

**AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF HIMANSHI SHELAT'S INTRUDER**

by Dr. Darshita Dave

If one moves on up the thorny trail the thorns will pierce and be pang, if one puts the feet on burning sand, they will burn; if one takes fiery coals in the palm, it results into a cyst, if the logic continues like this, without any hurdle, then the conclusion would be that, this must be defined to one who is in love. Though one cannot rely on the peg of logic in this matter. In this matter everything is to be rejected instinctively, surrendered, and to be given up without asking anything. This was about gliding from a flower like a dew drop, drizzling somewhere. Had you met before ten years this would not have happened. The relationship which existed before you arrived....how is it possible now to hold Mukund's hand, who has stood on the shore, having crossed the thundering ten years, before anyone else held it? When she is very cautious to avoid a slight kick to a house of sand, how a constructed, more solid and established house can be broken? Now, like this only one is to keep on moving on this path, being a stranger and prudent. One is to keep on walking with the burden of restrictions, reality, helplessness and wisdom on one's shoulders till the dusk of the short day. No resting place would come on the way.

A road is nice, with shade of the tree, songs of the bird on the bending floral full branches. Furthermore, the path is soft and colorful due to the fallen flowers and azure above. One is to keep on walking delightfully. The condition is not to look forward or reward. One is not to look forward as nothing comes there, not to see reward as nothing is visible there. There is nothing like repose, halt or rest. There is no four walled place on the way, no question of repose. No one has realized the necessity of pose in this type of journey. In this type of journey the joy is to move on. When tired one wishes sometimes that it makes feel well if the warmth of constructed walls is got. If one wants to desist under the tree, then one can, but the warmth will not be felt at that. Due to an alfresco walking round the clock, the conscience goes on pining for that warmth, the homely warmth. Home is the place where one can sit peacefully, forgetting all the stress and keeping the whole world outside the closed doors, and at home without any hurdles the time passes smoothly. This is not possible here, on this path. Though the path is certainly beautiful, one cannot stay here. After resting for a moment or two one has to move on again. On this path there is no such place on the way where one can stay for long. Of course, it should have been thought before moving towards this path, now how to go back from here and where to go?

The noise of clapping disturbs her reverie. It could not be known who gave speech and spoke what? She was not able to answer Mukund if he asked what the other person had said about him. She did not listen to anything at all. She felt that it would have been better had she not come. However, Mukund would not have liked it. The situation which is accepted after a serious thought should never be annoyed. Have I cheated on you? Have I concealed anything from you? That way death is also an accepted situation even though...but logic is

not applicable here in this matter. This is the matter where one is to be anomalous. She should not have normal aspirations like typical women. She looked around and noticed that many eyes were gazing at her in a very strange manner. She felt embarrassed for some time. A little bit perplexity emerged. She then looked at Mukund raising her neck. Mukund, who sat near Mandaben, seemed a stranger to her. She was watching everything as a witness. Better it ends soon she wished.

As the hall was filled with murmuring of the people, she stood in the corner feeling relaxed. Acquainted faces were smiling at one another, somewhere the hands were raised, they were joined in the expression of *namashkar*, and the acquaintance was being renewed. She knew that after such occasions if she departed without meeting Mukund, he would feel bad. If not more but it must be said with a smile, "I am leaving". Mukund took long time to come after crossing the crowd of the friends and relatives. The bouquet of the red rose that had been given to Mukund was in Mandaben's hands. Mukund came near her and said, "How did you come here?...Do not leave. Someone will drop you. Otherwise, you wait. I will drop Manda and be back soon." No...no..." she spoke very quickly. "I don't have to go that far. I will get a rickshaw or I will walk. You may leave, and it is already late." Her voice became acute, unintended. She could not understand why? Mandaben's smile might be the reason for it. You run after Mukund, but it is not easy for him to escape from my castle. I will keep him locked. You will have to stand outside. If I send him outside, then also I will tie him up with a string, so that when pulled, he will be back inside. Mandaben smiled again and sat on Mukund's scooter with the sense of privilege.

Someone was telling Mukund with obeisance, "Sometimes, come with your wife. Our bungalow is there in Ubharat. All facilities are there..."

"I will certainly come, no not alone, we both will come."

"Due to lots of work he does not get free time."

"One has to catch the time from work."

"Next time we will certainly come and will talk peacefully. O.K. then good bye."

When the scooter picked up speed, had Mukund really looked back or she just felt like that? Mandaben smiled at her. Was it enmity or the perverse delight of victory on her part? Gradually she started walking on her path. No special thought process was on. Nothing uncommon had happened. The same has been happening for many years, even though she was agitated. She increased her speed looking downwards. Mukund would have reached home. Taking out the key from purse, Mandaben would have opened the door. Samir would be inside his room. Generally when they went out, they always locked the main door from outside, so that Samir did not have to be disturbed. Both, Muund and Mandaben, would have been talking about the function. After changing cloths Mukund would go to sleep, followed by Mandaben...each pace of her became heavy. She was tired, and when the thought of exhaustion came in her mind she felt that the path was not as beautiful as she imagined. The

path was terrible, mysterious, dreadful and desolate, especially when one had to walk alone like this on it.

She wondered why she could not reach home after walking that much?

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### **About The Author**

Himanshi Shelat is one of the prominent modern short story writers of Gujarati literature. She was born on January 8, 1947 in Surat. She received [Sahitya Akademi Award for Gujarati](#) in 1996 for her short stories collection *Andhari Galima Safed Tapakan* (1992). The same book also received prize from [Gujarati Sahitya Parishad](#). After serving as a lecturer of English in M.T.B. college, Surat from 1968 to 1994, she has taken voluntary retirement. At present, she lives in Abrama near Valsad, enjoying the intimacy with nature and doing her social and creative work. She works for the marginalized people and does many activities for the unfortunate, deprived children. *Platform No. Char* is a memoir written on the experiences of this activity, which has won her The Nanjangudu Thirumalamba Award of Kannad Language.

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