

# Julie



# Kishore

CAROL JACKSON

# **JULIE & KISHORE**

By

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# DEDICATION



Heartfelt thanks to my dear husband and our two fantastic children  
for their wonderful support in the writing of this book.

CAROL JACKSON

# AUTHOR'S NOTE



A reference of Customs and Traditions a Glossary and a  
Vocabulary can be found at the end of this book.

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# INTRODUCTION



*'Never judge a person until you have walked a mile in their shoes.'*

My incredible journey starts here...

This book is a narrative, told in the first person, based on my own memories with extracts taken from my personal diary, which have been slightly adapted for the sake of understandable reading, as such this story is fictional.

The Indian stories that were relayed to me are written as accurately as possible.

# CHAPTER ONE



*The Hindi word for gidday is namaste.*

In 1984 the big news of the world was the famine in Ethiopia. In December the hit song by Band Aid ‘Do they know it's Christmas’ raised thirty million dollars for Africa.

New Zealand was settling into its new Prime Minister, the youngest of the twentieth century Mr David Lange. He had a reputation for a cutting wit, which was sometimes directed against himself although he had a certain eloquence. His government implemented far-reaching free-market reforms his legacy, a nuclear-free country.

Lady Diana Spencer, her fairytale wedding the day she became a princess her innocence, her vulnerability and that sweet, shy smile on show for the world to see.

I was sixteen years old and even though it had been three years since that extraordinary day, I still replayed the enchanting scenes of her wedding over and over in my head like it was yesterday.

Doesn't every girl dream of a big white wedding? I certainly did.

My wedding day, the day I had fantasized about my whole life.

Sitting on my bed with my eyes closed I embraced my pillow as I saw myself walking up the aisle, the familiar ‘*here comes the bride*’ tune played in my head...da, da, dada...da, da, dada...

Just like Diana, in my imagination I was dressed in an exquisite white lace gown which was beaded with delicate pearls, plunged to a heart shaped neckline and gathered at the waist. My vision was slightly misted by a white lace veil that covered my face and my red curls peeked through a diamond tiara that had been delicately

placed on my head. In my hands I held a posy of red roses that were dotted with tiny white baby's breath flowers yep, I definitely had imaginative, detailed dreams about my wedding day.

As I continued my walk up the aisle, I saw ahead of me waiting at the altar, the most stunning man I had ever seen.

My groom was beaming at me and as I stepped closer he mouthed the words, 'I love you.'

His stylish tuxedo accentuated his handsome features, as I reached him we stood to face each other and clasped hands as we proclaimed our vows of commitment and love. My heart beat faster as I visualized the part I adore the most of any wedding, when the priest pronounces the couple husband and wife and the groom is told, 'You may now kiss the bride.'

As I continued my dream, my newly announced husband, let go of my hands and romantically lifted my veil to gently give me a tender kiss, unfortunately it was my poor pillow that was the recipient of my sloppy lips.

I clutched my pillow tighter as I wished with all my heart in real life, not in my fantasy, I could be that bride standing next to the handsome groom.

But, as we were proclaimed for the first time as Mr and Mrs, I began to wonder - Mr and Mrs what? Maybe Mr and Mrs Smith, Mr and Mrs Jones or even Mr and Mrs Walker. I never thought in my wildest dreams that my husband-to-be wouldn't be the man from my imagination, he was so real to me. Little did I know what actually lay in store for me was a life changing event so completely different to my dream, at times I could hardly believe it myself.

If I had gone to a fortune teller and she predicted the journey I was about to take, never in a million years would I have considered it. I would probably have gone so far as to say that she was speaking a load of absolute rubbish.

## CHAPTER TWO



*The Hindi word for family is pariwar.*

The Prime Minister of India in 1984 was the country's youngest Prime Minister ever, Mr Rajiv Gandhi. He came into power at the age of forty, after the assassination of his Mother Indira Gandhi - no relation to the famous peace loving Gandhi.

