

Karma at Gate 6

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Introduction

Electronic City was supposed to be a pristine, hyper-modern monument to logic, a sprawling grid where people built software, calculated careers, launched companies, and engineered flawless futures. It was a landscape of geometric perfection, defined by towering facades of blue-tinted glass and smooth, grey concrete that violently reflected the harsh, white glare of the midday sun. But beneath the polished surfaces, beneath the relentless, sterile hum of server farms and the sharp, caffeinated chatter of the corporate cafeterias, an older, messier question kept returning like a persistent weed cracking through the asphalt: what exactly

happens when people who cause profound, suffocating suffering seem to effortlessly escape its consequences?

At the monolithic headquarters of FofoSys, Chaddichandan had been undeniably powerful, grotesquely wealthy, and universally feared. As the reigning CEO, he had weaponized his corner-office authority, using his unassailable position to systematically coerce, corner, and consume women whose entire careers, financial stability, and professional reputations could be instantly incinerated by resisting him.

His presence was a sensory assault. He announced himself with the heavy, rhythmic *click-clack* of custom-made Italian leather shoes echoing sharply down the pristine marble corridors. He brought with him a suffocating, signature scent—a heavy, expensive cologne that smelled aggressively of spiced rum, crushed pine needles, and sharp citrus, a fragrance that would linger like a toxic cloud in the heavily air-conditioned meeting rooms long after he had left. Official, mundane corporate trips, meant to smell of freshly printed dossiers and stale hotel coffee, became terrifying, claustrophobic nightmares of manipulation and abuse.

For Sumitri, Puju, Rashmi Bongi, Bomal Gupta, Pallavi, Priya Sharma—known fearfully and affectionately as Ms. ECity—Priyanka, Khushboo, and Rohini, the harrowing experience did not simply evaporate when Chaddichandan eventually disappeared from their professional lives. The trauma was not a file that could be deleted. The memories remained, hard-coded into their nervous systems, triggered by the sudden ring of a desk phone, the sudden dimming of projector lights, or the faint, ghostly whiff of pine and rum in a crowded elevator.

Then, on a humid, smog-choked Tuesday evening, Chaddichandan died in a horrific, mangled accident on the Electronic City flyover.

The physical end of his reign was chaotic and loud. It tasted of metallic blood and smelled of violently scorched rubber, shattered safety glass, and spilled unleaded fuel. The yellow sodium lights of the highway illuminated the twisted, smoking wreckage, while the shrieking wail of ambulance sirens momentarily drowned out the endless, droning hum of the corporate parks below.

According to the strange, unyielding logic of this novella, however, death was not the final punctuation mark of his story. The universe, it seemed, was not quite finished with his ledger.

He was inexplicably reborn as a dog.

The dog's name was Kaltu.

Kaltu lived his new, pathetic existence near the roaring, exhaust-choked entrance of Gate 6 at FofoSys, seeking shelter beneath the sprawling, chaotic canopy of an enormous, ancient banyan tree. The tree was a stubborn anomaly of knotted brown wood and hanging, snake-like roots that actively resisted the sterile, grey geometry of the surrounding tech parks. It was here that Chunmun, a man who had abruptly abandoned the corporate ladder to choose the quiet, dusty life of a yogi, meditated every single day. Chunmun was a jarring splash of vibrant, electric saffron against the muted, dusty palette of the street, smelling perpetually of burning sandalwood incense and fresh rain.

Chunmun fed Kaltu warm, starchy rice and yellow lentils twice daily. Through the quiet stillness of the roaring city, the yogi also

discovered the impossible, supernatural secret hidden behind the animal's glassy, dark eyes: Kaltu explicitly claimed to remember being the terrifying CEO, Chaddichandan.

Inevitably, drawn by the strange gravity of unresolved trauma, the nine women eventually encountered the scruffy black dog with the single, chalk-white patch beneath his chin.

To them, standing in the hot dust and smelling the diesel fumes of passing corporate buses, Kaltu immediately became more than a mere street animal. He was a living, breathing question mark.

What if the untouchable man who had once terrified them, who had locked doors and silenced their voices, had genuinely returned completely powerless?

What if the ancient, mystical concept of karma actually, tangibly existed?

What if a terrible, predatory person could somehow, miraculously, be forced to physically experience the exact same paralyzing fear and helpless suffering he had ruthlessly caused?

Their initial shock quickly curdled into anger, and their anger gradually hardened into a dark, daily ritual under the amber streetlights. Their traumatic memories were sharpened into weapons.

And Kaltu, initially willing to tuck his tail, flatten his ears, and quietly endure the rain of kicks and slaps in the dust, was given a peculiar instruction by Chunmun. The yogi told the trembling animal to count the heavy blows.

One.

Two.

Three.

Until the agonizing number reached exactly 108.

But, as the story unfolds beneath the rustling leaves of the banyan tree, the number 108 was never designed to be a magical, cosmic price tag that could purchase redemption for Chaddichandan's sins.

It was a boundary. It was a line drawn in the dry earth.

Before 108, Kaltu had silently agreed to endure the pain without baring his teeth or offering retaliation. After 108, that silent, painful agreement was entirely over.

The women, however, blinded by the blinding, intoxicating red haze of their collective vengeance, did not immediately stop when the numerical threshold was crossed.

That crucial distinction, that lingering momentum of cruelty, becomes the beating, bleeding heart of this story.

