

Miles & Smiles

Dhruv to Maya on WhatsApp: And again – Happy Anniversary! Really sorry about this. I'll make it up when I'm back ☺

Maya to Dhruv on WhatsApp: ☺ Sure. Safe journey.

Flight Announcement

Ali: It's your tenth wedding anniversary, right?

Dhruv: Hmm...

Ali: That's kind of special, man? I think you are supposed to gift each other some kind of metal or something. Some tin or copper?

Dhruv: Yeah, but it's not like that with us.

Ali: Hey, you are spending your wedding anniversary with me and you are not even gifting her anything?

Dhruv: But Ali, unlike you, we are not the couple that is into this symbolic anniversary thing.

Ali: Bro, I know that. But you know ten is a pretty big symbol?

Dhruv: Yes, yes I do, unlike you, Maya gets it. She always gets it. Plus I am not out there partying or having fun with people. I am working and it's a high-stress job and I am doing it for us. She knows that, she gets it. Ali, I am missing my anniversary too.

Ali: I understand that, and Maya might be the most reasonable person in the world. All I am saying is that a gift won't hurt. .

*Dhruv: I know, I know, I get it. I am not sure about tin and aluminum but a diamond always works. Which is why, brother, I have planned something.
A diamond heart.
It's tacky.*

Ali: Yes, a little bit.

Dhruv: Yes, you are right. She will also say the same.

Ali (*leaning in*): Hey, what is that? Hey, that's nice. Balls... I like it, diamond balls. No, those are like sugar cubes.

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Dhruv: Ya.

Ali: Oh man! Brilliant.

Dhruv: Whatever it is, I'm getting it for her.

Dhruv: *But if she doesn't like it, it will become worse.*

Ali: *My friend, just put it in the tea and surprise her..*

Dhruv: *If I keep listening to you, I'll surely get divorced on my anniversary day. No, Ali, that's it. I don't want to hear anymore.*

Ali: Oh look! . I love these public dramas. Just wait for the screaming match to unfold now.

Flight announcement in the background

Dhruv: You are a weird guy, somebody's misery amuses you.

Ali: Yes! Once I got so lucky, I was sitting next to this couple in a plane, they had this one device, one headphone in one ear, the other in one. Very cute couple. Now, the guy wanted to watch Game of Thrones (Series) and the girl wanted to watch Dear Zindagi (Movie).

Dhruv: Oh ho..

Ali: Bro, she yelled at him so much, it was like at one end there is death and at the other, there is life. It was crazy. It was so entertaining that things escalated to the cribs about mother-in-law. It was so crazy!

Dhruv: How do you find these situations entertaining? *(rolling eyes)* That's just ... *(Turns to the couple)* What do you think is happening here?

Ali: See the guy,...

Dhruv: Don't point, don't point.

Ali: That guy has just glanced at a woman. He has that sheepish look on his face, and she is super violent. She's going to hit him right now, don't look, don't look.

Dhruv: Wow! *(The woman suddenly gives the man a hug.)* And she's rewarding him with a hug? Great job, Sherlock!

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Ali: Then there is only one explanation... *(whispering)* he's married to someone else. I'm telling you, he's married to someone else and they're off on a weekend somewhere. 100 percent.

Dhruv: You're a terrible person!

Ali: I can bet my life on it.

Dhruv: How're we ever going to know?

Ali: You don't think I can ask him?

Dhruv: Don't ask him.

Ali: I can very easily ask him.

Dhruv: Are you going to ask him whether they are going on a fun weekend?

Ali: Do you know, I was the one who found Ankit and Ankita together at the water fountain.

Dhruv: Yes, I know.

Ali: You know, right?

Ali: I can ask him.

Dhruv: Alright, easy...

Ali: Excuse me, Sir? I just ...

Mr. Sinha: *(Annoyed, lost in his phone)* I'm sorry, I don't need a credit card.

Ali: Credit card? No, no ...

Mr. Sinha: *(Looking up)* Or a loan either.

Ali: No, I'm not a...do I look like a salesman...?