Kishore was born and raised in a very traditional family in New Delhi, India. His family were devoted Hindu's and as such were extremely religious, praying daily, which was a natural way of life where he comes from. Almost everything, everyone does in India rotates around the many Hindu gods. Worshipping can be done at home where families create a small shrine to their choice of god somewhere in their house. If they do go to a temple to worship, which is known as puja, Hindus wash thoroughly at home before prayers and when they reach the temple (mandir) remove their shoes, which are considered impure.

Worshipping involves all of the five senses - touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing also the five basic elements - light, fire, earth, air and water, meaning the whole soul of the being is involved in praying. Divas (little clay lamps) are lit, as the purity of the flame is part of the cleansing process.

Hindus consult priests or astrological charts when making a decision whether it's a career move, marriage or regarding children. They see the universe in terms of karma, which means for them to take on life in another form on earth in order to resolve whatever relationships or mistakes they had left uncompleted before or in another life.

Kishore's Father, Chandra and Mother, Roopa were immensely proud, reserved, respectful people who loved their son dearly.

His Father, being the head of the family was stern but knowledgeable and always ready to give wise advice. His Mother, a warm and caring woman worked extremely hard, devoting her life to her husband and children. In her time women were only meant to be obedient housewives, bear offspring and regard their husband as a god. She shared his karma and his destiny while her husband provided for his wife's needs, her security and social status. Giving birth to sons enhanced her status even further. The qualities most admired in a Hindu woman are modesty, shyness and self-effacement.

When Kishore woke each morning his Mother was there to tend to his, his siblings and his Father's every need. It was her duty to be up before anyone else, prepare a cooked breakfast and ensure each member of the family received whatever they required. They lived a simple life, better than some in India but worse than others. Their home was the typical set up for a dwelling in the bustling metropolitan city of New Delhi, consisting of a small apartment with only one bedroom. The flat was comfortable, it also contained a sitting room, kitchen and bathroom. In this small but modest home is where Kishore's Mother and Father raised four children.

During his childhood jam and eggs were regarded as wondrous treats and with young children in the house these items didn't last long. Kishore's family didn't own a car, washing machine or a television, not because they couldn't afford these things but in those times in India you managed with what you had. Appliances and cars were considered new conveniences and were not available to everyone, they were also thought of as luxuries and were not deemed necessary for everyday life. Their belief was to not pity themselves for being unable to have things other people did. Poverty was immense in India and they were grateful to god for everything, even the smallest thing.

Despite your status it was always important to look your best. No one in Kishore's family would dare to ever leave the house unless they were dressed smartly, modestly and in clean and ironed clothes. In Indian society this proved just by appearance only a person came from a respectable family.

Their eldest son attended Delhi University. As a young adult Kishore always had a feeling of being on the verge of a change in his life, he never felt settled, always knowing something different was in store for him. Although at school he was aware of girls he never found himself to be 'interested' in anyone.

Studying came relatively easy for Kishore, he practically coasted through university graduating with a degree in commerce, always bearing in mind he wanted a career as an accountant. After receiving his degree he obtained employment in a small accounting firm: his Grandfather was a bookkeeper and his Father worked in a bank so he was eager to carry on the tradition. Kishore enjoyed working, he was smart, savvy and learnt quickly. He had his own office, a peon - a young boy servant who is appreciative of work even if it's simple tasks such as making tea, fetching water or putting staples in the stapler and Kishore was extremely busy. Most importantly now he was earning, the plan that was always in the back of his mind could finally start. After giving some of his wages each week to his Mother the rest he saved. He knew he had a lot of expenses ahead. Although he was polite to his fellow colleagues and occasionally went out with them to a cafe for tea or coffee, he didn't want to make any real friendships as he knew as soon as he could he would be leaving India.

