

Balvignan Presents

From Human To Super Human

(Neel)Series-4

What is your goal?  
Where are you headed?





## - Trimantra -



Namo Vitaraagay  
Namo Arihantanam  
Namo Siddhanam  
Namo Aayariyanam  
Namo Uvazzayanam  
Namo lo ye Savva Saahunam  
Eso pancha Namukkaro,  
Savva Pavappanashano  
Mangalanam cha Savvesim,  
Padhamam Havai Mangalam  
Aum Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya  
Aum Namah Shivaaya



Jai Satchitanand.

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*What is your direction?*

*Where are you headed?*



## Our Aspirations

The times are changing at the speed of the internet. The questions that arise and perplex a five year old child today, probably arise in the parents at age fifty and our grandparents may never have had a thought about the matter in their entire lives.

The elders were just like a rippling stream, which silently sidestepped and meandered past the rocks that it faced. On its way, it turned the rocks into 'shaligrams' and ultimately immersed its identity without hesitation into the vast ocean.

On the contrary, today's generation is like the waters of the ocean which have the vast capacity to assimilate the waters from various different sources, while keeping its own identity intact. It likes to sway in a free atmosphere. It cannot be bound with any temptations. It remains in flow at times and at other times it remains in ebb. When it builds into a storm, it will leave its boundaries and when it leaves its boundaries it invites destruction.

This generation can be bound only with pure love and purity. Along with this, giving them the appropriate guidance at the appropriate time is necessary and it should be done in a scientific way, in their very own style.

Param Pujya Dadashri always used to maintain that, "Today's generation is extremely healthy minded. It is straight forward and frank. They are devoid of any attachments (mamta), but merely seek worldly pleasures (moh). They need a guide. When they turn around, everything becomes 'alright'. It does not take long to inculcate cultural values in them. Such a healthy minded generation has never come into fruition in any time cycle before, and when it comes into fruition, it will lead to the salvation of the world."

Keeping Param Pujya Dadashri's above statement in mind, a beautiful short story has been presented here which depicts the mental changes and the resulting puzzles and perplexities experienced at every stage, starting from childhood all the way to adolescence. The incidents that come into experience in everyday life have been tactfully portrayed here in the form of different characters. The characters have sometimes been shown entangled and sometimes confused. At times they have been shown to come through safely and at times they have also been shown to get caught up on the wrong track. The good-bad consequences of this as well as how they overcame each of these incidents using Param Pujya Dadashri's lucid and amazing understanding, have been artistically described either in this very book or in upcoming book releases in this series.

The reader is politely requested not to read an incident and instantly take a stand on it, rather wait for the missing links in future book releases so as to completely understand a particular incident.

May the generation of today attain the kind of enlightened understanding that they don't hurt any living being with their anger, pride, illusionary attachment or greed. May they mutually live with love and become ready such that they attain their own salvation and lead to the salvation of the world.

With the aspiration that they grow from "**HUMAN TO SUPERHUMAN**" .....

Jai – Satchitanand

## The story till now...

Young Neel went to Dada Bhagwan's spiritual 'shibir' (retreat) with his neighbourhood friends Anuj and Minu. In this very first meeting, Neel was thoroughly impressed with Dada and later became a regular at Dada's satsang with Anuj and Minu.

Rohan, an extremely talented student who was superior to Neel in all spheres, joined Neel's class. Neel fell into competition with Rohan. Neel reacted impulsively, making attempts outside his capacity and nature, to outperform Rohan. Finally, in his pursuit to prove that he was better than Rohan, Neel stooped to the point of tripping Rohan. Eventually he started to feel remorse over his actions. He went to Dada, repented everything and obtained guidance. Neel approached Rohan and asked for forgiveness. From that day onwards, Neel and Rohan became the best of friends. Neel's other friends Yash, Nikki and Tannu also assimilated him into their group. Anuj played a key role in bringing about the change in Neel's attitude. Anuj and Minu also joined Neel's group of friends.

This positive change in Neel's attitude inspired his family members and all his friends except Tannu to go and meet Dada. After meeting Dada, they were all in awe of Dada.

On the one hand, there was Dada and His philosophy while on the other hand, the group entered teenage. Teenage implies an age of mischief, surrounded by friends. Neel and his friends also spent most of their time together whether it be for a project or a picnic, while partying or participating in competitions – Neel's group stayed together. They were thoroughly enjoying their time together, helping one another overcome tiffs and tussles using Dada's philosophies.

As time passed by, Tannu developed a soft corner for Rohan and felt drawn to him. Rohan and the rest of the group were not aware of her plight. Rohan's normal interaction with everyone, especially with Minu started to bother Tannu. This irritation grew into dislike when Rohan started helping Minu by teaching her mathematics. Now let us read on....

## Introduction to the lead characters

Neel, Rohan, Yash, Nikki, and Tannu are best friends and classmates studying in the same school. Anuj and Minu are Neel's friends residing in his apartment complex.



Neel



Tannushri (Tannu)



Rohan



Nikki



Minu



Yash



Anjali



Anuj

((1))

The setting was picture perfect. The sun was lingering across the sky. It appeared as though in its mind, it did not want to set. The magnificence of an extremely enchanting evening was further enhanced by a mild breeze carrying with it the sweet fragrance of flowers which were in full bloom. Across the horizon the sun was gradually setting, spreading various hues of yellow and orange across the sky to add to the beauty of this already pleasant and tender atmosphere.

Just then, as if out of nowhere Rohan came before Tannu and greeted her saying, 'Happy Valentine's Day.' In his hand he held a fragrant, beautiful, red rose. Seeing this, Tannu's eyes glistened. With a mischievous smile playing on her face, she moved a couple steps forward. For a moment she looked into Rohan's eyes and extended her hand to accept the rose. Just then...

"Tannu, it's already nine, wake up now," said Manishaben pulling her quilt and dusting it.

On hearing her mother's loud voice, Tannu sprang up in her bed. Trying to place herself, she looked around and neither was Rohan there, nor was there a beautiful rose, neither was it Valentine's day and nor was there a beautiful garden. She was all alone in her bed amongst the four walls of her bedroom. She stretched a yawn with the kind of dislike that one would feel upon losing something dear and said, "What mom, I was in the middle of such a sweet dream and you ruined it."

"Now stop dreaming and learn to live in the real world. I have been observing for a while that, of late you always seem to be lost in your own world. You are not focused on studying or eating, or working. As soon as you get home, you stretch out on your bed. Is this any way to behave?"

Tannu got off the bed saying, "Oh mom, you've started your sermons so early in the morning." Manishaben continued to babble on as she folded the quilt, "Kids these days have no value for their parents. Fathers toil all day long to earn, while mothers boil all day long in the kitchen. They care for their children like buds of cotton wool, yet children are not willing to listen to their parents even this much. Everything feels like lectures."

Tannu kept yawning away.

"Why are you standing there yawning? Get going. Take a bath and get ready quickly."

"Look mom, don't spoil my mood early in the morning. It's Sunday today and I shall do everything leisurely." Saying this Tannu walked out of the room.

Casually sipping away her hot tea, Tannu went and stood in the balcony. When she looked down, she saw the neighborhood kids playing. Loud sounds of the words, "Colour, colour which colour do you want?" could clearly be heard up to the fourth floor. On the

other end of the compound, a cricket match was underway. It was only on Sundays that the elders could also join the game of cricket. Playing with the youth would also fill them with the vitality of youth.

Outside the compound gates, the traffic on the street was not any less than usual but definitely more quiet. The cars came and went as though no one had the intent to overtake or get ahead quickly. Tannu was enjoying her Sunday with a cup of tea, but for Manishaben there was no difference between Sunday and Monday. It's not like the stomach gives us a holiday on Sunday? As per her routine, Manishaben was busy in the kitchen.

Just then the phone rang and Tannu ran to pick it up. She made a face when she noted the number on the caller id of the phone. It was Nikki's number. She said to Manishaben, "Mom, take the call and tell Nikki that I am not at home."

Manishaben was astonished, but in order to stop the ringing phone, she did as Tannu said.

Putting the receiver back down, she asked Tannu, "Have you had a tiff with Nikki or what?"

Avoiding a conversation, Tannu said, "No, there's nothing of that sort, just for the heck of it."

"For the heck of it?" asked Manishaben confused.

Tannu evasively responded, "Yeah, I don't feel like talking to her right now, I shall speak to her at length later."

An exclamation mark emerged on Manishaben's face, but before she could probe any further she had to rush back to the kitchen to shut the gas because the third whistle of the pressure cooker had just gone off. Making most of this opportunity, Tannu ran back to her bedroom and sat down with a novel in her hands.

However, she could barely read a paragraph. Nikki would not leave her thoughts.

Nikki was her childhood friend. She came from a middle class family, where compromising was a way of life. Where two are needed, make do with one and where one is needed make do with none, but do not stretch your hands before anyone. Living by such values, her family had a lot of self-respect.

It is said that difficult circumstances make a person strong. As Nikki grew up she became smart and clever. On the very first day of school, Nikki and Tannu sat close to each other in class. A friendship developed between them since then. Money never came in between their friendship. However, a difference of understanding and opinions often came between them. Raised in constraint, Nikki was obedient, understanding and practical, while Tannu who was brought up in luxury, became extravagant, stubborn and controlling. Yet the friendship between them had lasted.

But of late Tannu had gradually started developing a sort of dislike for Nikki and the only reason for it was Rohan.

"Rohan, I have gone mad looking for you all over the school and you are sitting here in the blazing afternoon sun under a canopy?" Dripping with sweat, taking out her inner frustration Nikki plunked herself right in between Rohan and Tannu.

This irked Tannu who was thoroughly enjoying being alone with Rohan under a huge banyan tree in the school ground. Internally, she heaved a heavy sigh of frustration at





Nikki.

“What are both of you chit chatting about?” asked Nikki nonchalantly.

Tannu did not say a word. Rohan replied in a lighter vein saying, “Oh, I was just talking to Tannu about the increase in your arrogance after you were appointed head girl.”

“Oh really? It’s not like your arrogance hasn’t increased either. Get up. You do remember, that we have a meeting with Madam right now.”

“Yes, let’s go.” said Rohan

They all got up dusting their uniforms. Nikki started finalizing the points of discussion for their meeting as they walked. They both paced ahead as if they had completely forgotten Tannu’s presence. Tannu just stood there and watched them walk away.

Suddenly a loud ‘thud!’ sound was heard. Tannu woke up. The one kilo heavy thick novel had slipped out of her hands and fallen onto the floor. She bent over and picked up the book. She found the page she had stopped at and once again got occupied reading.

In the novel, a description of the heroin’s one sided love for the hero was coming up. She found the description a match to her own state of mind. Just as the heroin was crazy for the hero, Tannu was crazy for Rohan. She always desired and tried to retain Rohan’s affection exclusively towards herself. However, over the last two years, Tannu had not been able to attain the desired result and was exasperated sometimes at her own self and sometimes at those who took Rohan away from her.

They had been taken hiking from school to Tungreshwar - a small hillock located on the outskirts of Mumbai. This special hiking trip during the monsoon always proved to be enticing. The mountainous stretch, rocky roads, warm drops of rain and the multiple waterfalls in between, were the extraordinary attractions of this trip. In a densely populated place like Mumbai, where open spaces and the vast open sky can rarely be seen, people would specifically go to places like this to enjoy nature, especially the youngsters. Tannu’s school only organized this kind of a trip for tenth grade students. While hiking, all the students would move forward carefully holding each other’s hands through the peaks and troughs.

Yash, Tannu, Nikki, Neel and Rohan were walking away, chit chatting and enjoying the openness and the vastness of nature while climbing up. On their way up, they came across a boulder that had given away scattering rocks across the area. The water running down the slope playfully made its way across these sharp rocks gradually turning the softer ones into smooth stones like ‘shaligram’ (worthy of keeping in a temple) while the hard ones were not affected and remained sharp enough to hurt those who stepped on them.

They all held each other’s hands and carefully helped each other step down as they moved forward. Neel led the group, followed by Nikki, Yash, Rohan and Tannu came last. Rohan warned Tannu, “Be careful. It’s very slippery here.”

Tannu kept her eyes on the path and nodded. As they drew closer to the slippery ground, Rohan reached out to hold Tannu. Tannu put her hand in Rohan’s hand. Rohan was carefully leading Tannu but her attention was quite obviously not in walking!! The fact that Rohan reached out to her without her expectation, made Tannu unpredictably happy. Once they crossed the slippery area, Rohan let go of Tannu’s hand. After this, Rohan

remained the same for the rest of the trip but Tannu was definitely changed. Mischievously joking, laughing and making others laugh, Rohan began to appear more endearing to Tannu.

Tannu kept walking, replaying the scene of Rohan holding her hand, over and over again.

“Tannu, why are you so silent?” asked Neel.

“I don’t like to speak while enjoying such a beautiful atmosphere,” said Tannu trying to avoid giving further explanation.

“Look quickly, a peacock in full plumage. It looks so beautiful!” Nikki pointed towards the peacock in excitement.

Everyone looked in that direction, while Nikki literally started jumping in excitement.

“Oh, we passed by so many of them on our way up.” said Rohan to Nikki.

“Is that so?”

“Of course, let me show you.” said Rohan as he took Nikki back where they came from. Tannu stood there shell shocked. She burned with envy as if someone had set a match stick to her, when she saw Rohan hold Nikki’s hand on their way down the slippery soil.

“Let’s carry on, there’s no point in waiting for those two now,” said Yash realizing that it was worthless to wait for them. Neel also began to walk. Hesitantly, Tannu turned back and started to walk.

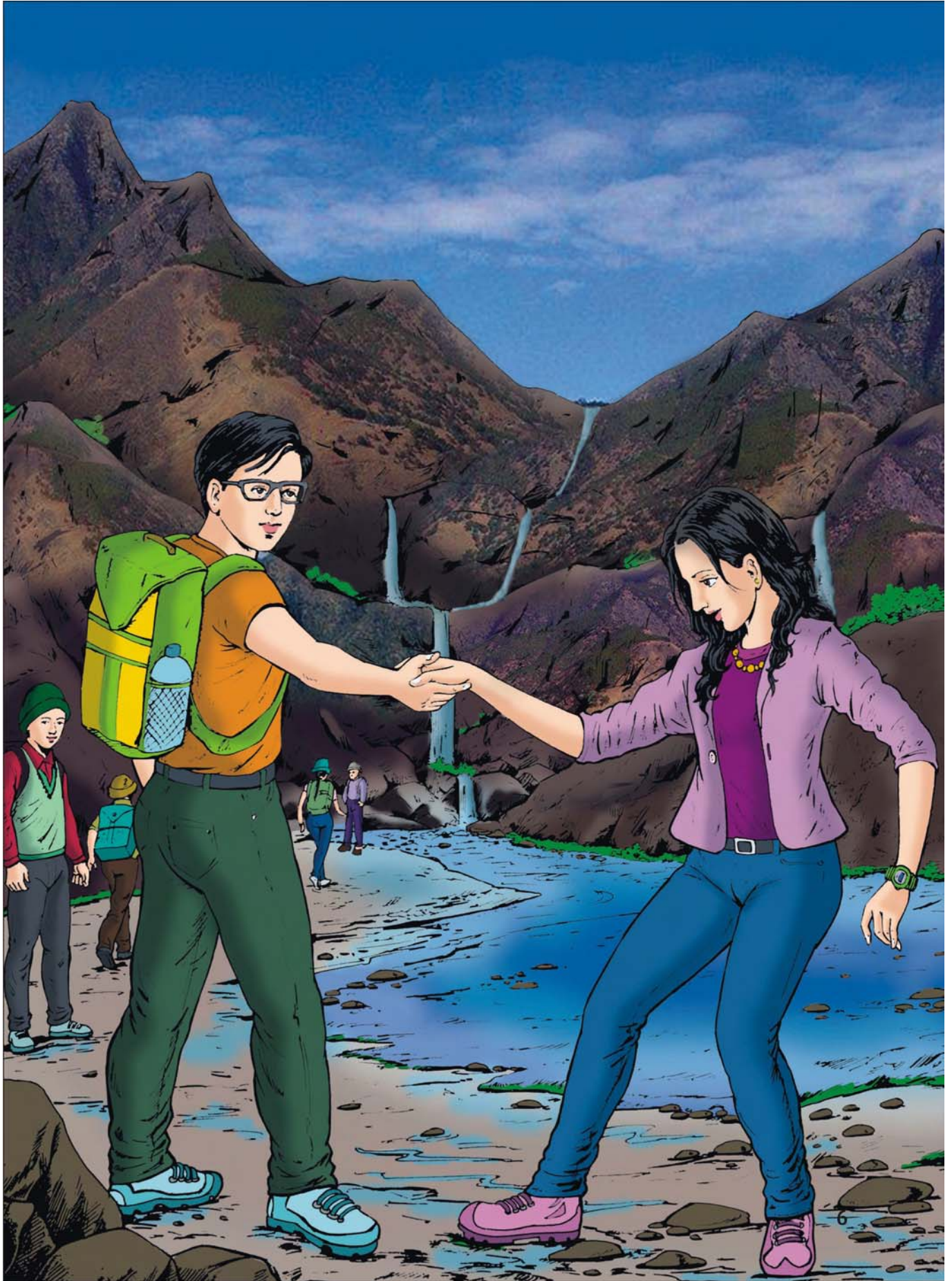
“She’s behaving crazy, as if she has never seen a peacock before!” Tannu felt irritated at Nikki.

