

# The Musk

(A love story...)



❧ MUKTA SRIVASTAVA ❧

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# *The Musk*



'Kuhu' is such a name by listening it heart's sensations started shouting. Then, if the emotions get connected in this name then why will not there be a tide in the ocean. Yes, she was a tide, who changed every trail of life and put her own stamp everywhere. A page was not even open to read the heart and a magical book full of rain was dropped. A page of that magical book, which has been called 'Ishq', was opened automatically every day. No matter what the heart aspires, reading becomes compulsive; there is no question of not reading. The feeling is so beautiful that the heart wants to die by drowning. Do not know how my world started to be limited, all friends and relatives began to disappear from my mind. Just one intoxication was stuck to every aspect of the personality. If 'Kuhu' were there I would have done so... if 'Kuhu' were there I would have done such...

I remember the day when I met 'Kuhu' first time. Nutan is my sweet loving cousin. Every summer, I used to spend my holidays in 'Chhappa'. This time too, I had gone to 'Chhappa' with same glee. It was not known that this glee is going to show me its beautiful form. A web of 'Maya' in which my bird like mind will be punished, for being trapped in it forever. My mind, that is roaming like free musk deer... helpless mind... just a little while more could feel the slight light strokes of free breeze. On the gate of my own compartment of train I enjoy the journey by holding the rod of the gate with my both hand while the train going forward. Upper two button of my sky blue check shirt were opened. Why did not I get to be a little bit adventurous whenever the swift winds of the air hit my chest? The love of 'Nature' is so mysterious. It is always helpful in the origin, experience and affair of love. It is not possible that mind do not get distracted in good weather. Tidying my hair backward with my own hand, I was perpetuating that natural bliss in my heart with full faith.

A little later... a blow... and emotions get full stop. Station had come; I picked up my bag and got down from the train.

Coming out of the station, I called Rickshaw... Rickshaw... The house was next to the 'Hathua Market', so it did not take much time. I stood in front of the house and started giving money to the Rickshaw puller. I did not have to knock the door. Nutan was already there with a familiar smile, she picked up my luggage and going forward. Maami had asked, "Who is?" A happy reply... 'Bhaiya'. Maami had further asked, "Who? Dev?" The aroma of Daal-Pudi had pulled me towards kitchen. I said, "What is being cooked?" "Pudi & Kheer are being prepared for you", She replied. She said to me, "Take bath quickly, Food is ready, Ajay is also waiting for you." At a minute intervals she again asked, "How are Bhai Ji and Didi?" The sweetness of the relationship was floating on her face. I replied, "Yes! Everyone is all right."

I wanted to sleep a little longer after taking a bath so I opened my bag, brought out towel and put it on my shoulder and went straight towards bathroom. Nutan had fried a few 'Papads' and cut a little 'Salad' according to my preference. She knew that I love 'Papad', 'Pickle' and 'Salad' all these in the plate. Nutan, Ajay and I together took their seat on the dining table to eat food. We have less food but spend too much time in talking. Maami served food frequently in love. Love is a strange thing; when it comes on anyone find their way of expression according to relation. The feeling of maternity is great in love. Its simple meaning is that where there is this feeling, you can never grow up. After meals, I said to Ajay, "Ajay, I want a little rest. Ajay was a bit older than me, but I considered him as my friend. Ajay said, yes, you just relax in my room. I will sleep in mother's room. I kept my watch and purse in Ajay's room on the table near the bed, lay down the slippers and laid while putting pillow under the head. I was interested in the literature, so I called Nutan ... Nutan...

Nutan came and asked with great love, 'Ji Bhaiya'. Seeing the mischief in sister's eyes, I guessed if she did anything wrong... Then thought to leave it... I said, "Give me a magazine, I will see it while having laid down." Saying 'Ji Bhaiya' with a special charm, almost flitting like, she went to her room. I thought she was very happy this time. When she returned, there were

5 or 6 magazines and a diary in her hand. She removed the vase and placed the magazine on one side comfortably and began to write something by opening the diary herself. I said, "What are you writing." She replied, "Mother's account." But she expressed such a way that the cat's fad is a pusher and she put the diary there and left.

I saw magazine for a while... not found something worth reading. I feel sleepy. Suddenly a picture from the diary was visible; I picked up the diary and opened the page with photo. Hey... my photo... the most beautiful... I started to look at keenly... like, watching it for the first time... Then got the attention on that page of diary... I saw... something was written there very beautifully that attracts attention to itself unintentionally. I noticed that it was neither the handwriting of 'Nutan' nor of 'Ajay'. Emotions were entwined to make garland with pearls like letters. I began to think helplessly that who has written for whom with such a beautiful emotions.

