

Star Shine

MAHEJABEEN HOSSAIN NIDHI

She was no ordinary box of sunshine. She never appeared at regular intervals during the day, increasing and decreasing as time dictates. She was a Type II Supernova – the most immense and overwhelming burst of energy ever witnessed.

I waited and watched, humble and quiet, from my small speck of space, too afraid to blink. You see, during her maximum brightness, the lustre produced by this particular star would briefly outshine the entire output of a galaxy. For then, the glimpses were enough.

I wouldn't quite consider myself popular, but for some odd reason everyone seemed to know me, or know my grades rather and of course assumed I was smart. Much to my surprise, the brightest object in our little universe was one of those people too.

It was a Sunday, I was fiddling around with my Chemistry book trying, praying, not to blatantly stare at her plump pink lips. It terrified me, when she suddenly changed her course and started heading right towards me, like the equivalent of an abrupt oncoming meteor shower

should.

I still remember the distinct look on her face, a bizarre combination of coy and assertive when she asked me if I would walk her home. Inexplicably, by the end of our short walk, I was sitting in her bedroom listening to her struggles with studies and her need for a tutor. If that wasn't strange enough, she even offered me money for something I would have done for free in a heartbeat.

Suddenly, for two hours every other day, I was inches away from the most beautiful girl I ever met. By some miracle, I found the strength to explain nuclear substitution instead of being lost in her; I delved into the concepts of mechanics when I wanted to discuss what she thought the mechanics of love were.

Despite her exams being just a few months away, I always found myself giving to her demands. "Porte iccha kore nah." It was the perfect excuse for me to brush her soft brown hair from her face and rest my hand on her shoulder. I'd argue with a feeble "please?" almost out of courtesy, while half-hoping she wouldn't change her mind.

Our time away from the formulae and theories was the high point of

my increase in knowledge. She would give me exclusive tours of her home, introduce me to her childhood toys, and show me how she made her noodles and the silly way she liked to eat it – things unknown to even the keenest of observers. I caught on early with her childish sense of humour, faltered in the lesson of keeping her attention, but to this day, I'd like to believe I could've made the passing grade.

Outside the confines of the school or her place, we didn't talk much. I couldn't blame her. I wasn't the most interesting person and I can't offer anything more than a book or a Wikipedia page can. On rare occasions she'd send me playful 7 second snaps of herself, which in all honesty, were unbearable. Her eyes the colour of raw tea in the sun, her skin the colour of a page in a new book; stretched out on her bed, the ebb and flow of her hair granted for just seconds.

Six weeks into the blinding journey towards her core, as I checked through her physics unit 1 mock, I scribbled down a note:

"There is no better depiction of the fact that beauty is ephemeral than your snaps."

The next day when she saw the note, that rare look of interest crossed her face. She tilted her head and looked at me, just like she would whenever she wanted to go over a topic I just explained.

For once, I no longer felt the need for words. Her face was warm cupped in my hands. She didn't pull back as I leaned in, there was no resistance. I, on the other hand, was overwhelmed by the immense gravity of hers.

It's hard to keep track of time when you're travelling at relativistic speeds. My blood throbbed against its vessels as I looked at her afterwards. Fear replaced the adrenaline. What was that saying about travelling too close to the sun? Her lips quivered. I stopped thinking. And for the first time in this voyage, I felt crushed by the forces around me.

"You should leave."

With a keen eye and a broken brain to mouth filter, Mahejabeen Hossain Nidhi has a habit of throwing obscure insults from classic novels at random people who may or may not have done anything to warrant them. Drop her a line at mahejabeen.nidhi@gmail.com