

# **PEOPLE of MOLOROK**

**-Avani Jain**

**Had you not suffered, would you write to seek comfort?  
Had you not been chained, should you conjure freedom?  
Had you not been punished, would you question authority?  
Had you not been granted relief, would you insist on being hopeful?**

## The Sick Planet

A planet birthed 4.5 billion years ago  
Wanting to tell a story, far it grows  
Years and years of changes and repairs  
Older than age, has no compare  
Brilliant stories emerge from it's deep flair  
And so I tell you some, for you to know this world's despair  
The planet of Molorok carries people of all glares  
Worlds exist in it's comfy scares  
The people are struggling and ask for your care  
And so, you must first learn about the worlds of this ugly sphere  
If you can help, you should vow to stay in this share  
And read along, we have no time to spare

## WORLD ONE

### School : A Child's Torment

*"What a man can really learn, shall only be learned by himself, as he lets himself free. What good are your teachers, if they fail to make him explore the true nature of his being. What good are your processes, when they can't challenge his enormous beliefs? This world falls with the dawn of every hour. Save it if you can, or the race shall rot sour."*

Ablazed the sun, as the little dinosaurs played under the roof of a rather peculiar house,  
Raced her heart, couldn't decipher the roaring sounds  
A helicopter landed, and the animals rushed,  
She flew up to help as she saw some people step up  
Climbed the building, hovering one floor at a time  
Careful with her stance, slipped over one of the sticky sides,  
Ablazed the sun again, hitting a hard tingle in her eyes,  
As a lady screamed "Get up, you lazy ass", and she shrieked and whined.

Reluctant as she was, she got out of her bed  
Brushing the teeth, bathing clean, dressing up in despair  
Drinking up a glass of milk  
Throwing away a little bit in the sink  
A clean white shirt, navy blue skirt  
The tie putting an extraordinary flirt  
Swallowed the breakfast like a bear in the wild  
Playing with her nails as her mother put ribbon in her hair outright.

*"Why do you send me to school, Mom?"  
"To learn. So that you become a good and successful person."  
"I can learn that here."*

*"No you can't. There's not much to bear.  
You sit with children from all castes and creed, it's fair."*

*You learn different languages and pieces of art,  
having empathy in your heart."*

*"Do politicians go to schools?"*

*"Everyone goes to school."*

*"Then why do they let people chop the trees like fools?"*

*"Do policemen go to school?"*

*"Yes."*

*"Then why do they make the innocent suffer with their tools?"*

Honk honk, the bus stops by

Mother quickly rushes to the balcony screams at the driver to stop with a cry

The girl rushes down and boards the pretty yellow carriage

Other children dressed up just like her, waving her a 'hi', a weird exhibit she managed

*"They want us to be seen equal but we are not.*

*Some have richer dads so they seek tuition, some are trod.*

*Some sing better, some dance*

*Some write like me, or paint the canvas, given a chance*

*The attempt though is fair at last*

*But Sid still won't have better stationary than Martha in the class"*

The bus is rather fun, they play a lot

Hide and seek, song games, you name it, a crazy pod

Anaya doesn't seem to have many friends though

Not the ones who would choose to sit by her, as she would often hope

A weird, smart, and enlightened keeper

But reluctance to being normal was the extinguisher

Sitting in the bus, she would calculate the amount of combustion they leave everyday

Looking at the cars, imagining a flying model of her own jet, she would show you with a moulded clay

No no, she was no quick-witted, no smarty pants

But her wonder was what kept her alive as a rough, lonely patch

You could get impressed by her skills in Basketball or Diction

But the kids in school would rather notice the difference and friction

Within minutes they had landed the world of agony and critical pain,

But that was just for Anaya, for others, it was fun and gratitude at display

It was called, The School of Wonder and Excellence,

Everytime she read it, she would smirk at the humour and hypocritical resilience

They joined their class queues in the quadrangle

Started with the morning assembly, like a military strangle

No talking, no peeking,  
clean shoes, cut nails, else you would be taken beating  
Around five hundred children sang together with their eyes closed  
The prayers for the gods, and goodness needed for their souls

Although, after the National Anthem was over,  
Two senior monitors took Anaya out of the queue, astonished and sober  
*"Why did you sing it so loud?"*

Anaya wondered for a while,  
Unable to get the logic, she loved the prayers and had them imbibed

*"I love the national anthem," she said.  
"That is no excuse to disturb others, you swell"  
"I was just singing..."*

*"You disturb the decorum like a twig shrinking  
Making fun of the anthem and us  
We know what you are upto, you punk!  
Next time you should keep your pitch low,  
Or you would be sent to a punishment in the hollow."*

This probably was the first time she got bullied out of the blue  
She thought of telling the teachers, but knew what it would lead up to  
They would favour the big guns, and she would be left to suffer  
Should just keep her voice low, to escape the gutter

They say a school is great,  
So many things to learn, so many friends to play  
Hers was the best in town,  
Newspapers and big hoardings talked about it now  
She couldn't see anything great at all  
Ironically, it was illogical for a school, a bluffed record

Sad and angry, she walked into her class  
English was the first lesson, happily she fixed her charts  
Nothing could go wrong in English, the favourite of all  
Charles Dickens, and Agatha Christie should wait for her this semester..but...alas

*"Get out your homework, Children*

*And who hasn't done should stand up stricken."*

Uh oh, her face went pale  
This was the fifth time it had happened this year, too much for a literary tale  
She took the courage and stood up  
The teacher was later surprised to see her unacceptable behaviour  
Ten other students stood glued to their spot  
She went to each place, each name she recalled

The students made excuses of all sorts,  
One said he was sick,  
one said he was absent for a week,  
One had gotten to a family party in the town of cheat

They were given a warning, and made to sit down  
As Anaya looked around, it was now just her and the stammering clown  
His name was David, a cute and sincere brat,  
But his confidence was shaken with the teacher's speech all drat

He started to speak  
His lips shivering, her voice screeched

*"Ma...am....I....I...."*

The whole class laughed at his misery  
The teacher did not scold them for this mockery  
She screamed at him, for not doing the desired work  
And considering his stammer as a prank of some world  
Why would she though? She was aware of his stutter  
A teacher couldn't be so implausible, not at the moment of such clutter

*"I d..d...did n...o...t..."*

*"That's it! Enough making fun in my class!  
You will be taken to principal's office, boy, no more dumb charades."*

This was the time, when Anaya couldn't take a pause  
She instantly spoke, for she couldn't watch David turn frost

*"This is wrong, this is wrong."*

The teacher walked towards her chair,

The eyes of the little girl gleamed with despair  
She was scared, oh yes she was  
The strict sailor, was coming next to her at last

*"What is wrong you say, you little twit?"*

*"The way you are treating him is not right indeed."*

The whole class was shocked.  
They looked at her with awe  
And she continued, without any stiff in her jaw

*"He stammers, so what? You should give him a chance,  
The students were laughing, you should stop them at this disgraceful stance.  
He also was sick yesterday, and his parents went to France,  
Has been taking care of the house and himself, you should be proud of his attendance  
today in class."*

And there, she had done it  
Everyone was sure she would be slapped in a minute

*"How dare you speak like that to me in class?  
I know what is his problem and I will make sure for it to pass  
If he doesn't go through this here, how will he face the world?  
No mother or peer, how will he disclose the hurt?"*

While the teacher shot astute remarks, David filled with shame  
Anaya had a lot more to say, but she did not wish to embarrass him again  
She could tell the teacher, she was making him feel weak  
Wrecking his confidence, making him a presentation peak  
That she was building a class of students who don't think before they mock  
Laughing on someone's biology, should not be taught  
The teacher shouldn't pass a remark to justify herself  
She should accept what's wrong, and create an example or else...  
Anaya controlled her emotions, and chose to stay calm  
Looked on the ground, and shut her mouth

*"Now, where is your homework?"* the teacher asked.  
*"I didn't do it."* Anaya turned sour.

