

**Crawling, Running Love: A Story of
Two Strangers**

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Chapter 1

The Beginning of a New Dawn

Waking up that morning was not like any other, it was like a veil is opened and everything became clearer. Margret could not place the feeling, but she knows definitely that something was talking to her; more like something was trying to alert her about something – it is the time! She felt an uproar deep inside her stomach, "definitely not a menstrual cramp," she reminded herself. Dressed in a Playsuit roped nightgown, Margret wasn't considering getting out of her king-sized all-white bed any soon. With her two arms clinching to a pillow, placing her left chin on one side of it while assuming a 'The Fetal sleeping Position.' She then adjusted a bit to stretch her already stiffing joints as a result of long clinching of the legs.

Now revealing her two smooth, tender thighs as a result of the knee-sized nightgown, she began to reminiscence through her antecedence so far, "...damn! I'm 24." That alone is a wake-up call. At 14, Margret had thought going back home one day, get a career as a lawyer, and then getting married to some prince. As an introvert, she didn't make many friends, and or getting into a romantic relationship wasn't her best niche. "...intimate relationships are vocation for the less busy", she always tells herself.

Margret has been working in her mother's small restaurant downtown for a year now. Though she had always dreamt of being a lawyer one day, the whole narrative of being a lawyer gradually faded away as she grew older. She found herself finding a sudden interest in banking, which made her take a course in investment banking coupled with few professional courses. "... I have to go," she said to herself. It is time.

Margret was just laying there like some Michael Angelo's 1530 'Crouching Boy' artwork as her mind kept taking her on a tour of mental self-appraisal. But it was interrupted by her mother's rattling voice, "Margret !!" her voice rattled. "...sweet heart... you know you can't make a good bank manager if you can't manage a small restaurant by the roadside, the last time I checked you are my manager."

"Mom..." Margret fired back, "I think we have to talk..." The last time Mrs. Alkabaheard the phrase "...we need to talk" she got a divorce. But this is time, she knew it can't be any worse than it is already. My daughter can't divorce me, she joked. "okay... I'm right here in the kitchen when you are ready..."

Ten minutes later Margret reluctantly dragged herself from the bed, walked straight to the bathroom as she unwillingly struggles to knot her short nightgown which is now revealing her abs, visibly displaying her medium-sized boobs which carelessly dangled as she brushed her teeth.

Now joining the mother in the kitchen, she looked at her with so much pity as she was so happy that morning. "No don't," she told herself. You will break her heart. Sometimes in life, the only way to do the impossible is to do it anyway. Margret took courage in all the motivational quotes she can summon at that point in time as she stood there, behind her mother thinking about the best way to go about it; the right words to use.

"Mom.. ", she managed to say. Her mother startled as the sound from behind sounded a bit crappie. Motioning around now, she quarried, "...honestly honey, can you be any less weird today?"

Sorry, Mom... but I want us to talk. "...you have already said it before, so start talking before I get a heart attack already."

"...I pray she doesn't", Margret wished. She went slowly now "...mom I think I have to go". Her mother looked perplexed now. "Go? But you just got here? Sweetheart really, you have to snap out of it and come out real. Do you finally get yourself a boyfriend? Or... oh... wait, you are pregnant? Oh jeez... girl are you pregnant?....", her mother's attitude was beginning to look annoying and the only thing Margret wanted at that point was to shut up. Then she let it out, "...Mom I'm going home!" on hearing that, her mother went numb, her face grievous as her eyes reciprocated with the moisture of tears, ready to roll down at the slightest blink.

Mrs. Alkaba has always known that a day will come when the only thing she has ever cherished will leave her. But she has always ignored that reality. Mrs. Alkaba has been with her only daughter since her devastating divorce 19 years ago, Margret was only 5 years when her father left for Canada which happened to be their original home. It took her years to get over the emotional trauma of losing the only man she ever loved all in the name of chasing clout. 6 years after the divorce, she lost her once heartthrob, she got a call one morning that the ex-husband is dead. This left another hole in her heart and took her years to recover, so seeing her only source of joy move out of the house is an emotional burden she has to deal with.

She had noticed Margret's reluctant attitude towards work of recent, and her lack of interest in things that ordinarily she once found interesting. At first, she thought she was going to leave the job but never know it was something bigger. "...Margret is leaving me" she said trying to make sure what she heard was true. She knew definitely that this is the time and nothing will ever convince her to change her mind, but as the saying goes, there is no harm in trying; so all needs to do is to ask, and she did. "Maggie honey..." she wept, "...you want to leave me here all alone? But why would you want to leave in the first place? This is like your home now, you can be whatever you want to be here, this America dear, everything is possible here..." Mom! Margret interrupts "...I know what you are doing, and trust me it isn't working, yes. You are right about this being like my home, but the truth remains that it is not! Don't you get it? My father's house is laying empty over there while I still have every opportunity to continue his legacy. Mom... I'm so, so sorry but this is happening. You just have to accept the fact that it will happen". Mrs. Alkaba motioned over her pot of West Coast Fish Chowder, stepped closer, opened it, and stirred ignoring Margret's presence. As she stirred, tears quietly rolled down her eyes as she couldn't get hold of them anymore, she later wiped her nose, trying so hard to restrict the mucus from coming out from her nostrils.

Then Margret knew this was the moment, she walked up to her, wrapped her arms around her waist, then rested her chin on her back. "you will be fine Mom, believe me, you will." Margret's words were comforting quite alright, but it didn't hold back her tears. The more she speaks into her hears, the more she weeps.

For Margret, that day marks her beginning of new possibilities, but for Mrs. Alkaba, it is the day she started her journey of solitary.

They both went to the restaurant that day but all could think about was what will become of the mother in her absence. "She is a strong woman" she consoles herself, she will get over it, she has always had.

For over a month, all Margret could think about is her proposed new life in Canada, how her new job will look like, her new apartment, friends, and possibly her new lover. Margret has always sucked in relationships, the last time she managed to get herself a boyfriend, it ended in less than a month. "Sex 'perverts', always looking to cohabit" she had once called most of her admirers. She had no idea what the future holds for her in Canada but one thing is certain, she knows exactly what she wants, and knows how to go about it.

