

# milli meet Miss Lilly

THE TWO WOMEN IN MY LIFE

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**Introduction:** **Dev Sinha** is a Bollywood Fashion Designer who has a steady girlfriend called **Milli** a fitness and aerobics instructor. They are in love and in a steady relationship for four years but things are about to change and so is the dynamics of their relationship as Dev gets obsessed with a mannequin made of latex and industrial rubber who he calls **Miss Lilly**. She is the new mannequin, which he has put on the front show window of his cloths store called **Razzmatazz**.

The rubber show doll is not real but comes alive in the mind of Dev who begins to fantasize about her and starts to be entangled into a relationship with the latex doll, which come alive at night and dances with him and listens to his problems. She is like an alter ego or Dev's feminine side, which comes alive in the shape of **Miss Lilly**. In the meanwhile Dev's relationship goes down the dumps as he losing interest in his real life girlfriend Milli, the lack of attention dives Milli mad, she has to get Dev out of this delusional relationship, she tries to do that with the advice of a Tarot Card reader by the name of **Shamli Chatterji**. Will Milli get her man back or become the laughing stock of her girlfriends **Mala** who is an apprentice with Dev Sinha, and her transgender friend **Suhana Caroline** the showstopper of **Coco Rani** a rival Fashion Designer who is challenging Dev Sinha at the Dove International fashion Week? Hold on to your seats and enjoy this rib tickling and bizarre Romantic Comedy.

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## Chapter one: Razzmatazz

It was the **Dove International** fashion week and there was very little time left, like most creative people, they start working only when the deadline is staring them in the face and panic sets in all around. Well it was that kind of a panic morning as Dev Sinha stood in the middle of his showroom floor with a coffee mug in his hand and a water bottle pressed against his forehead." Ma ma mia! I am in trouble for sure, its two weeks we have a dead line to meet people and the ball room lehengas are not even stitched, and the Scottish tweed hat no one has bothered to cut the fabric even." Dev was perspiring, he was not used to delivering the goods in such a short deadline and this time they were really pushing their luck. Mala stood on the side trying to cut a piece of silk cloth, she was trying to make a matching scarf, but the colour just didn't seem right to her, she wanted tangerine and instead of that she had to work with orange and yellow.

This was going to be a frantic day at the "**Razzmatazz.**" That was the name of the fashion hot shop that Dev had built over the years with lots of heartache and dedication. He was one of the well known fashion designers of Mumbai with a large Showroom and a dedicated staff who carved up clothes that where in Vogue and made people feel good about themselves. **Mala** was one of his apprentices, she had just passed out of the Xavier's Fashion institute and had been helping out with Dev in the showroom for two years or so. She was used to her Boss's antics and idiosyncrasies and his occasionally tantrum especially if he had a project in hand and the deadline was approaching.

"Dev you need to relax a bit, I know we are pressed for time but panicking will not help, we need planning and a clear process if we are to finish our work and get all our outfits including the skirts ready on time. The Dove International is a premium fashion event and we need to be perfect with are stitches, fittings and colour schemes." Mala tried to calm Dev down and urged him to get a grip on things." That water bottle will be the end of you, you got a headache use a balm and apply it on your forehead." Mala went on with her advice." Listen Mala I am the boss here that's for sure, thanks for your advice but time is of the essence here, Why don't you make an item wise list of things and tell me how much raw material we need like cloth, stitches, threads etc.

Let's get a lowdown on everything right sweets, don't forget I am the boss here." Dev tried to assert his authority and handed out the morning task to Mala. She dutifully jotted down his instruction on her note pad as she lost interest in the immediate task of cutting a scarf.

"The black ball room gown it looks very tacky and the pink peels they hang out like a sore thumb, I had asked you to tell the tailor to fix stars on them white stars that shine the ores look

really out of place darling.” Dev began inspecting the gowns that lay on the couch, they had been designed for the show stopper **Moon Moon Jaan**, the top super model of Mumbai.” I had given the tailors the instruction and even handed them out on chits, but the fools keep fucking things up, we were late in our last payment to them, I guess they are taking out their frustration by fucking the gown up. Anyways I will get to work and re stick them myself.” Mala said as she handed a hot cup of chocolate milk to her boss, who was by now very unnerved and edgy as he saw his premier creation in tatters in-front of him.



“ Mala darling I am sorry I know I put a lot of pressure on you all the time but you are all the help I have. Anyway all this work is part of your training, you will only get better at the job.” Dev looked at her firmly, he was her fashion guru too.

“ The Sign board of our hot shop we need to change the lights, I think we should light it up with purple and neon, it will look very lively, I am tired of the green bulbs I mean **Razzmatazz** is such a powerful brand for my show room we need more spunk in it.” Dev walked out of the shop and inspected the glow sign that adorned his fashion showroom, sipping gently from his mug swirling the hot chocolate in his mouth.

The showroom had a large floor area made of teak wood painted with oil paint, the large show window was covered by opaque glass. They're where red, green and purple bulbs fitted inside the show window that illuminated it with rainbow like colours.” I had asked you to clean the show window and wipe the glass clean of any dust particles, we will be placing a mannequin on the show window the dress for the show stopper will be displayed here.” Dev barked out further instructions to **Mala**. “I have asked for the delivery to be made in the evening but before that the show stopper costume needs to be fully stitched.” Mala knew that the coming few days were going to be hectic for her as there was a lot of work to be done and many more dresses and gowns that needed to be perfectly

stitched for the Fashion Show.

“Baby you know me I am a perfectionist, like **Coco Rani** I want to make a solid mark on this fashion show, this is the ideal opportunity for me to stamp my authority on the Mumbai Fashion scene. “



Dev lamented as he took a sip from a mug full of hot chocolate. It was January and the wedding season was upon them. The salwar’s and the ghagras where what he wanted to show off to everyone.” I am glad that you have come up with a brand new collection this time and ditched the Rajasthan Theme for good this new French and Gujrati fusion looks far more interesting to me.” Mala gave her two bit.

‘ I thought I would go for fusion this time, I was running out of ideas but French Chic with Gujrati Dhokla now that’s a new and novel idea. I know the new dresses and salwars will really make heads turn. See I have even put peacock feathers on some of the Kurti’s.” Dev went to his wooden varnished cupboard to take out some clothes and then put them on the ebony table I, which he used often to cut his fabric and make his intricate designs.

“ Mala dear you need to call up Moon Moon Jaan, she needs to come to the show room for the final fittings, we really need to get it done. If you need send my car to pick her up tell our driver Raja Ram.” Dev knew that Moon Moon Jaan would give his clothes that extra spunk that was needed to make people gasp and sigh.

“ Well I have been calling her up since yesterday but couldn’t get through her secretary **Ramesh** told me she has been crying all day and Has not come out of her room, She doesn’t want to talk.” Mala informed her boss in a troubled tome.

“ Why has she locked herself up in her room ? “ Dev asked promptly.” Well she has just broken up from her fourth boyfriend this year, so she is still in shock “ Mala informed Dev.” Damn that woman, no one knows how to handle her that

her problem. She is a slippery girl just like her chocolate skin she is slippery as hell that gal.



“ Her secretary **Ramesh** told me she has even cancelled her shooting and ribbon cutting events.

Therefore, it will take some effort to get her here for a fitting with her mental condition not being so right. Mala knew that the task of ferrying Moon Moon Jaan would be given to her.

“ Mala you need to fetch her girl there will be no show stopper and no show without Moon Moon Jaan. I know you are stressed with the ghagras alterations but please doll you have to get her out of her depression.” Dev was adamant that Moon Moon Jaan was made to keep her Appointment.

So it was done Mala took Dev’s driver and drove straight to Moon Moon Jaan’s villa in Juhu near Carter Road. She drove past bustling evening traffic, huffing and panting all the way egging the driver to drive faster, after all there was not much time left from their fashion show to begin and they still had to perfect the show stopper gowns and ghagras and choli’s.” Chalo bhai ! Don’t just stare at the red light its yellow now move we are as it is stretched for time.” Mala barked at the driver who was driving leisurely.

As they arrived at Moon Moon Jaan’s bungalow in Juhu, the car drove straight into the long alley leading to the porch of the bungalow. It came to a screeching halt and puff of dust bellowed in the air. Mala opened the car door and with haste started walking towards the entrance, Ramesh was there to see her and open the door so that Mala could sit in the hall.” Madam is very tense she has not eaten for days and has been weeping all day, she sleeps for over ten hours and doesn’t talk to any one, she had asked the servants to also stay away from her room.” Ramesh apprised Mala of the current situation and the mental health of Moon Moon Jaan.” Man we are doomed, the show will begin in a weeks’ time, Moon Moon Jaan has been promoted as the show stopper for Razzmatazz, she needs to try out her outfits and the fur cast which is part of our **Chinar Collection** inspired from the Kashmir valley, you need to talk to her and perk her up, we have no other option.” Mala looked bewildered and tense she had a job to do but without her showstopper, nothing would move. “I know you have been calling up all week, but what to do my hands are tied.” Ramesh looked helplessly at Mala and then looked at the ceiling as if looking for some divine intervention.” May be you should talk to her try and get her back to life perk her mood up a little, we have all tried and failed she is devastated after Rana Sahib dumped her for that French Girl Andre.” Ramesh gave Mala the much needed gossip.” Rana Sahib that Polo player, Ya ! Moon Moon was very fond of him, I thought this time her affair will work, so sad. Men they leave us women devastated and lurking in the dark.” Mala said feeling sorry for Moon Moon Jaan, she could understand, heartbreaks can be devastating and Moon Moon was not getting any younger. “ Let me in open her room door let me see her and talk to her maybe that will help.” Saying that Mala pushed the door and entered Moon Moon Jaan’s room that was adjacent to the hall.

Mala moved hesitantly towards a large bed made out of teak wood on the bed under the blue quilt lay Moon Moon Jaan, she was snuggled into the quilt with three large pillows scattered around her, her eyes were covered with a red silk blind fold, it was as if she was not interested in getting the sun, she just wanted to sleep. Her world now was desolate, dark and lonely and so was the state of her mind. Mala sat next to her on the bed, Moon Moon’s body looked life less she had flung her hands on either side, not a very comfortable sleeping posture for a



lady. Mala was hesitant at first but then moved her hands around Moon Moon's cheeks as if trying to comfort her and show affection and concern for her plight." Moon Moon darling you need to get out of this self-inflicted misery of yours shake yourself out of this depression, I am here for you, Moon Moon wake up dear look at me it's Mala." Saying this she jolted Moon Moon trying to wake her up and get her attention.

Moon Moon Jaan moved but slowly like a dead Python who had been hit on the belly by a sharp wooden stick, she wriggled around and then moans and yawned, she moaned and groaned a bit more as if admonishing Mala for having the audacity to wake her up from her slumber and daze. She then took off her blinds slowly and opened her eyes at first it took her some time to register that it was indeed Mala who was now sitting on her bed next to her trying to get her attention." What the fuck is this, fuck off Mala I am depressed, how dare you Kick me out like this, I am in pain darling." Moon Moon yelled as soon as she had gotten her bearings that she had been sleeping for two whole days. " Fuck Fuck Fuck." she hit her hands violently on her bed as she said those words." I want to go back to my sleep to my dreams reality is too horrifying for me, I am not sure I want to live anymore." Moon Moon was in pain and her voice choked with sorrow as she said this, then she looked on either side of the bed and stretched her hand to get her bed pan which was lying under the bed. She put her head down and puked her guts out.

She had been drinking gin for the past one week and after that she had started off with rum anything that would give her relief from the intense pain she was feeling after her break up, it felt that her world had crashed, there was no reason to live anymore.



Mala got a fright as she saw this and went forward to comfort her." Oh! Darling get a grip on your self, you look like a drunken heap, here let me help you." Mala steadied Moon Moon and put her back on the bed, resting her head on the pillow so that the poor woman could get some relief." That bastard he has been shaming that French bitch Andre, he cheated on me that bastard, what am I to do Mala my world has come crashing down, this is my fourth betrayal I can't take it anymore, my heart is a wreck and so am I." Moon Moon looked towards her friend as she said this with soulful eyes.

" That is life Moon Moon get a grip girl you have a fashion show to attend and you are the show stopper, right now you look like an old drunken bag." Mala tried to get her friend out of her stopper .

" I am so weak and feeble at this point this was my last chance for marriage I am thirty two for god sakes I am not getting any younger, what am I to do ?" Saying that Moon Moon went into her weeping fits as Mala tried to console her with a hug and a pat on the back." You need to get on your feet girl the Dove International Fashion Show awaits you now, we need you there is very little time, Dev wants you to try out his dresses so that you look perf get as his show stopper." Mala went on to state with some authority." Look Moon Moon work is the easiest way for you to distract yourself from another failed relationship that's the best antidote put your efforts in building your career as the show stopper burn the ramp girl burn the ramp." Mala tried to egg and perk up Moon Moon Jaan.

Moon Moon slowly got out of bed and gingerly went to the loo, she knew she could not waste any more time remunerating about here past and her failure to hold on to one more relationship. " Dev is so harsh, he knows my mental situation yet he insists that work is first, I am human after all." Moon Moon murmured to herself aloud as she started to brush her teeth.

“ Babes no time for Lulla Byes now, I have got the car waiting for you be ready we need to reach Razzmatazz quick hurry ! “ Mala then marched out into the porch and instructed the driver to start the car as they both waited for Moon Moon Jaan to get a move on things.

## Chapter Two : The Tarot Card of Death

**Milli Rastogi** was late today, she had been working in the **Diva Spa and Gym** as a fitness instructor for over two years now. Her job was to teach people yoga and high intensity workouts along with aerobics. Milli had just turned twenty-five and the love of her life had gifted her a new iPhone 13 with three large diamonds studded in its golden case. Dev Sinha had especially got it made for her from an apple showroom in Singapore and it had costed him a million rupees. But for his girl Milli he was ready to spend millions, he adored her and loved her. They had been going steady for over three years now. Their relationship still felt as fresh as the morning breeze as young and filled with nectar like the white lilies in a beautiful garden.

