Malefic

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Gargi Bhattacharya

To,

War affected people

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Contact Details --- Tearose0009@gmail.com

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Malefic is not a story of Delo and Moharani from the country – Corin - It is an impression of their life.

Delo and Moharani are a cute couple currently residing in a long island named Kaiser Island.

It is a lovely place filled with white sand which looks like silver when seen from far away ships. The island also has a kind of wild dog called Lingo. Lingo is native to this island and feral, it cannot be domesticated. Their appearance is more akin to a fox rather than a dog.

They often attack human beings. They hunt in packs and can tear a man into pieces within minutes. They can also put up a sizable fight

with a pride of lions. But whiles as lions love to live in the wild, Lingos come to human habitation and attack them as they are easy targets.

People in this island prohibit tourist and outsiders from offering food to these animals. They mostly roam around for food. That is how the Lingos started venturing into human habitation anyway. Finding humans as easy targets came later.
They are a rare species and only found in this place. Wildlife enthusiasts come here to watch these animals and people pursuing biological science also visit this island frequently to study this species.

Ordinary tourists mostly come to see the silver coloured sand beaches and the pristine nature of the island. They sometimes encounter Lingos too. More often than not, tourist guides can bring them back to safety.

A high structural base is standard for all the huts and houses here. One has to climb the stairs to reach the bottom of the tenements. Other than the beauty, this is also a

mechanism to protect themselves from Lingo attacking them. At night, people remove the stairs away so that the Lingos can't jump and launch an attack.

Delo and his lovely wife Moharani have made this their new home after fleeing a country torn apart by internal civil war.

It's been a while that the country called Corin is affected by severe civil war. A king rules the land. The royal family is the final authority there, and people love them. Various issues have given rise to a rebel community as well.

The rebels want the ruler to step down and bring democracy in the country. The rebels would like to start voting to choose a ruler from countrymen. They would like to abolish Royal worship altogether. They want a stable government who can take stringent steps to manage the land properly without being exploited regularly by foreign states.

Though they have an excellent thriving economy, it is suffering due to poor management of its oil fields by the Royals.

The Royal family, on the other hand, would not like to relinquish control. But the civil war is not the result of this conflict. The war has a different starting point.

Delo and his wife Moharani fled the country to live a safe and meaningful life. They design exquisite and unique jewellery by profession. Delo and Moharani do their work with a lot of passion, and all of their work is hand carved.
They are expert in custom made jewelry.They avoid machinery, and their design is often used as a signature kind of thing since they destroy the model after creating the jewellery.
Another unique element in their design is that they use semi-precious stones instead of commonly available variants of diamond, pearl, ruby or emerald. There are several rare and beautiful stones found in nature. They

use those stones to craft a unique piece for their customers.

Their shop is a perfect studio, where they carve amazing pieces and gives life to hard stones. They believe that jewellery is not to be mass produced; rather, it should be according to the taste and wish of the person who is wearing them. They believe in the philosophy of making everyone's life special.

They are expert Gavan ring makers too. These rings are designed during special occasions for the people of Corin known as coroners – for example, their marriage or engagement. Three metals - silver, copper and iron - are the essential ingredients of the ring. The ring has a matte finish and are designed only in various mathematical shapes - square, circle, rhombus, triangle etc. The essential style of all the rings is the usage of the three metals mixed in any proportion, forming any geometrical shape. The logic behind this is to recognise that life is all about balance. There is a proverb in their country, Corin, that "*know where you have come from and balance life accordingly",* their

rings are the perfect symbols of life and aligned nicely with the philosophy of Corin.

Delo and Moharani saved all the money they received as their wedding gift and used it to start a small jewellery business back in their country. They even went to various mines known for semi-precious stones to find stones for their rings. They spent their honeymoon, visiting some of these odd mines and smelling pebbles as passion flowers.

After marriage, they spent five years designing and selling jewellery in farmers' and artisans' market in their country to gain experience and expertise. Their jewellery was always appreciated among a lot of connoisseurs and countrymen alike.
Soon they started getting media attention and huge offers.
But it was the internal war in their homeland Corin- that drifted them apart from their own country.

They bid goodbye to their land and travelled with the thought about their five kids' future and their passion for gems, to a country

known for its natural mines. However, they could not stay there for long. Though it was officially a socialist country, socialism was never practised. Due to the cost of living which was very high- Delo was unable to sustain. So they travelled to Kaiser Island. It is in the southern hemisphere, also has small mines; the place was full of opportunities because there were a lot of tourists coming to the place and many gemstone loving people living there permanently.

