

A close-up photograph of a butterfly with vibrant orange and black wings, perched on a cluster of small pink flowers. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting foliage. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Dazzling Collection of
Short Fictions,
Volume 2**

ROSINA S KHAN

Dedicated To,

You, the Valued Reader

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Preface

First of all, congratulations on downloading this short fictions eBook.

You not only read and enjoy the fictions but also pick up tips and cues about how to deal with life's calamities, relationships and bonding and how to maintain peace and harmony among family.

This is not an average fiction eBook. The insights you gain are of high quality which you can learn and apply to your life and make yourself comfortable and anxiety-free.

Enjoy the book, take breaks and come back to where you left. This is the best way to read this book without overwhelming yourself but relishing every short fiction.

To Your Merry Reading,

All the best,

Rosina S Khan

Sushmita's Daughter Holding Her Family Together



ROSINA S KHAN

Sushmita's Daughter Holding Her Family Together

Sushmita was a lecturer in a renowned university. She loved her job and smiled a lot happily. Everywhere she went she caught the attention of people by her gracefulness, gentleness and above all, liveliness. Two happy years went by when her parents started looking for her bridegroom.

Guys liked her a lot for her openness and warmth. That is why Sushmita fell into a dozen of problems as well. She used her Dad's influence or authorities' help to recover herself from these problems. Otherwise her life was very interesting because she held interesting conversations with just anybody and she was well known for that.

More than anything her current ambition was to go abroad and explore the world. Now that her parents were looking for her a husband, she was doubly curious about materializing her dreams with him.

Her parents were looking for a bridegroom through a matchmaker. There were two proposals but they got rejected as they were unsuitable. The third one seemed to stick so far. Yet, the man wore a beard and was religious. Sushmita's parents liked him because the man wouldn't be an

alcoholic or go against the rules of life. He seemed the perfect man for their daughter.

When Sushmita had her first conversation with the man, she was disappointed in his appearance. So when she went on her second date, the man tried to look more attractive to her by shaving off his beard. And Sushmita liked him better and conversed better.

So it was arranged Sushmita would marry this man whom she had dated twice.

Invitation cards were printed and distributed to relatives, friends and acquaintances. It was celebrated with great pomp and show. There were lighting decorations all over the community center with flowers and paintings everywhere. The food ordered was ensured to be the best quality and definitely well cooked. Everything about the ceremony was supervised and well managed by the girl's Dad's authorities and influences.

Soon the girl would be departing with her man for her in-laws' home and she couldn't help missing her parents and cried helplessly like a child. And then as the car outdistanced them further and further away, Sushmita

knew she had to stop crying and get back to her normal self. 'Don't worry', she told herself, "You are in good hands".

Her husband had a PhD in Computer Science and Engineering – something Sushmita's parents further liked about him.

They would soon be flying to US after Sushmita got her visa. Accordingly she faced the embassy formalities and her husband helped her to get the visa. Soon they would be flying to US and this made Sushmita further sadder to be away from her lovely home and close parents and family.

Sushmita never thought she never would never embark on a career or pursue with her studies because within six months of settling abroad, she was pregnant and was always concerned and tensed about her baby inside being okay. In fact she was okay. Her husband ensured both were okay.

After nine months passed away, Sushmita gave birth to a healthy child. As a young, inexperienced mother, she was always confused about how to make the baby comfortable.

One day the baby was crying nonstop and Sushmita didn't know how to ease her down. Her husband was away at the mosque nearby. It was the mid nineties and she didn't consider having a cell phone. But she called by

land phone to her family back home and completely gave in, crying helplessly while talking with her Dad. She needed a quick fix to stop her child from crying. Her Dad was a doctor and she was hoping he could give her a fast solution. But her Dad just couldn't give a solution. He had to know a few facts. He asked her a few questions but her daughter was exasperated on the other end and she wouldn't just calm down. He tried to soothe her down. "It will be okay. Lay her down on her tummy and see if she burps. Maybe the milk she had is causing her problems. See if she would excrete. Best of luck." He said heavily and hung down.

God came to Angel Sushmita's side and the baby burped and calmed down immediately. Her husband came home at the same time, seeing a quiet and serene environment and said nothing. Neither did Sushmita who was half-asleep from the day's burden. This way every single day would pass away struggling with the baby for Sushmita and her husband would while away at mosques when she needed him the most.

When the baby was age three, they made an unannounced flight back to their home country. Sushmita's parents were horrified to see their poor daughter lose so much of her health. Sushmita's husband announced late at night that they would be leaving for Hajj at Mecca the next morning and

that they would have to take care of their three-year-old daughter meanwhile. Sushmita's parents were even more surprised. They asked themselves if they were in for more astonishments but apparently they weren't.

Daughter and husband were out early in the morning towards the airport while three-year-old baby lay in the cold bed sleeping. Her grandma went and lay beside her, questioning for the hundredth time if their son-in-law was a mistake for their daughter. She wept quietly while granddad watched from the door, with the same question in mind. "Maybe after their daughter grows up, there will be life in the family. Just maybe...", thought the gray-haired man.

After over a month's time daughter and husband were back from performing their Hajj. The two of them seemed happier, which was not expected by their parents which rather perplexed and confused them. Looking after their three-year-old daughter was a daily battle so far. She wouldn't eat, sleep properly, enjoy any toy and kept crying all the time. She just always asked for her mother. By the end of the month, she was cooperating better and showed joy in this or that but now the grandparents knew they would be returning to US and expected their son-

in-law to speak up any time. Well, he did speak up and said he was willing to stay for two more weeks. Grandparents sighed in relief and held a quick chit chat with their daughter.

The family would be leaving for the daughter's in laws' home soon. This further bothered her parents and asked gently their son-in-law if their daughter and her girl could stay in their place for some more time. The son-in-law thought for some time and finally said yes. So only the son-in-law got up from the table and headed for the door and finally ventured outside.

Indeed Sushmita felt free for the first time in years. She held her daughter in her lap and chatted with her parents more freely and warmly. She spoke of her daily struggles back in US and also about her experience in performing Hajj.

Sushmita took her child back to her room and kept her busy with toys while she herself made a To-Do list – she put on her list some of the things she would like to buy for herself and her daughter. She had her older sister in mind to go shopping with in the coming weekend. She chatted with her

sister at work for some time and she agreed to accompany her to shopping.

Meanwhile the husband reached his parents' home and his youngest sibling greeted in surprise. She created chaos in the house, announcing to everyone that their eldest brother was here. His parents met him immediately and asked him what on earth was going on. He said meekly he was sorry he didn't let them know before but he had just performed Haaj with his wife and went on with the tale of his wife and their daughter staying back at her parents' place.

