

*A
Woman's
Dignity*

Shobha Mehrotra



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Stories Matter

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For permissions requests or inquiries regarding this publication,
please contact:

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS

www.BlueRoseONE.com

info@bluerosepublishers.com

+91 8882 898 898

+4407342408967

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Sweet dreams are made of this
Who am I to disagree?
I travelled the world and the seven seas
Everybody's looking for something
Some of them want to use you
Some of them want to get used by you
Some of them want to abuse you
Some of them want to be abused

When I was just a little girl,
I asked my mother, "What will I be?
Will I be pretty?
Will I be rich?"
Here's what she said to me:
Que sera, sera,
Whatever will be will be,
The futures not ours to see,
Que sera sera!

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to my mother and my dearest friend Anita who are no more. My mother is the one who taught me and my sisters to study, get educated and be independent as she got married very young and suffered, realised the value of education. I am very thankful to her for that. You'll will stay in my memory forever.

Miss you Bhabhi (Mom)

Foreword

The author, my mother, has a gift for weaving ideas into narratives that feel both deeply personal and universally relevant. Each chapter invites you to pause, reflect, and perhaps see the world—and yourself—a little differently. It's the kind of work that doesn't just inform; it transforms.

In a time when our attention is constantly pulled in a hundred directions, this book offers something precious: a space to slow down, think deeply, and reconnect with what truly matters. Whether you read it in one sitting or savor it over weeks, you will find yourself returning to its pages again and again.

It is my privilege to introduce you to this remarkable work of my mother, Shobha Mehrotra.

May it inspire you, challenge you, and stay with you long after you've turned the final page.

Your Son,

Vijay B. Dhingreja

I miss the version of me

who laughed without forcing it, who trusted without fear,
who didn't overthink every silence.

Life didn't break me suddenly— it rewrote me slowly.

Now I'm careful where I care, quiet where I once spoke freely,
strong in ways

I never wanted to learn.

I don't miss people as much as I miss who I was before they
changed me.

Some grief isn't about losing someone— it's about losing
yourself and realizing

you're not coming back the same.

- Zaynsaye Poetry

Preface

This is basically a story and lives of 5 women, their connection, their intertwining with each other, their individual lives led by each of them as they grow up and understand the meaning of life and it's value.

From the day we are born, there are hurdles and battles to overcome as we grow with experience and people. Life's lessons are very hard and tough, difficult to survive, BUT there is always a solution for every problem. There is an inner strength inside all of us which grows with every obstacle we face and overcome.

How these 5 women face this hurdles, how they deal with it and overcome them. Truth is harsher than fiction.

Protagonists

1. Sunita
2. Anuradha
3. Priya
4. Rabia
5. Tara and Ulhas

Chapter 1

Prelude

A 60 year old woman Anuradha, dignified, graceful, belying her chronological age, sitting in her rocking chair, gently rocking with her eyes closed as if asleep.

She hears a soft sound near her and feels a light hand on her saree. She opens her eyes and sees the young fresh face of her 20 year old adopted granddaughter Simran, sitting at her feet and gazing up at her, her eyes expressing affection and a questioning look of wonder. "I'm sorry Grandma, did I wake you up?". Anuradha cuts in and says smiling, "No my dear, I was not asleep, just wandered into my past.....that's what happens to people of my age or older, so many memories to go back to, so much nostalgia...." She trails off and becomes quiet.

"Good memories or bad ones?" asks Simran.

Anuradha ponders over her question and replies "Both my dear, the good and the bad memories both merge together and is difficult to separate them entirely. Perhaps for me the best memories were at the last, when I finally came into my own..." She trails off and suddenly notices the expression on Simran's face looking somewhat anxious and confused at the same time.

Anuradha then laughs a young merry laugh that belies her years and says to Simran "Don't worry sweetheart, I have not yet become senile, but there is so much you do not know about me, my past life, except I'm your grandmother.

Her granddaughter answers smiling “I only know that you are writing a book on your memoirs, maybe an autobiography, I’m not sure is that so? But I believe you will not let anyone read it yet”.