Delo and Moharani opened their studio and gemstone shop in Kaiser island. They also conducted courses for naivetes in the jewellery industry as well as others who would care to learn about the jewellery making process. Their shop and studio was the workshop, while conducting courses.

Among their five children, three were keen to learn the craft while the other two were looking after sales and marketing. They worked as an outstanding and efficient team. It is all about family business.

As mentioned before, the internal war of Corin started oddly. One of the royal family members conceived her child using the donor sperm from an unknown male without royal heritage. Though the royal family was open-minded in using donor sperm, they never could think of accepting the sperm donor as the child's father and considering him as a member of the royal family!

No one thought about the consequences in this way when the sperm donation was accepted, but it all ended up in strife afterwards. That sperm donor named Ghish considered himself as the baby's father, wanted it recognised as such, and to avail all the pomp and pageantry given to the Royals from the ruling family. No one among the royal family or even the countrymen were accepting this. The struggle between Ghish and Royals started with a lot of bitterness, small skirmishes and arguments and finally ended up being a full-fledged civil war due to proxy attacks and excessive use of power.

That was not all. However, as mentioned before, there were other issues too! Corin was a rich source of petroleum and natural gas.The people from developed countries used to extract the oil and get it cheaply. But, did not care about Corin's environment, as is often the case, ended up destroying the country in several ways. The Royals reacted to this by seizing the passports of their citizens so they are unable to visit foreign lands. However, due to their low population, they also had to bring in foreigners to run the economy smoothly. The Royals did not handle the situation particularly well. They started to seize the unsuspecting foreingers' passport to prevent them from returning to their homes and forced them to stay back. Royals used this to increase the number of their countrymen. They believed that these foreigners would eventually accept Corin as their own country and would agree to serve loyally.

Royals' thought that according to the adage 'united we stand, divided we fall', the foreigners would eventually unite with the

coroners. So, they wanted all to stay and blend over the country – a feeling of belongingness foreigners would develop towards Corin.

When the war started due to a sperm donor and other rebels supporting him, the ruler started ignoring the cosmetic and jewellery sector like all others since it was not urgent for the humans. Stopping the civil war was more critical to the community, as per the government. The jewellery sector was mainly ignored as jewellery is not an essential element of life. However, the Royals' forgot that there were people who were dependent on the livelihood from the jewellery sector. These people were so severely affected that they were dying of starvation. The market and economy, in general, started failing, people trying to flee the country. In this situation, Moharani and Delo thought it was best to leave their homeland since their country was minus aesthetics and full of reality by then !

Their new place was also not suitable as they soon found out. Though there were ample gemstones to carve fantastic pieces of jewellery, the 'socialist' emperor made the economic conditions non-conducive, thereby the designers, makers and other professionals suffered massive losses over time, and the government used to siphon off any little profits they would make in the garb of taxes.

Alas! Poor Delo moved to the Kaiser Island full of beautiful white sand and heavenly peace, hoping that at least celestial beings of the island will enjoy their craftsmanship. Jewellery was their passion and obsession. Every piece was a challenge, and they loved to carve a new innovative art now and then.
So they were satisfied in their new home, Kaiser Island.

Only the Lingo population that used to attack people was their point of concern as they had five teenage and small children in their den.

Most of the time they used to stay in protected areas, but sometimes they went out to play games in the middle of the day while in school or in the afternoon with mates, and their parents were scared of Lingos. Apart from these, Delo and Moharani were pretty happy.

They faced a lot of turmoil in all these years! Their homeland Corin was torn apart due to internal civil war, then there was that 'socialist' country! Kaiser Island was a kind of heaven for them, and they thought of their inhabitants as divine.

There were plenty of other reasons for happiness in this community. During the long summer season, there was a kind of full dim sunlight till 2:00 am every day. They used to call it White Night. People used to roam around the island to witness this beautiful natural wonder! There were colourful lights in the sky during the white night. The colours were like large patches of rainbow and other

golden and silver colours. It was a charming scene, indeed!

During this time Lingos used to roam too and attack several people. At a certain point, the attacks became common.

The regular Lingo attacks on the inhabitants prompted the government to cut off the Lingo population by culling them. There was a massive hunt for Lingos, and most of them hunted down en masse without specific evidence about the animals selected to be killed were the truly violent ones. Local tribals objected to this indicating that the Lingos were their community animal. The tribal culture was full of folk tales and incidents connected to these animals' good nature. However, the government servants were in no mood to listen to the tribals; hence, they passed the execution orders and entered into areas with high Lingo population and shot them en masse to obliterate them.