Immediately the parents suggested that he bring his wife and child quickly back to their home. But their son lightened the matter saying, if they were happy there for the time being, why bring them? Now he had to excuse himself because he wanted to go for Zohr prayers and then have lunch.

The next two days Sushmita spent a major part of the time sleeping with her child. She got some peace of mind for the first time in years and her child followed her. Weekend would soon arrive and her sister would be here from her in-laws' home. At 2.30pm on Saturday her sister, Shaon showed up when Sushmita was almost all ready. She was keeping her

daughter in her mother's care for the time being. They visited Karnafuli Garden City, Twin Tower, Eastern Plus and Eastern Plaza and had a lot of shopping done now that Sushmita didn't know when her husband would come to pick her up and there might not be any time left for shopping, even if she desired.

Done and satisfied with all the shopping, her sister dropped Sushmita at her place and headed away. Taking all her shopping bags in the elevator, Sushmita smiled to herself- even she smiled she realized after a long time. At the door her daughter greeted and immediately wanted to go through the bags but Sushmita kept them safe from her child. She handed out a packet of Kit Kats to her and she happily went to the room playing around with it. Daughter and mother were chatting happily soon.

Sushmita's husband didn't call for about a month until one day her husband ordered in the morning to pack her suitcases because they would be leaving for US that very night. Sushmita was habituated by now with all her husband's drama making. She held herself together and said, "Yes, okay."

Gradually after lunch, she made her daughter understand that they would be leaving for their home in US with her Dad that very night. She needed to pack her suitcases. Her daughter was allowed to watch her pack but not touch anything.

Finally the clock struck 8pm and Sushmita and her daughter were ready to leave Sushmita's childhood residence. But her husband was late. At 8.30 pm he did arrive and asked them to ride immediately inside the taxi that was waiting for them. He said a few words of farewell to Sushmita's parents and got inside the taxi. They were soon going to embark on a journey back to US.

Their daughter talked a lot on the journey and soon became the life of the family. She kept her parents together and made them laugh their heads off by her amusing and funny remarks all the way. No one would ever notice the differences between husband and wife because their daughter concealed everything by her happy and adventurous ways and amazing words. She was intelligent like her Mom no doubt.

Epilogue

The daughter would keep the family together for years until her Dad would have a head stroke and pass away immediately. Sushmita would find life again and her daughter would be the symbol of love and joy. She herself might not have pursued a career or higher studies but she was determined to give all that to her daughter. As days progressed by, mother and daughter relationship would go stronger until the daughter would find a husband for herself and leave Sushmita. Sushmita had her own circle of friends and neighbors who would come to share their stories and listen to her stories. Sometimes Sushmita's daughter would drop by along with her husband and the trio would have a grand time, eating out and visiting places. Life goes on – nothing remains still. It's up to you to make the most of everything and live moment to moment. Sushmita learned this the hard way and her daughter lived by it as well, learning from her Mom.

The Bond That Was Never Meant To Be



ROSINA S KHAN

The Bond That Was Never Meant to Be

Beautiful Emmy took her seat in the classroom beside girls and drew the attention of a dozen guys, who were going to be her classmates. It was her first day at the university. Even girls were curious to communicate with her because she seemed so interesting. Guys had their turns and came up and talked with her. Some were more interested in her than others and wondered when they would have a second chance talking with her.

The orientation program was going on. After listening to the authorities, the guys and gals got bored and the guys looked longingly in the direction of Emmy. Emmy liked being the center of the attention and went up and talked to them, the very first opportunity she got during refreshment snacks time. It looked like to her they were looking for more than just a female friend in her. They wanted to be her boyfriend. Someone took leadership and that guy was bold to take a lead on the conversation without allowing others a chance. The other guys felt foolish and slowly found their ways away. So this guy was outright smart and made Emmy comfortable while they continued their conversation.

By the time the ceremony was over, the guy Titu announced to the class that Emmy was his girlfriend and they had made that commitment mutually and no one in class was ever to come between them.

As each semester at the university passed by, Emmy and Titu became even closer and closer. They had perfect body chemistry and compatibility and they loved each other immensely. They formed study groups and were always in the same group, studied and did exceedingly well in exams.

Emmy's mother was strict and made sure her daughter was not taunted by any of the guys. She dropped her at the university and picked her up also. But little did she know what her darling daughter did in between.

Emmy skipped classes and went on rickshaw with Titu just for touring around in the near about of the university. They were back in time for the next class or any ceremony going on in the university. This way Emmy had the time of her life. However Titu was good enough not to miss quizzes and encouraged Emmy not to do the same.

Four lively, busy years passed by with semester quizzes, exams and their roaming about on rickshaw. Soon they would be departing from the university. The big question remained in Emmy's mind: Will her parents

allow her to marry Titu? For four years she kept it as a secret. Deep within she knew she wouldn't go against her parents and comply with their request only. But she knew she would have a heartbreak breaking up with Titu.

These thoughts bothered Emmy and kept her awake at night. Final exams came and went and both Titu and Emmy were out of the university as graduates. Titu was busy looking for jobs and Emmy's mother intent on marrying off her daughter.

When Emmy finally disclosed to her parents that she already had a boyfriend and loved him, Emmy's parents were upset. They already had in mind who to marry their daughter with.

Soon Titu would call Emmy on the land phone because this was still the mid-nineties and cell phone was not yet a regular commodity. It bothered Emmy's parents that she kept in touch with Titu still. They forbade her to call him or receive calls from him.

"It was a bond never meant to be", Emmy reflected sadly. However she did tiptoe across the living room late at one night and made a call to Titu. She said, "Titu forget me. I cannot keep in touch with you any longer. I am

getting married soon. Have hope. You will find yourself a beautiful wife in time. Please forget me. I am sorry.” And she hung down. After that she never received calls from Titu.

Her marriage preparations were going in full swing. Invitation cards were being distributed. Her friends back at the university were broken hearted to see such a beautiful bond get broken – a bond that was never meant to be. Nevertheless they cheered up and attended the ceremony. Titu and the guys weren’t invited. Only the girls were and they thoroughly enjoyed her marriage ceremony.

Emmy was going to leave with her husband for Canada. She began to doubt what prospects lay there for her. But nevertheless the thought of abroad cheered her up.

Meanwhile Titu gave his all to his job for four long years and by and by he forgot Emmy. He came across many girls through his profession and social network. And finally he fell for a girl he had met at a party and he instantly knew she was her soul mate. Within two months he got married and within the next six months, his wife gave birth to a baby boy. It felt great for Titu to become a father already.

Meanwhile Emmy and her husband were back from Canada to their native country when Emmy also birthed a beautiful son resembling her husband.