*"Why?"*  
*"I didn't feel the need to"*  
*"What?"*



*"You give the same kind of homework every while  
I see it as a waste of time  
Rather than writing and using more paper,  
I planted a tree, and read another poetic label  
I got this really good book from the Library  
It's called 'David Copperfield', I loved it's pages and vocabulary."*

The teacher, Ms. Oberoi, snapped the table very hard  
Angry was much less a word, she boiled like dragon ready to burn all craft  
Slapped the kid hard, leaving a mark on her cheeks  
The attitude was unacceptable, she travelled to her seat

*"You will go to the Principal's office today, right now  
No more disgraceful tactics to escape from Homework, vow.  
If not, I shall call your parents and tell them how disrespectful you are  
And they are wasting their precious money at this school afterall."*

Anaya shuddered, getting hold of reality around her  
She had been slapped and sent to Principal's office for telling the truth, sinner  
Hadn't Ms Oberoi talked about her parents' despair  
She wouldn't rush out quietly, as five fingers imprinted themselves on her facet, glare.  
Scared, she stepped out of the class  
Losing faith and trust in herself, she was an eleven year old afterall  
Was she disrespectful? She asked herself  
What went wrong? What should I have done? There was no answer there  
She did not raise her voice, maybe the choice of words was disrespectful.  
What would be appropriate? How else could explain her ideas, being dutiful?  
If someone could tell her, what shall she do now  
The principal wouldn't later punish her to run around in scorching heat on the ground

Coming back to class, it was already 12:30 pm,  
Time for lunch, she let out a sigh in the air  
Taking her lunch box to the garden doors,  
They weren't allowed to sit inside, she walked out with hope  
Sitting under a tree, as she opened her lunch box,  
Everyone stared at the kid sitting alone, as if she had chicken pox  
Some felt pity, some humored her in their heads  
Some concluded she did not know how to make friends

*"Why is it so difficult to accept people who sit alone?"*

*They often come next to me with sympathy and offer a veg roll  
I loved my company, but they make me look bad  
My confidence is finally broken, I don't want to eat lunch in this crap."*

David sat opposite under a dense tree shade  
Anaya wanted to apologise, so she got up the very instant, looking lame  
Not wanting her food to be eaten by ants  
She ran off with her lunch box, in her sweaty hands

*"Hey! I am sorry. I did not know it would go so bad,  
I just couldn't bear with everyone laughing and the teacher letting the menace."*

The boy was stunned, and looked at her with awkward eyes  
He was almost taken aback by this reprise.

*"You are sssorry?  
Thhhhat's a glory  
You did noo wrong  
I am not bothered by their songs  
I will be a rap artist someday  
They won't butcher my voice then, with their laughing parades"*

*"Hey! You ain't stammering now  
You sound perfectly normal, totally wow."*

*"I stutter when I get nervous, that's all  
My voice shakes, confidence breaks, head begins to fall."*

*"Which means you are nervous most of the time,  
I am surprised and happy, it's a strange chime."*

Both burst into laughter, and talked for hours  
It wasn't difficult after all, to have someone around with whom you could practise vowels  
Subsequent to this accord, was a music chasm  
Selections for the annual function were due, excited, they ran fast  
Anaya hadn't been happier, she now knew what it was  
Things aren't the way they seem to you always, her smile crossed

*"Okay, Children, form a line as I call your names,  
I will pick the ones who will perform on stage."*

*Richie, Sanya, Rohan, and Arnold*

*Tina, Pratigya, Divya, Anand  
Chitra, Kavish, Aarav and Prem  
Rest of you please sit and play some game.”*

The music teacher resumed with her words  
Assigning instruments and music notes to the cult  
Anaya was disappointed, she had thought she might be trained in music this time  
But spoke not a word, for she imagined in her head what it might be like  
She already was scared that she doesn't sing too well  
Her notes would fall often, and eyes would swell  
Parents wouldn't send her to a music class  
And school wouldn't give her a chance to explore the craft  
If she speaks, the teacher might ask her to sing in front of the class  
And disrespect her and point out her mistakes, making others laugh.

So, today was the day she was broken apart  
The reality of the world fell on her little arms  
Exaggeration, some might call it  
Maybe that, or she knew what a 'fault' is  
Her eyes glittered, controlling the flow of emotions she beared  
A crazy glance, her hands shivered bare  
She didn't realize when her name was called,  
Someone nudged her, to bring her back to the four walls

“Are you deaf?” Asked the teacher  
She said “No” like a succumbed screecher

*“You will be incharge of backstage, Making sure everything is taken care of  
David should join you there, and so will Sulabh and Tanya, See how to build the props.”*

Suddenly, the world around her dropped  
She did not know what it was, did not understand, her heart popped  
A feeling of ridicule and self hate engrossed itself in her mind  
Nodding the head, she went to the washroom and cried like a pigeon without flight  
So much of pain, she didn't know how to describe  
It was a rejection her heart couldn't suffice  
People would tell her, she didn't even try  
But is trying only on the field, not before? While she practised and the clock hands turned to nine?  
What does the first effort mean in your books?  
It was just a school, Don't be a fool!  
She stood up thinking she was overreacting.  
To what though? Why so weak? Scolded herself for the blasting.  
She had cried after months, and noone noticed

Contently sighing, she walked out hoping  
Someday she might understand what it was  
And the fear of being put down, won't haunt her so sour.

She finally had the day, when her faith in school was gone  
Her books now made no sense at all, just to cover her crawl  
Teachers treated her like a machine with no handle or gear  
Growing dumber each day, they were sure her grades will face a tear

She would spend her free time in the Library and read  
About Children and Animals and stories about great schools indeed  
Enid Blyton was a new friend at last,  
Shakuntala's math puzzles, a souvenir she wasn't allowed to guard.

*"You spend too much time in here, don't you have a class?  
No allowance for you to have so many books at once, rules are fast.  
I should not see you here for a month  
This is a warning, you should remember dumb surge.  
You thought no one would notice?  
I have been a librarian for years, run away little unwanted robin"*

*But....*

*"I know what this is about,  
Don't fool us like scouts  
We know why students hang out here  
Go study, and no stealing is allowed.  
I have been told about your grades  
And your relentless parades  
Stop trying to act sincere  
When we both know it is to hide that you come here"*

She thought she could speak, but no argument made any sense  
The Librarian had also been harsh, there, ends a fairy tale  
Anaya could enroll her, like other smart kids in school  
Who could fool anyone, but she didn't want this temporary resolute.  
Her mission was greater, so she set on a plan  
The next school speech competition was what she thought a fiery jam

For a week she contemplated, and wrote her most favourite thoughts  
A pen and paper made her happy, but her vision was far greater than ink spots  
Happily getting ready, as she sat alongside her mother  
Braiding her hair tight, she spoke not a word, lost in her wonder

*"You are studying properly in school, are you not?  
I hope I don't hear a complaint or some rot"  
"Why do you say that?"*

*"Came into my mind, just asking you of course  
You are anyway a smart kid, all good and in force?"*

Something hit the twelve year old hard  
She again didn't know what it was, but aggression made its way past  
She sulked and got up, being impolite and irreverent  
Her mother didn't understand and questioned her unacceptable dialect  
Before any more questions could be imposed on Anaya's facade  
The bus honk broke the tension at once with a horn, harsh  
Mother gave her a look of " we will talk about it later "  
Little girl ran while her upper body tightly hugged a blue sweater

The bus that day was nothing like before  
She was excited to meet all the foes  
Looking at the world with supremacy, her cheeks gave a fluffy churn  
Her eyes filled with delight, for what might be a new world

It was arduous to wait for ten a.m.  
When the competition would finally start in the ground, not auditorium, a mayhem  
How perfect was the scene at last  
Surrounded by nature, and six hundred students who looked at her with applause  
She stepped on the podium, as her name was announced  
Five mins was the warning bell, the invited guests turned their head around  
Her charm couldn't be mistaken today, so everyone was quiet  
And then she did a mic check, with a tone rather admired

*"My name is Anaya, and I will be speaking about the Education System of Molorok."*

*"We live in a world that ought to be great,  
It somehow though, has its glory at stake  
The plants are dying, and so is the hope for the future  
Children getting Obese, and Kindness is at rupture*

*What I have been told, since I got a little old  
Is that it is the responsibility of ourselves, to get it out of the hole,  
I don't see how we do that though,  
My head swells sometimes looking at the school we all boast*

*Our curriculums are a dodder at last  
 None of what we learn serves the real world anymore, that's the truth, alas  
 The teachers do not teach with all their heart  
 Science is based on discovery, but we rot it like parrot charts*