Many tribal children were very disappointed and started lamenting as they were very

friendly with the furry Lingos and proclaimed them to be good-natured animals. On the other hand, the government described them like feral animals that cannot be domesticated and perceived any of their contact with humans as dangerous and potentially fatal. They had the attacking incidents that killed human beings to support their case. Using this argument, the government decided that it is not a wise thing to let them roam freely on the island.

So, there was another war of sorts between the government and the tribals regarding the treatment and preservation of Lingo population.



Back in Corin, one of the rebels was Chel. Chel was a native of Corin, a coroner (resident of Corin) by birth. His grandmother Modujosna married an Alcan(Alca, a country of dark skinned people) man as her second husband. This person was a slave by caste in their Corin society. His grandfather was brought to Corin from Alca for slavery. He was a black person there, whose job was to clean the streets and face incomprehensible torture due to his dark skinned background.
Modujosna had married this Alcan man who was a Moslem, named Naem. Naem's grandfather, who came here, was called Salem. Naem was a slave's child but was allowed entry to school to study. His parents had to face a lot of opposition, but a Corin elder helped them to enrol in a school. The enrolment proved to be a game changer in Naem’s life. He grew up to become a human rights lawyer.

Naem used to pay for his school fees by working in a pizza shop during the day and continued his education in the night schools. He was too determined to lose hope. He was also quite intelligent and passed the exams with high grades.

Being a human rights lawyer, he was the voice of the Alcan people whom locals attributed to slaves. During his work at the pizza shop as a delivery boy, he witnessed many slave residents, suffering in the hands of the locals. Locals also attributed thievery and dacoity with them. They were thought to be responsible for all crimes in the country.

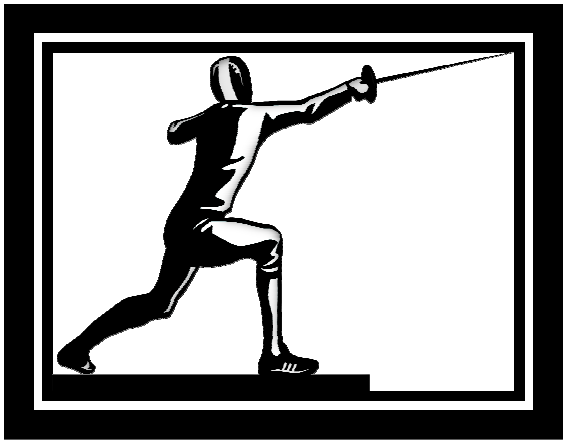
Nobody treated them as humans; not even as animals at times. Naem was quite open and sensitive about these issues which were difficult to talk. Due to this he came across Madujosna a media savy social worker and she fell for him. Naem was such a brilliant man and determined fellow that Madujosna could not resist!

Chel's journey as a rebel started with Madujosna's death and how society and

coroners treated her back then. Though she was a coroner herself the fellow countrymen didn't permit her funeral inside the country since she married a slave lawyer.

Chel's philosophy was to eradicate the skin colour and other gender issues from Corin. He thought that he should come forward because they are the ones who are creating the problems. **Chel became a radical, a rebel, though he himself was a coroner.**

Chel thought – Who is malefic? Naem and his forefathers, or the coroners? He could never find an answer that was also palatable to society.



"War, war, war … war everywhere!", thought Moharani. She was a thought leader in her own right. Her friends appreciated her thoughts very much. But she always regretted as she could not reconcile her feelings with society. She used to brainstorm new design as well as ideas and theories with her friends. Near and dear ones lovingly called her cerebral.

Moharani started designing a new genre of jewellery range - peace. Sometimes she designed using religious symbols, at other times things associated with love, but all of them were part of the peace genre. Very vibrant but hypothetical.

--“Where will society go if every one of us starts fighting with each other? Who will take us to the next level of evolution? Where will all these science and technology advancements drive us to, if people keep on quarrelling?", Moharani would ask Delo.

Poor fellow Delo had no answer, would say, "Don't ask me any question for which I don't know the answer. Stop asking questions if you want to survive in this modern world."

Moharani was not impressed with this reply but had no other choice but to stay silent.

Look at the case of Madujosna; she wanted to return to her homeland and have her funeral done in her family owned land among her other forefathers. But since she was the wedded wife of a slave, she was marked as

inferior and didn't get a chance to rest in peace in her own land.

