

"I DO NOT KNOW WHY"

Story of me :

I WAS BORN INTO THE WORLD-WITHOUT MY CONCENT-
I DON'T KNOW WHY !!

I HAD JUST LEFT THE WARMTH AND SECURITY OF MY MOTHER'S WOMB.

WHEN I LOOKED AROUND, I DID NOT SEE ANY SMILING, CHEERFUL FACES.

I DID NOT SEE THE OVERJOYED FACE OF MY MOTHER.

NOR DID I SEE THE FATHER WHO WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN BRINGING ME INTO THIS
WORLD. I DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY!

I CRIED WHEN I WAS BORN, HOPING TO BE LOVINGLY CARRIED IN THE WARM ARMS
OF MOTHER-IN VAIN. I DO NOT KNOW WHY.

I LEARNED TO SEEK THE WARMTH OF MY BED INSTEAD OF THE ARMS, AND
SUCKED THROUGH A BOTTLE INSTEAD OF AT MY MOTHER'S BREAST.

I WAS IGNORED TILL I CRIED AND CRIED.
I WAS ONE OF THE TOO MANY-DEPRIVED OF REAL LOVE & AFFECTION.
WAS I WORRIED? I DON'T KNOW?

I WAS LOOKED AFTER AND FED. BUT THERE WAS NO LOVE AND WARMTH.
HOW COULD I TRIVE AND SURVIVE WITHOUT THEM?

DEPRIVATION OF LOVE CAUSED ME QUITE A LOT OF CONCERN.
DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY!

THEN I HEARD A WHISPER-"HE IS ILLEGITIMATE" AND I DID NOT UNDERSTAND
WHAT IT MEANT, BUT THE FEELING WAS NOT NICE.

AND ALL THIS TURMOIL IN MY LIFE MADE ME VERY SICK.
BUT NO ONE AROUND ME CARED OR UNDERSTOOD.

I WAS MISERABLE, TILL ONE DAY SOMEONE CAME NEAR MY CRIB AND SAID
"ISN'T HE CUTE"!

PICKED ME UP, HELD ME IN LOVING ARMS AND TOOK ME AWAY TO BSSK.

HOW COULD I BE ILLEGITIMATE.
I WAS BORN LIKE ANY OTHER CHILD.
I WAS CONFUSED.

BEFORE THE JOURNEY, I WAS BATHED AND DRESSED IN CLEAN, COOL CLOTHING.
I FELT NICE-I DON'T KNOW WHY!

THE JOURNEY WAS HARD AND LONG.
I WAS TRIED, I WHIMPERED AND CRIED.

TO MY SURPRISE THIS TIME SOMEONE HELD ME CLOSE, COOED SOOTHING WORDS
AND FED ME MILK.
WHENEVER WE STOOPED ON THE WAY, THE CURIOUS CROWD STAERED AT US
(WE WERE TEN BABIES IN THAT VAN), WHISPERED AND AGAIN I HEARD THAT WORD

"ILLEGITIMATE".

I DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY GROWN UPS DO OR SAY SUCH THINGS.
I CLOSED MY EYES TO THEM-I MUST LEARN TO IGNORE THEM.

IN MY DREAM, I SAW TWO LOVING, CARING HANDS HOLDING ME, SMILING AT ME
AND LEADING ME TO MY FUTURE. I SMILED-IN MY SLEEP.

THE BUILDING, THOUGH VERY OLD, STOOD SOLIDLY, ASSURING ME CARE AND LOVE
AND A FUTURE.

RUNNING FEET AND OUT STRETCHED ARMS CAME, TO TAKE ME AND OTHERS INSIDE.
I WAITED-WONDERING WHAT IS THIS.

WHEN I OPENED MY EYES, I WAS IN A NEW PLACE.

ALTHOUGH I WAS SICK, I FELT COMFORTABLE AND FELT I HAD ARRIVED HOME,
I STILL DID NOT UNDERSTAND HOW

I OPENED MY TINY EYES AND FELT TWO SOFT AND CARING EYES STARING AT ME
WITH A SMILE IN THEM.

I WAS BATHED, MASSAGED AND DRESSED IN CLEAN CLOTHES.

I SMILED, CURLED MY FINGER AROUND THE RE-ASSURING BIG THUMB AND WENT TO
SLEEP.

I WAS TAKEN ONTO A LAP FOR MY FEEDS, CUDDLED AND CROONED TO-SOMETHING
VERY NEW. I DID NOT KNOW WHY- BUT IT FELT NICE.

AND THEN I WAS ROCKED TO SLEEP- A PEACEFUL, COMFORTABLE SLEEP.

WHEN I NEXT OPENED MY EYES, I SAW A SOFT, CONCERNED FACE PEERING AT ME,
PROBING MY BODY.

