



**RIDING THE FLYING HORSE**

**Jyotsna Lal**

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## Chapter 1

### THE COLOR RED

I was born on a puranmasi or full moon day in the month of march. The month of march is dedicated to the fiery roman god Mars, who hails the coming of spring with his hammer by sending thunder storms. According to the Hindu calendar, the festival "HOLI" falls on a full moon in the month of march. In India this festival marks the end of winter, the air loses its nip. The mists fade and the sky is beautifully blue again. As a sanskrit poet says, the days that lay curled up, now stretch their limbs bit by bit. It is a time for all fun lovers, it's an invitation to friend and strangers alike to enjoy themselves. Red or gulal is the base color, but the pinks, blues and yellow are great hits. On this day, young and old play with colors, squirting it on each other, rubbing it on their faces, amidst much laughter and protest.

Faces take on the look of a multicolored canvas, clothes look as though dyed in a dozen colors. Added to this air of gaiety, a constant stream of jokes, pranks, donkey rides and Moorkha Sammelans: a gathering where a group of poets read out their funny poems and satire in front of an audience. Many stories are told tongue in cheek, jokes are cracked at the expense of the audience.

I was born amidst such color and gaiety. I often attribute the artistic streak in me to the colors that surround the hour of my birth. According to the pundits or hindu scribes, it is a very auspicious day, the gods smile on the child born on this day.

My name "JYOTSNA" (pronounced - Jo-t'-s-na) a sanskrit word meaning full moon or bathed with moonlight, proved to be a happy coincidence. The name was given by maternal grand-mother Mrs E.P. Richards simply because she thought it was a beautiful name.

My father's name is Austin Lal, Mr Lal is as common in India as Mr Green or Brown in England. The word "lal" in hindi means red or the base color gulal. It is by rather strange co-incidence that my name Jyotsna-full moon, Lal-red or gulal, agree to my hour of birth.

Red is the color of blood which flows down from the cross, the precious blood of our saviour Jesus Christ, O' precious is the Flow, That makes us white as snow.

the blood of Jesus cancels out our sin debt and assigns us a new creation identity—the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:21). This act of bloodshed will be celebrated throughout all eternity. The song of heaven is the song of the Lamb (Rev. 5:11-13). He will emerge as the conquering King and prevailing Lion of Judah (Rev. 5:5). Jesus eternally wears the victor's crown.

I will begin my diary is with this story . My great grand father Reverend George Martin Richards was a colleague Reverend Parker an American stationed in north India. Together they use to preach the gospel in the villages Sometimes on horseback ,cycles later go by jeeps ,pitching their tent in the fields near the villages One night they saw a man hiding in the shadows of the tent

“Come out or we will shoot you “ Rev Richards warned A tall ,handsome young man came out of the darknes and fell at their feet ,begging for protection

“Who are you?”asked Rev Parker .

“I'm Phul Singh the Daciot I want to become a Christian and surrender my life .Please convert me “

'If you are telling lies ! you'll be sentenced to death ,as there is a ransom on your head

“ warned Rev Parker

“ No ! I'm telling the truth , I have heard the gospel I want to change my life”

Both the missionaries took the dacoit with them Rev Parker helped to get him pardoned from the British Government . Phul Singh [phulwa] became the shadow of Rev Parker ,staying in his house cooking for him in Etah . His son was Rev Chote Phul Singh a pastor

of Mcgraw Memorial Church where my parents got married later his grandson Rev R.P .Singh followed in his footsteps .

Rev Robert Alter another american presybterian missionary whose mission field was Fatehgarh and Etah was a colleague of my grandparents . later he became the headmaster of Woodstock school ,Mussoorie now Utrakhand, his son is the writer Stephen Alter who has mentioned about Etah in his book 'All the way to Heaven'.

The famous bollywood actor Tom Alter is the son of the elder Rev Alter also american presybterian missionary who lives In Landour near Mussoorie.