“ Shit man I am sorry woke up late today.” Saying this to **Pum Pum** the fat secretary who sat on the reception of the spa Milli barged into the work out room. She always carried her large sports bag filled with towels, shower gels cream and other gym equipment not to mention her green Tupperware water bottle which she would fill up with energy drinks from the cooler time and again after her workout instructions. Today either where two people less from her regular workout group of seven that she was expected to train and handle individually as an aerobics instructor.

“ Look girls you need to line up at Beth center of the floor today we will do smooth crunches with push ups and then the dumbbell exercises, that’s will be to warm up. Rema can you take the attendance.” Milli gave her instructions to her exercise group and a young teenage girl **Rema** to do the attendance for the day. Within minutes they were all on the floor on their respective yoga mats doing crunches and sit ups along with spot jogging. “ Warm up is the most important thing stop day, it relaxes the muscles and get the blood flowing into the body.” Saying this she

Trend on the music a symphony from the Mozart collection and soon started her drill. Her fellow students in the group started there exercise as well.

Milli loved her job the pay was not that much only fifty thousand a month but then she had a rich boyfriend in Dev who wails shell out now and again and give her expensive gifts. Her live was thus more than comfortable and loving. Dev cared for her and protected her, after all she was his girl now.



“ So now lift that butt up stretch both arms to the left and then swirl to the right.” Milli was giving her aerobic instruction as she asked her team to do jumping jacks accompanied by stretches and lunges. That was her life for the past couple of years, home to the spa, and her evenings would be spent with Dev listening to his showroom problems or inspiring him to make some out of this world clothes collection. It was their little love nest that they had build carefully with love mutual respect and admiration for each other. Now in his early forties Dev felt that the much younger Milli was just perfect for him, she would motivate him and perk him up all the time.

Dev was often chided by his friends as being a bit of a cradle snatcher as Milli was more the eighteen years younger than he was. However, as they say a man needs a young muse and that was what she was for Dev Sinha. His muse his inspiration for his world along with his showroom and work.

“ You know Dev aerobics is like fashion design it's an art from if you get into it, the various exercise routines and meant to starch and nourish every little muscle in the body it is very scientific you see.” Milli would endlessly chat with Dev over cups of coffee and doughnuts with her man. Hey with would have Coffee and Bun musk at

the Daruwalla Coffee Shop in Bandra not very far from Dev's showroom Razzmatazz. In the evenings they would watch plays at Prithvi theatre or just walk hand in hand at the Juhu beach. Milli enjoyed long drives as well in Dev's SUV which was perfect for the Mumbai roads full of pot holes.

“ You know Doll, I just need to get things perfect for this International fashion show, this is a perfect opportunity for me to let people know that I have arrived in the Fashion scene. I am nervous though don't know what will happen to my Show Stopper Moon Moon Jaan, she has been giving me sleepless night. “ Dev would discuss his office worries with her and get advice from her. They looked and acted as a perfect couple. Their bond had become stronger with the time they spent and they found solace in each others arms.

The two would often reminisce the time they met for the first time it was love at first sight for Dev Sinha. He had first met Milli at a common friends place. Shamli's place to be precise, she was a Tarot card reader and a close friend of Milli who was going through a violent break up with her then Boyfriends Raj who was a body builder at Milli's Gym itself. He was abusive towards Milli and would often yell and abuse her, which was frightening for the young girl. She had befriended **Shamli** and asked her for what the future would hold for her.

Shamli worked out of her home on the top of her house she had a loft that she had converted into a Tarot card reading room. The room had a door with large brass knobs hanging from it. It was painted Red and on the door it was painted “ **The Mystic** ” The room had two large windows that let the sun light through but Shamli would cover the windows with blue silk curtains when she was about to start her card reading session with a client. Privacy was of the utmost importance to her, she valued her client's privacy, and at times their anonymity. **Shamli Chatterji** that was her full name had come to Mumbai from Beliaghata area on the outskirts of Calcutta in West Bengal. Her father was priest in the local Kali temple and from her childhood Shamli was drawn to tantra, black magic, Mysticism and the left hand Sadhna. She was mediate for days and even fast in order to gain more insight into these dark arts. She was at a light study about Voodoo and Black Magic from her father, who would teach her mystic mantras and chanting exercises. In her youth she decided that she could make a profession out of her art and knowledge as a faith healer and someone who could provide guidance to others, help them in their tangled lives. When she moved to Mumbai, she realized that she had to learn Tarot Card reading and Palmistry to her knowledge of tantra that was the only way to get commercial success and impress her more urban and elite clients. It was also an easy way to make more money and a good living. She at first hesitant selling her mystical knowledge for profit, but then one has to survive in the big city

and without money one cannot go on for long. She had made friends in the city and slowly started getting a steady stream of clients. She had met Milli in the SPA which she would frequent in the evenings. Milli had also recommended some people to her and that way through word of mouth her business of Tarot Card reading had prospered, young men and woman with relationship problems would often seek her out for advice and predictions. Men cheating on their wives housewives with mother in law problems. Employee's suffering from a bad boss these kind of people would frequent her carrot card reading and spiritual guidance sessions, Slowly Shamli had made a name for herself in an elite circle of close friends. She had a way with words, with her deep and large Bengali eyes tanned bronze skin and a shiny forehead she did look like a Goddess who could read your mind within minutes and diagnose her client's problems and psychological issues. She liked to meet her clients alone in her mystic room which where decorated with Japanese paper lamps and a couple of Bonze Trees. She would wear a Japanese Kimono when she sat for her healing and Tarot card reading sessions with her clients.



Tarot card readers have always been odd balls and history has shown that there was a distinct link between carrot card readings and occult. In a way Shamli was because of her past was able to sue her powers for greater good. She through her tarot cards and deep insights into the mind of people would try and predict their past present and future. She was a spiritual advisor a kind of a love guru for her devoted clients, who she was able to heal and free from their day-to-day work and relationship anxieties.

Today she had **Milli** in her Mystic Room," Let me shuffle the deck of cards, you just relax and take deep breaths try and concentrate on the music and try and then slowly close your eyes, till you become still inside and the let your body hang limb first the neck then the shoulders releasing all the tension in the upper bar and spine slowly moving down to your your lower back. Take deep breathes easy and deep till you are totally still inside." **Shamli** would often start her sessions with this

relaxation exercise, this was done to make the client still, so that they would then begin to talk to her with ease and start answering her questions as Shamli began to shuffle the cards slowly pacing them one by one on the table.

It was simple a deck had 52 cards that represented 52 weeks in a year the four colours represented the four seasons. The 13 cards in a suit represent the thirteen weeks in each season, Four suits times 13 cards in a suite equals 52. It was all very logical and mathematical, but the ex-factor was Shamli and her knowledge of occult and the dark arts that would make the cards talk.

After cutting the deck and placing six cards on the table, she would then open her parrot cage places next to her chair or hanging for the ceiling in a cage. Yes! Shamli had help she had a pet a very dear pet and that was a colourful parrot. Yes she had a blue, yellow and red feathered macaw parrot and she called him **Rang Birangi**. That was the name of her dear per Ran Birangi who she would let loose in her sessions by flicking the cage open, on cue the parrot would pop out of the cage and land up on the table. She would then hop on one of the cards and by using her been turn the card the upturning of the card would then show Sharmili what it was. By reading the card Shamli would then start with her predictions.

Today the card that opened up flush on the table was, The Magician. At first both Sharmili and Milli started at the card and then Shamli closed her eyes for a moment. She opened them up suddenly as if she had got some deep insight.

The Magician also known as The Magus or The Juggler is the first trump or Major Arcana card in most traditional Tarot decks. It is used in game playing and divination; in the English-speaking world, the divination meaning is much better known. The image of the Magician shows a man who is standing in front of his powerful altar with tools that represent all four directions and the four suits in the tarot. When the Magician appears in a spread, it points to the talents, capabilities and resources at his disposal to succeed. The message is to tap into one's full potential rather than holding back, especially when there is a need to transform something.

“ You lucky girl you are pure magic darling. You need to look within and take stock of your talents its time for you to go for your ambitions and goals.” Shamli looked at Milli who opened her eyes slowly and stared at the card blankly then she waved her hands in irritation.” Just stop this mumbo jumbo talk tell me what it really means.” Milli inquired with distinct irritation.



“ It means you need to take wings and fly, it means your time has come dear, it means that love is going to be your guide and inspiration in the future pure love of your man.” Shamli clapped her hands and her parrot **Rang Birangi** did a little tap dance hopping from one card to another.

“ The Magician is a good omen you need to work on your career as an aerobics instructor and participate in 20km charity walks, that will give you fame and name. Who knows if you use your skills and talent to the fullest you might have a fitness spa and salon of your own one day.” Shamli went on to explain her predictions.

“ But to move forward you will need strength from your lover and partner. Let's see what the next card is.” Shamli clapped her hands and cried out to her parrot Rang Birangi, who hopped and flutter her wings she then with her beak upturned the card to the extreme right. It was the Tower.

As Shamli looked at the card she blew out a great sigh and covered her lips then she said, “ La la la now that's very interesting and also a bit dangerous. Girl the Tower card means there is going to be a sudden crisis in your life a great shift and change in your relationship. It seems you need to hold on to your man Dev Sinha a wee bit more tightly.” Shamli then started at Milli with soulful and concerned eyes. “ What do you mean me and Dev share a great relationship, he showers me with gifts and is very caring towards me, what can go wrong between the two of us. We love chatting with each other and meant every week. What can go wrong, I don't see the connect.” Milli tried to brush this prediction away as hog wash. “ So you say but relationships can crumble and collapse too, let's see what is in store, let me check the next card.” Shamli gains clicked her fingers and Rang Birangi opened the third card with her beak. The card was the tarot card of Death, “ Ma ma Mia ! Now that's something you got a Death card.” Shamli said with a blank expression none her face.

“ Well what does that mean is it good or bad tell me.” Mili inquired, she was not sure what the death card signifies. “ Dear there is no good card bad card in carrot all the cards are meant to convey an energy and the death card means a big transition, an end of a phase an end of a chapter and the beginning of another.” The astute tarot card reader went on to add and explain the meaning of the death card.

“ You need to look at your relationship with Dev hold on to him tight, there could be turbulent times ahead.” Shamli had made her final prediction for the day It was time to shut up shop, she slowly got up from her chair and kept her hand soothingly on Shamli's shoulder as if to give her some comfort. Mili got up thanked the tarot card reader, slowly she walked out of the room.

“ Oh! I forgot your fee here “ Mili handed her two thousand rupees as her fee before she left the comfort of the mystic room.

### Chapter Three : The Dove International Fashion Week

Moon Moon Jaan had been ferried to Razzmatazz, she still felt weak and groggy, at the door was a dapper looking Dev Sinha at the door early waiting for his show stopper to be.” Welcome darling, you look so dull and weak, not to worry you just try out my dresses, Mala will help you with the fittings all will be just finer. I Know about your break up.” Dev took the lady by the hand towards the many wooden wardrobes that adorned his show room. He the took out some gowns and ghagras from the wardrobe and slowly placed them on the center table.

“ Here now try these out, Mala take her measurements, we will have to do some stitching to make them fit perfectly.” Dev gave out his instructions to his assistant Mala, who was all too eager to take things forward. The dresses where fitting well and Mala was glad at least something was working for her today. She had spent hours wiping the tears of Moon Moon and helping g her overcome her fourth heartbreak. Dove International Fashion Show was a grand fashion event that took place once a year and it was the premier show to showcase ones talent. This could work for Mala she was a mere apprentice but she could come out of the shadow of her Boss Dev if she got some acclaim and made some connections at the show. She wanted things to go well and for that she had to keep the show stopper in a fine and mellow mood so that she could perform on the ramp.



This time the Fashion week was being held at the Regal Five Star Hotel, it was going to be a grand show and bigger than last year. The rock band called the Pandits and Oasis where going to perform. It was going to be a tough fight between Dev Sinha who was displaying his Chinar Collection inspired from the Hills and Kashmir. He had interlaced this range of clothing with twist of French Couture Fashion. His main completion was with **Coco Rani** the grand old lady of Mumbai Fashion Scene, she had entered the competition with her **Emerald Queen** collection that she would be showcasing. This was a range of real clothing with shiny silk collection inspired from the clothing and fashion style of the original Coco Channel herself. Yes the famous

French designer who re-created French fashion and introduced it to the world. Everyone knew that if a designer had to get eyeballs at the event, the clothing range he or she displayed had to be top notch at the same time they should have a great Showstopper along with a grand entry act where the models would then do a catwalk at the ramp.

Here Coco Rani had hit on a grand idea she did not choose a regular female model to show case her range of clothing line. She did some out of the box thinking and decided that this time her event would have a transgender as her show stopper. Never before in the history of the Dove International Fashion Show a transgender show stopper and been used. Since Coco Rani's collection was based on French styles and cuts she could use a transgender show stopper, French are liberal people and transgender intermingle with society with ease in fact many fashion designers in French where transgender and that was a huge market for a clothing brand it was an emerging segment now ready to come out and show off in style. Coco Rani decided that to make a bang and get attention she had to do something drastically different something that had not been seen in the Indian Fashion scene and that was having a transgender lead her clothing collection. The onus of carrying out the job fell on **Suhana Caroline**,

**Suhana Caroline** was a mixed breed she had a Moroccan Muslim father and French mother. Just like her parentage she also had a mixed up sexuality and in her teens realized that she was more a woman than a man from a male name of Shaan she changed her name to Suhana in her teens and by the time she had become an adult she had started dressing in ladies clothing and even started using woman's make up. She had become a transgender and even went through a few operations to get breast enhancements along with a few lip jobs as well. Suhana Caroline had been given a huge break she had been given then task of being the show stopper for Coco Rani's French collection this time around.

She would be the transgender Queen of her Emerald Queen Collection and Rani dear had to dress her up for the show. After all, she had to be pit her transgender queen against Moon Moon Jaan who would be holding the torch aloft for Dev Sinha's fashion collection. It was going to be the Clash of the Titans a winner takes all kind of a show and the fashion media was exaggerating up the contest just to get the sizzle and pop into the Fashion Week.

