

The Seven Wonders

Prarthana Saji

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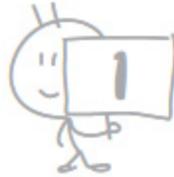
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Trinity School

Trinity School was one of the best English medium schools in the city of Cochin in Kerala, the so called ‘Gods own Country’. The school admitted only the best and the brightest of the students. Vrinda was 5 years old when she joined class 1. She was a dark and beautiful girl with long wavy hair, a large nose and beautiful large eyes. She was a studious and serious girl. She hardly could make any friends. In class 3, she had made two really good friends but they left when she came to class 6. Vrinda had not made any friend since then. Everybody in her class was slightly scared of her and nobody wanted to be her friend.

In her class there was a boy named Kannan. He was a fair boy with beautiful big eyes, small nose and shabby hair. He too was in the same class since class one and had joined one year earlier. Vrinda was always 1st in her class and Kannan was 2nd or 3rd in class. When they were in class 8, Vrinda suddenly started feeling very conscious when Kannan was around. Her cheeks would start turning into a shade of pink and beads of sweat welled up around her nose when he used to speak to her.

Vrinda with her parents lived in a colony named ‘Colonel’s Vihar’. All retired officers from the Defence forces lived there. There were rows of independent houses in that colony. Vrinda’s mother was really kind and cool about studies. She was a plump woman with huge eyes and she used

to be a dancer but had left dancing long ago. Her name was Anju. She would let Vrinda do anything she wanted. Vrinda's father was also a really fun person. He was dark and had small eyes and a moustache. His name was Sandeep. He was a Naval Officer and had retired when Vrinda was in 1st and had settled in the same place. Vrinda's parents were Malayalis and Vrinda too knew Malayalam.

Vrinda told her mother about how she felt when Kannan was around. Her mother told her to go and talk to the boy and make friends with him. This would stop making her feel like how she felt when Kannan was around. Vrinda tried a lot but whenever she went to school, the thought of talking to Kannan seemed impossible. Vrinda's life went on with her studies, her passion for singing and in the free times she would enjoy every moment with her parents. Her ambition was to become a paediatrician and make some difference to the country and wanted to devote time to do social service. The reason why Vrinda had started to go to school was to become a doctor. There was a time when she was small she didn't want to go to school. She would just refuse with no reason to give. Her grandmother had come for vacation at their home with her grandfather. Her grandmother took Vrinda for a drive and when she came back she told her mother that she was going to school, grow up and become a doctor and put injection for everybody except her.

When Vrinda was in class 10, she studied hard and when she went to class 11, she chose science stream. Now, she was a tall beautiful girl with the same wavy long hair and big beautiful eyes. Her life was just the same with not much of excitement. Kannan, she used to notice was always funny and used to keep doing things that kept his life in action. He was naughty, but he too was always aiming high. Kannan had now become a handsome boy, clean shaven and fair but his hair was still shabby and he was slightly taller than Vrinda. Vrinda felt that she was very boring and that Kannan would never want to be friends with her. She still used to become nervous when Kannan was around. She was never able to even talk to him properly. In class 11, he too chose the science stream and they again landed up in the same class.

Chapter



A Proposal

Vrinda had a neighbour. Her name was Tara. Vrinda always had thought that Tara was quite odd. She looked like a lady of 50, plump and shabby and used to walk in an odd way. Vrinda always used to hear odd sounds from her building, sounds of cats and dogs, sounds of chemical explosions and things like that but whenever she looked out of the window towards Tara's house, she could see nothing as most of the times, the lights remained switched off.

Vrinda topped in the final exams and she was now in class 12. One Sunday as she was sitting and studying at home, her mother came into the room and told her that it was time to play. Vrinda had a bad habit of not going out to play. She hated playing and was more of an indoor person. Vrinda changed into her sports dress and went cycling in her colony. After an hour of cycling around the colony, she was going to park her cycle inside her house, when her neighbour, Tara came out and called out to her and invited her to her home. Vrinda was apprehensive. She tried to refuse politely but Tara prevailed upon Vrinda to visit her house.