Mr. Sinha *(Quizzically)*: Timeshare vacation?

Dhruv *(Interrupting)*: I'm really sorry about my friend Sir, please don't mind.

Ali: It's just that we were wondering about your little celebration. That's all.

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Mr. Sinha: I'm really sorry. I thought you were trying to push a sale. I misbehaved, the coffee is on me. 2 more coffees, please.

Dhruv: Thank you.

Ali: We were wondering what the celebration might be? You guys look so happy.

Mr. Sinha: *(Smiling)* It's our anniversary. *(Looks back at his phone)*. India lost another wicket.

Dhruv smiles smugly at Ali, scoring a win. Ali wishes them a happy anniversary. The three walk back to where they were, close to Mrs. Sinha.

Dhruv: Yes, it's make or break at the Kotla (cricket stadium) tomorrow.

Mr. Sinha: The problem is that our middle order isn't holding up....

Ali: But Dhoni's (cricketer) going to fire!

Mr. Sinha: You sure? You think so?

Ali: Yeah, yeah... sure. 100 percent.

Mr. Sinha: Because I think that if they're going to do it, then it's just (mumbles)...
Keep the change....(mumbles)

Mr. Sinha: Alright, guys! Some coffee for you....

Dhruv: Sir, I'm Dhruv. Thanks for the coffee.

Ali: I'm Ali!

Mr. Sinha: Come, I'll introduce you to my wife.

Ali: Oh lovely!

Mr. Sinha: Anniversary wife!

Mr. Sinha: Come on guys..

Dhruv: Hello!

Mrs. Sinha: Hi!

Sits down next to his wife. Dhruv and Ali in their original seats, too.

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Mr. Sinha: This is...

Dhruv: Dhruv!

Ali: Ali!

Mrs. Sinha: Shalu!

Ali: Happy Anniversary. We were just talking to your husband about the cricket scores.

Mrs. Sinha: Oh, is that right? I see your vacation has already begun with cricket.

Mr. Sinha: No no... (avoids answering)

Mrs. Sinha: I'm just kidding. Where are you guys off to?

Dhruv: Delhi. I believe we're all on the same flight.

Mrs. Sinha: Yes. The same flight that takes 20 - 40 minutes before it can land!

Dhruv: (Laughter).. You sound like a frequent flier.

Mrs. Sinha: Yes, far too frequent for my liking.

Mr. Sinha: She flies for BelAir. Cabin crew.

Ali: Oh wow!

Mrs. Sinha: Which is why, I wasn't very happy about planes and airports and ... I'm kidding! I'm excited about the surprise!

Mr. Sinha: Hey! Someone you know!

Mrs. Sinha: (*Spots someone in the distance*). Oh Rina!! Hey Rina!

Rina: I'm good. How are you?

Mr. Sinha: I'll tell you something interesting. This entire trip is like a treasure hunt for her. And listen, please don't mention cricket in front of her.

Ali: I'm sorry Sir, I didn't know.

Mr. Sinha: That's a complete no (with her)!

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Mr. Sinha: in fact on this trip, I've booked some train rides, boat rides and a few treks too. Kept the flights to an absolute minimum. She hates flights. In fact, the first clue is going to come on this flight with her pre-booked meal. Her colleagues are involved in this plan.

Ali: Man! That's like, the first time ever that someone is going to enjoy an airline meal.

Dhruv: My God! That sounds like a lot of planning went into it.

Mr. Sinha (*Making sure his wife is out of earshot*): Yes, a few months, easily. Thanks. The biggest trouble was to get her to fly.

Dhruv: Hmm..

Mr. Sinha: She just hates flying when she's not working. Takes a lot of cajoling, just get her to the airport.

Ali: But all this planning must've required a travel agent?

Mr. Sinha: No, I did it myself. Of course, friends and family helped... and a lot of secrecy. In fact, at one point I was so secretive, that she was sure that I was having an affair. Just look at that smile on her face. That will make it worth it all!

Ali: I mean, the most meaningful gift I've given a girlfriend is an air-fryer! But I don't know why she dumped me?

