ONE LOOK ONE OCTOBER

A SMALL LOVE STORY THAT NEVER NEEDED A SECOND MEETING

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One Look, One October

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A small love story that never needed a second meeting

Akshay kumar

For the girl at the gate,

who never knew.

And for everyone who has loved something

for one second

and kept it for years.

Some people do not stay in your life.

They stay in your October.

Author's Note

This story takes me back to my final year of graduation. If you have been through college, you know that final year is completely unhinged. Everyone is running around pretending to have their future sorted, submissions are piling up, and right in the middle of all that chaos, life decides to hit you with something totally unexpected.

That was the phase when this story really started breathing.

And then, there was this tiny detail that changed everything. A small black beauty spot. A mole, a birthmark, whatever you want to call it. Funny how science calls it a random cluster of pigment cells, but when it sits on the right face, in just the right place, it stops being a mark and becomes an entire mood. It is the kind of detail you catch in the middle of a crowded room, during an ordinary conversation, and suddenly you forget what everyone was talking about.

Some memories do not fade because they get anchored to these little things, a passing glance, a quiet corner of campus, and a mark you could never unsee.

This story carries a piece of that time, some real chaos, and a lot of heart. Read it when you have a quiet moment, and I hope it makes you smile or remember a face you never quite forgot.

Your Lovable Akshay…

Before You Begin

* * *

This is not a big story. Nobody wins a race in it, and nobody gets married at the end.

It is only a small feeling, written in simple words, the way it lived in me.

If you have ever seen someone for one moment and carried that moment for a long time, this book was written for you.

Read it slowly. It is short, but it was not short for me.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Long Road

“Some mornings carry a gift. They just do not tell you.”

* * *

My hostel was far from college.
Not so far that I could complain,
but far enough that every morning
became a small journey of its own.

The road was dusty and tired.
The sky was washed clean.
It was October,
the month when the heat finally gives up
and the air starts to feel kind.

Autos honked.
Tea shops lifted their shutters.
A man swept the footpath
like he had all the time in the world.
Somewhere a radio was playing
an old song nobody was listening to.

I walked with my bag on one shoulder
and my mind on nothing.
Assignments, attendance, the usual noise.
I was a senior.
I believed I had already seen
everything this college could show me.

How wrong a person can be
on an ordinary morning.

There is a kind of day
that never announces itself.
No music. No signs.
No bird sitting on a wire
saying, “Look carefully today.”

It just sits there, quiet,
holding something small and bright
behind its back.

And you walk straight into it
with your shoes dusty
and your heart on silent.

I did not know that the gate of my own college was about to become the most important place of my life. I had

crossed it hundreds of times. That day I crossed it once, and I have been walking back to it ever since.

CHAPTER TWO

The Gate

“It lasted one second. I have been explaining it for years.”

* * *

I reached the gate.
The guard was yawning.
Students poured in
like water finding its way.

And then I saw her.

Not a grand entry.
No slow motion.
No background music,
like the films promise.
Just a girl walking in
with her eyes on the ground.

Her face was calm,
the way a still lake is calm
before you drop a thought into it.
Her skin held a soft glow,
as if she had borrowed
a little light from the morning.

And below her nose,
a tiny black til (Beauty mark).
One small dot,
as if the sky had signed its work
on her face.

Her lips were quiet.
Her hair would not stay behind her ear.
A few strands kept falling,
and she kept fixing them,
and they kept falling again,
as if the wind itself
wanted to look at her more closely.

She walked looking down.
Maybe she was shy.
Maybe she was new.
Maybe she was only careful
with the road.

I was a senior.
As she passed me, she wished me.
A soft good morning,
given to the ground,
not to my face.

I said it back.
Or I think I did.
My voice and my heart
were not speaking to each other
that day.

Then she moved on,
and the gate went back
to being just a gate.

It lasted one second. Maybe two. But a person can hold a whole life in two seconds, if that life is made of feeling.

A small poem

Two Seconds

* * *

Two seconds is nothing.
A blink, a sneeze,
the gap between two footsteps.

But I know now
that a heart does not keep time
the way a clock does.

A clock says two seconds.
The heart says, "This one.
Remember this one."

And the heart
is never wrong about
what it wants to remember.

CHAPTER THREE

The Face I Could Not Keep

“Memory is strange. It forgets the face and keeps the dot.”

* * *

By the time I turned around,
she was gone.
Into the crowd, into the corridor,
into a thousand other faces
all wearing the same youth.

I tried to hold her face in my mind.
It slipped.
Like water in a closed fist,
the harder I tried,
the less I had.

What I could see was a soft blur,
a picture drawn with a wet brush.

But the til (Beauty mark), I remember.
Right below her nose.
Small, black, perfect,
like a tiny full stop
placed by someone who knew exactly
where a sentence should end.