I KNEW HE WANTED ME TO BE WELL AND SURVIVE.
HE WAS MY PAEDIATRICIAN-WHO CARED.

I SQUIRMED AND CRIED HELPLESSLY WHILE HE EXAMINED ME THOROUGHLY.
WHY SUCH ENDLESS AGONY- I DON'T KNOW.

MY LOVING NURSE POKED ME, TOOK MY BLOOD, WEIGHED ME AND FUNNILY
ENOUGH EVEN COLLECTED MY URINE AND STOOL FOR TESTS I BELIEVE.
BUT STILL I DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY ALL THIS FUSS.
DID THEY DO THIS TO ALL NEW BORN BABIES?

I HAD WEIGHED LESS THAN A NORMAL BABY.
WAS THIS BECAUSE MY MOTHER WAS NOT CARED FOR WHILE CARRYING ME?

OR WAS IT BECAUSE I WAS NEGLECTED AND SICK.
EVEN IF I DON'T KNOW-NOW I AM IN GOOD HANDS.

I BELIEVE I WAS DEHYDRATED. ALL THE FAULT OF GROWN UPS-NOT MINE.
BUT I WAS THE ONE WHO SUFFERED- WHY, I DON'T KNOW.

I HAD NO WILL POWER TO SUCK OR DRINK. I PREFERRED TO LIE STILL AND NOT
BE BOTHERED. COULD I SLEEP PERMANENTLY- SLEEP FOREVER, NEVER TO WAKE
UP THIS LONELY WORLD!

NO! THAT IS NOT TO BE. SOME ADULTS CARE.

I WAS GIVEN LOTS OF FLUID- THROUGH MY VEINS.
A NIGHT LONG VIGIL WAS KEPT OVER ME.

AS I DID NOT RESPOND TO THE TREATMENT,
I WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL BY OUR NURSE.

THERE WERE MANY SICK BABIES LIKE ME AROUND.
BUT I DID NOT CARE ANYMORE.
I LET PEOPLE DO WHATEVER THEY WANTED TO.

SOMEONE LIKE MOTHER LOOKED AFTER ME THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND NIGHT.
I HAVE NEVER KNOWN A MOTHER BUT I HAVE HEARD SHE IS SWEET, CARING,
LOVING AND CONCERNED.

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A GREAT STRUGGLE FOR MY SURVIVAL.
ALL BABIES ARE THE SAME (THAT'S WHAT I HEAR) BUT GROWN UPS ARE
DIFFERENT-SOME INDIFFERENT- SOME CARING- I WONDER WHY!

I WAS FULL OF TUBES, POKES, BOTTLES AND STRANGE SMELLS.
WAS IT WORTH SUFFERING? I WONDERED!

IT MUST BE WORTH THE STRUGGLE, BECAUSE I HEARD MY DOCTOR SAYING
"THANK GOD-HE WILL COME THROUGH".

THE NURSE HELD ME TO HER HEART, ROCKED ME TO SLEEP.
SOME GROWN UPS ARE SO SWEET. I DRIFTED INTO A COMFORTABLE,
HAPPY SLEEP-SECURE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT SOMEONE CARES- I WONDER
HOW!

IT WAS MANY DAYS BEFORE I WENT BACK TO BSSK- MY NEW, SECURE HOME.

I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE THROUGH MY EYES SO MANY FACES SURROUNDING ME,
ASKING HOW I WAS.

EVERY ONE SEEMED TO BE SMILING AND CHEERFUL AROUND ME- WAS THAT
BECAUSE I WAS GOING TO SURVIVE? I WONDER!

I WAS CHANGED, WRAPPED UP WARMELY, HELD AND FED.
IT WAS A NICE FEELING- I DON'T KNOW WHY!

NOW I FELL INTO THE ROUTINE OF MY NURSERY- BATHING, FEEDING, SLEEPING,
PLAYING AND BEING CARRIED AROUND WAS ALL VERY NICE.
I FELT HAPPY AND SECURE.

ADULTS ARE VERY FUNNY. SOMETIMES WHEN I CRY, THEY PICK ME UP,
COMFORT ME AND TAKE CARE OF MY NEEDS.

BUT SOMETIMES WHEN I WANT THIS TO BE DONE AND I CRY, THEY THINK
I AM FUNNY AND SPOILT. HOW COULD THAT BE? I DID NOT HAVE MY
MOTHER AROUND ME TO SPOIL ME? OR HAS SOMEONE ELSE
BROUGHT THIS FEELING OF SECURITY IN ME AND THAT'S WHY I DEMANDED
THEIR ATTENTION- I DON'T KNOW!

