What do you mean?”

“ I know that you’ve been working as a relationship counselor, and you’re a certified counselling psychologist.”

“ No. I’m pursuing degrees in English literature and philosophy.”

“ You do. You do. But, you also do this, right? My distant relative told me that you helped him resolve his relationship issues. You run a consultancy under the name, Hedgehog.”

“Actually, I’m not a relationship counselor or something even remotely close. Your distant relative or whatever, as far as I remember I helped a woman, who’s a friend of my cousin, to resolve her issue with her boyfriend, and it does not fall under the domain of counseling psychology. It was done because the woman was my cousin’s friend, and he asked me for help. “

“Okay, then. Please help me like you helped her. “

*He should be ashamed of himself.*

“I’ll help. I hadn’t charged her, back then, but I’ll charge you now. “

“ Hey, come on! I’m your friend. “

“No. You can consult someone else. I’ll cut the call. “

“Please don’t do that. “

“₹3000 for a session, and a gift that I specify. “

“Hmmm. Ok. “

“I hate hmmms. I guess ₹3000 isn’t a big deal for you, and that gift will be cheap too. I promise. “

“ ₹3000 is just a trifle for me. “

*Then, why so reluctant? You, stingy butt.*

“Sumant, you’re earning well too, right? “

*I think of ending it right here.*

“ No. Choosing counseling psychology for money is the worst decision you can make if you want to build a career out of it. I hardly get clients. I usually don't charge more than ₹300 for a student per session, and ₹500 for a man/woman with decent income. Since ₹3000 is a trifle for you, there's no problem, I assume. “

“ Haha, there's no problem. “

*I clearly can sense regret of paying more, in that brief laugh.*

“ Moreover, I work part time. Even full timers and highly experienced counseling psychologists don't get enough money. Don't consider that ₹3000 as a fee. Please, consider it as a contribution to your poor, struggling 'friend'. Thank you. “

“ Hey, uhm, this is nothing. “

Is it?

“I know. You're a kind person. “

“ I need to listen to your wife too. Are you sure, only her behaviour changed? I need to know whether she feels a change in yours too.”

“ Sure. Thank you. When can we meet you? “

“ I’ll be busy for the next 2 days. Any day after that will be fine. Please call me before you come. “

“ Thank you. Don’t forget to share the link of that video.”

*Asshole!*

“ I have a question, and a few conditions before you pay a visit to me, Rohit .”

“Yes, please.”

“ There are so many experienced marriage and family counselors. Why do you choose me?”

“ Because you know me, and Pavani more than anyone else. You really study people well. You’re the reason why I ended up with my wife. Please, help me again, so that she won’t end this relationship with me.”

*I helped him. Is that why he left me at my worst?*

“ Ok. Now, the conditions. You have to pay me in advance for booking the appointment. Also, there are some very specific conditions that I devised only for you.”

“ Sure, please tell them.”

“ Lick the shadow of your wife’s pussy, while doing so, film it, and send it to me. Also, watch a few films along with your wife, and let me know her opinion on those films.”

“ What?! I’m not going to do such weird stuff.”

“ Then, go to some other experienced counselor.”

“ Why should I do that?”

“ To satisfy my petty, foolish sense of vengeance.”

“ Didn’t you say, you moved on?”

“ Yes, but I couldn’t completely forget what you did. This may affect my attitude towards helping you. So, consult someone else, or do that weird act.”

“ Please, Sumant. It’s too much you ask for the mistakes I had done.”

*Too much?*

“ Rohit, 5 years ago, I really needed your help. I called you 39 times that day. Neither you’ve answered my calls, nor you texted me back. You didn’t even call me back.”

“ I lost my phone that day.”

*Is this reason convincing to you? I don’t think this is true either, because I got busy tone on his number, once, during those 39 attempts.*

“ No. You didn’t lose your phone, you answered Ravi’s call that day.”

“ How did you know? Did Ravi tell you?”

*Stone in the dark hit the target’s ass.*



“ After your marriage, you passed a comment during your discussion with Ravi that who would care for a self destructive freak who never knew the touch of a woman, and a person cynical enough to remain unworthy of any love for his lifetime. Right?”

“ Come on, did Ravi tell you this too?”

“ So, you agree that you did these and said these?”

“ I’m sorry.”

“ Ravi didn’t tell me anything, I threw a stone in the dark, it hit you hard enough to scream out the truth.”

“ I’m really sorry. I didn’t mean to hurt you.”

*That’s why you did these in my absence? Actually, I heard from many people that you said these things about me, Rohit. Just, tried to confirm.*

“ Do you think that what I ask you to do is too much, now?”

“ I’ll do. I really want to make you my friend again. Remember, how close we were, to each other?”

*Funny. I want to laugh my ass out, as soon as I cut the call.*

“ How will you do that? Think of it.”

“ It’s impossible, without letting her know. How and where does it even cast a shadow? If she knows, it will be the surest possible way to divorce.”

“ Exactly. Your wife will be afraid of your weird fantasies. You’ll become repulsive. Now, who’ll be a freak?”

“ Now, I understand why you told me to do this.”

*There’s no rocket science in it. Even if you can’t understand after my clear explanation, there’s nothing that can fix your relationship.*

“ You called me a simp, during our 2<sup>nd</sup> year of MBBS. What’ve you become by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> year. You ended up being simp for Pavani. Remember, you’ll become whatever you told me I was, if I had focused on playing part in your downfall for personal vendetta.”

*No. It’s really not about my focus. It’s about his static nature of staying dumb, and never actually learning or growing.*

“So, the movie condition is enough, right?”

*Yes, that's enough to strain your relationship with your wife, further.*

“Yes. Please, don't go through any synopsis or spoilers before watching them. Watch them without context.”

“What are those movies?”

“Have you heard of Paul Thomas Anderson's Master, Lars Von Trier's Antichrist, and Pasolini's Salò?”

“No.”

*I know you. I expected this response.*

“Tell her that these are your favourite films, and you'd revisit them once every month, request her to watch them with you, and tell me her response to them, when you visit me. Peace.”

“Thank you.”

*I cut the phone and really had a good laugh after a very long time.*

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- *Capgras syndrome: It is a psychiatric disorder in which an affected person holds a delusion that a close friend/ spouse/ parent/ pet has been replaced by an identical impostor.*

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### **H, Hs, Hoes, Shoes and Homeless**

“ Hey, Sumant! What up?”

*My roommate and cousin Hareesh, is back from the hospital.*

“Nothing much, as usual. But, my old friend called me just a while ago, in the previous chapter. So, I’m ruminating on my shitty past.”

“ Oh, come on. When have you forgotten your past? You keep thinking of it every single day. That old friend from past is just an excuse.”

*Well, he’s right.*

“ Why can’t you act rationally? You know everything. You know what’s right for you. Yet, you choose to waste your time and energy over things that can’t be fixed.”

“Hareesh, you know, in depression, your thoughts control you, not the reverse.”

*This bitch is doing post-graduate course in psychiatry at NIMHANS. Of course, still in the 1<sup>st</sup> year, but he should at least know this stuff.*

“ Then, why don’t you come along with me, get yourself some treatment at NIMHANS?”

*Honestly, this isn’t the first time he offered this help. I’m the one who pushed him away.*

“ Antidepressants, talk therapy, CBT\*, there won’t be any use even if they try any other method as effective as these or even more effective than these.”

“ You even know the treatment options, and use of the therapy. Yet, you give in to your thoughts, and give up on your career, life and everything.”

“ Have you paid the rent, this month?”

“ We’re in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month! Can’t you ask any better question, to deviate the topic?”

“ What about the girl you’re dating? How’s it going on?”

“ It’s great! You can try dating someone too. Why do you just lock yourself up in a room and fap to porn?”

*He knows the reason.*

“ See Suman, I’ll tell you a hypothesis.”

*No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.*

“ It’s called the ‘H’ hypothesis, or Hareesh hypothesis.”

*Ah, shit! Here he goes again.*

“ According to this hypothesis, the man whose name doesn’t have the letter ‘H’ can never get a hoe. Also, the probability of getting a hoe is directly proportional to the number of Hs in your name. Any doubts?”

*Does he think this is some Quantum mechanics? Should I scratch my head and pretend that I can’t understand or should I consider this a joke, and laugh?*

“ For example, my name has 7 Hs, including my initial, so I got a girlfriend earlier and easier than you, hahahahahahaha!”

*Why does he stress so much on ‘H’ while laughing? Why reinforce the fact that his name has 7 Hs by ‘Ha’ ing 7 times. Why can’t he just ‘Ha’ two times, and say HaHa?”*

“ The problem with my name is because of that senseless numerologist.”

“ HaHaHaH...”

“ Stop ‘Ha’ ing motherfucker, or else I’ll blow your brains out.”

*Why have I spoken like Tarantino’s character now?*

“ Ok. Ok. I know that numerologist’s story.”

