



THE GIRL IN ROOM 105: A MURDER MYSTERY

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Chetan Bhagat, an Indian author is popularly known for writing Indian English novel about middle class youngsters. In 2010, he emerged as one of the world’s most influential people. He penned down many novels like ‘Five Points Someone’, ‘One Night @the call centre’, ‘2 states’, ‘The story of my Marriage’, ‘The Three Mistakes of My Life’, ‘Revolution 2020’, ‘What Young India Wants’, ‘Half girl Friend’, ‘One Indian Girl’, and the latest ‘The Girl in Room 105’.

The present novel is in the form of narration. The narrator Keshav Rajpurohit, a young IITian tells the story to Chetan Bhagat while travelling by Indigo Flight 6E766 HYD- DEL. The Story is about a young girl Zara Lone, a Kashmiri Muslim. Keshav first saw her at Rendezvous Fest, IIT Delhi as a finalist in the clash of Titans Debate competition. He was fascinated by her model like look and tried to be intimate with her. He busied himself to court her and was successful. Gradually, they came near each other, dated, romanced and even started planning life together. Keshav taking her went to Alwar to introduce her with his parents and to make her a part of their family but his father, Mr Naman Rajpurohit, a senior member of R.S.S.and her mother, prejudiced against muslims outrightly threw her away from their home. “Have you really lost your mind? You want to marry a Muslim Girl.” She said as if I had just requested for seed money to start an online cocaine shop.’

Next both the lovers tried to convince Safdar Lone, Zara’s father for their marriage. Zara, however had already spoken to her parents and mentally prepared them in advance. That’s why it was not an electric shock for them as was in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Rajpurohit. The result of the meeting was “It will have to be our way. We can do a nikah”

‘Whatever’ I said

‘We can give you a shahada a ceremony before or even during the nikah’

‘Shahada?’ I said hearing the word for the first time.

Safdar turned to Zara.

‘Your dost does not know shahada, yet he loves a Muslim girl.’

‘Dad, what is this shahada business’ I don’t think we need to.

Keshav did not expect that turn of events, ultimately leading to break up between the two. Keshav said, “I can’t convert, Zara. Please understand. I love your religion but I can’t convert. My parents will kill themselves.”

Even after the break up, Keshav could not forget Zara and always missed her. The 27th birthday of Zara was a turning point in the life of both Keshav and Zara. Keshav managed not to call or message her that night but suddenly late at night Zara whats Apped him---- “ So you don’t even wish me any more? Said the first. The rest followed--- “It is my birthday. I hope you remember.’

“Just was surprised you didn’t wish me.’.....

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“I miss you.”

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“Yes, life is incomplete without you.”.....

“Can I call to wish you” keshav asked.

‘Why call? You are not going to wish me in person.’

After these messages Keshav could not stop himself from going to Zara’s hostel room. His friend and flat mate, Saurabh did his best to check him from going out side at that chilly and silent night, yet Keshav taking Saurabh with him, cheated and befooled duty police as well as watchman and finally reached Himadri in front of room no. 105. Saurabh kept standing down while Keshav flung into Zara’s room through open window singing ‘Happy Birthday to you’ but ‘I only heard the mild hum of the convection heater in response.’ In spite of many calls there was no reaction from Zara. Then keshav, shook Zara’s shoulder again, this time with more force. She didn’t budge. Keshav touched her forehead. It felt ice cold. He pulled the quilt down



further from her head. Her neck had red marks on it. 'Zara baby' I said. 'I touched her cheeks, eyes and ears in quick succession. Everything felt cold.' Keshav, greatly nervous, called his friend Saurabh up who screamed to know about her death. Saurabh suggested to run away from there but Keshav decided to stay and tell the truth to avoid their ruin.