Titu and his wife and Emmy and her husband contacted each other after a long time and they got together at a restaurant to celebrate together with their blossoming families. Before departing, Titu produced his hand to Emmy with the intention of shaking hands with her. She accepted and shook hands. Their long lost love would never take its toll but they knew they could be friends from now on. Why lament over a bond that was never meant to be?

Shormi's Love Story



ROSINA S KHAN

Shormi's Love Story

Shormi was finishing the last touches to her makeup. She wore a bottle green dress. There was a shiny silver lace around the borders of her dress. Shormi was happy to transform herself to an elegant lady.

Shormi had been out of university for two years now. And she roamed around the streets of the city with her boyfriend, a handsome ex-classmate.

Shormi's family urged her to marry her classmate if she really loved him and not roam around the city aimlessly. But she was helpless and couldn't relay her problem to her family. In order to conceal that she showed outbursts of anger and bustled out of her home to be with her boyfriend who was waiting outside.

The mystery behind Shormi's story was that her boyfriend's parents were against the marriage of Shormi with their son. They didn't believe she was good enough for their son. But Shormi believed in herself and continued to go on dates with her boyfriend. The boyfriend was not so strong that he would boldly confront his parents and convince them that Shormi was the only girl on this earth he would ever love and marry.

This way two more years passed away. But Shormi didn't stop believing in herself and carried on. She even stopped by at her boyfriend's parents' home where he was still living. His parents started to chit chat with Shormi little by little. And that made Shormi jump over the moon.

Then came the biggest news. Her boyfriends' parents consented to the marriage. They were unable to find a girl like Shormi, let alone better than her.

Shormi's original family was extremely relieved and happy. Shormi's dream life was coming out true. Wasn't that a great blessing for her!!

Both the families started to take care of wedding and reception ceremonies. After all, Shormi was a pretty girl and after she dressed from the parlor, she indeed looked wondrously beautiful. Her bridegroom appeared to be equally gorgeous. Then the marriage ceremony began. Food and decorations filled the community center and the *kazi* married off the two beautiful souls. Shormi's happiest moment in her life was indelible.

Shormi and her hubby started living together at her in-laws' place as a joined family. Her hubby found work while Shormi was on the lookout.

Soon her hubby got transferred to another city and Shormi followed him. Shormi found the work of a teacher in a school. Both were very busy but Shormi managed to pull through the responsibilities of the home front quite well.

After two years, her hubby had left for work one day but Shormi was slow to rise. She felt morning sickness and half a hour later she threw up all the breakfast she had. She rang her school headmistress and let her know that she was extremely sick and would be unable to attend school that day. The headmistress was kind to her as so far she had been a regular punctual teacher and sympathized with her and hoped she would get well soon.

Shormi did not want to disturb her husband at work. So she slowly got dressed and went to the nearby clinic which was within walking distance. As she told her problem to the doctor there, he ran a few tests on her and confirmed that she was pregnant. Shormi was extremely surprised and overjoyed at the same time.

What looked like a nightmarish morning turned out to be a great blessing. She wondered thoughtfully at the chain of events and then when she came back to herself, she knew she had to let her husband know the great news.

Wasn't he delighted to hear the news from Shormi herself! He said he would get back in touch with her soon.

Two hours later the door bell rang. And Shormi was in for another surprise. She couldn't believe it! Her hubby stood at the door with a bouquet of roses and gifts. She happily accepted them and let him come in and talk.

Her husband declared that he took leave from his office to share and celebrate the good news. Shormi had never been happier in her life. They snuggled together in the living room sofa and ate popcorn and watched TV for some time. Her husband promised to take good care of her and warned her not to carry out heavy duties or lift heavy objects in the kitchen. He further said he would look for a maid who would help her with household chores.

The day passed off happily. Both the couple were up by morning the next day and both went to their work places. Shormi intended to take maternity leave from her school when the baby in her womb was more mature.

Six months passed by and Shormi followed the strict advice from her doctor and was on constant check up. By the ninth month, she was already on leave from her school and was afraid that the baby might hurt her to

come out any moment as she had heard so many stories like that from young and not so young mothers alike. Now she simply waited in anticipation of the moment.

Then one lovely sunny weekend she gave birth to her dashing son, Tareq after she experienced sharp piercing pain in her tummy. Her husband had already made all the arrangements in case anything should happen in his absence. Now that he was with her, he was happy to help her out with everything.

Mother and son were doing fine. Doctors and nurses kept them under their care until the next morning. When both their reports were all fine, both were released from the hospital and hubby was there to accompany them home happily.

It was a clean and immaculate home that Shormi entered and appreciated her husband's care and efforts. Hubby quickly took her by the hand to the bedroom. He had also bought a baby cot which stood beside their bed and several toys lay around for the baby to be busy and stay calm and quiet. But as babies always do, he started crying soon. And as instructed by the

clinic nurse, she made milk in a milk bottle for the baby and he swallowed it gladly and became quiet.

Shormi felt her baby was too small to be left in the care of her maid or a day care center. She discussed it with her husband and he agreed that it wasn't really necessary for her to carry on with her work at school. She could take care of her baby instead.

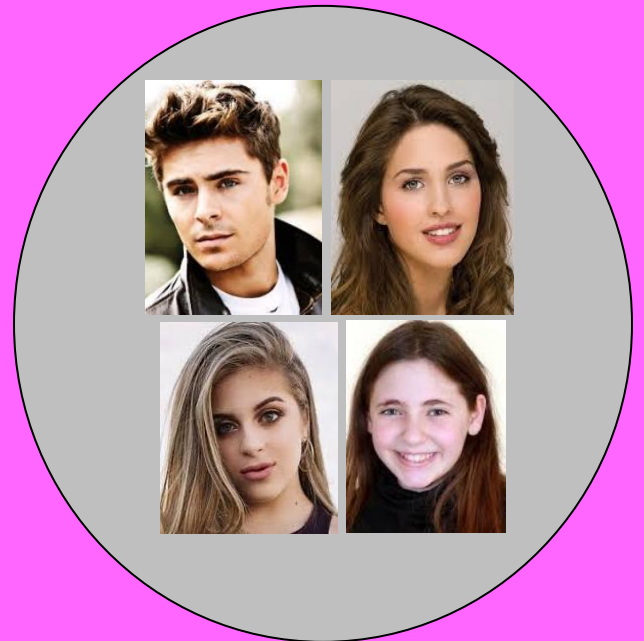
Shormi called the headmistress of her school and her husband carried Shormi's resignation letter to her.

Meanwhile with the care of both parents, Tareq started growing up chubby and healthy. He was adored by both parents and on weekends they went to the park nearby to let their son absorb all the sunlight and watch all the greeneries around and fall asleep in the stroller. His parents diligently carried him home.