Coco Rani was a middle aged slim woman with an almost bland complexion she had thin long arms and a pointed nose, she was constantly smoking cigarettes which would be stuck to long ebony black cigarette holder. Her make up would always be heavy and she had a habit of wearing the most bizarre of lipstick shades from Purple, Sapphire and even Burgundy. They gave her a gothic look. She also loved wearing flashy sunglasses, which she bought from holding in countries like Spain and Italy. In the fashion circle, she was worshipped for her originality and strict adherence to time shekels and timeline. She was never late in delivering her collections and always completed her tasks on time to the joy of many of her well-trusted clients.

“ Dev no doubt has talent but then he is too desi in his tastes and outlook, plus I believe his show stopper is recovering from a heart break and an alcoholic haze consumed by Vodka. There is no way these people are going to become organized in time. It's not easy to dress someone up and steal the show on the ramp. Look Suhana you are unique with your parentage and you being a transgender, you will just stand apart I have some great hats and eyes make up ready for you along with handbags and stiletto heels. You will rock babes.” Coca Rani had great plans for her showstopper and she knew that she will make tongues wag at the dove international fashion week.



“ I want you to arrive in the show in grand style in a way never imagined before, we have arranged for a Zebra from the local zoo you will enter the ramp seated on a Zebra and I will make a matching outfit for you. Imagine it will be a double whammy, a transgender show stopper making a grand entry on a Zebra. Never before would that have happened in a fashion show in Mumbai before.” Coco Rani explained her vision to Suhana who looked be sued but went on with the grand scheme of things.” The old hag Moon Moon Jaan would not stand a chance in-front of you my dear, not when you are mounted on a Zebra.” She gave a smile and took a puff from her cigarette which was imbedded inside a black ebony cigarette holder, it had a gold tip at the end and she kept puffing on it for a while as she took one long look at her discovery Suhana Caroline.



The Fashion Show was a grand success for **Suhana** who was lauded for her outfits and her talent on the ramp the paparazzi could not get enough of her. This was a transgender with a difference with her androgynous mixed fathers she stood apart. Her slender waist and long arms gave her a kind of quiet grace. Her face shone with a radiant brilliance of self confidence when she rode on a Zebra and paraded Coco Rani’s emerald collection in-front of buyers and fashion pundits alike.

The Paparazzi went berserk when they saw her in bouncy gowns and lehengas on top of a Zebra, man this was a new one for the Mumbai fashion circuit a transgender model on top of a Zebra that was a sight to behold.

**Moon Moon Jaan** on the other hand looked stale and jaded she had been decked up and put out there for all to see. Mala and Dev had worked hard on her make up and outfits but some how she lacked the zing and the spunk when the Show started, it was as if her break up this time had sealed her energies and jaded her enthusiasm for the job of the Show Stopper. She lacked the usual spunk and sadder of her younger avatars.” I am dam nervous this time.” Moon Moon told Mala as she was doing her makeup and looking for a darker shade of lipstick.” Just be yourself dear, you have the experience which no one has here on the show, you have just been

hurt tats all, lighten up and don't think too much." Mala gave her advise and tried to calm the jingling nervous of Moon Moon, who would occasionally puff away with her extra light menthol cigarettes.

No I feel different this time, it's not the same Moon Moon, I feel empty and strained this time, it's not the same me." Moon Moon said, it felt that she had even given up before her act. She had lost the fight even before the spot lights fell on her and her outfits." I am scared I am going to loose the spotlight, that Chaka is going to take the cake away from me." Moon Moon looked deeply into the mirror trying to hide her now hollow cheeks and dark circles around the eyes with pancake and make up." She is a transgender you know that girl, I mean that thing Suhana Caroline, man I have never had such competition before, I don't know what I will do I might just slip on the ramp this time, I am so under confident." Moon Moon said as if she was about to sob and throw up.

' Come on girls our act is about to begin." Dev barged into their conversation." Coco Rani's girl has done a fab job the Paparazzi have loved her Zebra act. Moon Moon babes you need to pull your socks girl, go give them fire and hell let the ramp burn girl let it burn." Dev clapped his hands in encouragement.

The act started and Moon Moon Jaan stuttered on the ramp with her six inch red high heels, she looked Jaded even under the exquisite make up. The lights where bright and Door's music " Come on Baby light my Fire " was playing, suddenly she realised that it was her turn she had to walk the ramp now. There where people cheering in the crowds as flash lights from camera's shown brightly like meteors falling from the sky. It was her turn now there was no more waiting she took one deep breath and then started her ramp walk. Her mind was not there she looked lost and desolate, she took the first few steps all right and that gave her confidence. She looked straight at the audience and smiled. Then had way through her walk three cameras flashed one after the other art her right on the face and the eyes. They just kept going and flashing one after the other along with long zoom lenses. It must have been the vodka still churning in her stomach and the bright flash lights that blinded her from a few seconds that as all that was all that as needed to break her concentration and break her walk. She stuttered and stumbled for a sec her high heels gave way and her lags wobbled like cooked noodles and like spaghetti she went into knots. She went off balance, she tried hard to gain her balance and steady her walk, but the more she

tried the more she feel off balance and wobbled finally she gave up the fight, she felt tried and fell flat on her face on the ramp walk itself.

It was a sudden event and a sudden thud she fell like dread twigs, just like the maple leaf flying free in the autumn sky. She fell flush on the ramp floor to everyone's horror. All in the front row gave a gasp, some froze with fear concern what had happened to the poor model who had just fallen flat in-front of their very eyes.



It was Mala who ran unto her and tried to comfort the fallen show stopper. She leaned forward and held her aloft and then with tug got her back on her feet as Moon Moon lay their tired, dazed and a wee bit embarrassed that she had failed in her act and delivered a flop show for Dev and his collection." Hey! Babes get a grip come come up back on your feet, you can do it get up now get up girl.' Mala tried her best to get her back on her feet. Moon Moon was still groggy and in a daze, she was confused as to what hit her.

It was now Dev's turn he flung himself into action and helped Mala get Moon Moon on her feet, and within minutes they had rescued her and pulled her away out of the flash light back into the clock room far away from harm's way.

" Man this was a total disaster, a hog wash, what the fuck happened I am day dreaming or what !" Dev sat himself down on a wooden stool as if he had seen a ghost. He had just seen his show stopped fall flat on the ramp and his collection of clothes go down the drain. No one would remember what Moon Moon was wearing, her fall had taken care of that." This is such a disaster girl."

Mala was equally disappointed." Moon Moon girl you are just not with it today, taking you was a big mistake, I should have just let you be, you where never ready from this event girl." Mala went on to say, she was really in shambles

seeing weeks of hard work just go down the drain.

“ I should have listen to you, Moon Moon was not in any shape to perform today, it's such a shame.’ Dev kept sitting with a blank expression on his face.” That bitch Coco Rani has taken the cake this time her show stopper and Zebra act has won the hearts of all Suhana has become the talk of the Fashion week. She might even get an award and feel Fashion Magazine covers, it's a dead end for us the Dove Fashion week is over for us.” Dev could recognize the warning sign. He peered out of the clock room and saw Coco Rani puffing away and congratulating her showstopper, they were both sipping champagne and celebrating their act. There was a throng of journalists trying to get byte and get a picture of the two together. Suhana had stolen the show and she was being hailed as Coco Rani’s most promising portage. The press just could not get enough of the two as their faces where flashed on the cover of **Glam Rag** and **Fun do Fashion** magazine. Suhana Caroline was giving one interview after another along with quotes. The Transsexual Queen who stole hearts with her ramp walk as she sat on a Zebra and wooed people.

On the other side was Mala and Dev who sat dejected and inflated by the flop show that ether team had given. I mean Moon Moon Jaan could not hold her balance, the show stopped with jelly legs and glue on her high heels. A ramp walk that fell flat due to lack of balance and grit.

Dev was hit hard by the turn of events and retired early that day, even in bed he tossed and turned. He hardly attended the rest of the fashion event atet went on for another five days. It was a damp squib for him and Mala. For Dev this was a fall from grace a slap on the face for his talent and creativity. He fell into a depression and took refuge by shutting himself i9n his show room just tsarina at the empty wooden closets. He had no inspiration left in him anymore and did not feel that he could design any new clothes at least not for a while.

He was devastated by the Flop Show at the Fashion Week and the failure of Moon Moon to impress the crowd. The disaster have weaned his energies and his creativity, he had no inspiration left. This was a classic artist’s mental block. He had told Milli many times about the artist block,” We have great mood swings, you know I have deep bouts of depression and then sudden exhilaration, it's strange I guess creative people are like that.” Dev used to tell Milli as they shared coffee at the local cafe. Milli had no clue what was in store for the two of them as



Suddenly their relationship was about to be rail loaded by a third person and this was not a real person but a mannequin instead who would be re christened as Miss Lilly.

## Chapter Four : Miss Lilly the abandoned Mannequin

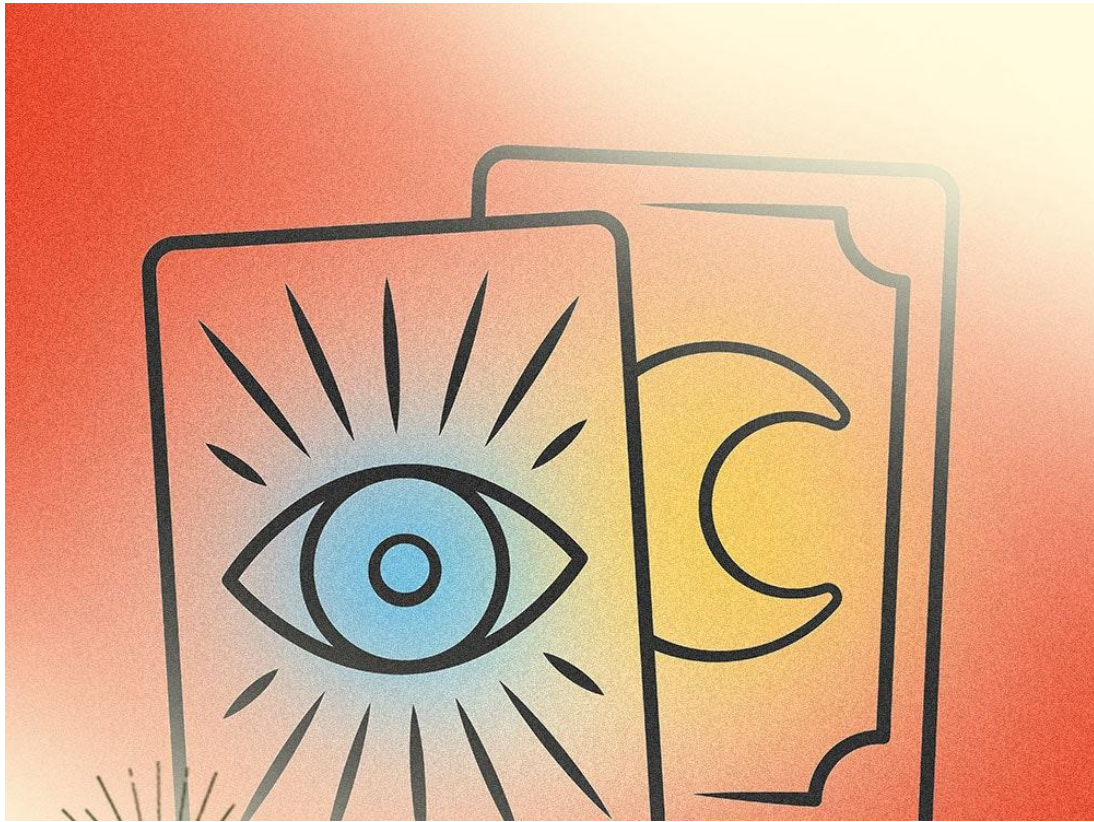
Razzmatazz looked grey and sullen, the lights where dim and the show window was empty after the fiasco of the fashion show Dev Sinha had not created anything new at all, he would just sit on his wooden stool staring at his computer screen, surfing the internet for design ideas, but his brain was not working to its optimum level and he would be distracted from time to time. His heat was not in his work and he at times stared blankly at the wall of his showroom. Then it happened there was a sound crack on his showroom window and a sudden shattering of the glass. It's as if someone had thrown a stone, shattering the glass of his window. Dev became alert by the sudden noise and commotion. He ran down the showroom floor and opened the main entrance door to see who it was, who had done the mischief. He stuck his neck out and walked out on the pavement to see who it was who had shattered his showroom window. "Oye! What the fuck you want from me, why are you bothering me come out you crazy son of a bitch." Dev was confused he ran on either side of the road for at least 200 meters but he saw no one, no one suspicious just some walkers and late night shopper do doing their shopping. It was as well past nine and its as dark. There was no one out there, he ran back to the showroom and saw the shattered glass, fallen on the street pavement. Then suddenly his eyes fell on the left side of his showroom on the floor was lying a mannequin, head first right in front of his very eyes the door which was made of skin colour latex and rubber was lying nose buried into the pavement floor, with one of her arms twisted, just like that flat on the pavement.

Dev Sinha went close to the mannequin, the latex and plastic doll was well over five feet tall or they are about. It was half dressed, from the clothes it was definitely a she, a female mannequin wearing a white dress with floral designs on it studded with red, blue and yellow summer flower designs. A Rose, a marigold and a sunflower, but the frock that she was wearing was torn from the back that exposed her upper frame and bare neck. Someone had carelessly town the doll with force, the mannequin had smashed the show room window and then fallen flat on her face on the pavement. Her twisted arm and torn frock was a testimony to her abandonment.

Someone did not want her anymore, or had no use for her now. She had lost favor from her master and was of no sue anymore that would explain why she had been abandons and brown away like a ragged baby doll and that too outside Dev Sinha's own showroom. There where bits of shattered glass all around her with some glass pieces still embedded to her back and neck.

