

MAYYA

by Tom Mathew
Illustrations by Pamela Navarro

First Edition

Copyright © 2020 by Tom Mathew

All rights reserved under domestic and international
copyright conventions.

Published in the United States by Trademark Universal Press, a
division of Trademark Universal, Inc.

First Edition

ISBN: 978-1-942576-40-2

Manufactured and printed with pride in the United States of
America.

The views and opinions expressed here are those of
exclusively of Tom Mathew and do not represent the views
of Trademark Universal Press or Trademark Universal, Inc.

Trademark Universal Press
-New York-

Chapter 1

Maya picked up Oberon's shirt and sniffed it. His scent was all over. She breathed in deeply through her nose as she wiped her face with it. A hand tugged at her.

"Get your own, Maya," Obe said.

Embarrassed, she laughed out loud. "Sorry, Obe."

His smell was on her face. She pulled a dangling hair off her chin and giggled. It was his. She looked around and then gently folded the follicle and placed it into her rear pocket. She pulled out her pocket mirror to see if there were any other hairs on her face. Looking into the reflection, she observed Obe putting on his shirt.

The sun highlighted his back. The sinews of his latissimus dorsi gently flowed like the tide into his abdominals. His belly hair. His shorts. Obe pulled his shirt over his head. Maya watched as it hugged his shoulders. Then he pulled it over his back and tucked it into his shorts. She felt her heavy heart beats and she let out a deep sigh.

Obe turned around to look at her. "Are you ok?" he asked.

"Allergies," she said matter-of-factly.

He laughed. She blushed and turned away from his glance.

"You got to head back into the house, little lady," Obe exclaimed. "It's hot out here." Bushels of apples lay at his feet. He picked them up and walked ahead of her to put them into the Farmer's pick-up truck.

"You want a lift back to the house," he enquired.

Suddenly Maya's voice got hoarse and she was speechless. She nodded "no." Obe laughed, started the Ford F-150 and drove off to the nursing home. Maya walked the two acres back to her home. She felt warm and happy. Her face was flushed. Her toes tingled and suddenly time stopped.

Hours later she awoke in her bed. "Where am I?" she asked.

"Home, silly," Karma stated.

"What time is it?" she asked.

"8:00 pm," the Farmer replied as he took off his hat and shoes as he entered his home. He saw his daughter in bed and Lollipop sitting by her bed. "What's up?"

"What happened?" Maya asked her father.

The Farmer looked at his wife, Chutney. "Obe brought you in. He said you just collapsed walking home," Chutney stated. Her mother had a large Pyrex dish with warm water in it. "This is a compress for your head."

"Heat exhaustion," whispered Chutney to farmer.

"Oberon? Where is he?" Maya asked.

"Oberon? So formal," snickered Karma. The boy made kissing sounds with his lips and ran out of the house.

"Oberon?" said the Farmer. "We all call him Obe, honey. He hates his name."

"It's a lovely name," Maya said dreamily.

"We used to call him that. His girlfriend," Chutney said.

"His fiancée," Farmer interjected.

"His fiancée, Titania, started calling him Obe and he asked that we all call him Obe. So we all call him Obe," Chutney stated.

The Farmer chuckled, "that was years ago, Maya."

"Daddy, how do you know if a boy likes you?" asked Maya.

The Farmer looked at his wife sardonically. "Time for me to check on Karma." He looked at his wife. "I believe this is your department." He kissed his wife. She kissed him back and rubbed his left arm with her right hand.

"Thank you, dear," she smiled.

"Oberon is so handsome," Chutney said.

"Oh Mom. He is just so beautiful. Such a diesel!" said Maya.

"Choo! Choo! Choo!" chimed in Karma from the outside window.

"Karma!" scolded Chutney.

"Yes, Mom?" Karma asked meekly.

"Mind your own business. Thank you," his mother said matter-of-factly.

"Yes," said Karma.

"Excuse me?" the Farmer asked.

"Yes, m'am," Karma said.

"Thank you, son," said the Farmer.

"Oberon is twenty five years old. You do know that Maya," her mother enquired.

"So Abraham married Sarah. He was ten years older," Maya insisted.

"OK," Chutney diplomatically said. Her mother quickly realized she had to take a different tack.

"You do know he has a girlfriend, Titania. She lives in Gringoville, on the other side of Golden Mountain."

"The rich side," yelled Karma.

"Please be quiet Karma," Chutney quietly requested.

"Bye Karma. Now where were we Mommy?" asked Maya.