Anuradha answers “No my dear, wait for the book to finish, so that you and the others can read it when it is fully written—you will enjoy and appreciate the book only in it’s finished version.”

Her granddaughter ponders and says “Yes Grandma, that sounds right, so I will in anticipation”. She gets up, gives her Grandma and affectionate hug and kiss and leaves the room.

The Beginning

The Friendship—Sunita and Anuradha

2 school girls go to the same convent school to study in a suburb in Bombay (not Mumbai)

Anuradha is the younger girl, a dreamer, loves poetry, shy and pretty, a bit of an introvert. Sunita is older to Anuradha by 2 years and is the reverse of Anuradha. She is a tomboy, loves sports, is witty, big hearted and straight forward.

There is a test going on in their class where both are present writing away furiously. Sitting next to Anuradha is a heavy set girl whose trying to peep into Anuradha’s test paper to get answers she does not know, but does not succeed.

Anuradha in the middle of the test ask for permission from the teacher to go to the bathroom. The teacher says “go but come back soon!”

The heavy set girl sees her opportunity, gets up and follows her after permission from the teacher. Once together, she

corners Anuradha and threatens her to give her the answers to the test questions. She is a bully and pushes her against the wall. Anuradha is quiet petrified and scared. At that moment the door opens and Sunita, the monitor of the class enters. She immediately gauges the situation and tells the bully to leave Anuradha alone, which she refuses. Sunita is stronger than her, pulls her away and slaps her.

The bully runs away and Anuradha tells Sunita what transpired. Sunita hugs her, reassures her and tells her to go to her classroom and that they will meet at recess, which they do.

Being opposite of each other, they become friendly to each other. They keep calling each other on the phone and get pretty close to each other as they live in different suburbs but not far from each other.

1st Protagonist

ANURADHA: The Dreamer

Anuradha is around eleven years of age, a dreamer, lives in a escapist world. She comes from a fairly well to do family, her father being a businessman, her mother a graduate and housewife. She being the only child, they are very close to each other and she shares all her friendships and fears at school with her mother.

Next day returning from her school she sees her uncle and aunt at her parents flat. They give her the news that her parents are no more as the plane they were returning home had crashed and there were no survivors.

Anuradha is shocked and shattered to learn this terrible news about her parents and she collapses. Her parents had gone on a day trip for her dad's business meeting and were returning the next day.

Anuradha is heartbroken, she becomes a loner and goes into her shell. Her uncle being her father's brother tries to comfort her as much as possible, but to no avail.

Since she is the only sibling and her uncle and aunt live in another city in Delhi they take her with them and put her in a school in Delhi. They sell her parents home and buy her a small flat. Her friend Sunita has been like a rock for her and totally supportive through her bad times. Sunita is heartbroken when Anuradha shifts to Delhi as they had become very close to each other.

Anuradha starts going to school in Delhi and has her own room in her uncle's flat. One evening, when her aunt is not at home her uncle comes into her room, he assaults her and

rapes her. He threatens her with dire consequences if she opens her mouth to her aunt or anyone else. She is terrified, alone. He keeps coming to her room whenever her aunt has gone out with her friends or shopping.

After a few years, however, her uncle and aunt shift abroad to Africa as her uncle has found a good job there. By then Anuradha is about 20 years old, finished her education, and moves into a hostel temporarily.

As she has a 1 bhk flat in Bombay given to a tenant, she decides to get it vacated and move into her flat in Bombay. She writes poetry, reads book and lives in her own world.

She meets a nice guy in her college, they fall in love with each other and they get married. Her husband Neil, later, after post graduation, gets a job in a multinational company.

Anuradha, after her marriage with Neil finds it difficult to get intimate with Neil because of her traumatic past with her uncle. Neil thinks she is just shy and slowly their relationship gets sorted out. She has a child with him, a daughter they name Ridhi who is now about 12 years old and going to school.