The only picture of home Margret knows about was the one her parents had told her as a baby. "...the frontage has a beautiful mini garden where grand Pa use to spend most of his time on his Recliner rest chair. It has wooden mahogany windows curved with some vents, don't worry sweetheart, you will be there someday. Home is waiting..." the father had always told her.

"...at least I will be going home, but without Dad." Margret's regretted.

Margret has always performed a ritual since when she was a kid, each time she is about to perform an audacious task, she looked at the moon and makes a wish. Funny enough, like magic, it always works for her, though some handful times her "wish-catcher" fairies tend to disappoint her.

As childish as this could be, she kept it alive as one of her closest secrets. Leaving the only place she has always called home, and the woman she has always known all her life was more than just an audacious, it is more of a total life turn around. As stupid as it may sound to an average 24-year-old woman, Margret will defiantly be talking to her imaginary fairies tonight.

Now dressed in her knee-sized Playsuit roped nightgown, she walked up to her balcony and proceeded to perform her mojo, "...Good spirits of the moon, hear me. Good spirits of the earth, guide. Lead me not into the wrong hands but shade me from one. I seek to love you I seek peace. Love those who love me, protect me from those who hate me..." she then kissed her lucky and went to bed.

As Margret took the whole month making preparations for her travel, her mother spends the month learning how to live without her. She made new friends, went on dates (or rather tried to go on dates), the last time. The last man she went on a date with, she came back 15 later "...that dude can smoke anything that brings out smoke! Hope he won't end up smoking a bomb" she had complained to Margret is one of her "post loneliness" preparations. At some point, it sounded so funny, and in another, all Margret could feel for her was a pity.

If it is up to Margret, she would reverse her decision, if not for anything, for the sake of her mother. But as it stands, she is no longer in control, her spirit being has taken over; her spirit has long settled in Canada waiting for her physical presence to complement the transit.

[Chapter 2](#)

When Love is About to Happen

When love is about to happen, a lot of things start taking shape. Love is like a fetus in a woman's womb, when it starts taking shape, a lot of things simultaneously starts taking place. When a woman takes in, some of the features in her start taking shape; the breasts get bigger, while the fit begins to swell. That's the exact scenario when love is about to happen, the proposed benefactor begins to express unusual goodwill followed by unexplained happiness.

That was the case with Jack, a 28-year-old college graduate who finds happiness in helping people get over whatever difficulty they had. Jack will always say to himself, "...if you are not the solution, at least be part of the solution." Though this affirmation has landed him in more troubles than he can count, but on most occasions have rewarded him in the most amazing ways. Jack his a taxi driver by choice, his chosen profession has triggered arguments with his parents countless times. Jack's parents have always wanted him to get a job just like his colleges, earn a decent salary, and live happily just like every other normal people. But the word 'normal' sounds a bit offensive to Jack, "...can you imagine what the world will look like should everybody behave like everybody?" Jack had asked himself most of the time.

Jack's idea of a decent job is never about money, it has a lot to do with job satisfaction. He has always asked his friends in one of their many conversations about the nature of his job "how much are you willing to sell your happiness for? How much is your peace worth? If you can answer that, then that's how much you wish your so-called employers to pay you to keep you caged in that life they had to want you in, and I don't want to be in that group."

Jack's loquacious temperament has made him loved by many, many of his friends always say that he talks more than he thinks. "But why say nothing when you can always say something nice to people?" he had defended. Being a taxi driver to Jack means a lot more than just driving these cabs, it takes you closer to people, it gives you an opportunity to talk to them and feel their soul, their burden, then knows exactly where to help out (if they need one). Jack has probably met more people than anybody else in the whole of Canada, but today he is about to meet someone that will change his life forever – his soul mate.

Waking up that morning to perform his routine yoga meditation, he felt a strong internal positive vibration. "I feel happier today, the spirits await my presence" he had told himself with an assuring smile. After 45 mins of Yoga, he went to the kitchen to pour himself a cup of coffee as he reads the newspaper from the back. Jack has always had that habit of reading books or magazines from the back, according to him, "you don't know if you will live to see the next day. So even if I die today, I'd known how the story ended."

Mumbling words from the morning newspaper, with the cup of coffee on his right hand, looked at the clock and exclaimed "shit!" I have to go!

He rushed into his oval glass bathroom with marble walls, grabbed his toothbrush, and hastily ran the bristles through every gap in his mouth. Now done, he yanked off his red Santa Claus nightgown on the bed as he ran back naked to the bathroom. Jack has many explanations for always choosing a Santa Claus styled nightgown, but his favorite reason would be that "every day should be Christmas".

Now in the bathroom, he sang along with the song playing from his compact disk set as he scrubbed his muscled masculine body, pressing the large tube liquid soap from the middle. Five minutes later his bathing, alongside a mini singing performance ended.

Dressed in his usual long sleeve body hock shirt, covered with an open buttoned shirt, he picked his car keys from the wardrobe where he uses to hang it alongside his shirts. According to Jack, "...if these machines are good to you, you have got to treat them right."

He jogged out of his mini flat as entered and inserted the car key in his ignition, "today is gonna be a good day" he whispered and cracked the engine to life.

He drove through the streets of Toronto, then out to the main road that links to the airport. After a five minutes drive from through the airport road, he was flagged down by a young beautiful woman. Not the prettiest he has seen through, but there is something special about this one. "definitely she is new here" Jack ascertained. The young woman was dressed in an overall black jacket which goes down up to her feet. With three different luggage including a handbag strapped up her right arm, Jack knew for sure that whoever this lady is, she is new in town, "...she even had stockings on. Oh shit, she is an American!"

Jack has been in this business for so long to read every passenger's psychology on sight. As in, when they are in a hurry when they want to start up a conversation when they need emotional support, and they need a quiet moment. A passenger once called Jack's cab a 'moving therapy'. And that's exactly what Jack has made his cab to become: a place of emotional rejuvenation. Still looking at his first passenger from the driver seat, he can tell that she is stressed, but then there is this other thing about her he can't place. At that point, Jack started having this feeling of anxiety as if some force is about to hit him, but what he cannot figure out is where it will be coming from.