Dev looked at her with amazement and then bend over to take a closer look, he turned the mannequin around to get a look at her face. She had a black wig on her with several golden streaks, her eyes where emerald green and she had a few scratches on her forehead. She must have got the injuries when she fell flat on her face. Dev held the doll firmly taking her by the arm, he gazed at her lips which where large almost Negro like especially the lower lip, her lips where paired with

purple lipstick. She had a green bindi on her forehead along with large silver earrings on either ear. Her eyebrows were thinly painted with black paint and her eyelashes were bushy and prickly.



Dev looked at her motionless, and her sheer helplessness, she had no home now and was left to die on the pavement like a destitute. Her master had abandoned her like a street dog to fend for herself. Dev felt a warm feeling in his hair when he glanced at her face for the first time. His eyes fell on the words written on the front of her frock it was an embroidery with red thread and the words were what her name could have been, "Lilly." It was that simple the word Lilly tagged to her floral frock. That was her name Dev got it instantly, "Hmm come on in Miss Lilly you need to get out of the street, come I will take you in with me." Dev said as he held the doll firmly in his arms and then got her upright on her feet. It took some strength for him to do that, as the doll was heavier than he thought must be over forty kilos for sure. That required all his strength and slowly he dragged the orphaned latex and rubber mannequin inside his show room.

He dragged her like a dead body across the wooden showroom floor and then made her stand behind his broken showroom window. The doll was now upright leaning slightly on the sidewall of the showroom window, her eyes staring blankly out of the shattered glass of the windowpane.

Dev shut the showroom lights and before retiring for the day he called up Mala, "Hi ! Sorry for calling so late, but someone smashed our showroom window pane and left a present for me, so don't get startled when you see it tomorrow morning, it's a surprise." saying that Dev kept the phone and retired for the day.

Next morning it was Mala's turn to look shell shocked, "What the fuck just

happened here.” Mala was looking at the five feet forty kilo mannequin.” What is thing in our showroom, did you get it from the museum.” Mala was bemused when she said this.” No dear she is a surprise and her name is Miss Lilly, some one threw her at the showroom window pane thus shattering the glass.” Dev gave his answer.” Who the hell did it?” Mala asked.” I have no clue dear but now she belongs to me and the showroom, we can use the mannequin, she will come in good uses I have many dresses that I could mount on her.” Dev replied saying that there was much use for the latex and rubber female doll.

“ God bless you boss, but I get a very strange feeling about this. Are you sure someone is not playing tricks with you?” Mala was suspicious being a woman she had a sixth sense about things.

“ Look Mala I kind of like her, she will cheer me up and maybe give me some sort of inspiration, anything to get me out of this creative block I am feeling after the Dove Fashion week distasteful disaster. I have found a place for her in the showroom, the mannequin stay ok.” Dev said sternly, he had made up his mind the doll would stay with him in the showroom. He had decided that he would be her new master now, who knows she might just inspire him to a new creative invention a new line of clothing or fashion range.

“ You going nuts man, I think you should take some advice from you girl as well after all Milli might have some reservations about you getting a latex doll into the showroom.” Mala asked Dev still not sure that letting the mannequin in was a good idea.

“ I like her she has soulful eyes, there is a strange venerability about her, it's like she has been abandoned by time, I feel for her you know. I think I will give her a makeover clean her up make her look grand and new again. She stays that's for sure.” Dev retorted as he looked at the ragged mannequin.

The showroom was filled by the odor of the doll, the smell was musty. Dev kept staring at her motionless for a while. Then he took off the torn and ragged floral frock that she was wearing. He took a few circles to gaze at the doll. She had heavy bulging hips and taut breasts. Her bare body was light cream in colour but some of the paint was peeling off. Her lipstick had faded a bit and the pink lips were not that pink anymore.

Dev delved inside the make up box that he had used to deck up Moon Moon Jaan for the fashion week. He looked at the doll and slowly went to work on her. To build the mood and a better mind space he put on some music an old ABBA Hit called the “ Dancing Queen.” That was appropriate for the moment and then he started painting the face of the doll. He started with the eye brow first then added some fake eye lashes which he alluded black with a small brush. He went on to work very delicately painted the face of the mannequin, at times take a step back to see the impact of the gentle strokes off his brush. It was as if he was repainting on an old canvass.

He went into a kind of a zone as he used powder and lipstick to paint the lips and cheeks of Lilly his new muse. Then he delved into his wooden closet to pick up some new silk dresses for Lilly and started to drape the material around her very lovingly. He would step back from time to time to see how they looked and how well they fitted. He would change a top or a piece of stocking if he did not like the colour combination. Then he went to his wigs cupboard and got out half a dozen wigs for Lilly. One blonde, one black there was a red one and an orange one as well, one by one he tried them on her to see how they looked. The orange one caught his fancy it went well with the green kurta and the black skirt.



He was getting absorbed with Lilly, it gave him a new inspiration for his creative outlet. He had been depressed all week due to his failure to make an impact and a mark on the Dove Fashion week but now he had a new plaything his new mannequin his new love his new obsession and that was a life less doll he proudly called Miss Lilly.

It had been two nights, he had not slept a wink obsessed by Lilly he had renewed her, she looked fresh the paint and the scratches on her arms and shoulders due to the fall and broken glass had been repaired and re painted. The blemishes on her face had been papered over by paint and cream.

At times he would put a Dupatta on her and then get bored and cover her head with a French Hat.

He was fascinated by Lilly's oval almost egg shaped head and tried many hats that would fit her personality. First he gave her a Bucket Hat also known as the fisherman hat. Then he tried to see if she would look better in a Derby hat and when he was not satisfied with that he tried a base ball cap on her to see if that would get the real personality of the mannequin out.

Dev was getting engrossed with Lilly and would place her in different positions around his show window. He wanted Lilly to be the joy and pride of his showroom and he would often ask Mala how the mannequin looked in different dresses." It is a damn doll a dead wood people use to hang their designer wear my god you treat it like she is a living lady, live with a life of its own." Mala would child Dev and try to make him see some sense." I think you need a shrink man, you have spent the last two weeks just slaving on the mannequin, someone just abandoned her and now you feel it's your duty to look after her." Mala would often complain as Dev had stopped making any new designer wear he was just busy with his Lilly.

The news of Dev's new passion and his new girl had reached his girlfriend Milli and she got to know it through Mala." You know your guy has gone nuts he has adopted a mannequin, he calls her Lilly, man you have competition now girl and that to from a piece of latex." Mala gave some disturbing news to Milli." Ya ! I am amazed to now a day Dev never calls me or takes me out for coffee the way he usually would, we would meet at least three times a week and now I haven't seen him for the last three weeks, even I am surprised with his behavior." Milli tried to get some sense of what was happening with Dev and his lack of interest in their relationship.

" You need to take control of your man, is you ask me Dev has gone a bit Coco, he stayed up late and at times I have seen him even talking to the mannequin, now that's very disturbing how can one talk to a piece of rubber and latex. It seems you have competition girl, ha ha ha " Mala sniggered at her girlfriend Milli.

" I did not notice it but Dev has been acting a bit strange these days, he doesn't even take my calls, nor does he answers to my messages that I send him, what's going on Mala ?" Milli was now a bit concerned. She had made a little love nest for herself and her relationship with Dev was cozy. They discussed everything from

work pressure to designer clothes to art and books. They were always together going to Fashion Shows and exhibitions together. She was there in the background at the Dove Fashion Show as well, she didn't get a chance to egg her man on during the show but she was there just in the background giving her encouragement. But this was a new Dev Sinha it seemed she had not seen this side of her man, who seems to have lost interest in her and their relationship lately. Mala's revelations had put the record straight as it were Dev Sinha had a new distraction and this time it was not another woman of girl in flesh and blood it was a latex mannequin made of rubber and material not living but just a show piece to be kept in the show window to hang his master piece's.

"Hey before you pour all your love into this thing have you tried to figure out how she got here in the first place, I mean who threw her on your glass showroom window and abandoned her on the side walk. I think you need to know how she landed up in your lap in the first place." Mala asked Dev as he sat sipping his coffee trying to figure out if the yellow silk blouse that Lilly was wearing matched with her blue cap." What is it with you stop nagging me yaar! I don't care who threw her on the side walk, now she is mine and my discovery OK." Dev lamented getting a bit irritated why Mala kept pinching him about Lilly.

"I have been observing your behavior Dev, yesterday evening I peeped in and saw you were talking animatedly with the mannequin, what do you think she is a living entity or what the damn thing is an object like a chair or the furniture like the green sofa you sit on in your hall. Get out of your delusion Dev." Mala said forcefully.

"Just let me be yaar ! Let me do her make up now Lilly likes purple lipstick you know, her eyes light up when I paint her in purple, she kind of blinks at me." Dev said and then went back to the task of decking Lilly up.

"Man you need a shrink Dev really, I know creative free spirited designers like you are a bit mad and eccentric but this new love affair of yours with a latex doll really takes the cake." Saying this Mala threw her hands in the air with exasperation and walked out of Razzmatazz. She knew she was not getting through to Dev at this point, he was like in a different zone altogether.

Milli could not adjust to this sudden change in behavior of her lover Dev. She knew about his troubles at the Dove Fashion Week, but why was he sulking like this and what the hell was his new obsession all about. She felt a bit disturbed after her conversation with Mala and that had unsettled her. To get her bearing she decided to go for a high intensity work out, that would probably clear her head and she would be more in control of her feelings. She walked up to the Diva Spa and Gym, her workplace and her daily abode.

She walked into the center hall, there where exercise bikes on the side with a few treadmills, there where yoga mats splattered on the floor and TV screens splashing the latest headlines and news. The Gym was almost empty today just a couple of her students doing stretches and sipping energy drinks they had just poured into

paper cups from the fountain. There was a large blue medicine ball on the floor and Milli sat on it just contemplating and staring out of the large glass window that adorned the gym. She was occupied with thoughts of her relationship or the sudden lack of it with Dev. Then she suddenly steadied herself and Nereid to get a grip at her thoughts, she had to distract herself and exercise was her best bet, so she started playing with the medicine ball. She swiveled her hips from side to side on the ball and then she lay flat on it with her back flat on the circumference of the ball, she again moved up and down and side to side. It was fun and she started enjoying it, the thoughts of her now strained relationship and lack of attention that Dev was giving her evaporated from her mind as she tried to focus it on her medicine ball exercise.

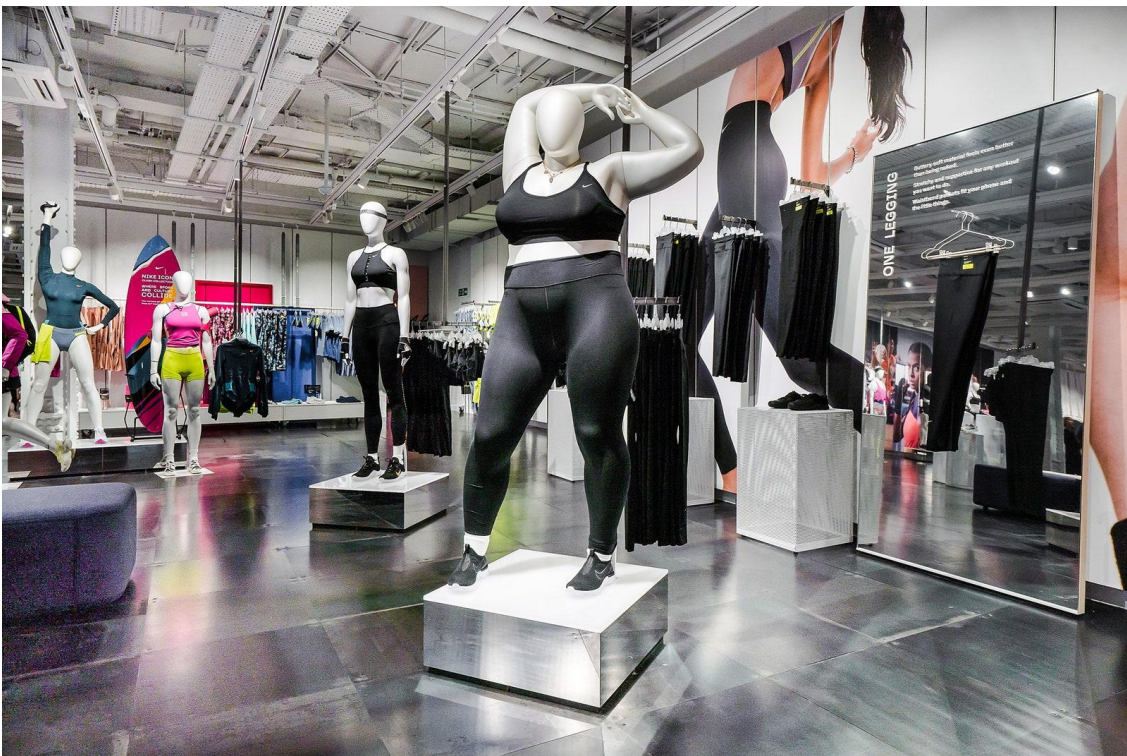
She then started her yoga, first the Matsya asana and then the Vajra asana after that she did the surya namaskar which felt strange since it was almost evening now. It was then that Pum Pum walked in, "Hey Milli you got a call take it in the reception it's Mala." Saying this she disappeared into the reception room. "Hey Milli I think you need to come to Dev's showroom, I am here too Dev has been crying all day, he is got a red nose and teary eyes he had been weeping all evening, come over you need to take care of your man." saying this she disconnected. Milli felt it was time she stepped in and shake up Dev from his obsessive stupor. So she did which any dutiful girlfriend would do, she marched right into Razzmatazz to take stock of the situation, and why was Dev weeping?

