



Reflections

Is Death More Crueler Than Humans

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“To the well-organized mind, death is but the next adventure” says J.k Rowling. The quote I read on the hospital wall while heading to ICU. We all end up the same dead I know right.

We all are born with a destiny to leave this temporary world for the life hereafter. Being a Muslim we all know that death is inevitable, there is a life here n hereafter, and the life hereafter is the one which is eternal. It is rightly said that Death is not the opposite of life, but a part of it. Being alive, every single day is a new journey, with new hopes to learn and conquer this tiny but vast world. Being medicos, you face this tug-of-war of death and life every single day. Every day is an amalgam of positive and negative sentiments which you come across while serving the ailing humanity and the injured hearts. There are incidents which make you believe that life is a beautiful gift of GOD if to be spent in the right way. There are days that make you find that this world is only in a shape because of some Good people: by good I mean those who never hesitate to help others while putting their own life or peace at risk sometimes. Then there are days when you see only the negative, gloom-ridden and pitch-dark aspects of society making you ponder that this world is not a place to live at all. I always used to contemplate who is crueler? Death? Misery? Poverty? Inflation? or humans?

Meeting so many people being struck by such atrocities in your daily routine, be it an emergency case with eye opening story or an outdoor case or your admitted patient, made me cogitate for hours and hours what actually is more menacing or more damaging for people. “Definitely Death it is, not only it does affect the one who is no more but also the friends and family one left behind.” Every time I used to be on my emergency call, this belief of mine got firm with every death & mourning the walls of ICU observed with me silently. Every now n then in such a duty shift, I used to mourn the death which was taking some loved ones away from their families.

Death o’ death
How cruel you can be!
No goodbye!



We’re dead inside!
A rape of the soul you see!

Medicine for me has always been a calling as well as a privilege. It’s a rush of hormones with the amazing highs of directly impacting someone’s life making you feel contented and the deep lows when a patient is improving poorly. Being a young doctor you are more passionate about helping diseased and ailing people to reach their potential and live their best life, the time when you want to make a difference in other’s live by putting all you efforts to make them join their families at home, in a disease free environment, smiling, working but well cared and protected.

Being a physician provides you innumerable opportunities and the immense privilege to help better the lives of patients of all ages .With a major chunk of your patients of middle to older age group, you never think of someone as young as you losing his hopes of life being on the

death bed that too in the absence of a defined illness. While performing my ICU duty I happened to have a chance which shattered my every deep belief of cruelty by 360 degree.

It was a usual tiring night shift of emergency ICU which was about to over in few hours when out of a sudden a very beautiful young girl of early twenties was brought to ICU with a referral from a local hospital with complaint of food poisoning after having some food at home. Wearing some traditional dress, dark colored mehndi on her hands, gold adornments, little left over makeup peeping through the corners of her eyes, quite in pain she was having persistent retching and vomiting though not so conscious to reply to my every tiny query. "She seems to be a newlywed bride doctor, quite pretty she is" my staff assistant whispered. "Yeah" my only reply at that moment with a head full of contrasting thoughts, is it a simple food poisoning? Or there is something more to the story which the family is hiding right now. She got initial treatment at a local set up but was unresponsive to treatment which led the family to bring her here. With a cloudy mind, I was there with my team to help that poor girl. "Something ain't right doc" my inner voices kept on crowding my mind. "Yeah I guess but let's first try to help her. I need to have another sitting with the family. I reassured myself." so far the only discernible things were a pretty few hours bride with persistent vomiting and deteriorating conscious level, brought by her in laws in the emergency who were in actual her paternal relatives too. Another sitting, another round of questions but no so helpful information I could have at all. While asking for his husband, they informed he is on his way to see her soon.

Soon after an hour, a boy was brought to ICU by the same family with complaint of vomiting and food poisoning. Meanwhile the girl was now at much ease, fully conscious but a bit sleepy with reduced vomiting. "Initial fluid resuscitation with specific treatment has helped her quite well. Good job my team. "I said to my team while Moving on to that young boy of almost the same age as of that newlywed bride, I found the family more concerned shouting, calling names, for a quick help. He wasn't fully conscious, retching with some abdominal pain. On a look he seemed to be in more agony than the girl. "The whole family might had some food which led to such condition I guess" one of my team members said. On enquiring about his whereabouts it was disclosed an hour later that he is the very groom of that bride lying on the bed next to him striving for life. All I was visualizing some red flags, some shady corners of the story. The family for sure is hiding something. "We need to get a toxicology screen of both the patients, just in case it might be a source of poisoning" I told the family which they totally denied and refused

to have a toxicology protocol done for them both.