*You know? Then why do you kill my brain cells with your hypothesis?*

*He knows it, but you don’t. So, I’ll tell you.*

*Actually, I was named Sumanth by my dad. During my 6<sup>th</sup> standard, I fell off the roof of my aunt’s house, not because of my misfortune, but because of my mischief.*

*I had a few minor fractures, but not so complicated.*

*Later, I fell ill, not due to my ill-luck, but because of lack of immunity. It took more than a month for me to feel healthy again after a pneumonia, only to be attacked by malaria.*

*My father is generally an anxious person, but all these made him more anxious. He had done everything he could do, to see me healthy again. But, he did this one thing he should've never done, and it was actually, unnecessary. A rich, stupid, stout, bald and unmarried friend of my dad told him to consult a numerologist whose suggestion helped him grow rich and healthy. Rich and healthy??*

*That numerologist who looked like a chronic porn addict, who would molest kids playing at a park, and like an uncle who's always ready to help his friend to become a cuckold, told my dad that I shouldn't have 'H' letter in my name, because it will significantly harm me, and eventually lead to uneventful death. What? That's what he said.*

*He said, " 'H' for 'harm' ".*

*That uncle should really update, and work on his vocabulary. Why didn't he think, 'H' for 'harem'?*

*At least, they could've renamed me 'Suman'. But, that uncle said that 'T' must be there, because, when the letters of my name are arranged as a*



*circle, 1<sup>st</sup> letter 'S' will be followed by last letter 'T', and It helps in formation of a closed loop. If 'S' is followed by 'N', it will be like North pole and South pole of a magnet, and it will never form a closed loop.*

*What the fuck? Why is everyone so irrational? Why should there be people studying physics and working hard to solve the problems of the universe, when it's so easy to give the dumbest possible reasons for everything, and get away with it, and still earn more money and fame than physicists?*

*Fear crippled my dad's rationality, and fucked my name up. I request people to call me Suman. But, still, some people call me Sumant, and it feels odd. It doesn't feel authentic. It just feels so odd.*

*"Give me bike keys, dude. I have to go, shop for a pair of shoes that I'll use to go for walking."*

*The only constant exterior act in my daily routine is walking. I walk so much that my shoes wore out within a year, after I had bought them.*

*" I need the bike by 9 P.M."*

*" Sure, there's 3 more hours."*

*" Done."*

“ Also, there’s half the medium sized pizza left for you.”

“ No, I don’t want to eat.”

“ Are you sure?”

“ Yes.”

“ I’ll give to that homeless woman near the subway, then. Ok?”

“ I have no issue.”

*Just as I’m about to leave, my phone rings. If it’s any other one, I don’t have to worry. But, it’s Mukthinath. He’s more of an omen to me, than a human. His call definitely scares the shit out of me.*

“ I’m coming tomorrow “, he says over the phone call.”

*He’s pursuing oncology at University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Centre. I’m proud of him. But, scared of him too.*

*He has sent me a photo that killed my hope. I don't want to buy shoes now. At least, I want to give leftover food to that homeless old lady.*

*Done. I have given her the food. As usual, during every break down, I crawl into my bedroom, and sob. If I have energy, I'll shout like a mad man at my misfortune. I make sure to turn on trance music and raise the volume to the maximum possible level, so that I don't freak Hareesh out. He knows that I cry while I do so.*

*After an intense crying session for about 2 hours, I came out to drink some water.*

“What happened now?”

“Mukthinath sent me a photo. The photo from her marriage.”

“Good. Now, you at least got a closure. It's over, now. There's no point in waiting for her, or staying a celibate for her.”

“Hareesh, I was never obsessed with her, I just loved her. I always cared for her. There's a character named 'Florentine' from the novel 'Love in time of cholera'. That character waits for his first love for 51 years 9 months and 4 days. That character even wishes for the death of his first love's husband. That's obsession. I never wanted to hurt her. But, she didn't give me proper closure. She didn't give me a proper reason for

rejection. I just wanted to wait for her, so that she'll come back some day. I just had that most dangerous thing called hope."

"Go, find some prostitute, have sex. Sexual frustration may be the leading cause of your anger and sadness."

"I have neither enough money, nor any mood for that."

"What about your book? Are you writing something?"

"Ghostwriting?"

"I said, your book."

"No. I stopped working on my books. That author, I'm ghostwriting for, has put a deadline for submission of the final draft."

"You wrote something for your own, a couple of days ago. What was that? Fiction or non-fiction?"

"Non-fiction."

"Title?"

“ How not to be a creep while trying to woo a girl, in the era where girls are becoming unofficial wives of BTS idols and members of the most dangerous army.”

“ I asked you about the title, not the summary.”

“ That’s the title.”

“ Why did you stop writing fiction? I really like your stories.”

*He never tells this unless I feel extremely sad or suicidal.*

“ I will. I’ll write very soon.”

“ Ok. Bye, it’s time to meet my girlfriend.”

*Get out. Go out as soon as possible. I want to roll over the floor and cry.*

“ Did the maid clean the floors yesterday? I went to write Philosophy exam yesterday.”

“ Yes, she did. She took the keys from owner, and cleaned the floors, yesterday. Next time, let me know if you aren’t staying in the flat. I’ll tell the owner to give her keys, beforehand. Luckily, owner was home, when the maid came.”

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*\*CBT – Cognitive behavioural therapy.*

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## **Rant**

*I know you have felt that “she’s the one” or “he’s the one” thing at least once in your life.*

*You see a girl or a guy, then feel like you want to spend the rest of your life with her/him.*

*I’m fed up of specifying genders every time I speak. I’ll tell you about “she’s the one”. That sickness. Girls, don’t hate me for not speaking out about “he’s the one” stuff. You can still relax and listen, or grow restless if you can relate.*

*Hey, wait! Don’t worry, I’m going to bash certain types of boys as much as I’m going to bash certain types of girls.*

*I built a nice shell for me, during some time period in my school. I don't like to specify which standard it was. The shell that protects me from a specific type of girls and also specific types of people. But, none could tell you or me, who would fall under that specific type of girls. Let me give them a term, for the sake of simplicity.*

*'Nothmothacs' or 'Nothmothats'. That's the term for that specific type. Actually, it's an acronym. You better not try to expand it, because I'm afraid that you'll call me misogynist or sexist for naming them like that. I know that I'm not generalising all girls. You know that too. But, nowadays, it is becoming a trend, labelling men like me as a misogynist or a sexist, without knowing the actual context. Not only toxic lady feminists, but also men are a part of this labelling culture. What's in for men for blaming people like us? They do this, and gain sympathy or soft corner from toxic or fake lady feminists ( actually, these type of men hope that they get laid with these type of women.)*

*Forgive my ADHD\* brain! Sorry mates, I deviated a lot from that 'shell' topic.*

*There was one such Nothmothac in my class, during school days. She was a cutie pie, according to other boys from our class. And then, there was my friend from the other section of the same class. He used to visit our section, during recess hours. He wanted to make friends with her, and develop a deep and meaningful connection with her. He never thought that she was nothing more than a cutie. I never thought that she could be worse than being just a cutie.*

*He mustered up courage, and spoke to her. It was going smoothly, until I overheard her, telling her male friends and female friends that my friend, Siraj, was simping for her.*

*I heard that term, 'simp' for the first time in my life. I went back home, and searched on the web for meaning of simp.*

*It's an internet slang term for someone who shows excessive attention and sympathy for someone, who doesn't reciprocate his/her feelings.*

*This Nothmothac acted like she reciprocated his feelings towards her, and she dared to say that he was simping for her, and she didn't actually care.*

*Just to boost her self-image. How narcissistic!*

*I told my friend the truth. He refused to believe it. He cut me from his life. Such an impulsive decision, based on blinding emotions.*

*That's the first time, speaking truth screwed up my social life.*

*I built a shell by limiting interactions with girls to the point of speaking to them, only if I actually needed to work with them. The term 'Transactional interactions', will better convey what I mean.*



*This self image boosting thing, it's not just a gender specific behaviour.*

*Now, I proudly present you a specific type of boys to puke at. They are 'Nothmothads'*

*There was a boy from our class who did this to a girl. She was just speaking to him with the intention of being a good friend to him. He spoke to his male friends with such a pride that she had been desperately trying to get his attention.*

*His ass! He told it the opposite, and got treated with biryani from his male friends for winning the bet. Bet was to get a girl who went desperate for him. Man, when do these narcissists grow up? That biryani made him contract diarrhoea. That's a different thing.*

*I'm not bashing such boys because I may sympathy from female listeners. I hate those type of boys. They make girls go into shells, just like I did. Girls develop trust issues because of those boys.*

*Many people take advantage of girls with trust issues. Some toxic feminists are actually born due to the thought that all men or all boys are the same. All of them are nothing more than dicks (Nothmothads).*

*This makes it hard for development of healthy relationship between boys and girls. How can they even come out of their shells and develop courage to trust the other person?*

*I'm not ready to bear the sadness now. I reached the breaking point. I want to hate them. I want to rant about them until I feel comfortable enough to blame myself for my self destructive behaviour, and finally stop the self destruction.*

*Forgive my ADHD mind again.*

*After I had started to live in that shell comfortably, I felt a strong sense of protecting myself from these shitty people.*

*I was so bored of living by myself. I wanted to make friends in my 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standards, but my classmates were shallow, envious and highly competitive. This led to betrayals of faith and cunning tactics. Their insecurities scared me more than their childish tactics. You would never know who would become your friend for their gain and who would turn their back on you, after their need had been fulfilled. So, I remained in the shell. I'm a highly sensitive person. I can't bear it when someone hurts me.*

*On the other hand, I always long for some good companionship. I'm always stuck in this dilemma of getting hurt in order to not feel lonely.*

*Actually, philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer put forward 'the hedgehog's dilemma'. According to him, when hedgehogs live in a cold environment, they try to get closer for warmth. On doing so, they hurt each other*

*because of their quills. This causes them pain. So, they get stuck in a dilemma of choosing between suffering caused by the cold weather and pain when they get close to each other.*

*Similarly, I have to choose between growing close to someone, get attached to a specific person, hurt by that person and staying alone, embrace solitude and finally get bored of myself and feel lonely after a point.*

*I was so bored of living by myself in that shell. I wanted to develop meaningful relationships at least during my undergraduate days.*

*I made friends with Rohit, Ravi and a narcissistic piece of shit during my 1<sup>st</sup> year of MBBS, and with Mukthinath during my 2<sup>nd</sup> year.*

*But, only Mukthinath had been there for me, even at my lowest point and the darkest phase of my life, until I shut myself in, avoiding everyone, crawling back into my shell.*