When she entered the showroom she saw Dev lying flat on the sofa and weeping, he had half wet tissue paper all around him and his nose had gone red from all the crying." It my Lilly, she has been telling me the story of her life, her birth and how she got here like a destitute thrown like dead meat in-front of my show room, its heart breaking I feel so much for my little girl, she has gone through a lot in her young life.' Saying this Dev sneezed into his tissue." Dev that's a mannequin it's just a latex doll it's an object a thing like a clothes hanger it has no life no soul it has no biography it's a dead thing it's not alive you dodo, its not human how can it have a biography how can it have. A past a history a story." Milli tried to get the ear of Dev, "Darling how the fuck can you be talking to a doll. It's an illusion of your own mind it's your imagination that thing can't talk just look at it its a damn mannequin." Milli said forcefully.

"What are you saying, you just jealous as I have been spending the past weeks doing my princess up, see I also made a new wig just for my darling Lilly, so that I could cheer her up, she has been through hell you know." Dev replied.



“ She had been custom made by a carpenter a very famous one in Crawford Market, a gentlemen by the name of **Vijay Gurmukhi**. Yes that was the guy who shaped her and build her with all his love form peace’s of rubber and latex bit by bit in his workshop. It took him three months to get Miss Lilly into perfect shape, then he painted her with skin colours and gave her hips and breast all the while chiseling her lips and then building her eyes. It was hard work but he had to get her ready in time for his esteemed client **Bedi Tailors**. They had placed an order for her, they needed her for their showroom so that they could mount their latest ladies Kurta’s on her and drape her with silk sarees as well.” Dev went into a slow and detailed monologue about the past and history of his beloved Miss Lilly. It was as if he was hallucinating.



“ Yes Vijay was her father the man who bought her to life and sold her to the highest bidder. He got a whopping five thousand rupees for making her and crafting her. I great sell for him and a profitable one at that. A large open van was sent to carry her and an hour ride away; she was dismantled into the Bedi Tailor workshop. They rejoiced that day Mr. Bedi senior came out and but a garland all around her and even broke a whole coconut, his fine did a small puja it was as if they where ushering in a there new Bahu, some one from the street even played the trumpet to celebrate the homecoming of Miss Lilly. She told me you know that the Bedi’s where her first home.” Dev went on to narrate the tale of Lilly that supposedly she had whispered into his ears all night.

“ Man someone get a doctor this man has gone totally nuts.” Mala almost cried out as she looked at Milli, who was equally bemused at Dev’s narration about his new love a latex lifeless doll a mannequin that supposedly spork and conversed with him about her past.

“ The Bedi’s treated her well they would dust her every morning and every week she would be adorned with new cloths from their tailoring collections, they even draped her with frocks and Banarasi sarees. She was happy there, at home and in peace they would even paint her lips and give her new wigs just to perk her up now and again. The price tags on her blouse would change depending on the outfits. The silk sarees had ten thousand rupees tags, the salwars had three thousand rupees tag, in dewlap they even had a fifty percent discount on some of the outfits that where mounted on her. These tag made out of white and yellow paper would have the price written with red felt pen or crayons. They would at times even put a do not touch me tag dangling from one of her arms. All in all she was occupied tending to the marketing needs of her masters Bedi Tailors.” Dev just could not stop Lilly and told him so much about her past.

“ Dev Sinha get a grip of yourself I am your living girlfriend me, Milli the one you loved so

Dearly, I am living person a living human how can you dump me for a rubber doll for god sakes.” Milli was pissed off, she was being dumped for a life less doll I mean that as so weird.

Dev stopped for a while as he blankly stared at Milli, “ She is my friend, she is my muse.” Dev replied to the apprehensions of Milli.

Dev got up and started to pace around as he narrated the life story of his muse Miss Lilly,” She even winks at me at times when she feels happy with a new wig or new cap that I give her. She is so gentle a being. Not asking anything in return, she proved to be very auspicious for Bedi Tailors whose business prospered as shona s she arrived in their work shop, all the outfits that she wore sold within no time, she was their good luck charm. Senior Bedi would even tie a Rakhi to her hand, she was like his sister, who had helped them prosper, she became ether good luck charm of sorts. In Diwali they would put a puja thali in her hands with essence sticks and a Diya. In Christmas they would adorn her with lights neon, red, yellow, purple and green lights that would blink on and off they would cover her with Christmas lights, some one even put a Santa Clause red cap on her, which stayed on her head well past new year.” Dev went on with his narration as he walked from one sidewall of his showroom to the other engrossed in the tale of his Miss Lilly.

“ The Bedi’s where a happy bunch and treated her well, giving her regular touch ups and refurbishing her from time to time. But it was when they had to make her wear a bikini all hell broke loose. It was the heat of summer in may the senior Bedi had got an order to make three Bikini’s from a foreign client who lived in Greece. He had made a pink bikini and decided that Lilly should water it for a while, that would give the Bedi tailor a much-needed sex appeal. So that’s

Exactly what he did, the very next day Lilly stood from wearing a pink bikini with almost a bare body exposed for all passerby has to see. That was quite a scandal in the neighborhood, as young street urchins his began to gather around the shop to take a peek at the voluptuous curve of the mannequin. She was now in her bold, sexy new avatar and for a conservative neighborhood this was bold and scandalous a latex doll in a two peace bikini.” Dev went on and on with his tale it seems he had covered with miss Lilly all night.

“ Just cut the crap you have gone insane.’ Milli just could not take his nonsense anymore.” No No you see that’s where trouble began for her. The locals did not take it kindly that their children had stopped playing in the streets and studying, as they would be running around the Bedi Tailor shop peeping at the bikini clad doll. Even the **Pan Wala Dubey Ji** would shut up his shop for lunch to look at the sexy legs and bulging breasts of the latex doll. I mean these guys had not seen a bare woman before not so blatantly staring out of the shop showing her body and her hour glass figure. Ok she was not a live but in their mind they could bring her to life.” Dev wanted to continue but he felt a bit tired and drained from all the walking, so he gingerly sat on the sofa.



The Bikini avatar of Miss Lilly was a sure shot hit in the neighborhood as men sitting and reading the newspaper would get distracted and ogle at the mannequin in a two-piece bikini. Bikers and passersby would often stop at the Bedi Tailor workshop and blow wolf whistles at her much to the disdain of the senior Bidi who would come out of his workshop with a large brass scissors and inch tape and would soften shoo away the young men,” Salla ! Time pass karta ho, this is my shop not a zoo.” Bedi would often rant and shoo away peering eyes at his beloved mannequin who had proven to be a boon for his business.

A customer once walked in for a fitting of his silk kurta and just kept staring at her, then he walked towards her to get a good look. He slowly walked around Miss Lilly to get a thirty degrees view and then even breast her breast area then asked,”

Uncle yeh! Kya real hie, ya plastic ka hei.” Mr Bedi just stared at him with disbelief.

Dev Sinha was engrossed in the story that Miss Lillie had told him about her past and where all she had been before she landed up on his lap.” But as they say Time never remains the same, in the riots that rocked Mumbai after the attack on Taj, Mr. Bedi’s shop was burnt down and the entire family fled to their native Punjab. Miss Lilly was abandoned again and left for dead only to be rescued this time by a Fireman called **Sachin Wagle**. He and his team had helped in dousing the fire at the Bedi workshop and Wagle would the mannequin lying flat on the floor het bikini have singed due to the heat from the fire and her legs where now covers with black soot.” What are you taking back home sir this doll, it's only a piece of trash now.” A fellow fireman had lamented when he saw Wagle carrying the doll into the fire truck.” I like it very much, I am taking it home, my daughter loves dolls she will look after her and play with her, this is my payment for all the trouble I took to get this damn fire out.” Saying this he walked out of the semi charred and now destroyed Bedi Tailor showroom.

“ Thats it I can’t take this anymore this is such a delusional man, he is in love with an object a piece of rubber, wake up Dev this is a mannequin its life less it can’t talk or have a conversation all this is the self-talk of your head, it all in your head.” Saying this Milly very angrily marched out of the Razzmatazz showroom in a huff.

She stepped out on the now deserted road and walked for a while to get some fresh air and sooth her mind. She was losing her man to a latex doll, now that’s something bizarre. A real woman she could handle but a mannequin. She could only think of one person who could help her failing relationship with Dev and help her get back his attention and affection and that was Shamli Chatterji, the mystic carrot card reader. So Milli headed straight to get some advice from her.

## Chapter Five : Miss Lilly and the Wagle's

“ It's all in the mind darling it's all in the mind of your man, Dev has gone delusional the lack of success in the Dove Fashion Show and his creative block has thrown him into an obsession with this mannequin. It is not going to be easy to snap him out of this.” Shamli said as she trend towards the cage of her parrot **Rang Birangi** and feed him some melon seeds.” We will have to figure out how to solve this unique love triangle between Miss Lilly, Dev Sinha and Milli, that is going to be some doing, let me see what the cards have in store for you today, here now cut the deck.” Shamli slowly shuffled her deck of Tarot card's and then. gave the deck to Milli for her to cut.



She then place three of them lop sided on the table and opened the cage of her beloved parrot who hopped out and started to dance on the cards. Rang Birangi then picked up one of the card with her beak and overturned it. It was the High Priestess,” High Priestess is a card of mystery, stillness and passivity. This card suggests that it is time to retreat and reflect upon the situation and trust your inner instincts to guide you through it. Things around you are not what they appear to be right now.” Shamli closed her eyes as she said those words.

“ Milli you need to get the attention of your man back and get him out of this obsession, Dev needs to be distracted away from Miss Lilly who he believes is alive and he really believes that his relationship with her is also real, she is giving him solace and an outlet for his talent. No wonder he is dressing her up all the time and doing her make up and hair. What is strange are the stories about Lilly's past that he narrates with so much precision.” Shamli closed her eyes again to meditate and activate her intuitive eye's and chakra.

“ You need to take your man into confidence don’t let him feel that you detest Miss Lilly, play along with Dev and his fantasy affair with this mannequin. Don’t detest and please don’t call him mad or insane it is just a phase that he is going through. Play along with it instead of asking him to see the shrink, dear girl it will only make matters worse.” Shamli gave her advice after a lot of thought.

“ Well Dev keeps talking about the past of Miss Lilly where all she has been and who all had once owned her. Now how the hell does he know all that the doll is mute and dumb?” Milli asked with a confused and perplexed tone.

“ The last session the card of Death finally appeared, the major shift in your personal life has already happened. Dev’s fading interest in you and his obsession with this freewheeling mannequin is a testimony to that. The cards do not lie your destiny is unfolding in front of you. ”Shamli said with a whispering tone

“ It's the third eye thing, he is able to see the history of the doll as if for real that is how connected he is with Miss Lilly.” Shamli closed her eyes again to meditate. “ Now quick Rang Birangi turn another card.” Shamli gave a clap and instructed her pet parrot who was getting mighty bored eating a piece of raw guava.

The parrot turned another card wala ! It was the Fool. “ Now that’s very interesting indeed, the Fool is a vagabond associated with divine madness, delirium, negligence and carelessness.

Now that is why you are losing Dev, you have been careless more focused in your aerobics you took your man for granted that is why your relationship with Dev is in doldrums today.” Shamli gave her final interpretation for the session and then huffed and puffed for a while to shake her body out of the trance that it had gone into.

Milli waked out of the session more reassured at least she knew what her immediate next steps should be. She decided to play along and not question Dev’s decision and a strange affair with his show room mannequin. She decided that she would listen patiently to Dev as he obsesses over Miss Lilly and dresses her in the best silk garments that money could buy. She would even suggest the best place for Miss Lilly on the show window and even help with her wigs as Dev

Dresses and undresses her from time to time. She would try to make it a happy threesome at least that way she would be able to keep a real watch on her man.

It was evening and she could hear soft Jazz music playing as she entered through the revolving door of Razzmatazz, she thought she could convince Dev to have the evening coffee with her like they usually did, but the sound of the music was intoxicating. Milli saw to her amazement that Dev was dancing with Miss Lilly, he was dancing with her to the sound of Jazz music. It was the famous Nat King Cole number Merry Christmas song. Dev was gently dancing with the latex mannequin in his arms as he swirled from side to side with her from one corner of the room to another.

This time instead of yelling at Dev and calling him mad Milli decided to patiently watch Dev dance with the doll as if she were a real living woman with flesh and blood and a soul as well. That's what Dev felt anyway, for him Miss Lilly was a living person not just a rubber doll. For him she was alive she had a past a parent who shared her and chiseled her to life. She had been with many masters and changed many hands as Dev was beginning to discover through many of his so-called conversations with Miss Lilly.

“Come you want to join us, she is really happy today she has been begging me to play Jazz for her and dance with her, I love her you know she is such a darling and she never gets angry or argues or throws a tantrum like you do, She is as docile as a cow and so innocent.” Dev could not stop gushing at his new plaything to the utter annoyance of his real life girlfriend Mili.

“Ta ta ta cha cha cha, I feel so good with her just being totally carefree with no worries in the world.” Saying this Dev swirled round and around with Miss Lilly in his arms twirling all over the showroom floor.

“So Dev what were the new stories that she told you today.” Saying this Milli sat down comfortably on the sofa. She had decided she would not get upset seeing Dev's antics and his unreal relationship with an object who he had begun to feel was a real woman.” Well she was telling me about her life with the Wagle's, after the fire burnt the Bedi tailors workshop it was the firefighter and his family that hosted her and looked after her. Wagle had picked her up from the charred remains of the shop and restored her to vitality and given her a new life. He wanted her as a play doll for his teenage daughter **Rekha Wagle**, “Dev paused for a while and stopped his dancing he went to the side table and switched off the Jazz music to catch his breath. Then he sat down on the sofa with Milli. He looked relaxed and after months finally took a good look at his real life girlfriend who had been ignoring for long.