Anuradha starts getting overprotective towards her daughter knowing her own past experiences with her uncle which still haunts her. Her husband's friend drops in quite often for a drink with Neil. This friend of Neil shows a lot of interest in Ridhi and Anuradha starts getting panicky and paranoid.

Anuradha finally decides to tell Neil about her past with her uncle and he is totally shocked and shaken. He gets very upset and cannot handle her past and starts drinking a lot.

So much so he blames his wife that she must have encouraged her uncle and maybe Ridhi is not even his own!

Ultimately the situation between them gets worse and ugly and she leaves Neil with her daughter permanently and goes to live in her 1 bhk flat in Bombay,

But Anuradha is finding it difficult to survive and make two ends meet financially. Her husband has completely disowned her and Ridhi.

Ridhi is now 18 years old, but on her way to college she meets with a horrific accident with a car driven by a drunken guy and she dies instantaneously

For Anuradha this is the last and final straw with no one to help her except Sunita her friend. She goes into a deep depression and seriously starts contemplating suicide. The feeling that life is not worth living gets stronger by the day.

2nd Protagonist

SUNITA: The Tomboy

Sunita keeps in touch with Anuradha while in their teens, till life takes them on their different paths.

Sunita comes from a family of educated parents with a younger brother five years junior to her. She loves her parents and her brother very much and are very close to each other.

Sunita keeps in touch with Anuradha while in their teens till life takes them their separate ways.

Sunita grows up, changes from a tomboy to a chic, elegant doctor working at a hospital. She gets better prospects in another city and moves there to a more elite hospital.

In the meantime, her parents breakup, her mother gets involved in another man and leaves her husband and son.

Her father and brother leaves India and go to Australia as her father gets a cushy job there. Sunita is very disturbed since she was very close to her family and cannot reconcile to their divorce. Her father tells her to come with them, but as she is involved with a guy she loves, a colleague, she refuses.

However, her boyfriend turns out to be unfaithful as she catches him with her good friend Lata in bed together.

Sunita is totally shattered and slowly gets addicted to drugs. She tries very hard to give it up, but cannot.

During this phase, she prescribes a wrong injection to her patient who dies. She cannot cope with life, and her guilt and in the process she loses her license to practice as a doctor. She

is completely heartbroken and totally depressed, and seriously contemplates suicide.

Sunita and Anuradha have kept in touch with each other over the years and meet up. They decide that they will end their lives together at the same time, as they have nothing to look forward to.

They make a decision together to go and meet the Dalai Lama and take his blessings and hope they will be going from this living hell to a better place. It will be “ashes to ashes, dust to dust”.

3rd Protagonist

PRIYA: Modern Woman

A very modern, smart, today's woman becomes an air hostess against her mother's wishes.

On her job, she meets a good looking guy Arun, who is a passenger on the same international flight she is on, and a frequent flier. They meet on and off in her flight schedule as he travels a lot and he is a CEO in a foreign corporate company in Bombay.

They fall in love and their courtship lasts for two years and they get finally married in Goa.

Priya has told him before marriage that she wants to continue to fly, so they will start a family after a few years, which he agrees to.

But soon after they get married, he starts showing his aggressive and true nature of bullying her which he had covered up before marriage. On one occasion, she had cooked a meal for him for lunch but he only found fault with her food, and giving into his anger, he flung all the dishes to the floor.

She was shocked as he tried to hit her. He started venting his anger and frustration for the slightest reason on her.

Slowly but surely, his violence got worse and started beating her on a regular basis. She realised he was basically a bully, low in self esteem who liked modern smart woman, but once married he wants to own her and kill her spirit and, to follow his orders so he can be the man of the house and dominate her.

For him she is an object of desire and possession, to be controlled and tamed to his bidding completely.

Slowly, she becomes a shadow of herself, loses her self confidence and thinks about going to the police, but he threatens her that he would throw acid on her face if she did so.

He humiliates her in public too and starts having affairs blatantly. Priya loses all her self confidence, and self respect and grows from a confident smart woman to a very depressed and repressed woman, a shadow of herself.