In the year 1964 My parents got married while grandmother Mrs Beaumont Richards was the medical nurse in Christian boys Agriculture college Etah, North India of course my Grandfather was working as a Teacher and warden there . he was lovingly called Papaji the house father while my granny was 'mamaji' ,she was a rather enterprising lady and kept poultry in the backyard

One summer night around 10 o'clock there was some commotion in the henhouse ,the hens were cackling with a peculiar note of fear, nervousness and panic .My granny hurried to the henhouse and opened the door something was sitting right near the and bit on her left hand .She went in the bedroom and told my grandfather ,he said it must be a rat ,put some tincture iodine on it.Suddenly she lost balance and fell down .My grandpa panicked and rushed out to the hostel where senior boys sitting in the study. Immediately the boys rushed to the house, some of them ran to the principal Mr Watford's house ,a group of boys ran to search the backyard and the hen house One of my uncles father's cousin was among the students studying at that hour .He recounts the moment they opened the door , saw a huge cobra sitting with its hood spread out ,waiting and hissing loudly .

A cornered cobra is as dangerous as a caged tiger lunging out at them ,it did not slink away but attacking them . The boys initially got scared and climbed on the wall to avoid it. Then some plucky ones clubbed it to death with their hockey sticks. [The cobra was preserved and kept in the biology lab I saw the Cobra when I had gone for christmas vacation]

Meanwhile my granny was rushed to the hospital with a tourniquet arm and she was lucky as serum was available She survived and lived to an august of age of 90 years, died on 14 Nov 2001, 36 years later.

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The locomotive has the history of the industrial revolution We regularly traveled by train ,it has an unusual charm the choo choo !chug chug! and smoke spewing out of the chimney of the engine and sing song of the wheels on railtracks 'one penny two penny ,one penny two penny', the railways came with the british who created the railway network in India so that they could rule India better and transport the troops

,goods from port to inland.We were going to Fatehgarh ,my uncle was the locomotive engine driver . The six hour journey by passenger train was always boring stopping at every station ,slowing puffing through the green fields and mango grooves .The villages with women in their colorful saris the train had stopped at one the small station ,a express train was passing since there was only one track they had stopped the passenger train. In spite of being a girl I have always been nosy .I wanted to peek in the locomotive engine ,my uncle allowed me to get in the engine . to see the boiler where the coal was put in by the trowel . I was looking at the various nobs and sticks .suddenly the guard got the signal of line clear the signal was up and the my uncle engine driver had started the engine, since the steps are very high and the engine was parked outside the platform so there was no time to jump out of engine and run to my compartment .I would say it was my luck that day I got a ride in the engine my uncle began stoking the fire and the engine moved forward. I enjoyed sitting on the wooden box inside watched the villages slipping past .my uncle asked me to pull a string wonders of wonders it was the whistle.I blew the whistle many times.

It was great fun and something I will never ever forget The next station came and the train stopped I got down and went to sit in my seat in the compartment.

We often traveled to Etah by train by changing at Tundla junction.taking the loopline. I spent all my Christmas holidays with grandparents in Etah , their use to be a garden swing inside the compound , I use to ride the bicycle and go visiting all the faculty members of college . Those days people use to go deer hunting as sport there use to be many kinds of deer [black buck] and antelopes [ blue bull] ravaging the crops and had to be eliminated by the farmers.

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In the land of Lycia , Chimera was a fire-breathing animal with a lion's head, a goat's body,and a tail in the form of a snake; hence any apparent hybrid of two or more creatures. The Chimera was killed by the hero Bellerophon on the winged horse Pegasus. Bellerophon a victim of slander who was sent against the monstrous chimera, which he killed with the help of his winged horse Pegasus. After further trials, he ended his life as a beggar.

When I read this Greek story as child I went to my Daddy and asked for the winged

horse. My daddy said "Your education is your dowry, my daughter and your career Pegasus the winged horse which will take you places." He had taken me to the Indian Institute of Technology airfield which had a flying club. He had shown me the small two seater planes and gliders called them the modern flying horse, I would watch them from our terrace and wished I could fly around.