“Sachin Wagle fancied himself as an artist of sorts and soon replaced the brunt arm of Miss Lilly, he refurbished her so that she would be presentable he also gave her new cloths a black Shalwar Kameez with golden border. She looked apart now and he finally gifted Miss Lilly to his daughter Rekha on her seventeenth

birthday.” Dev went on with his narration about the past of the mannequin,

Rekha was gifted the mannequin as gift on her birthday and she loved her new friend. She would place her in the cupboard in her room and tie her hair in the form of a bun. She would dress her up and even celebrate her birthday by cutting a cake for her. Miss Lilly had become a part of the family, her favorite play doll, someone she could dream with and talk to about her dreams and aspirations. Rekha had aspirations of being a singer, she would watch the singing competitions like Sare Ga Ma Pa on television and would get inspired by it. She would sing her favorite song, “Tu mile dil khile.” Along with Miss Lilly and even ask her how good her voice was, just trying to get her approval. At first the mannequin o=was like a piece of furniture in the house and she lived there like that. Occasionally she would get a makeover as Rekha would dress her up with her used frocks and old salwars, Miss Lilly was always moderately dressed and her lips where painted with purple and green lipsticks with a bright bindi that adorned her forehead.



On weekends, Rekha's girlfriends would come over and they would take the mannequin to the park and play ring-a ring-a roses as Miss Lilly watched the girls have fun and play their girl games.



The neighbors would often complain about the commotion the little teenage girls would make in the park as they played pranks and sang songs running around Milli in the park.

Milli was like a little pet for Rekha people kept cats and dogs as pets to give them company and be a friend to them, Rekha had a mannequin as her friend she could talk to and play with that all she was like a homely pet that the family loved and took care of.

Whenever guest came to the Wagle house hold they would introduce them to Miss Milli like she was a family member of sorts. She was like a fun show piece the family and acquired and gotten fond of over time.

Milly would participate in all the family festivals like Holi and Diwali, she would be painted with the colourful colours of Gulaal in holi as Rekha would rub the holi colours on her cheeks. In Diwali they would make the mannequin stand with a thali full of Diya's that would be lite in the night the flames on the cotton wick dipped in oil would lap up in the air and at times singe the pony tail off Miss Milli. She would be given a blog of laddoos and fruit during Ganesh Chaturthi like she was a goddess and a deity that the family revered and worshipped. Miss lily was part of them now and lived like she was alive and not just made of plastic and rubber it was as if she had a personality of her own and was like a living family member. Sachin bagel adorned his daughter he was from a lower middle class family and lived in a two bedroom small flat in Lower Parle area , he dotted on his daughter and gave her the best he could from his meagre salary that he earned as a fireman.



The family prospered and where blessed with good fortune Rekha Wagle got an admission in the Mumbai University and was able to study her favourite subject

botany. Sachin Wagle got two promotions one after the other and became the chief fireman of the local Fire station in Lower Parle and the mannequin was considered an Oman of good luck and blessings fro this small and tight nit family of three. But fate had different plans for Miss Lilly, one day Rekha took her out into the park to play with her girlfriends the girls got busy playing Kabaddi in the park and the mannequin was made to sit on the local park bench that as family large. As the evening went along the girls got busy with there games and no one gave any attention to Miss Lilly they just assumed she was watching them play from her park bench. As the night approached, the grill finished their game of kabaddi.

Rekha marched on towards the park bench where she had kept her favourite doll her love Miss Lilly, but as her eyes went toward the park bench to her horror she realised that it was empty. She ran all around looking for her and shouted out her name," Lilly Lilly Lilly where are you, where are you." Rekha Wagle screamed out for the mannequin not realizing that it was an object it would never respond back or say anything, she was not a living person, how could she say where she was.

The other girls also realised that Miss Lilly was lost, someone and picked her up while they where busy playing in the park, but who? The mannequin was lost someone had plucked her from the bench where the girls had left her. Someone had stolen their favourite plaything someone had stolen Miss Lilly. They had been busy with kabaddi and taken there eyes off the park bench and someone just picked her up and ran away. The girls took umpteen rounds of the park and shouted out her name but no answer they asked around but no one remembered seeing the mannequin. It was getting fairly dark and Rekha was devastated with the sudden loss of her pet mannequin, she was now panicking as she asked the fruit juice seller and the ice cream wala in the park.No one and seen the mannequin and no one could help.

Rekha marched back to her house and informed her father Sachin Wagle about the thrift of Miss Lilly," We where in the park playing I just lost sight of her, I sat her down on the park bench, some one just took her away, maybe they assumed she was abandoned and of no sue to anyone, they just took her away while I was not looking." Saying this she began to weep, sew as devastated her friend and companion for years had just disappeared and there was nothing she could do.

Sachin Wagle had even gone to the local police station to register a missing persons report." What are you mad a doll, a mannequin how can we write a missing persons report for a rubber

doll, she is not a person she is just a show room piece people use to sell clothes. How can I write a missing person's report for a rubber mannequin?" The sub inspector of the police stations as amazed and astounded this was the first time someone had come to make a missing person's report for a mannequin by the name of Miss Lilly. Sachin Wagle had tried his best just so that he could please his daughter and stop her from getting depressed at night it had been over a week the family had been missing Miss Lilly, but there was nothing they could do. Sachin did go around the neighborhood to check if they had seen their pet mannequin, but no one had seen her, she had just disappeared out of their lives, just the way she had appeared.

Miss Lilly had disappeared from the park and now she was nowhere to be seen. Who had taken her away from the arms and care of the Wagle Household. Well it so happened that the park was frequented by a Rag picker a local Kabaddi Wala, who picked her up when no one was looking. He was sure that she would fetch a good price, if he sold her off as used trash and as the girls were not looking he just picked her up and put her in a very large gunny bag. He slowly tied the gunny bag with rope and whisked the mannequin away when the girls were busy playing kabaddi in the park.

That was it she had been stolen by a rag picker in the park who thought that he would sell her for a good price and make some money out of her. It was better than picking cans and plastic bottles this beautiful mannequin would make him enough money to eat and drink for months. So he just took her away and was now looking for a buyer for Miss Lilly.

"Fantastic, fantastic she has really taken you to la la la land in a world of fairy tale, this mannequin must be something. Dev you have been ignoring me for this thing, I am real and she is not. I am Milli in flesh and blood a living person a human being you loved so dearly and now you are engrossed with this latex doll with her many stories, I don't know what to say." Milli had listened to her man patiently and now just threw her hands in the air with exasperation and frustration, she could feel her relationship with Dev slipping away and there was nothing she could do about it, nothing at all.

Milli took her leave and retired for the day. That night she took her frustration out on the medicine ball in her room and even tried her hands in boxing. She kicked and boxed punching the boxing bag, that was the only way for her to take out her rage and anger seeing her beautiful relationship with Dev Sinha go down the tube.

She had been advised by Shamli to be patient and listen to Dev and his obsession about the latex mannequin. She was advised not to push him away or question his madness and his conversations with Miss Lilly. She had tried to just do that but for how long, she was in coalition with an object. She was filled with jealousy and hate for Miss Lilly and in her imagination even had thoughts of blowing him up of just breaking her into pieces with an axe. It was better to burn the mannequin than to put up with her stories about her past and bear the delusions of Dev Sinha her

boyfriend who had lost interest in her.

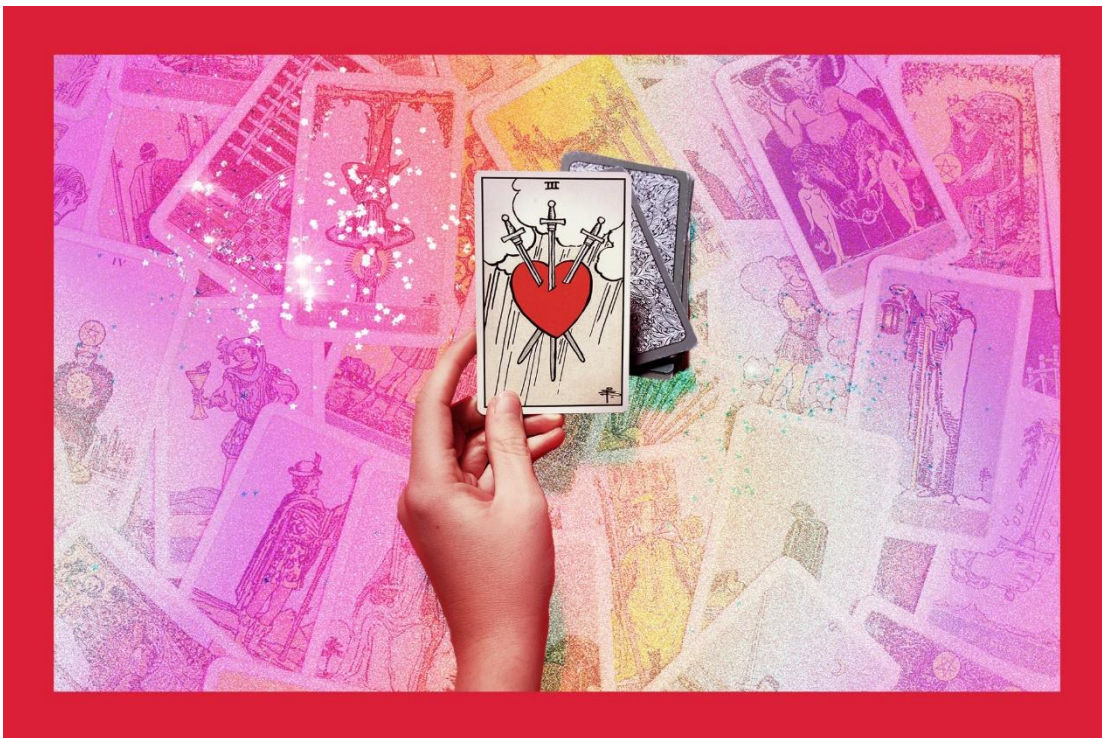
But things where not in her hands the Tarot cards had made their predictions and her fate was sealed. The predictions where now taking shape in-front of her and she could see the deeper, meanings of the cards. The great shift that was happening in her relationship with Dev Sinha was unfolding in front of her very eyes.

While doing her shadow boxing in her room she paused to wonder how the latex mannequin ended up in the lap of Dev. How did she fall flat on her face breaking the show window of Razzmatazz. It was true that Dev found her fall head first on the pavement covered with small peace's of broken glass. But who threw her there and who abandoned her, who left her there for dead only to be saved and salvaged by the famed fashion designer of Mumbai Dev Sinha ?

These where legitimate questions which where swirling in her mind about the history of Miss Lilly. She wanted her answers, and knew that she could only get them from Dev. I am sure he would have wanted to know who threw her into his lap.

## Chapter Six : Suhana's Journey

**Suhana Caroline** had now tasted success at the Dove International Fashion scene, she had taken away all the praise and accolades as the show stopper for Coco Rani. Her face was splashed across all the top fashion mags of Mumbai and she was the toast of the fashion event with her cat walk sitting on top of a Zebra. It was a high impact entry very unusual and quaint.



Although **Coco Rani** was in direct competition with Dev Sinha and his showstopper Moon Moon Jaan, ether rivalry remained to the fashion show, they would share pleasantries when they were not competing with each other professionally.

Suhana was a transgender all right she was tall and thin like most super models but it was very difficult to tell whether she was a man or a woman, she resembled more like a lady boy one sees in Bangkok.

Suhana would visit the Diva Spa and Gym for her aerobics and exercise sessions and her instructor was non other then Milli. Milli would do aerobics with her and even taught her how to use the medicine ball. She would teach her yoga asan and personally look after her exercise regime.

“ You seem to be a big hit in they fashion show, did you get any new modelling contracts then due to your remarkable and sudden success.” Milli asked Suhana as both ladies sipped the energy drink from the fountain at the Spa.

‘ Well I have shot for a few covers for the local glamour magazines and have been interviewed many times of Fashion TV. So yes ! May show stopper cat has helped me get more work.’ Suhana informed her friend and aerobics instructor.

“You seem to be a bit glum and off whether Mili, is everything ok.” Suhana asked her friend. “Ya ! I have been a bit tense its Dev my boyfriend, he has fallen in love with his mannequin you know a piece of lifeless doll, a show piece a hanger to hang his designer clothes and show off to his esteemed client. I am worried he even talks to her and listens to her stories, it is so weird you know. I can compete with another woman but how does one compete with a piece of latex. Dev is obsessed with her, he calls her Miss Lilly and even dances with her to Jazz music on his showroom floor.” Milli tried to explain her predicament and what had been occupying her mind.

‘ Life is strange and works in weird ways now just look at me I did not ask to be born as a transgender, but here I am the toast of the fashion week my ramp walk is remembered by all. Who could have thought that I would get fame in such a way one day.’ Suhana shared a slice from her life.

“ It was Coco I have thank her for giving me this big break and making me the show stopper for her Emerald Designer collection. She really mentored me and gave me wings. Fashion as always my passion it intrigued me the profession and there are many transgender and gay’s in our line, so I don’t feel out of place you know. Suhana went on to speak her heart out. She had grown fond of her gym and aerobics instructor Milli. After all it was Milly who had taught her all the asana’s she would do on her yoga mat and she had also learnt High Intensity training from Milli.

“ One needs to keep fit and in shape if one has to be a ramp model and is so important to watch your finger. Now just look at me all that I have is menthol cigarettes and red bull. I hardly eat may be a banana and an egg sandwich that’s all the rest of the day I survive on energy drinks. Thats how I remain thin and wiry that’s the ideal figure for a ramp model.” Suhana went on to explain the nuances of her profession to Milli, who was keenly listening to her friend.

“ Coco Rani is very talented but she is a bitch all right, she will do anything to win. It was her who advised me to make an entry on a Zebra you know, that entry took the cake and gave us all the traction in the Dove International Fashion Week.” Suhana was reminiscing the accolades and the press attention she had gotten.

“ But it is weird your man Dev being obsessive about a mannequin, what else does he do with the latex doll.” Suhana tried to probe her friend further.” Well he dresses her up all day in different cloths and even does her hair. He tried wigs and different make up on her, trying to make her look gorgeous and beautiful. He even murmurs to her about his sorrows and creative blocks. The bitch is like his wife, the only thing that remains is sex I am sure eh will start fucking the latex mannequin soon. That would really be weird.” Milli said with exasperation and

utter frustration.

“ I have another friend a tarot card reader by the name of Shamli, I meet her for regular card reading and fortune telling sessions, she has advised me not to get flustered and play along with Dev’s fantasy, just by being by his side and chatting to him and listening to him patiently. I have been advised to be patient at least that’s what the cards have predicted. “ Milli net on to disclose her mystic sessions with Shamli.