I BEGAN TO NOTICE MY SURROUNDINGS. I DID LIKE SOME MOTHERS,
BUT I DIDN'T LIKE CERTAIN OTHER PEOPLE HOLDING ME FOR NO REASON.

I CRIED WHEN THEY PICKED ME UP OR TALKED TO ME- NOT BECAUSE THEY TROUBLED ME, BUT IT FELT NICE TO TROUBLE SOMEONE- JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT I SUPPOSE.

WHEN I DID THIS, SURPRISINGLY I WAS PASSED ON TO MY FAVOUITE ARMS, WHERE I SNUGGLED AND SMILED.

I SPENT MOST OF MY TIME IN MY CLEAN AND WARM CRIB.
SNUG AS A BUG IN A RUG!!
I FEEL HAPPY- I WONDER WHY!

DAYS PASS INTO MONTHS. THERE IS MY HEALTH CHART AND GROWTH RECORD.

NOW I AM ABLE TO UNDERSTAND SOME THINGS-

THERE ARE CARING PEOPLE AROUND ME

I GET GOOD MEDICAL & HEALTH CARE

I AM KEPT CLEAN AND WELL FED.

IF I CRY OR PROTEST, SOMEONE TRIES TO COMFORT ME AND FIND OUT THE REASON FOR MY DISCOMFORT.

SOMETIMES I JUST CRY- FOR NO REASON AND STILL I AM SURPRISED WHEN LOVING ARMS HOLD ME CLOSE AND CROON TO ME.

I PLAY WITH MY MATES NOW, AS I CAN SIT AND CRAWL.

WE PLAY IN A BIG CRIB OR A MAT ON THE FLOOR.
IT IS FUN, I LIKE IT!

SOMETIMES THESE LOVING PEOPLE LET US BABIES BE TOGETHER TOO LONG. AND THEN WE PROTEST LOUDLY.

THEN I HEAR AN ANNOYED BUT ENDERING VOICE-"OH! HE IS GETTING SPOILT", AM I, I WONDER!

THEN I ALSO WONDER WHY SHOULD I DID NOT BE SPOILT WITH ALL THIS LOVE, CARE, WARMTH AND SECURITY! ISN'T IT NORMAL?

AS I GROW UP, I RECOGNISE MY FAVOURITE FACES AND HANDS.
MY SMILE LIGHTS UP, I STERTCH OUT MY ARMS AND KICK MY LEGS.

BUT I ALSO SOMETIMES SEE NEW CURIOUS FACES. THEY LOOK AT ME CLOSELY, THEY WHISPER TO EACH OTHER- GO AWAY- NEVER TO COME BACK TO ME. I BELIEVE THEY WERE THE ONES WHO WANTED A BABY OF THEIR OWN.

I BELIEVED TILL THEN ALL BABIES ARE JUST BABIES. BUT NOW I HEAR WORDS LIKE BOY OR A GIRL, FAIR AND DARK, BIG AND SMALL, SICK AND HEALTHY, BEAUTIFUL AND SO-SO.
AND THEN I WONDER WHAT AM I LIKE!

SOMETIMES I FIND A PLAYMATE MISSING, AND THEN I REMEMBER HER BEING LOVINGLY CARRIED ARROUND BY THE STRANGERS. SHE WAS DRESSED IN A BEAUTIFUL NEW DRESS. THERE WERE MANY TOYS FOR HER AND HER ONLY. IT ALL LOOKED SO DIFFERENT AND....

WHEN I DID NOT SEE HER AROUND- I HEARD SOME ONE SAY
"HER MUMMY & DADDY TOOK HER AWAY".

OH! I HAD THOUGHT THAT THERE WERE ONLY MUMMIES AND THAT THEY BELONG
TO ALL THE BABIES. BUT HOW COME THIS ONE HAD A SPECIAL MUMMY AND DADDY
ALL BY HERSELF. IN MY HOME EVERYTHING BELONGS TO EVERYBODY.
THIS THOUGHT BOTHERED ME.

AND THEN THE SAME THING ABOUT A SPECIAL MUMMY AND DADDY HAPPENED
TO SOME OTHER KIDS AROUND ME.

WHEN IS SOMETHING GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME? I WONDER!

I BELIEVE MY PROGRESS PAST EACH MILE STONE WAS RATHER SLOW. THEN ONE
DAY I COULD HOLD ONTO A FINGER AND WAS MADE TO STAND. YOU SHOULD HAVE
SEEN THE SMILES LIGHTING UP THE FACES AROUND ME AND THE KISSES
SHOWERED
ON ME FOR SEEMINGLY SO LITTLE. ADULTS REALLY FESS OVER SIMPLE THINGS.

BUT OF COURSE I FELT PROUD FOR MAKING THEM HAPPY.
I SHOWED MY APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING BY MY TOOTHY SMILE.

