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Fear

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I often pondered over the fact that “ what shall I become in my future”? But everything is destined. The director of my life has already created a thrilling plot for the story of my life. Certain things are out of our control. But to have a wish, or to imagine our future is the only thing which we can do.

I wanted to become a professor of philosophy and teach young generation the secrets of life and soul. I very often imagined myself as a professor, among young girls and boys; a reading glass on my eyes, and a big book of German philosophy in my hands. But there was something different written in my future.

My dad, was a retired army officer of a very low rank, and our family moved to different places of the country, wherever he got transferred. We belonged to a lower middle class family, but are contented whatever we have. My family comprises of five members. I am the eldest one and my younger sister Sonum, who is in her eleventh class, and the younger brother Nikhil in his 7th class, including my parents.

I qualified my graduation in arts and, now eager to join university for higher education. I being very enthusiastic about my higher studies, came home to inform dad about my future plans, but dad has thought something different for me. Now that our family is surviving on dad’s pension, dad wanted me to join some job. My dreams got shattered and finally I agreed to what dad said.

“Ok dad I am fine with your idea”

I wanted to support my family financially. I searched for a job in every newspaper, but in vain. Finally my dad took the charge of searching a job for me.

I have a passion for cricket and always find solace in watching cricket match on T.V. I am a very good batsman and I wanted to represent Indian team, but that too, a dream impossible. I am neither Kant nor Sachin, but my both dreams got shattered when I joined CRPF. I got posted in Delhi and tried a lot to adjust with my job. Whenever, I close my eyes I find myself in a classroom teaching Kant. Reality is a burden, we live our life in imagination. Somehow I adjusted with my life.

In Indian culture when you have a job, you are fit for marriage. My dear mom wanted me to get married. After some days of continuous efforts, my mom succeeded in getting a very pretty “Bahu” for her. I got engaged and I found Sonia, a very pretty, innocent, and soft hearted person. Soon I started loving Sonia and we used to spend evenings together. I always used to take Sonia on a bike rides. One day I took her on my bike to watch a movie, a small pup came under my bike. Sonia screamed and I stopped my bike and Sonia took the pup in her lap and cut her duppata and wrapped it round the pup. We took pup to a Vet and got it dressed and injected. She took it to her home. But she got very upset.

“I cannot see any living being in blood.” “ I am upset with this accident”

I got flabbergasted to see Sonia’s behaviour. She is so naive and innocent. I am really happy to have such a noble soul in my life.

Days passed and sometimes I feel I am not happy with my life, but Sonia came as an angel in my life, and I started loving my life. One day my parents announced my marriage and we all were very happy with this idea, especially my younger siblings. My younger brother was so excited that he decorated his room with our photographs. I got married and I wished to go to Kashmir for our honeymoon, but once again got disappointed. My parents wanted us to go to Shimla, with the word “Kashmir” my parents get paranoiac.

“Ma! What is this. I want to go to Kashmir. Dad got tickets for Shimla”.

“Ram rakhi kare” you know Kashmir is a mirage. It is beautiful, but bloody. No! You are not going there?

So this is how my next dream got shattered. Still happy to spend some lovely moments with Sonia, I forgot about my dream to visit Kashmir. Days passed and I really felt that Bagwan is gracious towards me. Sonia got well adjusted with my family. We Indian men are selfish: we want both milk and cream. Wife as well as family. Sometimes I feel sorry for Sonia, she is enjoying cream only not the milk. Anyways, “I am doing good” that matters a lot.

One fine morning I got an envelope, and my heart started beating loudly. I opened the envelope and found a transfer order in it. I screamed “Sonia, Sonia”

“What happened?” she replied.