“ The mannequin has quite an history Dev told me she has been in many homes form a tailor to a fireman many have hosted Miss Lilly and now finally she has fallen on the lap of my man Dev.” Milli said almost being tearful, as she was loosing grip on her relationship with Dev.” We don’t see each other that often now and even if I have to meet him I have to take a prior appointment or walk all the way to his showroom, we are spending less and less time together and things have been going down the hill. We have known each other for four years but now thing are slipping.” Milli explained further.

“ But let me not keep your waiting here make sure you do some kick boxing at home to shed more weight, rest you are a brave girl.” Milli advised her student Suhana and then took her leave she wanted to go back to the showroom and be with Dev see what he was upto next.

Milli again entered the revolving door of Razzmatazz and saw placing a large cake covers with pink white and blue icing on top along with a crust of chocolate. “ So whose birthday is it then yours is in May, who is the birthday boy.” Milli asked Dev who was slaving on the birthday cake and layering the icing and sugar along with the red cherries and strawberries.” Its for the birthday girl my darling Miss Lilly, she was born today on independence day, that’s when she was finally chiseled and brought to life by her maker, she told me herself the cake is for her come let's celebrate together.” Dev said excitedly as he plucked two red and

yellow balloons and started putting candles on the cake.” Now who the fuck is going to blow the birthday candle Miss Lilly is an object t she has no life and thus no breathe how you expect her to blow the candle and cut the cake.” Milli asked in wonder as if trying to shake up Dev from his obsessive stupor.” Oh! Yes I almost forgot, maybe you can blow the candles and cut the cake, just put it near her lips I am sure she loves chocolate and blue icing.” Dev said and gave Milli the silver knife to slice the cake.” You go ahead and blow the candle dear its Miss Lilly’s birthday time to celebrate.” Saying this he handed her the cake knife to carve up small peaces and then asked her to feed the mannequin.

So it was settled Miss Lilly was the birthday girl today and she had turned twenty five today, Yes that’s what her age was.” You know Miss Lilly is a brave girl she has had so many masters and been in service to so many, finally she is with me, she has some amazing stories which she narrates to me at night while I cut new silk fabric and contemplate new designs for my outfits. She tells me about her past a very fascinating life this babe has lived.

“ After she got stolen by the rag picker from the park, the man sold her off for twenty thousand rupees to a restaurant owner the guy and just opened a new Pizza outlet called **Ma Ma Mia Pizza**.

He had found good use for her and dressed her as a Pizza Delivery Girl with green cap and red apron, he had found a perfect pace for her and placed her just outside the outlet with a large box of cheese pizza in her hand. She was put right at the entrance, he had chiseled her lips and broadened her mouth so it felt she was giving a wily smile. Her head held aloft she would smile at the customers, the owner had also removed her rubber eyes and but two motorized eyes in the



eye socket, now Miss Lilly could blink with her motorized eye lashes and her pupils would move from left to right. The Pizza box firmly placed in both her hands she was the darling of the Ma Ma Mia Pizza restaurant and would get a clothes make over every week, sometimes the owner by the name of Mr Chawla would make her wear denim jeans and red top, and sometimes he would drape her with a green silk Banarasi saree. Mr Chawal had started his outlet with hardly any customers but here again Miss Lilly proved to be a boon for her owner at least initially. “ Dev started narrating the story of Miss Lilly as she had told he. He was fascinated by how much of life she had seen and the good she had done for her owners in the past.



“ This bitch is something then, she has had a more exciting life than me and you it seems, now that is something a lifeless mannequin so full of life.” Milli gave her snide remark as if to mock Dev and his fascination for the latex mannequin.

“ Yes Mr Chawla made good use of her, she would sell **Ma Ma Mia Pizza’s** to the world with her broad toothy smile and revolving eyes, she held the box of Pizza aloft and greets all who came to the outlet for a snack. **Mr. Chawla** made killing the first couple of years and as usual it was Miss Lilly and her Midas touch, she had the X factor about her and the businessman prospered.” Dev went on with his monologue.

“ He would deck her up with neon lights that would flicker purple, green and yellow in the night during Diwali and Dusshera time, he would even put a marigold garland around her neck and give her a red tikka just for that ethnic look. It is fair to say that Miss Lilly besoms the darling of whosoever becomes her keeper.” Dev went on as he pleasingly looked at his beloved mannequin with a glint in his eyes.

“ Dev darling you need to give your girl a break, I mean this is not healthy at all for you to be so absorbed by something which is just an object just look at you, you talk about her as if she is a living human being.” Milli sat down and then grew her hands aloft in the air. She knew that the tarot card reader had told her not to throw tantrums and go off in rage, she had been advised to be patient with Dev, how and slipped into some sort of delusion with his fascination with Miss Lilly and her past life before she was so unceremoniously dumped outside his showroom.

“ See I have designed a new pair of sandals just for her, she has small feet this red sandal with a four inch heel will be perfect fit for Miss Lilly, she would get that extra high and that would give her a more assured stature.” Dev said as he got busy putting the sandals on the mannequin it was a birthday gift for his girl.

“ Mr Chawla kept her well as long as his business was doing well, but you know businessmen they are calculating. Mr. Chawla was a drunk though and in night he would get very pissed, opening the shop for long hours and working late he had to sooth his mind and aching body and that he did with country liquor, he drank hooch and a drum full of it. When drink king he had no control, the man would turn into a lunatic when he got drunk.” Dev started his story of the mannequin and her past again.

“ I have had enough Dev, I have tickets for the new Bhansali movie let's go together the way we used to before this thing came between us, we will have coffee and have doughnuts as well. Come lets get some fresh air Razzmatazz is too stuffy for me today.” Saying this she held Dev by the hand and slowly dragged him out. She still had her charm Milli being a gym and fitness instructor she had a very fit and well toned body. I guess that's why Dev fell for her in the first place . Milli knew she had to get Dev's attention somehow and distract him, the movie would be perf at for the two of them. They would take long walks around the beach the way they sued to and for a change Dev would get m9re interested in the stories that Milli wanted to tell him.

“ We are not spending time together the movie will do us both good, it's Bhansali's mag opus and its in 3D, we will get special glasses to watch the film, treat me with popcorns and tortilla chips and thence cream, you have not pampered me in ages com e on Dev I need you.” Milli lovingly hugged him tightly. Yes ! She was very insecure and needs Dev's attention, she was not going to let her man slip away so easily that to a latex doll. She was alive and sexy she was a living person, how could she loose Dev to an object.

The evening out had done wonders for the two of them Milli held Dev's hands all though the film and even snuggled upto him lovingly as they both watched the movie.

“ It is strange you know, your obsession with Miss Lilly has gotten us closer, I am enjoying this night out with you even more now.” Milli said with love and compassion in her eyes.” You know what they say that space in a relationship livens it up even further.’ Dev felt that his obsession with Miss Lilly and the lack of attention he gave to Milli had in an obtuse way got them closer, as they where really enjoying each others company during their night out together.

“ She whispers her stories about her past to me from time to time, I have just got sucked in by her charm and those wonders eyes, I am sorry darling I know I have been an ass and have ignored you for so long, is just that Miss Lilly gives me a creative outlet. I have enjoyed dressing her up and even designed a new collection of clothes I am going to call it,” The Mannequin collection.” I went through hell in the Dove Fashion Week, Moon Moon Jaan was a disaster and my designer wear suffered, but Lilly is like a breath of fresh air for me, I have got back some of my lost confidence and I am sure this clothes collection is going to be my best so far.” Dev breathed heavily as he explained to Milli about his fascination for a mannequin.

“ It's strange how a dead as a do latex doll can inspire an uninspired fashion designer like yourself. But enough you have started talking about her again, don't forget this is our happy time together.” Milli reminded Dev and tried to divert his attention.

“ Why don't you Start coming to my gym, I can start training you in aerobics it will make you feel light and reduce yeh stress you feel. That way we will be able to spend more time together and you will get a break from your showroom, which is sucking you of all your energy and we will get soak spark back into our relationship.” Milli advised her man as get gently took him by the arms and then plated a kiss on his cheeks.

## Chapter Seven : Ma Ma Mia Pizza

Miss Lilly had a short stint at the Pizza outlet after the initial success he got in his business Mr Chawla became complacent and his drinking incensed in the evening. Chawla was a loner and lived alone. He had some friend's local young men and teenagers who would frequent his Pizza outlet, they would keep the place alive and kicking and the more fun they had the more Pizza's they ate.

Although the outlet had a no drinks policy, Mr. Chawla would often break it in the late evening, he would open up his cans of beer and even sip his single malt whiskey as he served and Spork to the regular customers.

It was that fateful night three young men eat lots of cheese pizza and gulped it down with dozens of can of beer, they had been binging on alcohol for hours and then one of them eyes the lovely Miss Lilly staring towards them with her revolving eyes and blinked at them with her eyelashes.



“ Arey just look at the rubber doll she just winked at me, see the lady is holding the Pizza box, she is flirting with me.” One drunk customer lamented and then he started dancing like a lunatic, slowly he moved closer to the lifeless mannequin who could do nothing but stare at him and blink.” Come on darling come to papa, daddy has a sweet tooth tonight, come lets dance baby come into my arms.” Saying this the customer with his obnoxious breath moved towards Miss Lilly, he took the Pizza Box and threw it on the road, slowly he lived Miss Lilly from her position outside the Pizza outlet and started dancing her. It was as if he was misbehaving with her and eve teasing her, he held her tightly by the waist and started dancing with her on the Footpath. Then he began to sing the song,” Mere spano ki rani kab ayegi tu, and his dancing grew even more vigorous. He swirled with the doll intoxicated and drunk soon Miss Lilly was being molested and funded by all the three customers, as they poked fun of her and groped her and fondled her boobs, one of them even tire her blouse and tugged at her sari to

the shock and annoyance of Mr Chawla who was helplessly watching the scene form his outlet.” Salli kya mast cheez hei yeh ! I want to fuck you my doll come make love to me darling.” The drunk customer smooched Miss Lilly and pressed hard on her breast all the while pulling and tugging at her body. Mr Chawla was now very annoyed after all Miss Lilly was her lucky mascot so what if she was just a mannequin, he could not just stand and see her being groped and gang raped on the footpath by dubious drunk customers.

“ Get away from her she is my property, that’s my Miss Lilly, she is the pride of my Ma Ma Mia Pizza leave her alone you fools.” Saying this Mr Chawal attacked the three men with a kitchen rod, he himself was quite drunk and this time. He took a huge swipe with his rod and cracked open the skull of one of the men. The other two attacked Mr Chawal with their fist and soon a mighty brawl started off in-front of the outlet. Miss Lilly lay fat on the road with her clothes in tatters she was almost half naked now as the men tried to enjoy her as if she was a living lady.

The street brawl caused by a drunken stupor had caused quite a commotion in the neighborhood and someone called the cops. A punch from one of the men almost broke the jaw of **Mr. Chawla**, who fell on his back with its booming impact, he lay there almost lifeless. The men realised that things had gone out of control saw the lights of the approaching cop cars. They decided to make a run for it, they ran into their open jeep two of the men carried Miss Lilly with them in their open jeep, they did not want to leave her behind. Within minutes they had fled the location and were away in a flash from the approaching cops.

They had driven to a distance and soon realised that they would have to get rid of the Mannequin, it might be evidence to their wrong doing, if they got caught by the cops. It was not wise for them to keep her in the jeep with them, it was mitigating evidence of the brawl.

They were in a state of Panick and they drove like mad adjacent to the footpath. One of them flung the mannequin out of the jeep with all his might, not knowing that they were throwing her flush outside the Razzmatazz showroom the very showroom owned by Dev Sinha. Miss Lilly was thrown with a lot of force and landed flush on the showroom of window, which was smashed, and the broken glass fell on the mannequin who lay face first flush on the footpath with her broken tattered body and torn clothes, almost half-naked. She had been manhandled, molested and raped by drunk men who were customers of Ma Ma Mia outlet. The crash made a mighty noise as the jeep crunched and screeched making a loud noise and commotion. The men had thrown her off board and then they sped away in the open jeep with haste fearing the approaching police who was now on their tail.

This is how finally Miss Lilly landed in the showroom of Dev Sinha who saw her broken and in tatters. The rest as they say is history the mannequin had completed the circle and finally landed in the hands of a new master who would soon become obsessed with her. He would pick her up and take her away from harm’s way into

the warm care and comfort of Razzmatazz. Over time, he would wash away her wounds, cracks and abrasions on her latex body due to her dramatic fall. This is how Miss Lilly would unwittingly become a red black between the flowering relationships that Dev Sinha enjoyed with Milli his lover and his girlfriend of four years. He would be the lord and master of the latex Mannequin now and she would take away his creative black filling his creative juices to the brim again.



Milli was happy with the movie she had seen with Dev and felt that she was weaning away her man. The trick of being patient suggested by Shamli seemed to be working as far as she was concerned. She thus decided to make one more visit to her favorite mystic and tarot card reader this time she had taken a gift for her a box of Swiss chocolate to celebrate with her as her advice was working.

The tarot card reading began as usual and the favorite parrot of Shamli was summoned again to pluck the cards that were lying on the table. This time the card was "Temperance."

"What is the meaning of this card," Milli inquired. "This is the card called Temperance this card indicates that you should learn to bring about balance, patience and moderation in your life. You should take the middle road, avoiding extremes and maintain a sense of calm." Shamli closed her eyes for a while and went into a meditative trance as if trying to contemplate.

Rang Birangi turned another card this time it was the tarot card of Lovers." Wow! You are in luck girl it seems the tide is turning for you my girl you got the Lovers card that is perfect it seems your

relationship with Dev is on the mend and your guys are going to grow into love again. Lovers is the ultimate Tarot card for love and represents a unique bond and deep connection between two people. Its presence in a reading reflects a very authentic relationship that is built on mutual trust and respect. It means you are going to get your man's love for sure, hurrah congratulations the relationship agony seems to be over for you." Shamli Chatterji had good news for her client and friend Milli.