"Maya, let's talk," her mother replied. Chutney went and closed the bedroom door.

"Hey," Karma exclaimed.

"Karma, son, please take Lollipop out and give Maya and me a little time to talk," Chutney inquired.

The Farmer quickly picked up Karma and they ran off into the orchard. "Come on, monster."

"Bye, Maya," said Karma.

"Boys are hard to understand," Chutney said. She closed the door. She came to her bedside and rested her hands in Maya's hands. Her mother gently clasped her daughter's fingers.

"Men are no easier to understand. I know that you are not a virgin so it is not sex that you are asking about," Chutney said.

Maya nodded in agreement.

"When a boy likes you, he looks at you. If you have not seen him for a while, he will wear brand new sneakers. He will try to figure out your favorite colors from your friends and try to wear something you like. No, let me correct myself. Something you will notice.

"Oberon is in love with Titania. He is a nice boy," Chutney said as she squeezed her daughter's hands gently.

"Man!" exclaimed Maya.

"Man. And when he finishes culinary school which is next year, he and Titania are to be wed.

You know her father owns a wedding hall in Gringoville," exclaimed Chutney.

"Yes, Mommy," Maya said in frustration. "And she is so gorgeous."

"Envy is just starting in you. This is an emotion that you have to learn to control. It will destroy you as it is responsible for the destruction of countless civilizations.

You do not know who you are yet. Sixteen is a hard time for anyone.

Because it is a time when you believe your eyes. Your brother will be sixteen one day as well. He will also have a hard time.

It took me years to control my innate jealousy. Dad and I got married because we had similar goals. We complemented each other.

Marriage brings out the opposites in a man and also in a woman. We come together and perpetuate a family. To become a successful family, a man becomes more feminized. He sublimates his ego to husband a family. And the woman becomes more masculine. She has to as she is so fragile and marriage enables girls to express themselves as women. She gets stronger as she is the foundation of the household. She holds the flower that is man. Properly nourished the flower blooms and attracts the bees which perpetuate the genetics of the flowers.

Here in Golden Mountain, the opposite occurs. The porcelain that is the material of a woman can easily shatter. Narcotics and the absence of love in so many families causes pain. Ultimately, ignorance is perpetuated in so many kids. Thus, the endless calamity, poverty abandonment and crime we see here in Mojave County.

You are sixteen. Soon boys will notice you. Also men. We do not learn about life and relationships from our parents," Chutney said.

"Huh," Maya retorted.

"The biggest mistake I ever made was to over focus on my success. When I realized that I learned more from my mistakes, I was able to humble myself. That humility enabled me to accept your father and to trust him.

Dad and I trust you to make the right decisions."
said Chutney

"Mom? How do I know if a boy likes me?"
Maya asked.

Chutney smiled at her charge. "Usually, they say hello," her mother whispered loudly and smiled.

Chapter 2

A week had passed. The Farmer went over to the Magic Rug and woke up Lollipop. They ambled outside to reconnoiter the farm. Maya was outside staring at the clouds.

"Dad. May I ask you a question?" enquired Maya.

"Heavens," the Farmer sarcastically remarked.

"Seriously," she stated.

"Is this one of your girl issues?" he asked while making quotation marks in the sky. He looked at her quizzically. "Did you look it up in the publication "Our Bodies, Our Selves" by the Boston Women's Health Collective? Mom and I got that book to help you find things on your own, privately, without looking it up on the all seeing internet. If you did not do so, you need to talk to the school nurse or Mom."

"Dad!" she yelled at the Farmer.

"OK. OK. OK." He sat down next to his daughter and asked, "What's up?"

"How do you know a boy likes you?" Maya asked.

Embarrassed the Farmer replied, "You need to talk to your mother about this."

"Dad!" she yelled.

"OK. OK. OK." He salubriously said, "Well. Maya, love never runs smoothly."

"Huh. What does that mean?" she asked her father.

"Do you like him or does he like you?" the Farmer asked.

"I don't know," she replied.

"We are not talking about Obe are we?"

"Obe? No, silly," Maya answered. "At the Ran Rold Country Club, there is this guy with tattoos..."

The Farmer sarcastically interrupted, "that narrows it down to 100,000 men in Golden Mountain."

"Dad. Stop! He is always by the courts when I play," she said, "and I think he likes me."

"Coincidence," the Farmer replied.

"And there's this guy at the beach," she retorted.

"Is he there only when you are there?" the Farmer asked.

"No!" Maya carped.

"Honey, take it easy. You are sixteen."

"What does that mean?" she asked.