*The stammerers don't make it on stage,  
 Students with less marks get punished without knowing what is at stake  
 Competition is how we learn about Alexander the great!*

*We encourage strict discipline and no new ideas in this so called temple of knowledge  
 And we expect the world to sustain itself with the catastrophe we are making it dealing  
 with, a rampage  
 Murders, theft, rapes, kidnapping and ruthless assaults  
 When you look at each other here, is anyone capable of turning it back on fault?  
 Do you have the courage of stepping up and making the world a better resort?  
 With your slapping and kicking the students on butts, are you making the world a  
 non-violent paradise afterall?*

*A teacher stood me up and punished me for being honest  
 She did not tell me where I was wrong, but used force, the least of the word that's  
 modest  
 The libraries don't allow children to read many books  
 The sports teacher doesn't allow everyone to play the sport they choose  
 The music teacher doesn't care if someone who feels left out could be talented  
 The stage doesn't reward effort but skill, this doesn't build anyone's character, just  
 leaves their spirits tainted"*

Everyone stared in awe, one of the teachers was outraged  
 She almost stepped in to get Anaya off stage  
 The invited guest though, signalled her to back off  
 He listened with intent, probably was some school chairman, she did not care at all.

*"The history in our books runs on political influence  
 That's why we probably don't know what it is to be a Molorokan, or just an insurance.  
 The math you teach is numbers and figures  
 People who invented it considered it idea and innovation in sigils*

*The science class is like a compulsion of laws  
 Art and Literature are only a possibility of "dull class".  
 If we don't build character, what do we take with us?*

*If we don't learn the art of learning, what use is this syllabus?*

*Children aren't a commodity, what different is a government from this school  
Operating on the citizens like Puppets, sometimes providing a swimming pool  
You teachers have a chance to make a difference to the world  
An opportunity to leave a dent in the universe  
If you don't take it now, then you will have no answers to give  
When your grandchildren ask you about this solitary rift :*

*'You say the world is changing for the better, but what do we see?  
More guns and barrels, sometimes atom bombs in the sea  
Why does it keep getting worse as we breathe?  
Grandma, since when did you know, this would be the fate of the civilization we live in?  
Did you do something about it in your time?  
Or just made fake promises like ones in power or in line?  
Did you have a chance?  
To glance at the adversity of our stance?  
Did your students build this?  
If not, have they attempted to stop it, oh so grim!  
What was it like to have trees around?  
To eat fresh fruits, and play your favourite sounds?'*

*You have chosen an opportunity to be noble and greatness shall come your way  
Education is holy, and probably the only way  
Why don't we make it count together and say,  
We will better this system each day, and treat students as we want our children to be  
treated forever with gay.*

*Thank you."*

No one clapped, as if they were waiting for more to come,  
A few seconds later, she saw a standing ovation  
Whistles and woos, her heart took a leap  
Handing over the mic, she stepped down with as a sneet

Others also came on the stage and performed their essays  
And then was the time to announce the winner, the one who finally slays  
Barbara won the contest, but Anaya had one the hearts

So she stood proudly as a runner up and medalled a star  
Although, she wanted a lot more than that  
Waited and waited for someone to speak about it, no drag  
And then, someone did....

*"This was an amazing day  
Such beautiful thoughts, charisma, and bright ways  
And the girl who talked about the education system did a good job,  
One day, you will make the nation proud*

*All of you were great  
Thank you for having me here, you are brave  
All are winners  
But the price has to go to one, that's the game."*

That's it? She thought  
How foul was this request, some drought?  
She later went and met the principal  
The principal turned her down

*"Oh you wanted an answer my dear girl,  
You were disrespectful there, now don't twirl  
Get back to your class and respect your teachers  
They know more about the subject than you, toodles."*

Everything was falling apart for her, words were supposed to be magic!  
Taken into the anchoring team, she was a star for a few days, but, how tragic  
They didn't feel it maybe, she did not say it right  
Maybe she needs better words, or a better stand, something caught her in fright.  
What if it wasn't the words, but the problem was much bigger than she thought  
Oh lord, save the world, what worsened distraught!

*"You tried"* said David, *"the world is not ready yet"*  
*"Well then it will never be"* Anaya threw away her nasty badge near the graveyard.



## **WORLD TWO**

### **My Profession is None of Your Business**

When they tell you “Do what you love”, take that in writing. For what I know, the world still is struggling with the moral conflict about what can and cannot be loved.

He sat opposite the bright-blue screen  
Filling in his life’s work, looking like a sheep  
A resume, they called it; for him it was like the constitution  
Looked brilliant when written, but had no solid execution

“Rudra Mehta” he typed with great shame,  
Two days left, what more could he do with his life, again!  
It was the time of the year for which everyone waited for  
The placement cell was in full gear, and he was an ambassador so called

As he carried on with his spectacular Resume designs,  
A thought plunged at him, so bright  
It was that moment when he realised,  
He had forgotten to ask the ultimate question to slow down his fight

"What was he doing this for?"

2 a.m. in the night, he stepped out in the balcony, cold and frost  
Looking in the sky, the visible stars were history, he thought  
The boy had lived a fairly good life  
Adorned with achievements and pride  
Something was always missing though, he did not know what  
The twinge was stronger today, it was a big day tomorrow, afterall!  
A bright kid in school, would win debates and play basketball  
IQ so high, parents would narrate stories of his clause  
The years of college were about to pass  
His future was coming nearer, like the clock hands moving steadfast

A rebel since a kid, he would question the ways of the world

Career was one of his favourite disciplines, well judged  
And yet he stood at the precipice of right and wrong  
What is it he wanted, and was it a fair song?  
He closed his eyes and breathed out his wildest dreams  
The air couldn't decipher it too, it was entangled by all means  
If the wind was a human, it would take him in its arms  
Throw him into the wild, so that it doesn't have to listen to his dilemmas  
But the wind was kind, so it listened to him speak  
A language no one understood, but it surely reaped

Rudra went to his Laptop screen and took exactly fifteen minutes  
Typed up, saved and mailed the resume to a friend for a print  
The sleep he had that night was extraordinarily peaceful  
No one, even he did not know, why were the dreams so beautiful

"When my time comes, forget the wrong that I have done....." the alarm rang at eight in the morning  
The favourite Linkin Park song made him jump out of bed, quickly retiring  
The brushing of teeth, cutting of nails  
Shaving of the beard, and unnecessary hair in place  
A shirt well ironed, he put a blazer on with tie and knot  
Had been ages since he was seen as a professional, bucked up tom!

Getting in the college bus, he reached the institute  
Walked down the gardens and fences, into a group of well-groomed dudes  
One of them took out a parchment from his bag  
And gave it to him, It was a beautiful Resume, everyone uttering 'swag'

*"The tests should start by ten"*

*"Hey, do you have a pen?"*

*"Bro, tell me what formula this is"*

*"I am shit scared, what could be a code for this piece?"*

For the first time in very long  
Rudra was quieter than most of all  
Getting through or not was not important to him  
He already knew he could do something with his talent bin  
Three and a half years of this institute and his heart just sank  
It was as if, he had drained his money in nuisance  
Although he was aware it was all about security  
Making sure he had a place to go, if all his plans landed for insanity  
And so he stood up,  
thinking this was the backup

Revised his formulas and programming codes,  
Lacking the art of manipulation, he rose

It was soon Ten O'clock and the crowd entered the test room  
Obsolete computers, lodged seats, and a fair gloom

The first round reviewed their skills for aptitude  
Numbers, puzzles, and anagrams, he was back in middle school  
Next tested the Verbal fragment  
Confident, he led through all the segments  
Once they were out, A voice rung in his head again  
Tried to wane it under the shouts, but it was a powerful question then

*"What happens if you don't make this round?  
Look little fella, turn around.  
Hundreds of other suitors have played with dedicated interest at bounds*

*It is not about career, or money, or pride  
It is about your relentless will to fight  
You want to be everything, and you don't want to fail  
Never have you lost a single long-run game  
Being good at so many things sucks, doesn't it?  
You may want to try slowing down your wit, mister fairly-fit*

*Think about stepping aside, you will anyway never take this chance  
Just trying to prove your worth, what an ugly romance  
It doesn't matter whether you make this or not,  
It is not about having a backup pay off  
Some poor old kid might have chances of employment this way,  
Others are also compromising on it, but you could be different this day!  
You want a proof of your success, but this isn't success to you  
But if you step out now, risks will haunt you*

*Stepping out might mean overconfidence in your books  
Facing your parents will become an issue  
Don't you believe in yourself big fella? You should do that once  
Don't waste a seat, it could be a huge currency for some".*

"Rudra!" screamed a pale looking boy, wearing a white shirt  
"You are qualified for the next round. Quickly go to the lab on the left, hurl."