One winter day a MIG landed on the IIT airfield, maybe it had visited the aeronautical department, it was my holiday and I was reading on the terrace, it took off and did several somersaults, dives and then flew off in the distant sky.

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Another incident, I was only 3 years when my parents came to work in the industrial town of Cawnpore they were newly and with little experience of life in a city with a toddler they faced many hardships one of them the difficulty in finding a suitable place to live It was almost like a miracle when they heard through some one about a gentleman by the name of Mr Yogi who wished to sublet his flat, they went to see it and liked it The flat was on the first floor of a three storied building, the rent and other formalities were duly completed They shifted into the flat.

My parents became busy with their daily routine they went to work early in the morning, leave me at the kindergarden and come back late in the afternoon. Evenings were usually spent out and night would bring sweet slumber to the tired little family Every morning the kitchen articles would be found strewn on the floor but were unnoticed by the unsuspecting occupants, who thought it to be the mischief of rats. My parents found living in the flat according to their liking The neighbourhood was good and Mr Yogi rarely stayed home at night and would also spend his spare time away from the flat

One Saturday afternoon, our next door neighbour Mrs Yusuf dropped in for a chat mom offered her tea, as they sat talking over their teacups Mrs Yusuf expressed her surprise that my parents had rented this flat.

Mr Yogi's wife had committed suicide in the room we had rented A discord had arisen between the husband and his wife The wife had poured kerosene oil over herself and put a match to it. She had wanted to prove that her husband had tried to kill her but she died in process. The incident had occurred some 6 months ago,

now the flat was haunted by the spirit of the dead woman.

Both my parents declared that they did not believe in ghosts or haunted houses [it was the only sensible way out when you are new in town and apartments are difficult to find] Now that the story was out, the forces of evil became stronger. The nights were often filled with sounds of footsteps, things falling and newspaper being torn. Yet they were not frightened, they would simply get up and switch on the lights believing such forces fear light and would be able to sleep peacefully the whole night.

They were always surprised to see in the morning that things that were breakable never thrown down, only articles like teacups, saucepan and coverlets were strewn on the floor, and the newspaper would be torn in equal strips.

Soon they became used to the whole affair, but family suffered on account of the unclean presence, one of the three would always be sick.

One day they happened to talk about it to their church pastor, he was surprised to hear about this and promised to pray for them. The week he dropped in at our flat to pray and held a small prayer meeting where all present prayed to clean our home of the evil presence. And from that day onwards, never again the ghost of Mrs Yogi came to disturb us. Of course she continued to prowl in Mr Yogi's portion of the flat.

My mother tells me that her restless soul was in the apartment but it seemed an invisible wall of fire had been built around our rooms. Earlier the poor ghost never harmed us or damaged anything. After some time Mr Yogi decided to marry again. And my father started looking for another flat.

We were still living in the flat when Mr Yogi got married. Hindu marriages take place in the night, only the men go in the bridegroom's marriage party, my father accompanied Mr Yogi. My mother was alone in the flat. She recalls the sounds of boxes being thrown around, crockery being broken, banging on the walls could be distinctly heard from Mr Yogi's side. The racket got worse around 1 a.m. the time coincided with the marriage ceremony. Soon after the wedding we moved to another flat.

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Chapter 2

MY SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER



My Sunday school teacher Mrs Esther Fiol, wife of Rev Frank Fiol, an American Presbyterian missionary to Kanpur. I was very regular to Sunday school; she loved me as I was only seven years old and fluent in English, always chatting comfortably with her. The Fioles spent their entire life in India; Woodstock School, Mussoorie, Faith Academy in Delhi, and Bible Seminary in Dehradun were under their administration.

In the 1970-80 era, my parents were both teachers; we were poor but well respected. In Indian society, teachers are highly respected as they are considered role models for the society, torchbearers and fountains of knowledge.

