

## How I got *My Girl back...!*

A nerd's guide to dating...

*FROM CHAPTER 17 :*

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### *ALL ON BOARD*

“Huh?” I was still trying to make the transition from my dream world, from the pretty world, the world of Pritha and polka dots to the world where silk smitha was considered desirable.

“Get out of dreamland yaar.. I am hungry. Let's go eat.” Kunal demanded.

We reached Shetty's udipi in fifteen minutes.

We ordered our favorite masala dosa. Kunal and Umesh pounced on the dosa. I had slept the whole day. I wasn't too hungry. Last night, I didn't get enough sleep. I had slept on a chair in the hallway.

Kunal and Umesh were giving each other suggestive glance over mouthfuls of dosa. Umesh, cleared his throat and said-

“Dev, I wanted ask you something.. as in.. I know it's your life and it's your choice but... but-”

Kunal helped Umesh finish the sentence.

“But we didn't see this coming, so we are, like, a little shocked.”

I had no idea what they were talking about and I didn't intend to know. I was happy enough thinking about Pritha and the cute girl in the white and pink polka dotted frock. I was happy thinking of yellow grass and a small cottage.

“Dude, don't get us wrong. We are not confronting you or anything,” Umesh said when he realized I don't give a damn about what they want to know.

“I mean, we are cool with it,” Kunal chipped in.

“Yeah. It's just that we would like to know. You know Akshay also doesn't look like that. Neither do you, but when we saw what we saw, we were like a little bewildered.”

I was jolted out of my dream world after the mention of Akshay.

“What? What did I do? And what did Akshay do?”

Kunal took a deep breath and sank into his chair. Umesh took the charge.

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“Dude... I know”

“About what?” I asked.

“About you and Akshay.”

“What about us?”

“I saw you enter his room around four thirty in the morning.”

“But you were asleep.” I said.

“I wasn't. I got up to take a dump.”

“But you do that at 6 in the morning.”

“It is a **dump** not ‘Indian Idol’ that a schedule should be followed!!” Umesh was furious that I used to keep a tab on his crap timings. “Anyway, it's your life and you can do anything with it. Just remember Akshay changes his girlfriends every month, you really think he will stick with a guy for long.”

What in the world was he saying...?

“What do you mean.. I don't get you.”

“See Dev, forget Akshay. You will get a girl. Don't be so desperate.”

It dawned on me.

“What the! You think me and Akshay? What the? You ass! What the?”

Kunal jumped out of his chair...

“Oh.. So.. so.. you guys aren't like.. let's say.. a couple?”

“No! We are not gay.”

“But why else will you enter his room in the morning?” Umesh asked.

That was it. Umesh and Kunal had imagined me and Akshay having hot sweaty sex. It would need a lot of convincing to erase that image out of their heads. I had to tell them all about Pritha. About my **love** for her. For a **girl**. And about how Akshay was helping me to get her.

“Oh! So you are... straight,” said Umesh.

“Of course I am! Why do you sound disappointed?”

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“Well, I had a bet going with Kunal. I bet 100 rupees that you were gay.”

“What? You guys had a bet going on my sexual orientation? And that too just 100 rupees!”

“Look, we are really sorry,” Kunal said stuffing a mouthful of masala dosa in his mouth.

“You see, you have no girlfriend and your life isn't exciting enough. We thought maybe this was your way of.. you know.. having some fun.”

“You crazy? As far as girlfriends are considered I don't think you two have ever been near a woman who wasn't your mother. And I don't see how you guys are better than me when it comes to an exciting life. Your life sucks too.”

Now, these guys were my friends. I wasn't mad at them or anything; in fact I found it amusing that they thought people change their sexual orientation just because they can't impress the opposite sex. But I felt bad about the 'Your life sucks too' thingy. I shouldn't have said that. Kunal was visibly hurt. Umesh sank his face into his plate.

Back at the flat, we weren't talking to one another. Not because we were mad at each other or anything, it's just that when guys feel hurt, they don't talk. I lay down on the bed. Kunal was sitting on a chair reading the day's newspaper at 11 in the night. It was symbolic. He never really read the papers. Umesh sat in a corner massaging his hair with coconut oil. That was symbolic too. Umesh didn't have enough hair.

“You know what guys, I am sorry,” I said.

“We are sorry too,” Umesh said, pouring more oil on his head.

Kunal kept the newspaper aside.

“Yeah.. We wanna make it up to you Dev. We want to help you get your girl back.”

“Yeah Dev. We want to help too,” Umesh stopped his oiling.

“Thanks guys, but you think you can help?” I asked, still being insensitive and all.

“Of course we can. Maybe not with the main stuff, but there is some stuff where we can come handy,” Kunal said.

“Yeah... We want to help,” Umesh said, now styling his hair.

I wanted to accept their help then and there. But Akshay had asked me to keep the whole thing a secret.

“Umm.. Well, why don't we do this- Why don't we freak Akshay out, the way you freaked me out, with your gay talk and all.”

“Oh.. sure sure... We would love to,” Umesh sounded excited.

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“Yeah.. tonight, as soon as he comes back from his date, we will bombard him with questions about his orientation,” said Kunal.

“This is gonna be fun,” Umesh rubbed his hands in glee.

“Good. So that means I should go to sleep. You can catch him when he is alone.” I said.

And that was that. I went to sleep. Back to the world of Pritha and polka dotted frocks, the world of golden grass and the evening sun. I slept. I dreamt.

In the morning, I woke up to three ugly faces hovering above me. Kunal and Umesh had freaked Akshay out enough for him to accept that he was helping me. After a lot of persuasion, he accepted Kunal and Umesh's help. Now there were four of us onboard.