*I was attracted to her, in an odd phase of my life. Odd because I was being my happiest self in that phase, and happy for no reason at all. I felt a strange relatability whenever I had seen her. It wasn't love at first sight. It happened gradually, over a course of 8 months. I felt that sick feeling of "she's the one!". I blushed even at the thought of her. I blushed all day, every day. It had been a simple tale of unrequited love until I told her. Now, I wish that I shouldn't have confessed my feelings to her. I should've never let my bench mate, that narcissistic piece of*

*shit, know that I had feelings for her. He too was interested in her. Why did I trust him in the first place? Why? Why was I so desperate for building meaningful friendships and relationships?*

*There's one striking difference between me and him. Though there are many, this single difference really matters when we compare our current situations.*

*He never felt "she's the one". Not even for a single time. He threw stones at multiple targets, hoping that at least he would hit one. She was one of his multiple targets.*

*I deserve this suffering. This sickness of feeling "she's the one", is really a malady called 'Oneitis'.*

*This is not a term I invented, like Nothmothac(t)(d)s. It actually exists. You can search for it on the web. You'll get many articles. I'm sick. I treated her like she's special to me. I'm not treating myself to cure my 'Oneitis', even though I know how to do it, and I am capable of doing it. How foolish I am!*

*Now, it's over. She's married to someone else. Even I have a lot of love for her, she won't receive it. She closed all the doors. The problem with me is, I can't forget anything. There's something with my memory. I hate it. I hate my brain, it remembers everything. I hate my condition. I have HSAM (Highly superior autobiographic memory). I can't even forget*

*what I ate a year ago on a particular day. How can I even forget a person whom I cared for?*

*My phone's ringing. I still foolishly hope that it could be her, because this is a very odd time for my parents to call me. No one else calls me at this hour, to check out whether I'm fine. It's 4:00 A.M. She's in New York. So, it'll be evening there. Why? Why do I still hope so even if she never replied to my mails or texts all these years.*

*It's my dad.*

"Hello! Are you asleep?"

"Yes, dad."

*I obviously lied.*

"Dad? What happened? Why are you awake at this odd hour?"

"I'm sending you an MRI scan. Interpret it, and call me back. Quick. It's Mouli uncle's brain scan."

"Okay, dad."

*Who would order for an MRI at this hour of time? If it's emergency condition, they'll first manage it. Ok, let's assume that this MRI was taken in the daytime or any other working hours, why would my dad or anyone ask me to interpret it at this hour of time. Doctors might have interpreted it already.*

"Hello dad! The scan shows an ischemic stroke with infarction, cerebral edema, ischemic penumbra and vascular abnormalities."

" Good. That's what doctors said."

*What? Is my dad testing me?*

" See my dear son. You're smart. Why are you wasting your potential and skill? Even when you woke up from deep sleep, you quickly interpreted an MRI correctly, that's you."

*I'm wide awake, dad. I don't want this type of conversation with my dad, now.*

" I'm giving you not more than one year of time. Attempt PG entrance exam again, and finish your post graduation, otherwise you'll see my dead body. I won't even let you cremate it. I signed a form declaring that I'd donate my body for dissection, to the college where you studied MBBS. I'm serious. I'll send you the form via WhatsApp. You'll be the reason for my death."

“Dad, please don’t say that. Please don’t do that. I’ll write the exam.”

“For whose sake, son.”

“For your sake, dad.”

“I’ll kill myself right now, if you’re doing it for my sake. It’s as if I’m forcing you. Your mother and your sister will never forgive you for my death.”

“No, dad. Please don’t do that.”

*I wish I were dreaming all this nightmare.*

“Good morning, son! Do it for yourself. Bye.”

*Monthly dose of morning motivation. This time it’s very serious and lethal.*

*Funny, isn’t it? All this random stuff? Feel free to laugh. We’ll laugh together.*

---

*ADHD: Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.*

---

## **Fate**

***June, 2023, a week after the INICET results are out...***

*“ Hey, you opened your eyes! My son finally became conscious.”*

*Dad? Why’s he crying? Why is he so happy? I just woke up from sleep.*

*“ Doctor! Doctor!”, he was shouting.*

*He rushed onto corridor. Wait? Corridor? I’m on bed. ICU? What happened to me?*

*The last thing I could remember was my dad asking me to interpret Mouli uncle’s MRI report.*

*My dad came back along with doctor.*

*“ Dad, what happened to me?”*



“ You met with an accident, 3 days after you attempted your INICET.”

“INICET?”

“ Yes, on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2023.”

“What? Isn't it April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 or something?”

“ What are you saying, son? Doctor, did my son lose his mind?”

“ Don't worry, sir. He might've remembered that day very well. It might've had some impact on him. He'll eventually recollect everything. That may just be the most striking memory on his mind, right now.”

“ You were in coma for about a month, following a traumatic brain injury.”

*Doctor spoke to my dad, and left.*

“ It was a disastrous night. You were driving in a sub way, you were riding Hareesh's bike. Only you were on the bike. There was a car behind you. The person driving the car suffered a heart attack, and the running car lost control and hit you.”

*That was so random.*

“ What happened to the person in the car?”

“ He’s dead, my son. The homeless woman living by the subway, rushed to the nearest shop, and called them, and responded quickly. Without her efforts, you would’ve died.”

*I never believed in the theory that tells you about the return of the effect of good deeds you do. I want to go and thank her, give her some more food. This time, not the leftovers.*

“ Dad, what about INICET? The results should’ve been out by now.”

“ AIR 237. You can get into psychiatry at NIMHANS easily.”

*I’m not happy for that. I’m so worried that I forgot a time period of more than a year in my life. I feel that something good had happened to me. I get a strong sense of it but I don’t know the basis of that feeling. Why am I feeling like lost something so dear to me?, something so important to me. Yet, I’m unable to recall what it is. I used to boast of my memory. Now, it’s lost. I should’ve at least had my first sex during that period. Why am I feeling that something so good must’ve certainly happened to me?*

*I wish I had forgotten my UG days. I wish I had forgotten Sia, who married someone else.*

“ It’s all your fate, son. Count yourself lucky, you’re about to do a course of your dreams at the institute of your dreams.”

*What’s fate? I’m experiencing a nightmare, dad. You’re speaking about dreams.*

“ Dad, I want to speak to the doctor.”

“Sure, son. He went on rounds. They said that you’ll be discharged tonight.”

### **Fallacy**

“ We are suspecting a relatively merciful variant of Korsakoff’s syndrome. It’s something called Transient Global Amnesia ( TGA)”, the doctor said.

*After the rounds, doctor came straight to me. He thoroughly examined my mental state, and asked me to tell him everything I remember. Sadly, I couldn’t remember what happened after April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, even though nothing happened to me until I met with that accident.*

*Doctor ordered for MRI, CT and DTI. No significant or worrisome structural damages or changes. Not even fMRI showed any defect in functioning of my mamillary bodies, the structures responsible for memories.*

*Yet, doctor came to this conclusion.*

*In Korsakoff's syndrome, exclusively, the memory of recent events is lost. Recent memories disappear the soonest. Older memories are preserved. The patient's level of intelligence, resourcefulness and wit are unaffected.*

*In TGA, it is a very temporary loss. Usually, the patient can recollect the lost memories within a few days.*

*Now, there's a blank space in my memory. I'll wait for a few days. If I can't recollect, I have to find it.*

*" Nothing much to worry, Sumant. You'll be alright within a few days. As per the investigations, there's no significant damage. I hope we'll meet soon, with your issue being resolved."*

*Hope? That's funny.*

*" Thank you, doctor. Let's hope so."*

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***June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Sumant's flat....***

*I had a dream. It seemed like everything that happened in that dream filled the blanks in my memory.*

*But, how much of it really happened?*

*According to what I dreamt, I had a girlfriend! We were about to get married! , but we never had pre-marital sex. I just can't believe all this actually happened. She was working as a senior resident in the psychiatry department, at NIMHANS. According to my dreams, her name was Sheela Shetty.*

*This is the first time in ages that I had such a sweet and wholesome dream. I didn't want it to end. I didn't want to believe it was a dream. In fact, it was more like reliving my lost memories, rather than just a dream.*

**" Hareesh! Hareesh! Are you there?"**

**" Yes, Sumant. I'm here."**

*He entered my room.*

“Where is Sheela?” , I asked him.

“Who’s she?”

“Hey, don’t try to pretend you don’t know anything.”

“What’s in for me to pretend? I do not know anyone with that name.”

“She’s senior resident in psychiatry department of NIMHANS.”

“There’s no one in our department with that name. You can come and check.”