I'm the only child, which is highly unusual for Hindu and Muslim families, both of whom give more importance to sons; daughters are generally a burden because they have to be married off and a dowry has to be arranged for them. Hindu parents give birth as many as six daughters in their hope of a son who will give them moksha [salvation] after their death because he will set fire to their funeral pyre. In spite of that, my parents have only one child – me – they were my first and best teachers. I was fluent in English as they used to talk to me only in English and they would bring English storybooks from their school libraries for me to read; as time progressed, I became a bookworm, almost setting the house on fire one day since I was so engrossed in reading a storybook. Hindu mythology always confused me; my class three Hindi teacher Mrs Maya Ariel, wife of Pastor Ariel, read out my Hindi essay, I written on the bonfire of Holi festival, Holika the demoness sat with baby God Krishna in her lap. It was Prahlad, another god, so many Gods – so much confusion.

Early in life, I became aware of the meaning of rich and poor; I was studying in St Mary's Convent, an expensive private school where only the rich people sent their children. The teachers often played favourite, whereas Aunt Esther Fiol loved me for my talents.

At an early age, my parents discovered my drawing and painting talent. I won the first prize in an art competition, but my principal Sister Eugenia did not announce it in the morning assembly as the common practice; she simply said she forgot.

Realizing I'm a girl child but I decided I will step forward and do what is best for my family. I decided to become the bread earner and support my parents in their old age like a son; I honour and salute my parents who are simple teachers.

Aunty Esther Fiol died at the grand age of hundred in USA, I had a proud moment when I spoke about my relationship with her during her memorial service in August 2013 in the presence of her son Dr David Fiol.

Another incident which I can never forget , my roll number was 10 when I was in senior school [class XII], every morning ,one of my classfellows would write ten with chalk on my desk ,sometimes there would be a sticker of number of ten.I was nicknamed 'Dus numberi" means number ten in hindi alias naughty fellow.

I was an avid reader of Horoscopes based on numerology. The sum of ten is  $1+0=1$  . I was actually number one and in my heart I had decided to become number one.

I learnt to ride a bicycle when I was only ten years old ,along with the little boys of my neighbourhood. I was regular tomboy , climbing trees and walls ,hanging on the monkey ladder.

One thing I'm mortally afraid of is driving a two wheeler even though I drive my car in the fast lane. As a teenager somehow driving a scooter never appealed to me. In the ninties ,India had yet to see the economic boom , cars were still a rare commodity. Whenever someone would suggest that I should learn to drive Dad's scooter I would loftly proclaim that I will drive a four wheeler nothing less . I never missed the sarcastic smiles and looks, which goaded me on to become a high achiever.

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As a child I use to see a peacock sitting on a tree outside my window.It is not an uncommon sight , they were as numerous ,as the trees here on the campus.Yet when I saw one , I paused in what ever I was doing whether rushing to catch a bus or simply taking a walk .The rich display of colours in its plumage brought out the artist in me .I always gazed asounded at the handiwork of god the mighty and awesome artist .The combination of colours , how they complement each other .The gorgeous blues and greens on the male peacock's back seem to be determined to out do each-other in their brilliant hues .The peacock has the elegant neck of a swan , on th top of its head is a tiara giving it an regal air.It is undoubtly the prince of the indian fields and forest glades . On the campus , it still roams like a proud lord in his domains. John Ruskin wrote ,Remember that the most beautiful things in the are most useless ;