It comes to a point when Priya can't live with him anymore and decides to kill him or herself! One day she goes on her flight and in a hotel room she takes a whole bottle of sleeping tablets to commit suicide.

Next day early morning she is discovered by her colleague who had gone out with her boyfriend and came home in the early hours and discovered her unconscious friend but barely alive. The ambulance arrives to take her to the hospital and the media too get to know about the suicide incident and manage to get some photographs of her. The news hits the newspapers, her husband too reads about her and is furious.

Priya recovers slowly but is still determined to end her life. She thinks "So close and yet so far...."

However, fate intervenes as Anuradha reads about her in the newspapers. She recollects that she and Priya have met a few times on flight and gone out for a cup of coffee too. Anuradha is concerned about Priya and decides to meet her at the hospital.

Priya tells her about her horrific husband and that she can't live with him anymore but she has not changed her mind about the suicide.

Anuradha then tells Priya about her suicide plans with Sunita and Priya is more than ready to join them. She looks totally down and out with dark circles round her eyes and a tremor in her voice. They hug each other and will keep in touch or meet until they decide their plan of action—how, where, when.....

4th Protagonist

RABIA HUSSAIN

Rabia comes from a poor Muslim family with mother, father and two brothers who are older than her. Her mother is a good God fearing woman. Father is strict and takes no nonsense from his family. He is a carpenter and works at his clients homes/offices. They live in a chawl in Lower Parel in Bombay which was bought by his father after taking a loan from his brother who works in a garage and had some money saved.

The two brothers of Rabia who are in their early twenties get involved with Dawood, the underworld Don. They get into a syndicate to destroy Bombay and were involved actively in the Bombay blast that took place in 1993, which shook Bombay to the core, wherein thousands of innocent people were killed, injured. These blasts happened in sequel all over Bombay.

The two brother run away to Dubai with false passports and papers so by the time the police and government agents came to their father's house they had disappeared from Bombay. Rabia's family is shattered, find life to live difficult in Bombay and the father falls ill.

The parents of Rabia decide to get her married as they cannot afford her studies anymore. Rabia is now 16 years old. The parents start looking for a good boy to marry Rabia but they refuse her as her brothers have ruined the family name, with the police and government hounding the family.

Finally Rabia's father gets a much older man almost his own age but well to do, to marry Rabia. Rabia refuses and runs away from home. She tries to commit suicide on the railway

tracks, but the railway police save her in time. She is sobbing uncontrollably and tells her story to the police woman who checks out her story. They tell her to go back to her parents, but she refuses and ask the railway police to find her a job so that she can be independent.

The female police woman Sabira, says she knows a nice family where she can work with a single lady Tara as Rabia can cook and clean for her. Her name is Tara and lives in a suburb in Bombay.

After Rabia meets up with Tara, Tara decides to keep her as she has adopted a girl child about two years old so Rabia can look after her daughter too. Rabia is very happy that she has found a good person and a nice job.

5th Protagonist

TARA

Tara was born into a middle class family, staying with her parents. Her father was a doctor, MBBS, working in a rented dispensary. One day while returning from a patient's house, he has a car accident and dies.

Tara is then looked after her mother who does tailoring and embroidery work for customers. But she fiercely wants her daughter to get educated so she can go to school and be independent on her own feet.

As Tara grows up, she and her mother get a legal letter in which Tara's grandfather, her dad's father, who was quite wealthy has left his granddaughter Tara some money, jewellery and inherited from him a house in Dharamsala. Her grandfather had cut his son off when he married Tara's mother because she was not from their standard and community.

As Tara gets older she becomes a psychiatrist, her mother who was ailing for quite a while, dies from a heart attack.

Tara is quite pretty and gets into couple of affairs, one who turned out to be a philanderer and other left her and got married to her bestfriend.

Tara's totally shattered and emotionally at her weakest and has a breakdown. But being a psychiatrist, she fights back, recovers and concentrates on her career, and becomes stronger than before.