The whole episode had taken place long ago but Tannu felt irritated at Nikki once again as if the incident had just happened. She put the novel aside and leaning her head against the wall for support, she began to think, ‘What could be the reason for Nikki’s call? She must have called to boast about something. Since she’s been appointed head girl, her arrogance has increased a lot.’

She once again slipped back to the memory of the day when both Nikki and Rohan were selected as head girl and head boy for the academic year. They were both flying high. Both of them were extremely elated, as sudden success always gives more pleasure. All the students gathered around both of them to shower them with congratulatory notes. Tannu, Neel and Yash were also with them. Other students were congratulating them as well since two members of their group were selected for the coveted post.

Yash whole heartedly accepted the felicitations, while Tannu and Neel could not mask their feelings of frustration behind their unwilling smiles. Tannu was pleased to see Rohan appointed as head boy, but she did not feel the same way for Nikki. While, in Neel’s case it was the reverse because he was expecting to be selected as head boy. It was once again proved that ultimately Rohan was much more capable than him in all the spheres. Feeling inferior and dejected, Neel silently went back home. Tannu did not fail to notice this and followed him home. Seeing Tannu, he felt awkward but could not hide anything from her.

Trying to maintain his composure with a faint chuckle he said, “Who knows why,



but I am not happy about Rohan's selection as head boy. Actually, he is the only one who is truly worthy of that position."

'And, I am not happy for Nikki,' Tannu thought to herself. For a few moments, there was silence between them as they came to terms with the reality.

Finally, breaking the silence Neel said, "I think we are making a mistake, we should share their joy. Come, let's go back and join them." Saying this Neel headed back to school with Tannu. On their way back they met Nikki, Rohan and Yash. Both Nikki and Rohan were walking on air as if they had received a crown and they completely failed to notice Neel and Tannu crossing their path.

Instead of being surprised on seeing Neel and Tannu coming from the other direction, they were already engrossed in discussions about their future plans as head boy and girl. Every word and mannerism of their speech hurt Neel and Tannu's ego even more. Before parting, all three of them wished the duo once again.

Just then, Manishaben entered the room. Seeing Tannu lost in her world of thoughts once again, she nudged her shoulder vigorously.

"Huh" Tannu managed to say coming back into the present. Manishaben was looking at her with a steady gaze. "I am feeling very hungry. Is the food ready?" asked Tannu, since she couldn't think of anything else to say.

Realizing that Tannu was fibbing, Manishaben walked out of the room without responding. Her anger was clearly visible in the way she hurriedly walked out of the room. Tannu also sensed that her mother was upset with her. She immediately gathered herself and came out of the room.

She felt like speaking with Rohan. Uncertain about whether she should call or not, she glanced towards the kitchen. Within a second she gauged how preoccupied her mother was with the kitchen work. She made her way towards the balcony with the hand set in her hand as she dialed his number. The phone was ringing. No one picked up the phone at the other end, so she disconnected the call.

'Where could he have gone?' within a minute, her mind was racing with numerous thoughts. Redialing the number once again, she quickly glanced towards the kitchen. This time around her anxiety came to an end. Someone picked up the receiver on the other end.

"Hello, who's this?" It was Rohan's mother's voice.

Covering her mouth, she softly murmured, "Aunty, it's Tannushri speaking, is Rohan there?" with the thought that her mother might drop in at any moment, she even avoided greeting Rohan's mother.

"No dear, he has gone with Neel and Anuj to do 'darshan' (pay obeisance) of Dada Bhagwan."

"Dada Bhagwan!" Tannu exclaimed in shock.

Saying, "Fine" she instantly disconnected the line. 'Now why did Dada Bhagwan have to come at this time? Hopefully Rohan doesn't gradually turn into a disciple' she babbled in her mind as she set the cordless phone on the charger. A fear was instilled in her.

She hastened to the kitchen to eat.



((2))

“**M**ay I have your attention please; Karnavati Express from Ahmedabad to Mumbai Central shall be arriving shortly on platform number five.” Even at 1:00 p.m. the Mumbai Central station was hustling and bustling with hoards and hoards of people. Promptly after the announcement, porters took off their thick scarf-like cloth’s hanging over their shoulders and tied them around their heads. Equipped, with the hope to get a hold of customers, the porters stationed themselves besides different compartments. Smiles appeared across the faces of relatives awaiting their dear ones. Everyone’s eyes turned towards the direction in which the train was arriving from.

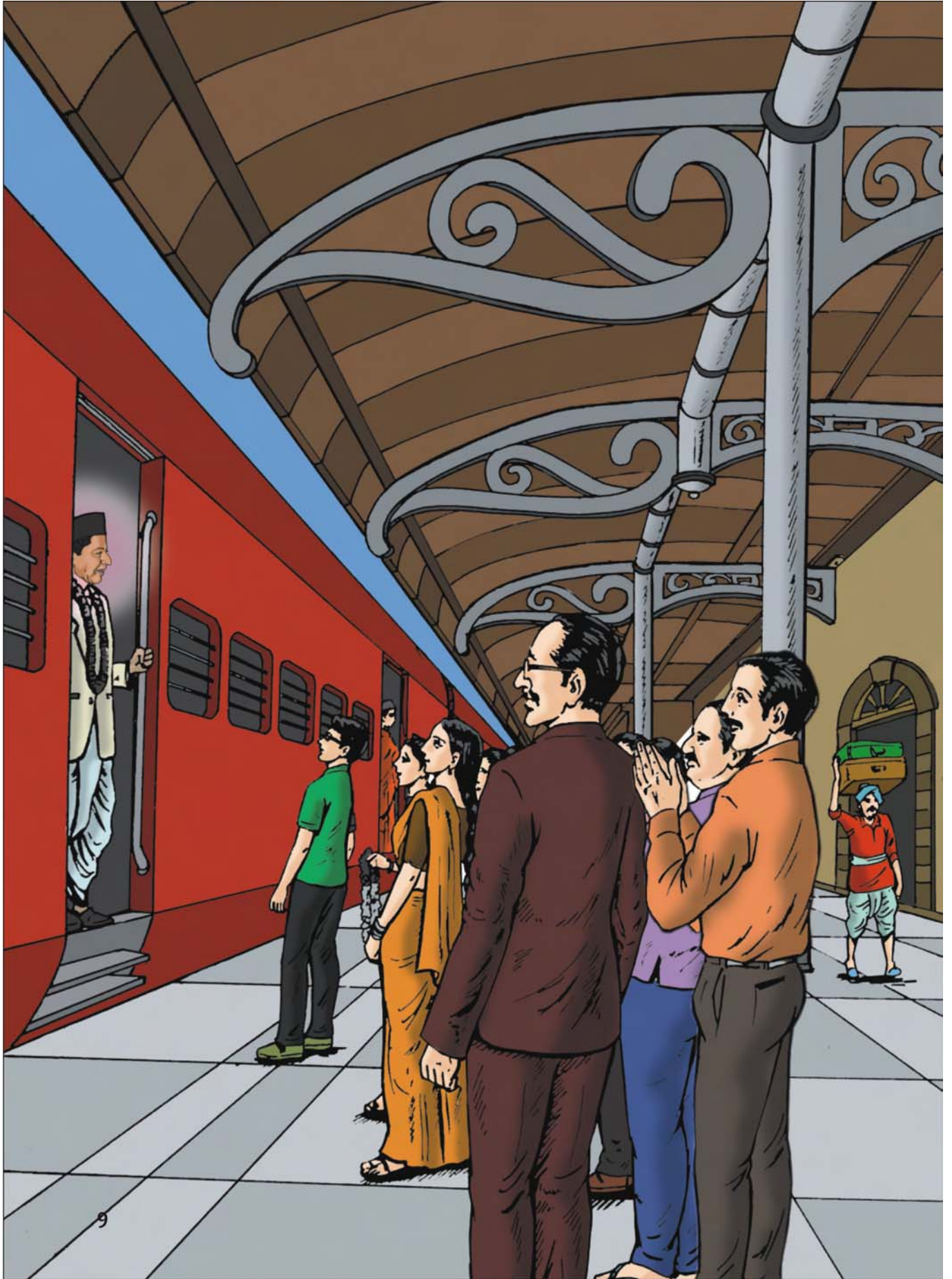
Many mahatmas from Mumbai had come to the station to welcome Dada. It was as if an end to the pangs of separation from Dada had spread bliss across the faces of mahatmas. In just a few moments, the train could be seen in the distance. The chorus sounds of ‘Dada Bhagwan Na Aseem Jai Jaikar Ho’ reverberated throughout platform number five. Mahatmas got organized into a line. As the train approached the platform, rhythmic claps accompanied the chorus chants of Jai Jaikar. Everyone stepped back three or four feet when the train arrived at the platform.

The eyes of those standing at the doors of the coach eagerly found their relatives and said, ‘I have come’. They would then wave their hand to draw attention. In acknowledgement, the other person’s waving hand would receive the guest saying, ‘Welcome’. Those who didn’t expect anyone to come to receive them, jumped off as soon as the train slowed down to avoid the rush on the platform. The compartment carrying Dada soon came into vision. Dada was standing right at the exit doorway.

Dada was neatly clad in a spotlessly white ‘dhoti’ (a white garment wrapped around the waist and tucked in), coat, and a black ‘topi’ (hat). His neck was adorned with a sandalwood garland. Upon seeing the ever-smiling Dada, mahatmas joyfully clapped with all their might, while the youngsters danced in excitement. Everyone was delighted to see Dada’s face glow with a gentle smile.

The same compassionate vision, the same pure love, the same gentleness and serenity in His presence, the same soothing nature. The vision of the day he met Dada for the very first time, floated before Rohan’s eyes. Once again today, upon seeing Dada, Rohan experienced the same oneness with Dada as he had on that day. He was standing right on the edge of the platform and coincidentally Dada’s coach came to a halt right in front of him. His eyes met Dada’s. When Dada’s tender gaze befell upon him, he experienced an immense sense of security. He felt as if he had attained the happiness of the entire universe.

He extended his hand to Dada. Dada took the support of his hand and climbed down



the coach. Looking into the eyes of each mahatma, Dada greeted them, 'Jai Satchitanand'. Just then an 'aaptputra' approached Dada.

"Dada we shall have to vacate the platform as another train is going to arrive here shortly. Arrangements have been made for you to sit in a corner outside where mahatmas shall be able to do 'darshan'."

"Fine," said Dada as He started walking. The entire group of mahatmas followed. Mahatmas were silently jostling amongst themselves to be as close to Dada as possible. The group, softly chanting "Aseem Jai Jaikar Ho", made their way outside the station. Dada settled down in a chair placed in a corner for Him, while the group of mahatmas gathered around Him.

'Sevarthis' (volunteers) requested the mahatmas to form a line. Gradually a line was formed and 'darshan' began. One after another, each mahatma went up to Dada, put a garland on Him and touched His feet for blessings before they moved aside. Dada blessed each of the mahatmas by making eye contact.

Rohan would invariably join Neel and Anuj to receive Dada at the station whenever He visited Mumbai. This was always how Rohan did 'darshan' yet he was in awe of the fact that Dada had so much love for mahatmas! Despite such a long journey's exhaustion, Dada would stay back to satisfy everyone and give personal 'darshan' even in the afternoon. With this thought, his feelings of awe for Dada were magnified. In any case, he considered himself very fortunate to have had the opportunity to hold Dada's hand and help Him down. He just could not take his eyes away from Dada.

"Let's go and do 'darshan'," said Neel and the three of them joined the queue. Gradually, they moved forward and finally it was Rohan's turn. While getting up after touching His feet, Dada asked him, "Do you remember Dada?"

Rohan nodded in affirmation saying "Yes". Neel and Anuj also touched Dada's feet.

Addressing all three of them Dada said, "Hasn't Yash come?"

Neel replied, "No, he had to go out somewhere else, so he could not make it."

"He will have to be looked after..." the words drifted out of Dada.

Neither of the three could fathom what Dada implied.

"Dada, Minu has conveyed her Jai Satchitanand" said Anuj.

Dada nodded in acceptance saying "Yes".

Dada got up after everyone had done 'darshan'. The car which was to take Dada was already waiting, Dada went and sat in the car and the car sped away to His accommodation. All the mahatmas scattered away. As Neel, Anuj and Rohan started on their way back home, a mahatma called out to Rohan and said, "You got a wonderful chance today, how did you feel inside while holding Dada's hand and helping him down?"

"It felt as if everything had become still within," replied Rohan with a smile. Even after the mahatma left, Rohan looked at Neel and Anuj and continued, "It was wonderful, for the first time today I had the benefit of Dada's 'seva' (serving)."

Neel and Anuj smiled back at him as they walked on.

"Did you notice how Dada smiled at me? And even later, His attention was drawn towards me over and again. I have felt for a while now, that Dada seems to be pleased with me. Even today, before I could reach out to hold His hand, He extended His hand towards

me. Really, it was a great moment! I thoroughly enjoyed it.”

Rohan kept talking without even bothering to see if Neel and Anuj were listening or giving any importance to what he had to say. Neel began to feel irritated at Rohan once again. Neel kept experiencing that after Rohan had been appointed head boy, his speech repeatedly reflected arrogance, which aggravated Neel further.

Anuj went to Neel’s house after they got to their apartment complex. Since it was a Sunday, they were both relaxed. Upon seeing Anuj, Neel’s mother Rashmiben exclaimed, “I’ve seen you after so many days. Where have you been of late? Even if you don’t come to visit Neel, you can drop in once in a while to visit me.”

“I’m just around here, but my entire day is spent studying. It’s tenth grade, so I have to study well!”

“Yes! That’s very true. What stream are you planning to get into?”

“I plan to be an electronic engineer.”

“Oh! That’s really nice. In that case, you shall definitely have to study hard! We have no inkling about what our Neel intends to do! However, he surely isn’t studying as sincerely as you. You better give him some advice.”

“Oh no mom, you’ve started the chapter of studying again?” Neel was in resentment.

“Did you notice Anuj, lately Neel gets angry a lot.” Rashmiben casually complained. Neel got up and walked off to his room. Both Anuj and Rashmiben just watched Neel smoulder with suppressed anger.

Anuj was wise beyond his years and knew Neel since their childhood, so he was well versed with Neel’s personality. Lately, he had also noticed that Neel frequently remained upset and lost his cool. He avoided meeting up with the group, especially Rohan.

Anuj went to Neel’s room and found him sitting around sulking. Anuj sat next to him and said, “I know that you are upset with Rohan.”

