

The Dark Tunnel

# The Dark Tunnel

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Thriller suspense



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## The Dark Tunnel

And thereafter, I was almost hauled and dragged in, forcefully through a half kilometre tunnel, with my face all masked in a black cloth, that had a strange stinking smell, and my both hands tightly tied with hard ropes. I was curtly thrown inside an unknown unruly place, where I could only hear the shrill thrashing and clattering of the big iron door. I was getting numb being thirsty for long seven hours and now that I am captivated by them, to their success, I found myself moaning in pain, frustration and disappointment, on the floor of the prison. Somebody helped me to inhale the reeking oxygen from around as he set my face free from the black cloth. All I could see was deep and intense dark surrounded. I could smell and taste my raw blood drooling from the cuts and bruises of my cheeks and nostrils. I was all wet and drenched in sweat and the dark place seemed even hotter and humid.

“ Welcome! ”, I turned my head in a swift, to my east, as the husky voice tore the noiseless silence of the dark room.

“ What for are you here? ” the same voice claimed for my answer.

I was gasping inside though, but overcome to hold my breath and tried to search the source of the voice, with my keen ears. I was fighting with my sight, if at all I could get a glance of anything or anybody in the midst of the unknown darkness.

The voice demanded, “ Are you deaf or dumb? I said, what for are you here? ”

Being restlessly perturbed of the unknown strangeness, I exclaimed, “ They imprisoned me! ”

My reply was instantly followed by a gang-laughter, which was sarcastic enough to make myself more confused and scared. Somebody held a torch directly on my eyes, and that was more than any kind of harrowing attack; it penetrated and tormented my cornea, letting my eyes frowned and I shut my eye-lids pronto.

*They are not so bad, as they seemed at the very first meet, at least than those cobra-printed regiments. Harry is the oldest but shortest of all, who is imprisoned since last five years. He was formerly a clerk in the post-office and found guilty as the assassin of the Reader in the parliament. I never asked him the reasons and details of the predicaments he faced; I knew whatever Tom and Peter had let me know of Harry. Tom and Peter used to work in a garage together and they are here since last four months, who were caught linked with a drug peddler, for some different case. It has been now one full week for me too, to accept these three men as my only family in the prison. Harry is always very quiet, but inflamed inside, seemingly doing some constant calculations inside his brain. Whenever I am awake, I look idle at his eyes, with whirling curiosity and suspicions. Every freckle and wrinkle on the skin of the old haggard seems to unfurl myriad unknown answers.*

*The candle they supply seems a measured container of wax capable of irradiation only till late evening. If every time that is late evening or not, we only become confirmed to see the slow refraction of the moon beams through a crack of the wall. Harry called me gently and asked me to get a glass of water kept aside. I carried out the order. He drank the whole of it as if to quench up his thirst since decades. He threw a torn dusty chit of paper at me and indicated me to go through. I was stirred. Seeing it, I gapped and my eyes were wide opened. I looked at him, and he pointed at the guard outside the iron bars. I threw a glance outside, and found him well equipped with gun and bullets. Even when he moves off the iron door aside, he leaves his shadow to keep an eye on us. I understood it would not be really a very facile fascination for me!*

## The Dark Tunnel

It had been always our lunch hours, when we used to practise our keen ability. Harry was always my guardian and guide. He instructed me to lift up the stone slab beneath his bed-stair very slowly and carefully. As I followed his words, could find ample ants strolling and crawling on a heap of dried grass and hay. I hastily dug and cleared the stuff and finally we found the exact point to locate the healthy oxygen of air! I looked at Harry in surprise and amazement, and found his eyes shining with utmost happiness and pride. Our so long investigation and suspicion made us to find the doorway off the dark tunnel. Nobody could ever dreamt and imagine of such truths kept untouched nearby. One of the hidden exits of the prison was through our cell, beneath the floor!

We waited till the moon beams getting missed to pass through the cracked wall on some no-moon night. And there it came to our hopes, desires and expectation. Tom and Peter were sleeping and snoring like two wild boars. Harry and I were also pretending to be asleep. As usual, the wax of the candle melted till its lees and the darkness engulfed the prison with silence. Harry knocked me with his fingers and took me to the spot we invented, inside the cell. The darkness in the tunnel seemed even darker with almost no air, but a stale fleshy smell. It was a very narrow long tunnel where one can only crawl with all his hands and legs folded together, and that would take even more than fifty minutes to cover that hurdling distance of 300 meters. I looked back at Harry, to see his face for the last time; I found his fatherly pat on my back that could implant confidence and courage within me to aim and set for my omen. And I took a deep breath and kneeled down to follow my errant assignment.