Two happy years passed by when Tareq was accompanied by his sister. Yes, Shormi had given birth to their baby daughter, Lucy. This time it was more easy going with the birth of her daughter as Shormi was an experienced mother by now.

Lucy and Tareq were the pride of Shormi's family. Together with her beloved hubby, the family would thrive. Her darling hubby was fast progressing up the ladder of success. So there would never really be any financial crisis for the family. Life would smile down at them always in spite of the minor setbacks it would throw at them. Yes, they would make it and there would be a good legacy left by the father to be enjoyed by their children and future generations.

THE UNINVITED GUESTS



Rosina S Khan

The Uninvited Guests

The Rahman family was having a quiet time at home – all busy with their own stuff. When the clock struck 5pm, there was a loud bell on the door. The Rahman family wasn't expecting anyone; so they were doubly curious to know who it was.

Soon it became known to the Rahman family that a family had come from the capital city to here in this town where the man of the family would be working. They wanted a little help in guidance around the town. And the man of Rahman family promised that he would give them a hand.

The man of the other family, Shahid by name left for the capital city again, saying he had some urgent business and would leave, keeping his family in Rahman's residence and he would be back. That night he never came back. So Rahman's family treated their remaining guests with warmth and honor. They cooked good recipes and gave them their daughters' beds to the three remaining guests. The daughters of the host family slept on cushions in the living room.

When morning came, there was still no sign of the new family man. So the new guests had breakfast as well.

But these guests were all uninvited and Rahman's family started to become skeptical – where on earth was the new family man? Another day went by and the new family guests remained. By now Rahman's family got irritated.

The next day in the morning Shahid showed up at Rahman's residence, saying he got busy with business stuff and he apologized gravely and Dr Rahman forgave him and so did the rest of his family.

Shahid got keys for his new home which was some distance away from this residence, about a mile away. The two families had tea and light refreshments.

Then the family set out for their new home in an attempt to tidy it and buy furniture. In the evening both the families were invited to another family's residence nearby within the town. Word was passing fast that in the town a new family had arrived.

Soon Shahid's family came to Rahman's residence after cleaning their apartment to dress up for the evening's invitation. They were exhausted from the day's work but became happier as they had light refreshments and at the thought of the invitation they would be attending.

Both the families got ready to go out for their invitation at Javed's residence. And they remained there for two hours, talking to the hosts and dining. For dinner they had *polao*, *chicken masala*, beef curry, vegetable curry, and pudding, custard and *payesh* as desserts. At the end, both the families said goodbye and set out for their own homes.

Soon the family was invited at other hosts' homes where Rahman's family would also be invited and they would all chit chat and dine.

By now the daughters of Shahid were attending school, the same one as Rahman's daughters. They were facing problems with the English language as they were fluent only in their native language. They had a lot of catching up to do. Soon they were able to relate to English and bit by bit everything started to fall together.

Rahman and family were soon going back to their home country on account of their kids' regular continuing education. So Shahid and family were feeling a bit insecure because they had come to Rahman's family until now for help, counseling and advice.

They invited them to their place. Rahman's family had a great time dining at Shahid's residence. They cooked well and was able to satisfy Rahman's

family's appetite. Rahman's family was in turn thankful for Shahid and family's invitation for lunch.

Shahid's family was humbled and they knew they would miss Rahman's family very much. They helped the other family pack up their stuff for the rest of the days. Finally Rahman's family left, leaving a lot of used but reusable belongings with Shahid's family.

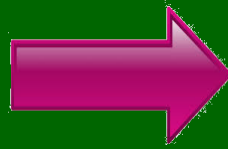
Shahid's family silently grieved at their residence but was soon back on pace with their life. Shahid gave full attention to their daughters' studies and tutored them. He prepared long and hard for lectures at the Technical City University. But it wasn't long before Shahid was laid off from his work.

Back in the country, Rahman's family was settling down making furniture for their new home and admitting their daughters to a nearby reputable school.

Then one day when Rahman went to drop two of their daughters in the second shift at school, most surprisingly he encountered the wife of Mr Shahid. She said her husband was laid off from his work. So they were back to the country with their daughters. And for the moment she was with her cousin sister to pick up her children from school. Rahman sighed in

grief at the fate of Shahid's family and wished them all the best on their current journey.

WHERE ARE YOU ADULT RAFIFA?



Rosina S Khan

Where Are You Adult Rafifa?

Rafifa, a seven year old little girl with dark brown hair covering her forehead and back hair curled inside was a lively girl and my best childhood friend. Where was she now? If I search her name on google, nothing comes up as concrete. What happened to her? I lost ties with her years and years back.

Back in grade 1 when I first met her, I knew she was a good girl with two elder sisters and a brother. She toiled hard in her studies and was always under the pressure of her elder siblings. I was also under pressure from my parents and worked hard in class.

To the surprise of both my parents I came out on top of the class both in grade 1 and grade 2 while Rafifa's position was next to mine in both the grades.

Life was fun in recess time in between classes. We got to share Tiffin and chit chat.

When we were back to class, there were strict rules and discipline. We were not allowed to talk but do our class work by our own merits. Teachers punished students who talked or broke rules by slapping a ruler on the

palms of the hands or sending to time-out corner of the classroom. I dreaded the rules and strict discipline. I tried my best to follow them. But sometimes I forgot to bring a copybook or book or was late to class because of unfavorable circumstances which was why I also got moderate punishments.

But I soon won the hearts of the teachers by my hard and sincere work in class and at home and by my quiet nature, trying my best to follow everything in class which impressed the teachers.

Now Rafifa, my best friend was similar to me. No wonder she was my good buddy because while she got help with her studies from her elder sisters, I got help from my parents. Besides Rafifa was a good soul and pure by nature. That is why I liked her so much.

Where on earth was Rafifa now? She was my age. She would be in her forties now with a happy family if she were alive. Or did she already depart from the face of this earth? I do hope with all my heart that the latter is not true. I should have got something about her on google but I did not.

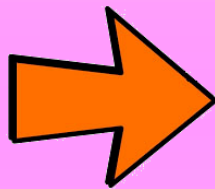
Mystery remains. In this fast paced life everybody in the villages also have cell phones connected to internet. Who doesn't have Facebook or other

social media accounts. But I see none of those information regarding Rafifa over the web.

I would rather like to say a prayer for Rafifa. It goes like this:

“Rafifa, wherever you are I would like to meet you. I would like to see how fully blown you have become. I would like to talk with you and listen to all the stories you have collected so far in your life. I hope you are happy and are in great health now. I love you still just as much I loved you during my childhood as my best buddy. Rafifa, I can tell we will meet and I am in anticipation of that golden day. May God help us come across each other in the crossroads of life.”

Sally, Are You Thinking of Me Too?



