AAN TALES WORKS

ERASED NORTH

CHAPTER ONE

A Direction Without a Name



ATIQ UR REHMAN

CHAPTER ONE

A Direction Without a Name

Duniya kahaniyon se bhari hui hai. Kuch kahaniyan waqt ke saath sirf qisse ban kar reh jati hain. Maa baap unhein apne bachon ko sunate hain. Phir ek waqt aata hai jab kisi ko yaad nahin rehta ke kaunsi baat sach thi aur kaunsi kahani.

Aur kuch kahaniyan waqt ke saath gaayab ho jati hain.

Lekin kuch kahaniyan sirf bhulai nahin jatin. Unhein jaan boojh kar chhupa diya jata hai.

Jaane pehchane raaston ke neeche, aam darwazon ke peeche, aur un imaraton ke andar jin ke paas se log roz guzarte hain. Koi nahin sochta ke wahan kya chhupaya gaya hoga.

Kabhi kisi chhupi hui kahani ko saamne laane ke liye bas ek insaan chahiye hota hai. Koi aisa jo woh sawal pooch le jo baqi log poochna chhor chuke hon.

Yeh kahani ek chhote, pur-sukoon shehar se shuru hoti hai. Uske aas paas hari pahariyan aur door oonche pahaad the.



Yahan har subah ek hi tarah shuru hoti thi. Sadkon par logon ke aane se pehle hi bakery wale apne oven jala dete. Dukandaar dukaan kholte aur darwazon ke saamne jami dhool saaf karte. Aas paas ke kisaan phal aur sabziyon ki tokriyan utaarte. Bazaar mein dukandaar apna samaan sajate.

Phir hawa mein tarah tarah ki khushbooyein phailne lagtin: taaza roti, garam pastries, phal, phool aur chimniyon se uthte lakri ke dhuen ki khushboo.

Dheere dheere shehar mein awaazein goonjne lagtin. Padosi ek doosre ko naam se salaam karte. Bachay galiyon se guzarte. Purane dost ruk kar wohi baatein karte jo pehle bhi kai baar kar chuke the. Subah ki pehli roshni pahaadon ki chotiyon par parti. Phir dheere dheere neeche aati aur shehar ki khirkiyan sunehri roshni se bhar jatin.

Kahin koi jaldi nahin thi. Kahin koi khatra nazar nahin aa raha tha. Kisi ko pata bhi nahin tha ke is pur-sukoon shehar ki kuch purani

baatein jaan boojh kar chhupayi gayi thin. Aksar logon ke liye, yeh sirf ek aur khoobsurat subah thi.

Isi bazaar mein ek solah saal ka larka bhi tha. Uska naam Rayan tha. Rayan inhi galiyon mein, inhi logon ke saath bara hua tha.

Use pata tha ke subah kis bakery se sabse achhi khushboo aati hai, kaunsi dukaan sabse pehle bhar jati hai, aur kaunsa padosi salaam ke baad das minute tak baat karta rahega.

Lekin Rayan ke baare mein ek aur baat bhi sab jaante the. Use doosron ki madad karna pasand tha. Kabhi kabhi... zaroorat se kuch zyada hi.

Agar kisi ko bhaari dabba uthane mein mushkil hoti, to Rayan ki nazar us par par jati. Kisi dukandaar ko madad chahiye hoti, Rayan tayyar hota. Mr Halden ko General Store mein madad chahiye hoti, to Rayan foran aa jata.

Us subah Mr Halden counter ke peeche kharay the. Rayan lakri ki ek bhaari peti sambhal raha tha.



"Ahista," Mr Halden ne kaha.

"Main sambhal raha hoon."

Peti ek taraf jhuk gayi. Mr Halden ne sirf bhawein uthayin. Rayan ne foran peti seedhi ki.

"...Zyada tar."

Mr Halden ki safed moochhon ke neeche halki si muskurahat aa gayi.

"Rayan, doosron ki madad karna achhi baat hai."

Rayan ne peti counter par rakhi.

"Mujhe lag raha hai iske baad 'lekin' aane wala hai."

"Aksar aata hai."

Mr Halden ne peti par haath rakha.

"Peti uthane ke liye taqat chahiye. Lekin use sahi jagah rakhne ke liye sochna bhi zaroori hai."

"To... kam uthaoon, zyada sochoon?"

"Behtar hoga dono karo."

Mr Halden ne doosri peti ki taraf ishara kiya. Brenna ko subah ke kaam ke liye seb chahiye the. Rayan ne peti uthayi aur bazaar ki taraf chal diya.