Mr. Sinha: (*Smiling*) Those things usually don't work. You can try a spa voucher next time.

Ali: Genius! Dhruv, take some notes.

Dhruv: I know, I'm taking notes. Really, I'm supremely impressed. I mean, how do even come up with a plan like this?

Mr. Sinha: You just have to learn to notice what they want...Mrs Sinha!
(*Just then Mrs. Sinha returns, anxiously checking her bag, pocket and seat for something. Mr. Sinha calmly hands her her boarding pass.*)

Mrs. Sinha: Tell me that you have my boarding pass!

Mr Sinha: I just want to check, how do you manage to be a frequent flyer day in and day out, but when you're with me, something happens!

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Mrs. Sinha: I know right? It's like I have some kind of brain freeze when I'm not operating a flight. (*Turning to Dhruv, curious*) So guys! What else is up, apart from cricket?

Dhruv smiles awkwardly.

Ali (*breaking in*): Well, what's up is that he's spending his tenth wedding anniversary with me.

Mrs. Sinha: Uh-oh ...

Dhruv: It's no big deal.

Mrs. Sinha: It is a big deal! Tell him!

Mr Sinha: Yeah....it is a big deal. Ten is a big number.

Ali: Hey! That's what I said!

Dhruv: I know, I understand it is. Lately, I've been busy and almost missing from from my own life.

Mrs. Sinha: (*absently*) That sounds like Rahul...doesn't it?

Dhruv: (*Looking at Mr. Sinha*): Rahul?

Mrs. Sinha: My ex-husband. That line just about sums him up. He was always absent from his own life.

Mr. Sinha: Give him a break, please.

Mrs. Sinha: You give me a break, please! And play the jealous husband card and stop defending my ex-husband.

Mr Sinha: Alright! I'll try.

Mr. Sinha: (*Trying to lighten the mood*) And listen Mr. Tenth Anniversary, it's not too late yet. Ten is for tin they say, right?

Mrs. Sinha: Aluminum?

Mr Sinha: Aluminum!

Ali: I'm sorry, but can I ask you one more question?

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Mrs Sinha: Yeah?

Ali: I promise I'll leave you in peace after this.

Mr Sinha: Alright.

Ali: I was just wondering, how did the two of you meet? Because I'm always thinking about how I will find (air quotes) "the one"?

Mr. Sinha: The one? Well, Rahul, she and I, knew each other in college. Then life took over. After my father passed away, I moved cities and took charge of the house. Had to take care of my mother and two younger brothers.

Mrs. Sinha: And ah...well.. Rahul and I were just a matter of time. After some time his absence just became so normal, that his presence didn't matter at all. You know what I mean? So something snapped and fortunately for me I was busy and my work was just taking off (*indicating a plane taking off*) – a pun that Manoj hates but I love using it...

Mr. Sinha rolls his eyes exaggeratedly

Ali: And then, obviously the two of you met later ... after all those years

Mrs. Sinha: Hmm....that is a very interesting story.

Mr Sinha: Which she loves to narrate.

Mrs Sinha: Yes, so I was operating a flight. It was a horror of a flight. There were passengers everywhere just freaking out.

AIRLINE SOUNDS AND A FLIGHT SOUND

MRS SINHA ENACTS THE FLIGHT

Mrs. Sinha: Sir please! No, you can't go to the toilet right now! The seat belt sign is on. Please fasten your seatbelts..

Mrs. Sinha: Madam, I'll get you water, please keep your kid on your lap. Please! The seat belt sign is on. Ma'am, please relax!

Mrs Sinha: And then I saw him! Manoj! Manu from college! I used to really like him. So I said, why not go and say hello to him?

Recognizes MANOJ

Mrs. Sinha: Excuse me, Sir.

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Mr. Sinha: Please don't disturb me!

Mrs Sinha: No, Sir!

MR Sinha: Don't you see the DND?

Mrs Sinha: I can't believe this! He doesn't recognize me. I have the same hairstyle!
This is ridiculous!

