

A Small Deed can have great outcomes.

It was a pleasant evening. The sun dipped into the horizon painting the sky in pale pinks and amber. But, as usual, Amrita was frustrated. All the travel, from her college to hostel and back was making her furious. In order for the catharsis to occur, she often used to nag at everyone. On her way back, she saw a little boy selling homemade candies. She gazed at him with despise and said "Oh! Look at you boy. I bet these candies are moulded from dirt." The boy didn't utter a thing and went on with his work.

Then she pushed an old lady to force her way into an uber to reach the restaurant. She even refused to press the pause button to let the stranger inside the lift. Amrita was selfish in every possible way. After reaching home she was quite surprised to see what was waiting.



for her. A parcel - well - wrapped - with a bowtie on the cover. She opened it eagerly because nobody used to send her gifts randomly. As she opened it, she felt a cool breeze sweep past her as if trying to calm her.

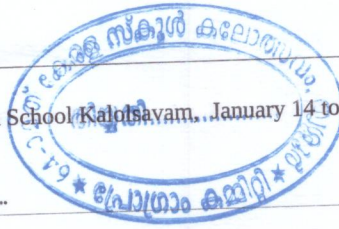
It was from mother. However, it seemed quite unusual because mother always has some notes for her - but not this time. Amrita saw a dazzling golden saree in it which she tried to pick up using her warm hands. It felt empty. She contemplated "Why would mother send me her favourite saree?"

The smell of the saree lingered in the room. Amrita kept it close to her heart and wondered "Is it because of my hesitation to attend her calls? But still, why would she send me something like this?". It seemed as if her mother wanted her to know something.



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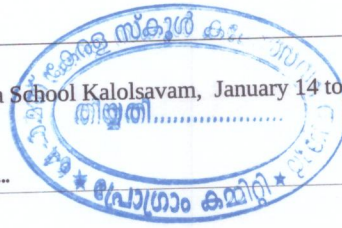
Amrita has always felt reluctant to pick up mum's calls. Mother had raised her with such care and love that Amrita never ever felt that her father had passed away. To her, mum is just a house-keeper. Nobody knew how hard she tried to run the family. Amrita never has felt the need to ask her mother about all these circumstances.

All the acts and conversation with her mother brushed past her mind. "Nothing really happened", she said to herself. "Then why am I getting a remorse feeling?" From the date, it is clear that the parcel was posted about three days ago. "There must be something wrong." In vain did she try to call her mother. It was never answered. The only way to find out what was really happening was to go back to her house, and so did she do. She pondered: "Is it really the first time I am getting concerned about mum?"



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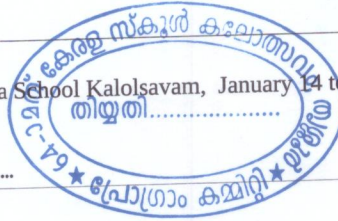


Unlike their normal conversations and feelings, this one had a semblance of love. She thought it would be better if she just enquired about her mother by calling Uncle Ravi. Her hands trembled as she took the cell phone. Fortunately Uncle Ravi picked up the call, however he felt reluctant to give answers to her questions. After requesting him several times, he said: "I-I am s-sorry, but mother is in ICU".

Ameeta pained for a moment. She was unable to accept the truth that she just heard. A tear drop fell from her lids into the yellow saree. She clutched the fabric, imagining she was giving a warm embrace to her mom. Not for a moment did she wait and ponder. She instantly thought of visiting her mother.

When she reached the hospital corridor, she began to quiver. As the door gently slid open, she saw her mother - all unconscious - staring at the abyss.

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Suddenly, someone restricted her from going inside. It was Uncle Jonas. He held her tightly and said: "Dear, you remember the day you hesitated to go to the hospital with mum? She had told all of us including you that it was just a minor headache. Well! It's not. She was a cancer survivor. Turns out, it's stage IV and we can't do nothing about it. I am sorry to have not informed to you about this earlier. Mother wouldn't have wanted that especially with your exams going on."

Amerita's feelings were ineffable. She was sure that mother didn't felt the need to tell her about it because she was saving money for her child's education. She gazed at her mother with glistening eyes. The shadows of the doctors surrounded the walls around her. It danced across the walls hiding enigma and secrets - A secret tied to her mother.



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"Mother used to say" she started reminiscing nostalgically "a saree doesn't get worn out easily. . . . It goes on becoming frail and unsewable. However, . . . only the wearer notices this - nobody else." She heard the beeping sound in the room get fader and fader until it eventually stopped.

It was never about the saree, it was all about the heart, the soul - the zenith of one's emotion. Only the wearer of the soul realises that his heart is getting torn apart day by day. She thought for a moment "If I had accompanied my mother to the hospital, there would have been a difference & a change."

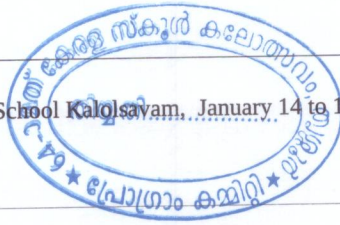
"This is true for each and every act." Anvita continued. "If I had not humiliated the little boy, he might have got more customers and thus earn more money to treat his ill mom. If I had not pushed the lady, she would have been able to take her sick mother to the hospital."

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If I had pressed the button, the stranger would have headed fast to the hospital to visit his mother who might be in a coma. She felt her heart crack right before her but she could do nothing. There is no repentance for an act once happened - nothing, though some might say there is. There is no renaissance, no time for a metamorphosis - ^{once} anything done, cannot be changed.

The doctors placed her mother on the death bed and as it strolled past her, a wave of regret, grief and misery resonated through her body. However, she couldn't do anything as there was no time for a redemption. The rays of the sun tried to pierce the darkness but it couldn't. She understood the consequences. Anvita didn't utter a single word even though she wanted to scream. She remained silent but her eyes told the whole story.