

KERALA SCHOOL KALOLSAVAM 2016-17

KANNUR - 2017 JANUARY 16-22

Code No.

655

"HAPPINESS FOR ETERNITY"

Her life wasn't considered "lined" truly up and until this moment. She stood there in the middle of the room, weighing her options, like a moth trying to find light in the darkness. She was almost forty and was at the top of her career in the world of Marketing. Cassie Nightingale was a woman with purpose, living by her name and status. She never let anyone down and was a faithful and an innocent character by nature; but things started to change once she left her job in Zenon Publications. She quickly sidetracked her healthy life and started to develop red rashes all over her neck and arms, believing more so everyday that it grew at an alarming rate all over her body. She knew she could sustain herself for a couple more years even without a job and by living on the small fortune she earned till then.



Cassie had hesitantly put in her resignation form and had come back to her home. She didn't consider highly of herself as a feminist of strong opinions but rather more as a person with willpower against dependence. And as she recollected herself back to the present, she knew that she needed help to control her rashes and become better. She decided it was best to at least understand what her condition was and what it represented for her in the future. She wasn't much of a social elite like her mother was. She respected her friends' privacy and expected nothing else in return. She picked up her bag, custom-made from Louis Vuitton and a present from her mother, which carried most of her essentials and trotted down to the front door and out on the sidewalks. The doctor's office was quite near ~~and~~ ^{and} luckily, walked over to ~~the~~ its doorstep. She carried a scarf around her head and as she reached, she loosened the knots and pulled it down. She felt the searing pain again all over her face and bit her lip in an attempt to not cry. She couldn't understand why but her gut instincts told her to tell the doctor about this too.

She quickly opened the door and stood in front of the office-cum-room clinic. She smiled inwardly as she knocked the door in an attempt to



grab his attention even though she knew that he (the doctor)

clearly understood that she was standing there. He looked

up only after waiting for the knock, out of formality.

There was mutual understanding between the two as they smiled at each other. He invited her to sit, all the while her

attention was drawn to how the hair on his head was

beginning to thin and how his face carried the expression

of a widely grinning baby who tasted candy for the first time.

He nodded his head in acknowledgment of her presence and asked what was bothering her this time. She began by saying

that she would have continuing pain all over her arms and

as soon as it disappeared, rashes with uncontrollable itching would

occur. He stood up and walked over to her and checked her arms.

He learnt that it progressed up all the way to her neck and the

same process has been present. He drew back from her and

said that she was in a serious condition of "Butterfly" skin and

as it progresses, she would also not be able to be exposed to

sunlight. Aghast, with the news, she thanked him for the service

and stepped outside, but she couldn't forget the vividly displayed

distaste in his eyes which later made his face into a sneer

of discomfort. She had to return home to her mother as soon as possible thinking she could support her in taking care of herself. She, noticing that it was almost nightfall, ran to her home and grabbed as many clothes and personal belongings as possible for

temporary stay, all the while wishing she could have another choice. She wasted no time and threw her bags into the back of the car and leapt to the seat in front and turned the ignition. Racing out of her driveway, she roared down the street and couldn't help but anticipate her life, even if she had one, for that matter.

About a half hour later, she drove into the lane she remembered so clearly once but still felt the venomous poison seep down from the surrounding edges from ~~her~~ step father who now resided in her old house. She drove through the manicured lawns and past the gates. She noticed that the lights were 'ON' throughout the entire house. She walked out from her car into the cool air and approached the doors, thinking that her mother would be behind those big oak doors to hug and embrace her in understanding. Little did she know that when she pushed past those doors that the halls were empty. She called out but no one answered. She felt as though she heard music and laughter and wondered why her mother would host such a big ball tonight. Nevertheless, she located the ballroom and found a huge crowd. Most of the people turned towards her and a huge whispering ~~fell~~ silence fell over the huge looming walls. She noticed that all eyes turned on her and she became aware of their eyes scanning her ~~and~~ some whimpered and some screamed in shock. She glanced over ~~her~~ shoulder and became conscious of what she wore. Like for the whole world to see, she chose by mistake to wear those ~~sketchy~~ ^{brant} pinkish gray frock which ended ~~only~~ up to her knees. Like a ^{brant} doll on display, the people started giving disapproving looks. Her mother however, pushed past the bulging crowd and standing amidst the front row, she exclaimed in surprise as to whatever happened to her only daughter.

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Cassie's eyes brimmed with unplanned but sought-after tears and asked how she could look at her with such mockery. The mother looked up and down her daughter's figure with a nasty look as if she reeked of bad eggs and rotten apples and told her to go to their old room upstairs and wait for us to come back later.

Cassie knew exactly what that meant and decided that her step-father had also clawed into ~~and~~ her mom's head. With one last fleeting look, she laughed so hard and loud in such a way that the man who entered her life, and standing at the back would hear her. She ran down the steps, flinging the doors open and flew to her car, slamming the gas.

Rushing down from her house and past the lane, she drove anywhere but back there. She finally let out a sob of anguished tears and let the windows down and screamed as ~~loud~~ as she could. The monstrosity of her life brought her to understand what she needed.

Driving to the base of a mountain after about an hour and half and finding a cave, she crawled in and hunched back. Her long ~~jet~~ black hair scraped her ~~shaped~~ chin and felt the cold breeze letting her dress cling to her skin.

She waited all night and after a long fixing wait, she saw the sun rise on the horizon, its first rays hitting the rocks and moving slowly above and spreading its wings like a red-coloured eagle.

She stepped out gingerly and as if testing the waves with full force, walked out of the cave and sighed. She felt no pain, no agonizing pain.

She did not whether she lived or died but she knew she was happy.