Ab sadkon par khoob chahal pahal thi. Log dukaanon ke beech chal rahe the. Dukandaar awaazein laga rahe the. Gaariyon ke pahiye pathar ki sadak par chal rahe the.

Brenna ki Bakery nazar aane se pehle hi uski khushboo Rayan tak pohanch gayi. Wahan se taaza bread, meethi pastries aur daalcheeni ki khushboo aa rahi thi.

Brenna ne Rayan ko dekh kar salaam kiya. Salaam ka jawab dete hue Rayan ne peti ko jaldi se sambhalne ki koshish ki. Kuch zyada hi jaldi.

Peti se ek seb gira, phir doosra. Dekhte hi dekhte kai seb pathar ki sadak par uchhalte aur ludhakte hue phail gaye.

"Oh, nahin."

Rayan foran unhein jama karne ke liye jhuk gaya. Ek aur seb door ludhak raha tha... magar ek haath ne use rok liya.

"Phir seb gira diye?"

Rayan us awaaz ko jaanta tha. Usne upar dekha. Saamne Sami tha. Sami pandrah saal ka tha aur Rayan ka bachpan ka dost tha. Woh haath mein seb liye muskurata khara tha.



"Hansne ke bajaye madad kar sakte ho."

"Madad hi to kar raha hoon. Maine is bechare seb ko khatarnak safar se bacha liya."

"Yeh sirf teen foot ludhka hai."

"Bilkul. Kaun jaanta hai aage kahan pohanch jata?"

Rayan apni hansi rok nahin saka. Sami uske saath jhuk gaya aur dono ne baqi seb jama karne shuru kar diye.

Kuch hi der mein Mr Halden bhi wahan aa gaye. Unhone pehle peti dekhi, phir sadak par bikhre seb, aur aakhir mein Rayan ko dekha.

Rayan ne saans chhori.

"Mujhe pata hai. Maine jaldi ki."

Mr Halden ab narmi se bole.

"Tum doosron ki madad karna chahte ho, Rayan. Yeh achhi baat hai. Lekin madad karna chahna aur sahi tareeqe se madad karna, dono alag baatein hain."

"Kabhi kabhi sabse achha kaam yeh hota hai ke pehle thora ruko aur socho."

Rayan ne sar hila diya. Thori der baad unhone seb pohancha diye.

Rayan aur Sami saath shehar ki pehchani hui galiyon mein chalne lage. Dono isi shehar mein saath baray hue the. Unke paas bachpan ki bohat si yaadein thin. Unke apne mazaak aur apne khwab the. Unki dosti ko samjhane ke liye alfaaz ki zaroorat nahin thi.

"Ab bhi bilkul ghar jaisa lagta hai," Rayan ne kaha.

Sami ne aas paas dekha.

"Kuch cheezein kabhi nahin badaltin, hai na?"

Unhein pata nahin tha ke bohat jald sab kuch badalne wala hai.

Agli gali par Sami ne poocha,

"Abhi bhi purana storeroom saaf karna hai?"

Rayan ke chehre se khushi gaayab ho gayi.

"Haan, abhi woh kaam baqi hai."

"Ghar ka purana storeroom. Mr Halden ne kaha hai ke aaj uski safai poori karni hai."

Sami muskuraya.

"Bees saal ki dhool saaf karne ke liye tayyar ho jao!"

"Hausla barhane ka shukriya."

"Dost isi liye hote hain."

Dono alag hue aur Rayan ghar ki taraf chal diya. Purana storeroom ghar ke ek khamosh hissay mein tha. Rayan ne darwaza khola. Dhoop ki patli si kiran andar aa rahi thi. Usmein dhool ke zarre ur rahe the.

Wahan purane naqshay, khat, safar ka samaan, dabbe aur bohat si bhooli hui cheezein rakhi thin. Unmein se zyada tar cheezein uske Abu ki thin.

Har cheez ko dekh kar uske dil mein ek sawal aata. Uske Abu yeh bag kahan le gaye the? Yeh khat kisne likhe the? Unhone yeh naqsha kyun sambhal kar rakha tha?

Phir Rayan ki nazar kapray ki ek chhoti, purani thaili par pari.

"Yeh kya hai?"

Usne use khola. Andar ek compass tha. Kam az kam... pehli nazar mein woh compass hi lagta tha. Uska dhaat ka khol purana tha, lekin us par bohat bareek kaam kiya gaya tha. Rayan ne dhakkan khola.