As if Rohan’s name was just the spark needed to bring out the pent up anger in Neel, he blurted out, “What does he think of himself. He’s become the head boy, but he floats in the air as if he has become the prime minister. Did you notice his boastful attitude today! ‘Dada repeatedly kept looking at me’, huh” Neel was out of breath as he said this with a spoilt face.

As much as Neel was formidable, Anuj remained mellow and stable. Maintaining the same composure Anuj said, “It’s not what you believe it to be. I don’t see any major difference in Rohan after his selection as head boy. It is natural for anyone to feel elated after having the chance to serve Dada. Try to recollect how you felt when you first came to a ‘shibir’ (retreat) and got the opportunity to do Dada’s ‘seva’.

You were also leaping with joy! That doesn’t mean that you became egotistical. When it’s new, this happens, there’s no need to get riled up about it.”

Neel took a stroll down memory lane to the initial days he had spent with Dada. At that time, he too believed that he was Dada’s favourite. He calmed down a little. Yet his intellect would not settle down. Arguing back, he said, “Let’s drop the subject of Dada’s ‘seva’, but after becoming head boy his ego has definitely gone high. Let me tell you of an incident.



In our school, there's a student named Samir in the eighth grade. A week ago, at prayer time, he got delayed by just two minutes and he went and stood in his class line. From the stage, Rohan signaled him to stand on the side and kept him standing until after the prayer when everyone went to their respective classes. He got a little delayed coming to school because his mother was ill, but Rohan paid no heed to what he had to say and gave him a negative report. Samir was also very angry with Rohan, but no one can speak out against the head boy."

Anuj was patiently listening. Neel continued, "Since then, Samir has also related a few other similar incidents to me in which there was no fault of the other person, yet Rohan threaten them and..."

Now Anuj could not take it anymore and interrupted Neel saying, "Neel, I think you have developed a lot of negative opinions about Rohan."

Neel argued on saying, "If you want me to take consolation by calling 'facts' as 'opinions', then what you say is absolutely correct."

"It's not a question of consolation, but if you continue to hold these negative opinions then your dislike for Rohan will increase and turn into hatred."

Neel was still brooding.

Anuj recalled something and said, "Do you remember, once Dada had spoken about opinions during His satsang?"

Neel pondered for a while but wasn't able to recollect anything, so he sat with a sullen face.

Anuj elaborated, "Dada had said that opinions are like spectacles. What you see is subject to the colour of the spectacles that you have worn. Likewise, whatever opinions we form is how we will continue to perceive things. Opinions do not allow us to see the facts."

Neel did not react at all.

"Thinking that, whatever Rohan has done to date is what he will always do, is the natural form of opinions. And once a negative opinion is bound, it will not allow you to feel affection towards him."

Neel continued to sit there without any expression. Anuj prodded his shoulder and asked, "Do you understand?"

Neel slowly nodded his head in agreement.

Anuj explained, "Let me tell you about this article I had read."

Without bothering to see if Neel is interested in listening or not, he carried on.

"There was this young fellow who had topped the university exams. Pleased with his efforts, his father thought about gifting him a car. Lemon yellow was his favourite colour. To surprise his son, the father told the car dealer to deliver a lemon yellow car directly in his garage at home that evening.

The next morning, taking his son to the garage to show him the surprise gift, he switched on the lights. As soon as his eyes fell on the car, he was filled with fury. "Oh no! I had asked for a lemon yellow colour and these guys have sent a green coloured car."

He called up the car dealer right away on his cell phone. Telling the car dealer off, he said, "Take this car away right now and tomorrow morning I want a lemon yellow car."

The car dealer sent his agent and had the car brought back. However, he was surprised to see the car. It was lemon yellow in colour. Confused, the car dealer sent a new lemon yellow colour car.

As soon as the father was informed, he took his son once again to the garage. The instant he turned the lights on, he let out a loud cry, "Green colour again! Do these people understand anything about colour or not!"

Saying this much, Anuj stopped midway. Neel glanced at Anuj because he paused at an interesting climax of the story. He had a puzzled look on his face. Seeing this reaction on his face, Anuj was convinced that Neel was keen to listen further. Breaking the suspense, Anuj revealed, "In fact, the lights in the garage were blue in colour, so as soon as the lights were turned on, the yellow car appeared green against the blue background."

Neel's mouth was agape and his eyes widened with wonder. Seeing the expected effect, Anuj said, "Precisely the same holds true in our dealings with individuals. Based on the experiences we undergo during our interactions with an individual, one light gets fitted regarding that person in our brain. Then later in life, whenever we come across that individual or if that person were to say something, then automatically that light gets turned on and we perceive the person through that light. Hence, we do not meet or hear the person for who they are right now. Rather, we perceive the individual to be whatever the background light portrays the person to be. And this is what is known as an opinion. Amidst changing circumstances, to perceive a person through our preconceived notions is our foolishness Neel."

With these words, Anuj looked down and fell silent. Now, Neel softened. Stretching away his laziness, he thought of something and said with a faint smile, "Well, ultimately you made me positive about Rohan."

Anuj also looked up and reciprocated with a smile. He softly added, "There is no choice but to understand this, if one wants peace!"

Neel finally conceded.

Putting his hand on Anuj's shoulder, "Thanks mate" is all he could utter. Anuj was able to understand the unspoken words left within.

Glancing at the clock, Anuj stood up saying, "Right then, I better go."

Saying, "Bye" Neel also stood up.

Neel felt lighter and Anuj felt satisfied.



(3)

**'A**nuj has not yet come?' thought Minu who was eagerly waiting for him. It's not like she couldn't do without Anuj, but she was getting impatient to know whether he had mentioned her 'Jai Satchitanand' to Dada or not, and what had Dada said in response.

The playful and bubbly Minu was a polar opposite of Anuj. Compared to the quiet Anuj who spoke only when necessary, Minu's commotion was like the honking horns during a traffic jam. In her presence, the house seemed full of people while Anuj's presence felt like a desolate desert. It was as if, steadiness and Minu were twelve villages apart! Wherever she went she got around at thunder speed, so everyone called her 'hurricane'. As if she got a special status, Minu also accepted this nickname with fervor and took pride in it. Minu's policy was to be happy and make others happy, to eat and drink and live merrily. She would not compromise on this at all. Yet, since childhood she had been in acquaintance with Dada and with His blessings she had definitely mellowed down a little.

"How long did you take? I have been waiting for you for so long." Seeing Anuj set foot in the house, Minu rushed towards him. "Did you convey my 'Satchitanand' to Dada?"

Anuj nodded his head in affirmation.

"Today you took too long Anuj! Was the train late or what?" said Krutikaben, Anuj's mother as she walked out of her room.

"No mom, I had gone to Neel's place on the way back home. I got delayed there." Anuj said settling down on the sofa.

"Brother, tell me, what did Dada say?" Minu went and sat next to him.

"Have you eaten at Neel's place or do you still have to eat?" Krutikaben had served Anuj's plate and kept it ready.

"I have eaten and come," said Anuj curtly. He momentarily looked at Minu. She was still sitting there facing him, waiting.

"Dada has conveyed his 'Jai Satchitanand' to you while swaying his head like this." Anuj enacted Dada's gestures while giving Minu the kind of answer she desired.

"Hurrayyyy..." said Minu who jumped in excitement right on the sofa.

"Watch it, Minu..." before Krutikaben could say anything more, Minu once again asked, "What else did Dada say? Tell me."

Before Anuj could say anything further, the door bell rang.

"Pappa has come," said Minu running to open the door.

"Oh, its Parag uncle! You have come here directly after meeting Dada, right? Tell me, am I right or wrong?" said Minu as she opened the door.

"One hundred and ten percent right, okay!" said Parag uncle as he mildly tapped her on her head.

“Welcome Paragbhai, we were just talking about Dada.”Krutikaben said as she offered him a glass of water.

Paragbhai was Dada’s mahatma since many years. He was also a very dear friend of Anuj’s father, Manojbhai and was instrumental in introducing Dada to the family. He often got the benefit to be near Dada. When Dada came to Mumbai, for the most part he was responsible for managing the arrangements. Since he had the opportunity to stay so near to Dada, he had a lot to share about Dada. He would open up the treasures of his experiences with Dada at Manjobhai’s home. Even Manojbhai’s family felt fortunate to be able to meet such a ‘gnani purush’ (enlightened being) after hearing the experiences of instances depicting the glory of Dada. They were in awe of Dada and felt gratitude for Paragbhai.

“We all know for a fact that Dada is the icon of wonder, but His mahatmas are not any less remarkable.” After saying this he started drinking water, leaving the rest of them eagerly waiting to hear what he had to relate this time. While drinking the water, his eyes wandered all over the house. “Krutikaben, isn’t Manoj home?” he asked handing her the empty glass. Just then, the door bell rang again.

“There you go, he’s here,” said Krutikaben as she took the glass into the kitchen. Minu opened the door. “Pappa, Parag uncle has come.”

“Well, well, I was just thinking about you on the way back home, that you will become busy from today onwards. Have you taken Dada to Dadar (a suburb in Mumbai)?” asked Manojbhai stepping into the house.

“Yes, I have come directly from there,” answered Paragbhai as he made space on the sofa for Manojbhai.

Settling down beside him, Manojbhai inquired, “How is Dada’s health?”

“Extremely well, even at this age he walks faster than you and me.”

“Uncle, please continue the experience you were relating to us,” reminded Anuj.

“Oh yes! Today, I witnessed Dada’s ‘parmatma swaroop’ (absolute state of the Self),” expressed Paragbhai displaying his deep respect for Dada. Hearing this, the four family members looked at him with curiosity.

“Did you just get here?” Manojbhai asked quite casually.

Now Minu was at her wits end. As it is, she had been anxiously waiting to hear about Dada, but instead the conversations kept drifting off to other matters. She firmly stated, “Please uncle, do tell us at once and now no one shall interrupt or ask questions in between.”

All of them once again settled down on the sofas. Paragbhai picked up the cushion lying on the sofa beside him, and put it on his lap as he began once again, “After giving everyone ‘darshan’, Dada sat in the car and we had planned to take the car towards Dadar.

No sooner had we started, Dada said, “First let’s go to Jaslok hospital. Taraben has been admitted to the hospital. We have received news that her condition is very critical. I want to do ‘vidhi’ (special internal specific blessing) for her.””

“Who’s Taraben?” interrupted Minu.

“She’s one of our older mahatmas. She used to be very regular at satsang before, but in the last few years her health has deteriorated, so she has not been able to attend satsang,” explained Paragbhai.

“Minu, don’t ask questions in between. Let uncle at least finish what he has to say,” reprimanded Anuj.

“Okay, what happened next, uncle?” Minu said discreetly.

“When Dada mentioned visiting the hospital, the ‘aaptputra’ requested Dada, “But Dada, its 2:00 p.m. now. You have yet to have your lunch and it has been a long journey. It would be good, if you eat and rest a little. We will go later in the evening.”

“No, no, I am not tired at all. Have you forgotten?” saying this, Dada looked at the ‘aaptputra’.

“What Dada?” said the ‘aaptputra’ scratching his head, trying to recall what he could have forgotten!

Dada clarified, “Who came from Ahmedabad, the train or us?”

The ‘aaptputra’ instantly came into awareness and with laughter he held his ear lobes as he conceded.

Dada said with amusement, “The train brought me here. I was sitting inside it relaxing while the train was travelling. After you got in the train, if you ran around inside in order to reach here earlier, then you would be tired, that is correct.”

At that time, everyone including the ‘aaptputra’ cracked up laughing.”

Everyone in the house including Paragbhai broke out into peals of laughter. Minu even started clapping loudly and said, “Dada hit a powerful sixer,” appreciating Dada’s wit.

Paragbhai continued the conversation, “Dada says that, “All these are mere psychological effects. When one feels ‘I arrived’ then exhaustion sets in. I always maintain that the ‘train arrived here’. I never let the thought that ‘I arrived’ enter the mind otherwise the exhaustion will take over me and after all, the fact remains that the train comes. It is the train that brings us here or takes us away. We are either leisurely reading a newspaper or taking a nap inside the train.””

Anuj was contemplating in his mind, that in all the conversations till now, there’s been no indication about the basis on which Parag uncle claimed that Dada and His mahatmas are ‘remarkable’. Thus, losing patience he asked, “But uncle, you said that both Dada and his mahatmas are remarkable, but in this incident till now there’s no...”

“Hold on, that is what I am about to tell you now.” Paragbhai shifted his seating position.

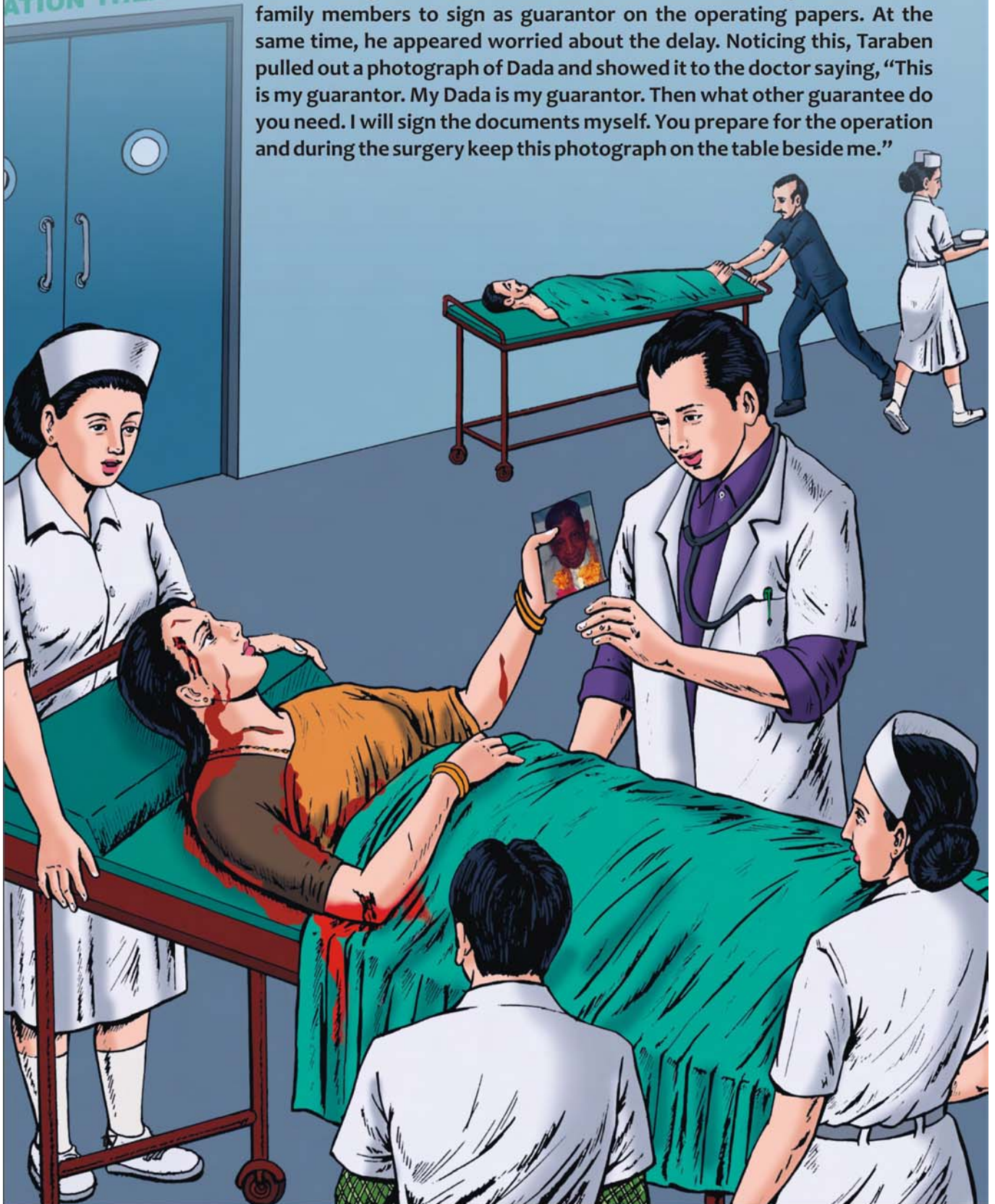
“You were telling me to listen to everything uncle has to say first and ask whatever questions I have later, and what are you doing now?” Minu immediately hit back at Anuj. She did not like how Anuj had reprimanded her in front of everyone. Taking this opportunity to reprimand Anuj, Minu experienced a kind of bestial pleasure.

