

Gulshan

By Gulshan

I am Gulshan, a garden in Urdu. This is my life story of how I turned from a shy and scared little girl into a strong woman.

I used to be very shy and scared. Like a tiny purple sunbird hiding in the shade of the Jasmine bush in the garden. I got married at 20, such a young girl, and my husband, older than me, was very controlling, belittling me in everything. He used to say: “your cooking is no good; you can’t call your mum; you can’t make friends outside.”

One day I had enough. We had a fight. I spread my wings and went for it, into the sun, into the light! I became a flying rainbow, this is who I truly was from the very beginning! I could not believe I dared to stand up for myself! I separated from him.

New people appeared in my life, I was longing to be in connection and joined social groups. I became independent and I started doing my work myself. I felt like a very strong woman. I had my family together and kept in touch with everyone. Now women in my family, even in my in-laws’ family seek my advice. I tell all women and friends to fear no one and to respect them-selves, to be independent and to make their own decisions. Because we all are very strong and we all are very important. We are not alone as God is always with us. Now I can joyfully visit and tenderly care for every flower, I am free to fly, as I am a flying rainbow in my own garden!

I am Gulshan!