"... I don't know how today is gonna go down, but it has much to do with the lady," Jack told himself. Are you gonna come help me out with this bag or are you going to just sit there? The young pretty lady blustered. The angry lady's voice brought him back from his daydreaming as struggled to open the door "...I said it, she is not a Canadian" he murmured. He walked quickly but quietly to be a lady to pick the luggage. "...sorry ma'am, pardon my ignorance I was.. "just take me to the nearest motel, she interrupted, not showing interest in any of Jack's words of remorse as she walked straight to the passenger's seat and sat down not minding how Jack is going to handle the bags. "...oh God! She is arrogant" Jack cried!

Returning to the driver's seat after packing the bags in the trunk, he knew at that point that this will be the longest ride of his career. As uncomfortable as Jack was, he managed to ask "...so which of the motels do you wish to go?" Just anyone along the Toronto downtown, she responded as she flipped out her phone to type. "Ok ma'am, right away".

Few minutes into the journey, Jack's loquaciousness was gone; he was practically struggling within himself to maintain his original tempo. After conquering his demons, he managed to initiate a conversation "... I bet you are new here?" he asked "not really", she responded without raising her head. OK...but you look American though, Jack pressed harder. "Oh really?" she reluctantly replied. Her last response got Jack a bit angry "did she just gave me cold feet?"

Jack was a little edgy now, "you know ma'am, I can play you a song if you wish, it will help you relax." Again, the lady reluctantly declined.

It is true Jack has met different types of passengers, but the current one he is driving seems a bit strange. Though all her physical body language says she should be left alone, her spirit says the opposite. It's more like, the body says 'yes' but the spirit says 'No'.

Despite the anxiety in the air, Jack didn't give up, so he pressed on. "so how long did you stay before traveling out?" he asked yet again. "...can you roll down the window please," she said ignoring Jack's question completely. But Jack, just like the patient dog obeyed.

Jack wanted to ignore the lady, but the loquacious part of him never conceded. Again, he attempted to start yet another conversation, "...do you think that..." for the second time in their journey, the young lady interrupted, but this time very annoying. "...you know what sir, I will prefer not to talk till the rest of the journey. Just drive."

To say that Jack was surprised is an understatement, Jack was stunned on hearing these words. He felt betrayed as those words sank inside him, piercing every part of his soul. All his years as a cab driver, none of his passengers have exhibited this high level of arrogance. At the moment, all Jack could think about is to shout the scalp out of whoever it is that was sitting on behind him. But then, something happened.

The same voice, but with milder tone now started, "...okay, I get it. Sorry for my initial response, I understand you are trying to engage me in conversation..." now stuttering "...I don't even know what to say, but hey, I'm sorry. Okay?"

Still focused on the wheel, but deep inside him, he felt a sense of belonging, "...it's ok. It's nothing, sometimes spirit has a way of playing a fast one on us. Isn't it what the psychologists call mood swing?" Really? The lady chuckled, "...how would you know that?" she queried with her smile still fixed.

Jack excited that finally, the stage is set for a conversation happily replied "...the welfare of our soul is determined by our outward behavior. I don't know the circumstances surrounding your coming here, but I bet you are missing someone." Hmm... impressive the lady sighed in affirmation. "Do all the cab drivers around here talk like this?" she joked. Then Jack gregariously responded "...you wise. Welcome onboard the moving therapy ma'am" they both for the first time had a loud long laugh.

Okay, ma'am, you are less than three minutes to Mc Martha Motel, it is probably the closest around here, "Oh... nice. Thank you." Arriving at the motel, Jack moves to get her luggage in the trunk. While on it, she slowly walked behind him, her voice more gentle now, "hey Jack", startled, as he can't remember introducing himself, he turned around in response, but the figure in front of him looks a bit different from whom he had picked up from the airport. "Menh...she is pretty.." he thought. Then the lady continued "okay ...don't be surprised, I got your name from the ID displayed on the passenger seat. Hope it's ok if call you Jack?"

Jack's cab driver's ID card was displayed at the passenger's seat with his formal name 'Jackson Spencer' boldly written on it. "...oh Yah...of course you can call me that, everybody calls me Jack". Okay, Jack, I was thinking, if you could come to pick me up tomorrow morning 11:00 to my place, it is still around downtown though, I will get you the exact location tomorrow. Can you do that? She asked politely with a smile. "...of course, yes, that's my job" Jack responded as he prepares to get back to the car. "...and by the way... my name is Margret and this is my number call me when you come" she added.

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Chapter 3

Fighting With Oneself

Going back home that day, Jack knew his life was going to change, but how it will happen is still a mystery. "Margret", he thought. What a name!

Jack entered the bathroom that night but found himself lost under the running shower. He just stood there staring at the dense glass surface of the bathroom while the shower eagerly descends the chilly cold water down on his head, and slowly spreads all over his body. On a normal day, Jack would have been shivering and gnashing as a result of the cold weather, but at the moment, his spirit has practically left the body while the brain searches every one of the over one billion neurons for a possible answer to what is going on here what is about to happen, and what could have caused the possible change in mood.

For hours, he just stood there like a victim of a nervous breakdown. He wasn't thinking of anything in particular; his thoughts were just a bit distorted; at one point, he is thinking about the first time he set his eyes on her, at another time, he thinks about how tender, soft, and light her hand was when he shook it. "...her voice is so angelic" he'd told himself. What is happening to me, he quarried, "I'm about to lose my mind".

If this is love like they say, then I think I will have to reconsider my options of getting one. "I thought love is meant to be a beautiful thing? Okay, Jack don't push it, you haven't even made advances yet" Jack started to discourage himself, trying hard enough to convince himself that he is not and never fall in love with some strange girl from a foreign land. "...no, I'm just infatuated, just a temporary obsession, it will pass, like hell, it will!" he assured himself. As if he has been poked, he suddenly came back to life, realizing that he has been under the same shower for hours. Since the brain is now in synergy with the body, immediately, he started feeling cold, shivering, as he rushed off the shower wrapped up in a white Turkish Cotton towel around his waist.

Normally, Jack has this habit of spending the evening with friends where they come together in a bar to talk about their day. Jack never misses each session, but that day, he drove straight to his house, took a bath, and collapsed on the bed. To Jack, the feeling mixed, it is a combination of anxiety, anger, excitement, and disappointment. Jack was anxious because he thought he would not wait to see Margret the next day, he became angry with himself for being obsessed with a stranger, and he was excited because "this could be his heartthrob".