ROSINA S KHAN

Sally, Are You Thinking of Me Too?

Sally, you were a close friend to me in grade 4. So was Janet to my sister in grade 3. Recently I have been thinking of these bonds and how they withered away early in life due to certain circumstances of life.

You and your sister had to leave for your homeland because your parents wanted you to have a better education. My parents thought the same for us when I reached grade 9.

Anyways do you know I secretly cried for you after I knew the day you would leave passed away? It broke my heart that I would never see you again nor would I ever come across you in a short while. Same with my sister. She felt for and missed Janet and was near to tears whenever we thought and talked about you gals.

Even when my Dad mentioned in the middle of our studies, " ...so they were your best friends, right?", my sister and I would choke up and our eyes would become moist.

How my sister and I awoke again from that situation to greater heights, I am unable to relate now. I was lonely in later grades and accepted life that

way until I returned to our home country and had Mou as my best friend in school.

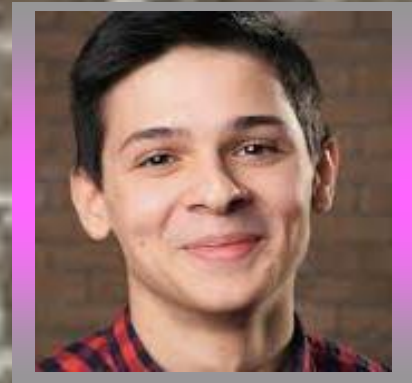
Do you know Sally I searched your name in Google and saw a woman in saree in a picture and I wondered if that could be you. I am not sure because although I can recall your childhood countenance I cannot imagine how your picture of a grownup would be.

Sally, as I have been thinking of you lately, I thought I would put you in the pages of my fiction eBook.

Do you know Sally Astrology says when you think of somebody, it's highly probable they too are thinking of you. So my question to you is: Are you thinking about me too?

That very thought makes me happy. Maybe we will come across each other sometime in near future. We will have so much to say – so many untold stories will unfurl. So many interesting conversations would flow. In spite of all setbacks, I believe we will talk and have fun in person or virtually via the mighty reign of internet.

Glimpses of Dave



ROSINA S KHAN

Glimpses of Dave

My first memory of Dave comes in when I was in grade 1. As old as me, he tried to do well in classes but I always did so much better with the help of my teachers and parents. I was regular in class and with homework so that I soon became my teachers' pet while Dave lagged behind.

The next memory of Dave comes to me when I was still in grade 1 and my sister (then non-school going) along with my parents had gone for a checkup of Ma to the hospital. The school finish time was clashing with the schedule of the hospital. So I was advised to get down from the bus at Dave's place.

Dave brought in a variety of toys to play and his surprised Ma recovering gave me something to eat which I barely touched when my sister rang the bell to fetch me to go home with my parents who were waiting downstairs. I said, "Dave, I will have to go. Thank you for your time. Bye." Then I accompanied my sister downstairs to be with my parents.

A few months down the road, our baby sister was born. Between school and home, I watched my sister grow up to 1-year old. My parents thought it would be great to invite guests on her birthday and treat them cake and

dinner. In this birthday party, Dave was invited along with his parents. All the children including Dave, my younger sister and myself circled around the table while Ma helped my baby sister to cut the cake. This very scene was captured by my Dad with his colored camera and in it Dave remained. So this picture where Dave stood with us to celebrate my baby sister's birthday remains in our family album and a pleasant memory.

Another glimpse of Dave I had was on our summer vacation to our native country when my family and I just boarded the plane and while walking through the aisle my parents noticed Dave's family was seated in a corner quietly. They didn't say anything and so we decided to keep quiet too. Later the plane had to land in Kathmandu unannounced for refueling when everybody evacuated the plane to get down in Kathmandu airport and so did I along with my family. When we were sitting quietly at the airport, Dave's family came in and gave their introductions. While our parents chatted happily and excitedly about their current updates, Dave and his little brother stayed aloof from us, the three sisters. He didn't communicate and neither did we. The plane took off, us being boarded and we didn't see them at the destination airport and they were lost from our life again.

Later in my life finishing grade 8 in our school abroad, when I entered grade 9 in our home country, I met Dave again all grown up to be 14 years old. We were in the same school until our A-Levels. We weren't close buddies but we chanced to talk on rare occasions.

In British Council when I appeared for A-Levels, I watched Dave loiter around with his buddies. And that was the last I saw of him.

Later I heard he had gone to US, first studying and then working there. I never chanced to meet him again. But the encounter of glimpses with my childhood classmate would be a good memory to uphold.

The Javed Family



ROSINA S KHAN

The Javed Family

Susie and her husband along with their three sons bade goodbye to their original families at the airport and finally boarded the plane. It was an international flight they were flying. It wasn't their first time abroad because Susie was there in London to back her husband up during his higher studies and birthed their sons there.

Now that they were flying once again, their three sons aged 5, 4 and 2 years respectively were enjoying it very much. They all could speak English and hardly their native language. Susie and her husband were a bit worried if they had made the right decision going to an unknown place abroad when their sons were so little.

But her husband was a doctor and he would be well paid if he performed well. There was no question about it. Because Susie's husband was a dedicated doctor and he would be in demand where he was going.

Susie warmed up at the thought as she snuggled with her youngest son, raising the arm rest of her seat. She looked in the direction of her husband. He was busily showing something in the plane catalogue to his eldest son.

Looking after her family had become a busy life routine after she had her youngest son. But there was no financial crisis in the family so far. Her husband had managed it all very well so far. So kudos to her husband, Charles Javed.

Charles' decisions were all good so far. So going to an unknown country for high salary may be risky some way but otherwise sound. She hoped with all her heart that they weren't making any mistakes.

The plane made a bump, then another one and another one. It spread a scare all over the plane until some were hysterically laughing. Susie and her husband calmed down their agitated sons.

Soon it was lunch time. Lunch was being served in boxes while drinks like juices were being offered in plastic glasses. There was also the option of beverages. But Susie and her husband were very sober in spite of the fact that they had stayed in London for a good many years.

The plane carried on another five hours. Susie's sons got bored and tired and fell asleep. So Susie and her husband also took the opportunity to take a nap. Susie awoke first to the voice announcing that the plane would be landing in about twenty minutes. She said, "Oops. I have to wake them up

all." She meticulously did so. In the next 18 minutes, the whole family had refreshed, applied cosmetics, combed hair and worn shoes. The three sons smiled at each other that they would soon be on the ground and be free to walk again. Little did they knew what lay ahead. Simply more journeys.

They landed and after the final check through and picking up their baggage, they exited the airport where a van was waiting for them to take them to the city. It was long two hours and Susie's sons kept asking questions about where they were heading. Susie and her husband were confused about what the driver of the van said but nevertheless her husband would check it out.