*I asked everyone associated with her, from the dream. Every one of them told me that she never existed. Did my mind make it up?*

*Except for Sheela, and the events associated with her, all the other events I dreamt that night, actually happened in my life during that period from April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 to the night I met with the accident!*

*Nobody cared much about 'how I forgot these memories'. Not my parents, not Hareesh, not even the physician who treated me. Nobody cared about 'how' because I have no memory issue now. They had declared that it was totally resolved. But, I can't rest. I really want to know why I forgot those memories. There's a lot of inaccuracy in the correlation between the medical investigations and the reason why I lost those memories. I can't just leave this here. I need a proper explanation to what actually happened.*

### **No, not again!**

*My college starts next week, and I'll be a post-graduate in the speciality I was the most fascinated by. I finally made it after 3 failed attempts. But, I'm not at all happy or excited! Not even a bit. This must not be the case, but it is!*

*If my lost memories hadn't returned, I would have been very excited for my post-graduation.*

*Everyone says that Sheela never existed.*

*In my dream, she introduced me to her parents at their home.*

*I went there yesterday, the people she introduced to me, as her parents still live there. In reality, they don't have a daughter!*

*Everyone told me that my mind had altered my memories and introduced a new character named 'Sheela' into my dull, boring life to make it exciting.*

*Was it all my fantasy, because I had been so desperate to be loved by someone?*

*After all, it was dream. But, it was so beautiful. Was it all just a dream?*

*Was she nothing but a fantasy created by my subconscious mind to make me feel happy?*

*I wanted to sleep so bad that I want to dream all that again.*

*I wanted to live that dream again.*

*I popped 2 sleeping pills.*

*I never took them before, even while I was suffering from insomnia. I knew every way out of my self-destruction I had been through, but I never wanted to help myself.*



*I popped pills to at least spend time with Sheela in the dreams, because she never existed in real life. Not even a single girl, ever came close to her in having the qualities she had. Not even Sia.*

*No matter how many times I slept again, with or without the use of sleeping pills, I never had that same dream. Even though I thought of Sheela, every waking second, I never dreamt of her again.*

*Instead, I kept having nightmares in which was re-living the sad memories of my distant past. Those nightmares were about Sia, my first love.*

*No, not again. I gave up on her, after her marriage.*

---

*I hate to speak of this again and again, because it hurts me like hell. But, I have to say this for your sake.*

*I like to address the events of my life as chapters. You might have already noticed this.*

*I told you in one of the previous chapters about my bench mate, right?*

*This isn't more about him or about Sia, that makes me sad. It's the way I reacted.*

*In 2014, when our 2<sup>nd</sup> year MBBS results, we had some serious financial problems in the family, there were fights between mom and dad. My grandmother started to annoy everyone in the house and hurt us more than the way she usually did. She never let me do my work while I was at home. My mother was so upset. She was further upset by my result. Though, I hadn't failed, I couldn't meet up to her expectations. My mom believed the reason to be my indulgence in writing fiction. She accused me of spending too much time in writing. But, that's not true. I don't even have a proper space for study. Moreover, my mind was occupied by a lot of overwhelming thoughts. "Writing stories won't feed you. Quit it, and study.", my mom said. That was true at that time.*

*Sia was never my problem. My thoughts about her were my problem. There were a toxic web of lies woven around her, by Parmesh, my bench mate. That worried me more.*

*Mom knew everything about what was going on with me, including the fact that I loved Sia. I was so careful that my mom never felt thinking of Sia was the problem. But, she never tried to empathise with me, with regard to the fact that I had no other outlet except writing. Mom was there for me for a significant part of my life, but stopped being so, after I entered MBBS. I had to come to terms that I was an adult, and I must be there for my family, and I must give in return.*

*There was a point after the results, when I was so overwhelmed by my own problems. I wanted her to know what was being plotted behind her, so that she could be cautious.*

*I told her that she was my crush, so I had cared for her.*

*I warned her of the consequences if she still wanted to know the truth. She told me that she wanted to know the truth.*

*The truth made her feel insecure. She was hurt because she treated Parmesh as her best friend and a true well wisher, but he harboured different intentions. He made an offensive statement about her, In her absence, I couldn't bear it. I stopped speaking to him completely. I really didn't want to disclose that to her, but she insisted. So, I told her. It really hurt her.*

*I won't disclose it to you, because she told me not to further tell anyone about it.*

*She had a smaller circle of friends. But, because of me, she started having trust issues, and I felt really sad that she couldn't share her sorrows with anyone, because she'll be distrustful of the people who may take advantage of her vulnerabilities and insecurities like Parmesh tried to do.*

*I couldn't sleep, thinking about how she might be dealing with all these.*

*Nearly for 3 months after that incident, I couldn't bear the weight of my thoughts, and finally told her about how I was feeling for telling her the*

*truth. She told me she was really fine, and told me not to think of all these, again.*

*She didn't initiate any conversation afterwards, however she didn't have any problem speaking to me when I initiated a conversation. I really couldn't let her go.*

*I used to cry in silence. Not that I wasn't busy enough to do better things or productive things. I made myself so busy that I'd even skip food at times, but nothing helped me to forget about her and move on.*

*My academics were fine, I really did well. My parents were happy, but I just couldn't forget her.*

*Even in NEET PG, I scored well, but I always wanted to do Psychiatry at NIMHANS. I lost it with a few marks, every single time, for those 3 failed attempts.*

*I was at least happy that she responded to my texts, until one day, after graduation.*

*I didn't get any replies from her. The messages stopped being delivered.*

*And last year, Mukthinath sent me a photo from her marriage.*

*I was still worried about her, until Mukthinath met me last year, the day after my dad threatened me.*

*The reason I really didn't want to let her go, wasn't because I would feel lonely or something. It's not like I won't get any other person who would reciprocate my feelings or not. She was so good that I didn't want her to suffer at the hands of some dickhead who would be full of red flags. She was a simple girl, and I really didn't want her to suffer.*

### **Metaphysics**

*"Metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe on instinct." – F.H.Bradley*

*"The solution of the riddle of life in space and time, lies outside space and time. They are, indeed, things that are inexpressible. They show themselves." – Wittgenstein*

*July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023...*

*The return of my lost memories is not only associated with merry, but also a lot of misery and mystery. I wish they hadn't returned. They had Sheela, who never existed in real life.*

*Medicine couldn't explain the cause of transient memory loss in a logically convincing way.*

*I told the senior psychiatrists at my workplace. They even ruled out hysterical amnesia after performing tests. They too couldn't explain how and why I had lost those memories.*

*I told you that I was doing graduate course in philosophy, right?*

*Out of all the branches of philosophy, I just can't connect with the idea of Metaphysics, because the theories in Metaphysics don't have a concrete evidence. They're just crazy ideas and speculations without any solid scientific basis. I don't condemn that they are false, but I refuse to believe that they are true. For example, the theory which states God created the world in which we live.*

*Metaphysics deals with the study of existence. It makes you question about reality. "What's really real?", they ask.*

*I'm admitting to you, that I always ridiculed the professor who taught us Metaphysics at college.*

*Now, I'm going to meet him, because of his own theory of existence of this world we live in. He just wrote it and got it published but he never got the recognition he ran after.*

*His theory is so funny, but it may provide answers to my quest.*

---

“Welcome Sumant! What brings you here?”

“ Sir, I’m sorry for ridiculing you, and Metaphysics.”

“ Have you come this far, just to apologise? Anyhow, I don’t actually worry much about you and your deeds. You’re just a kid.”

*He's certainly trolling me.*

“ Sir, I need your help.”

“ Yes, how may I help you?”

“ Sir, can you please elaborate your theory in Metaphysics.”

“ Sure, are you going to ridicule it? Troll it?”

“ No, sir. I see a potential solution to my quest.”

“What’s your problem, Sumant?”

*I told him whatever I had told you, and some things I never told you, and some things I never wanted to tell you.*

*“I see.”, he has said, sipping his evening coffee, and gazing at the book on the table in front of us.*

“Sumant, the problem with you is, you take things at face value, just as they are, just as they appear to you. If you’re going to listen to my theory, be willing to accept that there’s more to the world than that meets the eye.”

*I’m in a position at which I want to hear the things that even have the remotest possibility that can prove Sheela existed, no matter how absurd they are, or how baseless they are.*

“The basis of my theory started while I was trying to come up with my answer to the fundamental question in Metaphysics, ‘Is it possible that my current reality isn’t real at all?’”

*He has started foreplay. He’s slowly building up to his theory. But, I was never this impatient before. It will seem rude if I interrupt.*



“ Are you ready to believe that this reality, this world in which you exist, is merely a shadow cast by some higher truth? A faint outline drawn by higher truth?”

“ What’s that higher truth, sir?”

“ As per my theory, all this world is a fictional novel written by an author. We are merely characters in his novel. We aren’t conscious of the fact that this world is merely a work of fiction, and every event is controlled by the words written by the author. You might’ve lost your memories because the author wrote your fate like that. In fact, your every thought and action might’ve been just according what the author might’ve written.”

*His theory is interesting, but there’s no basis, like I have told you before.*

“ Can you at least show me a possibility that your theory may be remotely true?”

“ You already saw it. It showed itself. The book on the table in front of us.”, he has said, pointing the finger towards the book.

“ Sir, I don’t understand.”

“ You published a single novella, during your UG days, right?”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Take this book. It’s not an ordinary book. Write a story in this book. It has to be handwritten. You can create a world that feels real for the characters in that sto..”

“ Sir, sorry to interrupt you. Let’s assume what you said is correct, but the characters created feel that their world is real, and they never know that it’s a fictional world. Similarly, I don’t know that they feel that their world is real and they’re living the way I designed. How can I prove that I really created a world? How can I even know that they’re actually facing all the problems and conflicts I threw on them?”

“ You can pull a character from the world you created into your world.”

“What?”

“ Yes, go ahead and write a story. You’ll understand.”

“ Also, Sumant, the reverse is impossible. You can’t go into the world you created. I tried it.”

“ What the!!”

“ Surprised, huh? Shocked may be more appropriate.”

“ So, can I go into the world where the author who created me exists?”

“ Yes.”

“ How?”

“ He should pull you into his world.”

“ How?”

“ The ‘how’ is just how you’ll pull the character you created. But, the problem is with his intention or desire or necessity. He can do it if he wants to do it.”

“ What if he doesn’t want to?”

“ You can’t be pulled into his world.”

“ I still can’t believe it. If you can really prove your theories, why don’t you go ahead, and announce to the world that you know the reason behind very existence of this world. You’ll become the God.”

“ It’ll result in fractious chaos. Trying to accept that much of what you’ve always believed might actually be false, can make you uncomfortable. Same applies to every human in this world. Though, they may be merely characters to the author who created them, but they have a life of their own, here. They’re all living humans here, with same insecurities, vulnerabilities and psychology of the humans in the authors world. They have several religions and theories of who the God is. If I provide this proof, they simply don’t accept. You remember Galileo Galilei? He was punished for going against the Roman Catholic Church’s interpretation that the Earth is the centre of Solar system.”

“ But now, science has advanced a lot.”

