

A green light signal's



I still possess a picture of my grandma on the beach at Phuket, Thailand, dressed in her grey kufan and white dupatta and the wind blowing against her and she, opening out her hands as if waiting to embrace it.

Every time I take a look at this picture it reminds me of the horrific incident that followed it. Thinking of that incident I feel my pulse race up and a rage of fury in my heart but before any more of these emotions, water starts to run down my cheek. After leaving from Phuket my grandma took my sister and me to her brother's house in Kolkata. My parents on the other hand went back to Mumbai. We spent two wonderful weeks with my grandma's brother (who is just a year older to my dad) and his two sons (both of them were around my age), Varun and Vaibhav. My sister and me had to depart as our vacation had finally come to an end and our new school year was about to start.

My grandma, who only met her brother once a year, wanted to spend more time with them so my sister and I were to travel back alone. I have a distinct image of the accident. My sister and I were on the way to the airport to catch our flight. My grandma, her brother and her aunt were coming along to see us off.

We were all seated in a navy blue Maruti 800. My uncle driving and my grandma on the front seat with my sister. My grandma's aunt seated beside me alongside the luggage at the rear of the car. In comparison to the size of the car, it cannot hold 5 people and luggage. The car was purring along at a slow but steady speed.

We were fortunate not to encounter any signals as we were in a hurry. The tables seemed to have turned and we stopped at a four way junction. We were waiting at a signal besides a carrier truck approximately 5 times the size of a delusion of a car. No other vehicle or person was present at 5 o' clock in the morning. Then time seized to stop. I seemed like eternity.

The signal turned green signalling the cars to go. To me suggesting that " all people must leave". This incident reminded me of this very thought. We moved ahead. Everything appeared moved at the speed of the snail.

Adrenaline released from my adrenal glands, making my sensory organs alert as though a fire alarm had gone off.

At that very moment the truck took a sharp turn. Then as though someone had pressed the fast-forward button on a DVD player, from the right window I saw, the truck, coming onto us, with tremendous velocity, like a large wave approaching and engulfing a helpless child. I could only momentarily hear the shatter of windows pains and a shrieking cry of a child and before comprehending what had taken place, before I could recount what happened one of the luggage pieces knocked me out unconscious. I was woken by the sounds of loud calls and shrieking cries.

Initially my vision was hazy and found myself looking out of a smashed car through a broken door - there was a huge gathering of people and a girl in the middle, in a pool of blood, whaling her lungs out. , a person, eyes shut, precariously but hurriedly being put into an ambulance and a her clothes stained. My head bulged at the sight and my I felt my heartbeat throbbing against my chest. I faintly remember a man approaching me but nothing

beyond that. The next thing that comes to my mind is waking up in a hospital bed besides my sister.

To my horror, her head wrapped in bandages and she, fast asleep or, that is what I thought. My mother walked in, I still remember the worried look on her face but then suddenly she burst into tears and rushed out to embrace me. I wasn't aware of the reason for such sudden emotions my mother was experiencing but welcomed the warm motherly hug and felt something was wrong. I later found out that the windows had shattered and had gone into my sister forehead, missing her eyes by a few millimetres (0.7mm, I measured it). Whereas for my grandma her thigh bone had to be removed as it had been crushed into fine pieces and had to get a metal one surgically inserted and my uncle had fractured his hand.

As for me, I had no mark on my body to truly show that this accident had happened. I spent another two weeks in Kolkata until the bandages were removed, from both my grandma and sister. This incident left my grandma crippled for the rest of her life. Though she leads as normal a life as possible, in her eyes you can see the pain she suffers with every step she takes.

My sister was left with a 5 cm scar on the right side of her face, an ugly site on otherwise a very beautiful face. I am glad that I survived unhurt and further more that I didn't lose any of my dear ones. As for the truck driver, he was never to be seen again. This incident almost envisaged my thoughts I experience every time I wait for a signal - a green light signal's that everyone leaves.

Every time I am at the beach, I hear the waves crashing against the shore, I look back to see my grandma sitting on the beach chair unable to enjoy the activities she would have enjoyed doing, my eyes fill up with tears and my heart with anger. It feels as if she has lost half her soul in the accident and the other is crippled. If I were to find the person who did this I would never leave him. Whenever I think of him my heart beats against my chest as though a caged animal waiting to be released.

This incident has had a drastic impact on my life and even more on others but has taught me a valuable lesson - " life's too short, enjoy it to the fullest".