



SAUDADE

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It was snowing outside. The white, smooth ice covered the whole front yard. The ambience was cold and harsh, yet had traces of warmth and comfort in its own way. You know what occupied my mind at that moment? Not the thought of my past lovers with some clichéd memory. It reminded my time spent with my family back at my hometown. It used to snow just like this. The roof, the trees, our backyard, everything was covered with a mesmerizing blanket of white. Everything looked so pure in winter.

My mother would yell at us for walking up late, even when it was vacation. She always demanded strict disciplines at the household. I could not help but smile at the memory of my mother screaming at Bhai to wake up. She always had a few skills up her sleeves. Once she woke Bhai up by pouring cold water over his blanket when he would not budge to her frantic yelling. That too on a cold winter morning! I always woke up early and so was never a victim of her crazy plots to wake us up. But I had the tendency of trying to save my dear brother from our

mothers cruelty in the morning and that was how I was once drenched in cold water, at eight in the morning, that too in winter.

Winter was a time where my family and I had the most stories to tell. My family was quite different from the mainstream families in the society. The description of our winter morning alarm clock supports this view. Even though our mother followed strict disciplines of waking up early, it was never like a burden to us. We never felt encaged by her rules, sure they were annoying but not burdensome. I remembered that we had some kind of competition in the morning about getting breakfast ready and the losing team had to do all the chores. Teams were always mother and my brother, and dad and I. Of course when my mother's team lost, my brother had to do all the chores and he couldn't even cheat out of it. We took competitions very seriously. The imagery of my brother doing all the chores while our mother gave orders to him, always made me laugh. Even though they lost most of the time and he had to do the same chores a thousand times, he never could turn on

the washing machine on first try. Once he flooded the whole laundry room because he left the washing machine on. He probably had to make dinner that night as punishment.

The fire in my grate had burned out. The blazing last flames of the fire made me remember the times we spent in front of the grate back home. Most families I saw were not as open and did not have a close relationship as we had. Our family was very open with each other. We would sit in front of the fire and listen to stories about our parents' teenage years, how they fell in love and I could never help but shed a few tears about my parents' near to perfect love story. It always baffled me to see them together, because they always acted like best friends. Their relationship was always filled with colours. It was never monotonous. And I always loved hearing the same stories over and over again with a hot cup of coco to complement the time.

A gush of wind made its way through my window making me shiver. I know I should close the window, but I just couldn't bring myself to. It was snowing outside. The white, smooth ice covered

the whole front yard. And seeing the snow didn't make me remember an old lover's story. My story is about how it made me remember my family that was no longer beside me. My mother was no longer there to wake me up from my sleep early. My brother wasn't there to make me laugh with his silly incompetence, even though most of the time he pretended that to just bring out a laugh from me, and my father was no longer there to hug me on a cold winter night to seep his warmth inside me. They were no longer there and most people would shed a tear or two in the memory of their long gone families, but I smiled. I smiled because I do not want to dwell on the fact that they were not there. Rather I want to be engulfed in the memories of the good times we spent, the countless adventures we went through together and the precious laughs we shared. That was what I remembered them by because even though the ambience was cold and harsh, yet there were traces of warmth and comfort. Those traces of warmth and comfort were from the presence of them created by the pleasant memories themselves.