Before marrying Naem whom they called slave, she was a well-respected sanitorium social worker, working for the people afflicted by mental health issues due to war. These mental health issues are so hard to comprehend, discuss and communicate. Madujosna felt that this is a field where she can work and feel good at the same time since what she is doing is an excellent thing for humanity. As an example, a person who became blinded in war and had hard mental issues to deal with could now work independently with the help of an instrument. The person can now be independent and earn a living to lead a dignified life. This fantastic device reports about all his surroundings in real time too so that he can walk alone without human help and speaking to anyone and even go shopping independently!

Madujosna implemented innovative ideas that are available in the market after thorough practical research, and the

sanitorium became a place where people affected by war could live their life to the fullest.

It was all possible after Madujosna's initiation of modern devices, inventions and innovations that replaced the old methods. A machine, digital device instead of a help dog or stick! A robot with a literal helping hand to carry the shopping cart. She made people independent who were otherwise heavily dependent on others.

After her marriage to her slave husband, she had to move to another country where this guy used to work for the Alcan community.
At the end of life when she decided to return in the coffin, her country never forgave her for marrying a much inferior slave. They were very conservative in some sense since they disapproved the mixing of races and blood and used to call the natives who were involved in any mixing genes with other communities as Hapi. Hapi means half in their language. Hapis were also ignored and hated in Corin. Coroners were the followers of 'pure' human flesh and blood.

The case of Madujosna was not even Hapi as it was all about a dirty black slave, even worse than an animal in their eyes!!!



Sunlight kissed the trees, signalling the onset of another morning …..

Moharani sat in her balcony with a cup of hot tea. She never uses tea bags. She is a fan of pure leaf tea. She poured some of the tea into her cup. It was a lovely cup with Chinese art drawn on it. Suddenly she heard Delo's voice.
"People were scared of Lingos, and many soft-hearted animal lovers were also gradually supporting government's campaign involving war on Lingos. So, the government sent one of their officers to visit the Lingo infested areas to check the reality and progress of the campaign."

In the Kaiser island, there is a tribe called Tora. They are a kind of people who cultivate lice in their body. Both male and female keep long hair, and their body is also hairy. It is full of body-lice. Kids of their community start cooking from a very tender age of three or four. They are taught to cook, cut vegetables,

fish, meat, etc. and even learn to handle fire needed for cooking. They also chop wood and wooden sticks and use it to light a fire in the clay oven.

They eat almost everything under the sky from buffalo tongue to cow lungs to the intestine of animals and claws of chicken and other birds. They eat snakes, crocodiles, chicken crest/comb, and even fish scales. People outside their community often comment that these children would start eating human flesh when they grow up - that is, they would indulge in cannibalism!!

-- "Don't you think it is a little extreme to eat everything you encounter?" asked a tourist to her hubby.
-- "No, I don't!"
-- "Their parents are also encouraging them to kill and cook big animals from a very tender age. They could later lose all empathy towards even fellow humans and would be quickly radicalised and then join terrorist groups!", the tourist shot back.

Tora tribes do not approve of killing Lingos on Kaiser island though – according to them it is strictly prohibited and a sin but critics argue that ancestors of the modern Kaiser island tribes indulged in all other sorts of animal killing!

The government decided to kill the Lingos brutally at times by tying them up and stoning them. At other times, then they tried to shoot them. Police and the hunters worked together to get rid of the Lingo population.
Previously, at night, one could always hear Lingo's howl. But now people rarely listened to a Lingo barking at night!

Moharani used to work at night for long hours as the designs used to dawn on her at night. Her husband Delo too worked and carved pieces late at night, but that was less frequent. He enjoyed a good night's sleep after some boozing and worked hard during the day. Moharani, previously would hear a lot of Lingos barking each night when she worked.

She used several rare stones such as bright yellow coloured Pokhara, or violet coloured Gomati, dark red coloured Rubina, light blue Firojana, orange Churni, rainbow coloured Luthera, coloured artificial diamonds, light pink Rathi or light green Etonal.

All these lovely stones were carved into unique pieces. The design work and ideation started at night with the barking of Lingos! When everyone was asleep, Moharani worked, and Lingos barked throughout the island. So, they were, in a way, her company. When people started stoning them to kill them, she felt terrible. Very bad and lonely, as if her own children are stoned. She used to destroy each design after it took its real shape so that no two jewellery were the same, but still, she would think killing Lingos were unkind even though people blamed them for killing and attacking the general population.

The other day, Moharani was asking Delo why the sperm donor started the internal civil war.