So far the bride's family was still not there though she was here with us for couple of hours which was another thing to raise a brow for a suspicious doctor. "We haven't informed her parents as it is a simple food poisoning, we don't want to disturb them at this hour of the night, she is my niece, I am her paternal aunt, I will take care of my girl" her mother in law uttered while I asked for her parents. "Doctor you please help my both children", she added more to her stance. "For sure but for that I need to know all the details in order to hit the right cause of their condition", I replied.

She was married few hours back, when she moved to her in laws after typical wedding rituals. According to them she was super fine during the whole event and even after being here at her in-laws where she had a warm welcome and served with some delicious food and milk, though she only preferred to have some sips of milk only and the groom had some milk with rice which the other family members enjoyed too. She thoroughly enjoyed each n every ritual the family had with this newlywed couple and later on moved to rest. At 4am her mother in law who was her paternal aunt too, tried to wake them up for Fajar Prayer, despite of knocking multiple times at their door, they didn't open up. They tried to peep in via the ventilator and saw them both lying on the floor. The family finally decided to break into the room and found them lying on floor drowsy n semi-conscious. They girl was vomiting badly and was shifted to a nearby health care facility while the boy was quite ok at that moment who later started having retching but didn't reported any ill happening.

Situation started getting worse for girl but better for boy with every passing hour as she started losing her respiration in between. While doing the necessary arrangements for her assisted ventilation and optimizing her treatment in every possible way, I once again asked the family about any other information they want to add which can help us more, but all I can see were nodding heads in refusal. "Were they happy to have each other as life partner", I tried to give words to my cloudy thought; "yes it's their love marriage", the groom's brother replied. I was clueless at that moment except for a miraculous reveal by the toxicology report. I called the medico-legal team before shifting the girl to the ventilator support while the boy was doing fine, and asked the medico-legal team to contact her family too.

A few hours later, her family appeared on scene, all crying in pain, praying for her rapidly deteriorating health. She was the eldest child among her 3 siblings who were standing by her side, pushing her hands again n again by calling her name to wake her up with tear flooded eyes but the nature wasn't in her favor at all. While I was leaving after my shift I overheard the fami-

lies quarreling in the corridor outside the intensive care unit and the police department was on scene too. “May the odds be in favor of that poor girl!” praying for that poor girl I left the premises.

The other morning when I entered the ICU, the poor girl was undergoing a CPR. On duty staff informed that she had two sessions of CPR last night too and the boy was shifted out of ICU as he was totally fine with satisfactory labs and negative toxicology report. But the story wasn't over for the groom family. The girl's parents had lodged an FIR for “attempt to kill” their daughter on the groom family in light of a positive toxicology report of their daughter. Police investigation surfaced up the whole truth. The main culprit were the mother-in-law and the groom who both wanted to have all the property the girl had from their parents and then get the boy married to another cousin of him who made the bride to drink that poisonous milk. Things were too real to be unreal. Can anyone be so cruel, that too your own relatives and your so called loving partner. How can they murder such a young girl that too few hours after her marriage? How many dreams she might had of, about her new home, new life and new family who usurped her right of living in the blink of an eye? But who cares? Definitely humans are most cruel creatures.

In the meantime staff shouted for help again for that girl but unfortunately she couldn't survive this time. Her sibling were crying, her mourning mother who just sent her to in laws a day before with a wish to see her

daughter glowing and flourishing with happiness with her loving partner, but this cruel society and it's beastly people didn't let her live a single day. She was definitely at peace for now but left so many questions behind for this rotten society. Having a look at her made me remember the few lines I read once:

There was darkness within her,
A storm behind her eyes,
She was complicated,
But simple,
Brave,
But terrified
She had the heart of a mighty lion,
But deep inside she cried,
Her face was full of beauty,
Her head was full of lies
And although the outside was pretty,
She was dead and empty inside

For sure;
Human kind have in them evil streak
And they torment the innocent and weak

Definitely there is no beast crueller than man or a beast can never be as cruel as a human being. Alas!!!