Sui hili aur ek taraf aa kar ruk gayi. Rayan ne apna rukh badla. Sui dobara hili aur phir usi taraf aa kar ruk gayi. Usne compass phir ghumaya. Wohi hua.

"Main ise jis taraf bhi ghumata hoon... yeh har baar usi taraf ishara karta hai."

Lekin sui North ki taraf ishara nahin kar rahi thi. Rayan ne compass band kar diya. Rayan ek aise shakhs ko jaanta tha jise shayad is ajeeb cheez ke baare mein kuch pata ho. Rayan Sami ko dhoondne nikla. Aur dono milkar wapas Halden's General Store pohanche. Mr Halden ne compass ko bohat gaur se dekha.



Rayan ne bataya ke compass use apne Abu ki cheezon mein mila tha aur uski sui North ki taraf ishara nahin karti thi.

Mr Halden ne compass ko haath mein ghumaya. Sui hili aur phir usi taraf ruk gayi.

"Maine is tarah bana hua compass pehle kabhi nahin dekha."

Rayan ne unhein dekha.

"Kya mere Abu ko iske baare mein kuch pata tha?"

Mr Halden kuch sochne lage.

"Tumhare Abu ko purane raaste aur bhooli hui jagahen dhoondna pasand tha. Koi raaz milta to woh uske baare mein jaanna chahte the."

Mr Halden ne dekha ke sui kis taraf hai.

"Yeh shehar ke purane hissay ki taraf ishara kar raha hai. Town Archive ke paas."

Sami ne Rayan ki taraf dekha.

"Town Archive? To yeh compass purane records ki taraf ishara kar raha hai?"

"Shayad," Rayan ne kaha. "Lekin shuruaat ke liye itna kaafi hai."

Mr Halden ne compass wapas Rayan ko diya.

"Sambhal kar jana, Rayan. Nayi cheezon ke baare mein jaanna achha hai. Lekin jis cheez ko samajhte nahin, uske saath jaldbaazi mat karna."

Rayan ko subah ka sabaq yaad aa gaya.

"Hum sambhal kar jayenge."

Town Archive ke bhaari darwazon ke peeche shehar ka shor dheere dheere khatam ho gaya. Andar almariyon ki lambi qataren thin. Un par kitaabein, purane kagaz aur records rakhe the. Desk ke peeche Mira thi. Woh solah saal ki thi aur Archive ke records ko achhi tarah jaanti thi.

Rayan aur Sami uske paas gaye.

"Humein ek ajeeb cheez ke baare mein madad chahiye."

Mira ki nazar compass par padi.



"Yeh nishaan... lagta hai maine pehle dekha hai."

Usne compass ko gaur se dekha, phir almariyon ke beech chali gayi. Thori der baad woh ek purani kitaab lekar wapas aayi. Teeno mez ke paas jama hue. Mira ne kitaab kholi. Kitaab mein bhi wahi nishaan bana tha jo compass par tha. Uske kai hisse ek doosre se juray hue the.



"To iska koi matlab hai," Rayan ne kaha.

Sami ne poocha,

"Kya yeh itna zaroori tha ke kisi ne ise chhupane ki koshish ki?"

Mira ne kitaab mein likhi adhoori baat dekhi.

"Agar sach jaana hai, to humein Archive ke purane records dekhne honge."

Teeno Archive ke aur andar, purane hissay mein chale gaye. Jitna aage barhte, cheezein utni hi purani hoti jatin. Records ki fehrist wali kuch kitaabein band thin. Kuch records kharab the. Kuch cheezon ki poori jankari likhi honi chahiye thi. Lekin lagta tha kisi ne woh baatein jaan boojh kar chhor di thin.

Mira ko ek aur record mila. Us par compass wala nishaan tha. Dono nishaan ek jaise the. Lekin record ke kuch hisse gaayab the. Pehli nazar mein laga ke shayad waqt ke saath kharab hue hon. Phir Mira ko ek baat nazar aayi. Har jagah wahi hisse gaayab the.



"Har record mein ek hi tarah ke hisse gaayab hain."

Rayan ne panne dekhe.

"Kisi ne inhein nikala hai?"

"Aisa hi lagta hai."

Ab saaf lag raha tha ke yeh hisse sirf purane hone ki wajah se gaayab nahin hue the. Kisi ne jaan boojh kar records badle the. Mira ko ek jagah imarat ke purane records ka hawala mila. Usne Archive ke kamron ka purana naqsha naye naqshay ke saath rakh kar dekha.