Before Kishore was born, his Aunt Bhamini (on his Father's side) and Uncle Harilal immigrated in 1956 as newlyweds to New Zealand having a yearning to settle in another country. Canada, America or England was usually the first choice for immigrants. Like most settlers Bhamini and Harilal wished to give their intended children the chance to achieve - which was their main drawing card. When researching to settle in another country, they were told of this 'new' land near Australia, a country so far away it was near the South Pole, a country that promised great prospects and welcomed immigrants. Bhamini and Harilal decided to choose New Zealand to start their married lives together, it sounded to them as a land full of abundant opportunities.

They travelled by ship which took three months, upon arrival they were to discover they were one of the first Indian immigrants to arrive in this strange country. There was no one to greet them and they knew no one. Bhamini and Harilal struggled for

acceptance in a country where Indians were relatively unknown. They could not find anywhere that sold Indian spices, clothes or a place to gather to celebrate Indian cultural activities. To their dismay they found people shouted at them in an effort to make them understand English, regardless of the fact they had been taught the Queen's English at school (Harilal knew more English than Bhamini) and they were certainly not deaf. Although they were to soon realise the Kiwi accent and adaption of the English language was totally different to what they had been taught.

They settled in a small suburban street in West Auckland. Despite the immense differences between India and New Zealand, they enjoyed the lifestyle and knew their children would have a good upbringing. Their first baby arrived quickly followed by another and another. As they became involved in their children's kindergarten and school activities, they began to make friends and life improved, even so, they still knew they were outsiders.

Over the years as many more Indians began immigrating to New Zealand, the need for shops that sold Indian spices, food, fabrics and accessories became necessary. Soon these places started popping up in different communities. People of Indian heritage regularly met up to gather to celebrate Indian cultural festivals.

During Kishore's childhood years, Bhamini and Harilal occasionally travelled back to India with their New Zealand born children to visit his family. Kishore marvelled at his cousins funny accents and listened intently to stories about their lives in a far off country. His Aunt and Uncle brought gifts from their new homeland – kitchen cloths for his Mother, shirts for his Father and biscuits and sweets for the children that they had never seen or tasted before.

Kishore's eyes became wide with excitement and he was filled with amazement when his Aunt told them that they shopped in a place called, Foodtown, Foodtown! How could a whole town be full of food! It was beyond his imagination. It was then a seed had been planted in Kishore and as he matured he became more determined to join his Aunt and Uncle in that foreign land.

When the time was right and with his Aunt's encouragement and support, he decided to follow in their footsteps. Calling her

numerous times on the phone she told him the correct procedures he should follow and all of the papers he would require. Finally, after two years of arranging his funds, his passport, all of the appropriate documents and a plane ticket, he was soon to be on his way, filled with excitement and more than a little trepidation. Although the most challenging obstacle he had faced was convincing his parents he was doing the right thing.

His Father advised him moving to a new country was not as easy as it sounded, "You will have to start all over again," he said. "Here in India you have all you need, your family, friends, an education and employment, you will have to find work in a foreign country make new friends and begin a new life." He cautioned his son that life in New Zealand would be totally opposite to anything and everything he had ever experienced. Despite this, Kishore was determined to go, something more powerful than him told him it was his karma.

In the days leading up to the time he was due to leave his country, Kishore's family and friends became terribly sad. He knew he would miss them all a great deal but being close to his Mother and remembering how she had suffered when Kishore was a baby, he knew he would miss her the most.

It was still dark on the morning of the day he was due to begin his journey. Kishore kept himself busy with his morning routine. As the sun rose it promised a fine day, although the early morning showed a mist covering the city.

Once he had bathed, dressed and eaten, he double and triple checked he had all that he required for his journey. When at last he considered himself ready he gathered up his luggage and stood in the sitting room before his weeping Mother and Father. Kishore was after all their first born son. They had been without him for so many years and now they were going to lose him again, not knowing when they would next see him. In their hearts they desperately did not want him to go. For his sake they only spoke words of encouragement.