I could well understand my knuckles, knees and elbows all getting cut, hurt, bruised and notched by the hard stony surface of the tunnel. I imagined about my impish decision, kind of which was instilled by Harry, on the cobbled and pebbled tunnel periphery. My frustration of no sight due to any light inside the tunnel brought in hindrance for me to move even an inch. My six feet tall body was almost creased and crushed to a height of three feet or lesser just to be placed properly inside the tunnel. The rough surface had even sharp nails planted at many places here and there grotesquely. The air became more suffocating for almost no oxygen, but flying dust particles; I was getting dehydrated due to the excess excretion from my sweat glands inside the dark pot roaster. I was trying to breath in and out as less as possible, and kept on tying myself in the hands of destiny and fate. The salty sweat dripping on my fresh cuts and getting them wounded again seasoned my body perfectly for a dainty salad to any hungry tigress, would have been sent by those poachers guarding the cells in the prison. I was getting procrastinated to complete the adventure with my senses emphatically getting dull and low by the ambience of the tunnel. I felt myself like a creeping creature with no vision, sound, air, water except an endless impediment. Suddenly I heard a strange noise, very known, but again so very incog. I tried to hear it more intently and felt restless inside to recognise the trill. And precipitously, to my sheer excitement and joy I discovered it as the noise of crickets from outside! I was not too far off then, in haste I could imagine. I wanted to inform Harry about it, crawling back the tunnel, but that would be so childish to think and hover on it. I became desperate to reach to the other end as fast as possible, if nothing, at least to breathe some fresh air after a long period of one whole month. I tried moving faster towards the cusp, with my tissues and flesh getting more wounded and hurt; I did not care. I became cognizant of the fact that the so long aloof world was being so abreast in a few minutes.

I never knew all the hurdles till then, I had overcome to make my castles in the air in reality, would turn imprudence within seconds. A rusty series of iron bars were eerily planted at the very end of the tunnel. The crickets tried to lure me more with their call, intense and strong. I went insane with anger and despair, and started to cry inside. My brain stopped working anymore for me and I felt dazed and tossed up with frustrations. I could not even move back as my whole body was wrecked badly enough and then paining severely and bleeding too. I held one of the iron rods to get support and started to gasp heavily. It was enough to astound me as the weary skeleton of iron bar suddenly came loosened in my fist and signalled for my breakout. Instantly I was jarred by the incident and was refilled with anew strength and temerity. The corroded metal bars imprinted auburn marks and deep cuts on my palms as I tried to break and fight them an unequipped. Only two of them I could uproot in the middle and the rest three were firm and strong enough to

## The Dark Tunnel

be plucked off. My cranial grey matter started working harder and faster to help me flee. I tried my head go inside between my folded knees and my elbows inside my chest to pass my demonic stature through an approximate gap of twenty inches. I decided, either I would die sucked by that iron gallows or in the hands of gun-risers.

I fell down unheeded on the bed of cactus and other thorny creepers, after a prolonged striving with myself and contingency.

â â Ouch!â â , I held my reflexes back and lowered down my sound-box. I managed to stand straight but handicapped after a long battle of one hour inside the peril dark tunnel. I had aches here and there all over my body and would probably need an emergency first-aid to recover soon. All I then wanted was to sleep a happy night. The sky was equally dark with no moon as a fact. I could hear a howling sound along with the crickets from the deep forests, with chilling breeze touching my skin and hairs and kissing my nostrils to let me breathe and ventilate. I turned my head to the back and found the dark roaring Pacific oceans breathing high and full. And so did me.

*I have lacked this air for twenty-five million and ninety-two seconds in these last thirty days. I am feeling like a triumphed King who did not give up for a single moment in the battle-field to get back his throne and continue to reign. The huge waves bathed the coxes by the ocean, anchoring my relief as the waters touched my feet. Though, nothing is as scary as being a victim of amaurosis and its obscurity, I am bewildered with the beauty of darkness: the multitudinous shades of darkness with variant connotation, somewhere its anguish, while sometimes its trepidation and sometimes its joy and relief too! I am now feeling the ultimate pleasure of being free and walk by the stony shores amidst the dark beauty, decimating my nightmares I had nights back.*

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