She talks to her mother's photograph "Mom, you taught me to be independent and strong, so be it!- Thank you Mom".

But as her career starts doing well, she makes a decision that she does not want to get married and rather stay single and independent. She decides then to adopt a girl child who is about 2 years old and orphan and she also is about 35 years old. At this point Rabia has started working for Tara.

After around two years, Tara learns that she is between 2nd stage of cancer, diagnosed as Lymphosarcoma. By the time she goes for treatment, the doctors tell her that she is in the 3rd stage of cancer. They could give chemo therapy but she has now 2-3 years to live. She is extremely upset and trying to come to terms with her lifespan. She is totally shattered and trying to come to terms with her life.

Tara decides she does not want to go to the hospital for chemotherapy and that she would rather spend some quality time with her daughter and go and live in Dharamsala where her father has left their ancestral home to her, and let life and destiny take its course,

She discusses this with her brother Ulhas, who is a doctor too. He tells her that he will come with them and be there for her till the end. They pack up and leave for Dharamsala.

Chapter 2

The 3 women Sunita, Anuradha and Priya decide to meet up at the station to catch a train to go to Dharamsala. There was no turning back now,

In the train Anuradha brings up the topic of Dalai Lama and says “I think we should meet the Dalai Lama at Dharamsala and take his blessings before we go ahead with our final plans”. They all agree as they feel this is a good idea.

As they are travelling, they read a lot about the Dalai Lama and admire and respect his calmness and beliefs. Since Anuradha knows more about him, she gives them His background.

THE DALAI LAMA:

The Dalai Lama was born in 1935 as Lhamo Thondup on July 6th. He was recognised as a 14th Dalai Lama in 1950 at the age of 15 years, his name then was Tenzin Gyatso on November 17th 1950.

He fled to North India on March 10th 1959 to escape death during the 1959 Tibetan uprising against the occupation of the Chinese, as possibly maybe the last Dalai Lama which is unconfirmed.

He is called His Holiness, Spiritual Leader of Tibet and subscribes to non violence and human rights.

In 1989 he was honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize for Liberation of Tibet, and in 2007 another award, The Congressional Gold Medal.

DHARAMSALA

The three friends reach Dharamsala, where it is pretty cold, and stay in a hotel not far from where His Holiness was. They decide to meet him the next day and get his blessings, to come back to a better world. As they start climbing the stone stairway to go up, Sunita trips and falls down and fractures her ankle. She is in a terrible pain. Just then Tara too has arrived at the site to visit the Dalai Lama whose blessings she takes every week. She sees Sunita's plight with her friends and immediately goes across to help Sunita with her driver. She tells Sunita "Please come with me to my house which is close by and my brother who is a doctor will be able to help you". The women agree and help Sunita to Tara's car. They all get in and go to Tara's house.

Once there, Her brother who is a doctor, Ulhas comes and checks her foot and treats her after taking her x-ray nearby and discover she has a hairline fracture in the ankle. They are all sitting in Tara's hall. Rabia who works with Tara and takes care of Simran too makes them her special brand of Adrak ka Chai (tea) as it is quite cold. Ulhas, Tara's brother is an introverted person, does not talk much, nevertheless communicates quite well with these women. He is single, around 40 years, one leg shorter than the other as he had Polio in childhood and hence did not get married.

They get to know each other formally as they are sipping tea and making small talk. Tara and her brother tell the women to stay with them for a few days till Sunita's ankle get better and they have enough accommodation.

As the Dalai Lama is not expected for a few days, they agree and leave their hotel.

Next day morning the doctor goes out to the lawn to water the plants, where the other three women are having tea. Just when he is planning to join them he over hears them talking and using the word “suicide”. He stops in his tracks and what he hears shocks him. They are discussing how and when to commit the act of suicide and where to buy the injections necessary for them to do so.

He is totally fazed out and goes to Tara and tells her about the women’s plan. She too is very upset and ponders about them as to why they want do this terrible act, and how to make them change their minds and handle the situation with sensitivity.

