



POETRY

A Story of Him and Her

FOUZIA MAHIN CHOUDHURY

He knew everything
(About his mind).
When to let go,
When to give in,
He knew everything.
From tomorrow to a million year
Were clear in front of his eyes;
Perfect and precise.
(And) He was so certain
(Of) What makes sense,
What goes in vain.
From the lover to the fling
He was certain of everything.
But she seemed naïve
Troubled by her life
All she knew
She knew of love.
And nothing more
She could make sound sure.
(That) made him edgy,
Sometimes laugh...
No, girl, he said,
Things can't be true
For me and you this way!
You must work out for the day.

(He expressed his worries for her)
Like it say, he quoted,
'You must get your shit together!'
We can't start till you are free...
A strong, self-dependent entity!
She smiled and nodded
She whispered kind of
'Yes...'
And there were things
She failed to express...
She tried to think in her mind
Can everything be defined?
But all she could think
Was thoughts of love
So she begged a little mercy
To the God above.
Well, he added,
A believer I'm certainly not!
Yet a godly advice
I'll give you I thought...
For to him she was
Made of some different spice
Blended with brown sugar
And everything nice.
He wishes her good,



.....And melted in his arms
....On his own terms.
She was listening
With her eyes beaming at him
He looked like her favourite ice cream
When her throat is sore
The pain and the cure.
And the temptation.....
Mmmmmm, She thought,
I'll hold it for now...
He smiled back;
Was thinking the same! And

Somehow,
She knew
For this smile's sake
She'd fly him even to
The Mars and back.
However,
She said goodnight instead.
With a restless mind
Headed to bed.
Restless yet singing
Like a late spring dove
A song he knew for sure

Was a song of love!
And this, I ponder,
Seems like a riveting Prelude!
Thus this story goes.
To be continued.....

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FICTION

The Patriot

TAZRAN RAHMAN



saw?" she asked.
The classroom was so silent, one could hear a screw drop.
"My dear children, the hologram just showed us the animal kingdom. These were all animals from different areas of planet Earth."
"Planet Earth? That's where my great grandfather was from," whispered one child to another.
"Mine too. I've heard my great grandma talk about animals but I thought she was just making up stories," piped another.
"No, my dear. The stories are all true," confirmed Miss. Bravery.
In the corner of her classroom, Miss. Bravery could hear the surveillance cameras whirring, capturing every word she was about to say. The hair on the back of her neck stood up out of fear, but she brushed it off. She was prepared to face the consequences.
"What happened to the alimans Miss. Bravery?"
"Animals, my dear," she corrected them. "Well, as we all know that our great grandparents had to relocate from planet Earth to planet Mars, right before it burst into a million pieces. Till now, you have been told that the planet Earth was hit by a meteor thrice its size, but that in fact is untrue."
There were hushed whispers as the students absorbed in this new

information.
"Earth was a beautiful planet covered in trees and oceans filled with vibrant species of animals, some of which you just saw."
"Trees? And Oceans? I thought those were a myth," claimed another through the cylindrical glass sphere surrounding his head.
"We didn't always need to buy O2 my dear, known as Oxygen which the trees provided for free before mankind cut down all of them. And the pills that we take, which supply us with the necessary nutrients including H2O? Well, H2O came in the form of water which was given to us for free by rivers and oceans until factories polluted them with chemicals."
The entire classroom chorused in surprise and admiration.
"Seems like Earth was a fancy place to live in. What happened to all the animals Miss. Bravery?"
"The first hologram you saw was of the Amazon rainforest that was burnt to clear the land on order of the government. This contributed towards a loss of not only exotic animals that were killed in the fire but also Oxygen, since billions of trees in forests all around the world were burnt to ash. The second hologram showed us Arctic glaciers which dated back to pre-historic times before the existence of mankind. The

livelihood of those animals depended on the ice, and because it melted over the years due to climate change caused by mankind, the animals became malnourished and rapidly ceased to exist. The third hologram showed wild animals who were hunted to death for their fur, skin and horns. Mankind placed a price value on different body parts of these animals because some believed they would cure cancer while others just wanted to use the carcass of dead animals to decorate their living rooms."
The children gasped in astonishment while the security cameras whirled in direction of Miss. Bravery who continued with her lesson, forgetting her fear and remembering her purpose.
"The third hologram took a dive under the sea to show us the mysterious creatures that were once hidden below. They too faced extinction but not only due to chemical and oil spills from factories and tanks, but because mankind resorted to trashing the ocean with plastics and garbage that ultimately led to their death. The final hologram, showed animals that once lived in our backyards, who provided us with food and helped with carrying food in bulk. But mankind's greed for unlimited consumption slowly led to the extinction of these animals which is why the food we see only in pictures has become

replaced with pills. Of course, we have been told that the pills we take are more convenient as it is faster to consume and requires no trouble to prepare, but that is not the only reason. Sometimes man is anything but kind."
A voice suddenly appeared in the tiny speaker located near Miss Bravery's ear canal, ordering her presence at the headmaster's office but she ignored it and continued the lesson, fully aware it may as well be the very last one she teaches.
"All of these reasons combined including the absence of oxygen not only caused animals to die since humans had to buy their own oxygen first, but also resulted in natural disasters such as floods, tsunamis, volcano eruption, tornadoes, hurricanes and earthquakes; all of which led to the explosion of planet Earth. But before mankind was wiped from the universe, the government was able to gather influential people who would contribute to the relocation of civilization from Earth to Mars, and they are your great grand-parents."
The class looked bewildered, at a complete loss of words they stared at Miss Bravery with their mouth hanging wide open and eyes almost bulging out of their sockets.
"This is how only ten thousand people out of eight billion, came to repopulate Mars, which we now call our home. So consider yourselves to be extremely privileged," she concluded.
Before the children could get a grip on what they had just been told, the metallic classroom door flung wide open and four men in red uniforms stepped in.
"Miss. Bravery? We would like you to come with us. Immediately."
She knew what she had signed up for the moment she decided on her lesson plan for the day.
"Just give me a moment to say goodbye."
The men nodded curtly, not leaving the room and eyeing her every move.
"Well class, I have just one thing to say. Do not let history repeat itself," Miss Bravery said while cleverly but casually placing her hand on the shoulder of her favorite student who always sat in the front row, thus leaving her with the microchip that contained the holograms of a lost world.
With those final words, she turned and walked away escorted by the men in red, only to vanish forever.
Tazrian Rahman is an aspiring short story writer who plays with different forms of fiction and tries to address important issues which are often ignored in the society.

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One last click, showed a farm where a Collie was barking at a herd of Cows and Sheep to get back inside the fence. Gleaming Horses ran around in an open field beside a hut where Hens were clucking while laying eggs, all the time stealthily observed by a brown tabby Cat looking for an opportunity to pounce.
With the final click the hologram vanished and Miss. Bravery turned to a classroom full of children excited, nervous but mostly fascinated by what they had just seen.
"Can anyone tell me what we just