Peacocks and Lilies for example .If it were not for flowers and birds, the world would have been a deary place and hungry one too.From the flowers come fruits and seeds .Birds play a play an important role in this process of pollination .Well everyone is entitled to his opinion even John Ruskin ,but in response to his words ,I would quote another writer Edward Gibbon who says ,Beauty is an outward gift seldom despised ,except by those to whom it has been refused .On the other side of our flat was a grove of sheesham trees , a favourite haunt of several male peacocks and their peahens .The male peacock has a brilliant plumage and its call is both raucous and sweet while the peahens colours are drab and its voice makes one often wonder how can a sound so ugly come out of so slender a throat . A male peacock in dance looks like a blooming daisy ,with its tail opening out like a circular fan around it,when the peacock shakes its tail the swinshing sound to me like tiny bells .A dancing peacock is a common sight on a summer evening yet he always gets a second glance maybe that makes him vain .Many a times ,two males can be seen dancing opposite one another .Haughty competitors for the appulause. A full grown peacock frequently danced on our terrace ,he was quite happy to dance alone.A peacock doe not need the presence of a peahen to incite him to dance .I saw some young males not yet full grown about the sight of a large rooster following the suit of their senior.This prompted me to think ,that like all accomplished dancers peacocks also needed to practice their steps in private .They stopped dancing ,when I went on the terrace and waited for me to move off before they started practicing again. For me it was a common sight on summer evenings. The male peacock who has inspired me to write about its beauty would fly down from the tree to sit on the terace of the our flat. Its plummage glinting in the setting,the greens and mauves catching the rays more vividly .The blue feathers of the neck have taken a darker hue unlike when seen in full Sunlight. The peacock was beautiful as well as friendly ,he gracefully pecked at the bread crumbs ,biscuits and Cake left overs offered by me. He waited for me each evening on the terrace on the way to his night Perch the sheesham grove .I think ,I would love to paint a peacock's plummage in its varying shades and colours ,the brilliance of blues and greens.Where can I find a peacock patient enough to poise for its portrait . Incidentally the peacock is Indian national bird.All those who are voracious readers have always aspired to

follow and imitate their favourite authors ,sometime in their lives have also nurtured secret ambitions to become writers .I guess it is a important part of growing up to pen ones thoughts ; with it comes the realization that what cannot be put on paper and what cannot be read and shared with others is often worthless and immature . On a visit down the memory lane ,when one turns the leaves of tattered diaries ,reads faded ,old scriblings ,often pave the path to healthy and mature thinking. Yet the longing of seeing ones's name in print never lessens with age . My joy knew no bounds when I saw my published research papers ,These were papers were based on the work I done for my Ph.D thesis.Creativity is god's gift to man and places him apart from other living creatures . It is a way of praising the master in encouraging the creative instinct in the younger generation.I went to youth camp held in Stanley Jones Ashram in the pictureque Sathtal of Kumaon foothills of Himalayas .

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I enjoyed immensely ,working and reading ,hiking and exploring the surrounding hills sometimes getting involved in group activities like collecting wood for campfire . We had a few competitions too I won a prize for for best essay topic was 'Hoping against Hope'

Sheila was inside what used to be the public library before war ,now it was another bomb shattered building in town,She was in the part where the roof had fallen in shifting the damp newspaper files. Her name was Sheila but he called her Sheeba his queen, she worked as a mannequin in a fashion store . She was among the many in the crowd, who had kissed love goodbye and watched him get into the army truck and drive away in a cloud of dust.

War spread over the seven seas ,coloring their waters red ,filling the skies with aircrat and bullets Newspapers were full of war talk ,so terrifying Soon news of severe defeats began to come ,the lists of those killed in action began to trickle in ,his name was not in them It was a small consolation ,filling the heart with apprehension

War took a new turn , newspaper were now full of victorious battle and crushing defeats.On the enemy forces .And then suddenly they won the war .The streets were filled with rejoicing people .

War heroes began coming home The war office began publishing lists of those missing in action. His names was not among them either She wrote repeatedly to the

war ministry, but they could not trace him.

Today, she sat searching the lists of men killed or lost in action in the old newspapers, reading accounts of the war. Frantically looking for his name. He was nowhere. He was lost! Just lost!

The light had lessened, she got up and flexed the muscles of her neck and the back, quietly collected her things and walked out of the door.

Dusk was falling she walked down the street towards the railway station, joined the crowd on the platform, to wait for the troops train coming from the border.