Anuj was too wise to react and without entering into any arguments, he maintained his silence. Paragbhai went on saying, “In the car, Dada was talking about Taraben. For the first time, I learnt so much about her. What unparalleled devotion she has for Dada!”

Manojbhai and Krutikaben looked at each other and smiled, expressing their wonder and delight.

“This happened years ago. Once while driving, Taraben’s car met with an accident. There was no one with her. She was immediately taken to a nearby government hospital. She was injured so badly that she would require an emergency operation. The attending

doctor suggested surgery immediately. Her family members had been informed, but it would take them a while to get there, wouldn't it! The doctor was waiting for one of her family members to sign as guarantor on the operating papers. At the same time, he appeared worried about the delay. Noticing this, Taraben pulled out a photograph of Dada and showed it to the doctor saying, "This is my guarantor. My Dada is my guarantor. Then what other guarantee do you need. I will sign the documents myself. You prepare for the operation and during the surgery keep this photograph on the table beside me."



Even the doctor was astounded to see her immense self confidence and positivity. In all his years of practice, this was the first case in which the patient herself bravely signed her own operating documents and had the operation commenced, without any fear even under such dire circumstances of injury. The doctor took a look at the photograph and even though it was the very first time he saw it, he felt tremendously drawn. As a rule, except for medical equipment, no other items are allowed in the operating theatre but the doctor didn't object to keeping Dada's photograph or was it that he could not object."

Saying this much, Paragbhai stopped for a few moments to take in a deep breath.

Krutikaben stood up to put the cooker on for dinner and said, "Minu, bring water for uncle."

Anuj was touched to learn about Taraben, yet he sensed that something more amazing was left to be said. They once again took their places.

Paragbhai started to speak, "What wouldn't Dada do for the one who has such unparalleled devotion for Dada! The driver dropped us off at the entrance of Jaslok hospital and went to park the car.

In the hospital, there was pin drop silence. We went straight to the fifth floor and walked directly towards Taraben's room. Her son and daughter-in-law were sitting outside the room. They were overcome with emotions to suddenly see Dada. The tears that they had barely held back in their eyes fell silently, one drop after the next. They bowed down to Dada and broke down crying. Dada, stroking their backs gently for a long time, allowed them to empty out their emotions. Once they got up, Dada went in to see Taraben.

Taraben was on oxygen. She was completely conscious, but had lost the sense to recognize people. A photograph of Dada was hanging on the wall across the room. Her gaze was fixed on the photograph. Dada noticed this. He went and stood against the wall with the photograph."

Paragbhai looked towards Manojbhai and exclaimed, "Dada stood in front of the picture in such a way that He had superimposed Himself over the picture. Actually, I couldn't believe my eyes. Dada is really great. The depth of intent behind His every action cannot be measured."

As if recollecting something Krutikaben spoke up, "You know, Hansaben from Andheri (a suburb in Mumbai). Well, when her son met with an accident, Dada was in Mumbai at the time too. Her son was admitted to Nanavati Hospital. They had called Dada at the time of his operation. Dada did 'vidhi' and said, "Don't worry, I shall be present right there. Through the duration of the operation, chant 'Dada Bhagwan Na Aseem Jai Jaikar Ho'."

After the operation, when her son regained consciousness he started looking all around the room. Everyone thought that he wanted something. His mother asked him, "Do you want something?" Her son inquired, "Has Dada already left? He was present with me throughout the operation. He was talking to me all through the operation."

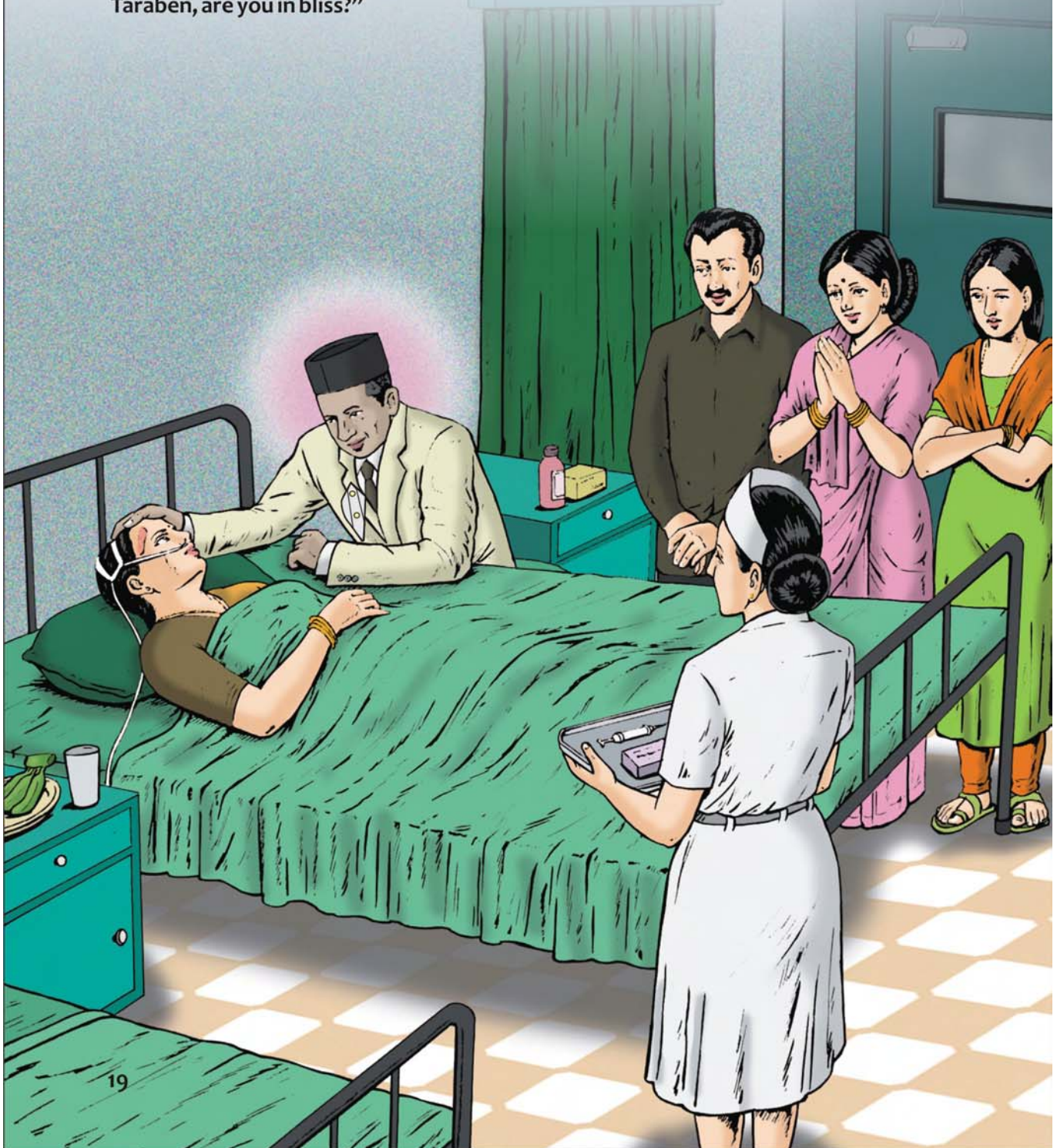
Everyone was happy that Dada had come. There must be many mahatmas with similar experiences." Saying this Krutikaben got up. The third whistle of the cooker had just gone off and she went into the kitchen to turn off the gas stove.

"Uncle, please continue on about Taraben!" said Minu. She experienced the kind of uneasiness that one feels when one is disturbed just as the climax of a movie is about to

unfold.

“As soon as Dada superimposed Himself in front of the picture, Taraben’s eyes dilated. Dada smiled at her very lovingly and she also managed a faint smile. Her eyes glimmered as if they had been instilled with life once again, and her face was diffused with contentment as though all her desires were fulfilled.

Dada approached her. He went close to her ear and said loudly, “Jai Satchitanand Taraben, are you in bliss?”





To the surprise of all present there, Taraben immediately dropped her eyelids and opened them indicating 'Yes'. The doctors present there were really stunned. How would they know, that the link of eternal relations is joint with the soul, not with the brain. It has nothing to do with the well being or deterioration of the brain.

Dada stroked her head with His hand. Just as a mother would gently stroke her young child, Dada lightly stroked Taraben's head. Her eyes did not drift away from Dada. It seemed as if the stream of nectar oozing with pure love out of Dada's eyes was liberating her. Taraben's eyes overflowed with glistening tears yet her face was radiant with delight. Dada affectionately kept wiping away the overflowing tears on her face.

The confidence that, 'Dada has come, now I will directly go from here to Simandhar Swami in Mahavideh Kshetra', prevented Taraben from suffering any kind of pain of separation from this world, her body and her relatives. Dada placed his thumb on her forehead and did 'vidhi'.

Today, I had the good fortune to be a witness to an extraordinary 'vidhi' that liberates from all accounts of Bharat Kshetra and connects with Simandhar Swami. I feel a sense of deep reverence for Dada." Saying this Paragbhai was overcome with emotion. An air of silence spread across the house. For a moment, Dada floated before everyone's vision.

Taking out a handkerchief from his pocket and wiping away his wet eyes, Paragbhai spoke, "After the 'vidhi' Taraben's facial features completely changed. Her face lit up. That's it, and then Dada did 'vidhi' for her son and daughter-in-law too, He blessed them and we left from there."

"Oh its 7:00 p.m. already, let me get going," said Paragbhai as he moved the cushion on his lap onto the sofa.

"Dinner will be ready in just half an hour, now have your dinner here before leaving," said Krutikabien making her way to the kitchen.

"Yes, now have your dinner with us and then go," insisted Manojbhai as he pulled at Paragbhai's hand and seated him back down again.

Then, Paragbhai and Manojbhai started chatting about other things. Minu joined her mother in the kitchen to help while Anuj went to his room and stretched out on his bed.

Dada, the embodiment of pure love, the embodiment of absolute compassion, the icon of divine love, drifted before his eyes. He closed his eyes. The noise of the conversations going on outside diminished and he got lost in Dada.



(4)

“Hi Nikki”

“Hi”

“Good morning, Nikki”

“Good morning”

“Hello Nikki”

“Hi”

Nikki was soaking up everyone’s salutations as she walked through the school lobby on her way to the cafeteria. The way she carried herself brimmed with an abundant sense of new found authority.

Nikki’s situation was much like the mythological character of ‘Gangu Teli’. ‘Gangu Teli’, who struggled even to obtain food, became king when the elephant poured a pitcher of holy water on him. Suddenly, he became the master of authority, servants and army. An ordinary student until yesterday, Nikki gained a special and independent identity after becoming head girl.

Her personality changed overnight. She was already smart to begin with, but the title of head prefect was taking her towards becoming over smart. Nikki, who used to mingle and speak with all students, small and big alike, now only interacted with the principal, teachers and select students. She made this boundary herself. Many students made an effort to get into her boundary, but Nikki paid no heed to them.

“Kavita, why haven’t you tied a ribbon in your braid today?” Nikki now paid special attention everywhere, while coming and going, she would notice who maintains how much discipline, who doesn’t maintain discipline, who listens to her and who opposes her.

“The ribbon is torn, I will bring a new one tomorrow,” Kavita responded fearfully.

“Hold on a minute.” Nikki said to her. Kavita got distressed feeling that, ‘she will give me red remarks’. Nikki looked around from the corner of her eye. From a distance, she saw Pallavi approaching and raised her hand signaling her to come over quickly. The heavy set Pallavi, barely ran over.

“Fatso, run a little faster. Eat less food,” taunted Nikki. Pallavi was breathing heavily.

“Do one thing. Kajal studies in ‘8-A’, do you know who she is?”

“The one who wears thick spectacles?” asked Pallavi to confirm.

“Yes, that specky four eyes. Go and get her quickly.”

Pallavi left saying, “Okay.”

“Run while going and sprint right back. Run such that one kilo of your weight drops off, otherwise I will get you a remark in the Physical Training class,” Nikki yelled out. Saying this she looked around. Four or five other students, looked at her and laughed. She

laughed back as well, saying, “First rate fatso.”

After becoming head girl she freely used such words. She began to enjoy flaunting her superiority. She could delegate any kind of work, to anyone at any time and make them do it. The number of her ‘yes-persons’ had also increased. Everyone encouraged her inappropriate behaviour whether they liked it or not to save themselves from red remarks. Nikki had now formed the habit of behaving this way.

Within five minutes, both Pallavi and Kajal came running. ‘What could it be,’ wondered Kajal as she looked at Nikki.

“Kajal, you have two pairs of ribbons, right?” asked Nikki.

“Yes,” nodded Kajal in affirmation. She was still out of breath.

“Do one thing. Bring the other pair tomorrow. Kavita’s ribbon is torn. Give it to her.” Nikki’s voice was commanding.

Instead of being asked when a person is told do something, then do they even have the option of saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’! Kajal said a mute ‘yes’.

“Can I go?” asked Kajal.

“Yes, both of you can leave,” she said gesturing towards Kajal and Pallavi.



After they both left, Nikki said to Kavita, "Tomorrow, if Kajal does not give you the ribbons, let me know."

"Sure, thanks" said Kavita humbly.

Nikki's chest broadened as if she had won a battle. Right from the peon to the majority of the students, she was able to make others do her will.

"Nikki..." Nikki looked back hearing her name. Yash was telling her to wait.

"What happened?" Nikki realized that Yash was tense.

"Oh man, today I have forgotten to bring my math book. Please don't give me a remark," requested Yash.

"Okay," responded Nikki instantly.

"But, where are you headed right now?" asked Yash.

"To the cafeteria. I am very hungry." Nikki replied.

"But, the recess is nearly over," exclaimed Yash.

"I'll be right back in five minutes," Nikki blurted as she ran towards the cafeteria. She went in and saw a few students waiting their turn at the counter.

'Oh no, now what should I do?' thought Nikki. She bypassed the queue, went straight to the cafeteria attendant and said, "Quickly, give me one plate of 'samosas' (fried fritters). I have to get back fast to manage the class."

The cafeteria attendant handed her a plate of 'samosas' without bothering about the students in queue. No one in the queue could say a word.

Upon becoming a commissioner from a clerk, one does not have to be taught how to behave as a commissioner. It is second nature, because even though this may be the person's first time as commissioner, the person would obviously have observed other predecessors! This was also the case with Nikki. As soon as she became head girl, the courteous and modest Nikki suddenly became bossy and imposing.

Within the next five minutes, the recess was over and Nikki had finished eating too. She reached her class. It was now the math period. Both Rohan and Nikki became engrossed in their duty of managing the class. At the same time, they also started to check everyone's math homework. Nikki passed Yash by, without checking his homework. Sachin who was sitting beside him called out to her, "Nikki, Yash's homework is yet to be checked."

"I've checked his homework." Nikki slipped away without looking at Sachin. Just then madam Pratibha arrived.

"Good Morning Madam," said everyone as they stood up in their places.

"Good Morning everybody. Please sit down." Madam sat on her chair. "Has everyone's homework been checked?" she asked looking at Rohan and Nikki.

"Yes, Madam." Both Rohan and Nikki stood up and replied in unison.

"Very good," said madam Pratibha. Just as she was about to start teaching the next lesson, Sachin stood up and said, "Madam, Nikki has not checked Yash's homework. I think it's because they are both good friends."