“ Yes, but a lot of people still don’t think rationally, or with scientific temperament. They feel insecure when their beliefs are questioned. They’re afraid to face the truth. Even the educated people are not above this. A group of religious fanatics is enough to kill me, and burn this book to ashes. Then, nothing can be proved. Even if I record a session trying to pull a character I wrote, it’s nothing like literally pulling out the character from the pages. The character knocks on your door, and you’ll open it. People can claim that new person is a paid artist who actually lives in our world. Also, this book has only 3000 pages, and write your story with pencil. You can rub the story and erase the entire world you created. I hate it when such extraordinary powers are

contained in destructible artefacts as fragile as this book, with a lot of limitations.”

“ How did you get this book?, and how do you know all this?”

“ Ask the creator of our world if you can meet him.”

“ What?”

“ I really don’t know how it happened. It was so random. Such random events happen only when the author writes it like that, in the most absurd way possible. As per my theory, even my thoughts and actions are controlled by the words the author wrote.”

“ I have a doubt.”

“ What?”

“ This situation, in which I’m becoming self aware of the fact that this is a fictional world, is it happening because the author wrote it?”

“ Maybe. But, it could also happen when the author stops writing the story. That possibility is just my theory again, this time it has no proof,

because It's not possible for me to know from the characters I pulled into this world by writing.”

“ Why?”

“ Because, the characters that’re pulled into the real world will have no memory of the fictional world from which we pulled those characters. Also, if the story is erased, the fictional character you summoned will also disappear.”

“ I want to try it out, sir, please be my guide.”

### **Rules and Ritual**

“ Keep in mind, Sumant, you can’t summon any other creature except human characters from the fictional word you create. Don’t try to waste your energy by describing a dragon or some historical figure like Hitler or Einstein. They can’t be summoned. It has to be a completely original fictional character. If you try to replicate any other character from literature or other forms of fiction, you can’t summon it. Also, your characters shouldn’t have any magical powers or super powers. They should have the properties and skills of humans that exist in this world only. You can’t summon a God using this.”

“ There are a lot of limitations, sir, I hate this.”

“ I hate the limitations, but the power is still cool.”

“ Yes, sir. I want to experiment as much as possible, note down the observations and find a way to meet the author who’s responsible for all the problems I had faced, and confront him about Sheela. I want to know whether she’s real. If so, where’s she?”

*“Take this locket.”, my professor handed me a chain which has a pencil tied to it.*

“ Write with this pencil on that book. Once you’re done with writing, wear this locket around your neck and chant what I say. While chanting, close your eyes and think of the character you’re trying to summon, and change the plot in such a way that every one in the fictional world forgets that the character you’re trying to summon, actually existed in their world, and remove all the traces of that character from the fictional world by recollecting all the details of that character and it’s records from minds of all the other characters and also from the world you created.”

*Ritual ended. I’m waiting for the character to show up.*

*Someone knocked the door.*

*He’s a kid I created in a short story I wrote in the book!*

*This stuff really works!*

*I spoke to kid. He doesn't remember anything. His face is blank. He isn't worrying. He isn't crying.*

*"Master, how can I help you?", this is only thing the kid kept repeating.*

*I erased the short story. The kid went out of the professor's house, and disappeared.*

*I wrote a lot of stories and recorded all the observations. I had figured out a way to meet that author even if he didn't want to summon me.*

### **The Inferences**

*I'm sharing with you the inferences I drew from the observations of my experiments with that book.*

*Some of the discoveries contradicted with the information provided by my professor. He told me that characters won't have any memory of the fictional world after they are summoned, but they do.*

*The characters that are summoned can actually recollect the geography of the place they came from. They can recollect how the places looked,*



*but cannot retain information about other characters and inter-personal relations they shared with other characters. But, this requires a certain level of triggering stimulus that can be achieved by showing the characters the place similar to the one that they came from.*

*I wrote a short story set in Miami. I never described how Miami looks. I don't even know the Geography of Miami, but I showed him some photos of Miami from my world, he recognised them, and told me that he know those places.*

*So, if the author doesn't provide the description of the places or didn't build the world properly, the world is created on auto-pilot mode which mirrors the world in which author lived.*

*Similarly, if the author had not provided the physical descriptions of characters, some of the characters took the exact physical form of humans in the author's world. The author might have seen these humans, and their appearances might've been stored in the author's subconscious. I summoned a female character I wrote in a short story, I didn't provide the physical description of that character, but I imagined a model's face for that character. She's so similar to that model except for a few differences.*

*Now, I'll share with you, the most important discovery.*

*I wrote a story with a lot of plot holes and summoned a kid from that story. I stopped writing that story. I left it incomplete.*

*A few minutes later, a character I never intended to summon came in search of me.*

*It confronted me for summoning his son.*

*How did the character become conscious of the fact that it existed in the world I created?*

*Because, I didn't completely build the fictional world, as a result that fictional world mirrored my world. So, there existed a counter-part of my professor's character, and also the book.*

*This character cracked a way to enter my world.*

*But how?*

*This character taught me two things.*

- 1) Years of time spent in the fictional world is equivalent to a matter of minutes in the real world.*

*It takes a minute to write an entire time lapse or just a second to time skip, flash forward and back while writing in real time, but all that time*

*actually passes in the fictional world. So, years of time spent there, can be quickly lapsed in the world in which the author exists.*

- 2) Portal can be opened between the author's world and the world he created when a fictional character he created becomes self aware of the fact that he's a character created by someone, and finds out the plot holes, when the author actually stops writing his story.*

*The character's fate isn't ceased when the author stops writing the story, the character's life moves forward because of the choices it'll make, and the life of the character will no longer be in the hands of the author who created it.*

*Think of the portal as a locked door that can only be opened by key, which is the plot hole that the author forgot fix during changing the story in order to summon a character.*

- 3) The plot hole's existence is the reason why a character still faintly remembers the other character which is summoned by the author into his world.*

*This information certainly helps me to meet the author who created me.*

*But, first, I should find the key. The plot hole which helps me open the portal.*

*For that, I must recollect and re-live the lost memories. I hope my HSAM remembers everything my mind perceived during the dreams.*

*If Sheela really existed, it can expose the plot hole, and I can bring her back.*

### **Mukthinath**

***Dyu Art Café, 5<sup>th</sup> block, Koramangala April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.....***

*“So, what’s he like?”, I asked Mukthinath about Sia’s husband.*

*“ Definitely better than you. He’s a neurologist at NYU Langone hospitals. You can’t even dream of getting there, bitch.”*

*“ That’s because I always wanted to be psychiatrist.”*

*“ Hahahahahahaha...you didn’t even become what you wanted to become.”*

*Damn, 7 'Ha' s again. Has he spoken to Hareesh about H hypothesis, or is it just him, laughing like he usually does, especially, when he wants to trash talk about me? But, he doesn't usually laugh like a maniac.*

“ I'm attempting INICET next year, again.”

“ Oh, when did you start taking your career seriously? I thought you'd easily spend rest of your life crying for closure from Sia.”

*I shouldn't be tricked and say that it's for my dad.*

“ Not giving closure itself is the closure. My mind couldn't accept it. So, I couldn't abandon hoping for her to return to me.”

“ Forget about her, returning to you. She won't even come back to India.”, Mukthi said.

“ Didn't you tell me that her husband was your schoolmate and he was in your class during your 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standards too. What's he like?”

“ Not worse than Parmesh, I'll say. Almost equivalent to Parmesh in mindset. He's like what if Parmesh studies well, earns well and settles in New York.”

*Ok. She just ran into a red flag. That's just what I was worried of her. I told you yesterday, guys.*

“ What will you do now? Since she's not answering your texts or calls, will you go to New York and tell her that her husband is just like Parmesh, and try to fix her life again, like you exposed Parmesh?”

“ No, I won't fix her life. I don't want to give her the truth. Let her live in ignorance. That will give her bliss. It'll be like as if I'm conspiring against her to make her believe I'm the only good person, and everyone else is an evil suitor.”

“ Great! You've developed a bit of sense. I thought you're coming to New York with me, to fix her life.”

“ Let's call it a day, Mukthi. Thank you for this meet up. I'm proud of you. Thank you for spending your time with worthless pile of garbage.”

“ Why're you so formal all of a sudden, bitch? We used to troll each other back then, even though you can't do it as good as I troll you, you'd at least try to counter-troll me. “

“ I'm in no mood for that. Moreover, I reached creative saturation in trolling you.”

“ Creative? This makes me think of your fiction. Have you written anything after your novella ‘Jail’? I know that you shelved several works, and unpublished two of your works.”

“ I haven’t written anything after unpublishing my later works.”

*Mukthinath took a book from his bag. I thought he was carrying a laptop or something in his bag.*

“ ‘Genesis du massacre’ is the title of this book. It’s written by Nakul Shetty.”, *he said.*

“ Is it good?”

“ I strongly believe that you’re the one who had actually written it?”

“ That’s some serious claim. Nakul Shetty is a very popular author from Mangalore. His fans will beat the shit out of you.”

“ Are you working as a ghost-writer for him?”

“No.”

“ Don’t lie, Suman. You suck at it.”

“ I’ve told you more than one time that I can easily identify any piece of shit written by you. Great or worst.”

“ Oh, come on! I don’t have any association with him.”

“Okay, then. This is the worst story I’ve ever read. It’s just shit”

*He’s getting on my nerves. I shouldn’t be triggered. He was actually right. I ghost wrote it for Nakul.*

*He went on speaking shit about the book. I lost cool.*

“ The massacre was placed at the beginning of the narrative, not just for the sake of shock value...”

“How do you know?, have you written it? Why do you speak out for to explain the intentions of the author? You know that I don’t consider your interpretations of other’s work. I always seek the first hand or the original info.”

“ Fine. I wrote it.”