Purane naqshay mein ek hissa tha jo naye naqshay mein nazar hi nahin aa raha tha. Woh hissa band kar diya gaya tha. Rayan ne compass naqshay ke paas rakha. Compass aur zor se hilne laga. Sui usi gaayab hissay ki taraf thi.



"To Archive ka ek hissa chhupa diya gaya?"

Mira ne naqsha dekha.

"Hataya nahin gaya. Chhupaya gaya hai."

Teeno purane naqshay ko dekhte hue Archive ke East Wing, yani mashriqi hissay mein gaye. Jitna aage gaye, khamoshi utni gehri hoti gayi. Purane naqshay ke mutabiq pathar ki ek deewar ke peeche kamra tha. Lekin wahan koi darwaza nahin tha. Compass aur zor se kaanpne laga.

Mira ne deewar ke pathar dekhe. Sami ko kuch ajeeb nishaan nazar aaye. Rayan ko patharon ke beech ek bareek jor nazar aaya. Phir Mira ko ek kundi mili.

"Yeh ek band deewar jaisi lagti hai, lekin iska ek hissa khul sakta hai."



Rayan ne deewar kholne wala hissa dabaya. Click ki awaaz aayi. Pathar aapas mein ragarnay lage. Dhool neeche giri. Aur deewar ka ek hissa dheere dheere ek taraf sarak gaya. Uske peeche andhera tha. Wahan ek tang raasta tha jo Archive se bahar ki taraf jata tha.



Woh raasta alag tarah se bana tha. Woh zyada purana bhi lag raha tha. Use kisi khaas kaam ke liye banaya gaya tha. Compass seedha usi taraf ishara kar raha tha. Teeno andar chale gaye. Raasta Archive ke neeche ja raha tha. Hawa thandi hoti gayi. Khamoshi aur gehri ho gayi.

Mira ne pathar par haath phera.

"Yeh raasta upar ke Archive se bhi purana hai."



Compass aur zor se kaanpne laga.

Rayan ne kaha,

"Hum qareeb pohanch gaye hain."

Raasta ek bohat bade gol kamray mein ja kar khula. Kamray ke beech farsh par ek naqsh bana tha. Uske aas paas saat khaali jagahen thin.

Sami ne dekha.

"Saat khaali jagahen... lekin kis cheez ke liye?"

Mira ne pathar par bane nishaan dekhe. Har jagah soch samajh kar kisi khaas kaam ke liye banayi gayi thi.



Compass kaanp raha tha, lekin woh un khaali jagahon mein fit nahin hota tha. Uski sui kamray ke doosre hissay ki taraf thi. Mira ko deewar ka ek hissa alag laga. Uske pathar baqi deewar jaise nahin the. Sami ne paas ja kar check kiya.

"Yeh khokhla lag raha hai."

Patharon ke beech ek bareek jor nazar aaya. Teeno ne milkar pathar ko dhakka diya. Pathar sarak gaya. Uske peeche deewar ke andar ek chhota sa khana chhupa hua tha. Andar kapray mein lipti hui ek purani cheez rakhi thi.



Mira ne use sambhal kar bahar nikala. Kapra bohat purana tha. Lekin andar ki cheez ko sambhal kar rakha gaya tha. Unhone kapra khola. Andar pathar ki ek takhti thi. Takhti ke saat hisse aapas mein juray hue the, lekin uska beech ka hissa khaali tha. Bilkul us gol kamray ki tarah. Compass phir hilne laga. Mira ne beech ke khaali hissay ko dekha.

"Yeh hissa purana hone ki wajah se nahin toota. Iske kinare bilkul saaf hain."

Sami samajh gaya.

"Matlab kisi ne ise nikala hai?"

Beech ka hissa kisi ne jaan boojh kar nikala tha.



Ab yeh sirf kisi purani cheez ki khoj nahin lag rahi thi. Yeh is baat ka saboot tha ke kisi ne kuch mitane ki koshish ki thi.

Teeno records ke paas wapas aaye. Ab woh aur bhi gaur se records dekh rahe the. Agar kisi ne purani takhti mein badlaav kiya tha, to ho sakta tha uske baare mein likhe records bhi badle gaye hon.

Mira ko takhti ke baare mein ek purana record mila. Lekin baad mein likhi baatein us se alag thin. Kisi ne record ko bohat pehle badal diya tha.