“हमें इजहार करना था,  
तुम्ही से प्यार करना था।  
मगर ये तब तो मुमकिन हो,  
जो तुम कुछ भी समझ पाओं।।”

(I had to propose, I had to love you but this is possible only when you understand anything.)

It was straight-hearted request but it was not getting that who did it for whom. I turned the page, again a humble request... with a 'moan' also...

अजब बेबसी है, नशा ही नशा है,  
जो इक बार देखें, तो सौ बार देखें।

I turned the page again, this time expression of love was different

यू तो आइने मे अपना ही चेहरा नज़र आता है,  
लेकिन मैं देखू तो वो किसी और में बदल जाता है।

With a curiosity, turned a page again

हृदय पुष्प, तेरे चरणों में, अर्पण करती हूँ हे देव!  
कभी मुझे स्वीकृत करके, अनुगृहित तो कर दो 'देव' ।।

Again some beautiful lines ...

किसी को दिल में बसा लेने के बाद.....  
अपना ही दिल बेगाना हुआ जाता है।  
डुबने की आशंका होती है.....  
और डुबने को भी दिल चाहता है।

Heart beat was calmed for some moment. It seems that someone has altered me from Human 'Dev' to God 'Dev'. This was my first opportunity when someone was pulling me towards own self with great humility. The word of 'Dev' in somebody's writing hurt me. I was compelled to fight myself. Perhaps someone had solicited me with a 'sigh' and I did not know "who is she?"

My slumber was gone after such greetings. I thought...to call Nutan and ask. But suddenly experienced she is my younger sister...what would she think about me? A sharp thunder of 'dilemma' and I kept on changing my position. All night passed with questions changing position while sleeping

became a form of work that had to be done with speed of time. “Who will tell me”, the same question frequently came to my mind.

A ray of hope, ‘Ajay’ but again a mental exercise if Ajay knows... He is my friend... He would have told me earlier and how could I ask to ‘Nutan’ I frequently kept on turning the pages of ‘Diary’. An unfamiliar love forced one to touch those letters with my hand lovingly. The sea of emotions was stirring in me that I cannot describe. One thing in this brainstorm came to mind that the expression of Nutan was telling that this time she is going to make me understand the affair. I spend that whole night with great troublesome feelings for having thousands of dreams in my eyes.

Moreover, it is necessary to sleep to be in a calm state. Both are strong things, “complement of each other”. I began to wait for the arrival of ‘morning’ from the window. As soon as the sun came, birds of curiosity began to spread their feathers. I got up... put on my slippers and started to stroll out... Ajay came in a little while and asked me, “What is the matter”, ‘Dev’ got up very early? Didn’t sleep properly? I replied, “No” due to change of place... and we all got busy in daily routine.

I kept the diary back in its place as it was... and from a distance I started to look at who has more desire to know about the diary. I saw the steps of Nutan herself going on and on, again and again, was going there. I understood... Nutan wants to convey me this full of sigh proposal of someone. Now it was easy for me to get information from Nutan. It seems comfortable for me to wait for the right time. In afternoon, Ajay went out for some work after lunch. I think this is the right time.

I wanted to talk to Nutan openly for five minute. But that ‘Line of Lakshman’ of hesitation was still there. I asked Nutan to bring her own album and sat comfortably with a pillow on the bed in the room Nutan had come with album and graciously sat on the front chair. How hard is it to express, the impulse of our heart before own sister for a boy. This thing came to understand that day expressively. I courageously picked up the diary in the case of heart there was a battle of kill or cure, either now or never. Taking out photographs from the diary and put it in the album looked towards Nutan and asked, “Is your diary also watched by your friends?” Nutan was ready for questions. She looked at me and saying with smile, “By some special friends..” She took the diary from

my hand and stood up to go... I took back the diary from her hand, smilingly and pointed to sit in front of me.

I had a feeling of an unstoppable hurricane in my mind and there was a mischief on her face with a loving smile...as if she is telling me...as much you have been persecuted me from childhood...now give her account.

I took some steady feeling and asked her, “Who are these friends?” “Who has written something in this diary?” Speaking this one sentence my face showed many colours of facial expression. She said such to bother me... “Where it was written?” “What was written?” I don’t know, I did not see it. Show me...

I was stunned for a while and began to think how old has she been? She is telling so much lie on this issue too easily... If there is any case of her... It’s also hard to know... Leave it ...



At this moment, there was a lot of need of treatment.

