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## Karmic Soulmates

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*Ishq ne 'Ghalib' nikamma kar diya*  
*Waarna hum bhi aadmi the kaam ke*

Mirza Asadullah Baig Khan Ghalib

We met twice...no, thrice, before...we hit it off! The first time I wore worst combination of colours you can possibly think of, second time I was too busy to dress well (which is always) and third time the sari was just “too flashy” for you. Wait...what am I trying to do? Imagine words in your head and sequence of events if you were telling this story to your next girlfriend. How would you narrate this saga of twelve months to any of your friends or yourself? Can I get into a man’s mind? To be harshly honest, after you happened, do I want to get into any man’s mind? I will accept that I tried to understand a glorious creation of God and no more will I venture into the unknown distorted kingdom. Let the wheel of fortune turn to my side of the truth. Is it justified to make a villain out of you? And by doing so, will your conscience wake up, will I get back those twelve months, can I obliterate you and me from our story, rewind and let myself never meet you? Thoughts before time machine invention.

First month: we will count from the third time we met, since the earlier ones are subconscious premonition from the universe to me. Your innocent pair of eyes struck a chord beside Ashmit, five years back in the first meeting that you barely remembered. In a quick flashback I reflected, “What is this kid doing with cunning Ashmit!” My memory chips forgot to zoom in the second flash of a meeting on the staircase or I would have concluded your eyes resembled Ashmit’s by then. That lesson was an exercise for the following eleven months, love is blind you see. My fingers tremble to write about you, the devil tarot card swirls around the walls, heart flutters to think about you as one in the midst of the crowd. After the third meeting, my intuitive self screamed at the top of its voice “No relationship drama. This guy is just another Aman.” We could have been friends forever, each other’s sunshine, pillars of support, and...strangulate hypothesis, I want to write the rest.

The first time I rejected your call in the second month was some stupid argument over Diana. Her outer shell mattered to you ever more. Spiritual guidance whispered, “Let him go, not good for your heart. Do not be the first to call.” I had become blind and deaf to my God gifted warning signals. Thereby, I began an awry chain of occurrences where I called repeatedly and asked for psychological abuse, redoing the process all over every month, and I lost the count. Third month: you brought in Sahana into our plate. Our!? Was it ever ours? It was a plate full of your girls. Some were my friends, some were yours; few were common friends. A release of your pent-up frustrations for not standing a chance with them.

I was trying to understand depression – yours and mine. I take to writing, perhaps you take to women, forget the daily pain for a while basking in their attention. You itched for fights; one paved the way for many. I tried relentlessly to sustain a balance, tranquillity, harmony for the next four months. There...there...you said it in the seventh month, “I like restless, happening days like these.” What I was trying to achieve was not how you wanted your life to look like. You did aspire to attain a part of me, because you were not all that you saw in me, your aim was to break my composure, calmness, emotional stability and drag me into Pandora, closer to you. Have you watched children disturbing a perfectly ripple less pool by throwing pebbles? There is no depth in the act, one of their many other childish quirks. In normal world, they often put it in these words, “just for gags.”

Eighth month: my mother visits. You wanted to have lunch with her; the message kindled dreams I had thrown out of the window. Mystical signs said, “This is the same guy who talked about a live-in relationship. He never has patience with your mood swings or panic attacks. Can you be giving in to an energy vampire all your life?” This period of the trial, I was blind, deaf and dumb. Hope springs like a fountain and gushes with droplets of joy with no tangible bearings. Bits of good memories – that time when you dropped your half-bitten chicken on my plate, that terrible night when you hugged me in the deserted street, when you came early morning with my birthday present, those looks from various corners at the workplace, you got me juice when I was bedridden, the “miss you a lot” texts after fights and countless sweet nothings. You fell in love when I had fallen out of it. My doom days were getting over and yours were to begin.

