

## Every shade of life

I remember walking through the park every Sunday evening with ~~a~~ my Grandpa. I was a curious little boy back then and I always found every little thing which was perfectly normal, fascinating. I used to pull my Grandpa's hand almost making him fall to show the line of ants walking with their food or a small little lady bird which looked like a <sup>red</sup> bead. And Grandpa was never bored of this. He always had a smile in his face and was patient enough to answer all my silly questions like 'why was the sky blue?', 'where does the sun go at night?' and so on.

As time went by he got weaker, but nothing ever wiped that smile on his face. I became a doctor just like I wanted to be when I was small so that I could take care of him. ~~Grandpa~~ ~~Grandpa~~ was a heart patient. But now I knew that was



not happening I was so busy at the hospital that I never had ~~the~~ time to go <sup>visit</sup> ~~to~~ his home. ~~and~~

Last week I got a call from him when I heard his shrilling voice through the phone, I remembered all the good old days with him.

'Are you busy right now?' he asked

I had just finished a four hour long surgery and was going <sup>to</sup> ~~next~~ grab something to eat

'Yes, Grandpa.' I replied ~~grain~~ trying to find the car key on the desk

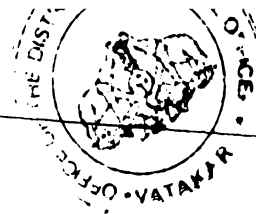
'Can you ... um ...' he started, as if he was unsure whether he should ask the question. But I already knew what his question was

'I'll be there by four thirty'

I reached his home at quarter to five. He was waiting for me at the verandha, smiling

'So, how's the old heart ~~is~~ going?' I asked him as I sat next to ~~the~~ ~~chair~~ him

'Ah, tried. It was a good run though' he replied



placing his hand on the chest

He looked outside to the garden. There were trees and flowers all around the house. The sky was becoming red and <sup>it looked like the</sup> birds <sup>were</sup> going back to their home.

As ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> gentle breeze blew through his grey hair, he wetted his <sup>dry</sup> lips and ~~asked~~ said,

'When you were little you asked me something that I didn't have an answer back then.'

'Well, I did ask some pretty weird stuff back then, Grandpa.'

'Yes, you did.' He said with a wide smile. 'And I loved that about you. But there was this one question that I couldn't answer.'

'And what was the question?'

'Why shade shrinks?'

~~was~~ 'Why shade shrinks huh?' I repeated his words thinking what was wrong with me back then.

'I still don't have the answer for that question. But it did make me think a lot...'

He ~~was~~ removed his glasses to wipe his eyes and put them back on and continued.

' If there is light, there will be dark, just as life has both happiness and sorrow. They are ~~the~~ like the sides of the same coin. Through every up and down we may feel like the ~~shadows~~ darkness ~~has~~ <sup>is</sup> gone or it is all that's left. But in reality, they come and go like the waves, nothing is permanent. But if we are strong enough, we can make the shades shrink.'

I looked at his wrinkled face. His eyes had a special glow.

' Thank you, Grandpa ' I paused to hold his hand,

' Thank you for everything '

~~the~~ <sup>my</sup> I closed my eyes and kissed his hands. I felt his other hand going through my hair.

' I should be the one thanking you ' he said with eyes filled with tears.

I said goodbye to him and <sup>knelt and</sup> touched his feet for his blessings.

' Stay strong, my child. You'll always have my blessings.'



That night he said goodbye to the world. But he left ~~my~~ me with a lot to remember. And ~~his~~ ~~his~~ ~~words~~ gave me strength to move on.

Today I had to operate a <sup>three</sup> ~~ten~~ year old girl with a hole in her heart. It was a miracle that she survived this long but I knew she won't wake up to see tomorrow. After ~~a~~ thirteen hours of operation all ~~the~~ the doctors gave up but I couldn't ~~let her~~ just give up. But I guess her heart stood with the other doctors and decided to give up too. I knew I couldn't do anything to save her yet I could feel my chest becoming more hollow. I ~~could~~ felt helpless and I was in agony. And I could feel the darkness creeping over me and that's when I remembered him telling me to stay strong. His memories were the light that removed the darkness in me, the light that made the shades shrink. He gave <sup>me</sup> ~~my~~ strength to ~~stand~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~shades~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ go through every shade of life.

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