

Reborn by Sadia Riaz Sehole

*Redolent of friendship is she.
Adorable is she simply,
Beautiful the most in the universe,
Intellectual is none like her of her age,
Affable is more than a saint.
This story portrays a girl
Named love and Sincerity
The unsurpassed, the best.
But becoming a prey of
An unmatched tie,
She broke down
And the pain drove her to pen down
The tale of a heart ache.*

Sara gazed over the sea, feeling the soft gust of wind against her face, eyes closed, and the silver sand warmed between her toes. The sight was attractive beyond certainty but still it could not ease the grief she felt. "What if I had not gone to the coffee house today? I would not have found the truth". Sara thought feeling angry at herself for falling for scum like Saad.

...much can change in a little time and the intense heart ache can impel a block between the cordial ties; it can even break the deepest of love.

He had betrayed her. He had played with her emotions. With watery eyes she saw him standing with his wife and daughter in the coffee house this noon. Sara felt very sad, her mouth opened in pain but no sound came out. Her eyes nearly gone way to tears but she blinked them away and took control of herself. Getting herself together, Sara decided to leave, but, to her surprise, Saad came and sat across her exactly like the first time they had met and it all seemed to be long ago now, much can change in a little time and the intense heart ache can impel a block between the cordial ties; it can even break the deepest of love. Sara quickly wiped off her tears, but the past has pushed itself into the present and took her back to the school days when she enjoyed her life to the fullest. Only then she had courage to look up every opportunity as a challenge. She accepted them with a big smile on her face and shine in her eyes. She had competed with some of the best people and won love. That was what Sara's life needed and with Saad, her life was complete then.

With him at her side she was ready to face every challenge. She never felt so confident or bold about herself until he came into her life.

Sara was like an ordinary girl in school whose only aim was to get straight A's. She was in class 10. It was there that she became friend with Saad. With him at her side she was ready to face every challenge. She never felt so confident or bold about herself until he came into her life. It was like breath of fresh air to her slow paced steady life. To her, Saad was a

silent support of her teenage. She believed he would be there even if the whole world turned its back upon her. As time passed, her love became stronger and trust became deeper, so did her success.

Her life was bed of roses and she enjoyed every single moment of it. She became quite popular with people. Her relationship with friends, family and teachers were going very well. She was so much grateful to love.

Initially, Saad and Sara were net pals and then they had fallen in love. So there was nothing like meeting up, though they were going to meet that summer because Sara was visiting Saad's hometown. It was just email, short messages, calls or sharing snaps and videos until then. The summer came and she met Saad.

Sara had visualized and fanaticized her upcoming life ecstatically expanding in front of her, together eternally. With him, Sara designed their whole life even their children.

Wearing a simple white frock, minuscule white jasmine flowers attempting to tame her shady tresses, she married Saad. They swore the promises as they held hands and smiled at the pure bliss of being adolescently married. Staying in a sea side resort, they consummated their love. Sara had visualized and fanaticized her upcoming life ecstatically expanding in front of her, together eternally. With him, Sara designed their whole life even their children. She wanted two, but he wanted four, so they had made a compromise on three; of course they hoped to have two boys and a girl. They had planned where they will live, forever they had thought.

Soon things turned the other way round. She started realizing that he was ignoring her. At first she thought it was just negativity but soon she could take it no more. Disowned by her father after her marrying Saad without his approval and consent, Sara started living in slums. Lately there she realized the change in Saad. If she did not call him, he would never bother to talk to her. She was more worried about him than her own self. Even though she realized he was ignoring her, she was still in love with her. Her love had come to a selfless stage that she no more cared about herself but him. His silence was killing her inner-self not knowing what had gone wrong.

Three years to the day she saw him in the coffee house, she kept wondering about the reasons of leaving her in lurch when she needed him the most. Just this noon he sat across her while smirking at her, "Oh my darling, what can I say? Are you wondering what if you had never met me? What if you had not expressed love for me? What if you had not so foolishly trusted me? What if you had never married me?" he said laughing at her.

"Why did you ruin my life?" Sara demanded to know while unshed tears were shimmering in her eyes.

"Oh well... go and ask your dad and thank him on my behalf. What if he had not asked me for a deal that day? I would not have become a millionaire today!"

"Deal!" Sara moaned with agony in her voice.

“Yes, deal...after disowning you for marrying me, he called me up and fixed a meeting with me. He offered me one-third of his property and a good sum of money as a price to leave you because he wanted you to have a college degree as you desired, make a career and so on and so forth. So you did, I’m sure. Not to disclose this truth was the part of the deal but who cares now when the man who offered me the deal is dead and buried,” he said laughing and took his wife’s hand.

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She was standing alone on the sea shore. The cold air bit her inside like a termite gnawing on a piece of hardened wood. Her eyes were closed and her hands were numb. It was useless to curse the dead father now because the man of his dreams entered her life looking for money not for her. The beach side marriage dissolved into quick divorce. Sara let out a pain and regret-filled sighs. “How could this beautiful place with its sapphire blue ocean and never-ending silver sand be the site for the angst she felt?” she spoke to herself in her meager voice while her eyes continued to burn with dire agony. The passion, the power, the fire, all had been blown away by the pain. She stood alone and yelled in pain.

