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The Digital Love-story

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When the Covid-19 pandemic could even outdo the traditional thinking of every middle-class Indian parent to gift an android phone to their child rather than canning them for such an ‘awful’ urge why can’t the country not bear the emotional influx of a digitalized love story. It’s the love story of the very own Alexa and Vicky. Funny enough. Yes, the names are indeed funny, unconventionally stricken in an Indian setting. But, the names are shared in their most personalized Facebook chat. Victoria’s name is not Victoria in her certificates, but when Alexa said that he has wanted his name to be Alexander during his pristine days reading wartime novels, Vicky stopped not to share that in that scenario, she could also remember a name that she has been very fond of in her salad days, and that is none other than being inspiring to be called as Victoria, reading the chapters of a colonized territory that the country has been and the name attached to the chapters of her Social Science book.

A week’s love chat and its never-ending impediment. The conversation began with a common ‘Hi’ but from an uncommon name in Vicky’s Fb chat list. Filled with enthusiasm she replied back. The chat continued with one familiarising with the other. ‘We have met in the seminar, 2019’, ‘Do you remember’ … ‘Were you in the organizing team or a participant like me’, ‘Participant’, ‘Tell me your topic, I will easily remember’ ‘Oh,.. it’s the paper with the theme of absurdity in Waiting for Godot’ and indeed Victoria’s choosing of the said novel has at least helped her start a chat with a person she highly thought of … although chatted years back, even though she thought of him some days after returning from the seminar with full exuberance. Alexa did not miss a moment to ask the absurdities she feel her life to be surrounded upon to continue with the conversation. Her absurdities include her inability to smell (i.e. she gets a smell only when someone alerts her that there is a smell around), she cannot drink tea and coffee (never in her life has she drank it) and lastly she cannot read, even a sentence before her exams. Vicky’s absurdities are so very different from what Becket has to express in his play. The very day’s conversation has not ended here though.

With an observant eye Alexa could sense well that Vicky is more of a passive listener unlike him. He-, thus pursued to carry forward the conversation. This time touching the tender point and slyly asked if her favorite color is Red, for her profile picture is all full of redness.
Slightly does Vicky favors red and he thus asked if the red depicts the romantic red or the exotic red. Both being literature students, Alexa in the second year of his Ph.D. and Vicky being a recent post-graduate, they know well the sentiments of the color Red. But, a little reference to a bit of redness has clamored their chat with redness of all kinds with the insistence of love being like a red red rose.

The continuous chat of the day from 6 P.M to 3 A.M came to an abrupt end when Vicky ended the conversation wishing him a very good sleep at the same time guiltily forsaking herself for wasting such important hours of her life mere texting when she should have been at the peak point of her revision schedule for the entrance she is to appear after a month. All full of remorse she has deactivated her Fb account for the time being and went to her sleep. On the other hand, Alexa sensed a romantic connection with a hope to sweeten it more on the second day which has already begun when unaware of the time they should have been wishing ‘good morning’ instead of ‘good night’ to each other. The blame goes to the pandemic and its impending disaster which has actually taken away any sense of time in all beings, being locked down most of the time. And so within these two innocent lovers.

A feeling of remorse for the day before has compelled Vicky to concentrate hard on her studies. She has never failed in the academic part of her life and desires to succeed in this entrance as well with flying colors. But as the day proceeded to its evening serenity, in reading the growing love between Gimur and Kajinsha in Mamang Dai’s Black Hill, and surrounded by a pleasurable scenery of birds chirruping and trees dancing in the mild air that is beginning to blow, she has felt a gist within her and she immediately re-activated her account. A message popped up in her screen, obviously from Alex with an urge to know what she is doing. He deliberately asked when Vicky replied if he have been disturbing her for she seemed to have de-activated her account, to which Vicky asserts that its not him, but herself. That she gets distracted too soon. But the game of messages went on for the following night with Alexa’s very researched topics of women and post-feminism, women and sexuality, and women and emancipation, and her mutually attractive points on the select themes. Ongoing chats have opened up the two persons. They both tried to express theirs till then encapsulated feelings about love and their own ways of loving in the digital platform which dares not bring between them the thrust of coyness experienced when two persons love chats in a real physical surrounding have been. Alexa liked to confess that he is a ‘demisexual’. Sexuality is not a bar in their chit-chat, for literature has opened up their conscience on it long before. His love for metallic songs is unlikely to be praised by her, for she listens to those to gear her up when she
pedals her Air bike exercise cycle solely meant for fitness. Guitar and metal songs have been his weakness and her likeness towards it has immediately pulled the lover’s string in him. And without delay, he confessed his likeness towards her. The conversation has been continuing without break and they have really talked a lot about themselves which has actually made it easier for him to declare his likeness.

The immediacy of the moment has drawn repulsive sentiments in her. How can he fall in love in such a short time period. Surely, he is flirtatious and the very thought of it irritated her. She felt sunken. She has genuinely begun to hope for it but the declaration let it off. And when Vicky neglects the idea of his love, claiming his fate to be like Heathcliffe of Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* Alexa decides to step back and resist all of the romantic indulgences towards her and promised himself not to defer it again. They took a day’s break, unplanned. The break happened co-incidentally from both selves.

But, the break- induced in her more tenderness towards him. She felt guilty and redress him on the fourth day, pretending to ask him about what a ‘horizontal reservation’ meant although she has googled it and known it herself already. The day’s chat has been solely focussed on their career pursuits, and what the present API for recruitment of Lecturer holds for. Vicky could feel through it the activeness on his part being demising. But, she initiated the tenderness between the two quoting the very dear word of every lover ‘babe’ in addressing him for the nights’ sleep. Both felt the agility of their own sternness and decided this time to fall in love. The next two days went on an avid discussion on love story’s they have read- from *Anna Karenina* to the love story influxes in Rushdie’s *Haroun and the sea of stories*, till Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, resting in compliance of Sethe’s love for Halle and her daughter Beloved. But, the seventh day blew up all these romantic emotions between the two persons forever. In the heat of turning loose of his emotions after suppressing them during all of his study years, Alexa asked her when they could meet her in person for she keeps on saying that in-person love is of a more valid kind than the digital version. And he replied with the enthusiasm to meet her soon after her entrance and make love to her. The word ‘make love’ connotated a very different meaning to her. She feared some sexual inhibitions in it and scolded him to her utmost for merely seeking her for such a nauseated desire and faking his love for her. The rebuke has been enough for him to trigger rage and shame as well for being misunderstood. The ego mattered more and he decided this time to de-activate the budding romance in him for her by de-activating his account forever.
But, in her, he has made a solid home. She recalls the chats within her heart and loves the way how he considered her to be his muse to write his perfect poem on his Perfect 32 which he promises to dedicate to her if he ever is able to publish his book of poems. But, things turned out different and he became instead her muse and she has decided to pen down the delicate love affair that came to an abrupt end before it got even started.