Hearing this, the whole class burst out laughing. Madam looked at Yash and then at Nikki. The attention of all the students was now on Nikki. Some of the students felt sorry for her, while some of those who had been scarred by her felt happy inside. 'Now she's

really cornered' they babbled in their minds. Tannu was among the list of those who felt happy. Everyone was anxiously waiting to see what action madam would take.

"Is Sachin telling the truth?" madam questioned Nikki.

"Madam, he has forgotten to bring his math book today, but I know he has done the homework. Yesterday evening, when I went to his place he was doing the math homework," responded Nikki, giving whatever answer she could think of.

Anjali immediately stood up and said, "No madam, Nikki is lying. She had not come to Yash's place because last evening both of us..." she suddenly stopped speaking. She could not think of what to say next.

Once, Nikki had complained about Anjali to the English teacher. Without listening to Anjali's explanation, the teacher believed what Nikki said and kept Anjali standing on the last bench in class throughout the period. Since then, she had been in search of an opportunity to take revenge. Today, she remembered the past incident and as soon as she got the chance, she stood up and started talking. However, she didn't realize that by speaking up like this, she was headed in the direction of revealing her own hypocrisy.

Vengeance is the kind of dreadful fire that once ignited, cannot be easily put out and it ultimately destroys both oneself and the other person.

Yash's heartbeats began to race. He turned towards Anjali and gave her a warning look. Neel noticed this. Seeing everything go the wrong way one after the next, he got annoyed with both Nikki and Anjali, 'Girls have no sense of what to say, when and how much to say.'

The puzzle was getting more and more entangled instead of getting unraveled. "We were... what?" Madam was waiting for the incomplete sentence to be completed. She looked at Anjali, Yash and Nikki one after the next.

"Madam, Anjali and I live in the same building. Yesterday evening, both of us were playing chess. Later that evening, after Anjali left, I sat down to do the homework. At that time, Nikki came to my place and that's how she knows. From tomorrow, I will never forget to bring my book. Please madam, sorry madam," said Yash in an attempt to turn the tables around.

As though she comprehended the situation a little, Madam looked at Nikki and said, "Well, you should have informed me that Yash has forgotten to bring the book. Being a friend doesn't mean that you entertain everything of his. You have faltered in your responsibility as prefect."

"Sorry madam, from now onwards I'll be careful." Nikki felt mortified.

Nikki's ego was provoked after her authority was challenged in class in front of everyone. She got annoyed with both Sachin and Anjali. 'I'll show both of them' she clenched her teeth. Rohan was quiet. Neel was perplexed about Yash, 'Yash was playing chess? And that too with Anjali?' Unable to tally things in any way, he recalled the words Dada had said about Yash, 'He will have to be looked after...'. He still could not figure out what was going on. Tannu was very happy.

Power is the kind of thing that first flings one high in the air, and then smashes down with force whosoever's it comes to. It creates differences between friends and makes them take sides; one loses the discrimination between good and bad, and it destroys

values of life. Nikki, who once lived by her ideals, started lying without a flinch once she came into power. She burned in the fire of vengeance and started to burn others too.

Nikki was oblivious of what madam taught during the rest of that period. Plans of teaching Sachin and Anjali a lesson were taking shape in her mind. She had so many different thoughts in such a short span of time.

As soon as the class was over, she gave Sachin and Anjali a piecing look. After school was over, she went to Rohan. Neel, Tannu and Yash also joined them.

“Rohan, I want to urgently have a meeting with you.” Nikki was very angry.

“What Nikki, nowadays you can’t say anything without holding a meeting,” scorned Tannu, feeling happy inside about Nikki’s predicaments.

Tannu’s words hurt her to the bone. Nikki was enraged like a wounded lioness, “Shut up, Tannu. I’m not in the mood for jokes.”

Rohan also found Tannu’s words unsuitable. For some time now, he had experienced that Tannu had started to develop a dislike for Nikki. ‘What could the reason be?’ he wondered.

Neel put his hand on Tannu’s shoulder to suggest that she keep quiet. Nikki pulled Rohan’s hand and took him away. Tannu looked on in anger. Yash was afraid to think of what will happen next. He was in a hurry to go to Anjali, but he couldn’t get away because Neel and Tannu were with him. Not knowing what to do next, however, the three of them parted ways.

“Rohan, don’t you feel anything? Why aren’t you saying anything?” Rohan’s silence began to irk Nikki.

“Nikki, in everything that has transpired, the fault is yours, isn’t it!” said Rohan, finally breaking his silence.

“What do you mean? If Yash forgot his book, is that my fault?” argued Nikki.

“Yash forgot his book. That’s not your fault. But not settling the situation with Sachin was your mistake.” Rohan explained.

“Settle? And that too with Sachin? My foot! I am not bound to convince him in any way.” smouldered Nikki.

“That precisely is your mistake. If you had calmly explained things to him at that time, then he would have been convinced, but things went out of hand when you lied to him. I feel like we’re both on a power trip after coming into positions of authority. Authority should not be used like water; it should be used like ‘ghee’. We’ve completely forgotten this.” Rohan was trying to pacify Nikki, but instead she was getting more and more furious.

“But Yash forgot his book for the first time today. This is not his routine. Anyone would forgive, the first time around.” Nikki said defending herself.

“No Nikki. It’s not the first time that Yash has done this. Of late, he comes without doing his homework more often than not. He lets me know every time so I take care of it. Last time I got a little upset with him, so this time he told you. Yash has changed. He doesn’t even mingle much with us anymore like before.” Rohan’s voice seemed worried.

However, Nikki couldn’t see any of this today. She could only see Sachin and Anjali. If she were to come across them now, she would strike them twice or thrice, such was her

mental state.

“Relax Nikki. These things happen. Let’s take a lesson from what has happened. What’s the sense in holding on to such things? C’mon, let’s go home.” Rohan said bringing an end to the subject. “From now onwards, we will understand and convince as we get the work done. If we display our authority too much, then we will get into trouble. I feel like both of us need to improve. We were not like this before. I feel like we are making a big mistake somewhere.”

Nikki cooled off a little. Both of them silently started to walk and made their way home.

Although, they were all at their respective homes, everyone had thoughts of each other playing in their minds. Tannu was on Rohan’s mind. Nikki was on Tannu’s mind. Neel was thinking about Yash and Yash was thinking about Anjali. Meanwhile, there was a crowd in Nikki’s mind with thoughts of Sachin, Anjali, Rohan, Tannu and Yash...

Yash...

the most restless of them all...

Finally, he started towards Anjali house...



(5)

**A**s soon as the door bell rang, Anjali knew that it was Yash. She ran to open the door. Yash came in and Anjali quickly shut the door behind him. When she turned around, she saw Yash still standing there. He went to the inside room with her.

Anjali, who was born and raised in a household with an abundance of money and a lack of people and relations, had always remained devoid of the warmth and security of relatives. Her father was preoccupied with taking care of and increasing his globally spread out businesses. Therefore, her mother's attention was focused on her all day long.

"Eat this, don't eat this, this is what you should wear, don't wear this, play with these people, and don't play with these others."

Once Anjali started going to school, her mother experienced loneliness and started going to 'kitty parties'. It would suffice to say that Anjali, who lived by her mother's instructions at home and by her teacher's instructions at school, was only breathing out of her own choice. As little Anjali came into teenage, she began to experience suffocation.

In the separate room set aside for her in the house, provisions for necessary and convenient facilities used in modern times had been made. She had everything from air conditioning to a 32' flat screen TV, laptop, internet, cell phone, sound system, and a treadmill for exercise. However, a mother's affection and a father's love were left unfulfilled.

Stuck in her room all day, Anjali who used to watch cartoon films did not even realize when she started watching Hindi and then English films too. As it is she was fed up of living among lifeless machines, and by watching movies she began to yearn a beating heart which throbbed exclusively for her, kind of like a film hero. She also yearned for a sky without a horizon, in which she and her hero were the only two. Pleased in her fantasy world, she forgot her suffocation for that much time.

Gradually, she sank deeper in this world. She also spent hours browsing the internet and gave new form to her fantasy every day.

One day while surfing the internet, her cell phone rang.

"Hello Anjali," a voice came across.

"Hello Ziya," greeted Anjali. Ziya was the daughter of one of her mother's kitty party friends.

"Listen, I am sending you an invite to join me as a friend on Facebook right now, please accept it."

"Facebook, what's that?" For Anjali, Facebook was new.

"Gosh Anjali, you surf the net much more than we do, yet you don't know what Facebook is? I can't believe this." Ziya was in disbelief.

"I really don't know," said Anjali once again.



“Okay listen, Facebook is a social network in which we can make as many new friends as we want, and we can even chat with them.” Ziya briefed her about Facebook.

“New friends! Wow,” For Anjali who was always looking for warmth and security, Facebook seemed like a blessing. ‘Now, I can make anyone my friend and I can chat with anyone. Mom won’t even be able to see me, nag me or stop me,’ thought Anjali and became pleased.

“Just create your profile as I tell you,” said Ziya as she explained each step. Anjali followed and in this way her Facebook profile was created.

“Now, I am making you a friend,” said Ziya before she hung up.

“Okay,” said Anjali as she hung up too.

In a short while, Ziya’s friendship invitation came through. Anjali accepted it. As soon as she accepted the invitation, a list of mutual friends also became visible on the side of the screen. In it, there were many familiar names and many that were unfamiliar. Majority of them were sons and daughters of her mother’s kitty party friends. Being new to all this, she made all of them her friends too and within ten minutes of sending and accepting invites, she had fifteen friends on her list.

Just then, Ziya started chatting.

“Wwwwoooow,” said Anjali beginning the conversation. In a short while, other acquaintances also started chatting with her. Anjali also responded back. For the first time in her life, she spoke to everyone without any restrictions. She was feeling good about it.

She went on Google search and obtained more information about Facebook. She now got an idea of what Facebook is all about. One after the next, she opened the pages of each of her friends and took a look at them. Everyone had loaded photos of themselves in different poses. Anjali kept looking through the photos and kept laughing. Last on the list was Bobby’s name. This was an unfamiliar name to her. She clicked on his name. His page opened. The chortling Anjali, stopped laughing upon seeing his photos. Her lips broke into a smile and her eyes had tenderness. She gazed at the photo with warmth. The handsome Bobby matched her fantasy. After gazing at the photo for a long while, she felt like chatting with him.

‘Should I or should I not? But what will I chat about? I don’t even know him.’ She contemplated before dropping the idea of chatting and went back to looking at his photo.

‘If I don’t know him, I’ll get to know him, what’s the big deal in it?’ she thought as she started to chat with him.

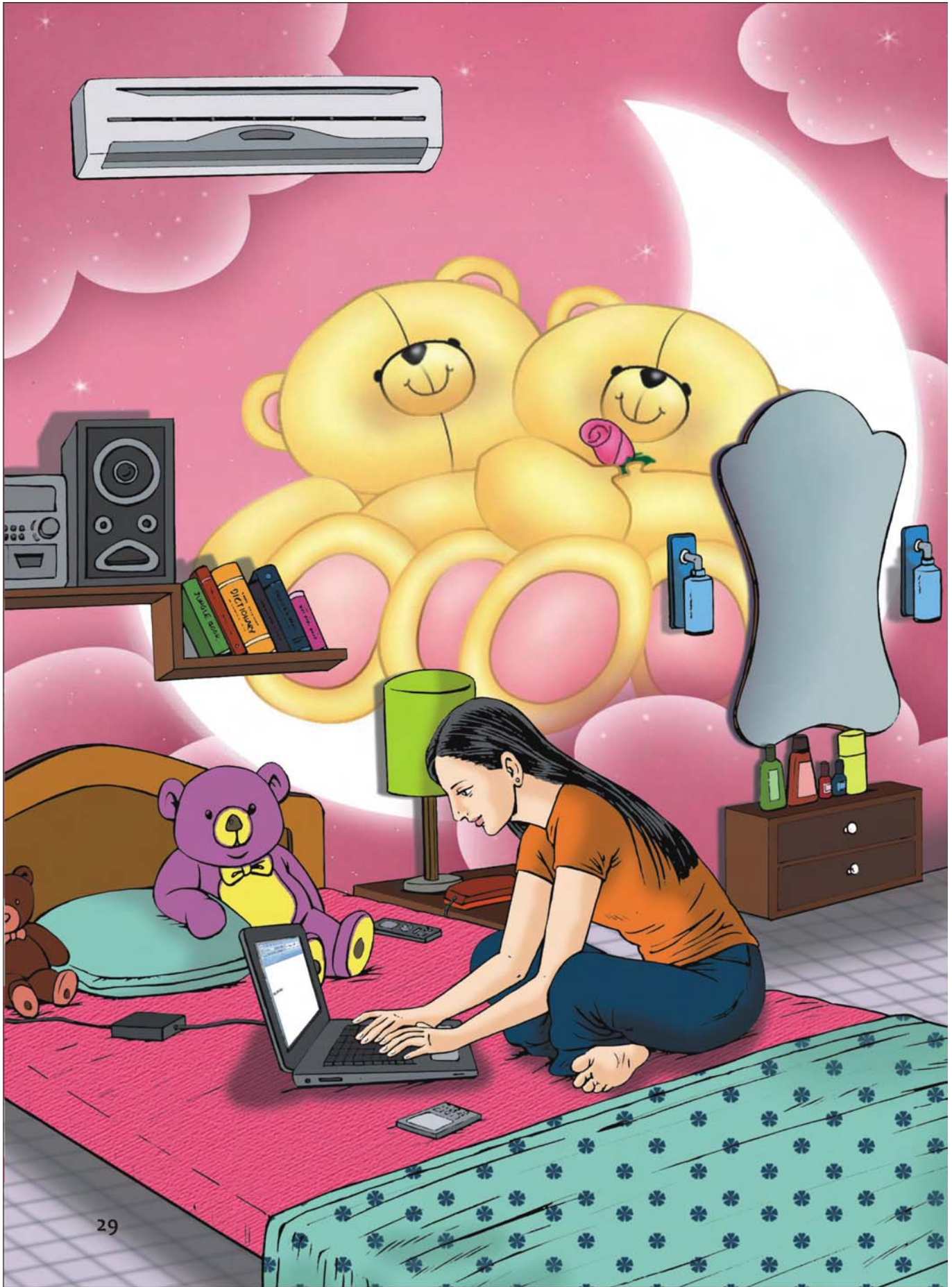
“I am Anjali,” she wrote and waited for a response. She waited for a long time and was dismayed not to get a response. Her eyes repeatedly drifted to his photo.

“Hi Anjali, I am Bobby” suddenly a response came. For a moment, Anjali skipped a heartbeat. She couldn’t understand what to write next and just then the conversation began from the opposite end. “I live in Vile Parle. I am sweet 16. I study in first year junior college commerce at Lokhandwalla College.”

“Oh, I also live in Parle. I am 14 and I study in the grade 9 at Rajpara School.” Anjali gained comfort in chatting.

“My favourite colour is blue.”

“Mine is pink,” responded Anjali.



“It is my hobby to make new friends.”

“I like it too, but I don’t have many friends.”

“No problem, I have a lot of friends. I’ll make them all your friends too,” said Bobby.

“Oh really? Thank you so much.”

“You are always welcome.”

“I love eating ice creams.”

“Me too.”

“I am in Ooty at the moment. I’m on holiday with my friends. I’ll be back in 20 days,” he informed.

“Okay bye. I have to get to my homework,” not knowing what to say next Anjali ended the conversation.

“Bye.” The conversation came to an end from the other side too.

Anjali sat down to do her homework, but she was unable to concentrate on her studies. Bobby’s face kept drifting in and out of her vision. She kept recalling the conversation they had.

She started the computer again. She opened Facebook and read the saved conversation, once, twice and many times over. Yet it was as if she was not satisfied.

She once again focused her attention on her homework and was barely able to complete it.