The Farmer spoke softly to his daughter Maya. "Boys look like red balloons at this time in your life. The good looking ones look like blimps. If you're attracted to any of them, they look like skyscrapers."

"Huh?" she responded.

He continued, "You have telescopes for eyes. Every boy looks like Jupiter, Saturn or the sun."

"Dad, you are making fun of me. Aren't you?" she asked.

"I am being serious. You like them. You think they are attractive. Suddenly everything takes over," the Farmer answered.

"What is everything?" Maya asked.

"Sensory overload," he answered.

"What is that?" she asked.

"Your blood pressure rises at the same time your pupils dilate. You start breathing faster. Your tongue enlarges. The confidence you project around nerds at piano recitals disappears around these perfect bodies," he replied.

"How do you know all this?"

"I was sixteen once," the Farmer said matter-of-factly. "Mom has pictures of herself when she was young. She had a beach perfect body. So athletic. Bronzed.

Can you imagine her with me at 16? Impossible. Chutney from Museum Row with the Farmer. I laugh as I would never have the guts to say even hello to her then."

The Farmer gazed over his farm with Maya. "Look at the beautiful barren wilderness I brought her too, decades ago. It took God's grace and years of hard work to make this farm productive.

Love is not something that you find Maya. That's an emotion that finds you," the Farmer said.

"Get out," she remarked.

"You'll be at a baseball field somewhere. Minding your business. That Afro-Caribbean voodoo comes out of nowhere and just hits you.

Few of us can understand human beings. Even fewer can comprehend the human heart.

This is not India. Nor is it England. Our civilization is much more simpler and flexible. A man is lucky to have a wife. It's

a blessing to have a husband and children. I am telling you that," the Farmer said.

He put his fingers under her chin and tickled her. She laughed softly and moved her head away like she did as an infant in the bassinet. The Farmer smiled. "Maya is there someone you ..," the Farmer was about to ask.

Maya interrupted him. "No, silly."

"Mom can help you. You are a flower. You have to attract the bees," the Farmer giggled.

"Wait, Mom said that man is the flower," she interjected.

"We are all flowers in God's garden. Mom is right. She is talking, however, about the man who will one day be your husband.

Right now, I think you want to learn how to be attractive to boys."

"How so?" she asked

"Good manners helps. Don't curse unless you want to attract vulgar boys," he stated.

"That matters?" Maya asked.

"I used to be a boy. Don't be jealous of fast girls in high school. You do not want to know the horrible things that go on in their lives that enables them to have all star batting averages when boys take the field.

Don't be fooled by flashy boys either. All of it is their step father's cabbage. They will walk all over you so they can brag to their locker room buddies how they got their way with you.

I am human. I have a heart. You have a heart; it is not made of plastic. When it breaks it cannot be glued back together.

Our world thinks what goes on in the privacy of a bedroom is important. It is not public information.

No book or seer talks about jealousy," the Farmer exclaimed.

"Why?" Maya asked.

"They want you to use all those chemicals and buy all these expensive things. Then your peers get jealous and look to undermine you.

None of the things you will ever buy will bring you happiness," he said.

"I do not care about any of that," she stated.

"Talk to Mom about things you can do about your appearance," the Farmer advised.

"Look at Oberon and Titania. They look like they are made for each other," Maya stated.

"God bless them. That isn't your life," her father stated.

"How?" Maya asked.

"Make a plan. Be honest with yourself. Talk to Mom and Dad. Maybe we can help in the future," he advised.

"Don't be scared about growing up. I made thousands of mistakes and that was just last week," the Farmer truthfully said to his teenage daughter. "When things go wrong, you can come and talk to us.

Maya, sex has consequences. When you are sexually active, the pleasure of it makes you forget you are engaging in a reproductive act. If you get pregnant, please do not get scared.

Do not be afraid to talk to me or Mom regarding that. You use contraception, but mistakes happen. If they do please come and talk to us. Mom and I are deeply religious and you know how we feel about abortion. And I will encourage you to have the baby. We can help you take care of it.

"Dad, I am not pregnant," Maya replied.

"I just want you to know that we are here for you. That is all. Always remember that, especially in the dark times."

Maya looked at her father. "You think love's going to find me Dad?" she asked.

The Farmer put his arm affectionately around her shoulders and they walked through the irrigation gully together. "Love finds everyone," he stated emphatically.

Chapter 3

Dear reader,

Chapter 3 is available only in the physical book. Available for sale at your favorite bookstore or you can purchase directly from Trademark Universal, Inc.

Thank you.