Ninth month: the drumming in my soul was deafening, much more than I ever screamed at you, my inner light was screaming at me for drowning it in obscurity when you said, “God! I heard the way you shout.” My friends said, “You are dating a boy who doesn’t want to grow up. He will bring out the worst in you!” He did. Did I leave him? Did I have the will to leave him? Both answers are negative. You met me at intervals, after meeting that buddy you have for eat outs, gym partner, another soul sister and a brother. Those talks about the many pretty, suave, sexy, oh-so-wanted girls to a dumb, deaf, blind intellectual catch, kept aside for revelations of the soul.

Can you talk to a five-year-old about *moksha*? I was doing that. It was Greek and Latin to you. You would come when I had chocolate treats to distract you. Excuses flooded more than the floods around the world, “Did you know my state of mind?” It is selfish to expect though that you would understand the same for anybody you love or me, i.e., if you ever loved me. Tenth month: “Yes, yes!! You have to give me what I demand for, or I will leave you.” Anger swelled in my best friend when I told her. The fool’s cards to chastise, psychology journals to know the medicine for your state of mind, could be useful if I was emotionally detached.

Your true colours were coming out with the yearly anniversary so I gave you all you wanted to make your pot of Saturn overflow. “Does it hurt your female ego to cry in front of me?” I cried. “Have you tried listening to me?” I did. “You never demand anything.” To give you opportunities one after the other to break my hopes, disappoint me, crumble me piece by piece into blithe, I demanded. How can somebody soar up to glory having as much as hard a life as you? That too, a woman?! If she brings out the shallowness in you, she is the vamp. In your well of darkness the light of Mother Mary, Goddess Kali, Bathsheba and Gargi Vachaknavi do not enter.

You were not listening when I warned, “Beware of the day I get tired. You are an ordinary man. Even a demon would be scared of me.” Last phase/Eleventh month: *Durga durgatinashini asura sangharini*. That time of the year when Goddess Durga comes on earth to destroy the evil within. All your bitterness, vindictiveness, coarseness inside me diluted into Her black infinity. I freed myself from your strings and your soul cleansed of these elements. Your wife will see the sweetest you and never know that I took the brunt nor will thank me. You will not know about my death or rebirth. I cannot think of a better punishment for you. Aslima, Antara and your debates will not matter fifty years from now,

and that is all you will have then. To live with matterless substance is penance; to keep somebody who matters it requires hard work, dedication and “what not,” that is beyond you.

A roadside idler met Juliet and wanted her to believe he was Romeo. Juliet respected his practicality to stand by his family and look after himself but how could she fail to see absence of the ability to love in him. Straight from the horse’s mouth, “I caught you at your weakest.” My twin flame says, “I am glad I found you depressed, or it would be next to impossible to marry you.” A man who cannot stay at my weakest is not worthy to have me when I am at my strongest. Your words were malfunction to your goals. Toxic relationships, abusive husbands and why women stay back are path-breaking research topics, don’t you think so? I know better than to judge those women now, love is ahead of theories. Albeit, the clairvoyant was right, you might as well have been my past life husband who was the mastermind behind my murder. I will not let history boast by reiterating.

No soothsayer needs to affirm you are that karmic partner I was destined to finish unfinished business; that pull towards you despite all toxic comments, spirits spoke to me through dreams from another world, “He will do it yet again in this lifetime. Save yourself.” This lifetime I would rather play the hermit, if there is no knight for the queen; I refuse to put up with the fool who will drain me of all human emotions.

Twelfth month: the lights turned off in OT and the doctor went out to tell my mother, “She is brave. She will snap out of it.” Weeks later the phone beeped, a whatsapp text read, “If you do not tell me where you work...” I looked at the tears in my mum’s eyes and blocked the number. You do exist, a mortal who does not care about my well-being or understands A B C of humaneness, will start with his banter of wants and I had run out of emotions for him. A deaf, dumb and blind girl got back on her feet to laugh at the last thought of the former kind she had left far behind, “Really wanted to wish him luck and leave on a pleasant note. I had to tell him I liked the brown shirt.”

Let no darkness ever kill your light. Let toxicity never touch your soul; body can be cleansed of stains. I will pray for his health and wealth, which might restore his sanity, his humanity; there is still a chance that he might be human and I the intelligent devil (it is possible to be objective, now that you are just another stranger).