The next day, after lunch Tara has an episode and collapses and becomes unconscious. Her brother who is treating her, gives her an injection to revive her. Just then the three friends walk in and see her condition and try to help. They ask the doctor with concern what had happen to her, the doctor explains to them that Tara is in the last stage of cancer Lymphosarcoma with probably 6 months or more to live and does not want to die in the hospital. The friends become totally silent, and find it hard to digest the news of her imminent death. They feel then that they should stay with Tara and her brother to help out for some days till Tara’s critical stage is over.

Next day when Tara is feeling better she decides to call them in her room and talk to them. She says “I know why you’ll have come to Dharamsala, as my brother over heard you’ll talking over tea last morning. Do tell me what has made you’ll decide to take such a drastic step to end your lives - if you’ll are comfortable telling me about it”.

The three friends look at each other and nod to each other and agree to tell their stories. Each of them tell her about their individual experiences and find the futility of living when the future is so bleak and they have given up their individual fight.

Tara realises she will have to convince the women to give up their idea of suicide no matter how dire their need is to do so.

She says “You all know by now that I do not have much time to live as I have cancer, which my brother has shared with you. When the doctor told me the news that I did not have much time to live I was shattered and heartbroken because I wanted to live- not die before my time was finally up!- “Life is precious and we have only one. God has given you the gift of life instead you want to throw it away!”

“You have to create a MOTIVE to live, not die before your time is up. Life is beautiful only if your stance of looking at it changes. Right now you’ll are feeling totally negative and given up the fight to live. Life is very long, lonely and unending when you are sad and desperate, looking for a escape route, which is death for you. When we give control to other people to dictate to us how to live/lead our life is when disaster strikes. You must be independent wholly and not depend on people be it your parents, husband, children etc and change your thinking and you will become stronger mentally and emotionally. Create hobbies, increase spirituality and do yoga and meditation which will help you a lot. Whatever you do, do it for humanity, for yourself not a particular person. Do not magnify your problems by thinking about it all the time which by now is disproportionate to what you’ll are already facing and giving up”.

“Fear of what is ahead of you in this life is the worst emotion and you’ll have all lost your self-esteem. Die with dignity when the time comes, which will come but at its own time. I’m a psychologist, so I do understand to a great degree your problem/ situation. But giving up your life is not the answer, fighting against all the odds and overcoming it and becoming stronger is”.

“The tragedy for me is that I want to live, Good or bad and experience life to the fullest and you’ll want to end your life prematurely! Nothing in life is permanent, everything changes with time and perception of your feelings and thought processes”.

“Please, Please do reconsider all I have said to you and you’ll will not regret it, I promise you. Your future is in your hands, only you can change it”.

“Perhaps I was meant to come into your lives, it was predestined to change your thinking”.

The women all get up and hug each other and the three of them go back to their room and go over what Tara has said. They decide they will make a decision after a few days before the Dalai Lama comes back.

In the mean time Sunita (the doctor) and Ulhas Tara’s brother go for long walks and get close to each other. He too starts caring for her and tells her not to do this dastardly act of suicide and take more time to make a proper decision.

Ulhas speaking to Sunita: “I had Polio since I was born, but neither my parents nor me gave up on me growing up. But it was tough for me not being able to play sports or any physical activity etc and I was the butt of the boys in school. As a result I became introverted and did not marry since I had got

a complex. But I did not give up, I studied and passed my MBBS exam to become a doctor. He laughed and said there is always an escape route to your problems too, another way of looking at things and your problems will seem smaller. You have choices in your life, take an alternate route”.

“If you hold a small pebble close to your eye, it looks huge and you can see the blemishes on it. But when you hold it at a distance from your eye it looks small and unblemished. So your issues and problems are similar. Look at it objectively and you will get your answers”.

“You’ll be stronger than you’ll think, you’ll be a group that should stand together when things get sour.”