After they reached the main city, the van driver drove to a residential area where Susie's husband asked the driver to wait along with his family while he would visit the medical school center and try to find out where he was destined. Susie's sons came out of the van and played around freely among the greeneries. They were well-behaved kids. Susie had also come out of the van and stretched herself. After another hour, Susie's husband and another man came to the spot. He introduced himself as a doctor working at the medical school college and mentioned that her husband's

posting was in a nearby town another two hours' drive from where they were.

The sons got discouraged on hearing this. They wanted to stay in the residential area and play around in the wide space. But Susie's husband coaxed them all to get inside the van. And he bade goodbye to the man who had helped him out.

Two more hours ouch!! The sons got impatient. Luckily Susie had wrapped in tissues some of the plane's refreshments and offered her sons those to eat. They were hungry again, yes and ate what Susie offered happily. They looked outside of the windows and wondered what it would be like living in this country.

Another hour, and they could take a glimpse of the sea. "Yes", thought Susie's husband, "the man said there would be picnics from our area to this sea side. It was a beautiful wavy blue sea."

Twenty more minutes. They were nearing the place where they would stay. And yes, the van stopped outside of a seven-storied building. They could see a gas pump right in front. But there were no greeneries or wide space here to play. The boys got out one by one and the driver helped

them to reach their luggage inside their home on the third floor. And then he left.

Susie was sad, very sad. With her 3 boys and husband only she felt lonely. How to understand the people around or to talk in their language she didn't know. Her husband was cheerful on the other hand. "Don't worry, Susie", he said, "You will get used to it." He then said he would go out and fetch some food or even groceries, if possible.

In about 40 minutes, he bought grilled chicken, *khobza* and ice cream. He also brought in groceries. Luckily the man in the city gave him local currencies in exchange for dollars. That's why purchasing was so easy now. He would have to start work as a doctor the very next day. Susie and her sons cheered up as they chewed and minced the food fetched by Charles.

Charles was early up next morning. His wife also awoke to make him quick breakfast. Their sons were still sleeping. Charles gripped his wife's hand, said goodbye and released her hand.

A bus was waiting outside of his building to carry Charles to his office. Four or five people already remained seated. The bus collected more people on

the way and soon the bus was packed with 40 people. 40 doctors would go to the medical center.

Susie opened the refrigerator to make a mental note of what groceries were available at home. She had put the closed pot of rice in the kitchen lower cupboard. Now she decided what dishes she needed to prepare for lunch. Her husband, Charles would be back by 2pm. He would be dead hungry then having worked until then.

She decided on cauliflower curry, chicken *masala* along with tomato and potato and a huge bowl of rice. She made up her mind that would be enough for today's lunch and dinner.

She went to her son's bedroom and asked them to wash up and get ready for breakfast. She toasted a few bread pieces and put jam on them for her sons to eat. Next she made 3 glasses of milk and forwarded to them.

Susie remembered which baggage contained her sons' favorite toys, unzipped it and finally found the toys for her sons to play with.

Charles was having a pretty busy time looking after one patient after another. He took a break at noon and stretched out on the easy chair in his office when there was a loud knock on the door. A little girl's head was

bleeding profusely. Charles along with two other doctors and a bunch of nurses carried her to the emergency room. They cleared her wounds and stitched her head clean so that it was almost invisible.

The doctors got credited for their diligent work. The girl's parents were happy and tipped the doctors heavily. Charles didn't expect to be tipped like this on the very first day and was feeling extremely proud and happy for his contribution as a doctor for the day.

It was 1.00 pm. Time to ride on the bus and go back home. He had so many stories for the day to share with Susie. What was she and their sons doing at the time? This was not the era of cell phones, rather mid eighties. So Charles would have to reach home and find out.

Susie had fed her sons lunch and now they were playing with Lego toys, toy trains, cars and planes. Susie was having fun playing with them when the door bell rang.

She went ahead excitedly to the door to meet her husband. Her husband was all smiles and Susie smiled back sweetly. "So it was a good day, Charles!" Susie exclaimed. Charles nodded. "I am dead hungry. Is lunch ready?"

Susie pointed to the dining table where lunch all covered was waiting. Charles went to the shower and freshened and called out to Susie. "Come here, sweetheart. Let's talk. How about the boys?" asked Charles. "They are playing happily", Susie said, "They just had their lunch." "Ok, that's great to hear", Charles said, "It was a very busy day today, Susie."

He went on to explain how he saw patient after patient nonstop and when he had gone to relax a little, another patient turned up with an emergency and two other doctors and himself had to stitch her up and how at the end they got a heavy tip.

Susie exclaimed, "Is a heavy tip all you will get?" "No, darling", explained Charles, "Our monthly salaries are due." "Oh good!" exclaimed Susie.

Charles went on chatting that he made some native friends at his workplace on the bus on the way back. In fact they lived near about their place. They were usually throw parties for all native families and he asked Susie not to be surprised about a near such event. Susie was excited for native company. She said enthusiastically, "I am looking forward to such a party."

To Susie's surprise in reality, she found guests ringing at her door. A gentleman and his wife. They spoke in native language. The man said, "We have heard you have come here new. We met your husband on the bus from his workplace. In fact I am also a doctor. Is your husband in?" Susie replied sweetly, "Yes, he is. Why don't you come in?"

The man said, "Actually we are in a hurry. We have come to invite you to our place. We are throwing a party. There is your husband!"

Charles walked in the direction of the door, amazed. "O Samad! How nice to meet you again. Come inside."

The man and wife both said they would come again another day but today they were in a hurry. The coming Friday they had arranged a moderately sized big party at their place. And Charles' entire family was invited.

Susie was over the moon. Charles was beaming with delight. The man and wife left. Susie locked the door and embraced Charles. "I am so happy, Charles", she said. "It would be a great outing for the little boys." Charles said, "I know, honey. I am happy for you. You will soon like the place and get habituated, I told you. You will get a lot of native company here. I hope we get to meet them all soon." Susie said meekly, "I know, Charles."

The following Friday evening, the Javed family dressed in their best clothes and quality cosmetics. Everything was in walking distance in this town. The family of five walked a little way to reach their destination. Earlier in the week Charles got directions to the party home. And so now Charles guided the way to a 2nd floor in an ash and maroon bricked building. On reaching 2nd floor, Charles rang the bell of the apartment on the left side and voila – it was the party home!

Susie and her sons followed Charles. Lots of lighting and video cameras were set up. The Javed family looked around in awe and hoped to see the hosts. And indeed they greeted them in and took them to their living room, introducing to everyone there.

Susie's sons behaved very well. She showed them the children's corner with toys and soon they got busy.

