

The Truth.. Untold

"Who ate the sweets on the cabinet?" A shrill voice pierced into the serene quietness of the Meghalaya household. Unnithan winced at the volume of his own daughter's voice. He winced even more when he heard dull footsteps thud against the wooden platform of his house. Moments later, the door banged open with a sense of urgency:

"I know, it's you." His daughter, Laya, said it calmly. Suppressing the grin that was pulling on his lips, he flipped the newspaper nonchalantly before muttering it speaking.

"It's not me!"

His daughter narrowed her eyes. "Swear it on me then." she challenged. Unnithan sighed, raising his arms in mock surrender, despite the unapologetic grin that has made its way to his face.

"You're diabetic! You can't have sweets! How many times have I told you that?" Laya's voice raised higher and higher. A vein on her forehead has had popped out and she almost looked pleading. When she yelled out "Those are not good for your health, baba..."

Unnithan's grin dropped. He hated when his daughter looked all worried and concerned for him. That was his job, not hers. But that...

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point

Argument . . almost made . no ~~choice~~ . when . he . was . the . one . on . wheelchair . with . one . of . his . kidneys . damaged

"I . know . I'm . sorry . I . couldn't . . resist . ." . And . he . really . couldn't . . Maybe . . it . because . of . his . big . old . age . but . these . days . his . sweet . tooth . only . . seems . to . be . growing

Laya's . eyes . softened

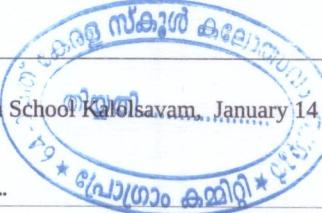
"If . amma . was . here . she'd . ~~feed~~ . have . banned . you . from . eating rice . for . a . week . ."

And . just . like . that . the . moment . was . ruined . . Unnithan's . heart . sank . just . from . the . mere . mention . of . his . late . deceased . wife . He . looked . into . his daughter's . eyes . and . almost . suffocated . from . the . longing . and . heart sadness . etched . into . them . . Swallowing . the . lump . that . was . rapidly . growing . in . his . throat . he . managed . to . ~~shh~~ . let . out . a . weak . chuckle . much . to . his daughter's . dismay . She . wanted . to . see . if . there . could . be . something anything . that . would . fall . out . his . mouth . regarding . ~~the~~ . her . mother's death . but . like . ^{every} . ~~all~~ . other . time . there . was . nothing

Hiding . her . disappointment . and . frustration . she . made . a . feeble attempt . to . smile . at . her . dad . like . usual

"Alas . I'm . not . your . wife . , Mister . ~~&~~ . Unnithan . . I . won't . be . banning . you from . having . your . precious . . rice . only . on . the . condition . that . you . will take . go . care . of . health . like . an . adult . Think . you . can . do . that . ? "

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She only managed to leave his room after getting a reassuring nod from her dad that, he, infact, will not be having sweets to the best of his ability and will resist his huge growing sweet tooth to the maximum. Across the hall, she caught the eyes of her older brother. It was almost seemed to be mirroring her, not from outside but from inside.

"It's tomorrow!" he muttered when he came closer.

"I know." Laya muttered back. "It's only a matter of when, not if, anymore. If he could remember the saree she was wearing. It's only a matter of time till he remembers more."

Layansh stared at his sister enthusiastic self with a sad smile. "That was years ago. There's no use in keeping hope anymore."

Laya mouth dropped open in betrayal and shock. "How could you say that?"

Layansh looked away, evidently ignoring her trembling lips and her eyes that looked elsewhere.

"I'm just saying, there's no point in keeping hope and making dad do therapy once a month. There has been zero to none progress and its only getting expensive."

"It's about money, then?" Laya could hardly see with how the tears had accumulated in her eyes. Her nose flared, face flushed with rage.

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Layansh... wanted to... fight back. wanted to deny... wanted to say no, wanted to... shook Laya... so she could finally open her eyes and see... that. Keeping hope is doing them more harm than good. But he didn't... She could... hate him, for all he cares. but he was doing this for the... greater good. His father didn't need to continue going through with... that pointless therapy once a month and his sister didn't need to... deserve to live with her whole life yearning for the truth she desperately... seeks.

"Yeah, Laya. It's about the money. I have a family to take care of and several investments to look after, so forgive me, if I don't... want to... continue his stupid therapy."

Laya looked momentarily shocked before her eyes fell downward... looking... almost... resigned...

"I just want to know what happened to my mother," she whispered, defeated.

slipped away

Unnithan, from where he had his ears glued to his door, to his centuries old wooden chair. He so plopped himself down with a sigh... so deep it shook him to the core. His heart broke for his children. His two innocent children he whose kindness he had been taking advantage for years. For ten years, to be exact. From the moment

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he had started pretending his memory loss. It was a gloomy day, he recalled. His wife Rajamma had brought the cattle back into the stables before busying herself in the kitchen. Unnithan entered the kitchen, not even sparing a single glance toward his wife. Depositing himself on the step of his back door, Unnithan groaned. "It looks like it's going to rain today." He glared at the dark, gloomy clouds that floated in the sky. It looked like it was sucking all daylight from the earth, leaving it dull and grey. "It sure does." Rajamma sing-songed behind him. "Make me a black tea, I'm craving it." He demanded all of a sudden. He heard a resigned sigh behind him and felt too smug at the fact that she has gotten started at the work he had assigned her.

