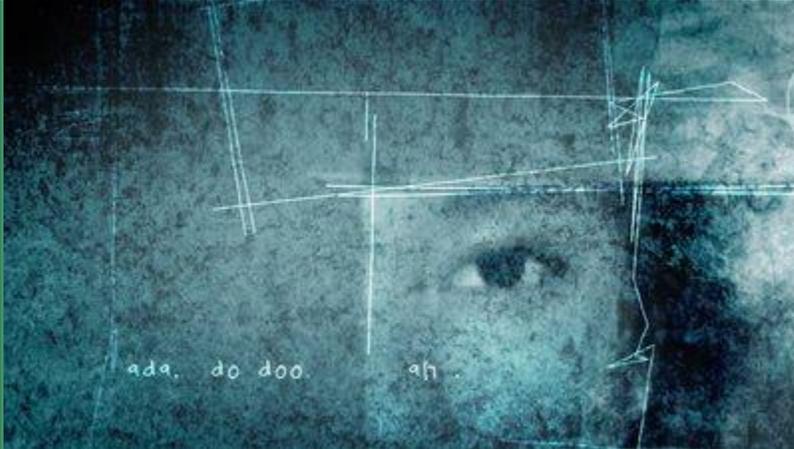


If Only



"But I am telling you, this is my 7th draft! People love these kind of stories where a protagonist's life comes tumbling down and the antagonist is luck. Please believe me!" Jane begged.

"I have worked with writers like JK Rowling and John Green. There's no way your book will sell! Writers like you with cliché stories get nowhere!", snapped the publisher, Hank.

"I... I... I think you just don't have the vision", Jane countered.

Then, a moment later...

"No no no, I didn't mean it like that."

"Get out of my room!

Ungrateful freak!

Walk away and don't look back you pathetic 40 year old lady, go and have some kids if you can even have them", he yelled.

Jane ran out of his office crying and wanting to give up.

"GET YOUR PALM CHECKED", a blaring yellow sign read.

"Surely, they will have some answers"

Jane walked into the creepy, half-lit room which had an ambience almost identical to that of a funeral of some hippie.

"DANGER, GREAT DANGER" The palm reader decorated in wrinkles and sagging skin shrieked.

"Check again please!"

"DANGER, GREAT DANGER"

A puzzled Jane, horrified by the reading, ran away without even paying, a million different thoughts running through her mind.

"Are James and I gonna break up? Is mom gonna die? Will I never publish a book? Oh my God! Anything but the last one."

Once she reached her home, with her red wine in one hand and her book draft in the other, she drowned in her sorrows. She picked up a knife from the kitchen drawer and held it dangerously close to her wrists and as soon as she was about to cut herself, James stopped her.

"Leave me please, I just want to die. "Everything I worked for is now gone. All the blood, sweat and tears have now gone in the drain..." she cries out.

She then slowly falls asleep on James shoulder.

A loud bang startles Jane from her sleep and she walks towards the door, opens it and finds only silence. The only sound to be heard is her heavy breathing. Thinking that the scare must've been in a dream, she goes back to sleep.

When she next wakes up, she feels different. She heads towards the washroom to be shocked by what she sees. Everything is perfect. No wrinkles, no 50 shades of black under her eyes and no skin full of acne.

“Wow everything looks perfect.”

As she walks out of the washroom, she feels her phone buzzing in her pocket.

Jane goes to pick up the call, “Hey Jane, I am a publisher, I am interested to publish your book. Heard all about it, come to my office in Downtown Miami.”

“Oh my god! Thank you! I will leave home in 5 minutes”

Neither did Jane ask his name nor did she ask where his office is. She was too excited. Everything she worked for would become reality. Every aspiration from paying her parents bills to living in a luxurious house could now come true.

On her way, Jane stumbles across the palm reader. She walks up to her and starts insulting her, she made sure the palm reader felt inferior. “You're FAKE. F-A-K-E. FAKE”

“DANGER, STILL DANGER” the palm reader shrieked again.

“You have lost it!” Jane yells.

Annoyed and full of anger and frustration, Jane makes her way to Downtown Miami. When she reaches, it strikes her where she had come. Downtown Miami was the hub for “illegal immigrants” like the beloved Donald Trump says. Drugs, smoking, tattoos were infamous in that area. Girls never dared to walk along the alleys and boys went to get a kick from life, to get ‘high’ on life.

Jane wonders whether she should explore any further. She is reluctant to, but the incoming thoughts of a success story was tempting. After a lot of deliberation she decides to walk into the shady office in front of her.

Upon entering, Jane’s horrified, looking at what lay in front of her.

“OMG Someone is bleeding, can someone help!” Jane shrieks.

Nearby, police officers conducting a wipeout of the drugs heard her screams. They ran quickly and found Jane next to the body which was pale blue in color, eyes wide open and a sight appalling to even those who watch pimple popping videos on the internet.

“Hands up, you are under arrest! You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say or do will be used against you in the court of law. You have the right to an attorney, if you cannot afford one, one will be provided for you. I have read you your rights as a citizen. Do you understand?”

“But I haven’t done anything.” Jane protests

“DO YOU UNDERSTAND”

“Yes, yes I get it.”

At the police office, Jane was treated like a murderer. All the proceedings were followed as though she was already convicted. She got questioned without an attorney and was granted no bail. On the day of the trial, since there was no proof tying anyone else to the murder, Jane was pronounced guilty.

“Everything I worked for is now gone. All the blood, sweat and tears have not gone in the drain...”

Jane thinks to herself before she sleeps.

“Jane wake up, it’s your big day, you have a meeting with JK Rowling's publisher”

“JANE, WHY ARE YOU NOT WAKING UP???”

“Please wake up love!” James yells in anger.

This was the end of Jane’s story. Before committing the attempted suicide, she said to herself

“Everything i worked for is now gone” and she said the same thing in the jail. It's almost like the Angels on the ground said “Amen” at the wrong time. She never had the privilege to publish her book but had the privilege to see it played out in another, unknown dimension before she took her last breath.

Written by: Lamya