Susie herself started talking with the women of all ages but they all looked very glamorous and beautiful this night.

Charles made a few more friends, giggling and joking.

Soon it was dinner time. Susie called out to her sons and asked the eldest and younger sons to take plates from the plate corner while she herself

held out the plate for her youngest son. Soon they were seated around the table eating fried rice, chicken roast, beef *bhuna*, salad and coke.

Charles and Susie stood on their feet and ate on plates. There was no more any place to sit. So they were only happy to stand, talk and eat. More pairs joined them. And they all talked and chatted.

It was a lovely evening but like all gorgeous parties, it had to end. Guests started leaving. The Javed family made their sons ready, bade the hosts good night and bustled out of the home, happy and smiling.

On reaching home, Susie put her sons to bed after making them wash their hands, faces and feet. Then Susie cuddled beside her husband in the master bedroom. "So honey", she said, "which family did you like the best at the party?" "Well, it's hard to say in particular because they are all good." "Well Charles", Susie confessed, "I liked one family in particular very much." Charles rolled out his eyes in surprise and said, "Which family is it?" Susie said, bursting out laughing, "The Rahman family." Charles said smiling, "Yes, that family is very special." Susie said, "Do you know Ms Rahman stitched all her girls' dresses herself. I find that woman particularly intriguing. Their big daughters are so fond of our sons. It seems they like

children very much. I would like to drop in their place sometime with the boys. Can you show me where they live?" "Yes, honey", said Charles, yawning, "they live on the other side of the gas station." Susie said in surprise, "Really? Then they must live very near our home." Charles said, "Ok, I will take you along with the boys to their place sometime. Now please let me sleep. I have work tomorrow and have to wake up early as usual." "Ok, ok Charles, sweetheart, sleep and sweet dreams. I won't disturb you any longer."

The day was not far off when Charles decided one weekend to take his family to Rahman's place. The girls of the family greeted them warmly and called their parents who came immediately to attend the guests. The girls took the little boys to their bedroom to play with toys. They came back again to the living room to treat the boys light refreshment. Parents of both families had great conversations until it was time to leave. Rahman family thanked Javed family for stopping by and the guests left soon after.

In their visit to Rahman family, Javed family came to know they would soon be leaving for their native country for the sake of their girls' further education. Susie was sad to hear it because she really found a friend in them. "It's going to be okay", she told herself, "I will find more friends like

them." But she couldn't erase the wonderful thoughts and memories about them.

Susie took her boys to Rahman's place three-four more times until Rahman family was gone from the town. Susie missed them horribly. Charles came to her side and took her hand. He said, "Sooner or later we all have to go back to our native country. Take it easy and find yourself new friends." Susie smiled and promised Charles so with her smile.

ABOUT MY FRIEND DOLLY



Rosina S Khan

About My Friend Dolly

After Sally left for her homeland, I tried to keep my eyes open about who to be friends with and find my new best friend.

The rest of grade 4 passed away and when I was in grade 5, I noticed closely the girl named Dolly. I started sharing with her my scrapbooks and drawings. She showed interest. I felt gratified.

Soon in class we sat next to each other and I was happy for myself that this was a great opportunity to improve my English writing skills. Dolly was great at writing English essays and I wanted to know her secrets.

It wasn't long before Dad got his summer vacation from work and like every year we would travel to our home country, missing classes and coming back to make up for backlogs.

I told Dolly, "I will be away for summer vacation. But in a short month's time I will be back." Dolly smiled and said, "Ok. You go ahead and have a good vacation." Her voice echoed over my ears all the time I was in the vacation.

And to my extreme disappointment when I was back to school from my vacation, nowhere did I find Dolly. Nobody could tell. Because everybody said she was here yesterday as well. I brought little gifts for her which I was unable to present her. I was so gloomy for the rest of the day.

Then next day arrived and while we were all getting ready to stand in assembly to say a short prayer, Dolly hit me on the back with a broad smile.

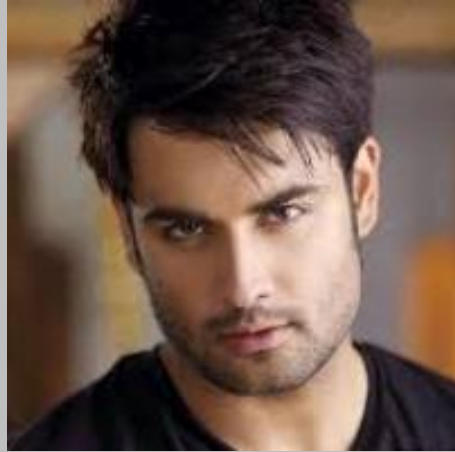
I was totally dumbfounded. I was sure I would never see her again. Now why did I assume that? When the assembly ritual was over, we talked and went back to class, waiting for the teacher to come in. In that small duration, I took the opportunity to gift her earrings that I had brought from my home country. And she was happy and smiling. The rest of the day was very happy again.

Then the next day disappointment struck me again because Dolly never showed up in school. What was the matter? I missed her all day. Perhaps she would come tomorrow but she never did. So many tomorrows went by and she was never to be seen again. It was then I realized she was gone and I would never see her again.

Later I came to know Dolly's Dad was diagnosed with Cancer and so they had gone to the city to get better treatment. Then I heard the news that they went back to their home country. After that, I heard that her Dad passed away. To lose a Dad at such a young age must have been very challenging for Dolly and her family.

Now I know she grew from life's bitter storms until her adulthood. I found her book online that she authored based on her own life, titled, "And then there were three..." meaning herself, her little sister and her Mom, her Dad having passed away. I would have liked to read her life story but unfortunately in our world not everyone has a credit card and neither do I. It would certainly be like a dream come true to have a credit card and buy Dolly's book and/or other good books and stuff on the web.

The Turmoil in Tawkir Family



ROSINA S KHAN

The Turmoil in Tawkir Family

The Tawkir family first came to the little town nearby the sea three years ago. Mr Tawkir was a teacher and colleague of Dr. Rahman and they lived on the same floor of the same building. The Tawkir family had a ten-year old daughter only who attended the same school as Dr. Rahman's daughters.

There were lots of events and extracurricular activities organized by Dr Rahman's daughters. Mr Tawkir's daughter, Jenny participated in some of them. Birthday parties and cultural shows were broad and prominent led by Dr Rahman's daughters and while only children enjoyed the birthdays, cultural shows were open to all adults and children of the complex.

The first three years for Tawkir family were very happy. The fourth year, Mr Tawkir started to experience pain on his back. As advised by the doctor, Tawkir started walking on the street pavements regularly with his wife in the evenings. But that didn't help much because by the fifth year, Tawkir was almost bedridden. He had kidney problems.

