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## The Unscripted Obituary

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It was quite early in the morning; Dev was out on a walk, like any other day, as he does his routine chores. There has been no change in his activities for the last couple of decades or so, like a well wound device he moves in sync with every click of time, chasing an unknown goal.

He lived in a suburban area; a single bedroom house on rent was enough for him, seldom visited by any, he was almost alone. People around in the adjacent houses never knew him by his name, or by profession, Dev too, never had any interaction with them as well. The front door remained shut most of the time, to deny any poking eyes about his activities.

It was Sunday, after the morning walk, he was back in his lair, waiting for the sweats to settle down before he takes a bath. In these waiting moments, he tried to move his eyes on the day's news, while sipping a cup of tea prepared by him, in the meantime, he hears a beep in his cell phone, and that grows louder by.

Putting aside his newspaper in disgust, he moves up to pick up the phone at a distance, on the table adjacent to his bed; much to his surprise it was one of his old acquaintances who seldom calls.

He could not believe his eyes, to see the name on the display screen of his cell phone, before he could assume the possible reasons of his call all of a sudden, he pressed the receive button to say Hi!

Hi Bibhu! How are you? How come; after so long a time? If everything is alright with you! Kaka, kaki, all is fine? As if he would ask the entire world in a go, but no answer from the other end.

Hey! Why don't you say anything? Any problem! Are you in trouble? Bibhu... do you hear me! Are you there? Dev was feeling restless not to find any answer from the other end.

“Come! If you wish so”, a brief and heavy voice came crashing at his ears from the other end, “I hope you should,” said Bibhu. I will be waiting you there, said he; before disconnecting the call.

The moment was quite intriguing, impregnated by possibilities, both foul and fine, whereas, the heavy voice of Bibhu weighed in favor of the former and the urgency of the matter yet to be revealed.

Without any delay and with all the apprehensions in his mind, he was out in a hurry on his bike to reach the spot as early as possible crossing a distance of approximately thirty kilometers. It’s quite obvious to anyone, if such type of news comes; no one can, but visit the loved ones.

But this time, it was about the blunted edges of his life;

It has been quite a long time, when both did choose their own ways,

Never thought of looking at each other’s face; No! Not even once or a snip of glance by mistake.

They had many things between, a lot of memories both big and small, unknown to common knowledge; as if the soft silk bond between them got tangled somewhere to the extent, so as never to return to its usual blend.

And, it has been years, they parted their ways. Years after years passed by and still, there was no change.

Once the fine tune of relationship loses its harmony, it becomes difficult indeed, to get back the lost symphony.

It was probably the same, for reasons unknown they had developed a spurious chemistry between.

By the time he reached there; there was a considerable cluster around the place, quite familiar to him.

He took a deep breath, before he inspects the incident there, to find out the reasons behind the cluster. What he saw was beyond his imagination, it shook the patch of land under his feet, Bibhu probably had left by then, and it looked darker all around, as if he would fall to the ground.

He stood still, like a lifeless piece of rock, at a distance, eyes fixed, on the body; like any unknown entity in a queue to pay homage... How should he tell ... and what? If anyone asks about his identity; should he introduce himself first?

Many more questions were creating innumerable ripples in his mind. He was speechless to utter even a word. No one knows, nor do they have any scope to know, but! How can he deceive himself? That the motionless body that was lying there was his wife. Can he deny “*Agni Dev*” or the “*Dasha Digapaal*” who were witness to it, they were married as per the Vedic rituals to live as husband and wife for a seven centenary as one and united as promised before them.

How can he forget to admit! The shower of love lorn starry nights spent in the soft seclusion of her soothing arms, the whisper of the moony crackle, a pleasant kiss that he planted on her forehead on the first meet. Many such moments, days and nights, the elixirs of intimacy that both shared to the brim, and the gush of cool bridge between.

All those are history now; some obsolete events long recorded on the pages of remote memory.

Her face didn't look the same as before. Probably because of the disease she suffered that made her look like a pack of skeleton

A thick layer of vermilion was drawn straight on her forehead, burning bright, a proud proclamation of her own rights, that she is married, even in death, the symbol of sanctity she adhered to, till her last breath. He could see a tinge of smile on her lips still, as if she is on a pleasure visit to the land of dreams, relinquishing all the pain and sufferings, with a pair of long red strips drawn on her heels, she was on a mission to dance on her own feet at far off lands, beyond his reach.

He stood fixed to the ground, stunned and spell bound, staring at her without a blink. The mortal body was perhaps saying something which he could hear her say; “look! I am leaving all your anger, your pride, all the apathy towards me, am certainly not leaving you as your wife... I will be no more around for all your troubles as often I was accused... am in trouble, that after me who would be there to be your loving enemy?”

“Look! I bathed all my life in the pool of tears, now I will be burnt in to ashes on the shore of High Ocean, a life that did rot in anguish shall float in the oblivion of eternal peace. Am a lone bird on a journey to my destination. I leave all that you gave me as your precious possession”. He

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stood there in deep remorse and repentance; his pale eyes were fixed on the body laying there while listening this. The lifeless body was saying all of these words tormenting his mind ... louder by every minute that passed by echoing in his ears.

He was able to hear it. As a muted listener, as he stood with a sign of sadness and regret. " yes, listen dear! Am' leaving behind Jealousy, Envy, Pride, Hypocrisy, your things and my things, the web of plotted stories; not only this, I too wish to give it back everything as I set out on this journey. "

"Yes everything that once was so touching. -The moonlit of your love, the bond of touch, the pearls of affection, the arms of bonding, all of them, I return to you today and at this time. Take it! It's all yours. Take it, and take care! I am leaving. This is my last loving gesture, all for you. "As if she was telling all these things, quite louder, and louder by every passing hour filling the air around his ears reverberating the same sounds "Take it... It's all yours..."

He could feel... as if he would cave in under the burden of unfathomable anguish and repentance for not being fair enough in his life towards her... he felt helpless to claim the body as his wife, or to spell his identity as her husband before the clustered visitors... before driving out his eyes from the face of the body... he never knew when... two drops of tears rolled on his cheeks as an unscripted obituary.