Rudra ran off to the next round, copying the codes of the best programmer

Classmates become supportive here, and so does the placement officer  
They finished the round and walked out into the open ground  
Laughed and pinched each other with remarks, all sound  
There sat a girl opposite all alone on a garden bench  
The fellow went off to her, wanting to know what was her clench?

*"Hey, Anaya!"* he waved at her  
She responded with a smile. And removed a bag for him to sit on the perch

*"Why are you sitting here all alone?"*

*"I was doing some thinking, it's exhausting to not do that, all cold."*

*"What is it?"*

*"It's...it's everything that is put in this flowery pit.."*

They looked at each other, their eyes met  
So much was unsaid, she went on with an unuttered consent

*"I don't really know what I am doing, you see  
This whole job thing is kind of irritating and not free  
I could step down and not go for the interview  
So that someone really in need might get a chance to improve."*

*But I need a backup, something to say to my parents, you know  
The path I am travelling on is not so easy, and doesn't always reap what you sow."*

*More than 250 jobs in the market, and we are all still stuck here  
So much to do and explore, but, everyone is so scared, it's clear."*

*Look at you, design and wit  
You would make a great brand manager if given a click."*

*I am just tired of this monotony, this fear of losing on myself  
It's as if, I am all wrong, the world is right, and I should lose up my shields in the digest."*

*If we were to travel a ten thousand years back from now  
The economy won't be beseeching our hearts to pound  
Being encouraged to do what we want  
And not focusing ourselves on this stupid, temporary gospel like font."*

Rudra smiled foolishly, and didn't realise it so

Someone was pouring his heart out, and if someone so beautiful was easier to listen to, then he wouldn't go.

*"What do you want to do now?"* he asked abruptly  
They had no time left for sympathy

*"What I am supposed to do.  
Get into that room and crack the stupid interview."*

This time, they both smiled, partially laughed  
It was rare that these differences could sync at last, in the world so classed  
They got off their seats and walked towards the auditorium  
He hadn't felt so comfortable in a long time, and a bit of his future path seemed clear.

\*\*\*\*\*

Forward to a few hours, he was sitting in the interview room  
Questions poured in as the two gentlemen straightened up who looked more like goons  
He swallowed, and wondered, what would he do next?  
Everything related to technical computing was still a foreign affair

*"Tell us about your major project, and this interesting sigil on your resume."*  
Aah, he had forgotten. His uniqueness would rescue him just as well, even in this dismay

*"That's my logo, gentlemen.  
It represents my identity very well.  
My project deals with blockchains and quantum computers  
Something I am willing to still understand as a part of my research in this sector."*

The interview was a superrocking blast  
As compared to interrogations of the past  
He didn't have to worry at last

No codes, no programming, no data structures came his way  
His ideas made the interviewers get blown away  
Coming outside, he was relieved at last  
Ideas, it is the ideas that make people tick, and the passion to run past.

He saw people all tensed outside  
Asking him how it was and on what should they put more light  
Rudra was quickly rescued in by some monitors though  
To wait in a room with a few others, who had gone through their interviews already, sorrow

Not to his surprise, Anaya waited in the corner of the room  
Writing something in a sheet of paper, looking like a ragged balloon  
She wore a shirt coloured subtle grey  
A million colours in her eyes gleaming, as if looking for an escape  
He went straight to her and sat beside  
She hardly noticed it amidst her own wordly fight  
He waited for her to finish her prose  
Not willing to disturb through sound or even a nudge which might have her mind closed  
As she was done, and looked up and turned her head  
He looked at her with friendly eyes, a charming bet

People in the class saw it as a platonic hue  
Although the two protagonists could tell how amazing and different was the view  
It had no attraction, just charm, no mildew  
Even the slightest possibility of a mistletoe was desirably removed

The gleam of two strangers was subdued  
Such relationships also exist in nature, was hard to believe and undo  
There was comfort without panic, and connectivity without longing  
How hard is it to find such bondage in a world wanting to settle, or attract a lodging

*"Oh I am sorry" she burst out in glee  
"I was engrossed in putting down an arrogant cacophony"*

*"That's okay, CAT EYES. I saw how absorbed you have been  
Can I have a look? Curiosity kills better than gin."*

*"Sure, only if you don't judge the handwriting."*

*"I promise." and read on the sighting*

**What day is it, what time?  
What planet, what chime?  
I am hurtling my identity in a mixed oceans of strange wobbly minds  
Who are you?  
What are you?  
If not just an ocean of ideas**

**Who are you?  
What are you?  
When you choose to chain your ideas**

**This race, this game, It's making me sick**

**All over the place, my mind is a relic**

**I thought the world existed beyond this right and wrong  
But until when do I have to fight? For how long?**

**They say you should listen to your heart,  
And then maintain a balance within your sporty bikes and cars**

**Who am I?**

**What am I?**

**Am I at all myself? Or just a jumbled and topsy turvy version that the world has  
taught and fell**

**I am chained I say, you deny.**

**You call me privileged within a second of eye**

**I am a kid you say, and keep putting the ugly realities of the world in front**

**Not wanting me to fight against them, but to accept and deal with the burden**

**Cause when you go and try to fight,**

**You will be trodden like a snake bite**

**But at least I will be free, and doing the right thing**

**Cause who I am, is a bird in a cage with wings.**

*"That's...beautiful cat eyes, I loved it.*

*What's going on? You look swelled up a bit."*

*"You read what I wrote*

*Although, we writers usually tend to exaggerate, so I don't know."*

They spoke for hours, spent jiggling on ideas

None led to a conclusion, but that's what artists do, not missing a chance to imperfect Narnias

*"I would rather be a dragon than the rider*

*It may sound crazy from a boy who likes to drive, but that's my styler"*

*"I would rather be the rider though, it's great to have power*

*I think it comes from me never having complete control over my towers"*

*"You look like a rider to me, you look like a fantasy*

*A possibility of something more, and rich, a calamity"*

A strange yet beautiful aura had surrounded them

It is these experiences that make you feel your further best

It gets easier to carry on  
To build a world, not just a corn shop

Forward to a few days, both were in the list  
As if it mattered, that's the whole gist  
More than 200 careers, and this was not their fate  
And so the process began towards getting a job in a land far away, hail!

For 6 months after that memorable evening  
Rudra went working on his gigs, sincerely bemusing  
Using social media as a weapon for his grace  
And the frustration from family a solitary inspirational phase  
He would design all day long  
Nights being tinkered with shapes and colours in the darkest forms  
After landing a job in a reputable organisation, he flew away post the exams  
The city was called Solumnus, he was playing all the jacks and travelling all parks

A designer is strange, in colours his eyes faint  
He was eager to learn and explore the best and quaint  
Good with his work, the learning was great  
Everyday was a new challenge, and his art straight  
A year later though, he sat on a tree branch  
Remembering how it used to be and now how it was, a boring trance  
6 months into the work he had been called in the office of the CEO  
To be told how he should be more business oriented now, how should be the end video  
For months he had been focussed on getting it just right  
In the beginning it was exciting, later it became an empty mine  
Not everyone can handle economy as an art  
Because it isn't, it's pure draft

His progress seemed remarkable, but not in his heart  
He got a raise and appreciation, something was wrong, was it not?  
Rudra wasn't a businessman, and he did not like any more of his job!

