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**ISSN 2278-9529**

**Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal**  
[www.galaxyimrj.com](http://www.galaxyimrj.com)

## Glimpses. Snippets. Information. Triggers

**Mahendra Waghela**

I sat there. The late November evening light in the garden was still sufficient to observe them from the opposite bench. However my first guess was wrong about who could be in the charge. The tall one with hard face, wearing a bursting tomato red tank top and black jeans tucked into fancy ankle boots turned out to be docile. She was the one who give in. Her cry was plaintive but loud. "Eleina, please! Have you ever made a mistake yourself? Am I not allowed to make a small one? Shutting me out for weeks is a kind of cheating too."

I couldn't hear what Elaina said but she waited till the tall one sat down next to her and tried to kiss. Eleina's first slap surprised the tall one. Three more slaps in quick succession, then Elaina seemingly lost the energy or the other girl's willingness to take punishment calmed her. After a pregnant pause, Eleina wiped the tears from her lover's face and swung one of her legs over the tall one's lap. Their hug made the old bench creak and it lasted a long time. The smack of those two pairs of lips was loud enough for me to get back.

\* \* \* \*

Women have sixth sense, they say. She was no exception. Her first discovery was when she found three stolen dolls in his school bag. This was a kind of mild affirmation she needed because as a child her son disliked guns or rockets. He preferred to draw flowers and butterflies instead of trucks and tanks, but she waited till he started collecting old hairstyle magazines. His curiosity about the female make up kit was exceptional. As a teenager he had his short phase of obsessing over the girls in his class, but most girls apparently avoided him. Her secret raid on the son's cupboard led to a dozen fine lingerie that smelled of him. His blunt confrontation with the father started when he started sporting a pony tail. Thereafter, the boy found his collage crowd and made a point to avoid any family gathering during festivals or cousins' marriages.

She knew it in her heart, but she wanted to confront the truth in its special, precise moment. The mother in her wanted to break this gently and clearly to son, no matter what others thought. She had accepted him for who he was, his sexuality for what it was.

Ironically it was son the one who presented the perfect opportunity.

He had sneaked into her room when she was supposed to be busy in the kitchen. She finished the tadka and let the dal boil on a low flame. Now she remembered the phone she had left with the charger. To avoid overcharging she had to unplug. She climbed the steps while he was looking lost in front of her dresser mirror. She walked into the room as he was about to apply her new lipstick. He was too startled when she asked. "What are you doing with my lipstick? It's new...I haven't used it so far?" He took a moment and smiled. He returned the lipstick to her. "I love the

strawberry flavor, you know that...I am playing Draupadi in our college production... rehearsals start this evening."

Playing Shikhandi would have been appropriate, she thought but didn't say a word and smiled like a proud mother.

\* \* \* \*

My head throbbed because of the migraine. The acid fumes would be too much today, I decided. I bunked the chemistry lab class and reached the hostel, my limbs tired. Something made me stand outside the room no 69, my room. I didn't knock and almost fell off my feet as I entered. My room partner Joy (Joyee for me) had opened my secret drawer and he was wearing my favorite fetish - violet silk panties and, nothing else. He was freshly shaved all over and his red lips shone with artificial gloss. I felt certain rage and animal passion in the same moment. My shameless Joyee blushed looking at my erection before making things clear to me. "I am playing Juliet in our college production of Romeo and Juliet... you can come for the show tonight if you do not trust me!"

"Why do you have to go public with this? Am I not good enough?"

"I like drama, the excitement of playing the part!"

"I never saw you rehearse for the part."

"Haven't you?"

\* \* \* \*

No one else was in the office when this happened on the 11th floor overlooking the magnificent Arabian Sea, at Nariman point, Mumbai.

Lea smacked her ample hip against the door to open it and looked at the surprised face of her boss.

"Why not?" She leaned over the huge glass desk, giving an eyeful of her creamy milk melons to her middle-aged boss. "You haven't given me a promotion but I have noticed you drooling at me like a horny, desperate teenager."

"I like what I see but you are bossier than my wife!" The boss shifted nervously in his chair and looked cagey when he replied. "What do you want in return? By your admission, you detested your previous jobs. You are a 27-year old trainee copy writer who is likely to remain a trainee for a long, long time."

"I know my copy sucks but I write killing poetry on my blog. 1000 plus followers. Also, unlike other creative drudges, I am even tempered, easy with people and logistics. They listen to me even when I am not wearing short skirts. Agree? Do I deserve a fighting chance in servicing department? No strings attached."

"It's a deal if we keep this under wrap."

"Suppose I charge you with rape tomorrow?"

"Do you know what kind of risks I have taken sitting in this very chair? I like your kind of bluntness. I trust you as a person. That alone makes it worth it."

"I know for a fact that your wife is bonking someone else. That takes care of my guilt factor."

"Lack of guilt doesn't prove love."

"Presence of lust doesn't mean absence of love"

"That settles it for tonight" The boss nodded in agreement and got up. "A glass of Champaign for my lady for the night, and some verbal foreplay in semidarkness of our favorite lounge. Final action in a five star Hotel room, or do want something right here, right now?"

"I think we should get out of the stuffy office, let's breathe some fresh air outside."

They took the elevator and climbed into his luxury sedan.

The boss turned the ignition and tossed a question at her.

"How many times have you tried this with my kind of man?"

Lea didn't waste a second before responding. "Are you judging me?"

"I am teasing you, this is my kind of foreplay, okay?"

"You are my man for the night!"

\* \* \* \*

"I am f\*\*\*ing done with you"

"Same here. Switch off the phone, will you?"

"So why are not blocking me yet?"

"You can do it too on your PC. It's a two way street."

"If I do, you will change your mind in a second and you would be too embarrassed to reconnect. You will be depressed forever."

"That makes you worried? What do you know about depression anyway?"

" A bit worried. For your info - I know a LOT about depression."

"Touché! Asking for the last time - how many times have you lied to me?"

"What gives YOU the right to ask this question?"

"May be I love you."

"What do you know about me? Everything you know about me could be a lie. I could be a cluster of pixels."

"Thanks for giving me a sleepless night"

"You do the same. Also, I KNOW it's early morning there."

"Okay, a terrible morning start AND a sleepless night. Now let me test one of your lie."

"You can't."

"Let's give it a try."

"I am married. Have a wife and children. And a cat."

"Now you tell me! What's her name?"

"Whose name?"

"Cat's"

"Karma. Same as your Chatname. I brought her home after we became friends."

"Friends? We are friends? Do you know anything about yourself? Is it a stray cat?"

"Ok, we are net junky lovers who can never meet. Yes she is a stray. I like her stripes, her mood swings and independence."

"Lovers. Irrespective of the context, I like that word when you speak it, I mean - write it. Get rid of the cat."

"I like the distance of a continent and culture between us. And don't say a word about my cat."

"Thanks. It's late. Get some sleep. F\*\*\* your wife. Hug your cat."

"Karma is curled up my lap right now, she is reading all this. You Go to work. And don't forget the juice before you get out. One more time - I don't really care if you get a medal in the rat race!"

"Good night. Sleep tight."

"Smile. Have a nice day. I will send you the cat picture by afternoon, so no sleepless night!"

\* \* \* \*

In some dark corridor somewhere, someone made a few calls, a few mails were sent, some permanent changes were made on data files; some individuals were neatly categorized and flagged; some lives changed a bit, some a lot more. Some destinies changed without anyone vouching for the godly acts. Life went on for the rest.



\* \* \* \*

George Orwell remembered 1984 and smiled in his dark grave.