Rayan ne kaha,

"Yeh apne aap kharab nahin hua tha."

"Nahin," Mira ne jawab diya.

Sami ne saboot ko dekha.

"Kisi ne yeh sab soch samajh kar kiya tha."

Mira ki nazar records ki ek purani kitaab ki jild par pari.

"Iski jild doosri kitaabon se zyada moti hai."

Usne kitaab ki peeth par lagi jild ko gaur se dekha. Uske andar thori si khaali jagah thi. Wahan kagaz ka ek teh kiya hua tukra chhupaya gaya tha. Rayan ne use sambhal kar khola. Zyada tar hissa gaayab tha. Lekin kuch lafz ab bhi parhe ja sakte the.

"Archive Record Number 79. Section... Ref 4."

Kagaz ke is tukray par poora jawab nahin tha. Lekin yeh ek aisa suraag tha jo unhein jawab tak le ja sakta tha.



Mira ne Archive ke records ki fehrist mein dhoondna shuru kiya. Kagaz ke tukray par likhe nishaan unhein record numbers ki ek kadi tak le gaye: AR-315, AR-316 aur AR-317.

"AR-317?" Sami ne kaha.

Mira ne woh kitaab dekhi jismein doosri jagah bheje gaye records ki list thi. AR-317 gaayab nahin hua tha. Use doosri jagah bheja gaya tha.

"Municipal Records Storehouse."

Compass hilne laga. Rayan ne use mazbooti se pakra.

"Phir hum wahin jayenge."

Jab teeno Municipal Records Storehouse pohanche, suraj dhalna shuru ho chuka tha. Darwaze par maujood aadmi ne unhein rok liya. Uska lehja sakht tha.

"Tum log yahan kya kar rahe ho? Kya chahiye?"

Mira ne bataya ke use Town Archive se yahan bheje gaye records dekhne hain. Usne Archive ka apna ID card dikhaya. Us aadmi ne card ko gaur se dekha.

"Bina ijazat koi andar nahin ja sakta. Har kisi ko yeh records dekhne ki ijazat nahin hai."

"Main samajhti hoon. Main Town Archive mein kaam karti hoon. Yeh meri ijazat ka saboot hai."

Us aadmi ne ID card check kiya. Phir use Mira ko wapas kar diya.

"Theek hai. Andar ja sakte ho. Records ka khayal rakhna."



Andar almariyon ki lambi qataren thin, jo andhere mein door tak ja rahi thin. Compass ka khinchao aur barh gaya. Woh records ke beech aage barhe. AR-315. AR-316.

Phir Mira ruk gayi.

"Woh raha."

AR-317.

Usne file shelf se nikali. Woh doosri files se purani lag rahi thi. Rayan ne dekha.

"Yeh daftar ki aam report nahin hai."

Mira ne use khola.

"Yeh safar ke dauran ki gayi jaanch ka record hai."

Usmein bareeki se banaye hue khaake the. Unke saath zaroori baatein bhi likhi thin. Ek purana raasta bhi dikhaya gaya tha jo

shehar se bahar nikalta tha aur pahaadon ke paar jata tha. Pannay par ek naam likha tha: Northern Pass.

Compass bohat zor se hilne laga. Rayan naqshay ko dekhta raha.

"To hamara agla jawab pahaadon mein hai."

Mira ne naqshay par bane raaste par ungli chalayi.

"Yeh raasta pahaadon ke andar, Northern Pass se guzarta hai."



Sami ne dono ko dekha.

"Shehar se bahar... ab asli safar shuru hoga."

In records se poora raaz samajh nahin aaya tha. Lekin ab unhein pata tha ke aage kahan jaana hai. Teeno ne AR-317 ke kagaz mez par phailaye. Unhone purane survey ka naqsha shehar ke naye sarkari naqshay ke saath rakh kar dekha. Mira ki bhawein sikur gayin.

"Yahan dekho."

"Purane naqshay mein raasta shehar se bahar nikalta hai. Phir Northern Pass se bhi aage jata hai."

Rayan ne naya naqsha dekha. Raasta gaayab tha. Sami bhi qareeb aa gaya.

"Ise mita diya gaya hai."

Raaste ka nishaan na dhundla hua tha aur na hi naqsha kharab tha. Ise mita diya gaya tha. Unhone ek aur sarkari naqsha dekha. Usmein bhi yahi baat thi. Shehar se bahar jaane wala woh raasta kahin nazar nahin aa raha tha. Northern Pass tak jaane wale raaste ko bhi hata diya gaya tha. Sarkari naqshay mein uska koi nishaan nahin tha.

