

# An Abode of Isolation

By : Shadows of Memories

Anu, a newly married woman with a lot of new and sometimes strange people around, comes across dilemma, double thoughts and identity crisis. She tries to cope up facing the hards and worsts of her lifeâ she runs behind so many unanswered queries that leave her curious every moment. She fails and again she stands up, and then she gasps for a little fresh air. Will she be able to succeed? Or will she give up to trust her hopes and desires.



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# Chapter 1: The Prelude

## The Prelude

As Anu entered into the 1500 sq feet big apartment, it made her feel an absolute new interface to her new world. The colour of the *mehendi* on both of her hands is still very dark that implies how newly married she is. Almost everybody was starring at her as she was getting down from the car at the very entrance of the apartment. She took a gaze at the sky-touching monument that she would be residing at, with her husband. Her gorgeous red silk sari made her look like a princess. Up came she with her husband on the tenth floor by the elevator and walked till the corner of the blind end of its corridor. A full-bloom bonsai was kept so carefully at the left side of the *mahogany* door. She could see a shining bronze name-plate on the door of the flat which says:

*Mr. Anirban Mukherjee,*

*M.Tech (IIT), M.B.A. (IIM),*

*Senior Software Consultant.*

*"Oh my God! The alphabetical letters are more than the actual address..."* thought Anu.

*[My protagonist, Anamika has always been nick-named as Anu by her loved ones, without her due permission ever. It never let her relatives and herself as well to think over that why the name has been cut into such three syllables for other's convenience. To introduce her to all my readers, she is a 21 years old woman who just got married with the 28 years old Anirban under social matrimony-processes.]*

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## Chapter 2: The New Planner

### *The New Planner*

The company has provided Anirban a decently furnished flat of 3BHK on the tenth floor of the apartment-building. The newly made residential-complex is situated at the posh junction of the Ballygange Place, where-from anybody can get a broader view of almost the whole of south Kolkata standing in the front balcony and would be able to hear the cacophony of the busy traffic. But during the evening hours, the city takes the beauty of a gorgeous Queen, with all the street-lights lit. The hoardings of so many different advertisement posters have crowded the sky in such a way, that sometimes the city looks gasping helplessly to breathe properly. The crows and the sparrows try fly and find window panes and balcony shades to repose instead of tall trees. The footpaths around look like meshy maps from the tenth floor that guide the pedestrians and also homeless beggars to nestle. The traffic-police are so dedicated and committed to stand all through the year at the same place and signal the moving vehicles accordingly. *It seems they really don't need to get into a gym to mould over their muscle-lipids. Truly a Healthy profession!* Smirks Anu.

When it is about to dawn, the city undresses of it's vanity and the moaning reality gets unearthed, as if it evokes out of the ashes with fuming smokes still rising up slowly in the sky; it carries a deep hope to see the new sunrise followed by a new day!

Anirban clasped her from the back as she tossed by her side on the bed. His hot breath aroused her hair-lines by her carefully curved body. The blinking red light from a far-off hoarding through the glass-pane followed her heart-beats. She closed her eyes and started anticipating a cascade full of kisses approached her. She could not refuse too. The two phased through an alluring destiny of love and lust.

Sharp by 8.30 in the morning, Anirban's car is being sent from the office to his residence. During this part of the time the house seems to move with a fast-forward effect: Anu preparing for her beloved husband's morning breakfast and tea and also the lunch to his office; Anirban busy with his pre and post bathing programmes, making choices for the suitable clothes and deo for the day to his office; the maid doing the domestic jobs wherein she inputs some inattentiveness at her own convenience.

Anu lingered for the last-moment goodbye-kiss and few loving strokes and togetherness from her husband before leaving for the office. It keeps her refuelled till her husband comes back after almost 10hours of his office. And her loyal husband too can't deny the fact that these days it has been just impossible for him to resist long, the supple beauty and chic of his bride.

Anirban leaves. The maid is still cleaning the utensils. Anu relaxes on the armchair in the back-balcony with the newspaper in one-hand and a pen in the other. It's now the time for her favourite cross-words solving. Almost she has made the half of it. Suddenly her gaze coincided with a huge banyan tree amidst the far off lawn by the lake. She had missed the 'being' since when she had moved into this house...it has been almost three days and she never noticed the tree! She was mesmerised by the poised tree, and suddenly felt a deep attachment within, for it.

Anu made her occupied all day learning new recipes. Once, she heard that the best way to a man's heart is to satisfy his tummy first. And so she was trying hard to learn fast. Toasts with butter or an omelette or even boiled rice and an egg would hardly let her continue to carry on. However she felt a great interest in this new subject and started picking up the tricks to make food tastier real fast. She invested her time into the culinary studies, though she also loves to be engaged in the grooming of her new house too.

## Chapter 3: the Nagging Neighbour

### The Nagging Neighbour

Anu had just completed her bath and was draping herself in a floral printed cotton sari of red and pink combination. Her damp hair and soft skin carried a sweet smell of the bathing bar that she had used during her bath. The dark *kajal* in her eyes and the small red *bindi*, just in between her eyebrows, made her look like a fresh-face of the *Tilottama* Magazine that comes on the first week of every month. She was not looking any less than a Bengali heroine. The one who had sometime said, *married women are more attractive than the spinsters*, seems was not a wrong statement too! Anu however proved it a universal truth.

