

## Govinda Is Not Coming

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### Govinda Is Not Coming

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উপসংহার

## Introduction

We are all told stories as children. Stories of gods and demons, of virtue rewarded and evil punished. We are taught that a cosmic scale weighs our deeds, that a force named Karma ensures that what goes around, comes around. It is a comforting lie, a lullaby sung to us by a world that is too afraid to look into the darkness and see nothing looking back. We believed those stories. When we moved to our small patch of land in Bandel, a place that was supposed to be our heaven, we believed our good intentions and hard work would be enough. We believed in the inherent goodness of people, in the protection of the law, and in the ultimate justice of the universe. This is the story of how we learned the truth. This is the story of every stolen fish, every poisoned tree, every act of malice we endured. It is the story of the walls we built, not just of brick and mortar, but around our hearts. It is the chronicle of our unlearning, the painful shedding of a faith we once held dear, and the grim acceptance of the world as it is, not as we wish it to be. Bengali translation has been provided at the end of the book.

## Chapter 1: A Patch of Heaven, A Glimpse of Hell

We arrived in Bandel with hearts full of hope, the deed to our new land clutched in my mother's hand like a winning lottery ticket. It

wasn't just soil and water we had bought; it was a dream, a tangible thing we could walk upon. The sun, a soft apricot orb in the hazy Bengali sky, cast a warm, golden light over our new domain. This light, thick as honey, filtered through the fronds of tall, stoic coconut palms, painting shifting mosaics of emerald and gold on the cool, damp earth below. The ponds, two liquid eyes in the landscape, shimmered like polished silver, reflecting a sky of the palest, most delicate blue. For my mother, it was the canvas for the garden she had envisioned her entire life. She walked the perimeter, her sari a splash of brilliant saffron against the deep greens, her hands tracing the air as she mapped out flowerbeds and orchards. The very air felt alive, humming with the gentle, rhythmic chorus of crickets and the distant, melodic trill of a kingfisher. It was a symphony of peace, a sound that promised tranquility, scented with the rich, earthy perfume of fertile soil and the sweet, clean fragrance of water. My mother saw a legacy, a place to put down roots that would outlive her. My brother and I saw freedom—acres of it, unbounded and wild.

But a discordant note began to seep in, slowly, like the insidious dampness in monsoon that stains walls and chills the bones. We soon realized our patch of heaven was not an untouched paradise. It was a resource, a larder for the families whose small, cramped houses of gray, unpainted brick and corrugated tin pressed against our new boundaries. Their proximity was a physical weight, a constant presence that seemed to leech the color from our side of the fence. The bright, hopeful hues of our dream began to dim, tarnished by the grim reality of our neighbors' entitlement. The fish in our ponds, which we had imagined as glistening flashes of silver and gold in the sunlit water, were considered communal property, harvested by unseen nets in the pre-dawn gloom. The sweet, nutty scent of fallen coconuts, which we associated with our morning tea,

was an invitation for silent figures to scale our trees in the dead of night. Soon, we found ugly craters in the earth near the boundary, where the rich, dark topsoil had been systematically dug out and carted away, leaving scars on the land and a faint, acrid smell of disturbed earth that hung in the humid air like a bad omen.

Our very presence was an intrusion, a disruption to a long-established ecosystem of theft. The whispers started first, slithering through the village like snakes in the undergrowth—low, sibilant, and venomous. We would hear them as we walked to the market, a sudden drop in conversation, a turning of heads, the sharp, assessing glint in eyes that had been friendly just a moment before. The sounds of their hostility were subtle, designed to unnerve. A door slamming shut with unnecessary force as my mother passed. A laugh, too loud and sharp, from a group of men loitering by the tea stall. The warnings came disguised as friendly advice, their words a quiet menace wrapped in a thin veneer of concern. "This land is not good for city folk," one woman told my mother, her face a mask of false sympathy, her eyes darting towards the oldest banyan tree, its aerial roots like grasping fingers. "There are spirits here. They don't like outsiders." They spoke of ghosts in the bamboo groves, their voices dropping to a conspiratorial whisper, and described strange, dancing blue lights that supposedly hovered over the ponds at night. They were trying to scare us away, to reclaim their unofficial pantry with tales spun from shadow and superstition.

But we were not so easily dissuaded. We were pioneers in our own small way, blinded by the luminescence of our dream. We patched the holes in the fence, we put a lock on the gate, and my mother began to plant her first rose bushes along the path. Each act of claiming our land was seen as an act of aggression. The subtle hostility soon curdled into a unified, palpable resentment that felt as

thick as the monsoon air. We were the enemy, the wealthy outsiders who had come to lock away the bounty they believed was theirs by right. Every smile we received felt sharp, a baring of teeth. Every polite greeting was laced with an unspoken threat, a challenge in the tilt of a head or the narrowing of the eyes. We were surrounded, a small, hopeful island of green in a rising sea of simmering animosity. And in that murky water, we had not yet met the sharks that circled, drawn by the scent of something new to devour.

## **Chapter 2: The Usurper's Mark**

Among the hostile faces that peered over our wall, one quickly distinguished itself through sheer, unadulterated malevolence: Ashok Bhakraborty. A migrant from Bangladesh, he possessed a feral cunning and an unquenchable thirst for land, for territory. He had started small, a man of supposed humble industry, selling eggs from a basket on the back of his rusty bicycle. But beneath the surface performance of poverty was a predator's instinct. The light in his eyes was not the warm glow of ambition, but a cold, calculating, flat gray, like river stones at the bottom of a murky stream. His presence was a stark, ugly contrast to the vibrant, living colors of our budding garden. He was a creature of grays and browns, of filth and decay, and he sought to paint our world in his own sordid palette.

Ashok's method for conquest was as vile as it was effective, a piece of theater designed for maximum disgust. He would identify a piece of unused land and begin to systematically defile it. He would urinate on it, day after day, a ritual of desecration. The stench became unbearable, a foul, yellow miasma that clung to the air, driving everyone else away. The land would become his personal