



*Broken*  
is the New  
*Beautiful*



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## Road Not Taken

A beautiful winter morning of January 2018, was eagerly waiting to embrace the energy hidden in this day. It was 7.00 am when Khushi's alarm revolted to wake her. As getting up early was still a task she needed to accomplish. Due to her night owl work schedule, she used to follow a workaholic routine. But, woke up as soon as she heard the alarm clock singing her favourite song sung by Jassi Gill-

*“Enrique da hero sun sun ke tenu karna pyar sikhda, munda jattan da Ni oh balliye tere karke guitar sikhda.”*

She allowed her eyelids to part ways and welcomed the morning with an energetic smile. After hugging her blanket, turning off the alarm, she stepped out of bed stretching her arms. Before getting fresh, she collected her wavy hair to make a messy bun and clipped it to not let it get wet with water splash. So she brushed her teeth, washed her face. After getting fresh she went to her room, for doing her morning workout. Being a fitness freak she loved to exercise with music, as it generates happy bubbles making the mood lighter and happier. And bestowed her with the energy she needed to achieve her goals. After exercising she prepared tea and breakfast for herself.

Then took a hot water shower followed by getting ready for office. After getting dressed she went to the worship room to meet Lord Ganesha who was her best friend. And asked him to give her the courage she needed to lead a life of purpose. So she closed her eyes, joined her hands and opened her heart to hear Ganesha's mission for her life. She was a blessed child, as she had good intention for all and was an empathetic soul that dragged Ganesha's attention the most. To make Khushi strong, he deliberately gave her tough roads, to help discover her powers deeply rooted in her personality. God test their beloved ones by giving them an exceptional road to make them extraordinary human beings. But also protect them in times of adversity and not let them settle for leftovers. Rather plans a road that will lead them to have what they deserved. Soon after having a discussion about her mission with Ganesha, Khushi picked her Smartphone to save the MOM (minutes of the meeting) she just had with him. Whom she affectionately called "Gannu". And saved the points in notes application of mobile phone.

Before she could finish writing, a popup from facebook reminded her of the memory she had four years back. Her mind reminded her of her old version. When she was undervalued, judged and turned down for being an old-school naïve girl. Whereas today she made to her dreams by building a ladder of success from the stones that were thrown at her. Now she achieved everything that the world said she could never have or be in life. Now she was valued, accepted, and unstoppable on her mission. Khushi was an Author; it was never her choice to be one, as she was never fluent with written expression. But sometimes passion chooses the person for a mission, not the person himself.

She became a sensation and was loved for what she delivered to the world through her writing. It was not chosen out of her wish but as a result of circumstances and destiny that made her become a novelist. She had a deep connection with **Advika**, who was her favourite character from the novel- *“A Girl That Had to be STRONG”*.

That taught her the real meaning of transforming pain into power, accepting flaws and building something no one created ever before... And was reminded of quotes that define reality beautifully-

*“Success always bugs you in private while failure always slaps you in public.”*

But when the former happens, a good number of friends get debited from your account of friendship. Not few but many people choose to walk out of your life for no legitimate reason. They now feel insecure about your presence. Because they never expected you to do something so uncommon in life that too better than them. And wore a mask of friendship aiming selfish interest done out of you. So they parted ways, belittled you, steal your sunshine & refused to accept your unique identity. Just because you shine too bright that it pricks their eyes. They want you to dim your light or leave it behind if you want to be a part of their life. Never give importance to such people who feel inferior because of your light. Don't let them dim your light. Rather ask them to have sunglasses on so it doesn't pain their eyes, but make them watch your light anyhow. If you are ready to choose an extraordinary path, be ready to lose people.

From the time you decide to break the glass ceiling and launch your success on a road not taken, you encounter with brutal truth of Life-

*“Everyone loves you when you do what the world expects from you until you decide to be a trendsetter and take a road not taken by anyone in your circle ever before.”*

Being engrossed in such thoughts Khushi realized- it was her first day at work. She cooked “aloo ki sabji and parathe” for lunch and wanted to reach office on time. So she finalized her dress, arranged her handbag with stuff she might need at the office. Being particular about things, she checked her bag twice, to ensure she doesn't miss out anything important behind. Before leaving for work she hugged her mother- Shalu. When clock stroked 9.00 am she left for the office as her office was on 40 minutes drive from her home. To reach safely and without rush, she wore her helmet and drove to work. Although a day before she came for an interview, soon after that she forgot the route to her office. While driving she realized- that she doesn't remember the road accurately. But gave it a try saying to herself-

*“You need to be lost if you wish to be found”* and continued driving.