After she got back from school the next day, she immediately turned on the computer to see if Bobby was online on Facebook or not. She didn’t see Bobby. Even after waiting for a while, when he still did not show up, she logged out feeling disappointed. ‘He must have come now,’ she thought and logged in again after five minutes. Bobby was still not there. She did this six to seven times in an hour. The last time, Bobby showed up. Her heartbeat began to race. She felt like chatting but couldn’t figure out what to say. Uncertain about whether she should chat or not, she whiled away some time. Ultimately, she started to chat.

“Hi Bobby.”

“Hi Anjali.”

“What are you up to?”

“Chatting with you, ha..ha..ha.”

Anjali liked Bobby’s mischief. In this way, she began to chat with him every day. Her television and movie watching got put aside. The chat conversations that began from five to ten minutes ended up lasting hours. In the meanwhile, they both exchanged cell phone numbers too. They talked with each other on Facebook sometimes and at other times they talked on the phone. Now, Anjali was no longer bothered by her solitude, but the desire to meet Bobby began to trouble her.

“I am coming tonight,” Bobby said on chat one day.

“Oh,” said Anjali as though her wait had come to an end.

“So, shall we go for an ice cream tomorrow?” Without beating around the bush, Bobby asked her directly.

Anjali paused before answering. Although she was keen to meet him, she couldn’t think of what to say when she was asked by him.

“What happened Anju?”

Over a short span of only twenty days, Bobby went from calling her ‘Anjali’ to ‘Anju’. Still there was no response from Anjali.

“Hello...”

Anjali was quiet.

“I will also introduce you to all my friends. You will really like it. You’ll come, won’t you?” Anjali was overwhelmed by Bobby.

“Yes, but when? Where?” she asked.

“After school, I will come to pick you up on a blue coloured bike. I’ll wait for you in a blue coloured t-shirt.”

“But,... where will we go?”

“Wherever you say.”

For the first time someone gave Anjali a choice. This touched her. “Okay” she wrote.

“Bye then, see you tomorrow. Sweet dreams.”

“Bye.”

With this Bobby signed out. ‘Bobby’, Anjali began to like the name. She looked at his photo again. She was waiting for the next day to arrive.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“Mom, I will be late from school today. I have practicals.” Anjali announced to her mother on her way out.

“Okay, I won’t be home when you return. Eat your meal at your time,” replied her mother, without even looking at her as Anjali left.

Today, she was not able to concentrate on what the teacher was teaching. She had thoughts of Bobby playing through her mind. As soon as school was over, she ran. Approaching the gate, her eyes started looking out for a blue bike and a blue t-shirt. From a distance, she saw a raised hand wave towards her. Anjali began to walk in that direction.

Dressed in a blue t-shirt and blue denims, wearing goggles on his eyes, playing with the bike keys on his fingers, Bobby was slightly darker than wheat coloured complexion. With a proportionate height and body, Bobby was handsome enough to surpass the good looks of a movie star.

“Bobby,” introducing himself with a smile on his face, he extended his hand to greet Anjali. Anjali hesitated as she extended her hand to shake hands with him. Always restless for warmth and security, for the first time Anjali felt like she met someone who was her very own.

“Anjali,” she answered back.

“Where shall we go?” asked Bobby.

“Step in snack bar.” Anjali replied after some thought.

“Okay,” he said as he mounted the bike. Anjali sat behind him. He turned the bike towards their destination.

They entered the fully air conditioned step in snack bar which was playing soft background music. Pointing towards a table in the corner he asked Anjali, “Shall we sit there?”

“Yes,” for the first time, someone was asking her and doing things according to her

will. They both went and sat at that table. Bobby slid the menu card towards her.

"I shall have chocolate chips," said Anjali perusing through the menu card.

Bobby placed an order for two chocolate chip ice creams.

"You didn't bring your friends?" enquired Anjali.

"They... I'll introduce you to them all, now that we will be meeting regularly, won't we!"

Saying this, he added in a soft tone, "I like you very much, Anju."

Finished! She felt as if lightening from the sky had struck her.

Unable to figure out what to say or do, she asked, "When will you introduce me to all your friends?"

Bobby started giving excuses. Just then the ice creams were served.



“I will definitely introduce them within a week. In the meantime, let us both become friends.”

They finished the ice cream while chit chatting and came out after paying the bill.

“Where shall we go, now?” asked Bobby as they walked.

“Back home, I am already late,” said Anjali, sounding a bit worried.

They both got onto the bike. Bobby dropped her a couple blocks away from her home. They parted after deciding to meet on chat.”

Anjali...

Raised within four walls, she crossed her boundary for the first time today...

Alas, she was not aware of where this road would lead up to...

The lack of maturity can never see the reality. She created her dream world watching and learning from movies, but she does not know that dream worlds are like castles constructed out of playing cards. Just one breeze of reality has the capacity to destroy them.

Gradually, Anjali and Bobby started meeting more often. In a short while, Anjali mingled amicably with Bobby. Bobby began to take her into his group. Anjali initially felt hesitation to go to dance parties in which boys smoked openly and with them girls danced carelessly. She would make excuses to avoid going there, but Bobby always managed to persuade her to come. In order to get his way in some things, Bobby would concede to Anjali in all other areas. Innocent Anjali could never understand this move of his. The others girls in Bobby’s group played a vital role in familiarizing Anjali to that environment. Day by day, partying and clubs became commonplace for Anjali too and money was never a concern for her to begin with!

Anjali needed grace marks to be promoted from the ninth grade to the tenth grade. Studying was now an activity she did just for the sake of it. She spent her time, chatting with new and different people on Facebook all day long. She became proficient at chatting with strangers for hours on end.

One day, she saw Yash’s name on Facebook.

‘Yash! And that too on Facebook!’ She started to wonder. ‘Well why not? He too comes from a rich family. Let me get him.’



((6))

**Y**ash...

Just like Anjali, he was from an affluent family. His ancestors had left behind assets worth lakhs of rupees. Both of his parents had a career as bankers. His mother maintained her career just to remain engaged in some kind of activity rather than for the money. Yash's father had set up a computer at home, but never had the time to use it. Therefore, Yash made the most of it.

As it is now, things were no longer fun in his group of friends at school, like they used to be. Although they still appeared like a socially bonded group on the outside, from the inside they were all lonesome. Rohan and Nikki were never free from their meetings and couldn't spare time from boasting about themselves. Neel also kept to himself and Tannu always walked around with a sulk on her face. They started having feelings of dislike and disgust for each other. They snapped at each other, cut each other off in conversation and argued repeatedly. Subsequently, Yash also started making new friends on Facebook to pass time. He made friends with everyone, be it boy or girl, he did not discriminate. However, he never went beyond chatting. He did not let anyone know about this.

"Anjali?" He was surprised to receive an invite from Anjali to be his friend on Facebook. Although, she was in the same class as him, he had never said anything beyond, 'hi-hello' to her. Oh well! For now he had sat down just to pass time. He accepted her invitation and began chatting.

By now, Anjali was comfortable luring boys. Anjali, who freely roamed around in groups of boys and girls, took no time to make friends with Yash.

At school, their interactions with each other were still limited to 'hi-hellos' but every evening on chat they spoke at length. When their parents were home, they both exchanged messages on their cell phones by sms. In this way, gradually the routine of coming and going from each other's homes began. No one was around during the daytime at both their homes, so it was easy for them to spend quite a bit of time together.

He found Anjali's outlandish behaviour and speech unbecoming at times and unexpected at other times. He would sometimes avert Anjali's suggestions, but is it possible to remain in the water and run from the crocodile? He was unable to hold Anjali off any longer.

Bad company (kusang) is much like a slide, in which it takes no time to slip down. If a person slips down even a little then they keep slipping down more and more.

One day, Anjali took him to meet her group. The group was filled with boys and girls who clearly appeared to be up to no good. The group comprised of boys, who considered girls as status symbols rather than friends.

Saying, "Hi" Anjali gave a hug to each and every boy and girl. This was the first time

Yash saw such an unbecoming sight. His eyes looked down. Even in his wildest fantasy, he had not expected such behaviour from the soft spoken Anjali. Seeing this side of Anjali, he was completely shaken.

“Friends, meet my school friend, Yash,” she said introducing Yash to everyone.

“... and Yash, this is Bobby, Diego, Simi and Zeel,” she said introducing the group to him.

“Hi, take a puff,” said Diego offering his cigarette to Yash. “Come on, man, feel





free,” Simi said trying to encourage him.

Yash still did not extend his hand so Zeel took the cigarette from Diego’s hand and forced it in Yash’s mouth. Yash had no choice but to open his mouth. Seeing this, everyone started clapping loudly. However, Yash started coughing uncontrollably. Unable to tolerate this environment anymore, he started to walk away saying, “Anjali, I am leaving.” Sensing that that everything was going the wrong way, Anjali quietly followed him.

“You hang around with such dirty people!” Yash was angry.

“They are better than Nikki and Rohan, who don’t even look at you after becoming head prefects. These people make everyone their friends.” Anjali’s words hurt Yash. Anjali was not completely wrong. Rohan and Nikki had changed, even he had experienced it. Yash began to feel inferior around them, and it was this feeling of anguish that led him to Facebook.

“But smoking! Dance!... all this...” Yash’s sentence remained incomplete.

“If you don’t want to do all that then don’t do it. I will tell everyone not to force you,” said Anjali coaxing Yash. Yash couldn’t utter a word. From that day onwards, Yash went with Anjali to her group many times. On Anjali’s instructions none of her friends forced Yash into anything.

But wouldn’t the effect of ‘kusang’ have its influence? If someone says that I roam around with a drunkard, but I will never drink alcohol, one day the person is bound to start drinking alcohol, because ‘kusang’ does not leave its nature.

Gradually, Yash became a member of the group, but his plight remained the same even there. He experienced inferiority in school as an unimportant person, and here as an orthodox person. Instead of alleviating his anguish, it was as though ‘ghee’ had been poured into the fire. Finally, he resorted to smoking to forget his suffering. He started turning towards the inappropriate behaviour of the boys and girls.

Quite naturally, this began to take its toll on his academics. Yash’s concentration on his studies started to decline as he turned towards a colourful life with extravagant friends. In any case, he wasn’t very interested in studying to begin with and to make matters worse, Yash completely lost interest with this change in the direction of his life. He began to foster carelessness towards his homework, but since Rohan and Nikki were the prefects he was not worried about it. Every time, he would persuade Rohan, but today the secret almost leaked out.

“I’m sorry, are you still upset?” said Anjali cajoling Yash.

“Why did you have to speak in between?” Yash was in anger.

‘I wanted to teach Nikki a lesson,’ she muttered in her mind.

“What will I tell Nikki and Rohan if they ask?” Yash shared his concern with Anjali.

“Uh, Why are you so uneasy about it? You did say that we were playing chess.”

Anjali’s face was free from any care.

After sitting quietly for a short while, he was still uneasy so he stood up and began walking out. In any case, it was time for his mother to be back home.

Yash ...

What path had he taken to because of wrong company...

A man is known by the company he keeps...

Everything improves for one whose company improves and everything spoils for one whose company spoils. If a person finds good company, then the person can climb five hundred steps of progress and the bad company of just one or two can drop the person a thousand steps down. There's no telling what will happen next.

Yash started to climb down the stairs.



(7)

“Rohan, Why are you so quiet? Did something happen in school?” asked Artiben, whilst gently patting Rohan’s head. Rohan was in deep thought, sitting in the balcony.

“No mom, nothing’s happened” replied Rohan emerging from his thoughts.

“Son, from the time a child turns fifteen years old his ‘mother’ becomes his ‘friend’ and with friends one can share everything with an open mind and without reservations” said Artiben with her gaze still fixed on him. “A fleeting glance is more than enough for a mother to appreciate the state of her child’s mind, given that she has borne the child for nine months in her womb and nurtured him for fifteen years by her side.” Rohan looked at his mother. Artiben emanated a loving smile.

Rohan voiced his concern saying, “Mom, I keep feeling like the distance between all of us in the group is increasing. I believe that, it is because my responsibilities as head boy have increased substantially, therefore I am not able to spend enough time with my friends, which is why everyone is upset with Nikki and me.”

Being well acquainted and experienced with the ways of the world, Artiben thought for a little while before she responded “I don’t believe that’s how it is. The reason should be something else. Most likely everyone is being hurt by you in some way.”

“Hurt them? I’m not doing anything like that.” Rohan was surprised.

“Listen son, you may not have hurt anybody individually per se, but it is possible that after becoming prefect your interaction with everyone has changed.” Artiben had also been observing the change in Rohan for quite some time now. But wise parents always wait for an opportune time and circumstance before saying anything. The highly cultured Artiben was also awaiting such a chance. Today, as Rohan revealed his confusion forthrightly, Artiben took advantage of this opportunity.

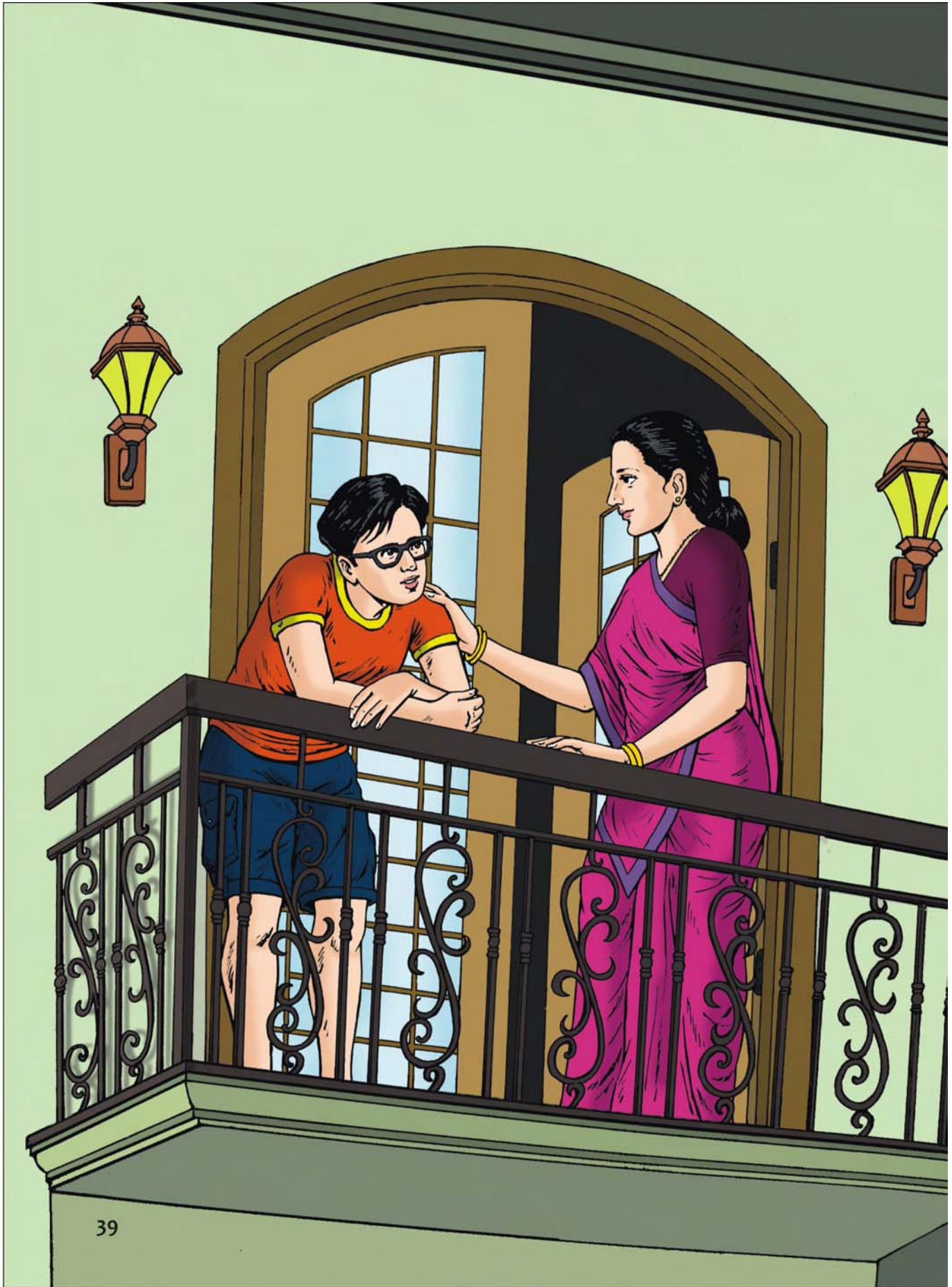
“What?” Rohan couldn’t grasp what his mother was trying to tell him.