“ You ghost-wrote it? For money? “

“ Yes. Don’t tell anyone.”

“Are you still working for him?”

“ Yes.”

“ Why don’t you write something for yourself? Well, I did. You know. It didn’t sell well. You know this too.”

“Hard, isn’t it?”

“ My dick?”

“ I told you to troll me, not to make me cringe.”

“ Creative saturation.”

“ How long do you live like rotten, cynical, heartbroken, lonely and lowly being?”

“ I don’t intend to. But, I don’t want to live a better life.”

“ You do. Everyone likes their life to be better. Even the bitter ones.”

“ Stop trying to give me hope. It already crushed me into deeper shit. I got used to stench there. So much that I got addicted to it.”

“ You’ll be simping for some girl again.”

“ That won’t happen.”

“ Okay, take this book.”

“ I’m the one who wrote it.”

“ Is there any rule that authors shouldn’t have copies of their own works?”

“ It’s Nakul Shetty’s, dude. Not mine.”

“ Open page number 56. The wedding ceremony scene. There’s a surprise for you, there.”

“ An invitation card?”

*It's Mukthi's wedding!*

" Congratulations!"

" Please do attend. Stags are not allowed. Get a girlfriend by then, or rent a girlfriend."

" I have the right to refrain from attending your wedding."

" Think of it. You had several plans during our UG days. You've written pages of text to read at my wedding. An extreme roast."

*Damn, he's right.*

" Three more months, Suman. Reconsider your choices."

" Bye, dude. Thank you for your invitation. I'll not come."

" HaHaHaHaHaHaHa..."

*Screw that H-hypothesis.*

“ Ok, bye! I’ve to meet my clients.”

### **Figures from distant past**

***Sumant’s bedroom, early in the morning, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022...***

*As I have been peeping through the window, ruminating on on the random chain of events that had occurred for the last two days, it has brought me back to the starting point. I'm watching the dogs copulating again, through my window. My phone’s ringing.*

“ Hello, Rohit!”

“ You fucked it up dude.”

“ What happened?”

“ She caught me watching that dog video.”

“You’re the one to be blamed for that, Rohit.”

“Right. But those films! What in the world are they?”

“ Can you elaborate?”

“ In one of the films, there’s a scene in the beginning, where the protagonist mimes sex with a naked woman mould out of sand in a beach. Pavani scolded me for making her watch such an obscene film. She lost her respect for me, now.”

“ Dude, she’s not a teenager, and what’s there to feel so repulsive about that scene. I want to know her mindset. From what you’re saying now, and what you said before, I can conclude that she’s sexually repressed.”

“ I checked out parents guide to the other films. I almost puked while reading the descriptions. What kind of films are they? And, what kind of a person you’re to recommend me such films. I withdraw from meeting you. I don’t want to meet you. You’ll just make matters worse for me and her. I’ll just give you those 3000 rupees as a help, out of pity, since you’re struggling. Go, and meet some therapist. You’re so sick.”

“ Rohit, just keep the money with you, and buy yourself the Fleshlight\*. It’ll help you have the satisfactory sexual experience that you’ll frigid wife cannot provide. Don’t ever call me. You can contact someone else for help. I already told you before.”

*I cut the phone and started writing for Nakul Shetty. I have to submit the final draft within the next 4 days. This way, I can distract myself from Sia, Parmesh, Ravi, Rohit and all the other nightmarish figures from my distant past. It’s done. I’m fed up of every single one of them, including Sia.*

- 
- *Fleshlight – Not to be confused with flashlight. The Fleshlight is a brand of an artificial vagina, oral, or anal sex toy.*
- 

### **Task**

*April 27, 2022, Nakul Shetty's residence...*

“Sir, do you suggest any changes to the final draft?”, I asked Mr. Nakul, who's actually very delighted for reasons unbeknownst to me.

“Can't you see my face? Don't I look satisfied?”, he asked me in return.

“Seems like 'satisfied' would be an understatement, sir.”, I replied. “You look so elated, and please don't tell me that it's just because of the final draft.”

“My daughter's marriage is fixed.”

“Great, sir!”

*Is it any magical period during which marriages happen, just like bad luck happens to me, all the time? Starting with Sia, and two chapters ago, Mukthinath. Now, Nakul's daughter. In the same flow, if I find myself a girlfriend, it'll be a life saver.*

"You must attend."

*Thankfully, he hasn't put any condition like Mukthi did.*

"Sure, sir."

"Sir, there's something I need to tell you."

"You have to do a favour to me, Sumant."

"What is it, sir?"

"No. First, you tell me what you wanted to tell me."

*What a cliché!*

"Sir, thank you. You had paid me salary every single month, even though I wasn't working for you during that month. All my expenses

were at the mercy of the money I earnt through ghost-writing for you. Thanks to you, my parents hadn't interfere with my care-free, careless and self-destructive life, that was at least peaceful for me. It's all because of the financial freedom that would never have been possible without you."

" Why are you telling me all this now?"

" I'm quitting writing. I don't want to write anymore."

" Why?"

" I don't feel like writing. I feel so exhausted."

" Oh, come on!"

" What's the favour I have to do for you? I'll at least do it out of my gratitude."

" This time, we're co-writing a novel. I'll give you credits. Our names, side by side, on the cover page. I won't be merely telling you my ideas to develop a novel. I'll write it along with you."



“ Why? Why me? Choose someone else. World knows you as a bestselling author even though I was in the shadows working as a ghost-writer for you. It’s very easy for you to co-write with other authors.”

“ You have an authentic way of writing, but while working for my novels you write like it was me who was writing the entire novel. That's the reason why I made you work for me, for 3 consecutive novels. It'll be my final work of fiction, Sumant. Please, don't say no.”

“ Sir, but...”

“ You told me you'd at least do it out of gratitude.”

“ My bad! What's the genre?”

“ That's my boy. A romantic comedy with supernatural elements.”

*Damn! Romantic? I wasn't careful with my words. I regret saying that I'd fulfil his favour, at least out of gratitude.*

“ Is there a murder in the plot?”

“ What are you talking? Why will there be a murder in the plot? It’s a complete romantic comedy with sweet twist of supernatural stuff. Like a Disney movie.”

“ A murder would make it refreshing.”

“ No need.”

“ At least dark comedy?”

“ No.”

“ Sorry, I can’t write it then.”

“ You can.”

“ Why did you ask me for this? You know that I’m good at dealing serious stuff. I just can’t handle light hearted stuff. I suck at it. I’ll screw it up.”

“ Just write it. Write the romance part. I’ll take care of the fantasy part.”

“ Sir, please give me that fantasy part. I’ll nail it.”

“ No.”

“ Why’re you so persistent?”

“ Same question. Why’re you so rigidly believing that you can’t write romance.”

“ Because I don’t know the feeling of being loved. So, I can’t. Sir, you’ve been in marriage with your wife for more than 25 years now, and you can write romance better than me.”

“ Who told you that you have to marry someone for writing romance?”

“ To write it better, you need to experience it. I write only what I have.”

“ So, you have murderous intent?”

“ No, it’s not like that.”

“ You write a murder scene as if you’ve committed it.”

“ No, that’s not it.”

“ If you don’t have to be a criminal in order to write a crime novel, then you don’t need a girlfriend to write a rom-com. You should have a true understanding of love. That’s enough. Just like you understand the psychology of a criminal, you need to represent love in it’s true form. Read classics. Work on it. Mix your originality.”

*I don’t want to argue with him. I’ll try to work on it.*

“ I’ll give you 3 lakhs in advance. You’ll get 2 more lakhs after the final draft, and 50% of the royalty.”

“ 3 lakhs?!!”

*He’s so persistent. I really can’t say “no” to the money.*

**Who’s she?**

***May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022...***

*I was restlessly thinking of the plot. I went to all the places where actual couples go to, except the extremely private places. I’m not a voyeur.*

*I went to coffee shops, parks, and restaurants. It causes me a stabbing pain to see how these love stories I see are built on false expectations and how fleeting they are. All of this seems like a cruel cosmic joke.*

*Fed up of cringing to these stories which feature a toxic male and a submissive female or women who disappoint me with their reasons for getting into a romantic relationships and loveless marriages, I decided to stop observing couples, and date someone.*

*Then, I turned to dating apps. I found an app, 'PooMa', date the desi way. What the fuck? You'll get all the garbage of the nation in this app. Moreover, you'll be cheated at least more than once, if you're desperate enough, to use the app after failing.*

*I dated a series of toxic women. Toxic women raised by the social media, internet, imposter and hustle culture, lacking self awareness and self acceptance.*

*None of them ended up well. I found it an ineffective way to find inspiration to write a great love story. I lack imagination to describe like a prolific author, at the top of the game, especially when it comes to the romantic novels.*

*Nakul wants me to give my readers something to smile at.*

*I re-visited Dyu Art Café. I was carrying an old book that was lying around in my room for a while now. It's a second hand copy of Emily Bronte's Wuthering.*

*It was raining hard, and I saw a woman walking into the café, drenched in rain. She seemed exhausted after a long day's work. I wanted to go to her and ask her name. She's kinda appealing to me. Dark brown eyes, anaemic white skin (no, I'm not a racist) , with rosy cheeks, and a red lipstick that sort of ruins her otherwise pink lips. Bluish tint of veins visible in her neck. Armpit length hair, messy, untied. Prominent cheek bones, almost as tall as me, with a curvy stature. A mole just above the right side of angle of her mouth.*

*I was hooked. But, scared too. Hedgehog's dilemma kicked in.*

*I went out of the café without ordering anything. She casted a permanent shadow in my mind. I couldn't shake it off. Even amidst all the darkness in my mind , the shadow she casted was clearly distinct.*

### **Simping again**

***Sumant's bedroom, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022...***

*I was very upset, because while leaving the café in haste, I had forgotten the piece of novel I had written after hours of pain due to imagination of a girlfriend, who didn't actually exist in my real life. And, I couldn't*

*Speak to her. I couldn't even ask her name. Would I ever get to see her again?*

*"Hey, Suman! You awake?" , Hareesh asked me.*

*" Almost. "*

*" Do you need bike now? "*

*" No. But, I want to go to Dyu Art Café. I forgot my book there. Can you just drop me there, if you're going out now? "*

*" Sure. "*

*" Where are you going, Hareesh? "*

*" Dyu Art Café, hehehe! "*

*" For real?"*

*" We had a new senior resident in our department. It's just a dinner to welcome her, so that she feels a bit of ease working with us. The entire psych department is hosting it for her. "*

“ Then, there’s absolutely no problem for you to take me there.”