Jack's relationship with the females has always been on a platonic basis; he has always gotten pressured from many angles, especially from family and friends about going into a relationship. Jack has always been a friend to all, but going intimate is something he has not really paid much attention to. He was so unserious about going into a relationship that his friends had to set up.

Jack has an amazing circle of friends, though they can be dramatic a times; they never your back; they are the true representation of "stronger together". So when they noticed Jack's unserious attitude on girls, they agreed to set him up with Lora. Lora is a 25-year-old accountant, beautiful, intelligent, and elegant. That evening, Jack walked in there as usual, and all of the three friends are there, but surprisingly, there was another person in their midst, a girl, light-skinned, back hair, with an Angelina Jolie kind of lips. "...a new initiate uh? Probably the most beautiful" Jack joked. "... I'm Jack by the way, and whatever they'd told you in my absence is not true" again, he joked. That joke triggered a conversation that sure each person contributing avidly, but not when he noticed all his friends started excusing themselves one by one. Few minutes into the conversation, the three men were gone, leaving only him and Lora. "...damn! Son of a bitch!" he grinned, they set me up!

Still marvelled at the stunt they have just pulled on him, he turned to Lora who is now wearing an odd look of acquaintance; not looking surprised at the development.

"wait a minute..." Jack exclaimed, tell me you are not part of this?! "Well...you can't a girl for trying" they all laughed aloud in unison.

Well..., the three friends thought they had succeeded but not Lora came back three days later to complain that Jack is the most unserious person she has ever met. "...how old those he thinks he is 12?!" she thundered. Lora had complained bitterly how Jack treats everything with kid's glove. "...everything for him is another huge joke! Sorry to disappoint you guys, but I don't want to spend the rest of my life babysitting a full-grown adult.

Still lying helplessly on his bed, while other feelings gave way for anxiety, Jack can't wait for tomorrow to come. "...damn! I can't wait to see her again" he admitted.

Chapter 4

A Life About to be Changed Forever

Margret's undivided attention was once focused on how to go about rearranging her new home before she entered that taxi, she was more interested in getting her new life started already. But this is not the situation now as all her attention is now channeled towards seeing Jack again. "oh! He is cute", she said, lying on the single size motel bed.

Margret didn't have much memory of his father, but as a five-year-old girl still trying to find her purpose in life, all she needed to do was pay attention to whoever gave it to her. And from the look of things, her father gave her the most attention; hence, the father-daughter relationship. Aside from those beautiful bedtime stories, especially those stories of home and its beautiful features. Margret's father's stories were actually what inspired her decision to move. She always dreamt of a better life there, just like the Christians will believe the story of heaven even without visible evidence. Canada was Margret's idea of heaven.

When her father left as a result of the divorce, she felt betrayed. The more she thinks of missing those beautiful bedtime stories, those sandcastles at the beach, and a 'Jack in the Box' play session, the more she feels guilty, "how could he have left? Even if there is nothing left to salvage in the marriage, he could have just stayed for my sake. He betrayed me!"

Margret has always blamed her father for leaving, that single behavior has changed quite a lot of things about how she views the male folks. "...they will light your heart with so much happiness and abandon you just when you about to enjoy the ride."

Because of this, she has not been able to trust men enough to let them into her life. "...make sure you don't die a virgin", the friends would joke. As a teenager, Margret has wondered why people of her age would find so much joy

in keeping intimate relationships even when they know it will certainly end in tears someday. "...honestly, how do they do it" she had asked herself, "you mortgage your happiness on the altar of an impending disaster, then turn around and cry your eyes out claiming you have been heartbroken. How does that work?" To others, Margret is Philophobic, but for Margret, it is just the fear of walking away when things become more interesting. She can't just afford another replay of his father's betrayal.

Margret didn't hate the father. Neither did she hate men, just that of all the feels she fears the most; heartbreak tops the list.

While on the bed, she couldn't help but recall how she treated Jack the first time they met "...I knew he likes me, I knew he was trying to make advances at me, but what if I consented and the obvious ends up happening?"

Margret would have gotten any other taxi to take her downtown. Still, her reason for asking him to come to pick her up was to give herself a second chance, "I can't continue living this way, I deserve to be happy, I deserve a second chance" she kept telling herself.

Dressed in just bra and panties, she had been rolling from one edge of the bed to the other, trying to catch some sleep. Just like Jack, anxiety has set in. She looked at the clock; it was 2:00 am, "heavens are already awake, just a little more time."

Margret was lying on the bed face up; she had two things in mind: either to be swept away by Hypnos: the goddess of sleep, or for morning to come already. Either way, she couldn't wait to see Jack yet again. In less than fifteen minutes later, Margret's wish was granted: she slept off.

Margret was woke by the shattering sound of the motel telephone. "Damn! What the hell...!" she grumbled. Still, on the bed, she stretched out her left hand towards the phone while covering her mouth as she yawned. "Hey," she said with a tiring voice. Then a woman's voice responded, "...good morning ma'am, you have a visitor, a taxi driver, he said his name is..." yes! Margret interrupted, please let him in.

"How could he be so early?" Margret thought, as she was trying to roll to the other side of the bed, his eyes cut the vintage wall clock on the wall of the room. "jeez! It is 11 am?!" she rushed out from the bed, quickly brushed her teeth, then racketed her Travel Totes for the nearest fitting shirt wear before Jack comes in. As she bent over, her eyes caught her image on the Cheval Floor Mirror adjacent to the balcony. Then she understood how much she has changed since his father's death.

When Margret's father left, it was bad enough, but then when the news of his death got to her, she nearly committed suicide. She felled into depression one month later, trying to find solace in virtually everything, and that's how she turned a glutton. And coupled with the fact that she works as a manager in her mother's restaurant, food was never a problem. Within three months, Margret gained 280 pounds in weight due to massive consumption edibles, as of then, Margret lacks moderation, anything and everything goes. The mother noticed these changes, understanding the implications of an 18 old girl gaining such weight took it more seriously by engaging the experts' services. She bought every material on weight control: CDs, Magazines, books, just about anything. She began spending more time with

her, offering both psychological and physical assistance. In fact, her mother had encouraged her to make more friends because she left for Margret alone; she had become her own companion.