Strange, no?
The mind forgets the whole
and saves the smallest part.

I stood there for a while.
Not sad.
Not excited.
Just full,
the way a glass is full
when someone pours into it
something you never asked for.

Let me be clear about one thing.
There was nothing wrong in my thoughts.
No bad idea. No plan. No game.
Only a clean, quiet feeling
that I can call by one name.
Love, Pyaar, Ishq, Mohabbat whatever you want to say.

Not the loud kind.
Not the kind you post.
The kind that sits in a corner of the heart
and says, “Okay. This one.”

My mind was confused.
It said, “You saw her for two seconds.”
My heart said, “Yes.
And?”

CHAPTER FOUR

Eyes on Duty

“I did not go looking for her. My eyes did it on their own.”

* * *

From that day my eyes changed their job.
They stopped looking at the road.
They started looking for her.

At the gate in the morning.
On the stairs at noon.
Near the canteen,
where laughter is always cheap.
In the library, between the shelves.
In the corridor,
where every footstep sounded like hers.

Every girl with long hair
made me turn my head.
Every girl who walked looking down
made my heart skip once,
then sit back quietly
when the face was not hers.

A white suit in the distance.
Not her.
A bag of the same colour.
Not her.
A laugh near the notice board.
Not her.
A different til (Beauty mark) on a different face.
A different story.

Monday became Tuesday.
Tuesday became a week.
The week learned to walk
and became a month.

I told no one.
What would I say?
That I saw a girl for two seconds
and now my eyes are on duty?
Even I would have laughed.

But a little smile stayed
every time I crossed the gate.
Some mornings I walked slower,
just in case.
Just in case the world
felt generous again.

It did not.

A small poem

The Til (Beauty mark)

* * *

I do not remember her name.
I never knew it.
I do not remember her voice,
only that it was soft.

I do not remember the colour
of her bag or her clothes.
The day has taken all of that.

But I remember a small black dot
below a quiet nose,
and how it made
a whole face feel
finished.

CHAPTER FIVE

Maybe She Was Not Mine

“Not everything you love is meant to stay.”

* * *

Maybe she passed close to me one day.
Maybe in the same corridor,
on the same stairs,
and I looked the other way.
Maybe my eyes were tired
and I missed her by one step.

Maybe her schedule was different.
A different class, a different gate,
a different life
that had nothing to do with mine.

Or maybe,
and this one hurts,
maybe she was never meant for me.

There are people like that.
They come like a good song
from a passing car.
You catch two lines,
you smile,
and the car is gone.

You can run after it.
You will only get dust.

So I let it be.
I did not follow.
I did not ask my friends for her name.
Some things lose their magic
the moment you try to grab them.

I told my mind, “It is okay. Let it go.”
My mind listened.
It is obedient like that.

Letting go is not one big moment.
It is a small decision
you make again and again,
every morning,
at the same gate.

CHAPTER SIX

The Wish That Stayed

“The mind can forget. The heart only pretends to.”

* * *

My mind said, “Forget her.”
And it tried hard.
It filled my days with exams,
with deadlines, with plans, with people.

My heart kept one small light on,
like a night lamp in a house
where everyone else is asleep.

The wish was never big.
I did not wish to talk to her.
I did not wish to know her name,
or her class, or her city.
I only wished one thing.

Just once more.
Let me see her one more time.
Let me look at her properly,
without the blur.

The strange part is,
this had never happened to me before.
I have liked people, yes.
I have noticed, admired, smiled.
But no one had ever stayed like this.
No one who never even spoke to me.

My mind wanted to forget.
My heart did not.
I think that was the first time
they ever disagreed.

I learned something that year.
Love does not always need a conversation.
Sometimes it only needs a face
and a quiet morning.

CHAPTER SEVEN

October Again

“October gives and October takes. It does both gently.”

* * *

Now every October,
the air changes,
and so do I.

The same cool morning.
The same soft light on the road.
The same feeling that somebody,
somewhere,
is about to walk into my day.

They say if something is meant for you,
it comes in October.
Or at least October tries.
Or maybe it is just the month
that teaches you how to wait.

Maybe I will see her again one day.
At a gate, a station, a street.
She will have the same til (Beauty mark),
and I will know her
in one look,
like the first time.

Or maybe I will not.
Maybe she will stay a beautiful maybe,
a poem I never finished,
a song with only the first two lines.

And that is fine.
Because some stories are not long.
They are deep.

If she ever reads this,
I want her to know
that nothing in my feelings was ever wrong.
Only thanks.

Thank you for walking through that gate
with your eyes down
and your hair in trouble.
You gave a tired senior
a reason to look up.

A Last Few Lines

* * *

I still look up sometimes.
At gates, at faces, at mornings.
Not because I expect her.
Only because once,
in October,
looking up was the best thing I ever did.

T H E E N D

Thank you for reading.