

DANCING WITH DESTINY

WWW.BOLLYWOODBOARDS.COM

11

They travelled great distances to be together, broke through barriers to love one another but will destiny force them apart?

"Mahi wait up!" Anna ran after her and was finally able to stop her by the shoulder

"Anna I have to go" Mahi sounded terrified.

"What's wrong? I'll take you home. You don't look well"

"No it's okay I can manage" She pulled away and started walking again but suddenly stopped again. "Was that your friend Raj?"

"Oh, yea that was" Anna replied smiling.

"Tell him he's a jerk" Mahi spat and walked away as quickly as she could. Anna stood motionless and feeling confused. She then decided to run after Mahi to get to the bottom of this. Finally catching up to her again Anna tried to understand further.

"Mahi, please explain! I'm so confused"
"Anna please don't ask me to. Go ask Raj what he did!"

"Okay I'll ask him but you tell me what happened too" She wanted to know both sides of the story. She suspected something between Mahi and Raj now and her heart was beating fast. She couldn't control her breathing.

"I'll tell you some of it, but it was highly shameful for us!"

"I Understand Mahi, I won't judge, I will just listen"

"Do you want to know now?"
"If you have time now I'll come with you and we can talk"

"Sure"

Anna called Raj and told him that she was going to keep Mahi company and that she would meet up with him later on. The two girls decided to walk together at the city park.

"We used to live in America, my entire family...." She stopped and looked pained. Something changed in her eyes and she suddenly looked angry. "My family wanted me to get married and I decided to let them arrange it for me"

"You didn't have anyone in mind?" Anna said with a slight smile

"There was someone, but he wasn't interested, or so I thought"

Anna was confused now. "So what happened?"

Mahi told the story....

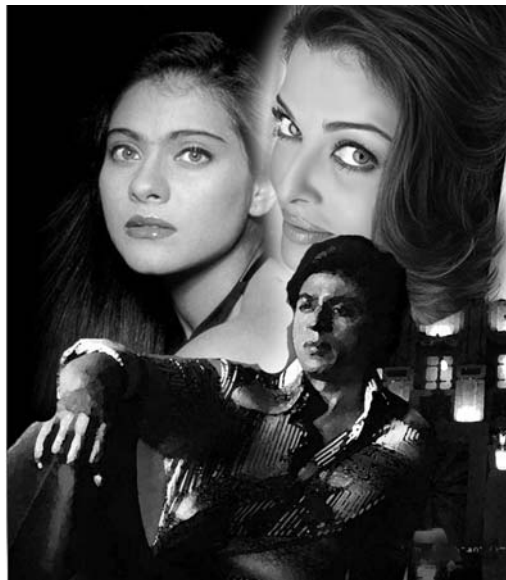
"Mahi, are you ready"
"Yes maa, are they here?"

"They will be here soon – let me put that on" Her mother reached out to fasten the necklace. "You look beautiful"

Mahi was taller than the usual Indian girl, fair and confident. She knew this guy

would like her, even though the one her heart desired for didn't.

"They're here" Mahi's sister Rhea called out. Mahi felt a rush of nervousness. This man could be her future husband and she would marry him to show that other jerk how good it could have been. It was not the correct



reason to marry but the love will grow, she thought.

Her mother guided her to the living room and sat her down. She felt her veil being lifted and there he was. Raj. She watched him in shock. What was he doing here? How? She had loved him for a long time. She had wanted him for a long time. He had never returned her advances. So how is he here now? She couldn't help but smile – She would win him finally! The formalities took place and both parties agreed. Raj and his father left. Mahi didn't know a lot about Raj but from the first time she saw him, she knew she wanted him to be the one. He hardly talked during the meetings. All the preparations happen quickly. It was the night of the wedding and everyone they knew would be there to watch her become one with him. She was ecstatic that night.

It was almost midnight when the call came. Raj had left. His father didn't know where he was. The wedding would have to be cancelled. He had left a note.

"I can't do this. It's a mess and I can't commit to something I'm not happy with"

"Oh god that's horrible Mahi!" Anna felt her heart twisting. She felt bad for Mahi but her insides ached with another feeling. Jealousy. He was going to marry someone else – he had agreed to it.