Now standing at the mirror admiring her new shape, "I'm a better woman now..." she reminded herself as she slowly rubbed her palms from her waist through her hips, then down to her thighs wearing only her shirt. "I have really come a long way..."

As she was busy mulling over her curvy looks, there was a knock. "Damn! I'm almost naked", she said, trying ransacking her bags for the nearest pants. "one minute!..." gushed as she struggles to fit into her black silk pants.

I'm sorry for interrupting you, but I just read this, and it looks awesome, the dialogues are so fluent, so vivid, would you mind to tell me if you are writing in some page, or where I can find more of your work? Thanks, sorry for the abrupt message

[Chapter 5](#)

One the Road with a Familiar Stranger

"...Good ma'am, I thought you would be ready by now" Jack quarried; I'm ready, she responded looking directly at Jack, looking like a surprised baboon. "you said you are ready?" yap. Sure I'm, all dressed, ready to go. "Miss Margret..." Jack called ominously, "are you sure you are okay?"

Jack's eyes, now surveying the entire room, wondering what she has been doing before he arrived. "Miss. Margret, your room looks weird" immediately Margret got it; her room was scattered. Margret's clothes were littered as a result of trying to keep the right clothes. "oh that?!" She said, breathing faster now. You know what, Jack said, motioning backward, I will have to wait outside. I will be here in the next 15 minutes; I believe you must be ready by then. Feeling a bit embarrassed, she sheepishly chuckled, then went back to arranging her littered clothes, but this time gently.

Margret always has an age-long self-therapy which she performs each time she is anxious. Closing her eyes now, she took a deep breath and whispered to herself, "...you have to calm down girl, you really have to calm down." As if a fragment of her brain started coming back, she noticed she was sweating, and her hair was not probably done. "Damn! I didn't take my bath."

She immediately removed and tossed her clothes on the bed and rushed to the bathroom. Quickly, she rubbed the liquid soap provided by the motel on her chest, down to her thick breast, then the armpit and smoothly through her hips down to her thighs towards the foot, while the two fairly large boobs dangled bath slowly on.

Her was a quick one; she bathed without a sponge. After seven minutes, Margret was all set, dressed in a red sheath dress (knee size); she was actually combing her hair when she had a knock. For the first time in Margret's life, she

thought she was getting ready for a date outing. She quickly ran her hair tie around her head and urged aloud, "...come on in, the door is open."

Jack walked into the room for the second time that morning, but surprisingly the woman she was looking at was nothing like the one she picked up 24 hours ago. The one he was looking at is way too ravishing for a local motel by the roadside. At some point, he was lost in his thoughts, but he quickly snapped out of it not to make the lady feel embarrassed.

With all her bags packed and arranged, she announced, I'm ready now. Bewildered, Jack responded, "...of course you are." He went ahead to pull one of the bags upon his shoulders, then pulled one on one hand while he wheeled the other.

He neatly arranged the bags in the car trunk and waited in the driver's seat to formally lodge out. Moments later, the door to the passenger's seat opened, and here comes Margret "... okay Attaboy, let's do this, take me home." They both laughed out loud.

Pardon my ignorance, Jack said, 'Attaboy', what's that? Oh, that? Margret gasped, "hmm... okay let's go this way; it is an informal way of encouraging a man, like..." she rolled her eyes "...go get it, Jack! (she shrugged) something like that." She murmured really slowly "...and It also, an expression of admiration." I didn't hear that" Jack quarried, I didn't get the last one. "...no, it's nothing, just talking to myself," she lied.

Now on the road, Jack was already curious at Margret's sudden excitement, "... maybe this the time to establish my empire, " he encouraged himself. So ma'am, what's up with you today, you look different?" different? She frowned. As in how? "...no nono, don't get me wrong, when I said different I actually meant bright, as in brighter than yesterday" he defended. He noticed me to she thought. Margret, now wearing an autocratic look like a queen about to order for the head of her subject, her head straight, and her outlook audacious. Then she said, her voice harder now, "Jack, you know this is never the way to compliment a woman. If you think a woman looks good, come out clean and say so..." Margret said, her smile cruel. Even though she is sitting behind him, he feels he has provoked her, and she is about to slap his face from behind. "oh...sorry ma'am, but that's the best word I can find at the moment." Really? She protested, "so whatever happened to words like pretty, beautiful, sexy, or did the government place ban on their use or something?" she joked.

"...what is she doing? Is she hitting on me?" Jack was a bit surprised 'cos he was the one preparing to do the hitting. Margret's advances actually made the job easier; what he should do is just to follow up. "...by the way, Jack, why didn't you call me as promised before coming?" 'I never promised,' Jack thought. Responding now "I called actually, precisely three times but nobody responded, I suspected you weren't with your phone so I had to ask the reception to help me out" Margret flipped her phone, she saw three recorded Miss calls on it, "oh.. Yap. My mind was just all over the place until I dozed off." Hmm...Jack sighed, so you were your thinking, what about? Do you mind sharing? On a normal day, Margret could have just shared her thought, "do you seriously expect me to tell you I was actually thinking about you? Nah... sweetheart, it doesn't work like that", she concluded in her mind, but then, she has to say something. "Nothing much really," she lied, "just a bit anxious, thinking about my new home and stuff." So you have a family

here, ma'am? She then interrupted, "you know what, Jack? Just drop the formality, call me Maggie, are we cool with that?" Of course, attagirl! Jack humored. Again, the two laughed aloud.

Chapter 6

Can I Know you Better?

Jack knew they were going to have a long ride, and he didn't mind the journey taking even much longer. Jack has had countless road conversations, but there is something special about this one. A wise man once said, "lick an orange, it is just an orange. Lick it with the right person, it becomes a sweet orange." So at the moment, the conversation is definitely taking place with the right person. While on the journey, Margret has got Jack many times trying to take a glimpse of her face from the car's rearview mirror. "...he got the message." She grinned.