Kishore's Mother held his cheeks in her hands and spoke through her tears, "My bayta (son) you must eat properly and call us as soon as you are able."

His Father shook Kishore's hand then embraced him tightly,

“Kishore remember who you are and be wary of strangers,” he advised. Sorrowfully Kishore nodded in agreement to each of their requests. He picked up his suitcase and said his final goodbyes. Although he did feel sad, the anticipation of the excitement that lay ahead overpowered any thoughts of unhappiness.

As he strode downstairs to the waiting taxi he did not look back.

## CHAPTER THREE



### *The Hindi word for hair is baal.*

I was glued to the TV as I watched the New Zealand model Lorraine Downes being crowned Miss Universe. As she waved delicately at the camera with her blonde hair, hazel eyes and a smile that dazzled, I thought no one on earth could come close to being a Barbie doll brought to life. You may have heard the saying ‘Plain Jane,’ well that’s me, except, replace the name Jane with Julie. When I studied my reflection in the mirror, I would say to the Julie staring back at me, “Well, my dear, there is nothing exciting about you, this is as good as it gets.” And what did I see staring back at me? Red hair, freckles and ordinary boring brown eyes, would I ever find a man who thought I was a Lorraine Downes, a Miss Universe? The answer was a downhearted, despairing... ‘No.’

I would never find love, who would or could love me? Make-up couldn’t hide my freckles so I hardly bothered even trying to attempt to wear it, a smear of lipstick was my idea of make-up. As for my hair, don’t get me started on my hair, it was wavy and hard to manage at the best of times.

It was even harder to look at myself in the mirror on rainy, muggy or humid days when my hair was all over the place like a mop, seemingly having a mind of its own. It frizzed with the humidity making it bushy and boofy and depression, like a mantle fell over me. On these days I would avoid the mirror as much as possible, hurriedly brush it and tie it up in a ponytail with a bundle of hairclips, firmly pinning each strand onto my head. I hoped no loose curls would escape to stick out and wave in the wind, triumphantly exclaiming, ‘Ha, ha we are free!’

My despondent mood grew worse as I foolishly compared myself to the singer Crystal Gayle. As I watched her sing '*don't it make my brown eyes blue*' I was more captivated with her hair than her sultry voice. Boy! did she have *alot* of hair! Straight, shiny, glossy and exceptionally long! As a girl who wished for hair just like hers, I recklessly put my hand on my heart and hastily vowed I would never cut my hair again. But in reality I knew my hair would never be blonde like Lorraine Downes and as it seemed to grow out not down, I would never have hair as long as Crystal Gayle's.

I was slim, at least that was a good thing and of average height - petite, simple, ordinary features that once again added up to me being a 'Plain Jane,' there was nothing about me to stand out in a crowd. I got called all of the usual things at school: carrot top, ginger nut, freckle face and oh yes, once I was even called a pixie. No man on the planet would ever fall in love with a plain, boring, freckle faced, red headed, pixie!

Being the youngest, my siblings, Andrew and Sarah had already paved the way for me. Over the past few years I had watched quietly on the side-lines as they had travelled through adolescence. They had waded through all manner of trials and tribulations that are part of a normal teenager's existence. Quietly, I had observed as, one by one, Andrew then Sarah had left home.

I was four years younger than my sister, Mum had not planned on having any more children after her, then unexpectedly, four years later along came a surprise - me! My brother and sister had brown hair and brown eyes, the complete opposite to me, they *looked* like siblings, they *looked* like our parents. When I was born Mum was astounded as she caught sight of my tuff of red tresses. At family gatherings as I was the only person with hair the colour of fire, the discussion invariably ended up being about my possible heritage. Jokes were made about the milkman being a red head and just what else had he been doing when he brought the milk? Someone else suggested maybe my colouring was a throw-back from some Scottish ancestor but really, no one knew.

During my childhood my family occasionally attended our local Anglian church. We would all arrive on a Sunday morning adorned

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