Sami ne kaha,

"To unhone sirf records nahin chhupaye."

Mira ka chehra sanjeeda ho gaya.

"Unhone raaste ka naam aur nishaan sarkari records se hi mita diya."

Rayan ne compass naqshon ke paas rakha. Compass ke andar ke purzay kaanpne lage. Sui ghoomi aur usi bhoolay hue raaste ki taraf aa kar ruk gayi.



Uske Abu jis raaste ka pata laga rahe the, woh shehar se bahar tak jata tha. Rayan ne door pahaadon ki taraf dekha.

"Agar mere Abu is raaste par gaye the... to mujhe pata karna hoga ke yeh kahan jata hai."

Teeno shehar wapas aaye aur safar ki tayyari shuru kar di. Unhone North ki taraf jaane wale raaste ke naqshay, mazboot rassi, tel wali laalten, sookha khana, kambal, paani aur zaroorat ka doosra samaan jama kiya.

Filhaal compass unhein jitna bata sakta tha, bata chuka tha. Ab unhein raasta maloom tha. Subah hote hi woh purane raaste par chalne wale the.

Sami ne samaan ko dekha.

"Aaj subah main sadak se seb utha raha tha. Ab hum us raaste se pahaadon mein jaane ki tayyari kar rahe hain jise naqshay se mita diya gaya tha."

Mira ne naqsha teh kiya.

"Tumhein aane ki zaroorat nahin."

Sami ne hairani se use dekha.

"Tumhein lagta hai main tum dono ko apne bina jawab dhoondne dunga?"

Rayan muskuraya.



Ab yeh raaz sirf ek ajeeb compass ka nahin raha tha. Rayan ke Abu, gaayab records, badli hui takhti, chhupa hua raasta aur naqshon se mitayi gayi sarak, sab isi raaz se juray hue lagte the.

Subah, teeno shehar ke kinare kharay the. Unke peeche woh galiyan thin jinhein woh bachpan se jaante the. Unke saamne khule maidan aur door pahaad the.

Rayan ne ek baar peeche mud kar dekha. Sirf ek din pehle tak yeh shehar bilkul aam lagta tha. Jaana pehchana shehar ab unke peeche tha, aur aage woh raaz tha jiska jawab unhein dhoondna tha.

"Agar mere Abu is raaste par gaye the, to mujhe jaanna hai ke yeh kahan jata hai."

Sami ne jawab diya,

"To hum is raaste par saath chalenge."

Mira ne apne haath mein pakra naqsha seedha kiya.

"Aur agar kisi ne raasta records se chhupaya tha... to shayad tumhein meri bhi zaroorat pare."

Sami muskuraya.

"Theek hai. Hum usi raaste par chalte hain jise unhone mitaane ki koshish ki."

Suraj nikalne se pehle teeno ne shehar peeche chhor diya.



Rayan ne kaha,

"Ab wapas mudna nahin. Yeh hamara raasta hai."

Mira ne pahaadon ki taraf dekha.

"Humein sambhal kar rehna hoga. Nayi jagahon par naye khatre bhi ho sakte hain."

Sami ne sar hilaya.

"Jo bhi ho... hum saath hain."

Rayan ne Broken Compass khola. Sui phir usi taraf ruk gayi.

"Saamne ke pahaad," Rayan ne kaha.

"Yeh ab bhi usi taraf ishara kar raha hai."

Teeno chal diye. Shuruaat mein raasta khoobsurat aur jaana pehchana tha. Lekin har qadam unhein ek anjaan duniya ki taraf le ja raha tha.

Unke peeche, purane patharon aur ghani jhariyon ke beech, koi unhein dekh raha tha.

Ek khamosh saaya. Bilkul be-harkat. Jaise kisi cheez ka intezar kar raha ho.

Rayan, Mira aur Sami ne use nahin dekha. Woh chalte rahe. Unhein nahin pata tha ke is pal ka intezar koi aur bhi kar raha tha.



Kuch raaste bhula diye jate hain. Kuch raaste mita diye jate hain. Aur jab koi un par dobara chalna shuru kare, to purani baatein hamesha chhupi nahin rehtin.

END OF CHAPTER ONE

ERASED NORTH

Story & illustration credits

Written and created by Atiq ur Rehman

Published by AAN Tales Works

Illustrations were created with AI assistance using the approved character references and story direction.