He came here to make art, not to look at the marketing vows  
Questioning his profession, he looked out for another field which would have him say "wow!"  
A few hours on his Laptop, and he chose his path  
Animation and VFX was his new destination, not miles apart  
Speaking to a few friends, he knew just what to do after all  
Excited, he made a phone call to his home, mom picked it up with no halt

*"Hey Mother, had your lunch?"*



*"Oh yes, what about you dum dums?"*

*"I did, just wanted to tell you something,  
Remember how I was confused with various career choices in the beginning?  
I am planning to migrate my job  
To something similar, but what will make me happier in all  
It's new and exciting, and I wanted to share with you first  
Will be looking into a career in animation and VFX, haven't started digging in it yet, but  
will be a cool head burst."*

Upon hearing his voice, the mother croaked  
What was his son doing again? Her voice stoned

*"Again a job change, are you out of your mind?  
Life is not a joke, son, can you not settle your cries?  
If you keep going on with life like this  
There won't be any career left for you to switch or twist."*

*"I know, mother, but I am only twenty two  
And my heart wants much more than just a stable job that I should do  
Especially when money is not an issue!"*

*"You don't understand, you are a kid alright  
This has become a habit of yours, to change jobs like changing clothes in the night  
If you don't do anything about this now,  
Your life will rot and will end up playing see saw"*

*"It isn't such a big deal as you are making it be  
I am exploring career options, not gambling fees  
Changing my career to a similar field  
What are you even saying, I don't understand a thing."*

*"You first opted for biology and maths  
Then chose not to be a doctor, but an engineer at last  
And then you do everything opposite  
Some designing nonsense, people ask us questions, we are unable to requisite  
Then you say you love your job  
And now call me up to tell me, even this doesn't work at all.  
Such instability will eat you up someday  
We are scared for your future, you cannot make a single choice, our trust has gone  
astray!"*

*"I am a man with multiple interests, oh mother  
My career is not landing in a dump, stop bothering your brain.  
There are things I did not know before  
If I did, my choices would not be the same, therefore,  
Let me explore my life the way I want, at least until I am twenty four."*

*"And some magic wand shall remedy this strange spell that has been put your way?  
You have lost your mind, son. Come back to our hometown away from this plague."*

*"Okay Maa, I will speak to you later  
Take care of your health and speed crater."*

He hung up the phone exhausted with the talk  
Mother was a teacher, taught him never to speak his heart  
Why do people always have to know what they want?  
Exactly and very specifically, if they don't, are called selfish thwarts  
Why shouldn't we have an opportunity to explore multiple professions in practise  
Before we choose what really ticks our tactics  
What will make the world a better place  
That seems like the purpose we choose on the planet of grace!

As he came back and sat on his desk  
The CEO called Rudra in his cabin again  
Looking from his computer, he asked him to sit down  
And began discussing a few ideas to the ground

"Very well, and by the way, we have decided to offer you a raise  
Let's discuss that on Monday, while Ashish, our co-founder, is back from L.A."

\*\*\*\*\*

It was a befuddled morning in Solumnus the next day  
A weekend at grasp, Rudra woke up in a friend's spacious stay  
The house was a mess, but not more than his life  
The hangover made it difficult for him to open his eyes  
He wasn't planning to get up and leave  
But something made him get out of bed and stand up, heavily breathe  
A friend lay flat on his stomach on the other side of the bed  
Rudra washed his face and sat with his laptop on the lap  
An hour later, when all the boys were up  
They gathered in the same room, having a conversation strike up

And when Rudra brought up the dilemma of his life  
The guy he had met yesterday, proposed in a cocky voice

*"Bro, you are creative, I know of a job in animation if you would like  
The pay is the same, but their work is interesting, maybe give it a try?  
Take a week, and see what more can you learn,  
And I will get you an interview by the time this week burns?"*

And they exchanged the whole career concept over breakfast  
Rudra did not know how good was he with his art but continued the constant  
This was scammy though, the kind of opportunity he had  
To work with video game designers, storytelling teams, he could go happily mad

A week went by, and he wouldn't get away from his macbook  
Be it a heartburn, or a screaming cook  
As he went to the interview, and came back with a negotiation he thought was good  
Called up his mother, raging with positive attitude

*"I got the job!  
The package is the same as what I was earning here though, a slog!  
But that is cool  
As it is a new career drool.  
Hey, why are you screaming like a fool?"*

*"You were getting a promotion at this job  
Now you will work for less money, for a job in which you have no background at all?  
Is this why you were sent to a city far away  
We don't want your money, come back home, you have got a head hay."*

The conversation went astray, Rudra knew it was difficult to handle  
But something made his mental screws trigger, and his heart wander  
He was brave enough to listen to his heart  
Mother will understand in the end, but why not now? Why not so fast?  
A 22 year old was struggling to find his life through the day  
The organised structured of this world was killing his spirit in every way  
Switching on the TV, he put on a show from a far away land  
A culture he thought was exciting, where anyone could be anything they wanted, Oh man!

He would see a waiter as an important person now  
Money only as a source of living, but there was more somehow  
Where he lived, he was respected in some way

Cause he wasn't a waiter, or a plumber expecting a raise

Every job had a likelihood of being good or bad  
This division was making him go mad  
Not just his mother, but even the corporations he would apply to were sad  
They want your history to be a reliable chalkboard work, all flawed ass  
How could you ever know what you wanted to do?  
If the entire world was after your life to JUST CHOOSE!  
What about experience? What about people who want to do many things  
How can they be called unstable when they are experimenting with their life every minute of being  
It's not a wrong way of living, he thought  
250 plus careers and I knew only 10, when I graduated from school, alas

Why don't we give our children a chance?  
In the fear that they might fall with the dance  
Why don't we risk our bones to give them an opportunity they could themselves call?  
Why don't....ding dong, the bell rang out

Keeping his pizza slice back in the box,  
He got up scout  
A well-dressed girl stood outside the door  
She wore her hair naked, green eyes, and a beautiful smell of cologne

*"Richa! You came!"* he said with glee  
Hugging each other, they went inside the living room, opposite the TV

Putting her bag down, she stretched herself  
As if she had been here a number of times, 'Suit yourself'

*"So, what's up?"* She leaned over to his side  
Waiting for a response as he sighed

*"I got the job, but I am feeling low  
Everytime I do anything, I never feel successful, am I some show?"*

She grinned at the phrase and kept her hand on his  
Meeting his eyes, almost an abyss

*"You just don't value what you do and it has nothing to do with the world  
We are brought up to believe a certain things, anything else get questioned"*

*If you took that job in the MNC, it would be really hard as you would have hated it so much  
But it would get easier with time as it was only you to fight, not the others  
Right now, everybody tells you what you are supposed to do as you ask them  
You are going against what's been taught to you, it's not easy, believe this and mask hell."*

Rudra was uncomfortable and this was all stupidity  
It's not a big deal, then why is he treated with Sympathy?  
He jerked her hand off and sat upright  
"You are just making a big deal of this, I can't be so emotionally weak! I am tight."

She took a deep breathe and looked at him  
With a little look of pity and disgrace, she continued within

*"Feeling something intensely doesn't make you weak,  
You question every move you make, that's what eats up your sleep  
In a society we live in, actions always represent something  
Even if it means getting a strange haircut that's rocking*

*All classes have a certain tasks to be performed  
Which made sense before, when there wasn't much reform  
But today, we want to be individuals, but it's too hard to accept  
If you are so different, it will be difficult to put you in a herd concept  
You know my story, How I survived this crazy time  
I did my engineering out of compulsion, just like you, it chimes  
But then I took up writing, and now it's fine  
As a girl sitting in an office is nowhere close to a lost dime*

*You have little to worry about, only twenty two  
Just get back up and take the job if you want to  
Because once you cross twenty five, I might not say the same to you!"*

"Is it fair though? To have restrictions on what one must do?" asked the young man  
"Not everyone is desperate to know who they really are or what they want." Richa said it as a sharp fact.