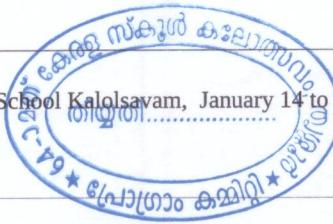
Unnithan stared at the sky with boredom as it rumbled to life. The downpour was heavy and its thunders roared so loud like an exclamation. "Here's your tea." He heard Rajamma announce, oh so softly as he turned back. Reaching out a hand, he had almost gotten a weak grip at the glass before it was knocked straight off his hands. The glass shattered on the wooden hardware as German Shepherd.

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leaped.. across. them. before. ~~not~~ jumping. down. from. the. window. . . .
as. swiftly. . as. he. came.. Rajamma. looked. at. their. pets. retreating.
figure. B. . fig. before. letting. out. a. ~~faint~~^{fond} chuckle. & she. was. about. . .
. to. remark. . something. about. the. naughtiness. . of. their. dog., if. not. .
. for. the. . shimmering. . rage. she. found. poorly. hidden. in. her. husband's.
face. Her. face. dropped. as. to. she. saw. her. . husband. . getting. . up. . .
. from. the. . ~~glo~~ floor. floor. with. . a. snarl., eyes. wide. with. fury. . she. . .
. couldn't. . process. what.. was. . happening. until. . she. saw. unni than. . . .
reach. for. the. . big. knife. . they. kept. in. the. lower. cabinet.
"Wait!..". She. yelled. out.. in. panic.. "What. are. . you. doing?".
"I'm. going. to. kill. that.. stupid. dog.". Unni than. gritted. out, nefariously.
before. marching. out.. the.. steps. and. going. out. in. the. rain.
Heart. in. her. throat,. Rajamma. went. after. him. . finding. this. whole.
situation. stupid. . and. her. husbands. rage. absurd.
". It. is. not. that. ^{deep}_{deep} of a matter, please. come. back.". She. had. to. shout. as.
the. ~~not~~ downpour. was. so. heavy. , it. was. getting. hard. to. see. and. .
hear. clearly. She. had. was. almost. on. her. way. back. to. the. house,..
dismissing. the. whole. . thing. as. . a. joke. when. she. . saw. her. husband.
take. a.. swing. at. the. dog, the. dog. barely. managing. to. dodge.
the. attack. . in. time.. Rajamma. . yelled. out., running. with. her. life.
to. stop. her. husband. She. desperately. tried. to. hold. his. hand. behind. .
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as the man kept on trying to swing at the dog, who was currently barking at him, loyalty clawing within it to not a lay a hand on his master.

"Rajamma, let go or I'll end up hurting you, too." Unnithan's eyes were glowering with fury, voice coming out raw from this throat as he tried to push Rajamma away from him. Stubborn, Rajamma didn't let go so he pushed her harder away from and kept on doing so to get himself free from his hold. One, one, one particular hard push, he felt her grip slip away from him. Smugly, he turned around, expecting to see her standing in the rain, drenched from head to toe with a frown. But what he had not expected was her lying at the ground, unconscious with blood trickling down the rock behind her head that got quickly rinsed away from the raindrops.

Mortified, Unnithan dropped his knife and crouched down. "Rajamma?" He tapped her cheeks before pulling fully, patting it. "Rajamma? Please say something! Rajamma?!" His vision was starting to get blurry. He grabbed her head with both hands before pulling her closer to him. "Rajamma? Please say something!" He was starting to let out ragged breaths. But his whole world stopped when he noticed that.

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Rajamma was, ~~in fact~~, not breathing. And the whole world turned black.

Present day Unnithan wiped his eyes as he remembered how he had started to pretend he had memory loss from the moment he opened his eyes at the hospital. He didn't want to live as a criminal in front of his kids for the rest of his life. It was a harmless lie at ~~at~~ first. He hadn't known that it could have escalated to such a point that his own kids would have to fight each other.

Making up his mind, he stood from his wooden chair and ~~got~~ got out of his room. He made his way across the hall towards the front of the house when he saw it. He saw his kids, two grandkids, throwing flower petals at each other. He saw his daughter and daughter-in-law laugh delighted at something. His son had said: His family was small, but happy. He smiled bitterly as he decided to keep the truth unfold yet again, like many other times. Because if ^{he} does not, the day could've ended differently in a way that would make his heart hurt, ~~and~~ ~~get~~! The day could have ended tragically and with the days after following it with too. Unnithan was a selfish, selfish man.