She will be brave and wait for him like the ancient queen Sheba Surrounded by deserts, ancient Egypt was the world's first nation state.

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When I was Ph.D student [1990], I knew that a window was a square hole in a room...an application was something written on a paper...a mouse was an animal...the keyboard was a piano....File was an important office folder...hard drive was an uncomfortable road trip...cut was done with a knife and paste was done with glue...web was a spider's home...virus was flu....apple and blackberry were just fruits. Then I took a Computer Diploma course and discovered that a mouse was not a mouse. Let me tell you an anecdote

The Windows operating system arrived had just arrived.

Bill Gates: Namaskar! you must have heard of Windows.

Student: Oh yes! most Govt. offices we have the single window clearance concept.

Bill Gates: Have you installed Windows at home?

Student: I have removed all windows due to increased burglaries in our house.

Bill Gates(Confused): Then what is the system you operate on?

Student: OPERATION? Yes, I had a Hernia operation last month.

Bill Gates(Sweating): Hope the internet is being used a lot in India.

Student: Oh Yes! Due to increased mosquito problems many people are sleeping under the net.

Bill Gates: By the year 2002 India should export computer chips.

Student : We are already exporting Uncle Chips [ potato chips].

Bill Gates :(Feeling very Uneasy): Do you regularly use LapTops?

Student: My brother's child sleeps on the top of my lap.

Bill Gates(Sweating Heavily): The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh knows a lot about RAM and ROM.

Student : RUM? Prohibition is being lifted and it will be shortly available in A.P.

Bill Gates(Feeling Dizzy): I would like to take your leave before my system crashes.

Student: I have exhausted all my leave.

Bill Gates: I have no energy left, let us go out and have a bite.

Student: BITE? I believe in non-violence. I will not bite.

Bill Gates: (System Crashes and Found Missing). "Windows is restarting.Please wait....."



### Chapter 3

#### THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

To Jyotsna ,A Poem On Your Birthday ,

As ,

Your name brings to mind

A beauteous sight

The tranquil radiance

Of a moon-lit night

So ,

Your sweet nature

Will fill and surround

Bringing happiness and joy

In the lives of all around

Written By Dr. Swapan Dutta ,Professor in Deptt of Nuclear Physics  
Indian.Institute.of.Technology . Delhi ,India 11 March 1995

The first journey on the the flying horse is unforgettable . My dear daddy was no longer with me , Mummy agreed to accompany me on this trip.

Many friends advised us not to go to China ,but I was invited to present to two research papers in the 4 th PBAST Pacific Basin conference on Adsorption Science and Technology in Tianjin. I went to faculty members of IIT Kanpur for advice. A lady professor had been to China ,she advised us to carry rice and cook in the microwave Another Leather exporter , said he carried packets of biryani with him and warmed it in the microwave.We decided to carry dry things biscuits and chips . Chinese cuisine will not suit our stomachs.

We were booked on AirIndia Boeing from Delhi to Tianjin China was a enigma to me . I was going to Peking university in Tianjin to present research papers in 4 th PBAST Pacific Basin conference on Adsorption Science and Technology. I had read most of the novels of Pearl .S. Buck and seen the movie 'The last emperor ' so I had expected to see small women in trailing robes ,with bound feet Men smoking opium pipes wearing round caps and headgears .Pearl was the daughter of Southern Presbyterian missionaries to China . Pearl Buck's former residence at Nanjing University is now the Sai Zhenzhu Memorial House along the West Wall of the university's north campus.

Jacky Chang is a popular hollywood star his movie Shanghai noon is an all time favourite, I had seen many action movies based in HongKong , one of my favourites was the 'Hidden Dragon and the Crouching Tiger' I was eager to see the China portrayed in these movies. I was pleasantly surprised when I reached China.