"So tell me about life here... how do you guys live? How do you party, how is the corporate here? Just tell virtually everything you think I need to know." Jack has always been a fan of politics, but never envision himself engaging in one. So he was peculiar with Margret's question. Well, Jack started "there is a lot of stuff going down here though but let's start from the social lifestyle, first It's Forbidden to Pay in Coins.." What?! Margret exclaimed "...no nono... don't get me wrong, not like you won't be paying for goods with coins, just that you don't pay with a lot of coins, it is prohibited. The government only allows you to use only 25 loonies (a Canadian one-dollar coin) and 5 coins of 25 cents each. So if you are thinking of paying C\$30 for food in loonies, be aware that it's actually illegal across the country." Wow...that's super interesting.

Again, Jack continued," it is Illegal to Drag a Dead Horse Along the Street" who will want to do that? Margret asked furiously. "well, some people do, probably can't afford a truck." And there are other crazy laws like "It's Illegal to Remove a Bandage in Public, It's Not Allowed To Carry a Snake in Public, and now the super crazy one... It's unacceptable to hold too many sales, can you dig that?" Wow... that's super crazy indeed she responded. And again, please note this, Jack's voice more serious now "It's Forbidden To Pick trillium", Margret looking confused now, "what's a trillium" she asked, it's a type of flower actually."

As if she remembered something, "yes, I think this is the right moment to ask this. I read some time ago that It's Illegal to Own a Domestic Rat. It is quite funny, how true is that?" they both laughed for a while. Then Jack moved to respond "yap...that's very correct, you can't keep a rat as a pet, but that doesn't apply to all the province here. If you live in Alberta which is approximately 3500 km from here and will take us 36 hours on road, You cannot keep a rat as a pet. Since the 1950s, several laws have been passed in Alberta prohibiting the keeping of rodents.

“...hmm... interesting. But how come you know these stuff so well, I hardly see taxi drivers with an academic description of the environment they operate in. Tell me about yourself Jack.”

This request alone made Jack feel like he had won some lottery. “you are so... in there” he exhorted himself.”

“Well... my dear...” he had started. On hearing that phrase “my dear” Margret knew he has gotten the picture. “come on Jack, say the word” she improvised. Jack still holding steady on the steering, searched his mind to find the best possible way to start; probably make the whole story less weird. How can I possibly tell her I purposely rejected my admission for a cab. “Oh, you are such a weirdo” he teased himself.

Chapter 7

Retired but not Tired

Mrs. Alkaba woke up that feeling so vulnerable, she has not felt this way since the death of the husband. But if there is anything she is very good at, it is motivating her herself. She falls into depression every now and then, but never a day did she stay depressed, “life is a choice, you either choose to leave or still wallow your sorry ass regretting just one mistake.” Though her divorce is all her fault as she paid more attention to her job than her marriage, this is a mistake she regrets so deeply, but to keep feeling guilty about it is another mistake she can’t afford to make. “I have to give myself a second chance,” she said walking to the bathroom for her routine morning duty.

She went to the kitchen to make herself some coffee, as she was turning the coffee, she could hear every cling emanating from the cup as a result of the continuous contact of the spoon and the cup. A cling has never been so loud, “I need to keep my mind occupied or I will have to perish in loneliness.”

Sipping her coffee as she walks back to her room, she walked-pass the mirror, then stepped back to have a proper view of the image she had a clip of the first time she walked passed. There she stood there admiring her structure. “...I am such a petite she told herself, look at all these curves.” Angela! She called herself by her first time, you really need to get a fix. She then rubbed her hands round her breast area trying to argument the almost sagging breast even if it is for few minutes of admiration. Then she stylishly turned around like a model on the runway trying to admire her side buttocks. “young lady, you are just 48, not 84, go out there and kick some ass with these buttes!” she urged herself, “but first, you are going shopping.”

Excited, she joyously tip-toed to her home theatre sound system and pressed the play button. Fortunately enough her favorite song was playing on the stereo section of the home theatre “wow...Cardi B!” she exclaimed, “Yah...hit me baby” as she danced and sang along, whining her petite-looking waist as the buttocks relentlessly tweaked along.

Back in the car, Margret and Jack were still trending carefully not to appear too desperate, despite the overwhelming desire to get a relationship going already.

Replying to Margret's question wasn't a big deal as such, the problem is what to say to her. "okay..." he started, "I'm just a regular guy with an irregular perception about life" confused, Margret displaying her confusion enquired "how is that?" well...he continued, "I don't really know how to go about it, but I try to simplify it. I have always wanted to study psychology, as a matter of fact, I still very much want to still study it, it is not really about money, but the joy in renting services to people. I'm a college graduate by the way. Let's just we are too excited about helping people succeed in our little way." Margret couldn't phantom what she just heard "you a minute dude..." Dude?! At that moment Jack knew she was in trouble. "...are you in any way saying that you abandoned your intention of continuing your education because you feel you make people happy? Seriously?! Who does that? I can't believe I'm hearing this" she sat up as if she was going to physically attack Jack. "can I be honest with you Jack?" she continued "nobody gives a fuck! Got that? This is life, the more selfish you are, the better your chances of making it in life. You these guys are happy with you? Try asking them for favor and see how it goes. I'm not saying you stop helping if that what makes you happy, but don't do that to your detriment."

Margret's words really cut deep into Jack's heart, "I knew there was something about this woman" he told himself. She continued, "come on Jack, this is your life and you really have to take charge, don't hurt yourself to please others, it is totally wrong. Even the Christian book made it clear that displeasing yourself to please others is a sin. So give yourself a break and feed yourself with that happiness that you deserve."

This woman must have to stop talking, Jack told himself as he makes a turn. "we have to stop hear for gas" he announced as he slowly pulled over.

Chapter 8

Mammy meets Pappy...!

Still trying to resurrect her teenage days as she danced to excitedly to the song from the home theatre. While on it, the phone rang, at first she didn't pick up as she was so carried away by the rave. As rolled around, her left eye got the florescent lights of her smartphone device as it vibrates, making a humming sound as it rings. I have a call. Breathing heavily now, she tapped the green portion of the screen, "Hello..." she answered politely as she slipped her hair behind her ear.

