



SHAMMA

She looked on confused. She did not know what she was looking at, but she could tell that her eyes were not playing tricks on her. This was not the real world. But she questioned herself how she got here.

She was in his mind. She could see everything: his thoughts, his pain, all his gashes from his past... everything.

The weird thing was that everything was monochrome. Everything was grey as far as her eyes could see. He always seems so vibrant, brimming with life. Why is this world of his so devoid of colour? And why does the entire place look so... lifeless?

"How did I even get here?" she asked herself. But it was pointless to ponder over this question so many times. She could tell that she wouldn't be stuck here for long. Besides, she was always curious about what went on behind that bright smile of his that would make anyone's day. She could never tell, until now.

Seeing that she has time to spare in this world of his, she might as well explore this eerily contrasted land.

All these shades of grey looked very odd. It wasn't something she felt she would be spooked out by. Instead, it all felt to be of something more subtle, with a hint of danger. The place also felt very chilly to her, devoid of warmth. Did all of this hint out loneliness to her? Well it sure seems like it.

But there seems to be a part of this world that seems to glimmer faintly in the distance. So she decided to follow the faint glimmer. "I wonder what that could be," she said to herself.

As she kept following the light, she took a good look at the world around her. It looked like a grim version of the picture children draw of village scenery. The path she was walking on looked like it was built with a lot of effort at some point in its life. But it seems to have become dilapidated over time. Maybe it was out of apathy towards this path that it was never cared for. Or maybe the damage was intentional.

The road was rough to tread on, but she still managed to follow it. There was a stream a few feet to the right from the battered road. Well, calling it a stream

would be stretching it too far. It was more of a long, stagnant canal. It seems it used to lead somewhere in a lively and expressive manner. Now it's just a stagnant body of water that is starting to become shallower and shallower.

This world was starting to get to her head now. There was a tiny broken down hut by the side of the road with vines all around it. It didn't look very inviting at all. She could see broken and torn childhood toys in there. The whole sight of it gave her a little spook she didn't expect.

"Why is everything so dark? He looks so happy. He's always looked so positive to everyone. He's always been so cheerful and nice to me. But why does everything look like this in his world? Why is it so twisted?"

These words kept echoing in her mind over and over again. She kept coming up with several reasons, but none of them made any sense. They just didn't add up with the face he keeps up with the outside world. How can a man with a mind as grim as this always seem so jolly?

She decided to keep moving onwards.

She has to see what keeps this man going. More importantly, she has to see where that glow in the distance kept coming from.

She could feel that she was getting closer to the source of that dim light in the distance. She could see a colourful patch of land ahead. The air around it wasn't as chilly as the rest of the place. Her skin was finally soaked with warmth. And on that colourful patch of land, she could see something that resembled a tree.

As she got closer, she was confused. The plant-like thing looked very outlandish, but it was certainly something to behold. The branches spread far and wide. The leaves were of many joyful colours. Even though it was the most alien thing she had ever seen, she didn't have that eerie feeling inside her anymore. The

On closer inspection, she noticed that there was a word carved beautifully on the tree's slightly dark bark. 'N... A...' she read out.

She didn't need to read the rest. It was the nickname he always loves to call her. She smiled.