

Sujata Down Under: Melbourne Nirvana

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Introduction

Alright, pull up a stump and lend an ear, 'cause this story, she's a bit of a strange brew. We're not starting off down under, not yet. Nah, our tale kicks off a bloody long way from any gum trees or sandy beaches, in a place called Patna, over in India. Now, Patna, she's an old city, real old, and the air there hangs thick enough to paint, smelling of everything from ancient dust and fragrant marigolds to whatever spicy tucker's bubbling away on a thousand street stalls. It's a proper assault on the senses, in a good way, mostly.

And it's here, amongst the hustle and bustle, that our main sheila, Komal Yadav, comes into the picture. A good-looking sort, sharp as a tack, but with a bit of a story already whispered about her, even before she's old enough to order a beer – not that she would, mind you, not just yet.

So, get comfy, grab a cuppa (or something stronger, no judgement here), and let's dive into how a young lass from the heart of Bihar ends up tangled in a mess of earthly dramas, spiritual shenanigans, and a journey that'll take her halfway across the damn globe to Melbourne, where things get even more interesting. Fair warning, there's a bit of rough and tumble, some language that'd make your grandma blush, and a bloke in orange robes trying to save souls on the Frankston line. You've been warned. Let's get this show on the road.

Patna's Shadow

Down in Patna, Bihar, where the air was so thick you could chew it, smelling of dust, marigolds, and whatever tucker was bubbling away on the street stalls, lived a young sheila named Komal Yadav. Word on the street was, she was Sujata reborn – you know, the village girl who gave Lord Buddha himself a feed of milk-rice before he got all enlightened. Komal, though, she just knew her own busy life. Born into a cashed-up Yadav family, she was the apple of her old man's eye. Rakesh Yadav, her dad, was proud as punch of his little girl, his pride shining brighter than the gold rings he sported. He didn't spare a cent, making sure Komal, who was a stunner and sharp as a tack, wanted for nothing.

Sunlight streamed into the classrooms at the posh SJC College, lighting up the dust dancing about. Komal, who'd got in with a decent 75% in her Year 12 exams (plus a hefty donation from her dad that reeked of old cash and strings being pulled, if you get my drift), was stoked to be navigating the massive campus. She was doing a B.Sc. in Computer Science, the smell of new textbooks mixing with the jasmine perfume she liked. The college grounds were buzzing with students chatting, the distant clang of building work, and the wind rustling through ancient banyan trees.

But even in fancy colleges, there are always a few bad eggs. Gadhu Yadav, son of the local MLA Badhu Yadav, strutted about like he owned the joint, a real greasy type. His flash cologne couldn't quite hide the whiff of stale smokes and thought he was God's gift. His mission, and everyone knew it, was notching 'em up on his bedpost like cheap souvenirs. His eyes, heavy and sizing her up, landed on Komal one arvo as she stood near the packed canteen, the smell of samosas and chai filling the air.

"Alright, darlin'?" Gadhu's voice was smooth, like he'd practiced it a thousand times, cutting through the noise. He sidled closer, right in her personal space. "What's your name?"

Komal, clutching her books, felt a bit uneasy but managed a polite smile, trying to keep the bloke at arm's length. "I'm Komal Yadav. Nice to meet you." The formal greeting felt like a shield.

"Gadhu Yadav," he announced, puffing his chest out a bit. "My old man's the MLA, see?" He was expecting her to be impressed, maybe even bow down.

"Righto," Komal replied, her voice dead neutral. His cologne was overpowering.

"Free this weekend?" he asked, his eyes giving her a proper once-over.

"Yeah, but why?" A knot of worry tightened in her gut.

"Simple. I've fallen for ya," he declared, bold as brass. "Want to take you to my farmhouse. Pack a few dresses. I'll pick you up."

Komal's politeness vanished. "Not interested." Her voice was firm, cold as a fish.

Gadhu's smile disappeared, replaced by a nasty sneer. "No girl says no to me. We'll make your family's life a living hell. It wouldn't be hard to snatch you, either, or if we have to." The threat hung in the air, ugly and mean, cutting through the cheerful campus sounds.

Komal stood taller, her fear pushed aside by pure outrage. "I'm going straight to the coppers, you grub! You're threatening me out in the open, in front of everyone!" Students nearby stopped their chatter, turning to watch the drama unfold.

Before she could do anything else, Gadhu lunged, grabbing her arm. He smashed his lips onto hers in a rough, unwelcome kiss. His breath stank of stale curry. He pulled back, licking his lips. "Mmm, tasty."

Disgust and fury surged through Komal. "You're a disgusting pig!" she spat, wiping her mouth furiously. "We live in a civilised society, not the bloody jungle! We're not animals! Apologise. Now."

Gadhu let out a nasty cackle. He leaned in, his voice a menacing whisper. "Don't bother. The cops won't lift a finger, love. Not against the MLA's boy."

That was the last straw. Quick as a flash, Komal slipped off one of her sturdy sandals. The crack of the thong echoed across the courtyard, startling a bunch of pigeons into flight. "Now," she yelled, her voice ringing with pure, righteous anger, "maybe you'll think twice before forcing yourself on another girl!"

A second of stunned silence, then all hell broke loose. Other girls, gutsy now seeing Komal's courage, surged forward. Thongs and shoes were flying, a flurry of leather and rubber hitting flesh. He yelped, trying to cover his head, his arrogance vanishing into panicked fear. He stumbled, begging for mercy, his hands folded like he was praying. The girls, a furious mob, forced him to his knees, making him touch Komal's feet.

"Sorry, Komal, fair dinkum!" he whimpered, proper terror in his eyes. "I'll think of you as my sister from now on!" His face was red and stinging, covered in the marks of countless soles, one particularly clear pattern looking like a '7' blooming on his cheek.

The crowd scattered, leaving Komal shaken but determined. Gadhu scrambled to his feet, his face twisted with rage and humiliation.

