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ISSN 2278-9529
Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal
www.galaxyimrj.com

The Black Butterfly

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Memories, and situations leading to these so-called memories are the strongest parts of every person's life; Everything we do and everything that happens to us plays an important part in what we become. I always look and wonder, how there are millions of people around me with their own beautiful stories and memories. What made them as they are today? I always wonder and the answer stays as a curious delight to me even today. But simple as it is what made me the person I am today are the situations and memories that led me here.

I was called Rosa by my parents. They loved me a lot, that I knew very well. They showed me love in every possible aspect. They made me study despite the hardships they faced. They worked very hard to feed me and my sister. I loved them a lot. I have heard a lot of people singing throughout my life, but never have I heard someone sing as gracefully and painfully as my mother. Singing became a part of my life because of that strong lady who fought all the odds of life, and would still not shed a tear to keep us strong.

Going to school was the hardest part of my life, having to see the white kids was even more hard. The best part of going to school was to meet my friends Benjamin and Lizzy. They were coloured just like me, they made me comfortable and I loved even the silliest jokes they made. The white kids always treated us badly. We had to stay outside till they finished their games of hide and seek. Benjamin and Lizzy could tolerate all that they did but to me it was something impossible to do. I always got into a fight with them, and ended up getting called an ugly gypsy. The one I hated the most was Gertrude, she always ended up insulting my mother. The only wrong thing my mother did was working at Gertrude's house.

My elder sister was the angel of my parent's eyes. I was always jealous of her, she always stayed at home and enjoyed every day. I, on the other hand had to go to school for no reason and suffer undeserved humiliations. My sister was always eager to listen to all my stories, as soon as I get back home from school. She sometimes annoyed me but I loved her more than words can explain, she was the kindest and prettiest person I ever knew.

My life went on just like a journey on a straight road, and it kept getting boring day by day. The best part of everyday was the end of it, when my mother would sing us the song of the 'Black Butterfly'. It is the best song I have ever heard, that no one has ever sung or heard of. The song was a beautiful secret of my mother's mind which poured out through her lips. It was a secret that only my sister and I knew about and it went like this:

Come here children come and see,

Oh!this is rare to see,

fully Black and majestic is she,

*this beautiful butterfly,
rare to see.
You don't disturb the silent dark,
And beautifully enchant the dawn,
Oh! Dear butterfly beautifully black,
Fly away on your own track,
Oh! Dear butterfly beautifully black,
My dear butterfly,
Rare to understand,
Fly away, fly away, fly away to that promised land.*

I loved my mother's song; her bold voice suited it very well and listening to her daily, I fell in love with music. I would stay up till my mother finishes the song, but my sister will fall asleep halfway through the song. She never once has stayed up till the song ended. She was a real sleepy head. Mom would always cry, when my sister Mary falls asleep, not much, she would shed just a tear.

One morning, all my doubts became clear. I woke up early and taunted my sister to play with me. Despite her tiredness, she woke up. Calling her a lazy sloth I ran to open the door before her. I touched the door and turned to make fun of my lazy sister, but all I could do was hold my breath in fear. I saw my sister collapse to the ground right in front of me. I couldn't move, couldn't scream and everything around me went blank. Pushing through all these disturbing feelings, I ran to her and called for mother. Mother came rushing and it was the first time that I have ever seen her confused and not knowing what to do.

I could only look at Mary, while many thoughts surrounded me. Why is she like this? What should I do? Is she pretending?

So many thoughts but not even a single explanation. Mother went through all the medicine boxes like a crazy person. As I was looking at all of this, Mary finally spoke; she asked me for water, I rushed in to get it. That day was the worst of all the days I have spent on Earth. I heard mother telling Father about the disease Mary had. She told him that Mary was getting worse, and that she had only a little time to live. This cannot be true, Mary cannot leave me, how can I live alone? who will play with me? who will listen to all my stories? So many thoughts just rushing through my little head. I took some water to Mary, and she had just a sip of it.

The next day Mary felt better, but I was getting mentally worse. I couldn't control and asked if she was going to die. She said yes and smiled. How could she smile even at such a hard situation? What my sister asked me on that day, changed my life forever. She asked me

to find her a Black Butterfly, but a fully black butterfly is hard to find. She asked to see one as her last wish. I couldn't deny the rare wish she asked for, and I readily agreed, but on one condition, she should go along with me to find one. She agreed to that and we left home without our parent's knowledge. We vowed to never come back until we find one.

We searched everywhere, no stone was left unturned. There were red ones, blue ones, yellow ones, we even found black ones with at least some streaks of colours on them, not one fully black butterfly did we find. Rare, was she just as mother had sung. We couldn't find one single black butterfly. Mary started getting tired, so we sat down to take rest. We lay on each other's backs, it was comfortable. I felt bad, because I could not get for my sister the one thing she wished the most. I asked her for forgiveness, and I felt helpless. She told me that it wasn't necessary anymore. We were those rare Black Butterflies she said, and that there was no one else to compare with us. I felt precious when she said that.

We sat there on the grass meadow for a long time in silence. Breaking that silence Mary asked me to sing mother's song and that she wanted to listen to me singing it. I made fun of her for not staying up till mother finishes the song every night. We had our own fun for some time, making fun of each other. Later, Mary asked me to sing once again, so again we lay on each other's backs and I began to sing. I lost myself while singing, but as I was halfway through Mary started getting heavier and heavier. I couldn't bear her weight, but all I could do at that very moment was cry. Mary never waited for the song to end as usual, and after this she will never listen to the beginning of mother's song as well.

It has been twelve years since Mary left us, Leukaemia wasn't an easy disease that a child could have overcome, I couldn't get her off my mind, her thoughts kept haunting me severely, but then I got used to it. I wanted to become someone great in my life. I worked very hard and my voice found its place. Today I am known by the name "Black Butterfly", and everyone knows me and loves my songs. I have been through a lot of tough times in life. A lot of bad experiences have I gone through, a lot of tears have I shed, and many times have I fallen. Everything I went through just melted like snow, when my aspiring was over and my dream was reached. Yes, I say to myself every day, 'I am a Black Butterfly, the rarest to find and unique among all'.

I understood one thing in life, God is the author of everyone's story. He has written it already, all we should do is wait for him to turn the pages of our beautifully scripted stories. I know that my story is beautiful and mysterious because the author not only wrote my story, he walks the story with me, falling and rising with me. Everything in life happens for a reason, just be patient and you will be able to see everything fall perfectly in its place.