*"Nor are there restrictions  
Only definitions and ways of professionalism  
Not every person is here to question  
And so there are scientists so less with discoveries and acquisitions  
Every era has a new face*

*Most people don't have the eye or grace  
We aren't trained, but are perseverant  
Your IQ, your mind, your tendencies decided the credit scale  
Maybe you are different, and so you have to fight it all the way  
You can't blame the people, they just want things where comfort stays"*

He looked at her with great rage  
An image of a passing metaphor grabbed at him, like in a cage

*"But their words hurt! This resistance slows us down.  
You are a writer, you should know what makes you so proud!"*

*"Did resistance slow you down, or did it fuel your spirit?  
How can you ever know that, with this passion at the back of your killings?"*

*"Why are you always justifying what others do?  
Why can't you just agree with the fact that the world is falling in every strange way into  
moo"*

*"Because, we can set an example, not change their brains  
Not each person on this planet will bear you scream at their name!  
You should go do your job, and not bother yourself with these questions  
Cause they won't solve anything but only have an unbearable repercussion  
The world is the way it is, stop talking about it like it's your enemy  
You know better than this, it is you to blame if you go mad even when they speak  
profanity."*

*"You are wrong, you know. We need to have these talks  
We need to keep these conversations alive, or the day of doom will be near the walk  
I go mad because people throw their ideas on others' games  
Self freedom is a demand that none should strain."*

*"Against Self Freedom the laws are made!  
Murders, theft, rapes, happen if you don't put a chain."*

*"Well then might itself teach their children how to respect others' way of being  
May not cause any harm, that's it, relief!"*

She was about to speak something, but they both noticed tears in their eyes  
Her dark circles had gone darker, and Rudra helped her with a tissue he got up to find  
Once she was done, both hugged it out  
It was almost as if their intense theatre practises came loud

*"The world is the way it is, let's still leave a dent"* muffled Rudra tightened with lack of air  
She smiled and pulled away, looking at each other they started laughing in pair

The evening was beautiful, With stars in the sky, what a rare view  
They sat on the perch of a garden beside his house's swing sew

Months later, Rudra again decided to change his job  
He did so elegantly, and soon became an entrepreneur out of wedlock  
His goal was to make the world a better place, and it never stopped  
Conversations were no more in a private living room, but in front of a 50 people staff  
He grew without stopping, and said it out loud  
*"I want to leave a dent in the universe, and make it proud."*

## **WORLD THREE**

### **Don't Call Me a Man!**

“If the physique or appearance of a being tells us how they deserve to be treated, there is something really wrong with us.”

On a cold frosty morning as she unfolded her eyes  
Shivering as she lay on a mattress, bedside  
Looked at the digital clock as it said 6 a.m.  
She freezed out of her blanket into the bathroom, taking an unnecessary shower, carpe diem  
Happily coming out, and sleeping finally on her bed  
She was careful with her stance as it was the second day of her period  
When a woman came and told her it was not fair  
That she uses bathing as an excuse to climb up the bed

*“Your college starts in two hours,  
Get out of the house, you just took a shower”*

She groaned in her sleep and made an irritated face  
*“I couldn't sleep all night mom, cut me some slack today!”*

The lady stormed out of the room in anger  
*“What a disgrace!”* screaming from the other side of the living room center

When the girl woke up again at 10 o'clock,  
Looking at the time, springing off the bed like a fruit falling off a tree top  
Her body ached with muscle cramps  
She hopped on the kitchen door for some breakfast scraps  
Her mother kept a plate on the floor for her to collect,  
She sat down on the cold floor, because it was too much work to bring a mattress  
It was every period now, she thought  
Being treated like an untouchable, when will it stop?  
Her father had once told her, that she should not feel bad  
This is how it is mentioned in the religious texts, and so we follow that

No sleeping on bed, no touching the food  
No entering the kitchen, or travelling to places too scoot  
She wondered again as her dress was stained



Washing it off in the bathroom, her eyes went pale  
It was so natural and so obvious now  
Menstruation was not a phenomenon, but a curse of some sort  
Picking herself up, she went working on the Laptop  
When her elder brother entered said he had some work urgent-top

She went on the other side of the room and started reading her favorite book  
Her eyes glistening with great gratitude  
When mother called her out to chop some vegetables  
*"Ask him to do it"* Anaya snapped at once

*"He is a boy! How many times have I told you to stop this"* said mother  
*"Moreover he needs to work, his placements are going on, don't bother"*

The elder brother looked at her sister with a wicked smile  
And went typing something on the Laptop, both knew it was a waste of time

*"I don't understand, how can you be so mean!"* Anaya snapped again

*"Be it a boy, he is older than me, he should not have this bargain."*

*When I say Akansh could do it, you say he is young*

*When I ask you to put responsibility on Lakshya bhaiya, you talk to me like an anti-feminist woman*

*They are all excuses I know*

*While I can't go in the kitchen, I can chop the vegetables, what a show!"*

*"Well, if you don't want to help me with anything, just tell me so!"*

*No need to scowl and screaming and blame and make the house run coarse hoe*

*Give me the plate, I will do it all*

*Noone cares of my health anyway, I should only drown"*

When the mother came to snatch away the plate, Anaya didn't let her  
Began chopping the vegetables, thinking she was helping her mother  
The world was so clear to her, she had read of symbolism  
This was just the beginning she thought, it started at home and should end in every part of the world until prison

While she wondered in her thoughts,  
heard some screaming from the parents' room, alas!  
And then came the shouting and cursing very fast  
Nothing to stop it now, she thought, it had become their daily chores in fact

When she was a kid, it was only her father who would beat mother  
But now the times had changed and both were equally responsible

Their hands were somewhere in control, but what about the tongue?  
The sound of a rage, of anger very often

Should she have been proud though? As her mother also took a stand now, even if it meant she  
turned into a violent animal  
Both had taught her kindness, that was true, so she just went on sabbatical

Lakshya came in to help her peel the salad  
But all she could see was pity, no help, was it really that dramatic?  
Feeling guilty she smiled and sent him away  
Said it was okay, he didn't have to do it today  
As if he was doing a favour to her  
Oh her hypocrisy, she could be eaten by a pair of blunt scissors  
She wants to be treated equal but she makes him back off  
She makes him feel again, that he doesn't really have to do house chores, as his gender goes  
cross

It is not okay when people think too much  
Causes an illness of wanting to know the conscientious  
Her overthinking was a result of her vivid imagination  
A writer she called herself, bailing on salvation

While she was done with the chopping, the doorbell rang  
A couple of relatives arrived, maternal uncle and aunt  
They were her favourite ones but something she didn't understand  
As she welcomed them inside, and they sat on the sofa, she sat near the stand

Uncle's name was Parag, and he asked her how she was  
But the moment Anaya uttered a word, she turned her head at the glance  
The uncle stared right onto her breast and then looked into her eyes  
Stealing the gaze every now and then, hiding it well with pride  
She left the living room and went inside her own  
Standing in front of a 4 feet wide mirror, staring like a fool  
Having exceptionally large chest, she was a hot lady in any dress  
But she did not feel comfortable with people staring right at her chest  
Not an uncle at least, she thought and pulled herself together  
Thought she was exaggerating but then, why did it make her feel no better  
Eyes glistened, and she did not know what it was  
Could she call it a crime? She was not touched or called names, and he was a close relative of  
sorts

Could she excuse it with 'natural tendency of men'  
*"But how would they feel if you look at their crotch while they are setting up a tent?"*

They might feel fantastic, a woman is interested in them  
Cause they don't need to earn any respect, they are men

No no, she had to calm down  
This is not what she thought, even though it happened every time now  
Shaken by the incident she couldn't speak to her mom  
She had tried once, but her mom had told her to reduce her weight, and ignore the glance  
Mother said she must have misunderstood  
That she should stay away from anyone so destitute  
She must be careful with what she wears  
Because the world is not a grown up place that cheers

Anaya couldn't fight back with a single word  
Cause she felt guilty and angry of being the way she was  
Maybe if she questioned her mother then, mother wouldn't say the same thing  
But something broke in her, as if this was not a new shilling  
She had exceptionally large breasts  
36 inches to be exact, and a fat stomach and ass

It had happened before once, when she was 13 years old  
Sleeping on the terrace with all her family, one of her maternal uncles had come so close  
He had slid his hands inside her T-shirt  
And when she woke up in the middle of the night, she could realise life is no fun  
50 people slept on the terrace that night  
She slept with little kids, taking care of them so that they won't fall through the time  
He had come by and slept near her at midnight  
Cause there was no space left in sight  
He had gone carried away at 2 a.m. sometime  
But now she couldn't sleep a single minute of flight  
She had put his hand away and stared right into unabashed his big black eyes  
Her heartbeat strong and eyes wide  
Struck with horror, she stood up and paced about the place  
As everyone else dreamt of a mysterious chase  
She sat in the corner until it was 5 am  
The sun rose, and everyone woke up, she could pretend she chased the peacock clan  
She hid this incident, feeling guilty  
It was her fault to let him sleep there, even when there was no other space in the vicinity  
That's what she was trained for, indirectly  
So that's what she believed, it was pity

And this was not it, it had happened one more while  
When her mother had caught her sleeping with another maternal uncle on a same pillow with  
strangled clothes one time

She had felt uncomfortable around him during the night as they talked  
His hands not controlling themselves, and brushing through her fingers and hands

Scared, she looked for an escape with no electricity in town  
And so, arrived in a different room with no one inside and slept with just a pillow on top

Next day, Her mother opened the door and saw them both lying on a single pillow in the morning light

A deep sleeper, Anaya was shocked and didn't realise

She had fought with her mother, saying she did not know what it was

Getting scolded for her behaviour, she felt guilty more than ever, alas

She did not know why the uncle would do that

But the conversation went with a different flow, getting away from the part

Her mother did not console her, but screamed at her instead

That's when she had lost all her confidence

How can teenage girls be so feeble afterall?