"We had to cancel the entire wedding and

face the shame of everyone. We lost a lot of money for the wedding and we were in debt. Raj was no where and I had to pick up the pieces."

"I'm so sorry Mahi" Anna didn't know what else to say

"I was so angry at him! We had to leave and come back. We couldn't face anyone. Rumours started, you know the rumours."

"Why would he do that!" Anna felt angry

"He's a heartless man" Mahi spat. "I hate him and everything about him" She was so angry and Anna didn't know what to say to calm her down.

"I'll talk to him"

"I have to go Anna, I don't want to talk about it anymore" with that she walked along the path faster, leaving Anna behind. Anna stopped walking and stood feeling the

breeze on her bare arms. She burst into tears feeling confused. Why hadn't he shared any of this with her? He said there was no one and there had been no one in his life. She walked slowly back down to the office car park.

Raj went home that night feeling uncomfortable. Mahi would surely have told Anna something. He feared Anna would hate him. He didn't want her to hate him – he didn't want her to love him. He felt angry and confused at the same time. Time to sleep it off, he thought.

Anna got home later than usual and her parents screamed at her. They were worried and she hadn't returned their calls. Her phone was in the car. She went to bed that night on an all time low. Sleep would be impossible that night so she decided to read. The next morning came and went. Anna felt the days rushing forward. She hadn't had the chance to talk to Raj, nor did she feel like it. She didn't want to hear anymore – she felt sick even knowing he had someone else. Did he love her? She knew she was selfish, Mahi had gone through so much and here Anna was thinking about herself.

Saturday arrived faster than Raj wanted it to arrive. He hadn't heard from Anna the entire week and he knew something was wrong. He dreaded seeing her today and wondered if she would even come. Raj waited for half an hour, she didn't come. He thought about leaving but the hope that she might come made him stay. He was scared of what she would say but he wanted to see her face.

Anna was debating on whether to go in or not. She wasn't sure how she would act if she saw him. In the end she got out of her car and went in.

"You're half an hour late" Raj said robotically. "We should get started"

She stood there watching him. She decided to let it go until the end of the lesson. It was hard but she would try. "Okay" she said without a hint of emotion.

He taught and she followed. She concentrated hard and did everything correctly. She avoided his eyes. He noticed her high concentration, not only with the dance steps but also with avoiding his gaze. It was hard to teach her while she was like this but he kept going. He was holding her in a partner dance position and he tilted her down. She lost her concentration and looked into his eyes, she lost it.

"Did u hold her like this too?" She asked icily. He almost let her go, hearing this but kept his concentration up. "What?"

"Nothing" she said pulling herself up and brushing herself off, of nothing in particular.

"You said, did you hold her like this too – who are you referring to?" He felt a surge of anger going through him.

A novel

By
Shanali Edirisinghe



"You know who I'm talking about – or were you going to get married to more than one person" She spat at him.

"Anna, what? I know, but –"
"Oh don't play innocent" She felt so angry at him. It hurt her to yell at him but she wanted him to hurt because she was burning.

"Anna, please don't yell –"
"You hurt her you know, you're just like other men!" she stepped away from him.

"Anna please don't say that – I have a reason"

"A reason for what? You abandoning your to-be wife or for lying to me when I asked you if you had had a lover" She felt she was being a bit unreasonable, she didn't know his reasoning for anything, but she was so hurt by it all.

"I have reasons for everything" He replied barely audible.

"So tell me!" She said viciously "Tell me your so called reasons"

"I can't"

"Oh you can't? You can't now? You have no reasons – you're just a pathetic man and a horrible person" She cried hearing her own piercing words. It hurt her to hurt him yet she couldn't stop. It was all coming out.

"Anna There's so much you don't know"
"Enlighten me then"
"I can't...."

"What can you do? Love someone, then leave them? Lie to me?"
"Stop Anna, for god sakes just stop – you have no idea...."

"OH? I have no idea? What do I not have an idea about? What's wrong with you!?"

He stormed up to her and grabbed her by the shoulders. "That I love you, dammit!!! You have NO idea about how much I love you" He said with such force that she watched him in shock. He let her go and stepped back rubbing his hands through his hair. He couldn't look at her.

to be continued