Colleagues in the complex rushed to his aid. They started arranging for the family to go back to their home country where Tawkir could be with relatives and get better treatment from doctors.

Ms Tawkir was a pretty, soft woman but in the midst of all turmoil and crisis, she kept herself strong and gave strength to her hubby and daughter.

Then came the day when Mr Tawkir and family would be leaving the town permanently. There was a cloud of moaning and unhappiness as they climbed into a van with their luggage. After they were all settled and ready to move on, they were embraced by all families including Rahman family to bade them farewell.

The whole complex watched the Tawkir family drive on and disappear on to the main street. Everybody in the complex said a silent prayer for Tawkir family and wished and hoped for the fast recovery of Mr Tawkir's ailment.

UNCLE BASET AND WIFE



Rosina S Khan

Uncle Baset and Wife

Uncle Baset had been living for a while in the small town nearby the sea. He was close to several native families including the Rahman family. One day while kids were at school, Uncle Baset got big prawns from the market and excitedly called an impromptu party at his home place. He did not have an estimate of how many people could feed on those prawns and they fell short at the party. The party turned out to be hilarious and embarrassing.

In order to save the old man (Baset by name) and his wife, young wives started cooking rice, chicken and eggs and treated those to their hungry children and others who fell short of the prawns.

In fact, eventually it turned out to be a great gathering and soon disappointment and resentment found their way to merrymaking and laughter.

A PLEDGE TO DR. J



Rosina S Khan

A Pledge to Dr. J

I am troubled, Dr. J. I may not have come across you but I have heard about you. I don't know your full name but I do know you are a doctor.

I know you help me in various ways unknown to me. I have heard your voice in the earlier residence. But now that I have changed places in the city, I hardly hear your voice.

I assume you are in your thirties while I am in my forties. You were settled to be my life partner. But months are passing by and I hear no such news.

I know that there are lots of problems in and out but I keep believing in myself that we can get married ultimately and follow our dreams together.

I do not believe I cannot carry on with my future endeavors if I marry – a rumor I totally disbelieve. Anything is possible so long you can dream it and believe it.

But as I said I am troubled. I am hurt deep inside by external forces which no one in my family is able to help me with. And the first person to seek help that comes to my mind is you. Please help Dr. J. I know you have sources and resources with which you can provide me the help.

I know there are traps and troubles in the distance between you and me. But in spite of everything, you are able to help me because we do love each other and we have a special bond.

And recently I realized Almighty God gave me a connection to you. When you think about me, I already know it. It is a special telepathic connection.

God wouldn't give me this connection to an angelic sacred girl like me if He didn't believe in my love for you.

I know we are meant for each other. Show up Dr. J. Stay invisible no more. Let us meet and solve each other's problems and follow our dreams and venture out into the world. We both have lots of promises to keep and lots of miles to travel.

I rely on you Dr. J. Hope I will get the required help for the trouble I am in and also come to encounter you for we are meant for each other and I know and can tell we will meet. It's written in the stars, Dr. J. Believe it with all your heart and we will meet. Yes, we will.

About the Author



Rosina S Khan has authored this eBook of short fictions. She has written a good many short fiction stories on free-ebooks.net, which you will find on the next page as well as on her website.

Apart from writing fiction stories, she also loves to write free self-help eBooks. Additionally, she has written over 300 articles on EzineArticles.com and finds great delight in blogging as well. All of these free resources including inspirational movies can be found in one place on her personal website. You are encouraged to visit <https://rosinaskhan.weebly.com> and access all the great free treasures there as much as you wish.

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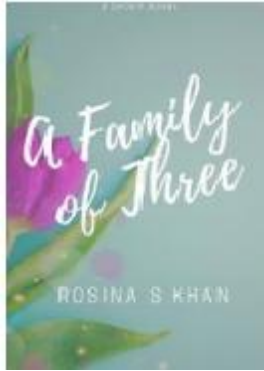
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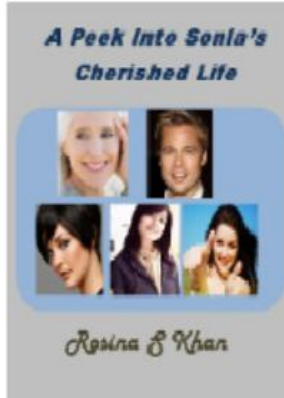
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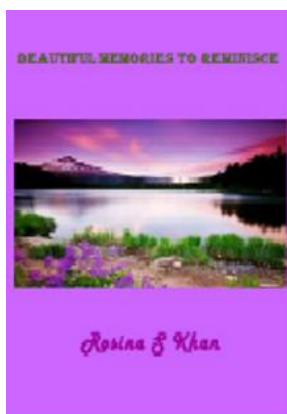
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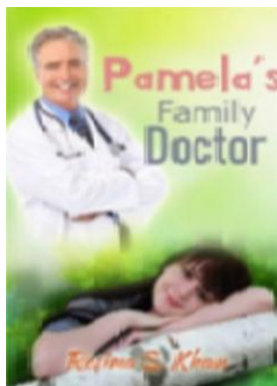
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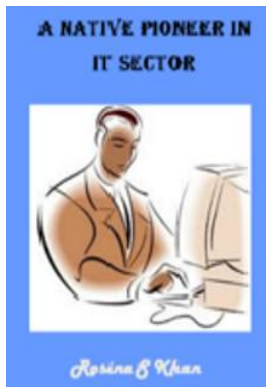
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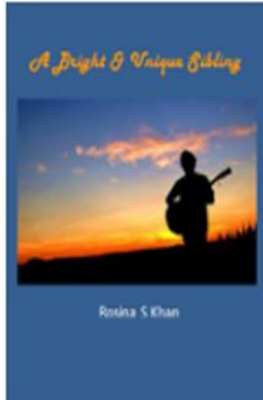
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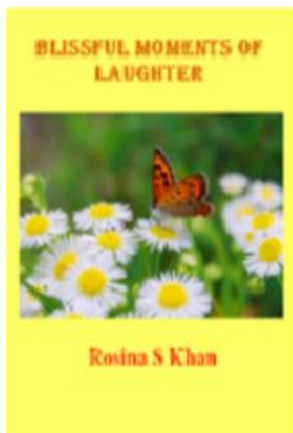
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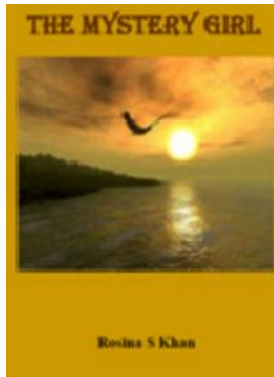
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17.



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18.



The Mystery Girl

19.



Stunning Life Journeys

20.



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