“I got transferred to my dream place”

“Where? Oh God Kashmir”

“Yes” I replied

I gave this message to my mom and dad but they got upset. Finally, I packed myself to be ready to go to Srinagar. I found Srinagar a very beautiful place. It was month of April, and I enjoyed every day here. I missed my family very much, but the beautiful city helped me to adjust with my job. My words fail to express the beauty of the valley. The weather is romantic, and the air is drowsy. The people in Kashmir are very hospitable and lovely. The women here wear dupatta to cover their heads, and the men usually wear Khan-Suit. They have fair skin with pink cheeks. It really reminded me of a couplet by Jahangir, “Agar Firdous bi royay zameen ast/ hami asto hami asto hami ast”. I have watched many T.V Serials like Ramayana and Shakuntala, and have imagined “Surag” and “Apsaras”. I think this place is the real Surag on earth, and the surag of my imagination.

I joined my duties at headquarters and my office was at Lal-Chowk. During these days I visited almost all the places and gardens in Srinagar. I had a sikara ride on Dal Lake. I found myself lucky enough to be part of this valley. Everything looked soft, serene, and cool here. No pollution, no noise, and not any hustle and bustle. For the first time I have seen blue skies, which guard this valley and spread peace everywhere. I called Sonia to come here, but to my surprise she gave me a good news. She is pregnant. After a month I took official leave

and went to Delhi. I convinced Sonia to accompany me to Srinagar, but once again my parents refused. I came back with a sad heart.

In the month of June, here in Kashmir they celebrated Ramdhan. People were very busy in praying in mosques. I also attended many Ifftar parties. After a long month of fasting, people got busy in Eid celebrations. The sweet aroma of Khewa filled the air with saffron and cardamom essences. Everything was so nice and peaceful here. After eid suddenly the calm and peaceful valley turned into torpedo. A terrorist was killed by army.

“If he was a terrorist why people turned violent” I asked my colleagues. Believe me no body satisfied me with a good answer.

The whole city of Srinagar, which was filled with the fragrance of saffron, turned into smoky and dusty one. The air is now filled with smoke of tear gases and bullets. I too am a policeman, but believe me I never wanted to kill anyone. I have a humble heart under my bosom. The more you grow old, the more you get attached to your family. Now that I am going to be a dad, my heart is filled with love and passion. I never believed in violence. I am follower of Ghandi, and worshipper of peace and love.

“Religious fanaticism makes brothers to kill each other

But two strangers get united with the conversation of love”

I had to present myself before headquarters for emergency duty. We were given pellet guns and were given orders to shoot at sight. I was taken in a bullet proof wagon to another city. During an hour distance I could see only dust and smoke. The siren of ambulances made me cry. We reached Anantnag, and suddenly thousands of people gathered and pelted stones on army and police vehicles. We got down from our cabs and our officer commanded us to control the mob. Hundreds of kids got injured and some were killed also. My co-officer killed many of them. I was watching this like a apparition. He yelled at me and said, “come on fire” he once again screamed at me, “what the hell, why don’t you fire?”

“No I can’t” I replied.

I could not lift my gun. I never thought of killing any one. God what is this I am son of Adam and Eve. I love peace. Whenever I tried to lift my gun I failed. I shivered. My officer yelled at me. “Come on fire at the mob kill these bastards”. I lifted my gun but my hands trembled. I tried to fire, but I could hear the whispers of my younger brother, “bro don’t kill me” ultimately I gathered some devilish courage and I fired on the mob. A boy of fifteen years old fell-down. I screamed “Rahul my love my brother, how could I kill you”. My thumb moved aimlessly and another victim was a young girl. Blood was oozing from her eyes. I lost my control and put my gun down and moved towards the mob to save my brother and sister. Hundreds of innocent faces were covered with blood. Mothers were beating their chest. I could see my mom beating her chest and Sonia holding a baby crying for help. I moved towards the mob to help them but they call me murderer and ran away from me. I sat down and cried, “I am not a murderer, I am a brother, a son, a dad. How can I be a murderer” I am all alone sitting on a slab of a street, full of smoke, stones and tear gas shells. Bloody,

bloody are the lanes and my hands are also bloody. I tried to wipe away blood from my hands, but could not. Like lady Macbeth I turned psychotic. I hated myself. I feared to open my eyes. I feared and trembled and close my eyes I saw myself wearing spectacles and a book of philosophy in my hands.