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JEALOUSY HURTS & BREEDS HATRED

At least jealousy has no gender discrimination. It sprouts and grows with the same energy as much as an individual caters to it, be it any gender. Expression of it may differ.

I was in fourth standard. There used to be a girl by name Vinatha, who used to sit to my right. Mallamma is another girl, who used to stare at Vinatha continuously, stretching her head a bit forward and turning her head to the right. She had to keep her head in that position for a long time with a few of very short intervals to cast her looks on Vinatha. We had our respective seats fixed on the wooden panels almost glued to the ground. I could observe Mallamma doing this feat because she was the immediate girl sitting to my left. It also caused a suffocation to me. This inconvenience made me to research as to what made Mallamma employ her looks on Vinatha, with so much of intensity.

Vinatha looked clean and used to wear nice clothes, which looked stylish. Her pencil & eraser box, school bag looked trendy. She used to sing too and that made her a bit

dearer to most of the other students, including me.

As an attempt to get out of my inconvenience, I asked Mallamma whether she would be interested to exchange her seat with me. I thought she would accept to my decent proposal as it would get her a closer view of her “interest”.

But she said, “Thu...daanipakkakevalgoosuntaru?...Kotimogamdi” (Fie...who would sit besides her?...a monkey-faced). I hesitated to embarrass her with the question, “Then why do you always keep looking at her?”. Mallamma was bit aggressive too.

Mallamma’s brother was also in our class. His extra-curricular indulgences made him his sister’s class-mate, otherwise, he could have been three years senior to us. Those days failing a student if he didn’t fair well in studies was common. May be its alien to the present. He used to take reigns of the class though I was the officially declared leader. Boisterously he used to come to each of us and ask us to seal our mouths with index finger, saying, “Notimedey” (Put the finger on the mouth). Every-

body invariably did that but continued to talk loosening the finger on the mouth. It was like “Tarjyamukhenadharayami”...a ritual which has lost the purpose.

He used to rule the class like a dictator, till the teacher came. Mallamma approached her brother (Surprisingly his name was Mallanna) and casting ugly looks at Vinatha, Mallamma complained against Vinatha, to her brother. Now, it reminds me of Shoorphanaka complaining about Rama to Ravana. Basic characters of humans remain the same! He wrote Vinatha’s name in a book along with a few others’ names, who were making noise or misbehaved in the class. It was duty of the class leader to write names of mischievous students and give the list to the teacher when she came. Mallanna gave the list to me and asked, “Gidi teacher kiyyu” (Give this to teacher). “Dadagiri!”.

I handed over the list made by Mallanna to teacher like a robot. The teacher usually came with a cane. She called the names one by one, said, “Cheybattu (Stretch the hand)” and beat on the stretched

palm. As Vinatha was receiving her undue punishment, Mallamma shouted, "Gaaporijaamkaaygooda dinnadi (That girl ate guava also) teacher". Mallanna supported her false complaint, "Aun teacher... Jap amkaaybheedinnadi (Yes teac her. She ate a guava also). The teacher gave her additional punishment of beating her on the other palm. I could see Vinatha feeling humiliated. I was silently crying for her.

From that moment on, I joined Mallamma in looking at her, of course she out of a negative passion and me with compassion, which I couldn't identify then by names.

The last school bell rang. All the students ran out of the class as usually, with so much of excitement like birds released out of cage. Vinatha was slowly gathering herself, wiping off her nose, eyes, looking at her palms, thinking of injustice done to her etc. I too was about to move out of the class but looking at Vinatha, halted.

"Vinatha! Edchaddu(Don't cry)", I said compassionately. She started sobs. I touched her affectionately and said, "Edchaddu Vinatha (Dont cry Vinatha)". "Nenasalumatlannemaatlalle. Jaamkaaytetchukonele (I dint talk at all. I didn't get guava at all)", she continued sobbing. I was close to crying. But was always shy of crying. I said, "Sorry", touching her hand compassionately. I said, "Let's go home". She got up. As we were walking along, she asked, "Why did you give my name to the teacher? You know I didn't talk. You know I didn't eat guava". "I know, you didn't talk. I know you didn't eat guava", I said. "Then why did you give my name?", she asked. "It was Mallanna who wrote all the names. I just handed over the list to the

teacher", I answered with repentance. "Aytenuvvendukiga? Aynne class leader undaniyyu (Then what for you are? Let him be the class leader)", she said with a tinge of anger. We walked a few steps together and the point came where we had to part ways. She just looked at me and began to walk along her way. I did stop for a minute looking at her. My little heart was crying. I turned to walk towards my home.



Next day, she was absent to the school. I was going to the school every day with a hope that Vinatha would come that day. But her absence continued. I told Mallamma that Vinatha wasn't coming to school. "Raakapoterakaponi yyu. Kotimogamdi (Let her not come, monkey faced)", she said brushing me aside. "Why? Poor she?" I said.

Entashaanukunnavaaniki! (How proud she is!)", she exclaimed at a non-existent. "She is a good girl", I said. "Is it!? Go and ...", she switched over to her natural flow of indecent vocabulary.

Whole scenario bothered me so much. The next day I got up when the class teacher came and narrated

everything that happened. She beat Mallanna with the cane and warned him never to act as the class leader thenceforth.

But Vinatha never turned up to the school. What happened to Vinatha? Jealousy stung her. She was a very silent girl in the class, who seldom spoke... quite a decent girl. I never saw any clash between her & Mallamma also, excepting an ugly and toxic chemical getting into Mallamma's eyes as she looked at Vinatha. Satya Sai used to say, "Jealousy has no reason and no season".

But jealousy might have caused havoc in Mallamma's life more than in Vinatha's, because the toxin I saw in Mallamma's eyes was very dangerous. She couldn't contain it. She would have succumbed to it one day.

The heart that grieves silently on the damage caused on account of the jealousy would turn into a curse. Jealousy breeds hatred and hatred crafts evil, ultimately depositing bad Karma into our account. Any ill health or ill luck is the effect of our bad Karma. Jealousy may hurt others but containing it creates toxins in the brain which would reflect very adversely on the body. However beautiful one may be, the one looks very ugly when it forms a negative aura on one's face.

Above all, we are all made up of one substance...Brahman (Consciousness). No one is different from us. It's a seeming bifurcation like ice blocks in a lake caused by temperature. Here the temperature is Maya. We are hurting ourselves being jealous of others.

So why jealousy?

(Author is a well-known musician, Devotional singer, writer and composer.) 