

A Special Kind of Makeup

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I had recently bought a flat in a residential complex in Delhi. The complex was quite large with play pen for toddlers see—saw and slides for children and a basketball court for adults. As I neared the entrance, I was greeted by my two young friends Seeta and Sarasu, aged eight and six respectively. They rushed towards me—eager, to talk about their toys, playmates or some exciting new event. This had become a daily routine: one of them would hold my hand, the other would press the lift button and both would chatter incessantly till we reached my flat. Then we all would have lime juice together.

Today, they had a question for me. ‘What makes your face shiny?’ Both chorused, swinging their feet as they sat comfortably. My expression of surprise at this unexpected question made them elaborate on it. ‘Your face does not sweat much’ explained Seeta. ‘And it seems quite clean,’ finished Sarasu. They looked

at each other then at me. ‘How do you do it?’ They asked.

I wanted to laugh, but it was obvious that the question had been put in all seriousness.

‘I use make-up’ I answered.

‘Oooh’ was the dual response with more than a hint of disappointment.

‘It is a special kind of make-up’ I continued, as though I had not heard the response. ‘In fact, it last for months and years.’

‘Ooohh’, they chorused again, but this time with curiosity.

‘It’s there for everyone to see’ I said. ‘But no one sees it. In fact, it’s MAGIC!’ ‘MAGIC!’ they repeated. Oh, how they loved the word.

‘Yes’ I nodded my head mysteriously. ‘It’s in water. It’s in the lime juice that we all have every day.’

The little girls looked at the glasses in their hands, their eyes round with excitement.

‘As I said, it’s in water. Good, clean water. Now this water, which you drink, cleans out your stomach. It

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clears your mouth when you rinse. It cools your brains and eyes. If you are clean on the inside, you will look clean on the outside.'

'Water is there in fruits and vegetables as well' I continued. 'Fresh leafy vegetables contain water. An Apple is juicy because it has water. And remember how juice squirts out of a lemon?'

'Watermelon is my favourite fruit' said Seeta enthusiastically.

'And bel fruit is mine' smiled Sarasu. 'Yes, my dears' I said, 'Remember to have lot of water. And do eat all kinds of fruits and vegetable, something different every day. This will give you clear skin and sparkling eyes, through the wonderful magic make-up!'

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