Serenity's Abode

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A whiff of that strange fragrance once again caught me off track; and once again, I was lost in a rollercoaster of feelings which always seem to last for hours but actually span a few micro-seconds. 'Apu, hey, Apu! How come there're no more éclairs.'

My younger brother's yelps were enough to draw me out of that wonderful reverie - but every time I sit beside a specific window at home, this distinct smell hits me hard and leaves behind the bittersweet feeling of a nice memory. It has a slightly sweet, slightly fresh touch to it - the way we feel after taking a nice long shower with a large dose of perfumed shampoo. But that's not specific enough; it's a scent which makes you FEEL. And it appears in the strangest of places - a window that faces dilapidating buildings, with no trees in sight, far less flower trees, which could have been the source of the fragrance.

For quite a few evenings, I have sat beside the window and wondered why the unique smell appears so familiar and yet so strange, but my efforts remained futile. It wasn't until yesterday, that I found another strand of mystery to add to my mysterious scent. Yesterday, late in the afternoon, I went on a short visit with a few relatives to my maternal village near Narsindi. The moment we were outside the city, the entire atmosphere seemed to alter. The sky became clearer, the air purer, the trees greener, and the people saner. Even though a storm was brewing in the distance, the sky and the surroundings had a tinge of colour which can't be seen in the city even on the brightest of days.

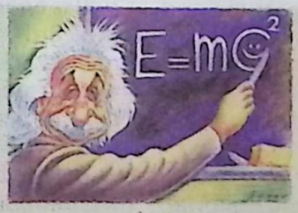
A steel bridge joins our village to the main road, however, due to a mishap the bridge had collapsed a few days back leaving us with only two options: we could either cross the body of water by a miniature wooden boat, or we could take the longer way by car. Obviously none of us was willing to miss the chance of a boat ride!! But even before we set foot outside the car, the dark clouds which we had been marveling at finally cracked, letting loose a downpour which was even more breathtaking than the clouds themselves. Rain is a common phenomenon for us, we see it every year, we walk through the deluge which is the natural consequence of the heavy rains, we lament over the huge financial loss it causes and we sympathize with the poor villagers who have to bear the brunt of the floods. But what many of us miss out on is the sheer beauty of our Bangladeshi rain in the setting of a beautiful, green landscape of the village. The greenery appears greener, and the sound of rain has a music of its own which has an amazing effect on one's mind. By the time we had left Dhaka city we were exhausted from the heat, the fumes and the chronic blaring of crude horns which seemed to follow some hard rock music's theme. But when the splatter of rain hit us through the open windows of the car, it had a refreshing effect on all of us - no longer exhausted, we were eager to start the next part of our journey by boat.

Hailing a simple wooden boat, all of us crowded onto it, and yes, it was still raining. As one of my cousins put it, there was 'Water beneath us, water above us'. The river was not really deep, but I am just guessing because a large amount of weeds were sprouting from the bottom. It was then and there that the unique fragrance enveloped me once again. It seemed to be floating in from the banks, or maybe it was from the water plants, I don't know for sure, all I knew was that I was familiar with that smell.

As I got soaked to the skin by the incessant, but nonetheless remarkable rain, I realized that despite the pollution, and havoc which the city reeks of, there are certain nooks and crannies, even in such a disorganized anthill, which have pieces of tranquility trapped within them. It's rampant in the countryside, that's why it doesn't strike us as strange there, but when we encounter such serenity in the city, we are left astounded, and some, like me, are left searching.

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Albert Quotes



--"Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death"

--"Whoever undertakes to set himself up as a judge of Truth and Knowledge is shipwrecked by the laughter of the gods."

--"Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."

--"There are two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle; you can live as if everything is a miracle."

--"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

--"Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere."

--"Only a life lived for others is a life worth while."

"If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough"

--"The only real valuable thing is intuition."

--"I don't know, I don't care, and it doesn't make any difference!"