As she entered Tara's house she felt like she had stepped into another world. Tara's house looked like a scientist's lab. Vrinda was really shocked. She was in awe. She turned to look for Tara and there was nobody around. Then, a beautiful lady came out of the room on Vrinda's right. She

looked like she was in her twenties and now was an inch or two taller than Vrinda. She had long curly hair and was really pretty. Vrinda asked, "Who are you? Where's Tara?" and then she added in a suspicious voice, "Did you kill her?" The lady laughed in a calm manner said, "No Vrinda, I did not kill Tara, I am her." Vrinda said, "I do not believe you, are you going to kill me? Since, when have you been in this house or lab?"

The lady remained composed and said, "Look, Vrinda trust me, I am Tara. I don't let anybody know that I live here or let them know that I am me. What I wear is a full body mask to protect myself from my enemies. There are people who are not supposed to know my real identity, that will not only endanger my life but the lives of everybody in this colony."

Vrinda was flabbergasted. She just stood there without saying anything and without moving a muscle. She wasn't sure if she should just run away from there or ask her more about the weird things she had been seeing since she entered the house. The new Tara said, "Okay Vrinda, just come in and I will explain everything to you." Vrinda wasn't sure but followed Tara.

As she went into the room the first person she saw was Kannan. Her eyes split wide open upon seeing him and her first instinct was to run away from there before she made a fool of herself in front of him. She turned to leave but Tara held her hand and pulled her in. That is when Vrinda realised that the room was quite big and there were more people. There were three boys including Kannan and a girl. The only seat that was not taken was the corner-most seat, the one next to Kannan. Having no choice but to sit next to Kannan, she went and sat down. Kannan turned towards her and said, "Hi, I'm Kannan, your classmate." Vrinda felt the same sensation she had every time Kannan spoke to her. She started smiling stupidly and said, "Yeah, I know."

Tara started speaking; I'm Tara as most of you might know. She looked at Vrinda, Kannan and the girl. I work on my own for the country. I am a spy. I had a team of five to help me but now they all have died. She gave a pause and looked at all our grave faces, and then she said, Okay, I'm just kidding. All of them have retired. I need a new team and I have selected the five of you. If you don't mind we will start training from tomorrow

itself and make you into the spies who need to be hard as a coconut. If all of you agree we can start or else we will see. Vrinda felt that this was a chance to make her life exciting, she did not know why Tara had chosen her but whatever reason this new Tara had for choosing her, she would have had her own reasons.

Suddenly a thought came into her mind, “What about your studies and your dream of being a doctor, dear Vrinda?” So she stood up and refused with a heavy heart. She was sure that there would be somebody to replace her. She was nothing great. Then Tara said something Vrinda had not been expecting at all.

“You don’t want to join now, for studies? Alright, we will start training after all of you finish your studies. Vrinda is important for this group, in fact all of you are. All of you together will make the best team ever. So next year it is. We can meet here next week, if all of you are free. I can explain more about our team. So...disperse!”

Vrinda felt overwhelmed. It was kind of the first time when somebody had felt that she, Vrinda, was special in something other than studies. She started liking Tara from that moment. Tara was postponing the whole training for about 6 months only for Vrinda. She looked around and then she noticed that the two boys and the girl next to her were looking at her in a very rude way. She wasn’t surprised. Many people were present on earth (especially people of her age) who hated her for putting studies first in her life. All her happiness disappeared when she saw the faces of the girl and boys filled with hatred. She got up and said, “I have to go and study, bye” she said this particularly to nobody. After saying this, she left as fast as she could.

As she entered her gate, she had a mixture of feelings. She felt sad because she knew that girl and boys did not like her much but felt excited for her life ahead as a SPY.

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