The door-bell rang. *Oh...who it may be right now?* Anu glanced at the wall-clock and it was 12.30pm. Anu rushed to the door, peeped through the eye-hole and found a middle-aged stout lady with a lot of excess make-up on her face, curiously waiting and repetitively checking the time by her watch. Anu opened the door, and almost half came inside the lady with a broad smile on her face,

*Hey hello, Mrs. Mukherjee? O sorry, I am Paromita Sikdar. My husband is a bank manager. We stay on the seventh floor...ummm, G2.,* the lady tried her best to make herself identified. She was wearing a gold-printed blue unfit salwar-kameez, a lot of unnecessary gold jewelleryes and a pair of red sandal.

Anu, little confused of what to do, anyways, allowed the lady inside the living room.

*Oh! Please come in...*

The lady almost spunged her into the soft sofa and felt so happy to sit so comfortably as per her size.

- *Wow. You guys have worked so hard, it seems, to decorate the house. It's truly beautiful.*
- *Thanks. But we have not done anything actually. The flat has been provided by his office.*
- *Oh...office!* (with a very shocking tone. Looked like, the word *office* failed to satisfy the lady's curiosity somehow)

The lady continued, *So you guys are saving up a lot, hmm?* (sarcastically)

Anu felt so incontextual. And so she asked, *Would you like some tea or coffee or juice?*

- *Hey, no!* (Reaction came from the lady, as if Anu offered her a glass of poison.)

*One glass of water will do.*

- *Umm...water? and some sweets?*
- *Okay just one please. I am cutting off on sweets and snacks you see. Growing so big everyday...* (laughed out loud)

Suddenly a room of silence trailed. To comfort herself, Paromita started, *Ey sorry, I forgot to ask your name.*

- *Anamika.*
- *Wow. A very nice name.*

Anu never knew what's so nice about it. Just to cooperate, she put a slice of smile on her lips. Paromita continued, *... and what's your husband? I guess he's an engineer and MBA.* (Obviously she got the idea as

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soon as she had knocked the door. She must have come across those 'mesmerising alphabets' on the name-plate)

- *Yes. He is.*
- *And you?*
- *An arts graduate.*
- *O! So lucky you are. You got a gem as your groom. A loved one?*
- *No. An arranged marriage.*
- *Is it? How come?*
- *Mmmm?*
- *No I mean, generally when it's a social tie, they don't prefer somebody so simple. No! I meant to say...*

Anu cut her in the middle of it, *Mrs. Sikdar, you can have this one...this is a sugar-free. It won't add up to your calories.*

The silent room very soon was filled up with the munching sound of Mrs. Sikdar. Anybody would find her looking so hungry for decades. She finished of four of them, irrespective of her tensions on adding to her extra-pounds. It would made anybody feel she was really dieting for a long time indeed!

Breaking the silence, Paromita triggered, *So how about your family? Your parents?*

- *Yes they stay at Khardah along with my grandmother.*
- *Oh! She's still alive?*
- *Haan? She is just 75.*
- *O! Thats pretty sweet. And you don't have any sibling?*
- *Yes I have a sister. She is at her plus two.*
- *So...did they demand any dowry during the marriage?*
- *Who?*
- *Your husband's family...*
- *Ummmm...not really.*
- *No! (the reaction came out in such a way as if Anu negated the fact that she was HIV negative)*
- *I mean did you expect them to take dowry? Why? You had had such bad experiences?*
- *Mmmmm...no no! My husband is very sensitive about this topic. I would have committed suicide if they would demand dowry. Just for this reason, you know my father gifted him with a Honda bike and the normal furniture, that anybody would give, during my marriage.*
- *You must be from a very affluent family.*
- *Yes. Ofcourse. My father is a businessman. We have five hardware stores in West Bengal. He has even gifted one store to my husband on our tenth anniversary.*

Anu found the topic so boring and uninteresting that every now and then she was having a feeling to yawn on Paromita's face. Possibly Paromita could conceive the guess and so she finally announced to leave.

Paromita left with a proposed invitation to Anu to their flat on the seventh floor along with Anirban. Anu too with enough gentleness in her voice and attitude, asked her to revisit her again. Anu was also given an invitation to join the Ladies' Club on Wednesdays which had initiated to let all the ladies of the apartment join together and share their thoughts, setting up Kitty Parties, Weekly once mental and physical fitness programmes, celebrating each others' birthdays and anniversaries etc. The concept of such overwhelming get-togethers was so new to Anu in true sense. In anycase, such social intimacy was a total taboo at her end. So she gave up the idea of wasting her time to even think upon it.

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She moved to the balcony and found the banyan tree calling her, flagging it's leaves through the breeze. Everytime she gazed at the scenario so far away, she felt a beautiful world to be there, so very different from the one she'd been residing at, so very different from the one she had read about in the geography text-books, so very different from the one usually shown in the National Geography Channel.

*There's a world full of rainbows, with an abode of happiness, behold, amidst the green bushes and white clouds with the rule of togetherness surrounded,* imagines Anu. Her eyes went here and there searching for so many unknown answers, already clouded her heart.

The unwanted guest though came in, out of the blue with a lot of unexpected curiosities, still Anu felt that at least she found a human face in her flat apart from the prevailing spirits and thoughts roaming inside.

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