-- "Why does Ghish want to destroy the family of his own child? He is the one who donated the sperm to give life to an angel. Now, whatever be the situation, he should not partner with the rebels and try to destroy the regals just for his own selfish sake!"

-- "I have no idea. I don't know why a father wants to kill the family of his child for a petty and selfish reason. Even if the Royals have not included him in their ancestry list, so what? He may be sad, but should he be so ferocious to try to kill the monarch and end the monarchy? So many complex issues exist everywhere in this world. Life is so complicated, but almost everywhere, and every time we humans make it more difficult. We have double standards, so we act like a double-sided knife. Why can't we resist our kinkiness and unkind nature? Everyone knows what is right and wrong; still, we barely ever act in the right way.", said Delo.

-- "Enough is enough!", said Girralong, an elderly tribesman. He now has shaved himself to be presentable to modern society, and he has gotten rid of his body-lice! Most of them carry this parasite with them where ever they go. They say---“atleast the tiny creature gets something to feed in !”
After killing his parasite demons, Girralong has changed his garb to appeal to people and to stop killing Lingos. He would also confront them when he saw them killing the Lingos.
-- "They are with us from the ancient times. They have always been like this. We love them for whatever their habits and nature are. Killing them means killing our own children. Live and let live."

Nobody liked his words. Probably for the kindness he wanted to show to Lingos – the very animals that attacked humans.

When there were enough tribesmen like Girralong protesting, the authorities sent an official to investigate the brutality of killing Lingos.

He was Lego. Lego Digdirado - a tall man with a long flowing moustache. His appearance was akin to a mafia leader. His profession was to keep an eye on social matters and affairs to maintain the balance of life.

Lego took his toddler with him. His wife loved the beaches a lot, so she also accompanied him as well, even though the mission was dangerous.
-- "The beaches here are all silver!", gushed Lego's wife, Gail.
Lego laughed and responded, "It would be fair enough if we can trace even a single silver dust particle here! It would be very nice. Hard to watch only the shine and colour!".
Gail said, "What's wrong with imagination? I have heard the other night that when it rains here, it appears like rainbow falling as rain from the skies! Are they stars and astral particles or pure imagination?"
-- "I don't know much about it. But would love to find some silver dust here.", said Lego.

As they were engrossed in this conversation, their kid ran away from them towards a seagull.
-- "Hai hai, hai, hai", said the child, Ether, and ran behind the bird.

Suddenly her parents lost sight of her, and then they were unable to locate her.

They roamed and called her and shouted out her name, "Ether! Ether! Where are you? Eetheer!!! Where are you, baby? Can you hear me?", dad and mummy wailing!

But the little one was out of sight and lost entirely as if the sky or the earth has eaten her within moments!

Within moments, the environment was tense, and everybody around was stressed. Where is the child? Where is she?

The fishermen said they had seen nothing. Other people also said no one saw her after dusk. Her parents were sad, terrified and sorry. They thought that maybe it is just another Lingo who has survived on her at

sunset. Perhaps they have torn her into small pieces and completed their feast. Everybody was scared and fearful, imagining the consequences of this mishap.

Late in the night, the officer was standing in a reflective mood behind a massive tree in front of his motel.No one was in the mood of sleeping tonight. Such a lovely little girl suddenly disappeared into thin air!
Gail's face has swollen like a balloon after long hours of crying.

Suddenly Lego heard a hissing sound! At first, he thought it is a snake! Maybe a brown snake or some other such snake.

But as the torchlight fell on the creature, he saw it was his toddler, making strange sounds— "hiss, hiss." Maybe she was struggling to breathe! The place was a small hole kind of thing where the toddler was lying, and two Lingos were around her.

He immediately pointed his gun to kill them. Luckily at the nick of time, he saw the Lingos fending off another animal from Ether, safeguarding her from other wild beings !



Instead of being joyful for finding Ether, Lego dove into his deep awareness, maybe also partly sad due to the fate of Lingos in this land.

Even a practical minded ,combat prone Lego was forced ponder about who the actual Malefic was – Lingo or his own folks !



The end or the beginning ???

About the author

Website: www.gargiz.com

She has received a finalist plaque from Multicultural New South Wales (New South Wales Government) supported Hindu Council of Australia on international women's day for her writing in 2019. She is the only Bengali recognised in 2019.

Her writing style is taught in the creative writing classes and workshops of a KOLKATA based English medium school in India.

Noted Indian mainstream publisher, Dey's Publishing has marketed many of her initial books.