Listening to her intuition as well as a little remembrance of road signs she figured out the road. To memorize the route, she took visual note of things she encountered on her way. She was not less than famous Bollywood character- Gajini- “who kept forgetting things quickly”. Even in the era of technology and Google maps, Khushi's mind needed three visits to feed a location in her brain. Finally, she could manage to reach the office safely.

While entering the office premise, Lakhan- the security guard of “Storyteller-Pacify” stopped her at the entrance. He asked her to show her ID card. Khushi told him that it’s her first day, so she doesn’t have one. But her face was giving a contradictory expression when she was explaining her part. That made it difficult for Lakhan to believe in her words. So to solve this mystery, Khushi told him the name of the person who hired her for the job. To her attempt of solving the mystery, he quickly replied- yes tell me who hired you for this company.

She said- Mr Ravindra Prajapati (MD of Storyteller-Pacify) hired me. Hearing the boss name, Guard wanted to believe her for once but somehow he failed to. As her expressions were convincing him to not believe her at all. But to solve this, he decided to call Ravindra sir immediately. So he dialled him to confirm the same.

Lakhan: Good Morning Sir! I am Lakhan, the security guard of Storyteller-Pacify... Sorry to disturb you sir, but I wanted to inquire about new recruitment. As a girl has entered our premise and calls herself a new employee of this company.

Ravindra: Ok. Ask her name and job role she is hired For?

Lakhan: Sure sir, I’ll just ask please be on hold. Meanwhile, he asked Khushi her name and designation.

Khushi: I am Khushi Shrivastava, hired for the post of Creative Writer.

Lakhan: Sir, Her name is Khushi Shrivastava, hired for the post of Creative Writer.

Ravindra: Great!! She is here, that’s nice, let her in and make sure you welcome her with a bouquet and smile. 😊

Lakhan: Sure sir, I will. Although he found her suspicious but decided to still welcome her. So he muttered silently addressing to the lord-

“Oh GOD save me from this girl, I find her suspicious”



*Lakhan to Khushi: Mam, please come with me, I'll take you to the second office. Seeing him behave like a gentleman astonished Khushi.*

*So she self-talked feeling dumbstruck and said to herself- "A moment back this man doubted me as if I come from a rival company!! And hold wrong intentions? But now he is respecting me as if he knew me since childhood." Lakhan successfully dropped her to the second floor handed her bouquet of sunflowers and greeted her good morning with a smile. She accepted it and while pulling the door of the second floor, a guy called out her name asking if she is the new employee?*

*On being asked, she turned back to confirm whether it's real or is she hearing voices out of hallucinations. She was astonished to see a man standing behind her wearing nicely ironed formals. The man approached towards Khushi and said- Hey! it's me Arush- HR of this company, if I am not wrong are you Khushi?*

*Khushi- Yes I am Khushi. Nice to meet you Arush.*

*Arush- "Welcome on board Khushi, it's indeed a pleasure meeting you".*

*And welcomed her with a tightly gripped handshake. Well, I don't forget faces it's my job as an HR. So I remember it to ensure employees have a comfortable stay at work. So let me introduce you to your teammates now. Khushi was dressed in a red peplum top, black jeans, a silver Timex watch, and black bellies to complete her look. In the name of makeup she only applied a light red shade of lipstick and Kajal to complete her look. Simplicity was her charm so she managed to rock it. As soon as she entered, all eyes glued at her. Male employees adored her beauty as well as her dressing sense.*

But their stare of admiration made her feel little embarrassed. As getting attention was the most hateful thing for Khushi. But unfortunately, she attracted more of such situations more.

To avoid giving a yes to their stare, she decided not to have eye contact with anyone. And decided to walk towards her cubical counting her footsteps from the door to her desk. Arush noticed she was getting awkward with the attention, so to make her comfortable; he took her for interacting with her teammates. And introduced her to every member one by one starting from Vinod, Rudra, and Arman. Further introduced her to Rakesh bhaiya who is the helper appointed for their team- "Think Different". The man who expresses thoughts in words is Vinod- appointed as Hindi Content Writer. While Rudra as a Software developer and Arman- as SEO Manager. Who is training an SEO executive under him currently. Arush told her that six teams function this way and are bifurcated with the same number of members. To help monitor the performance and productivity of every team individually. After the introduction, he showed her desk and asked to let him know- if she needed anything. She occupied that seat and was happy with the welcome given to her.