"hello...Mama mia!" a lanky male voice answered. "How are you today?" surprised at the awkward courtesy, "who is my speaking with please?" she inquired politely. "This is Mr. Edison 'The Big Daddy Papito'..." he sang his name like a verse in a song. Mrs. Alkaba stunted at the caller's identity could not help it but laugh hysterically in excitement "...The TBD Pappy!" she called out, thought I have lost you" she said crossing her legs as she sits the sofa chair. "You don't really lose Pappy, my dear, all you need is to ask around...well, let's just say Pappy missed you." On hearing that, she blushed, resting her head on the sofa cushion.

Popularly known as TBD Pappy, TBD, a full meaning for "The Big Daddy" is a 63-year-old popular socialite and a widower who finds delight in hanging out with a lot of women. Black in complexion, tall, and an ominous voice that sounds a bit like a mafia. He met Mrs. Alkaba when he walked into her restaurant for the first time, in his usual way of flattering women he lavished praises on Mrs. Alkaba, telling her how her beauty may course heaven another fallen angel. All through his stay in the restaurant, she wouldn't do anything else but to blush all through.

"aren't you coming to the restaurant today gal, all I can see are your staffs that and the last I checked, none of them looks like you." He is in the restaurant?! Mrs. Alkaba thought as she suddenly realized she has a restaurant to run. "You are in the restaurant?" she questioned, "yes actually, trying to have a decent meal, but your presence would have been a perfect complement; will make the food digest faster." Again, she laughed so hard that couldn't help it but to promise him she will be coming down soon. "I will be with you soon Pappy..."

From the filling station to halfway downtown Margret didn't say a word to Jack, neither did Jack attempt to start a conversation. It was a complete "Ghost Mode" as if none of them existed despite staying in the same car. Margret was

busy swiping her phone, while Jack had switched on the stereo. To Jack, Margret's last few words were the hardest he has ever had years; nobody has ever spoken to him with so much passion and audacity, "I really need to go back to school" he concurred, 25 minutes into the journey, they arrived downtown Toronto – one of the most popular areas in town. "We are here Maggie," he said as he pulled over.

Margret's father's house was a three-bedroom bungalow, a mini garden at the frontage, a wide balcony, and a garage, exactly how her father described it. "So this is will be your new home now?" Jack inquired, unpacking her luggage from the trunk, "yap, and from the look of things, it seems I won't be doing much cleaning after all." Feeling fulfilled, she excitedly ran towards the entrance door with some bunch of keys dangling in her hand. With that happy mood, she slotted the key in the keyhole and turned it once, clicks, the door swung open.

With Jack behind her with the luggage, she opened the door expecting to see an all dusty apartment with nylon sheets covered all over the chairs and other furniture. Fortunately, there were no nylons covering any of the furniture, secondly, the house was looking as clean as if it is been cleaned on a daily basis, therefore, contradicting the fact that it has been abandoned for close to seventeen years. "Well...this doesn't look abandoned to me" Jack said looking surprised as well. "Definitely it been occupied all along" Margret supported. As they were busy contemplating on the possibility of a said abandoned apartment looking neater than ever, Margret's phone rang.

"Hey Maggie..." a female voice said, sounding all cheerful. "Heard you just arrived..." she heard? Margret wondered. The voice continued "...the neighbors told me you just arrived. I should have stayed back and waited for you but I had an urgent call so I hard to leave. The family was excited when your mother told us you were coming home. Hope the house suits your taste, I changed some of the old stuff though...oh! Forgive me, I didn't introduce myself, I'm Kiky, your cousin. We talk more when I come back, you are welcome." She hung up.

"I think things are going to be more exciting than I thought. My cousin just called, never met her before, she said the rest of the family knew about my arrival. Wow..." Margret said turning to Jack who has careful put down the luggage as he prepares to leave.

As Margret turned he saw Jack standing there looking at him, obviously ready to go. "Jack, you are leaving?" she asked me her face swollen as if she wanted to cry, "I have to, I'm a cab driver you know, I have to hit the road." Margret then deep her hand in a bed handbag, counted some few dollars, and handed it over to Jack. "Thanks, ma'am," Jack said motioning around "ma'am?! Margret protested. "call me ma'am again and I will have to slap the ma'am off your tongue," she said sarcastically. "You have my number now Jack you can always call me whenever you wish, and can always come around whenever you wish. And please for heaven's sake call me Maggie." They both laughed "...yes I will, it's a good thing you found your family already, or should I say...your family found you. Again, I thank you for the advice in the car, I think you have a strong point there about going back to school, I really give it a thought. A nice home you have there by the way."

Now, Margret came closer to Jack and gave him a peck, "see you around Jack." Jack blushed for a while, turned and the house smiling sheepishly.

Chapter 9

Love Searched, Love Found

Normally, Margret should be mesmerized at the secret surprised arrangement between her mother and the rest of the family. Before now, Margret had no idea she has cousins talk less of ones that are magnanimous enough to lessen the burden of cleaning. “How sweet” she could say. But right there, the only scene occupying her holographic mind at the moment was when Jack left. She couldn’t stop thinking about the smile from his macho-blush, his benevolence, and diligence he displays in his job. “I haven’t seen a man so proud of his job.”

For the first time in Jack’s life as a cab driver, he went home much earlier than he uses to. Jack could not help driving around town with a heavy mind, driving needs focus, and right now, the least Jack could do is to focus. Going back to the house was the best thing he could think of at the moment, and so he did. Like Margret, Jack’s best moments were playing on repeat in his brains and he was definitely enjoying the play out. Unlike Margret, Jack’s best scene was the peck “she pecked me...” he said to himself grinning. Jack’s holographic memory slightly slipped into an aesthetic imagination. Jack had imagined himself with Margret kissing each other on a beach, holding hands as they stroll past the river bank. Jack’s imagination too did not last long as it turned into a dream after Jack dozed off. For an hour Jack was talking in his sleep, calling Margret’s name at every minute.

Jack’s sleep was cut short by a sound from his smartphone, it has been ringing for some time before he could notice. He yawned while crawling to the other end of the bed to get the phone. “Hey Maggie...” he said with a tiring voice. “Hey, you... was wondering if you got home safely...” She was worried about me, Jack smiled. “...Come’ on Maggie, I’m a cab driver, we are always safe.” Then he looked at his watch which has too lazy to remove since he got back, his jaw dropped. It is 11 pm already! “no wonder she was calling, I’m supposed to do the calling. I should have been the one doing it.”