I grabbed her hand and said, “Swear on me... Tell me the truth... Who wrote this and for whom? She got more fun... She said, “Didn’t know who wrote? Diary was seen by Pooja, Aarti, Rupa, Pratima everyone... really didn’t know who wrote and made a helpless facial expression. I understand that she is teasing me. I adopted another way and began to pack my stuff in my bags. She asked, “What is this?” I replied, “Going back”, “tell to Maami”.

As soon as I started coming out of the room, she quickly caught my bag and said, “So much angry...” She put the bag back, I also went back and sat down the chair and looked at her with a questionable sight. She said while giving me ‘Diary’-“My dear friend ‘Kuhu’. Kuhu had come here to leave the village 20 days ago. As you see my album, Kuhu also sees it. Seeing your photo in the album she asked with so much of curiosity that “who is that?” Nutan was going on explaining intermittently and I was listening gladly. ‘Kuhu’ is such... Kuhu is so... She thinks so... she likes this and that... and many more things...

I understood that Kuhu is that girl for whom my soul had been long since long time. I started feeling uneasy for Kuhu. I said to Nutan, “You have told the name and so much... tell me her address too...

Nutan asked me with a soft smile, "Address for what? I said politely, "I want to write something and send it." Nutan made her eye's round and said, "She has refused to give the address." I said, "You are my sister or her?" "She has vowed to you not to tell..." Said Nutan smilingly. I also told Nutan in the same way. I also give you my oath... now tell me too...Or else more than a month will not be alive anyway. "Do not take too much heart on brother..." she said holding my hand. It may be she might write in any gust of emotion... nothing would be in her mind... she again said, "She has a little different mood, she writes but to love is not just about her... always talks about studies... she wants to be officer in future... she doesn't like businessman and anyway she only has a friendships with toppers. She does not like to be friends with minor people. Listening to this, I did not want to live in modest...

I said to Nutan, "Please give me her address..." what would be next, who would see it? I want to tell her my heart's feeling. It has to accept what time ahead will present... Nutan has written her address on a paper and gave it to me. Nutan said, "She was living in Patna's Boring Road". She would get angry with me and there would be end of our friendship. I said to Nutan, "Don't be worry..." I will be able to tolerate... when I will feel that it is my last night, and then I will write to her. But, I need a favour to live without her so I am going with this diary.



Further I said, "I have a intense desire to see her once... whenever she would come Chhapra, please call me... It is easy to do so..."

It is not easy to call in the year 1988, phone was not available at every home and to talk to another city we had to book a trunk call by going to STD. I had a phone at my home but Nutan had to go STD... so I gave her 200 Rs and said, "To book trunk call..."

I kept Diary, met Maami and went straight to station to catch my train.

The one who is distressed to see his beloved and cannot be seen because she is far away, at this the mind becomes disturbed. Nutan did not have even a single photo of her due to that my heart unable to get some comfort.

I went there to stay... but the helpless heart generated so much of pain that I soon came back from Chhapra....

I caught the train and back to the way of Asan Sole...

Thousands of flowers were blooming in heart fortuitously. A special kind of glee came to me due to someone's such a beautiful love proposal. A beautiful meaning was felt in life. But as much as I had happiness in my mind so much was the pain...

Same question came to my mind everytime... So much love and non-identification bond... suddenly the expression of laughter have come on my face. I was thinking about the best way to meet her, and then I spontaneously returned back in calm state. I began to think that the laughter that comes to my face will be taken wrongly by people on the side. Everyone will consider me mad that I am laughing lonely... It is a very difficult to me to stop my mild smile...

Luckily, the person selling the magazine was also seen in the train... I called him... Magazine... Magazine. He came near to me and showed me magazine. I picked up a magazine... I gave him the money for magazine... he went and I began to turn it on...

Magazine was only a pretense... only I had to hide myself from the people so that people may not consider me mad as I was laughing involuntarily...

I was seeing that words of love in the magazine...the journey of 12 hours only with her memory...

I got down at Asansol...picked auto-rickshaw and went straight... Chandmari...New Colony... Had the pleasure of coming home...but the same pain internally...helplessness of not being identified... really I became hopeless...my mind was craving to meet and talk to her and she imposed the full impedance on the Nutan... All this was getting heavier on my heart... As soon as I entered the house, there was a sense of happiness on the mother's face.

'Maa' asked emotionally, "had come from Maami?" I touched her feet happily and answered, "Yes, Maa..." Maa further asked, "Came back very soon this time... What's the matter...? Are you fine...?"