But soon her eyes ran toward the empty chair placed just next to her. Can you tell me about the empty seat? Hearing this he told her the girl who used to occupy this place will join the company tomorrow, as she is on leave today. Her heart jumped in happiness when she heard the word "She". This news made her curious to meet the girl. Being the first day of work, she was not offered with the task yet. But sitting without work and wasting time is something she can never do. So she decided to find some work for herself. The joining phase in a company is never a disappointment. As it's more like a honeymoon period for an employee. Where they are kept away from work. Which may vary from a few days to a few months? New employees are kept away from work not because they want you to pay a free salary.

It's just a way of checking you by seeing what you do in your free time. Whether you find work to keep yourself busy or you simply sit and waste your time. Good companies don't put pressure from day one but silently they monitor all your activities from the cameras installed smartly in your cubical. They keep a check on you so she was already aware of what the HR team was doing in their cabin. After finding a task for herself she was able to manage her first half of office pretty well. She was working in a content-based company named Storyteller-Pacify that aims at delivering quality content to the readers. While its parent company was- "Pacify Innovation" dealing in providing technology, website & application development. Finally, it was time to take a break, as it was a lunch break. She interacted with her team and wished to go on lunch together.

But she realized all have a friend with whom they spend time. So she knew she has to spend time with herself for lunch. So she went to the canteen and had her Aloo ki sabji with parathe. And after having a good stomach filling food she returned to her desk and plugged her earphones to enjoy some good music to freshen up her mood. Soon it was 6.30 pm, a time that everyone secretly loved but behaved ignorantly as if they hate to leave office. Khushi also left after seeing most team and employees leave. She was excited to meet the girl which made her nervous excitement. But she managed to calm her mood and drove back home. Shalu was excited to hear about her daughter's first day. As mothers are keen about knowing your day. No matter how good or bad it turned out for you. It's their way of showing care and relieving our muscles if any tension exists. And maybe the reason was they knew what unconditional love was. So to make Khushi's day she prepared her favourite dish "*Kadai Paneer and zalfrezi with butter roti.*"

As good food has the power to change your bad mood into a good mood. And so it's important to have well-cooked food for a healthy mind free from stress. What more could you ask when you have delicious homemade food cooked by mother. Khushi loved the surprise planned by her mother and told her about her day as well. Also complimented her mother for cooking amazing food. Then she opened her wardrobe to decide her clothes for tomorrow. As now a little bit of planning was needed while dressing. After all its office not home you have to be presentable and not come out in *comfortable pyjamas*.

So she decided to wear formal shirts to work as well as separated her cupboard with office wears week wise. She picked a fluorescent green shirt and paired it with white jeans and shoes for tomorrow. Being fond of watches she invested in classy watches. She decided to wear her Silver Timex watch having a green dial and silver beads covering the watch dial on inside. And though to tie her wavy and thick hairs, with a white spiral rubber band. Next day when she reached the office, she saw a girl sitting adjacent to her seat. As soon as Khushi went towards her, she heard a sound. Before she could figure out or ask her name, she saw a ceramic flower pot falling on the ground as if it the pot poses of a fall from a building. The cracked pieces of pot spread across her chair and made it appear she broke the ceramic flowerpot. On hearing the noise of fall all eyes ran towards both of them. As if she and the girl sitting next to her conspired to break it deliberately. The long-haired girl said to Khushi- I am sorry! By mistake, I dropped this flowerpot. Before the mess gets messy can you please help me clean, she said to Khushi. She agreed to help and after getting her approval both teamed up to work together on a mission- "clean the mess".

Finally, the mission got completed. So she asked the long-haired girl.

*Khushi- What is your name?*

*Bhoomi – I am Bhoomi Agrawal, SEO Executive for this team, nice to meet you Khushi. Thanks for helping me clean the mess. May I know your name as well?*

*Khushi- It was a pleasure helping you. My name is Khushi Shrivastava, appointed as Creative Writer for this team. After introducing themselves to each other they found threads attached that made them talk even more. When they were engrossed in chats, a bell hindered their conversation. This was a call for the team to report in conference room ASAP. Bhoomi asked Khushi to be equipped with a dairy and pen as it's time to scribble some ink. Together they went to the conference room and took adjacent seats. After they reported, Tarun, Rudra, Arman, and Ravindra also joined the meeting. Finally, the meeting started, wherein Bhoomi and Arman drove the presentation stating the facts and figures about the website. Ravindra asked Arman to show their content market reach, the percentage of readers in males and females, most loved categories of readers and revenue generated so far?*