They say love brings joy and happiness...It takes you to the highest mountain and gives you wings... It makes you sing, embraces you... muster you and turns you into a beacon of shining light...but now in her heart she knew they were wrong. Love is nothing but pain and woe. It plunges you into the darkness of an ocean and leaves you there to drown. It burns you, rips you and leaves you worse off than being dead. She realized that love is nothing more than an illusion, an illusion that addicts you with its charm and beauty. But when that illusion breaks, there is nothing more than a deep gaping hole. She was feeling exactly the same at the moment. She stood near the edge of sea shore and thought of choices she had. She could walk the path that lay before her, a path full of ashes and amber, where her dreams lay routing and her future lay burning. She could suffer and never be free... Or she could fight back. She could jump now in deep sea and be reunited. She could fight and defeat the troubles and suffering that had been etched into her destiny. She closed her eyes and thought about freedom.

he had happened to meet numerous pretty ladies during his job as a freelance photographer. It was her lonesomeness and isolation that had engrossed him. Even at the distance, he knew that she was unique and unusual as compared to other women he had met.

The man stood gazing from the rim of palm grove, his eyes never leaving the woman staring out to the sea as thought waiting for some *maseeha* to relieve her from the pain that she underwent. She was gorgeous and had a trim slandering body wrapped in a baggy flowing chiffon gown; her wild hair and dazzling azure eyes were not different from the shade of the ocean itself. It was not her features and looks that had fascinated him though; he had happened to meet numerous pretty ladies during his job as a freelance photographer. It was her lonesomeness and isolation that had engrossed him. Even at the distance, he knew that she was unique and unusual as compared to other women he had met.

Sara sensed the man forthcoming even before turning around. She had sensed his presence in palms grooves and had known about him standing there, gazing at her. Opposite to her nature she had felt eccentrically tranquil about being observed and spotted. She looked at him and felt the instantaneous glow of association she had experienced only once before. He strolled gradually towards her and their gaze met each other. They felt as if they had been soul mates in some previous birth and were reincarnated here and meeting again on a familiar beach. This feeling was mesmerizing and it brought them closer.

Accompanying each other they sat facing each other at one of the sea side bars; sipping the indigenous cocktails they started talking. They talked about the quality of the available local and foreign food and affability of natives. Later, after the alcohol took control of their nerves, their conversation dwelled deep into their lives and its tragedy. Finally, Sara exposed her wounds, pain and dilemmas of her past life and how her destiny brought her back to the place where she had married the man who duped her and outplayed. Sara thought to herself,

*We love men
But they dupe us.
We do anything for them
But they inflict pains upon us.
We regard them
But they disregard us.
We take care of them
But they do not pay heed to us.
A mind would wonder
Why do the men have this attitude?
Why do they dupe us?
Then a mind would realize
That they do not dupe us
But we dupe ourselves
As we fail to recognize them.*

Sara told Omar, the man with whom she felt completely comfortable and compatible, the tale of her grief that she had buried down deep inside her incapable of relating it to anyone. She told him how she felt hurt and agonized after losing her baby whom she nurtured for complete six months inside her womb. She was six months pregnant and the most delightful she felt, thoroughly engrossed in her life waiting for her baby. The pains started earlier than expected. She was sharing a room with her friend as Saad was not attending her calls. He failed to reach to Sara in time. She loathed him for not being around her; for not feeling the pain as much as her but above all for resembling so much like the little baby boy that she pressed against her chest tenderly for a short while before the hospital staff took him away.

All through the following days she had withdrawn from her husband Saad, family and friends just like they all have turned their back at her considering her an outcast for marrying at just 18 and expecting with a baby and then losing the unborn. She didn't try to come out of the ache and never let her wounds heal considering it as an infidelity to her

son's grief. At the memorial service of her son, Sara denied standing next to Saad and subsequently she files for annulment of her marriage.

Looking up, Sara could see her pain reflected in the man's eye. Solitariness in him had become more sub-merging with the fall of darkening night. He felt spine-chilling fret-full. This very isolation belonged to Maryam, his wife as well as sweetheart. They had promised to live together throughout their life but their innocent promise was shattered by the Mighty nature. His love had left him alone. All he had of her was her smiling face in his thoughts. He wanted to reduce his turbulent nature so he called his close friends but after some time they all got bored with his meaningless talk. They all got busy in their work leaving Omer behind. After losing hope of his friends, he turned to his family for support but it was his hard luck that his own family failed to console him. His thoughts and his mood took him to this sea....for no hope.

For the very first time after so long, Sara did not feel unaided; she felt the agonizing weight lift from her, only a speck, but it was a beginning... Omer took Sara's hand and led her to the depth of sea. They closed their eyes and thought about freedom. They thought about the entire thing they had and all the things they could never have. They tightened their eyes and said a silent prayer...

Then with a smile on their faces and a twinkle in their eyes, Sara and Omer took a step back and let themselves into the arms of eternal bliss...!

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Born and brought up in Lahore, Pakistan, **Sadia Riaz Sehole** acquired her early education in science, though she later pursued her academic career in Literature. She is currently residing in Lahore, Pakistan and working over her PhD dissertation. She is a teacher, researcher and a utopian who is too much absorbed in the world of ideas. She has already written for various newspapers and research journals. For her writing is a vent of feelings, agony, dilemmas, chaos, evens and odds in life. She wants to be a maseeha for the shattered souls and reform the humanity by inculcating positivity in them through her writing.

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