A Candle's Breeze

About one week back, as I was busy assembling milestone information to be included in Cybage quarterly performance report – a telephone ring interrupted me. HR was on the other side. We had lost one more in the family – young Tarkeshwar Gupta had fallen to the road fury earlier that morning.

My immediate thought was no thought – just numbness. That was quickly followed by a few moments of denial – a 3rd tragedy to hit Cybage family in the past 12 months! The probability just didn't add up right. The shock waves soon tapered into a sudden rush of confused thoughts – the quarterly performance draft on the screen grew hazy. What comments to pen down here? That Cybage business excelled so and so in the previous quarter, and then add obituary of the lost Cybagian as one of the bulleted points? Is that the level of tribute a fallen hero deserves, and then the business just brushes the tragedy aside and goes on? Who was Tarkeshwar after all? How sincerely can you even mourn for someone that you never had the opportunity to really know?

In a daze, I toggled the screen and dug deep into appraisal repository, to get to know a being called Tarkeshwar by browsing over comments by his colleagues. And then I discovered that there was nothing much to discover – he was a young fresh kid who hadn't been long enough in the organization to have undergone a single proper appraisal! It is then that the magnitude of tragedy sunk into me… *a beautiful candle blown out long before the logical exhaustion of its fuel.* My gloom has been shared across the spectrum of Cybage – our Intranet is flooded with obituary messages. If such deep sadness has stirred in us for a soul who for many was just a little more than an employee ID, one shudders to imagine what his parents and family must be going through.

Of course life must go on… an organization and society will figure out ways to extend support to the family; police and lawyers will be at work to bring guilty to the book; city municipal corporations will feel rattled at one more statistical evidence; executive and HR managers will insist on the wisdom of safe driving to preserve our sacred lives. Then gradually things will become better, life will return to normalcy, and Tarkeshwar will slowly fade away in the forgotten corner of our brain cells.

Unfortunately the business too, however inconsequential in cosmic scheme of things, needs to go on. The quarterly performance reports cannot take a pause. We will never know if the present quarterly report met Tarkeshwar's expectations, or why he chose Cybage to pursue his dreams, or whether we lived up to his aspirations over the last year. But one thing we do know – Cybage will forever remain indebted to him for dedicating the most precious year of his life to us. His memories will reside in our hearts, and not a forgotten part of our brains. And his rightfully belonged place is in the smiley heavens, and not a bulleted point in a company's performance report.

Every organization will do well to remember with gratitude – behind the fanciest of balance sheets, there is sweat & soul of a real human entity who did its part to make it all happen…