

“Sorry Sue. I’m his sister. Was torn between betraying my family and telling the truth. I really didn’t know what to do. I know it’s wrong... I am so sorry.” I blinked my tears away.

“No, Yuva. Not your fault. Mum would’ve been heartbroken as well if I declined the proposal. Being a typical Ceylonese, she was adamant that I only marry a man from our community. She’s sacrificed so much for me and brought me up single-handed. Couldn’t bring myself to disappoint her....”

Sue stared into space. She looked so lost, and I hated myself for partially being the cause of her misery.

‘If she was really your sister, you wouldn’t have let the marriage take place, right? How convenient to have a slave at home for your brother’ a voice in my head taunted, making me feel like garbage. I could not say anything. Silence was my solace.

“How pathetic can I be, dearest sister-in-law? That my husband prefers to fuck a man than me. He prefers a dick to a pussy,” Sue forced out a chortle. Sue had never been so explicit with rage. It was my first time witnessing my silent and patient sister-in-law outwardly consumed by fury.

I felt like throwing up hearing Sue’s words but I had to be calm and composed. I had to take the bull by the horns.

“Sue, I promised you before, I’m promising you now. I’ll always be on your side” I started, hoping to make her feel a little better.

Sue looked at me. Contempt adorned her face. Not towards me but her life. Her husband. My brother.

“Auntie has controlled Selva from the time of birth until this very day. Do you know what your brother is suffering from? Of course you don’t, Miss Perfect!” Mark growled. His voice trembled as he spoke, more of containing his bursting out as opposed to fear.

“Allow me to fill you in. Your brother was on the verge of suicide not once but two fucking times. He felt so hopeless and useless. He couldn’t voice it out. He had no one except me and, of course, Anand. He begged me and got me to swear that I wouldn’t mention this to anyone. Don’t know about you, but I wasn’t going to lose a friend to suicide because of the fucked-up society,” Mark said brusquely. I didn’t utter a word but listened intently to what Mark was saying. More arrows shot aimlessly in my head.