---

### ***Dyu Art Café...***

*I hadn’t found the book, but I found her. She’s the new senior resident he mentioned about.*

*I was sitting at a different table in the café. Watching her when she wasn’t noticing my presence. Am I creeping you out, people? This time, her hair is neatly combed, tied and she looked formal and tidy. I’ll place a bet with you, you’ll instantly smile if you by chance look at her smiling. It’s that contagious. You can’t smile if you have any paralysis, otherwise you’ll definitely smile back.*

*Cliché? But, true.*

*She’s about to leave. I went to the door, as quick as possible.*

“ Hey, Hi! This is Suman. May I know your name? “

*She was confused, quickly regained her composure, and responded, “ Hello Shuman! I’m Sheela Shetty. You look nervous.”*



*Shuman? Okay, any how. I don't want to correct her.*

*" I'm a bit of a timid person, Sheela. I'm Hareesh's cousin. "*

*" Ohhh! Good, good."*

*" Nice meeting you, Sheela. I'm writing INICET next year. I aspire to do my post grad at NIMHANS. Wish me luck."*

*" Great! All the best! "*

*" Bye. ", she waved her hand.*

*" Bye." , I waved my hand with an easily noticeable disappointed look on my face.*

---

*Actually, she can't spell 'sss'. She can only spell 'shhh'. For example, she spells sake as shake, Sumant as Shumant. She never felt insecure about this. I admire her for that. And, I feel like she added that 'H' to my name, and you remember the H hypothesis, right?*

*We met more frequently. We shared a lot of interests. I was legitimately shocked to know that she liked the films of David Fincher, Scorsese, Coen brothers, Zulawski, Kurosawa, Tarantino, Nolan, Kieslowski, Satyajit Ray, P.T.A, Lars Von Trier, Gaspar Noe and watched a lot of world cinema, read a lot of literature. She even reads manga and watches anime. So, we had a lot to speak about, every single time we meet.*

*We became friends real quick.*

---

***June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022...***

*I received a letter along with the book I left at the café, through courier.*

*The piece of novel I wrote includes a scene in which protagonist confesses his love for the female lead. The letter I received appreciated a part of what I had written, and roasted the rest of it. There's also another sheet of paper containing plot points those the person who wrote the letter thought, should be included in my novel to make it interesting. Those plot points are indeed interesting. Who wrote that? There's no 'From' address. I'll show this to Sheela.*

**Shumant**

***8:00 P.M., May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, Dyu Art Café...***

*Ash I had entered the café, I shaw a man, losht in hish thoughtsh. He had shoulder length hair, untied, looked sherioush. For a brief period of time we looked into each other'sh eyesh. He wash holding 'Wuthering heightsh'. Ish he intereshted in literature too? Hish shkin wash brown( no, I'm not rashisht). He turned hish gaze away, and left the café in hurry. I went to the table where he shat. He left hish book there. I had read what he had written. There ish an outline of plot in hish paper, and a shene he had written, I preshumed. I had taken it home with me.*

---

*Neksht day, my department had given me a welcome dinner there. Thish time, he came there. He shpoke to me. I appreshiate hish effortsh. He wash empathetic, chubby and adorable. We shared a lot of interestsh.*

*He reshpectsh me. My shpeech may be annoying to you, but it wasn't an iss hue to him.*

*He told me about hish crush and how it hadn't ended up well. About hish pasht, hish pesshimishtic mindshet.*

*I don't like to bother you much with my odd shpeech. Shorry if I troubled you. I love him.*

**Unforgettable**

***June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022...***

“So, it was you who wrote it.”, I was still in disbelief. “It was so cinematic or fictional. That coincidence.”

“ It ish.”

“ When I was studying for philosophy degree, there was a crazy professor. He taught us metaphysics. He proposed a theory that our world was actually a fictional world written by someone in the real world, and we weren’t conscious of that fact. Absurd, isn’t it? But, all these events seem like there may be a possibility that it may be true.”

“ Haha, intereshting. Why don’t you come, and vishit my parentsh. They’ll be happy to shee you, dude?”

“ We’ll go.”

“ By bike, all the way to Mangalore.”

“ Great!”

“ Shpeak about our marriage.”

“ My parents told me to join post grad first.”

“ Okie, okie. We’ll shee after that. But, tell my parentsh that we’re going to marry.”

“ Sure.”

“ What if they shay no?”

“ I’ll convince.”

“ Do you know Nakul Shetty?”

“ Author?”

“Yesh. He ish our dishtant relative.”

“ Ohhh! Great!”

“ Do you know uncle Shetty?”

“ Yes. I ghost-wrote for him.”

“ Ish it sho?”

“ Yes, his last three novels.”

“ Great! I’ve read only ‘Geneshis du masshacre’. It wash brutal, but good.”

“ Nakul sir shall speak to your parents, if there is any issue regarding our marriage.”

“ But, my parentsh don’t value Nakul uncle’sh wordsh.”

“ What?!”

“ What will you do then?”

“ I’ll do everything I can.”

“ There won’t be any trouble, if they value Nakul uncle’sh wordsh, which they ushually do.”

“ So, they usually listen to him. You could’ve teased me for some more time.”

“ I’m not good at holding shecretsh.”

*If what my professor proposed were true, I’d forgive the author who created me for all the trauma and heartbreak I had suffered just because he created Sheela for me.*

*I met her parents. They were amiable.*

*We attended Mukthinath’s marriage together, by the end of July.*

*I co-wrote the novel for Nakul Shetty. It was published a month after his daughter’s marriage, in the month of September.*

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***December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022....***

*In the midst of Bangalore’s rain-kissed crossroads, time seemed to pause as Sheela and I stood facing each other. Her eyes, like pools of mystery, held me captive.*

*Raindrops fell around us, like delicate whispers from the heavens. Sheela’s hand moved tentatively towards my cheek, her touch*

*a tender caress that sent a shiver down my spine. Her fingers traced a path of warmth.*

*In that intimate space, our lips inched closer, and I could feel the tension between us. But just as our breaths became one, she paused. Her forehead gently pressed against mine, and it was as if time had melted away, leaving only the synchrony of our heartbeats.*

*In that suspended moment, I could sense the unspoken emotions swirling between us, like a dance of souls in perfect harmony.*

*“We’ll find our way,” her words were soft, like a whispered promise. In that instant, I knew that our connection was deeper than the fleeting touch of our lips.*

*That was the first time I kissed someone. I never knew how the touch of a person I loved actually felt like, until that point. That moment was unforgettable.*

## **The Travel**

***August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023....***

*A plot hole occurs due to a mistake made by the author either regarding the logic, rules of the story world , or in the characterization.*



*That's what I needed to travel to the real world. And, I found it in the form of CCTV footage, from the traffic department.*

*The author changed the course of my story through an accident that never intended to happen, and he managed to erase memories of Sheela's existence from the minds of the characters that knew her. But, he didn't build the world properly. The author doesn't know many locations in Bangalore, so the world this story is set in, is a reflection of the author's world by default. The author hadn't specified the crossroad at which we kissed each other. There was a CCTV there, that recorded us. Sheela is erased from the minds of characters, her household, my cell phone, and every other device, but not from this CCTV. He must have certainly forgot this, while changing the plot before summoning her. This created the plot hole.*

*And, the plot hole is the key to the real world.*

*With the help of professor, I performed the ritual that opened a portal to the real world.*

### **The Deal**

*It seems very familiar. The real world is familiar to my native place. My native place had a clock tower, and now I'm standing in front of something very similar to it. Someone tapped on my shoulder from behind.*

*He looks very similar to my professor? Is he the one who first discovered the book, in this world?*

*“ Are you looking for Shinjitsu?”, he said in a toneless, guttural voice that is very different from that of my professor’s voice.*

“ What? Who are you? Who is Shinjitsu?”

“ The author who wrote your story.”

“ Yes, I’m looking for the author who wrote my story. But, who are you?”

“ I’m not just the one who discovered the book and passed it on to Shinjitsu, like your professor did to you, in your world. I have a greater responsibility to fulfil here. And, a part of that responsibility is to help you find him.”

“ I don’t understand.”

“ Are you ready to choose truth over Sheela?”

“ No, I choose Sheela.”

“Then, follow me.”

*He took me to a home.*

“ Is this the house?”

“ Go inside. I’m leaving. Don’t tell him that I showed you the way. If you tell him, Sheela will be dead. Don’t believe everything he tells you. He’s a very evil person. Highly manipulative. He tries to create a sympathy for himself. Remember. The most dangerous demon is the one that makes you sympathise with it it, and then uses your humanity to doom you. Be careful. “

*I knocked on the door. He opened the door.*

*I saw him, that cruel bastard who summoned Sheela. That Shinjitsu or whatever the shit he is. We look alike! Am I based on him?? Is my story based on his life?*

“ Damn, did I create a plot hole while summoning? This is some serious shit.”, Shinjitsu said in a very casual manner, with a bit of disappointment.

“ Why the fuck did you summon her?”

“ To have a girlfriend for myself.”

