

“Wrong Turn” – A short story

“Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and sorry I could not travel both...” these lines from the poem “The road not taken” by **Robert Frost** seems to have a perfect match with my own life. Now at the age of 40 I understand the impact that a single choice can bring in one’s life. Choice and yes a choice indeed that at some point of time in my life made me happy but now make me regret for the same. I believe that I would have to regret for the rest of my life as I have no option to move back in life as I have left my young age long back. Yes, it was a choice made by me rather a decision which could have been easily avoided by taking the other option but that did not happen for me.

I was a brilliant student since my childhood and this had raised the expectations of my parents towards me. I used come first or second in every class. My parents felt proud for me and are the other relatives. Praise from teachers during annual meetings in school made my parents believe that one day their son would rise considerably high in career. Here, I think I need to give a brief or description of my parents. My father works as a clerk in a government funded school whereas my mother is a simple housewife. I had come to know from my father that he wanted to become engineer in his life but due to financial crisis and family burden he could not fulfill his dream to become an engineer. This has made him to expect that I would fulfill his dream by pursuing a career in engineering.

The salary that my father used to draw was sufficient to run the family but the same fell short when it came to support my studies at higher levels. The normal working hours of my father was 10:00 am – 5:30 pm but I could hardly remember him coming before 9:00 pm since I was in class nine. My father used to work overtime in school and also used to work as a freelancer for some of the Chartered Accountants’ firms to earn those extra bucks that could help in supporting my studies and ambitions. On the other hand, I have seen my mother to provide continuous support to the family who would regularly awake at 5:00 am in the morning and then get into all the daily works like making breakfast, preparing meals, washing, cleaning and many others and this was irrespective of the weather conditions.

However, since my childhood I always wanted to be a wildlife photographer. In fact, photography had become my passion since I was 12. I had also completed a short-term certificate course in photography from an institute while I was in class 8. I dreamt of becoming a photographer at any cost but my destiny did not allow me to pursue my dream. It was in 1994-95 when I had just completed my high school exams that my father expressed his wish to make me an engineer. He cited all the hardships that he & my mother had taken all these years for me. Yes, all those are true but everyone has his own dream. My father's logic was that becoming an engineer can help in mitigating all financial problems and would also raise my standard of living and status in the society. My parents could not understand my dream. This might be due to generation gap. Parents were looking more convinced about conventional career like engineering and could not think photography as a career. That day I could not sleep for the whole night as the next day I was supposed to enroll for a funded program on professional photography. I tried to express my views to my parents but failed to do so in front of the emotional arguments placed by my parents.

I did not go for the photography programme as I choose to become an engineer. Today, I am engineer working for a software development company. I have been able to fulfill the dreams of my parents which I had considered as my own ones but could not pursue the actual dream of mine of becoming a wild life photographer. Today, I have money but without having sufficient time to spend those money. Long working hours, official tours, frequently staying away from family and working even during holidays have become a part of my daily life. Today, I feel that my life could have been different if that I had gathered the courage to express my dream to my parents. Today, I work to earn money but I do not like the work. May I could have been enjoying working as a professional wild-life photographer and that work could have become a play for me. Yes, today I regret for taking the career of engineering but I think people will praise my sacrifice for the family but I still regret.

“I shall be telling this with a sigh

Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I...

I took the one less travelled by, And that has made all the difference.”- Robert Frost