*Being overloaded with so many questions Arman decided to share stats with everyone. He started with the number of users reporting daily, organic traffic, number of clicks on ads, bounce rate as well as engagement rate of content. Soon after sharing this, he showed the team about the percentage of the audience and popular categories of their articles. Ravindra wanted to hear from Bhoomi about platforms she manage and their response rate? She was ready to answer it all and was sure about slides she needs to show for her presentation.*

*But out of nowhere she entangled her fingers to the laptop charger cord cable and made it fall. As a result, the laptop got shut and everyone had to wait for her presentation until the laptop restart. She was sorry about what happened but didn't know what to say to her colleagues. Such incidents were common with her as she was a butterfingere girl. So she didn't have any eye contact and kept calm while waiting for the system to restart. But Khushi couldn't stop herself from laughing as this was the second time she saw her dropping things like anything. But she tried hard to not laugh as she was already embarrassed by many stares of people present in the room. While her system restarts, Arman intelligently took over the mess and decided to deliver a presentation from her behalf. Ravindra called off the meeting for everyone except Arman and Rudra. So they went back and occupied seats and waited for the meeting to finish. But it took too long to finish, that made Khushi hungry. So she asked Bhoomi to go for lunch as soon as the meeting finishes.*

*Bhoomi- Sure, just let me finish my daily task sheet first.*

*Khushi- Okay I'll wait. And prayed for the meeting to get over as it made her hungry. Just when she was waiting, she saw a girl approaching her. Her thoughts made her run while sitting and thinking-*

*"Why is this girl approaching me?" The girl was wearing a pink top and black jean that approached towards Khushi.*

*Ritu- Hey, my name is Ritu; I am the new Graphic Designer for the team Think DIFFERENT. Am I standing in the right team?*

*Khushi- Yes, it's cubical of "think DIFFERENT" team.*

*Ritu- Thanks, sorry I forgot to ask your name?*

*Khushi- I am Khushi Shrivastava, Creative Writer for this team, pleased to meet you.*

*Ritu- Pleasure is mine Khushi Mam. I have read the work you write amazingly.*

*Khushi- Thanks dear ☺ don't be formal it's okay you can call me by name. We don't practice extra respect in same age group.*

*Ritu- I am so lucky to have such cool colleagues. I thought people might take it otherwise if I don't call them mam/sir. By the way who manages the SEO (search engine optimization) of this team?*

*Khushi- Well it's managed by Arman and Bhoomi. And introduced Ritu to Bhoomi.*

*Ritu- I am glad to meet you Bhoomi.*

*Bhoomi- Ritu, I am Happy to have you onboard. ☺*

*Ritu-Feelings are mutual. I would like to learn SEO and content writing from both of you.*

*Khushi & Bhoomi in one voice said- "Sure why not." Without realizing they were in absolute sync of voice, pitch and timing. And later laughed on their similarity saying- "what a timing, seriously".*

*Ritu- Bhoomi can you please tell me about my work?*

*Bhoomi- Surely dear, but first let's have lunch together.*

*Ritu- Let us go for it then, I am damn hungry. Yes, let's have it what do you say Khushi?*

*Khushi Winked saying- Yes, I am in. Already filed my hunger case in Bhoomi's court hoping to get good food. ☺ But got justice when you walked in else she would have asked me to wait for a couple of hours more. Bhoomi laughed- Hababa, don't worry Khushi, I won't let you lose the case nor let you die hunger. ☺ Let's go with the majority and have it now. All three girls went to the canteen and looked for a table to occupy.*

On finding one they occupied it and enjoyed stomach filling meal together. Furthermore, they had a craving for eating something sweet. So they unanimously consented to have "gulab jamun".

As soon as they got their order on the table, the song playing in the canteen background changed to a song of Sanam Puri. Just when the girls were gazing the gulab jamun but before their spoon chops its round body into two. The lyrics took over their mind as if the desert sings to all three of them- "*Aap ki nazro ne samjha pyaar ke kabil muje*".

At this point, all three girls' thoughts related it to the desert which made them laugh harder. The people sitting next to their table got scared with loud laughter noises and walked back to their cubical thinking they are insane. Unfortunately, Lakhn also noticed it and firmed his thoughts about Khushi. As he already found her crazy from day one. But only these girls know the reality behind their laughter. Such an event happening with strangers made a similarity earth a seed between all three of them.

What more could a person expect, when they find look alike in strangers on the first day itself. There was surely some connection that Khushi could notice with both of them. As if they were meant to be together maybe for a reason or lesson. But the best part was the incident that brought them even closer.



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