Getting struck by little scolding, is she crazy? She should not fall

Why did she stay awake until midnight with a maternal uncle she had met after 2 years

Couldn't she just go to sleep and not give her mother the nightmares?

She hadn't explained anything to her mother in the morning

While her mother had told her what would people think if they had noticed?

So much guilt, she couldn't utter a single sound

And slowly she got herself away from this cousin uncle for good, setting a safe ground

He probably meant no harm

Or did he plan the whole plot at guard?

What was he thinking? And why was he there?

I am thirteen, I don't know. Relax dear

She was guilty of so many crimes

If she is ever molested again, it should be her duty this time

A girl who cannot say 'no' to the people she trusts

A thirteen year old, who cannot differentiate what had happened to her

She hadn't been wise, had made mistakes

Of not realising the difference between being a kid and of teenage

What exactly was the mistake though, sometimes she would wonder

She did not know where the guilt was coming from, this was a shudder

She had read of symbolism, that was probably it

Women are responsible, that was the shadow of the wit

Where was the fear coming from?

History and other statements or the readings past the prom

The strength came from the past too

She must have heard it in language on loose

Why was this so crazy, she had looked into the mirror so many times

Being sexually appealing was a curse, even when she walked around like a guy in all events and chimes

She would wear shirts and man-pants to parties and shows

Would be called a “tom boy” and her mother would show a shameful rogue

Speaking of feminism used to make her creep

She would feel guilty without a necessity

Not the right kind of woman she was

Neither here nor there, she wished for a memory loss

Not complete man, and not completely pure woman with those incidents

Her heart couldn't think of anything but mistakes, what a disgraceful precedence

Who implanted this on her? Herself?

Or was it something else? Being so weak and filled with threat?

Her eyes shone into the mirror remembering incidents like this

While her father called her out, in his own prestige

Anaya suddenly got herself together and looked around

A 4 feet mirror stood tall in front of her frown

She was in her room, making herself cool

Shaking her head out of the flashbacks in which she had swoon

This time her maternal uncle was very careful

How could he be okay now? She wondered as she was resentful

She was a grown woman now, with so much anger at her disposal

The guilt wouldn't go, but she now had wisdom of a growing tough armidale

They then asked her of what and how did she do

About her studies and her dreams, she spoke it all out as if an obvious tattoo

She was in her third year of engineering, they thought of it as prestigious

Why would she mind, as long as they didn't share their opinion?

The guests soon left and Anaya was feeling low

She went to the couch and slept while watching her favourite TV show

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It was 8 pm at night, and she played UNO with her younger brother Akansh

They had a strange kind of fun while her phone rang again, aghast!

It was thrice that the unknown caller had called

She picked it up and someone spoke, it was a man, alarmed, she fanned

Taking the phone in an empty room, she talked

It was not allowed to speak to strange boys in her house!

Not like she did not have friends who were male

She just never spoke about them in this place

*"Hello, who is this?"*

*"Someone who adores you, Miss."*

*"What? Who are you and to whom do you want to speak?"*

*"Someone who really likes you and wants your friendship."*

*"Stop being a creep and calling me at this hour  
I am in my house, and it is inappropriate and sour  
No interest I have in being friends with you  
Just cut it out and never try to speak or call, that's my final clue"*

*"But I want to be friends with you...."*

Cut. Tensed, she put her phone off  
If she tells her father, he would take it away, that's all  
He might ask her about the numbers of guy friends she has  
About her messages and chats of secrets they cracked  
Her fear was unreasonable but yet it thrived  
The fear of listening for false accusations, she had probably lost her own vibe

She went back and played and won the last two games  
Prepping for college the next day, shame  
In the morning as she boarded the college bus  
Switching the phone on, in a rush  
She saw missed call alerts her eyes couldn't believe  
This was not a bollywood movie, or chain of relief  
For a moment she wondered if it was some genuine guy  
Or a friend who played some prank, couldn't think of a why  
Killing the mystery off, plugging the earphones in  
She played Linkin Park and fell asleep  
The phone buzzed again, number unidentified  
Picking it up she freezed, voice, she recognised

*"You look amazing in blue  
The colour suits you."*

Did not scream, but her voice was gone for a minute  
Looking around, trying to know the culprit

*"Who are you? And how do you know what I am wearing  
Stop this nonsense now, or I will complain about this daring."*

*"Why so much anger? I just want to know you more  
Saw you on college campus, just speak to me, no?"*

*"Stop fucking around and tell me who you are  
If this is a joke, I don't want to be a part."*

*"No dear, I am head over heels for you  
I will tell you my name after sometime, don't be scared, I am no goon."*

*"Where did you get my number from?  
Stop harassing me, and calling it a strange com"*

*"I will call you from ten different numbers if I have to  
Where and how is irrelevant, just give me some time of you."*

*"NEVER call me again  
Or I will file a police complaint."*

Cutting the call and blocking a number  
Blocking and blocking, her hand shivered  
Looking around the bus, people were staring  
What might they think of her? That appalled her more, scaring  
Hardly could she think more about the crime  
But what would her parents say if they had this in the find  
Telling her that having a phone was a huge mistake  
That she shouldn't distribute her number onstage  
Not wanting to know or think of anything else now  
She slept off listening to Eminem's 'Beautiful', it was dawn

Entering the college campus was a little scary at first  
But then she met her "gang" and life was all burst  
She felt lucky that she knew people who would think alike  
Lucky or unlucky, she did not understand though, what a sigh  
Was it just self approval of opinions and unsolicited ideas of freedom?  
Cause they were also what they called "kids of the new generation"  
She grabbed her friend Nancy, and drew her away  
Told her about the incident that was eating her full blown-out sway

*"Do you feel okay? This is so disgusting  
Don't people have any responsibility left? Give me the number of the freak, I will handle  
him"*

*"No Nancy, it doesn't make much sense  
If we call him it means he gets what he wanted, the attention."*

*"Yeah, maybe you should have our guy friends or your father or brother handle it  
Else he will keep on bugging you, like the last brat your father insulted in"*

*"But that is exactly the type of world I don't want to live in  
Why is there fear of doing wrong only when a man owns up shit  
When I say no, it means yes?  
And when my dad calls up it clears the language it is a different quest?  
This is sick and stupid and exactly why the world is so wrong  
I am tired of this today, you know, it's like I will never be strong.."*

*"Hey, don't break your heart on this, I am with you  
But let us be practical for the time being, and sort this as fast as a rule  
This is how the world is, no matter how wrong  
We want your safety before anyone's ugly horns"*

*"Yeah alright, I will make my brother speak to him  
I wonder when will I be able to take complete charge within"*

*"Someday...when the world is ready  
Now get up you doody ass, professor Arnold must be waiting"*

They attended the classes and the world looked so different to Anaya's eyes today  
She would notice everything she had ever ignored blindly amidst the beautiful hallway  
The gang of the "guys",  
The sarcastic comments by professors who indirectly pointed at the gender bias  
Dress codes and cheesy lines  
A different treatment towards women because they were more "sentimental" by the vibe  
Anaya had been different, she was cooler than other mates  
She would scream out a "bro" but today she was not okay  
Had she never embraced herself as a woman till date?  
What was wrong in being that way?  
What was wrong that she punished herself?  
That she was a hypocrite, and didn't give shit about women