Shanghai is a renowned international metropolis situated on the Yangtze river As usual AirIndia flight was late in Delhi , we started our journey on the wrong foot . We reached Shanghai pudong airport late and the next flight by Air China was in the morning , some miscalculation on the part of our agent We had to catch this connecting flight from the Hongqiao domestic airport. One interesting feature was that all the airport officials were young boys and girls in early twenties.

I was impressed to see modern China, the beautiful well planned city of Shanghai

There were two pretty girls at the taxi counter who spoke accented English and booked a huge land cruiser for two. Skyline comprised of the Oriental Pearl Tower and the Bund a dam on the Hwanpu river on the way to Hongqiao airport .

Since it was already past 10 o'clock in the night ,the girls asked for lift . I agreed since I thought it would be safer , the driver dropped the girls at their hostel and reached us at the domestic airport which was deserted .China follows the rule no airtraffic in the night. Shanghai ,Beijing ,Tianjin The western attire and fashionable women was visible everywhere . Mao Zedong would inspire Chinese fashion with his own variant of the Zhongshan suit, which would be known to the west as Mao suit. Meanwhile, Sun Yat-sen's widow, Soong Ching-ling, popularised the cheongsam or qipao which is long sleeveless shirt with a mandarin collar as the standard female dress these clothes are tailormade so expensive poor people where a samfu which ia a top and trousers . Students prefer tea shirts and jeans. At the same time, old practices such as footbinding, which had been viewed as backwards and unmodern by both the Chinese as well as Westerners, is forbidden. Something we Indians have to learn that clothes should be for comfort not a social bondage. We sat in the passengers lounge the entire night ,one Malaysian student was there with us. He chatted with me , another fan of Indian food and bollywood actors.

The satan was doing his best in breaking my spirite .After a boring and stressful night ,at the security checkpoint ,our hand luggage was opened ,inside everything was covered in white powder , the lady who was checking our baggage ,mistook took it for some kind of drug. I was stumped and looked at my mummy and asked what it was she shook her head . I was asked to taste it , well it was salt , the packet had burst open due to air pressure .One thing I noticed the lady looked more relieved than the two of us . We boarded the Airchina flight it was a small aircraft each row consisted of only five seats we were seated with a Malaysia businessman and had just returned from Mumbai when airhostess served Chinese noodles with boiled pork ,we didnot eat it.He grinned and began extolling the virtues of Indian cusine ,naturally we were laughing but feeling very hungry for home



cooking.

Three hour later the flight landed with light rain at Tianjin , I went to the help desk for directions , the young people there spoke broken english but arranged a taxi for me , they were accepting yuan only. Our taxi driver was very kind , he took quickly to the university gate .

The university gate we were stopped by the security guard , he just said , No in Chinese to everything .I had asked my fellow passengers to write in chinese that have to attend conference and to stay in the guesthouse showed him that chinese note actually since I was a foreigner so everything was negative.

I was stumped then I began asking the students walking in and out of the gate for help , some just smiled since they did not know english suddenly two pretty girls popped up actually angels in disguise ,one of them carried a bright pink mobile phone . she called up the coordinator who was luckily at his residence. She gave the handset to me I informed him about my arrival. He instructed the gateman to allow my taxi to enter.

Well the second satanic attack had just been overcome.

Tianjin university has a huge sprawling campus, as you enter there is a huge fountain facing the gate near it a large statute of girl reading a book which at banks of a huge artificial lake with a pagoda style pavilion , right opposite to the statute is the Vice Chancellor's office on an elevated platform which you can enter on climbing a series of stairs.At the door are two huge porcelain vases about 9 ft with chinese motifs and design the architecture is Chinese pagoda style.

We reached the guest house finally , the coordinator Dr Zhou Li welcomed us .the room had two separate beds with a large television a refrigerator and microwave ,doorkey was digital.

I was not aware that China was so ahead in technology , Japanese electronic items are exported more around the world.I became a staunch fan after spending fifteen days in Tianjin.

Well that day we rested since flight schedule had worn us out. My mom was feeling depressed due to the course of events. I switched on the tv and surfed the

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