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Fragrance of Love

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“How can I stay away from you?” cried Ria and started weeping against Raj’s chest. Raj put his hands around her and kissed her forehead with tears in his eyes.

“You are my strong girl, don’t cry, we can manage the situation.”

Raj and Ria got married in the year 2005. Though being from the same caste Raj’s family was not ready to accept Ria as their daughter-in-law. Raj was determined to have Ria in his life. After facing a lot of issues in their family, they convinced their families and became one soul on 4 Dec 2005. They got what they had dreamt of. On October 4, they were blessed with a son, Arjun, who completed them and made their world blissful. They both were happy in their profession, but at some point, they realized that they should try for a government job to have a steadiness in their later years of life. They both started filling forms. Raj’s keen eyes were always on the employment newspaper.

“Ria there are vacancies in your field in engineering colleges, the job you were dreaming of”.

“What about the vacancy in your field?” inquired Ria.

Raj: yes, I will also apply and hope that at least one of us could get the job.

Both of them filled the forms, appeared for the written test. 15 days after while having tea in the evening Ria received a call from one of the colleges in which she had applied for.

“This is an unknown number I will not pick the call. Students have developed the tendency of calling on off days”, Ria murmured in irritation as she was with Raj.

The phone rings again showing the same number. Ria in irritation picks up the phone and get shocked, the call is from one of the engineering colleges confirming the interview. She got excited and hugged Raj. “You will also soon receive a call”.

Time passes Raj did not receive any call but was very happy as Ria got a chance to prove her capability. Since the time was very less and Arjun was small enough to be left alone at home, so they decided to take him along with them. Raj said, “we will go by flight, it saves our time”.

Ria: No, Never...flight... I would prefer to die rather than to go by flight.

Somehow Raj convinces Ria and the day comes when three of them have to board a flight. “I have kept cotton balls and orange candies to control the ear pressure”. She nervously said. Being alert during every process of boarding her heart is beating at a very high pace. She boards the airbus and starts chanting prayers. It took around 1 hour for them to reach Lucknow from Delhi. Raj kept on telling Ria to be confident and give her best. The day came 29 November, Raj’s birthday, Ria gave her interview and was confident about her selection as she gave her best and it was her lucky day...her Raj came into this world. After the interview they decided to celebrate the day. They went to Zoo as Arjun is fond of birds and animals. His sparkling eyes scanned every bird and animal. Trio went for candlelight dinner to make the day more special and cherished every moment they spend on that special day. They came back to Delhi eagerly waiting for the result.

After one week,

Bip! Bip! Ria’s mobile rings twice, an indication of the incoming message.

“It’s a message from the university,” screamed Ria. Raj snatched the mobile from Ria’s hand and read the message, “They have asked to collect joining letter after two days from Lucknow”.

With fumbling voice and tears in eyes, Ria shrank in Raj’s arms. She has to reach Lucknow on 7th. They made all the necessary arrangements and reached Lucknow. The sweet dream they saw was about to fulfill but the moment they came to know that Ria has to join on that very day and the posting was 750 km away from Raj, it became a nightmare. They were not able to accept reality.

Somehow Ria accepted the offer and requested the director to permit her to join the college after two days, as she has to make all the necessary arrangements of her baby and her Raj. With a heavy heart, Raj and Ria made all the arrangements, but both of them were not ready to accept that they are going to live away from each other. While packing her bag her tears were rolling

out and in the other room Raj was trying to control his emotions but could not stop his tears. They tightly hugged each other and wept. Raj accompanied Ria to her college in Banda. She has to stay in hostel, away from her family. Luck has twisted their lives. In the evening Raj left Ria and went back to Delhi. Now Raj has to take care of Arjun and himself. It's now being four months Raj has learnt a lot of things. He prepares food for Arjun and made him ready for school. Ria, on the other hand, travels after every 15 days to meet her little world. Raj sometimes gets irritated and shows his anger through anti-love messages, but their love is so deep ...so true that in anger also one can feel the fragrance of love.

Biographical Details of Author:

Dr. Archana Singh is an Assistant Professor at Rajkiya Engineering College Banda, Uttar Pradesh. Earlier she was Associate professor at Amity School of Liberal Arts, Amity University Haryana, Gurgram. She completed her Ph.D from C.S.J.M. University Kanpur. She has fourteen years of rich teaching experience in different institutes and universities. Her specialization/interests include Innovative Teaching & Learning Methodology, English & Applied Communication, Business & Corporate Communication, and Contemporary Literature. She has authored 2 books: *Alienation & Estrangement in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal* and *An Innovative Approach to Comprehension and Composition*. She has also edited 2 books: *Dynamics of Progression: A critical Overview of Indian Women's Writing in English* and *Theorizing Cultural Contemporaneity: A Paradigmatic Approach to Popular Fiction and Films*. Her several poems, short stories and many research papers are published in National and International Journals.