Mrs. Sinha: Sir! St. Xavier's hostel, room 314. I'll ask someone else to take your order
Mr. Manu, thank you!

Mrs Sinha: He deserved it!

Mr. Sinha: Shalu!? Shalu Malhotra?

(Back to normal)

Mr. Sinha: I did behave like a moron.

Mrs Sinha: Yes, you did.

Ali: That's an amazing story and clearly it ended happily, so congratulations!

Mr. Sinha: Well, after the flight where I behaved like a moron, we got back in touch,
picked up our friendship and I actually surprised myself by asking her to marry me
(*Squeezes her hand.*)

Mrs. Sinha: No, you surprised me! For one month, everyday, he sent me flowers, he
wrote me poems, he invited me home for dinner, he even cooked dinner for me,
something I know, he hates to do.

Mr. Sinha: (*Fondly*) She is telling you that I exhausted her into saying yes.

Mrs. Sinha: (*Holding his hand*) Yes, you did actually. It was just wonderful. I know
I'm sort of no frills person. But this man, managed to break through that defense and
I have to admit, now, I enjoy that indulgence. I really do.

*Boarding announcement. This is the final announcement for Flight 6E621 is now ready
to board.*

Mrs. Sinha: And that's our boarding call!

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Mr Sinha: Of course.

Mrs Sinha: Could you just check the boarding pass.

Mr Sinha: It's all here.

Mrs Sinha: No, just check once more.

Mr. Sinha: Checked it, Shalu.

Mrs. Sinha: Just do it for me. Please.

Mr. Sinha (*Looking inside the folder. Notices another card in there.*) This is your boarding card, this iswhat's this?....Shalu. These look like cricket match tickets for Kotla!

Mrs. Sinha: (*Beaming*) Happy anniversary, Mr. Sinha.

Mr. Sinha: But ... how? How did you manage this?

Mrs. Sinha: Why? Only you can surprise me?

Mr. Sinha: Shalu and...and these are two tickets.

Mrs Sinha: Hmm

Mr Sinha: And you're going to watch the cricket match with me?

Mrs. Sinha: Of course, it's a good day to start! And like they say, if you can't beat them, join them.

Dhruv: Wow!

Mr. Sinha: I just want to shout!

Mrs Sinha: Please go ahead!

Mr Sinha: I need to shout. I'm going to Kotla to watch cricket! This is unbelievable! This is amazing!

MRs Sinha: That is a VIP box ticket.

Mr Sinha: This is amazing, maybe ten years! Maybe ten years people!

They hold hands and share a side hug.

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Mr. Sinha: (*Addressing Dhruv*) Don't forget to surprise your wife.

Dhruv: Yeah...it's just that Maya is not very big on surprises.

Mrs. Sinha: Oh! Everybody's big on surprises. Look at him, he's screaming like a kid in a candy store.

Mr Sinha: I really want to know, how did you manage this?

Mrs. Sinha: Bye. (*Converses while walking away*)

Dhruv is struck by this thought

Ali: They are really a cute couple!

Dhruv: Yes, they are!

Ali: Let's go?

Dhruv: Ali, what am I doing with my life? I don't have time. Maya doesn't like surprises. The truth is, if you spend long enough time with a person, little by little, you slowly just stop paying attention. Why can't I surprise my wife? She's my wife!

Ali: Yeah, that's what I have been saying to you. Give her those diamond sugar cubes.

Dhruv: Brother, right now, the best present I can give Maya, is to start with at least being present in my own life.

Ali: Lets go? We'll miss our flight.

Dhruv: No, Ali. You'll miss your flight. I'm going home. You'll handle it, right? Handle it!

Ali: Ok

Dhruv: I'm taking a cab.

Ali: Maya. It totally worked, the plan worked! Dhruv realizes. And those actors that you hired were amazing! They were fabulous....what? What do you mean you changed the plan? So, you didn't hire any actors? But then who were those guys?

Maya you don't understand what just happened....

This is like...this is should be in the movies....(*fades away*)

END

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