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Weeks went by and she worked on her writing  
Getting an internship was quite easy for her and exciting



It would start next month and she was enthusiastic in every way  
When on a Sunday morning, one of his cousin paternal uncle from a far off state decided to stay  
She liked him a lot, he was down to earth and kind  
They sat together on the sofa as her mother brought him a juice of lime  
Laughter on a Sunday was the least of Anaya's worry these days  
Her focus was on learning, and the family was supporting in every way  
And so now she would bear better with guests  
Especially on uninvited occasions like this and the rest

As the uncle put a moist cookie in his wrinkled mouth  
He was being asked questions about his children's affairs, one was out of town  
A father of five children he was  
Three girls and two boys  
Interesting was their family tree actually  
The elder brother was a slave of madness and poverty  
Two daughters were already married who were twins  
Both well educated and beautiful, under any swings

He talked about them, and then spoke some feisty words  
There was no shame amidst his patriarchal world

*"I had already told all three of my daughters, to not even think about going for a job  
They may study as much as they want, but to go out there and work was nuisance, aah  
the tea is hot!"*

*"Why would you tell them such a terrible thing?  
Won't they have a say in an idea so crazily slim?"*

Anaya had burst out, that is right  
Although she was known for that, so it wasn't frowned at with surprise  
She was wrathful already for how women in this world were raised  
And took it as a responsibility for anyone she or her words could change

*"Well, that's what I want from them, I am their father  
It's not like they were stubborn about it, they also did not bother"*

*"Why would they bother when you told them not to ask  
You are their father and they consider it their duty to follow as you please their tasks"*

*"That's good isn't it? That's my way of raising them up  
I wouldn't argue on others' ways of how their kids are brought into the world!"*

*"Yeah, you would comment like that cause it only seems fair"*

*Being hypocritical and being responsible for the way the world is...the world is a womanizing affair  
And it is worse that we teach our daughters not to ask for their rights  
We take pride in the same, and don't leave any ground for mistakes also, if others might fight"*

And she had done it again, her grandmother looked in horror  
She had come to visit a sweet little child, but now she was struck with nothing better but fear  
The paternal uncle was a kind man,  
and so said nothing just looked at the child, with a bigger eye span  
Luckily Anaya had not screamed at him  
And rather than a "you", had said "we" in between  
That made the argument not about any insult  
But her mother seized her in, and asked to stay shut  
Later, the girl apologized to her uncle very nice  
And faked laughter that apparently looked real in their another few minutes of chatter voice

The day was a disaster,  
scolded fourteen times, later laughter  
Being scolded doesn't feel bad as much as being guilty  
For being wrong, having an opinion that doesn't fill in the pity

*"And who are you to judge what he does  
Who are you to question what's fair in their hut  
Aren't you doing the same then? Interfering in people's affairs?  
Being a hypocrite on judgement, just like some childish snare?"*

Her mouth was shut and eyes were bleeding  
The tears weren't of anger or hate, but of some woundless screeching  
She no more understood what was she supposed to follow  
All of her adventures just seemed so shallow  
Had she been fighting with the world who never put it's weapons up?  
What made her so desperate and alone and filled with mud?  
"A stubborn child" they called her  
The one who is meant to bring doom in their snub

Her eyes would glisten very often in a dark room with unburnt dreams of demise  
How did she forget to be careless and happy, the world was eating her up alive  
Was what she was fighting for an ugly chain?  
A really bad world and a really selfish gain?  
Was she a spoilt little kid, who did not understand culture anymore  
A satan, a curse, the good system's loophole?

All these questions wouldn't have mattered before  
But now her family told her she was a good for nothing stow

That she spoilt their name without any reason  
That she will run away from their house now, any season  
They had said that she needed new friends  
She must be hanging out with a bunch of this generation mutants

How could she explain, that her thoughts and ideas were her own  
She might be a hypocrite, but not for the dreams and philosophies she sworn  
"Have to speak what's on my heart, else..how will the world know?"

Going off to sleep that night was a dreadful scene  
She could do it quickly, not knowing what she would dream.....

She suddenly appeared in a court-like space  
People sitting in black coats and pointed hats, bit strange  
The lawyers and the spectators stared at her as she stood unwillingly onto the podium  
Her legs entangled in chains, and balloons all around with helium

A lady in a lawyer suit stood up and took out a paper from her pocket  
Anaya already stood there feeling guilty, as if she had robbed a skyrocket

*"Miss Anaya has put allegations on the world  
That no one gets what's in her words  
She said she had been put down because she is a woman  
And wants to fight for all others just as sickened  
She has also mentioned that her living in this world is pointless  
And not so scared to die, she would rather spend her years in jungles with loneliness  
My Lord, This is utter bullshit  
I request to cross question the culprit"*

The judge who was a sixty year old man,  
Waved his hand in an approval from the chair  
The lawyer walked up front and looked at Anaya with disgust  
Anaya was numb by the shock but let her feet up

*"So Miss Anaya, have you ever been raped?"*

*No, that's a crime from which I have been saved."*

*"Has anyone in your house ever tried to kill you because of your womanhood?"*

*"No. The house has been very loving since my childhood.."*

*"Were you educated? Or were you asked to leave your education in between?"*

*"I was given one of the best ones in the town, which was possible through their financial decree.."*

*"Have you been married when you were young?"*

*"No. I am only twenty one."*

The whole courtroom had now started laughing and making fun of her  
The judge releasing a sigh and doing some paperwork  
That is when she spoke, and this time she was stammering at some words  
Afterall, it was scary to speak against such a big audience!

*"It is not these big decisions, but the little things  
And not just me, every woman feels  
The way they are looked at is not very comfortable  
From being told what to wear, to their attitude towards things, it's not fair  
The way many of them still don't go to work  
And the way we are told to support our mothers in the kitchen  
Not allowed to have boyfriends, or marry the guy we love  
That's not exactly a feminist issue but something of concern  
The way we are..."*

She had a lot more to say but was interrupted at once  
This time by a cold voice that came from a defense lawyer

*"Let's just speak of your case, and not of others  
Helping your mother is a good thing, she is just a spoilt kid officer  
Doesn't want to take responsibility for what she wears?  
And the stupid thing like 'love' being used as a factor  
She has been cheated two times in her relationships  
And being brought down by depression, because of the maniac that she is"*

Anaya was in a shock as the lady lawyer came to the rescue  
She gave her a kind look and began with her lawsuit

*"A little molestation is every girl's story today, my lord  
That will take some time to not exist any more  
I do not condone it, but this girl is a menace  
All the claims she made are very wrong and filled with nonsense"*

*Her family has loved her every day of every hour  
And she has been an unfaithful lying coward  
Such kids have become a reality of this generation I must say  
She might put a stain to their image in the society one day  
I will dismiss my stand by saying that this girl should be punished  
For the immature defamation she has brought to the world and her family, how selfish  
We have more serious crimes to look at  
Not of teenage girls victimising themselves because they look fat  
Once she grow old, she will see  
How stupid is her talk, and her fancy skin  
She has a way of exaggerating everything  
We should recommend a good psychiatrist"*

Anaya was in tears, and she couldn't speak  
Her parents sat on the other side of the room with anger in their shins  
The judge put a hammer like thing on the table and stood  
Everybody in the room followed his look  
All coming close towards Anaya and shouting "Stupid and selfish"  
Came together close and painted black paint on her face, damn it!  
She cursed herself, she screamed and cried  
Was she really a culprit, oh my god, she should die

As she screamed and wrestled, she heard a faint voice  
"Anaya, wake up!/" it was her mother in the glorious poise  
Anaya looked around, she was lying on her queen sized bed  
Her mother asking her if everything was well

"I had a bad dream,  
Did I say something mean?"

"You were screaming 'Sorry and Help' and tossed your hands  
What happened in the dream? Did anyone hit you or bother you bad?"

"No, I was in a court...I  
What's the time?... NINE!!"

"Yes, you should rush up and get ready for college,  
Breakfast is on the table, something you can manage."

And so she did. She got up and ready and went to college  
With guilt in her eyes for days, she could not talk much or seemed pledged  
Being a bold rebel in a perfect society of hers  
She was just an unrequited stranger