Artiben clarified further, “I mean that, our behaviour reflects arrogance. Deep inside, you start to believe that ‘I am something.’”

“What does it matter to others what I believe inside? Externally my interactions with others are just fine.” argued Rohan in response.

“That’s what you feel. But what you believe is reflected in your behaviour and that behaviour is bound to hurt others.”

“But mom, isn’t it a little natural for me to feel that way? Becoming a head boy is no small feat? They consider all past years’ academic progress, external behaviour, sincerity, punctuality and lot of other factors before appointing anyone as head boy. They don’t just make anybody head boy. Therefore, they must have seen all this in me?”



“But of course! However, this belief is leading you towards counting others as inferior from within and you have no idea about it. My dear, as nature takes us higher, in reality we should become more and more humble. Don't they teach you that 'everyone likes one who bows (has humility).’”

Rohan nodded in affirmation.

“Take some time to think about this. Everything will work out.” Artiben said returning to her work. Considering it inappropriate to serve everything all at once, she stopped at this point to give Rohan time to think about things.

Rohan, the son of Artiben and Anilbhai received nobility as his heritage and religion in his upbringing. Right from his childhood, his grandmother would read the Ramayan for him every day. Devotee Hanuman was his favourite character.

He was deeply influenced by Hanuman's devotion towards Lord Ram. Even Lord Ram's love for Hanuman was very dear to him. He also had high regard for Mahasati Sitaji. In this way, piousness and self-restraint were woven into his life.

But 'Kaliyug' is bound to show its effects! After attaining a high position, pride and arrogance began to erupt within him too. He had started considering his friends inferior. The belief that 'I am something' had begun to surface in his speech.

But after his mother's guidance, his vision broadened in that direction. He started to remember all his past follies.

“Neel, can you guess what must be in this folder?” Rohan asked Neel, showing the folder he was holding in his hand.

“How would I know?” Neel couldn't guess.

Rohan went very close to Neel and whispered, “It has the last exam's report cards for all of us.”

Surprised Neel asked, “How did you get them? The results come out tomorrow”

“Sir, is not coming tomorrow, so he has asked me to distribute them tomorrow,” Rohan said in a careless tone.

Neel requested, “Please show me my result! I'll take a look and return it to you.”

“Forget about it! It can't be shown today; only I can see everyone's results.” His voice was brimming with authority.

“I don't want to see it, go. I know that you have become a big man.” Neel got angry and walked away from there.

The next day when taking his report card, Neel did not even bother to look at Rohan. It took almost five to six days for his anger to cool off.

Mulling over the past, Rohan heaved a sigh. He remembered yet another incident. Once while teasing him, Yash had said that, “Buddy, of late you seem to be saying 'hi' to girls more than boys.” They were walking through the school lobby as they chit chatted.

“Huh... You are mistaken. I am not the one who is saying 'hi' to the girls rather it is the girls who seem to have started saying 'hi' to me more. If someone says 'hi', then I must respond to them!” Rohan's nostrils flared up in anger.

Shaily came over right where they were talking and said, “Hi Rohan, I need a favour from you.”

He looked at Yash and laughed cunningly. He then turned towards Shaily and said, "Yes tell me, why do you need?"

Sharing her problem she said, "I have been making runs to the office for so many days to pick up the receipt for my fees. Those people keep making excuses saying, "We'll give it today, we'll give it tomorrow," but they simply aren't giving it. Please, talk to them."

"Oh, is that it? I'll get it done right away. If they don't cooperate I shall take the matter to the principal." There was firmness in Rohan's voice. Shaily felt that a mountain was being made out of a mole hill and said, "No, no, we can't bother the principal for something so trivial."

"We can, why not? I will tell him. Why are you so afraid of him? I'm here," said Rohan giving her a guarantee that she will get the receipt. They obtained the receipt easily but he managed to leave his own special impression upon her. Before giving the receipt to Shaily, he showed it to Yash saying, "See buddy, anyone dare say no to Rohan, they'll see life."

Yash observed the insolence that had seeped into Rohan's behavior. Yash was going to point it out to Rohan, but realizing that there's no benefit in saying anything, he held himself back and remained silent.

'Mom was right,' Rohan came back to the present. He could now understand what Yash wanted to say. He began to recall another incident, but just then...

'Tring, tring... tring, tring,' his thought process was disturbed by the ringing phone. He was just getting up to pick the phone when Artiben picked up the receiver and said, "Hello...".

"Listen Aarti ...," It was Anilbhai, his voice sounded tense.

"What happened?" Artiben's voice was raised as well.

"Rasik uncle has had a heart attack. He has been admitted to the hospital. We shall have to go to Ahmedabad," said Anilbhai all at once.

"Oh," said Artiben with a sigh.

"Pack our bags. We will have to leave for Ahmedabad tonight," said Anilbhai giving all the instructions.

Artiben put the phone down and related everything to Rohan. She told him, "Son, we will have to go to Ahmedabad for four to five days. We leave tonight."

Rohan got busy packing his father bag while Artiben quickly prepared their travel snacks. Anilbhai was home within an hour. Anilbhai and Artiben freshened up and left for Ahmedabad.

Feeling a little unwell the next morning, Rohan decided to skip school. At school, everyone was surprised not to see Rohan, who hardly ever missed school. What's more, the principal called Nikki and asked her to prepare a report, so she needed Rohan's help. During the recess, Nikki called Rohan...

"Hello Rohan, why haven't you come to school today?"

"Because I have a fever," answered Rohan.

Nikki spoke to Rohan about the report. Rohan guided her accordingly.

"Okay, bye," said Nikki as she put the phone down. She informed the whole class

that Rohan was running a temperature.

After school, Tannu asked Neel and Yash if they wanted to visit Rohan at his house. Neel did not show much desire and Yash was no longer interested in this group anymore. Yash blew off the matter saying, "It's only a common fever, it's not typhoid."

After seeing the inclination of the two boys, Tannu gave up the idea of asking Nikki. As it is, she was not keen on having Nikki join her.

"I am going to go." Finally, she decided to go to Rohan's house all by herself.

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"Come on in Tannu." Rohan said as he opened the door upon hearing the doorbell.

"How are you feeling?" Tannu asked as she stepped into the house.

"I am good." Rohan answered indifferently.

"Yeah right, you're well! Just take look at your face, it's so sunken. Isn't aunty around?" Tannu asked glancing at Rohan and then taking a look around the house.

"Mom and Pappa have gone to Ahmedabad. My father's uncle is not well. He has been hospitalized." Rohan mentioned as he covered himself with a thick woolen blanket. He was shivering with cold.

"My God, you are alone at home?" Tannu sounded worried. "Did you consult a doctor?"

"No," said Rohan and closed his eyes.

Tannu, went close to his bed. She put her hand on his forehead.

"Oh my God, you have a very high fever." Rohan's head was burning hot.

She went to the kitchen right away and took out some ice from the freezer. In a vessel, she made a salt and ice water solution. She came outside and rummaged through the drawers in the cupboard and found a handkerchief. She pulled a chair and sat besides Rohan. Then, Tannu started applying the saline cold compresses on his forehead.

Rohan lay there with his eyes closed. Within no time, his eyes were drowsy. Tannu continued to apply the cold compresses. Today, it just so happened that for the first time, she was alone with Rohan without a feeling of fear or embarrassment. Everyone was aware, so there was nothing to hide from anyone. She began to feel that it was good that no one else came. She kept looking at Rohan. He looked even more innocent than when he was asleep.

His eyes opened after nearly two hours. Tannu was still applying the compresses. Realizing that she had kept on applying the compresses, he felt mortified. "Oh! Enough, that's enough, I didn't realize when I dozed off to sleep." Rohan said as he tried to get up. Tannu stopped him from getting up and put him back in bed. "Don't worry, take complete rest today."

Noticing that it was 4:00 p.m. on the clock already, Rohan asked her, "Won't they be waiting for you at home?"

"I have already called home and told them that I will be late." Tannu said as she kept applying the compresses.

"Are you feeling better?" A sense of kinship came into Tannu's voice.





Rohan nodded his head in affirmation.

“Do you want to eat something?” asked Tannu.

“No. Have you eaten something?” Rohan remembered Tannu’s meal when she asked him whether he had eaten or not.

“I am not hungry.” Tannu replied without even looking at Rohan.

“Well, do one thing, prepare some ‘raab’ (gruel) we’ll both have some,” said Rohan.

“Raab!” Tannu was taken aback.

“Why, don’t you know how to make it?” Seeing Tannu’s face, Rohan sized her up.

“N... n... no, I know how to make it, but it’s been a while since I made it, so I’ll have to recall.” Tannu started to fumble. Her face became teary.

Tannu came from a wealthy and significant family. Everyone in the house pampered her and gave her importance. Raised in an environment where she got eleven when she asked for one, Tannu was definitely different as she grew up but at the same time she was immature and inexperienced. Her mother Manishaben would often tell her to learn kitchen work and scold her, but her grandparents and her father Maheshbhai always reprimanded Manishaben in turn.

“This daughter is not a burden on us that you keep nagging her to do work.” This was always Maheshbhai’s dialogue.

“She’s not going to be spending her whole life with you; she will get married and live with her in laws. What’s it to you, everyone will censure the ‘mother’.” Manishaben would retort back.

When two cats fight, a third one benefits. In the same way, Tannu would benefit from the arguments between her parents and slip away from kitchen work. Gradually, even she started to feel that she was not meant for kitchen work. In this way, Tannu, who enjoyed a ready plate of food every day, felt bad today that she did not know how to make ‘raab’.

Rohan was able to appreciate her predicament. He felt like laughing upon seeing Tannu’s face. He said, “Okay, prepare it as I say.”

“You know how to make it?” Tannu was surprised.

“Yes, my ‘dadi’ (paternal grandmother) had taught me and later I used to make it for her,” said Rohan.

For the first time in her life, Tannu experienced humiliation about the fact that she didn’t know how to cook. She said “fine,” and went to the kitchen carrying the water vessel with her. She poured the water out, rinsed the vessel with clean water and turned it upside down to dry. She also washed the handkerchief with water and hung it to dry.

“First roast four teaspoons of ‘gundar’ (dry gum). In a small saucepan take eight teaspoons of ‘ghee’ and heat it...” Tannu did as Rohan instructed.

Rohan was watching Tannu. When someone who hasn’t done any work, does work, then it doesn’t suit the person. This was also the case with Tannu. Working did not suit her. Just like a person without intuition she was completely confused. Rohan felt like laughing when he she saw her and he also felt a tender sentiment overcome him.

She took two sets of cups and saucers and the saucepan of ‘raab’ and arranged it in

front of Rohan. In one cup, she poured out some 'raab' and handed it to Rohan. Then she filled her own cup. Rohan took a sip.

"Like it? How has it turned out?" Tannu became impatient to know the report of the 'raab' that she made for the first time all by herself.

"First class." Rohan took another sip.

Tannu's face beamed. She finished drinking all her 'raab'.

"Are you feeling better?" she asked.

"Much better." Rohan said.

She once again put her hand on his forehead. The fever had subsided.

"Rohan, will you have 'Khichdi' (a preparation of rice and lentils) for dinner?" Tannu asked.

"Will you prepare it?"

"Yes."

"Then, I shall eat."

Tannu felt delighted. In this way, until Rohan's parents returned, Tannu continued to go to his house every day. She went and learned from her mother how to prepare, 'mung nu pani' (lentil water), 'daar bhat' (lentil soup and rice), 'khichdi' etc. She would prepare something new for Rohan every day. Since it was her first time cooking, she made many messes yet she did it happily. She would also talk about what was taught in school that day and she would help him with classwork as well as homework. Nikki was busy preparing the report. Neel and Yash were busy in their own worlds. Thus, no one came to visit Rohan. It was just Tannu, who would not move away from Rohan's side. For Tannu, each of these days was like the pleasures of heaven. She had not even imagined that she would get to spend so much time alone with Rohan.

'For someone who hasn't ever picked up a glass of water, she's doing so much for me! She gets utterly exhausted, yet she serves me different dishes that she prepares herself every day.' Rohan's affection towards Tannu kept increasing.

"Thanks Tannu, you took care of me in my time of need." Once Rohan said while sipping on 'mung nu pani'.

"Rohan, I am ready to take care of you always." Eventually, Tannu expressed the feelings in her heart. Realizing what she had just said, she quickly turned it around saying, "I mean... friends would obviously help each other!" Then she went into the kitchen. After winding up the kitchen work, she went home.

Now, Rohan was completely alright, well enough to go to school the next day. After Tannu left, he stretched out on his bed. His eyes were not drowsy. He took a magazine in his hands but he couldn't concentrate on reading. Tannu's words kept playing in his mind.

'Ready to take care of you always!' what is this Tannu said! When he first heard the words, he had felt a jolt. The past incidents surfaced in his memory afresh.

'When I had a fracture, why did Tannu come to meet me without telling anyone, why was she apprehensive when she saw Anuj, why did she get upset when I was teaching Minu, why has she developed dislike for her childhood friend Nikki, why does she take so much care of me...' he found the answers to all these questions in an instant.

He understood that 'Tannu likes me very much'. The thought of it, put him in turmoil. His face blushed. A wave of happiness went through him. He closed his eyes. Gradually, he got lost in fantasies.



((8))

“**T**ring, tring... tring, tring...”

Neel picked up the phone.

“Neel, will you give me your math book? I want to copy the homework?” Yash asked impatiently.

“Why? Don’t you know how to solve the problems?” Neel counter questioned.

“No, and right now I have to go out so I’ll copy it quickly and I’ll it understand later.”

“Where do you go out every day?”

“All that later, are you giving me your book?”

“Okay, come get it” said Neel hanging up.

Within a short time Yash picked up the book, made some formal talk and went away. Since the day he had said that, ‘Anjali and I were playing chess’ Neel kept sensing that something fishy was going on. One day, he had even asked Yash, “I found it rather amusing to know that you play chess with Anjali. I have never even seen you talk to Anjali.” At that time Yash had blown off the conversation saying, “We play occasionally,” but since that day he evaded Neel. This behaviour from Yash only made Neel more suspicious. He frequently remembered the words uttered by Dada.

“What could it be?” Neel simply couldn’t solve the mystery. His restlessness kept increasing. He was completely bewildered amidst the two unsolved puzzles; his frustration with Rohan and his suspicion with Yash. Finally, he decided to get remedy for both, from Dada. He left to go to Dada without telling anyone.

“Jai Satchitanand, Gauravbhai” said Neel as entered the house where Dada had been staying.

“Oh! Come in Neel, come on in. Jai Satchitanand. How are you?” said Gauravbhai, welcoming Neel. Gauravbhai was an aaptputra who was constantly in Dada’s ‘seva’.

“Fine, how about you?” Neel asked in return.

“What else can be expected in Dada’s company, but sheer bliss!” Bliss was truly evident on Gauravbhai’s face.

“That is absolutely correct,” replied Neel with a sigh.

Neel was in no mood to further the conversation, so he directly asked, “Isn’t Dada home?”

“Dada is resting. He will wake up shortly. Do you want to meet Dada?” asked Gauravbhai.

“Yes.” Neel responded.

“Go, go to the room where Dada is resting and sit quietly. Dada will wake up in a little

while.” Gauravbhai accommodated Neel. Thankful, Neel went to the room inside.