Now the murder mystery started, Police and Zara's father were called and the dead body was taken by Safdar without any post mortem. Zara's Iphone was unlocked after many trials and two missed calls were found from a contact called Raghu Cutie Pie. The location of Raghu last night was searched from the cell tower showing Apollo hospital from Hyderabad. Inspector Rana tried to call Raghu that was picked by a lady of Telugu accent who passed the phone to Raghu 'Hello'? Raghu said.

'Hello', Mr. Raghu, Inspector Vikas Rana from Hauz Khas police station speaking. Can you talk?'

'yes, sir'

'Have you heard the news?'

'What news, sir?'

'Do you know Zara Lone? A friend of yours?'

My fiancée, sir, Raghu said, fear in his voice.

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'Which men? This is the police. We have her phone.

'You gave her two missed calls today. One at 8:14 in the morning, and the other at 8:32. From Raghu's talk it came out that Zara and he were going to marry after two months and that three goondas outside Raghu's office in Cyber City came on bikes and hurt him with hockey sticks.

The watchman of Himadri was taken into custody as murderer because Zara had a quarrel with him some days ago. Keshav and Saurabh were relieved from the police station on the condition that they would daily pay visit at station and not leave Delhi without permission. The case was almost solved, killer being in jail but Keshav was not convinced. He managed to meet Laxman inside police lockup. Laxman said, "Sahib I didn't do anything. I did not kill Zara madam." His voice broke and he began to wail.

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'I don't know, Sahib. I swear on my children. I didn't do anything.

I didn't kill Zara madam.

'From 2:02 to 2:41 where were you?' asked Keshav.

Laxman whispered into his ear that during this time he was using washroom wi-fi to enjoy porn sites.

With Saurabh's help it was investigated that Laxman was not the murderer. Keshav was excited to know the real killer. He met Raghu and found out that Professor Saxena, Zara's Ph.D. guide used to teased her and prepositioned her to approve her thesis sooner. Raghu also showed him Zara's mail as proof. With this new clue both friends investigated anew. Keshav went to professor's office and questioned about Zara. They met Mrs. Saxena who was very angry to know her husband prepositioned a student, but she admitted that her husband was at home the night of Zara's murder. Saurabh also noticed a limp in professor's leg, making it sure that Saxena, too was not a killer, as it was impossible to climb a mango tree and reach Zara's room with that limp.

Another possible killer, according to inspector Rana was Safdar, Zara's father who might have killed her due to his honour and both the friends moved towards Safdar's home. They talked with Safdar and with his permission searched her room from where they found some clues of Zara's connection with her step brother Sikandar and Tehreek-e- Jihad a movement in Kashmir. During the course of events Sikandar too committed suicide. One army Captain Faiz Khan, also connected with Zara came under Keshav's investigation.

At the end of the novel, it was clear that, Raghu, Zara's fiancée was the real killer. He very smartly made a plot to kill Zara knowing her affair after reading her chat with captain Faiz, however she came in his contact to improve her step brother, Sikandar. Raghu scrolled up a conversation between Faiz and Zara -----

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'Okay, need to go . It is late, Raghu is calling me.'

'Stay'

'what?'

'Even if you are with Raghu. At least our child will be good looking. With him, you never know

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'Well, you don't want Raghu looks for your kids, do you, all black black,

Ugly ugly.'

These words pierced deep in Raghu's heart and he weaved a plot to kill Zara, hired some goondas to hit himself, thus admitted in Apollo hospital. He took nurse in his confidence, typed a happy birthday message to Zara and asked the nurse to sent it exactly at 12



midnight because doctor has severely ordered him to be in bed by 9 p.m. After that he slipped from hospital, took 11:30 flight from Hyderabad, landed Delhi at 1:10, reached Himadri, murdered Zara, Messaged Keshav from Zara's phone and again took 4:55 flight from Delhi to Hyderabad and reached hospital, leaving no clue of being a killer. But Keshav was smart enough to bring truth before the world. In this way the murder mystery was resolved and Raghav was replaced by Laxman.

REFERENCES

'The Girl in Room 105' by Chetan Bhagat, Thomson Press India Ltd.