



At first I thought I was dreaming until I realized...

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Woosh... A car flew by throwing lumps of mud towards us. 'Oooh! A useless bullock cart!: Sunimal shouted in disgust. "What does he think? Is it his dowry?" Euwan shouted. "Pph... maybe... such a stupid motor..." I answered back. "No.. boy.. I meant the road. He used it as if it is his dowry:

It was a frequent meeting at Vijesiri Kade. Sunimal, Ruwan, Aje and I used this spot for our meetings since it was a convenient spot for all of us to gather. All of a sudden, Aje threw a piece of paper at us, just like a magician. "Fantastic, Aje you should have been in the FBI". Aje had scribbled the number of the vehicle on the paper. Aje, really is far more attentive than any of us. That's why he always achieves the first place in the class. He is a favourite of teachers too. Anyway, it's this move of him, which reminded us that we too are members of our own secret society.

The reason why we formed this particular organisation is an unrevealed sad story. Roshan was a "Colombo boy", as we always called him. His father was a businessman, yet he never told us what business he did. Roshan seemed to be from a well to do family, that's why we decided to join him to our group. Anyway, even if it was the reason, no sooner he became a favourite among us and even the teachers loved him so much. Our relationship straddled nearly two years as closest friends until he suddenly disappeared. No one knew what happened to him, His parents were grief stricken and have hardly lived since then. It was the same with us. No one can imagine what grief such an incident can bring to a close friend, until a similar incident happens to them.

It was then that we became determined to search and discover what had happened to him. Unfortunately we did not succeed.

"Aje, do you think this stupid driver really carried Roshan after 5 months?"

"Yes Sameera I know. I don't say that he may have been in this vehicle but..."

The incident had happened nearly five months ago. Yet we hadn't given up searching for him. We went over each and every minute detail, however, every time we remained empty handed.

That evening Aje and I had decided to launch a little investigation, to search details regarding 'Veddas' for a school assignment. For the task, we went to visit Andiris Seeya, an aged villager. He lived alone, selling betel at the Vijesiri Shop. His house was amidst a real jungle. No one had attempted to help him even by cleaning his garden. Neither Seeya himself could do such stuff. Anyway, he welcomed us warmly and we saw he was overjoyed to relate old stories to us. He told us much more about his childhood and youth and sadly spoke about the present life. He was so pleased that he offered us a kerosene lamp, as it was getting dark. The weather was really bad.

On the way, huge raindrops began to beat us. To find shelter, we entered the verandah of an abandoned house. The rain seemed to remain for nearly an hour. So Aje and I slowly entered the hut. Inside was in thick darkness. Luckily, we had the kerosene lamp safe with us. In the dim light we saw

that the walls were thickly matted with cobwebs. Surely the place was not used by anyone for nearly six or seven months.

“Sameera, there is only little oil in the lamp. If this rain remains much longer, we’ll have to stay in this mud hole throughout the night”.

There was an old bed, a table and a broken chair. Next to the bed, there was a huge box. I threw myself on the box since I was fed up with standing for more than one hour.

Alas the next moment, I was sitting on the floor.

“Pphh... Sameera... Why? Did you remember your infancy?” Aje laughed at me scornfully. I was filled with anger.

“What’s there to laugh so much? I’ll leave this place now.. just now.. whether you come with me or not. I don’t care”. I stamped my feet on the ground with anger. The next moment I was in a pit – a dirty, bad smelling pit. The situation was worse. “Aje... Aje...” I yelled in fear. “Sameera don’t worry... it’s not so de... eeeeeep”! Suddenly I felt a heavy weight on me. It was Aje! “Ha ha Aje, why are you crawling? Did you remember your infancy? This was a great chance for me. “No... I just jumped in” Aje answered back angrily. “Anyway it doesn’t matter if you fell in or jumped in. Now both of us are in the pit”.

The pit was dark. The kerosene lamp had smashed to pieces when he fell in. We stood with much effort. For our luck, there was a match box with me. As the match stick created a dim light we tried to imagine what the place was like by throwing out our arms.

There was something unusual in one corner. Aje held the matchstick close to it. It.. It was a dead bod! We lit three matchsticks and held them together to see it clearly. It was disfigured , but the clothes... there was something familiar with them.

At first I thought I was dreaming until I realized that I was standing in front of my own friend Roshan’s dead body. I didn’t know how long we stood there in silence. I felt no fear, no surprise until I realized that it was grief that invaded me, when huge drops of tears rolled along my cheeks. Although we tried to find out friend we never, ever expected to see his dead body. We had a strong belief that he was still living. Still I couldn’t get rid of the belief even though he was lying dead just in front of us.

I don’t how I managed to get out of the pit and how we reached our homes. We were totally absent minded. I remember how I told the news to my parents, tying up the words with much effort since then. I was laying on my bed for more than a day. I had no strength to stand on my feet. I was just listening to those who were gossiping around me.

I heard that this was done to revenge Roshan’s father due to a problem in his business dealings. Aje ad I were invited by the police. He thanked us for revealing a crime and even offered us gifts. I still remember how I yelled, crying “we don’t need gifts but only our friend”. I cried so much, as loudly as I could, but I didn’t receive my dearest friend. I never received him back.

Should an innocent life be responsible for what his parents did? Yet, I’m still helpless in convincing my mind what I saw with my own eyes.