Tara has a few more episodes, with Ulhas and the women helping her but her time is near and she realises it. Couple of weeks have passed since the friends came to stay with her. She has become very weak, but she still smiles bravely and says “I wish I could live like you all. You don’t know what you lose until you have lost it”.

The friends tell her then we will give life another opportunity and see where it takes them. Tara is very happy that they have made this decision. She becomes quiet and tells them that she would like to give them the responsibility of looking after Simran and bringing her up. Anuradha tells her “I will look after her like my own daughter”. Priya is going abroad to live with her sister and her husband and start a fresh life abroad.

The Dalai Lama has returned and the three women and Rabia to meet His Holiness. Tara too makes an effort to get His blessings before leaving this world with the help of her

brother and Rabia. Ulhas and Rabia helps her up the stairs to meet the Dalai Lama.

They get the blessings of Dalai Lama to help them through this life with grace and dignity. They go back to Tara's house who by now is panting and very exhausted and lies down. The friends and Ulhas are very sad and worried for Tara as she is sinking day by day.

Finally after about fifteen days Tara expires and everybody is totally heartbroken with tears running down their face, especially Ulhas and Rabia who has been closer to her pain and anguish.

Sunita stays back with Ulhas as they have to discuss their future with each other. Anuradha and Priya say a tearful goodbye to each other especially Sunita. "We shall miss you Sunita, please keep in touch". They hug each and take their leave.

Priya after getting her visa leaves the city to go to her sister in the states. She is very teary eyed "I will miss you all very very much_____". Anuradha says "leave the past and negativity behind and start a new fresh life, like Sunita. I'm very happy for her and you too for starting a new beginning. Take care, Love you, will always remember our time together- unforgotten memories".

Anuradha goes to her home with Rabia and Simran who is now four years old.

Chapter 3

Fifteen years have passed, Anuradha is about 60 years old. When she left Dharamsala, she joined a NGO for cancer patients, worked with dedication, with Tara's memory always with her and the memory of her other friends. Priya has gone abroad and found a good job, Sunita has finally got married to Ulhas and is happy with him. Rabia too has moved on and got married to a local guy. Anuradha is still single, independent and happy with Simran who is now 19-20 years old, a beautiful young girl. Anuradha's whole time is occupied with the NGO and her hard work and dedication is rewarded when the previous CEO of the NGO dies of a heart attack and she is selected unanimously to be the next CEO.

Anuradha brings in more changes and donations for her NGO and becomes a recognised figure in the news and media.

THE PRESENT

The memoirs Anuradha was writing is finally over after a few years. She sends it for publishing and becomes a hot seller especially as it is an autobiography of herself, her friends and especially Tara.

She is awarded the Noble prize after a month in New Delhi where she is invited. Anuradha and Simran are very excited, especially Simran and is very very proud of her Grandma. The news travels abroad, and in India and Priya, Sunita and Ulhas all read the exciting and incredible news.

Anuradha has dedicated the book to Tara, her inspiration and in her memory. Anuradha's friends decide they will all come for the felicitation and award function for Anuradha after a few days.

Anuradha is called on the stage for her Noble prize and all her friends and audience who are present at the function clap for her. Her friends have tears in their eyes, tears for her achievement and pride for her.

After the award function, its late evening. They all go out in the open air and it's a beautiful clear night. Anuradha and her friends look up and see a brightest star twinkling down at them and Anuradha says "That is Tara giving us her Blessings and Love".

They all raise their drinks and salute her for inspiring them to start life over again. "Thank you Tara for showing and giving us a second lease of life" with tears in their eyes and gratitude to her.

THE END

"There is a kind of sadness that comes from knowing too much, from seeing the world as it truly is. It is the sadness of understanding that life is not a grand adventure, but a series of small, insignificant moments, that love is not a fairy tale, but a fragile, fleeting emotion, that happiness is not a permanent state, but a rare, fleeting glimpse of something we can never hold onto. And in that understanding, there is a profound loneliness, a sense of being cut off from the world, from other people, from oneself."

-Virginia Woolf