

# THE MEETING

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**DEDICATED TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE  
MENTALLY ILL, AND WHO TREAT  
THEM WITH THEIR KIND HEARTS.**

**I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY DEAR  
TEACHER, MRS SAMANMALEE WHO  
MORTIVATED ME AND HELPED ME  
IMMENCELY.**

## Preface

The primary goal of the current educational system is to mould a productive citizen and a caring family member who is equipped with knowledge and skills. The main responsibility of the school is to identify and recognize children's talents, as well as to sharpen their skills to meet the needs of the nation and the world.

Our Alma Mater is constantly guiding and assisting children who are creative. This project has been an ongoing process at our school for many years, particularly in terms of writing books. Many skilled and enthusiastic young writers participated in this exercise for years, producing novice writers to field of literature. We regard this as a great victory and a national need at this hour.

To continue this effort, we have adopted digital technologies and an e-book project this year. I am confident that this unique event provided youngsters with valuable experience and challenges that will benefit them in the future.

The Ministry of Education has hailed the project as an important step toward motivating young authors in schools. As principal of Mahamaya Girls' College, I am grateful to all of the students throughout the country who contributed to this endeavor. I commend and applaud all of the young authors of these-books for their perseverance and devotion in this difficult task.

I would like to thank our school management committee, employees, parents, for my students, administrators, and teachers from other schools who encouraged students to take part in this worthwhile effort.

Ms Shashikala Senadheera

Principal

Mahamaya Girls College - kandy

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# **The Meeting.**

This is a story, which happened to me couple of years ago.

It was much unexpected and strange, I still remember it as yesterday.

To begin with, I have to tell you that both my parents were working at the psychiatry unit of Kurunegala hospital.

As a small kid I used to visit the psychiatry unit frequently.

Although I visited the unit frequently, I actually was afraid of the ward.

I had a strange and peculiar feeling about the patients.

When I visit the ward most of my relatives and neighbors, would ask in a funny voice, ' Baba are you also going there'?

So I thought it was a strange and dangerous place.

But because of the incident which I am going to tell you, I am happy to say that I am no more afraid of my parent's work place.

It was my school vacation.

Early morning I got dressed up, I hated to stay at home, although I was afraid of the place, I enjoyed going there with my parents. So we went to the ward. As usual my favourite two dolls were with me. I used to carry them with me everywhere possible.

In the ward I started playing with the dolls.

My parents were busy with the patients.

Then next thing I remember was a strange set of eyes looking in to me.

Then I woke up from the dream I was having with my dolls.

When I look around I realized that I am at a far end of the ward alone. I wanted to shout, but I could not with fear.

I felt my heart pounding, my two dolls were on the floor, and the stranger picked up the two dolls and handed them back to me.

Gradually my fear lessened and I started talking with her. She asked me various things, but suddenly our conversation was disturbed, another one came and started singing and dancing around me. Then other people also joined. All of the sudden the ward became a musical show.

Everybody in the ward panicked with this. I heard a nurse coming running and shouting at me “ Baba what are you doing” . Then I saw my mother staring at me, with fear and anger.

So we had to end our conversation abruptly.

Strangely, my mother didn't scold me on that day. The whole ward was talking about me and my new friend. They were laughing at me but I was warned that going into the ward alone like I did could be dangerous sometimes. So, I realized that although I feared, the patients in the ward are same as we are.

There are not strange or peculiar, just ill people, as my father would always tell me.

Couple of days later I again went to the ward. This time I took some cakes with me. All the people at the ward enjoyed the cakes.

I was allowed to talk with my friend.

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She told me that, she had a daughter just like me and unlike me they had no father.

I remember I was very sad to hear this, as little girl I remember me questioning my father, why didn't they have a father?

I am a more grown up girl now and am able to understand things better as my father would tell me.

So now I realize that there is nothing strange and peculiar about Psychiatry wards.

The patients are just like you and me, and they are mentally ill, as my parents

would tell, but I did not feel any difference about my friend, who was also mentally ill.

So this is the end finally, I would like to tell you what my parents tell about their patients.

They always tell me that their patients are discriminated just because

they are sick and this is very wrong.

It is more in our country, they tell me sometimes even they get discriminated because they treat mentally ill.

I don't fully understand about this, but I just wanted to share it with you.

But I can certainly tell you  
that my friend was just like  
you and me.



### Afterword

As modern technology permeates the social and economic arenas, students tend to distance themselves from the creative process, relying more and more on technological tools. To reduce this risk and help aspiring young writers produce their own books, I sought and presented a research proposal to the Ministry of Education in 2014. It was a fantastic opportunity for children to showcase their enthusiasm and knowledge. The students of Mahamaya Girls' College achieved a record for the most books written, paving the way for a new level of innovation.

The e-book project will enable the students to reach international readers, and I am confident that they have gained new experiences and challenges that will enable them to face the future with resolve.

I wish all of the young writers the best of luck in their future endeavors

Senevirathna Mahalekm

Founder of Books Publishing Project Among School Children

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