In other not to sound too proud, he took responsibility “sorry I would have called you earlier today, I think I slept for a long time. So how are you?” Jack asked trying to sit up. “...I’m fine dear, just there. By the way, I just met my cousins and kiky too. Remember kiky, the one that called immediately I walked in?” Jack nodded in agreement “...yap.. Sure” she continued “...they made me dinner, they also told me much about my Dad, showed me pictures too. It was

beautiful.” Then Margret’s voice was a bit sad now “...do you know my dad died of cancer?” Jack was surprised at the revelation and felt nothing but pity for her “...am so sorry about that Maggie. But worry, you will be fine trust me, you have your family now, and hey... , you have me too.” Margret smiled at Jack’s last comment “are you sure I have you Jack?” she asked initiating a silly tune “...sure of course, do you doubt it?” Jack asked smiling even deeper, with a naughty expression, Margret replied “yes I doubt, why don’t you prove it. Take me out!” nice move, Jack thought. “Okay, alright. Tomorrow is Saturday, I’m coming to keep you up by 11:00 AM, better be ready” Yuppie...Margret exclaimed in excitement, “I will be sure waiting sweetie...” at that point, Jack felt more like a victorious prince.

For the second time since Margret came to Canada, she was so very anxious about meeting someone. After that phone call, all she could think about was how she will want to kiss Jack right on the lips, how she would want to hug him tightly with her breast locking onto his chest. In fact, that night was full of romantic and erotic fantasy for Margret. And as the night gives way for the morning sun, Margret’s excitement was out of the world. As easily as 7 o’clock she started selecting her best cloths. And by 11:15 AM, she heard the sound of an engine. “...he is here,” she told herself. But at looking at the window, she felt a bit surprised because it wasn’t a taxi that she saw packed outside, it was a Lexus SUV 350 model. Still stretching her neck to see who the driver was, behold, it was Jack. “You got to be kidding me,” she said moving to the sitting room to get the door. On seeing Jack after swinging the door open, she quickly gave him a tight hug as if she has missed him for centuries.

“...and who has the car Jack?” she quarried, “well... it’s mine. My Dad gave it to me as a birthday gift two years back. So since I don’t go out much, it has been packed there since then” Wow... Your Dad? Margret inquired, “what does he do? He owns a mining company”, he said collapsing on the seat. A bit bored of the question and answer session, he tried waving it off with another topic. “...and I thought of where to take you to, and after much deliberation, I concluded that Dufferin Grove Park will just be perfect.” Well...” Margret responded, “...this is your town, I’m good with your choice.” Okay... Dufferin Grove Park then, Jack concluded. “give me a minute I will join you soon,” she said as she hops back into her room.

After 15 minutes, Margret Re-emerged in a red Bardot Malina Dress, Jack could not hide his excitement as he kept staring at the curvy figure in front of him. Due to the shortness of the gown, her tick smooth-looking thighs were on full display, “aren’t you just too beautiful in red?” he said smiling sheepishly. Still blushing to the compliment, he added, “...shall we?”

Now in Dufferin Grove Park, Jack slowly slipped his hand on Maggie’s left palm while they walk side by side. Then Jack broke the news his going back to school “...and I have decided to go back to school... “ he said smiling. The news sounded like a song to Margret’s ears “good, you finally listened that’s very good to hear” what came next hit her like a force of gravity, Jack continued “...and I think I’m in love with you Maggie!” Margret’s eyes went wilder, her heart skipped, her brain tries so hard to marshal out the best expression to put on. “oh God he opened up. I thought he was such a Jake all these while”.

She did not respond as she was still surprised at the sudden confidence. Jack was facing her now, come on Margret, say something. Or did I say anything wrong?” in an effort to sustain Jack’s confidence, because this might be the last

time he may summon such courage. “Jack.. I love you too...” Jack almost got blown away. She continued... ”ever since I met I certainly knew you were the one, but I’m afraid you may find me a little weird” weird?! Jack interrupted, “weird is good girl” she smiled, then continued “...I doubt you can ever find me interesting...” Jack countered “...you are not interesting you said, wait till you see me dancing, I look miserable”...they both laughed holding each other closely. Slowly, Jack drew closer with his eyes fixed on Margret’s lips, and in slow sensation, they both kissed passionately.

From then onwards, it has been a dating regatta, the day Jack took Margret to meet the parents, it was a carnival in the house. Jack’s mother was particularly excited about seeing her soon getting himself a friend. The father used his connection to secure a job for her in one of the city’s best-performing banks on getting to know she is on a job hunt. During one of the girl’s talk session with Jack’s mother, she can’t quit repeating the phrase “Maggie, marry my son, I don’t care how you want to do it, just say yes...”

And after three romantic years of courtship, Jack proposed. His proposal to Maggie came as a surprise to everybody, it was on his graduation day, he just rounded up his bachelor’s degree program in Modern Psychology, immediately after the certificate presentation session, when others were busy taking pictures, he walked up to Maggie in the presence of the mother and his two sisters, Margret was extending her hand to collect the paper in his hand when he held it, knelt down, then popped out the big question. In a matter of sections, they turned the cynosure of the whole arena as every graduating student turned their attention on them. Two months later, the love birds were officially married, their wedding was the brightest as both friends, relatives and business associates graced the occasion. The whole area was jam-packaged with hundreds of yellow cabs owned by Jack’s colleagues. It was indeed the most interesting wedding of the year, surrounded by the sweetest love story of all.

Epilogue

Margret was in the kitchen when the rattling cry of a baby started emanating from the room, “...honey. Can you help me with the baby?” which of them Jack asked, “...cos the last time I checked we have twins”. Thanks for reminding me Margret chuckled, “just get me the cry one. He must have booted.”

Jack who is all dressed up for work slowly handed over the baby to her kissed and yanked off through the doorway.

Snooze... her phone rang. “hey mom..” she speaks into the phone with a smile. “yap I’m in the house, this is weekend remember? “ ...yes my Jack is fine, he just left. Her face looking stony now “...what? How do you mean you moved in with him?!” well... Mom, you are an adult, and can’t tell you what to do. If you think moving in with this Pappito lover of yours makes you happy, then I wish you luck all the way.