I said in a soft smile, "Yes... I was not in good health... and further to get admission in any college... if time passes then admission will not be done..."

I put my bag in my room ... I had more exhaustion on the way... didn't even sleep ... so I asked Tea from Maa.

We have a joint family. My father-mother, my brother & sister in law and their children all were lived together.

My niece has made a tasty tea for me ... I was tired a lot but my brain was not tired. Every moment someone's that poetry kept hovering around my mind. The effect of the 'Shape' and 'background' was repeatedly being noticed in the brain. The composition of Kuhu in the shape was clearly making their own place ... and in the background, the image of a beautiful girl was circulating differently...

"Uncle, tea ...!" My niece's voice broke my drowsiness ... and I came out of my dream castle. I drank tea with a heavy mind and got a bath for the purpose of being light ...

I didn't want to eat ...but who has won over mother's request ...” After dinner, I went to the room with the desire to sleep ...

Twinge of not meeting with Kuhu further did not let me sleep. Put out diary and I started looking on those letters for life. It is good to read ...

“हमें इजहार करना था,  
तुम्ही से प्यार करना था।  
मगर ये तब तो मुमकिन हो,  
जो तुम कुछ भी समझ पाओं।।”

अजब बेबसी है, नशा ही नशा है,  
जो इक बार देखें, तो सौ बार देखें।

यूँ तो आइने मे अपना ही चेहरा नज़र आता है,  
लेकिन मैं देखूँ तो वो किसी और में बदल जाता है।

हृदय पुष्प, तेरे चरणों में, अर्पण करती हूँ, हे देव!  
कभी मुझे स्वीकृत करके, अनुगृहित तो कर दो 'देव' ॥

All these words from Kuhu were saying to me... Come Dev, meet me... see me... love me... and my heart was only wordlessly truning on the pages of Diary.



I did not know when I get to sleep...

At 7 in the morning, sister in law got me up and reminded that I have to go to college for admission. At that time there was no competition for getting admission in the college. I had to get admission in college on good marks. I quickly completed the daily routine and take the necessary documents with myself and having two toasts in the mouth... I almost ran near my bike.

I used to biking... self confidence became quadruple as the speed grew... sitting on the bike, placed keys and a hard kick... Today I wanted to talk to the wind from the whole heart. Don't know why I was not afraid to die that day... I increased the speed to 80–85. At that time technique, it became dangerous.

Strong wind blew on my chest and when I was moving forward by spinning those winds... there came a special thrill in me... It seemed like it was going to get into my lap...

I filled my admission form in B.S.K. College, which came under the Ranchi University. In Asansol, my patrimonial business began to slow down. For the purpose of handling the business, I decided to take admission in B.A. I thought

that I could handle my father's business while doing B.A. I took Economics as an honors' subject. It was 1988 the first year of my degree... My friends also took admission in B.S.K. College. The company of friends is one of the best moments of life. It was great to be in a college. There was the excitement of decorating new life's dreams. These dreams were saying to touch the high by flying in the sky. 'Firm Sentence' of Nutan that "she only shares friendship with toppers..." generates in me a 'pang' of excitement every time. I was becoming increasingly sensitive towards my studies every day. In my study such commitment was incorporated... and the same loyalty was tying me in profound love of 'Kuhu'. Life was running at its own pace.

In February 1989,

My God took pity on me... A postcard of Nutan came (It was a simple way of sending a letter at that time) only a sentence was written in postcard. "Come Soon Brother". Reading this sentence my peacock like mind began to dance being enchanted... I didn't think other way... and just kept some clothes in a bag and I began to depart from home in almost wanting to fly like... I thought only to tell mother as soon as possible... It was my duty to tell mother that I am going to Chhappa for 2-3 days. She became 'amazed'... She saw me speechlessly... Mother is mother... It may she got understood but she didn't stop me... gave me her bless smilingly...

I undoubtedly wanted to go to Chhappa by first train... after reaching the station; I noticed that 'Maurya Express' would come after few hours. Time was still left but I didn't want to go back home... I was afraid that the train would not be missed... otherwise I will not be able to see her. It was right to wait at the station there... I didn't get reservation... It was 12 hour journey yet there was the joy of going without reservation. Just waiting for the train... It was the passion of love... I had to meet her. Just a few hours later I sat on the train.

The mind was moving at the same pace as the train was running... How do I meet her? How do I start to talk? How can I tell her that "My soul has been searching her since a long time?"

How will I see her for the first time? How would she react to me? Her mind and heart are very good... but how will her body structure be...? I was laughing at my consideration and began to think... leave it, she will not be too bad...

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