THE DAY CAME WHEN DOCTOR DECLARED "HE IS FINE NOW, HE MUST
BE PLACED SOON". I DID NOT FULLY GRASP THE MEANING OF THESE
WORDS. BUT THEY SOUNDED BEAUTIFUL.

I FELT STRONG AND HEALTHY. I WAS CARRIED AROUND NOT ONLY IN THE
NURSERY, BUT SOMETIMES TAKEN TO THE OFFICE ON SOMEONE'S LAP OR TABLE.
I LOOKED VERY 'CUTE'-THAT'S WHAT THEY ALL SAID.

THEREAFTER I LOVED GOING IN THE OFFICE. I WAS NOT INTERETED IN
STAYING IN MY NURSERY OR PLAYING ONLY WITH THE OTHER BABIES.

WELL! I REMEMBER HOW THRILLED OUR DOCTOR AND SISTER AND OTHERS WERE,
WHEN I SPROUTED MY FIRST SMALL TOOTH. WAS IT SOMETHING SO UNUSUAL-
THAT THEY WERE ALL SO THRILLED! I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

ONCE I KNEW THEY ALL LOVED MY TOOTHY SMILE AND MY ATTEMPTS TO STAND.
I TRIED THE TRICKS AGAIN AND AGAIN-JUST TO CHARM THEM.

ONCE I HEARD A WORD "MUMMY AND DADDY" FOR MYSELF.
I PRICKED UP MY EARS.

I STARTED FEELING THE NEED FOR SOME VERY SPECIAL CARE AND ATTENTION.
MY LONGING FOR MY OWN MUMMY AND DADDY HAD STARTEDS.

I SMILED QUITE A LOT IN MY SLEEP.
DID I SEE SOME LOVELY LADY AND KIND GENTLEMAN IN MY SLEEP BECKONING ME,
HOLDING ME? I DON'T KNOW! BUT IT WAS NICE.

AT LAST... AT LAST!!! - WHEN I SUDDENLY OPENED MY EYES, I STARED INTO
TWO BEAUTIFUL LOVING EYES. IN A MOMENT, I KNEW I HAD FOUND SOMETHING
FOR WHICH I LONGED - A MOTHER'S LOVE. MY OWN MOTHER -A REAL ONE.

WHEN I HELD THOSE EYES,I SMILED AND SHE SMILED AND I HELD HER FINGER
VERY TIGHT. ALTHOUGH I DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY. SOMETHING JUST

CLICKED, I DID NOT WANT TO LET GO OF THAT FINGER.

NOW EVERYDAY SOMETHING WAS NOTICED AND NOTED DOWN ABOUT ME.
I WAS DRESSED IN DIFFERENT CLOTHES. WHAT WAS THIS ALL ABOUT, I
WONDERED!!!

AND THEN OH! THE JOY OF THIS NEW LOVE, THAT ENVELOPED ME. I WAS
LIFTED UP, HELD NEAR HER HEART - YES! I COULD HEAR THE BEATS-LOUDLY.

WE DID NOT WANT TO PART, I SLEPT ON HER LAP-MY DEAR MUMMY.
SHE KEPT HOLDING ME, ROCKING ME, FEEDING ME.

IT WAS A FUNNY FEELING-NEVER EXPERIENCED IN ALL MY SHORT LIFE-
AND THEN I SAW THOSE LOVING EYES FULL OF JOYOUS TEARS.
THEN I UNDERSTOOD THERE WAS ANOTHER REASON FOR CRYING-SHEER JOY.

WHAT A GLORIOUS DAY THAT WAS! MY SEARCH AND LONGING FOR A MUMMY AND
DADDY WAS OVER.
SO WAS THEIR FOR THEIR LITTLE BABY.

SUDDENLY I FELT THE BRUSH OF ANOTHER FACE-I DID NOT MUCH LIKE THE
ROUGHNESS OF HIS CHIN-BUT I LEARNT THAT DADDYS FEEL LIKE THAT-BUT
THEY ARE STRONG AND CARING. HE WAS LOOKING AT ME WITH VERY FOND AND
CARING EYES. HE LOOKED VERY HAPPY AND TRYING HARD TO HIDE HIS JOYOUS
TEARS.

THIS TIME I DID NOT WONDER I UNDERSTOOD IMMEDIATELY. THIS HAS TO BE MY
"DADDY", OTHERWISE I WOULD NOT FEEL SOMETHING FUNNY IN MY HEART.

MY FAIRY TALE IS NOW BEGINNING... I AM WITH MY OWN MUMMY AND DADDY-
THE CENTRE OF THEIR LIFE, LOVE AND - I NO LONGER NEED TO WONDER, I KNOW.

Lata Joshi
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