I am going to tell you a tale, a story of my life. I grew up as all children do, I am told. I was inquisitive, moody and full of energy. I do not quite remember myself ever waking up without a cause. Each and every morning there was something interesting that preoccupied my mind. Each and every morning there was always some mathematical problem, some physical phenomena that I had to understand. Even in my dreams, I recollect thinking about the colours of rainbow, the shape of moon, the lives of fish living below the floating ice and the pinpricks of lights that we all see in the night sky. I believe my interest in science is such only because my parents were always there to support, guide and teach me. The everyday bed time story routine not only inculcated a habit to read but also exposed me to so many different facets, the habitats of animals, how they survive, the different places on earth, their climates, the unique organisms their adaptations etc. This is probably where my thinking and ever questioning temperament was born which I believe is my greatest asset. It was though countless hours of practice that I realised that the time required to learn something new is immense and the benefits that come through learning are priceless.

I advanced quickly in my areas of interest in my junior grades. When my classmates were classmates were still struggling with basic algebra I could handle detailed factors. This obviously had its detrimental affects and the kid in me quickly became boorish, self obsessed and very over confident. But life has its ways to teach lessons. My first lesson came when I was in grade five. My teachers encouraged me to take part in a regional competition for which I was to receive special mentoring with a select few. I loved these special classes, partly because of the additional inputs and partly because of the feeling of special status and entitlement. I started believing that I was different from other students, not because I worked more but because I was me. I was so sure of my capabilities that I turned my back to the lessons about hard work that had made me better in first place. I wrapped myself in a cocoon of complacency that insulated me from realty that I had to face. With my childish overconfidence I ended up doing so badly that my own teachers decided that it would be in the best interest of the school for me to not be in the school team. I was informed of this on the exam day and I took the exam as an individual entry, not as part of school team. I was devastated. This disturbed me to such an extent that I could not complete the exam that I started. What followed were hours of contemplation on the injustice in the world and how everything was so unfair. I was shattered. I could not cope with the fact that I had lost on something that I was so good at.

Looking back, I could not get what I so desperately wanted but I did learn something very very profound. Sometimes, you might feel that you absolutely deserve something in your life. Not getting it makes you feel that you have been robbed of your destiny or privilege that was rightfully yours. However, one must not try to escape from what has happened and learn to accept it. Overcoming denial is the first step and then realizing that we all make mistakes. Learning from them and moving on, in such a manner that it does not deter us from doing what we want to do. I guess the irony of life is that our mistakes are more valuable than our victories.

Lastly, I would also like to add that although I try my best to incorporate all my learnings from yesteryears, I rarely am error free. I derive my satisfaction from striving to become better each day.