“ You, filthy bastard! How can you even do that? You’re fucking psycho! You dumped all your trauma on me, and became the reason for every misfortune I had. How could you do something so horrible? You lack empathy. You know that whatever you write in the book happens in the world you created, and we actually suffer for the shit you dump on us. You are conscious of all that, right? I’ll kill you here itself. I’ll butcher you into pieces, and burn that book.”

“ Do you know how to go back into your world, Suman?”

“ Why are you quiet, Suman? Speak up. You don’t know, right? Take your girlfriend with you. I don’t stop you. I’ll guide you to your world. But on one deal.”

“ What have you done? What have you done to her? “

“Nothing, really. She’s asleep. You know the change of time here, in comparison to your world, right? It’s been 5 minutes since she was summoned, and she fell unconscious. I don’t know why.”

“ I’ll kill you, if she doesn’t wake up.”

“ This isn’t you, Suman. You’re not how I created. Love definitely changes a person. I want to experience that change as well.”

“Shut the fuck up. What’s the deal?”

“ You have to write a light-hearted rom-com for me. Take this book with you. It has the outline of the plot. Our writing style is exactly the same. But thoughts began to differ since you had your girlfriend. So, you can write a rom com better than I can. It’s already proved with what you co-wrote for Nakul Shetty.”

“ You can get a girlfriend. You can meet girls in real life.”

“ No, I can’t.”

“ You, dumb piece of shit. Why do you think so? You can.”

“ Any girl I spoke to, in my world will die, as soon as she accepts my proposal.”

“ What?!!”

“ That’s my story written by the author who created this world.”

“ He’s crazier than you. But, you can write a different story and summon someone else, right?”

“ I can’t.”

“ Why?”

“ All the pages of the book were finished.”

“ Well, you wrote the story with pencil, right? Rub it off.”

“ If I rub the story off. All of you’ll disappear. You cease to exist. Even Sheela. I developed a very deep bond with your story, because it’d be my life, if the author who wrote my story were a bit kinder than his actual self.”

“ I’ll take Sheela back, and write a story, create a girlfriend for you, summon her in my world and bring her to your world.”

“HaHaHaHaHaHaHa!”

“ Why are you laughing?”

“Law of seepage. Did your professor tell you?”

“What does it mean?”

“ A character cannot seep through more than one world. It’s impossible.”

“ I’ll give you the book I used. It has space in it. Write a girlfriend for yourself and summon.”

“ Your book doesn’t work in this world, and my book doesn’t work in your world.”

“ Do you have someone like Sheela in your life?”

“ I have Sia. She’s married to some red flag.”

“ Have you tried finding the plot hole, and travelling to the world of that psychopathic author who wrote your story? “

“ I tried, but here’s the catch. The only plot hole he created led to the discovery of this fantastic book that beholds great power, but with a lot of annoying limitations.”

“ What happened to that plot hole? You could’ve used it?”

“ Haha! That sicko created a character that either fixes all the other plot holes or somehow deviates me from finding the plot holes. I know who it is. But, I just can’t act.”

“ Who’s it? Why can’t you act?”

“ It’s the professor. I can’t act because all my fate is fixed. Every act I ever committed, I’m committing and will commit is already fixed because all the plot holes are sealed by the professor.”

*Professor warned me not to reveal that he guided me to Shinjitsu’s house. Sheela will be dead, if I do so. Also, I shouldn’t be trusting this Shinjitsu guy blindly.*

“ Why hadn’t you killed that evil professor?”

“ First thing, that professor isn’t evil. He’s just a puppet created by the author who wrote my story. The professor has no conscience. Secondly, whatever I had known, I knew everything through the professor.”

“ Can you elaborate?”



“ The author who created my story had not described the world appropriately. So, this world became the reflection of the world in which he existed. This led to the simulation of the book and the professor’s character in my world too. I discovered the existence of book, while I was studying at the professor. I became conscious of the truth behind the nature of reality. This was not supposed to happen according to the story the author wrote. So, the first plot hole was discovered, and the author noticed it before I could figure a way to reach his world. So, he used professor’s character to seal all the plot holes, and deviate me from the plot holes for a good amount of time, during which he fixed everything tight and right.”

“ How did the professor deviate you?”

“ By providing the wrong information about the rules of this world and the ways in which book worked.”

*Should I reveal him about the way professor threatened me? No, I must look for Sheela’s safety.*

“ What are you thinking of?”

“What about the professor’s character in my world?”

“ I didn’t consciously do it. I was the puppet there. The author who wrote my story made me write your story that way, with plot holes. So

that you can come to my world and take Sheela back, leaving me in despair.”

“ Then what about the deal? Is it according to the way the author wrote your story?”

“ I don’t really know, Suman. The author might’ve showed mercy on me, at least through this deal.”

*All these things he say, do not add up. Is he lying? There’s inconsistency in what he’s saying. They aren’t convincing.*

“ What are you thinking Suman? Wake Sheela up. She’s upstairs. I’ll send you both to your world. Take this book. Take your time, write it, and come back.”

*Sheela has woken up, but she doesn’t remember who I am. It’s because she was summoned. As soon as we return to our world, she recollects everything. We have taken the plot outline Shinjitsu gave us.*

### **The Truth**

*Sheela recollected everything on return to our world. Everything in our world was back to normal trajectory. A happy life. We have gained freedom. We’re not puppets anymore.*

*But something kept bugging me. I should keep up the promise I made to Shinjitsu, at least because he created Sheela in my story. Though his reason for summoning Sheela wasn't justifiable by any means, I'll write it for him, and visit his world. I should also look out for that professor in his world. Shinjitsu had taught me the way of re-opening the portal, since I already opened the portal once, I can do it again, through teleportation ritual.*

### ***Shinjitsu's world....***

*I went to Shinjitsu's house with the finished draft.*

*I was shocked to see the professor living there, instead of Shinjitsu.*

*"Have you finished the novel?", he asked in the same toneless, guttural voice.*

*"Where is Shinjitsu?"*

*"Dead. His story ended."*

*"Do you know about his death beforehand, professor?"*

“Yes. That’s the reason I lied to you, that Sheela’s life will be in danger if you reveal that I guided you to his house.”

“ How sick of you!”

“ I’m just a puppet. Go and fight with the author that created me. You can’t. Because of the law of seepage. You too played a role in his death. You could’ve altered the story, because the deal wasn’t in story the author wrote. You came to this world, when the author briefly stopped writing Shinjitsu’s story. Shinjitsu was lucky enough to make the deal.”

“ How did he die?”

“ Broken heart syndrome, as the forensic pathologists wrote in the report. That’s what the author might’ve written. Minutes before his death, Shinjitsu gave me a message to pass it in to you. Since the author ended Shinjitsu’s story with his death, and stopped writing, I became free. So, I really want to help him by giving you this letter.”

*“I was a failed author. If success was measured in terms of fame and money one can earn through writing. I was a failed lover, if love was successful only if the person you loved, loves you back. I was a failed son, if successful sons are the ones who obeyed their parents. But, I at least want to keep up the promise I made to my dying fan. He wanted me to write something for my readers to smile at. Please, make it possible. If possible, please make the book wildly popular through marketing. I at least want this to be reached to a wide range of people.*

*If you can, please give a copy of this novel to Vaani, the counterpart of Sheela in my world.”, the letter read.*

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*\*Shinjitsu is a Japanese word meaning ‘Truth’.*

## **Epilogue**

### ***Shinjitsu’s world...***

*I had done everything I could, and made Shinjitsu’s final novel reach as many people as possible. It had become a huge success, but Shinjitsu wasn’t there to see it. Since Shinjitsu and I look alike, I was Shinjitsu for those people. I pretended to be him until I fulfil his last wish. Shinjitsu is the pen name of Vikram. Dr. Vaani doesn’t know that he writes by the pen name, Shinjitsu.*

*On the first page of the novel, it is written that this work was dedicated to Shinjitsu’s dead fan, and to Vaani.*

*I went to meet Vaani at her hospital in New York.*

“ Hello! Can I meet Dr. Vaani? Tell her that my name is Vikram, her classmate during her UG.”

“ Sure, sir. I’ll call ma’am.”

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“ Ma’am is busy. But, she asked me to find out why you wanted to meet her.”

“ I want to gift her a book that I wrote.”

“ I’ll tell ma’am, sir. Please wait.”

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“Ma’am has asked you to hand over the book to me, and leave.”

“ No problem, I’ll stay.”

“ Okay, sir.”

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***4 hours later.....***

“Hey, Vikram! What’s the matter?”

*Seriously, Dr. Vaani? Is that the response you can give to someone you knew significantly, and he had come all the way to U.S. from India just to give you a book that he had dedicated to you? You had never responded to his texts, ghosted him for no justifiable reason. I hate to ask you whether you’re doing fine or not. But...*

“ How are you Vaani?”

“ I’m fine. Actually, I’m feeling great. Why did you come here?”

*I really don’t want to ask any further questions. I don’t want to stay around her for any longer. How does Shinjitsu react if he were here? He’s supposed to be here, but he’s no more. If I hadn’t met Sheela, and still loved Sia, would her reaction just be like Dr. Vaani’s? Would she have shown same level of apathy?*

“ Vaani, this is my last novel. You’ll read novels, right? Please read it. It’s dedicated to you.”

“ Oh, really? Thank you. I’ll read it when I find time. I have to leave now. My husband is waiting for me, outside.”

*She took the book, and gave it to the woman at the reception, and left.*

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*I returned to my world, but the fate that Shinjitsu suffered, never stopped haunting me. I kept thinking what's beyond the truth. The story of Shinjitsu through his professor as an omniscient reader, isn't disclosed to you completely. I want to tell you everything I knew from the professor about Shinjitsu and the author who had written his story, but all of this feels heavy right now. I feel a pang in my heart. I'll tell you once I detach from that tale.*



