

LOVE: The Great Canadian Novel

By : www

It is universal love that transcends all boundaries and resides only in the heart.



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Welcome to the land of the Aborigines, she thought. She felt so light-hearted. She took a deep breath and inhaled the cold air. Although it was chilly, she liked the feel of it. She was standing outside the Calgary International Airport waiting to be picked up by Ian. She looked around but couldn't spot his blue car.

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"Madam, do you need a cab?," she heard someone call from behind her. She turned around and saw a turbaned cab driver. She was extremely surprised to see a Sikh Punjabi man there. Back home in (East) India they are the locals and seen everywhere. Her eyes lit up.

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"No, thank you. I am waiting for someone to pick me up," she said happily. Any person from homeland was one of her own. She had struck an instant bond with him. The 36-hour travel from India to Canada had taken a toll on her. She was damn tired but now felt light. Her first air travel had left her satiated.

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"Madam, are you coming from India?," he enquired.

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"Yes, from New Delhi. Are you from Punjab", she was chirping away as if her close friend was talking to her.

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"I am Parminder Singh from Amritsar, Punjab. I came here 22 years back. You will be surprised to know I was a doctor but coming here couldn't set up my practice as our education is not recognised here. I had a family and with no work, the only option opened for me was to become a cab driver", he paused. **"For people from Third World countries, even though highly educated, only these jobs are available. Here we can be a cleaner, security guard, cab driver, a waiter but not a doctor, engineer or lawyer. Are you here for further education or job?"**

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"Aw! You sound highly educated. I am Fauzia. My parents called me Fuzzy. Thank God, they didn't reduce it to 'fussy'. I am here for University education. I wasn't aware about this job scene", she was curious.

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"Most of the Indians and Pakistanis are cabbies here. If you will talk to a cabbie here, you will know most of them are either doctors, engineers or lawyers and from Asian countries. Amazing, isn't it? Now, my son is going to the University. He can at least find a good job as per his education. He is in the first year there in Science. What course are you going to join?", he sounded excited.

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Fuzzy was thoroughly enjoying her wait. It was like a blessing in disguise. "I will be taking up English Literature. You know what, I can never think of you as a cabbie. You will ever be a doctor to me - Dr Parminder Singh. I am so glad my pick up is late."

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Parminder was extremely happy to hear her say this. "You are like my own daughter. My son Surinder Singh Chatwal will be of your age. You can always meet him at the University. You can always visit our home in the North-East. You can meet my wife and mother there." He took out a piece of paper and wrote something on it. "This is my address and phone number. Being new here, you are always welcome. We will show you around. If you need anything, don't hesitate to call. It's a pleasure to meet someone from my own country. God bless you."

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"Thank you so much for your kind invite and blessings. I made the right choice coming here. I will definitely meet Surinder. I don't mind being kept waiting", Fuzzy was wondering what happened to Ian.

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Parminder was concerned. "At this time in the evening there is a traffic snarl-up. One can be held up at the signal for a long time. Do you want to call up your pick-up? If you wish I can still drop you."

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She heard someone call her name from behind. She saw a tall guy walking towards her. She knew he was Ian.

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"Fuzzy", he asked.

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"Yes. And you are Ian", she said.

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"Right there. I am sorry. My calculations went wrong with traffic. It took me a hour and a half to reach here. I am absolutely sorry to keep you waiting. You must be pretty tired too. I am really really sorry", Ian looked deeply apologetic.

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"That's OK. It was a pleasant wait with a person from my own country. Meet Parminder Singh. Parminder, he is Ian. Had you not come, then he would have dropped me", she joked.

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After an exchange of greetings, she took leave of Parminder. Ian loaded her bags in the car and they were on their way to his home in Dalhousie in North West.

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