Because the real, enduring question posed at Gate 6 is not whether Chaddichandan truly deserved cosmic consequences for his crimes. The real, terrifying question is what the living desperately choose to do with their own festering pain when the person who originally caused it is no longer available to answer for it.

Can deep, psychological suffering actually be transferred like a currency from one body to another?

Can the sharp, jagged act of revenge successfully repair the soft, broken tissues of trauma?

Can physical punishment dealt in the dirt truly restore the years, the confidence, and the peace that were violently taken?

Can a victim remain a pure, unblemished victim while simultaneously, eagerly becoming the violent aggressor against someone—or something—else?

And what exactly happens when the supposed, perfect instrument of that revenge is suddenly discovered to simply be a breathing, bleeding animal, entirely capable of visceral fear, sharp pain, and desperate self-defense?

At Gate 6, surrounded by the deafening roar of auto-rickshaws and the blinding neon signs of modern commerce, these heavy philosophical questions slowly become part dark comedy, part modern fable, and part agonizing moral experiment.

The nine women do not suddenly, magically forget what happened to them in those icy, over-air-conditioned hotel rooms. The smell of the cologne does not instantly vanish from their nightmares. They do not receive a perfect, satisfying explanation from the heavens. They do not get to stand in a supernatural, glowing courtroom in which every wrong is neatly, perfectly balanced by a divine judge in robes of white.

Instead, one by one, standing in the harsh, unfiltered sunlight and the choking dust of the pavement, they begin to profoundly understand a much harder, sharper truth.

The dark, heavy past cannot be beaten into submission with sticks and stones.

The 108th blow landing with a sickening thud against an animal's ribs does not retroactively restore a single, stolen year of their lives.

A terrified dog's bite, tasting of copper and panic, does not magically erase the deep grooves of trauma.

A silent apology whispered into the humid night air does not magically undo the ink of history.

And karma, whether it is a grand, sweeping cosmic force governed by the stars, or simply the messy, bleeding, earthly accumulation of actions and natural consequences, absolutely does not remove the moral responsibility of the living.

Kaltu may have truly carried the blackened soul of Chaddichandan.

Kaltu may not have been anything more than a scruffy, unfortunate street dog with a white patch on his chin.

By the end of their exhausting journey under the banyan tree, the definitive answer to that supernatural mystery matters infinitely less than the profound, earthly choices the women make after the terrifying question is finally asked.

Because sometimes, the strangest, most chaotic stories reveal the absolute simplest, most grounding truth:

A person cannot always control the horrific, suffocating things that were done to them in the dark.

But eventually, as the sun rises over the glass towers and the smog clears, they must decide exactly what their own two hands will do next.

At Gate 6, amidst the noise and the exhaust, that quiet, difficult decision becomes the only real, tangible meaning of karma.

Chapter 1 — Sumitri and the Dog at Gate 6

The banyan tree near Gate 6 of FofoSys, Electronic City had become an unlikely landmark, a massive, sprawling organism of knotted wood and hanging roots that fiercely resisted the sterile geometry of the corporate parks surrounding it. Every morning, before the smog had fully burned off, the scene was painted in a hazy, diffused amber light. Chunmun sat beneath the ancient canopy with his legs crossed, an electric-orange shawl folded neatly around his shoulders, providing a jarring splash of color against the mottled greys and deep browns of the tree bark. His eyes were perpetually closed, and his breathing was slow enough to make the frantic rhythm of the city seem entirely distant.

The soundscape of Gate 6 was a relentless, mechanical symphony. Auto-rickshaws shrieked as their brakes locked on dusty asphalt, the deep, rattling diesel groan of corporate buses vibrated through the pavement, and thousands of leather shoes and high heels produced a staccato clicking as software engineers hurried through the towering glass-and-steel turnstiles of FofoSys. Delivery riders shouted into cheap plastic headsets over the blare of traffic horns. Yet, amidst the sharp tang of exhaust fumes, the metallic smell of

ozone from nearby server farms, and the distant, sweet aroma of boiling milk and cardamom from the roadside tea stalls, Chunmun seemed to exist inside an impenetrable bubble of quiet.

He had chosen the life of a yogi, although nobody at the towering, blue-tinted FofoSys campus was entirely sure what qualifications were required to claim that title.

Beside him slept Kaltu.

Kaltu was an ordinary-looking, scruffy black dog. His fur was the color of a moonless night, save for one glaring, chalk-white patch beneath his chin. He possessed a deeply unsettling habit of staring at people with dark, glassy eyes, holding their gaze long enough to make them feel as if the animal were reading their unwritten emails and buried secrets.

Chunmun fed him twice a day, usually a mixture of warm, starchy rice and yellow lentils that filled the immediate air with a comforting, earthy scent. To everyone else pushing through the turnstiles, Kaltu was simply another stray, a dusty fixture of the street who had attached himself to a man seeking enlightenment on a noisy pavement.

Chunmun knew the stranger truth. Kaltu was Chaddichandan reborn.

When Chaddichandan had been the CEO of FofoSys, he had manipulated his environment like a predator. He used the blinding glare of his authority, the heavy weight of his wealth, and the dangling promise of promotions to pressure women who worked in his orbit. Official business trips—which were supposed to smell of freshly printed dossiers and sterile conference rooms—had instead become suffocating traps.