"It seems Dev has had enough of Miss Lilly, she will be moving out of his. Life and is on her way to finding a new master and a new home. Her stay at the showroom are now numbered, you will be getting the absolute attention of Dev Sinha soon. All this has happened as you have been a patient listener, patience has won the day for you my dear." Shamli went on to state her predictions to the full.

"But how the hell will that latex mannequin get out of both our lives, I feel like I should light a match under her designer cloths and that would be the end of her." Milli lamented getting a bit impatient. She was however very happy with her card reading session today as it gave her hope and that invigorated her.

She thanked Shamli as they both polished off the Swiss chocolates before the latter departed for her Gym where her students were waiting for her instructions.

"You seem to be in a warm mood today, what's the matter." A student asked Milli." Nothing it's my fortune teller she says happy days are coming for me and Dev." Saying this Milli started with her aerobics schedule, she felt light today as if a huge weight had been removed from her shoulders. She felt Light and energized as she did her aerobics comforted from the fact that her love life would be back on track soon.

## Chapter Eight : The Burning of Miss Lilly

It was an ideal time to surprise Dev after all it was his birthday to celebrate the renewed spark in their love life and relationship Milli decided to throw a birthday bash for Dev and she invited all even Coco Rani was given an invite who came to Razzmatazz with Suhana Caroline. It was Mala who was given the task to get the pineapple birthday cake and prepare the Gala dinner. Milli had invited her mate Shamli Chatterji as well after all her predications where now taking full circle.

“ You seem to look renewed Dev, you have shaken yourself up from the embarrassment of the Fashion Show, and who is this new friend of yours.” Coco Rani gave her two bit to Dev rather sarcastically.” Oh! That the love of my life, its Miss Lilly my mannequin the pride of my showroom only if she was not a latex doll I would make her the show stopper for the next fashion show. She is my inspiration I have deigned a whole new range of clothes just inspired by her.” Dev went on to say as he cut the cake and blew all the candles. Everybody clapped and red wine with cheese and grapes went around for all.

“ My My Dev Sinha in love with a mannequin now that’s a new one, are you sure you are not getting a bit queer darling.’ Suhana said as she kept her arms around Dev’s shoulders trying to get his attention.” I know it's weird but Lilly for me is more living than anyone, she even shares her stories with me, she has been my mate and got me put of my depression and creative block.” Dev said as he sipped his wine and took a large bite of his cheddar cheese.” Come on Dev I know you have a highly creative mind but hallucination has its limit, talking to a latex doll now that’s sign of madness for sure.” Suhana chided Dev.

“ You should ask me, I have borne the brunt of Dev’s obsession it has been hell for us you know, that’s why the birthday celebrations I want to relax and be with real people for a change. Being in competition with a mannequin has not been easy.” Milli looked at Shamli and said those words.” But it was Shamli who was there for me and helped me and advise me through these trying times me and Dev where going though. I am glad to have all the people who matter to me the most today at this birthday bash.” Milli lamented.



“ Hey Dev tats quite a work of art you have here, a mannequin she is quite a peach the girl and I see you have decked her up with swan and peacock feather cap, and I love the turquoise shawl she has put on and the purple lipstick really makes her stand apart.” Coco Rani’s eyes fell on Miss Lilly who was standing motionless on the show room window.” Oh ! That’s my Jaan the love of my life my latex doll the jewel in my crown Miss Lilly. She has helped me sell many of my new designer wear.



“ Really it seems she is your good-luck charm, where did you get her from.” Coco Rani enquired as she took a keen interest in the mannequin.” Well she just fell on my lap, fate I guess someone threw her at my showroom window, she was abandoned and left to rot and die in-front of my very eyes I just took her in and refurbished her back to her glory and now she is the pride of Razzmatazz.

“ I see that’s what has been keeping you busy these days Miss Lilly is it you have been slaving over a mannequin that’s very interesting.” Coco went around the mannequin and then touched her shawl slowly moving her hands and fingers around her face and eye’s feeling her and then. Slowly she felt the fabric Miss Lilly was wearing.

“ Oh ! Don’t ask she is his mistress, he just can’t get enough of her, and he even carries her with him on his morning walks.” Mala explained her boss’s fascination with Miss Lilly.” She has a long history, you should ask Dev he will tell you all about the past of this mannequin.” Mala went on to add.

“ Accha ! Is that so, she is very enchanting and those eyes they are so true and real, so soulful as if she was a living person with a heart and blood flowing in her veins.” Coco took a closer look at Miss Lilly moving around her to assess her figure and height.

“ She has a great figure and protruding breasts a firm figure, she is tall enough to have that added oomph and long arms and heavy hips for that extra appeal. Some one really chiseled her with a lot of care and interest. Miss Lilly the mannequin with a soul. Reminds of that legendary scene in K Asif’s Mogul- e - Azam where Anar Kali stood in-front of Akbar and his son Salim in the shape of a white marble sculpture. Then Salim shoots an arrow from his bow and the veil from the face of the sculpture falls revealing the soulful eyes of the actress Meena Kumari who comes alive as the servant maid Anarkali. “ Coco went into a narration comparing Miss Lilly to Anarkali. This comparison fascinated everyone.

“ There has been a movie in Hollywood also made on a Mannequin, the movie was also called “ Mannequin.” You see they have fascinated artists around the world and Dev Sinha is a great artist and a designer.” Milli clapped her hands as if praising her lover Dev Sinha.

“ Ya ! I remember the film it had Andrew McCarthy and James Spader, a fine film indeed made in the eighties.” Coco said remembering the cult movie.

“ There was one woody Allen film also called Mannequin in the red a dark kinda film.” Mala added try to show off her knowledge on the subject as the others sipped wine and enjoyed cheese with crackers tats were being served in the birthday party

“ It seems you have a new inspiration Dev, you really taking your embarrassment at the dove fashion week to heart my dear. You look determined to avenge me in the next years show.” Coco Rani chided Dev with her snide remark.

“ Anything to get back my creative juices, you will be surprised I have designed an entire clothing range around Miss Lilly and I intend to show it off next year in the show.” Dev said with pride.

“ We'll make sure you get a better show stopper than the half-drunk bag like Moon Moon, when it comes. To walking the ramp you will need a real woman unless you wish to make an entry with Miss Lilly on wheel chair.” Coco mocked Dev and gave a wild laugh.

“ Don't worry I will not make that mistake again. This time I will have Miss Lilly by my side.” Dev said with a quiet confidence in his tone.

“ You must have competition girl, is it easy getting Dev’s attention these days.” Coco Rani asked Milli slyly.

“ No no she is no competition for me I am the real thing and she is not.’ Milli explained trying to hide the rift she had had with Dev and trying to paper the cracks in their relationship due to his obsession with Miss Lilly.

“ Well well a Mannequin with stories, you are a real lunatic Dev Sinha.” Coco Rani said as she took another good look at show doll.

“ She is my ticket back to fame and glory, the collection I am making inspired by Miss Lilly will get me back into the fashion scene next year for sure I am confident of that.” Dev Sinha smiled as he looked at Miss Lilly with pride.

“ Well I wish you luck Dev and rest assured Suhana will be giving you competition in the next fashion show, isn’t that true darling.” Coco turned her eye’s and nodded at Suhana.



“ Well you will have to figure out what animal from the zoo you will get for me to ride on in the next show.” Suhana asked Coco.” A tiger, how about a tiger you can ride a tiger on the ramp we will make you dress up like Durga.

The birthday party had gone on well and Dev was at his humorous best, Milli looked at him all the while with loving eyes, finally he was acknowledging her the way he used to before Miss Lilly came into his life. The night ended with all getting mighty drunk Coco Rani had to be pushed into her car as she was high on wine and cheese but everyone was grateful for the birthday bash and thanked the host of the party Milli.

Milli net about her day as usual going through her aerobes exercises and daily drills, she felt like she needed to see Shamli again their was still something to be done she felt now that she had Dev’s attention she wanted him back for good and for that to happen Miss Lilly would have to exit his life for good otherwise she will always be like his beloved and she would have to share Dev with a lowly mannequin.

“ Hi, you look cheerful today all is well with you and Dev ? “ Shamli enquired as if exchanging pleasantries.” Yes but until that latex doll is with him and his showroom I will never get him back for good. I need you advise I want that Miss Lilly out of Razzmatazz for good.” Milli was clear she wanted a closure now.

“ Let's see what the tarot cards have to say about that should we.” Shamli closed her eye’s as usual and clapped her hands an instruction for Rang Birangi to come out of his cage and start hopping on the cards lying on the table. With the flick of her beak, the colorful parrot turned the card.

“ Wow ! This is good news the card is Minor Arcana. This particular card is all about public recognition, victory, and success. Not only have you managed to properly succeed in achieving all of your goals, but you are also being publicly acknowledged for them and the results that you've managed to attain. It seems you will be victorious and there will be a closure finally.” Shamli did a quick interpretation of the minor Arcana card.

“ But how will that happen how will I get Miss Lilly out of Dev’s life finally ?” Milli had many questions on the issue.” Well that you will have to figure out, you have free access to his show room and his show window. Just get rid of the mannequin “ Shamli suggested.

“ It's not that easy Dev will kill me he is so attached to her, he has been talking to her for months now, he even dances with her to Jazz music, she is like his favourite pet. He will kill me if I lay a finger on that bitch.” Milli tried to explain her dire situation to Shamli.

“ Hmmm let’s see maybe the next card can give us some clue.” Saying that Shamli clapped her hands again and the dutiful parrot turned another card.

“ Wala, I think we have the answer to your predicament dear, this is the tarot card of Fire. Now it seems you will have to burn the damn mannequin, yes burn it with fire, that’s what this card is saying.” Shamli smiled the solution was staring them in the face.

“Burn Miss Lilly, now that’s not going. To be easy.” Milli felt confused, but if the cards were saying so it might just happen.

“that's all I can tell you no more than what the cards say, rest you will have to figure out.” Saying that Shamli closed her eyes again.

Milli walked back to razzmatazz this time in the dead of night she had the keys to the showroom. When she enters, she unlocked the show window and pulled Miss Lilly out into the hall. All she needed was fire and some petrol. But she could not light a match and burn the mannequin in the showroom, that would create a commotion. So she decided to drag Miss Lilly out of the showroom and dragged her behind the showroom, near a rubbish dump. She threw her into a large litterbin filled with raw vegetable and garbage. Now that as a perfect place to burn the bitch, the entire rubbish would burn with her and since the large bin was made of wrought iron, the fire will remain in the enclosure and would not harm anyone. In the morning, the kabuki wala will no doubt take her away as trash.

She took out a lighter and poured a bottle of Kerosene on Miss Lilly but before that she stripped her of her blouse and skirt, she did not want any of Dev’s collection to catch fire.

She closed her eyes and the tarot card of fire flashed in front of her, she opened her eyes again and then using her lighter set the mannequin on fire. The kerosene caught fire immediately and the mannequin caught fire. It was like the Ravana burning in Diwali, there was a huge crackling sound as the latex doll burnt with vigor. She pushed Miss Lilly’s burning body into the wrought iron dustbin as it kept burning, slowly the plastic melted and Miss Lilly’s face started to disfigure. There was smoke blowing in the air and before she could realise Milli started to cough as huge balls of flame left in the air. That was the funeral pyre of Lilly burning in front of Milli, it was her very own born fire.

Milli stood still for a while and let the mannequin burn, then she smiled a smile of relief and victory Miss Lilly was finally out of her life and there was no one between her and Dev. She had her man back for good the bitch was dead and would be a heap of burnt rubbish soon. Milli then slowly walked away from the spot, she did not want to be spotted there. The latex mannequin was finally dead, its journey was over it would not have any master anymore Dev was the last home she would have.

Next day the mangled body of Miss Lilly lay charred in the rubbish heap. In the morning the same rag picker passed by who had picked her up from the bench in the park and sold her for a profit to Mr. Chawla of Ma Ma Mia Pizza. He started groping in the bin no doubt trying to find something worthwhile that he could pick up from the rubbish heap.

He looked deep into the rubbish heap and so Miss Lilly charred and covered with soot, her mangled body twisted and charred and her eye's staring right at him. The rag picker looked at her with fear and astonishment. The doll ate and fetched him good money was now lying in a trash bin lifeless and of no use to anyone, she was totally disfigured now. The rag picker picked her up and removed her brown wig, he managed to salvage a bracelet that was stallion her hand and there was a metal chain Wirth a cross around her neck. She still had something the rag picker could sell and he duly took them no doubt to sell it in the pawn market to feed himself for a few days.

Miss Lilly had been useful to him when she was a beautiful mannequin and now that she lies scarred and battered in a rubbish heap, she was still useful to him in her doom. The rag picker picked up the chain and the bracelet smiled the gave a demonic laugh before he walked away from the scene.

**Dev Sinha** is a Bollywood Fashion Designer who has a steady girlfriend called **Milli**, a fitness and aerobics instructor. They are in love and in a steady relationship for four years, but things takes a turn when Dev gets obsessed with a mannequin made of latex and industrial rubber whom he addresses as **Miss Lilly**.

The rubber show doll comes alive in the mind of Dev who begins to fantasize about her and begins an imaginary relationship with her. The mannequin comes alive at night and dances with him and listens to his problems. She is like an alter ego or Dev's feminine side, which comes alive in the form of Miss Lilly. Meanwhile, Dev starts losing interest in his real life girlfriend Milli, and the lack of attention drives Milli crazy. She seeks help from a Tarot Card reader, Shamli Chatterji in order to get Dev out of his delusional relationship.

Will Milli get her man back or become the laughing stock for her girlfriends, Mala who is an apprentice with Dev Sinha, and her transgender friend Suhana Caroline, the showstopper of Coco Rani, a rival Fashion Designer who is challenging Dev Sinha at the Dove International fashion Week? Hold on to your seats and enjoy this rib tickling and bizarre Romantic Comedy.



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**\*THE END\***