Dada was sleeping on a bed placed in the middle of a large room. There was a peaceful silence in the room. Neel went and sat a little distance away from Dada’s bed.

Dada was sleeping on his side facing the opposite wall. One of Dada’s hands was folded beneath supporting His head, while the other hand was propped on His waist stretched out towards His legs. The hair on His head was neatly styled. He was wearing a white shirt and ‘dhoti’. It didn’t seem as though Dada was fast asleep. Neel’s gaze became fixed on Dada.

He was in seventh grade when he met Dada for the first time. Those days came back to his memory. What bliss he had experienced back then! He never missed an opportunity to stay near Dada, ‘satsang’, ‘shibir’, ‘jatra’ (pilgrimage), picnic. Rashmiben and Shashankbhai had never stopped him from visiting Dada. Influenced by the change in Neel, after he spent time in Dada’s vicinity, Rashmiben and Shashankbhai had also turned towards Dada. Once they had gone to do Dada’s ‘darshan’ with Krutikaben and Manojbhai. Manojbhai had introduced them to Gauravbhai. Being well acquainted with everyone, they all recognized Neel. Even Gauravbhai was happy to see his parents come today. He took them all to do Dada’s ‘darshan’.

As it is, Dada recognized Krutikaben and Manojbhai, when it was Rashmiben and Shashankbhai’s turn, Gauravbhai said, “Dada, do you know them?”

Dada said, “Jai Satchitanand” as he looked at Gauravbhai.

“They are Neel’s parents, Rashmiben and Shashankbhai” said Gauravbhai introducing them to Dada.

Hearing this Dada emanated a pleasant smile towards both of them. He looked instantly towards Gauravbhai and said, “It is not correct to say that they are Neel’s parents. You should say that Neel is their son. The younger ones are always recognized by the names of the elders.”

Amazing! What excellent knowledge of social custom with the knowledge of Self realization! This was the first time they saw such extraordinary art of explanation to mould in every way those who stay with Him and to make them fault free. In time, the ‘darshan’ ended but from that day onwards, Rashmiben and Shashankbhai surrendered themselves to Dada in their minds. Up to now, they had heard about Dada from Krutikaben and Manojbhai many times. They had also heard about Dada from Neel and Anuj, however, after their personal experience they found Dada to be much more glorious than what they had heard.

After going home, they wouldn’t tire to sing the praises of Dada. Quite obviously they narrated the incident to Neel, but they also narrated the incident many times over to all their friends and relatives. Neel was also pleased to see his parents’ reverence for Dada.

Just then Dada stirred a little. Neel’s gaze was still fixed on Dada. Dada’s eyes were still closed. Neel who was perplexed started to feel pacified upon seeing His facial composure. In the early days, Neel had once asked Him, “Dada, how is it that you are always able to stay happy? I am always unhappy about something or other.”

“Tell me, what are you unhappy about?” Dada had asked him at that time.

“All my friends have more games than me and seeing them I keep feeling ‘I don’t have this, I don’t have that’ and so I am always upset.” Neel explained.

“Oh, that means you can’t be happy about what you have and you are always unhappy about what you don’t have. I don’t do such foolishness. I only look at what I have and therefore I am always happy.” Dada explained to him in his child language.

Neel argued back saying, “But that which I don’t have, is not with me, is it? So I’m bound to be unhappy about it!”

“Yes, but then again you have something which others don’t have. So, shouldn’t that happiness remain?” asked Dada.

“No, it doesn’t last.” Neel replied.

“Then do one thing, would you like to sell these two eyes of yours for two crore rupees?”

“How can eyes be sold?”

“Fine, then would you like to sell your legs?”

“No, absolutely not.”

“Sell the kidney then. If you are getting so much money, then it’s fine to sell one of the two kidneys. Then you can buy whatever you want.”

“Dada, what are you saying? No matter how much money I could get, even then I would not sell these things.”

“Now, you tell me, you have merchandise worth crores of rupees, yet you are crying for games, is that not foolishness? There are so many people in the world who don’t have one thing or the other among these, and you have all of these things.”

Hearing this Neel was tongue tied. He had never thought in this way before. Since that day, the majority of his complaints had stopped.

He heaved a sigh. Today, he was in the same condition once again, that he was in before. He was unhappy again because he entered into competition with Rohan. The happiness had long disappeared. He remembered Rohan.

“Sir, let’s make Neel the head of sports. In any case, I will not be able to manage all the responsibilities.” Rohan once said as he recommended Neel to the teacher.

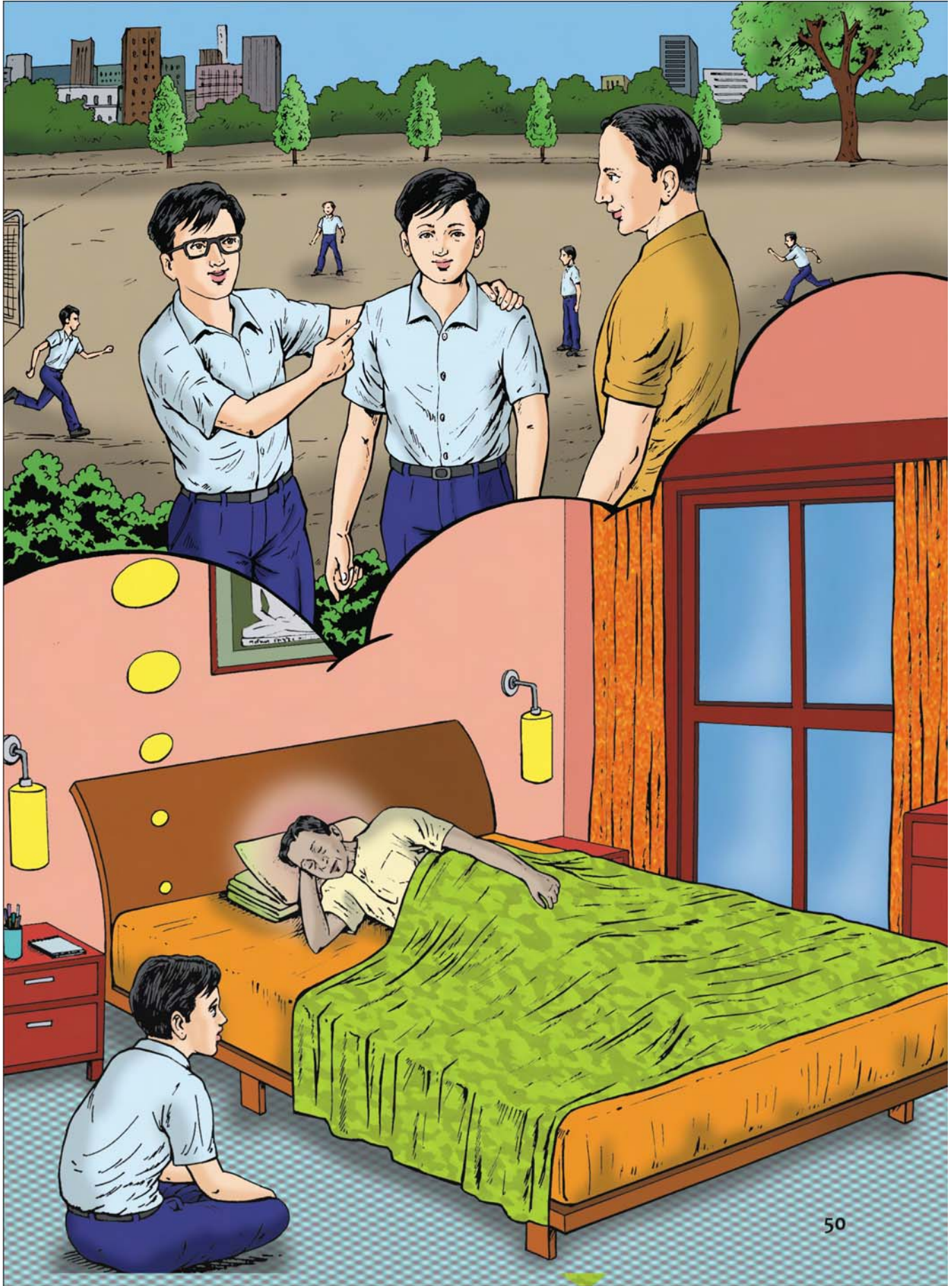
“Well, if you are fine, then I have no problem.” The teacher responded casually.

This is how Neel became the head of sports. Once, Neel reprimanded a boy for not doing his sports practice properly. That boy complained about this to Rohan.

He was a spoilt son of a wealthy father who got a lot of respect in school because of his clout. The idealistic Rohan was becoming lax in holding onto his ideals after he became head boy. He would instill and maintain his impression by becoming humble in front of big people and boasting in front of ordinary people. As soon as he heard the boys’ complaint, he went to Neel.

“Neel, his health is not good and that’s why he doesn’t practice. You have wrongfully reprimanded him. Say sorry to him.” Rohan spoke to Neel right in front of that boy.

“I don’t see any such reason, but it is definite that you can no longer see the truth.”



Neel chided in turn, instead of saying sorry.

To keep his image in front of that boy, Rohan said to Neel, "In that case, you will have to step down from this position. You seem to have forgotten that it is because of me that you have become the sports head."

Although Neel became the sports head, Rohan's behaviour often reminded him that he was sports head because of Rohan's recommendation rather than because of his own capability. At that very moment, he took off the sport badge and threw it at Rohan's face.

"I don't want to be the sports head," he said as he walked away from there. His negative opinions about Rohan were becoming more and more firm. Despite the numerous attempts that Anuj made, a permanent change in Neel's opinions for Rohan did not happen. The effect of Anuj's attempts would remain for a little while and then Neel would revert back to his negativity for Rohan.

If you had to live every day with the person for whom you have negative opinions, then just imagine what would your state be? Precisely, that is what Neel's situation was. Eventually, out of frustration he had come to Dada today and that too without informing anyone. He had come with the hope that from Dada, he would certainly find a way out.

Dada opened His eyes to find Neel in front of Him and lovingly asked, "Oh Neel, when did you come?"

"It's been a short while, Dada." Neel said, as he greeted Dada, 'Satchitanand'.

"Have you come alone?"

"Yes."

"Is everything alright?"

Neel was not able to say anything. The corners of his eyes began to dampen. He couldn't look at Dada in the eye. Dada felt like he was trying to make a lot of effort to speak up.

"Do you want to say something?" Dada asked to help him overcome his hesitation. Dada's voice sounded loving.

"Dada, I have developed immense dislike for Rohan. I don't even feel like talking to him." Neel gathered his courage and said.

"Why, what has Rohan done?"

"After becoming head boy, he has changed, he has become very arrogant. His every word brims with arrogance. He humiliates everyone at any and every occasion. I just don't like being with him."

"So now, what shall we do?"

"That's exactly why I have come to You, I want to come out of this."

"Do one thing. From today onwards, start saying, 'he is very nice, he is very nice, I am greatly obliged to Rohan, I really like being with Rohan'."

"Should I say this, even though I don't feel that way about him?"

"Yes, even then."

"What will that achieve, Dada?"

"It is by saying that 'he's not nice, he's not nice' that you have wound the wrong belief. By saying, 'he's nice, he's nice' those beliefs will unravel."



“By simply unraveling the belief, will the negative opinions dissolve?”

“Yes, because this is a science. By reversing the method in which the mistake has entered, the mistake will leave.”

“How will I come to know that all my wrong beliefs have been unraveled?”

“When you can no longer remember any of the past opinions that you had about Rohan, and you feel pure love for him, then know that all your wrong beliefs about him have been unraveled.”

Today, Neel got to learn something new. He felt satisfied. For a little while he just sat there. He wanted to ask Dada about Yash, but couldn't pick up the courage to do so. Instead, just then, Dada asked him, “How is Yash?”

“Yash has also changed. He doesn't mingle with us much...” Neel couldn't ask any further.

Pointing His finger towards the corner table, Dada said, “Bring that piece of paper and pen.”

Neel gave Dada the paper and pen. Dada started writing on the paper. Dada's inquiry about Yash started to seem mysterious to Neel.

He kept thinking, ‘What could it be?’ and just then...

Dada said, “Give this to Yash” folding the paper and handing it to Neel.

Neel wondered but he couldn't ask anything.

“Fine” said Neel as he got up. He bowed down to Dada and took blessings.

“Do pratikraman for Rohan and wash it all out, okay. He is a very good boy.” said Dada.

Neel said, “Yes” and left the room. Gauravbhai asked him to stay on but he was lost! His mind was lost in thoughts about ‘what must Dada have written in the note for Yash’.

“Please convey my ‘Satchitanand’ to Anuj, Rohan and Yash.” Gauravbhai did not pressure him any further to stay back.

Neel walked away from there after barely managing to say, “Sure.”

It was just beginning to get dark. As it is, he had left home without informing anyone, so he was in a rush to get home and to add to it, he was impatient to know what Dada had written for Yash. His footsteps moved at a brisk pace.

Today, the road to Yash's home seemed longer than usual. His mind kept getting tempted to open up and read the message on the note, but how could he read it without asking Dada! Unable to bear the feeling of suspense, he increased his pace of walking even more. He was practically running. He arrived at Yash's home.

He rang the door bell. Even the wait until the door opened became unbearable for him. The door was opened by Yash himself. Seeing Neel he said, “I was just coming over to return your book” and he went in to get the book. Neel didn't even realize that he was failing in the simple etiquette of asking Yash's mother ‘how are you’. Yash came with the book.

Saying, “Thanks” Yash handed the book over to Neel.

Neel just looked at Yash for two minutes before he pulled out the note from his pocket and presented it to Yash. “Dada has sent this for you.”

“From Dada?” Yash felt a panic take over him. He slowly lifted his hand to take the note. His heart began to race. With a quivering hand he took the note.

Several thoughts ran through his mind, even as he opened each fold of the note.

“Must Dada have come to know?” Yash broke into a sweat.

Neel stood right there and subtly observed each change that took place on Yash’s face. Unable to figure out a hasty way to get rid of Neel, Yash’s face was overcome with fear.

He opened the note. He became stunned to read what was written in the note. He froze right there.

The message read: Dada is waiting for you, please come back...



# બાળવિજ્ઞાનની અન્ય પ્રસ્તુતિઓ

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**Neel-4:What is your goal? Where are you headed?**

Although, they were all at their respective homes, everyone had thoughts of each other playing in their minds. Tannu was on Rohan's mind. Nikki was on Tannu's mind. Neel was thinking about Yash and Yash was thinking about Anjali. Meanwhile, there was a crowd in Nikki's mind with thoughts of Sachin, Anjali, Rohan, Tannu and Yash....

Yash...

the most restless of them all...

Finally, he started towards Anjali house....

**Neel-3: The World Of Teenagers**

Tannu spotted Yash, Neel and Anuj walking out of the building. The three boys were completely engrossed in their conversation, to even notice her. Tannu immediately crossed the road to avoid them and continued walking ahead with her head down. Her heartbeat was racing, 'If they see me, my secret will be revealed. How will I answer everyone?' Suddenly, Anuj noticed her. From her behavior, Anuj realized that she had not called out to them although she had seen them. He was taken aback thinking, 'Why is she hiding and walking away from us? What could the reason be?...'

**Neel-2:The real victory.**

Upon hearing Rohan's results, Neel felt extremely happy that 'I am confident I will rank first'. Thinking 'I shall definitely get at least 90 %', he eagerly awaited his result. Just then his number was called out. He broadened his chest and got up. The teacher said, "Neel has failed."

Neel let out a cry, "fail?"

...and he fainted. He collapsed onto the ground.

**Neel-1:The treasure of happiness.**

Neel was pondering that, "Wow, It hasn't even been a full day and yet my bliss is overflowing, my peace is not disturbed. I have already become a favourite of all. There's so much bliss overflowing from within that on the basis of that bliss, I am able to give up any of my belongings for others easily. If I spend the rest of my life for the happiness of others, then I too shall remain in bliss my whole life."

But how?...



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