

"THE QUEEN OF HEARTS"

by

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FADE IN:

INT. KATHMANDU, KUMAR'S HOME- EVENING

KUMAR SHRESTHA (early 20s) is back from the hospital. His childhood sweetheart MIRA MALLA (early 20s) has been diagnosed with last stage cancer and since then has been admitted in the hospital.

The camera follows Kumar from behind, through the stairs. His hair is long and disheveled and walk is staggered and clumsy.

While he is still walking up the stairs, he recounts the brief exchange that took place when at the hospital earlier.

INT. HOSPITAL- EARLIER THAT DAY [FLASHBACK]

NURSE'S VOICE (V.O.)

We'll have to take her to run some tests now.

KUMAR (V.O.)

Oh! I was just leaving. And, please do call me anytime, anytime MIRA needs me.

NURSE'S VOICE (V.O.)

Okay, I'll let you know of any development.

INT. KUMAR'S HOME (CONT'D)

KUMAR

Dev-dev--development (softly)
(sighing)

He takes off his shoes carelessly and walks on to unlock the door, his hands evidently shaking. We see a blurred and unclear portrait of a girl on the wall facing the door.

INT. KUMAR'S ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

He sits on the floor, trying hard not to look at the portrait. A radio set and a deck of playing cards lie on

the table; he switches the radio on and sad classical MUSIC plays in soft low volume. He picks up the cards' deck absent-mindedly and starts counting and arranging them into smaller stacks of spades, diamonds, clubs, and hearts.

KUMAR

1, 2, 3... (softly)

(MUSIC still playing on the background)

CLOSE UP- KUMAR'S EYES

His eyes are mildly red and wet.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE- SERIES OF SHOTS SET TO BACKGROUND MUSIC

A) A Hospital entrance

B) A "CANCER WARD" board

C) A GIRL lying on the hospital bed, we ZOOM IN but the face is all blurred. This SHOT of unclear, unrecognizable face lingers for a while.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE UP- KUMAR'S LIPS

KUMAR

49, 50, 51 (softly)
(background MUSIC stops)

CONTD:

The cards finish at 51, his hands are now empty. We swiftly move up to his eyes and they are emptier. Indifferently, he bundles up the cards into an unmanaged deck and puts it back on the table. The telephone at another table—rather far from him—RINGS. He walks up to it and picks it up.

KUMAR

(Listening)No! Wrong number

(puts down the receiver)

He sits on the chair beside the table. Then again, gets up at once and walks towards the other room. In doing so, he notices something, maybe a paper-- under the sofa or more precisely, under its heavy wooden legs. He tries to reach it and sees a crumpled playing card. He unfolds it in slow motion:

TIME LAPSE

--A crumpled, torn playing card in KUMAR's hands

--A 'QUEEN OF HEARTS' card torn right from the middle all the way with a small strand holding the two halves

Just then the telephone RINGS again, ominously.

KUMAR's P.O.V

A) The ringing telephone

B) The card in his hands-- now separated in two halves. We ZOOM IN to this SHOT.(the telephone still RINGING)

FADE OUT

TITLES