A Thought to Remember

*Start at centre stage*
*gesture with the left hand* "Slowly turn right turn right turn riiight no no no not that way other right other right."
"Put the gear! Put the Gear!! Put the god flaming gear"

<Toastmaster, My dear toastmasters>

Most people know this dialog and the friendly driving instructor. As far as getting from point A to point B, driving is a fine mode if not for the abysmal traffic.

The highlight of my driving school life was a day that the van was full to the brim. The first guy took the wheel. We were travelling down the Galle road and all was going well. When his turn was over, the instructor asked him whether he can take a bus home instead of riding in the van because the van was full. So did the next guy. And next. Until it was my turn. I drove well and as everyone, got down. *pause* Then I realized. That I have forgotten to bring my wallet.

So there I was in the middle of the Galle road several kilometres away from home, penniless, phoneless, and hopeless.

Nowadays if you stand near the Galle road and do as much as try to scratch your head, *scratch head* 5 Three-wheelers and 1 nano cab will stop and ask "where do you want to go?"

But this story happened a long time ago. When taxis were not that common. I had no option but to walk.

People who know me know that "I think fast, talk fast and walk fast." It is so bad that one girl from my school once said the day I get a girlfriend, I’ll have to carry her on my shoulders if I expect to have a meaningful conversation.

*turn left. Act out. But do not move on stage* So that day I walked and waked and walked under the cursed tropical sun along the Galle road.

After about an hour of walking, and only half way through to home, far away, *turn back and look far away* I saw the van of the training school returning. What would a normal person do?

Of course a normal person will think they are rescued and get a ride on the van for the remainder of the trip. But not me! I was too proud/stupid to admit what had happened. So I took to a by lane, *sneak away* waited till the van passed *peek* and walked another one and a half hour home!

*Move to left diagonally. At front–left of centre  ↖ *
The important thing to note is that this does not mean I like to walk. I walk fast because I do not want to waste time moving about. I want to get to the destination and be done with it. It is just the way of getting from point A to point B.

But there actually are people who think walking is fun. And it is not even regular walking, but in jungles and mountains and wherever that is devoid of civilization. The worst part is they call these “trips” and drag you with them.
So when someone tells me, "Hay let's go a trip to a jungle" I hear "Hay let's take a walk between rocks and thorny bushes, drink water from muddy streams and get ourselves bitten by leeches."

Mind you I am not afraid of leeches. Compared to mosquitoes they are cool. Leeches are like. "Let's drink blood. Get fat and roll off." Mosquitos are like "Noob. I am going to drink blood, get fat, give malaria and sing the song of my people. *show annoying mosquito* Zzzzzzz* catch the mosquito*

Coming back to the story; soon after ALs we planned to go on a trip. When I said we, I meant Amila. Just so you know; we called this guy "King Kong". "King Kong" has a commanding nature about him. He is taller than I and has the girth of two of me. He also has an uncle who is a ranking officer in the forest department. So surprise! .... Surprise!! ... Our trip turned out to be four days walking in the kanneliya forest. Of course we had king Kong to guide us. So we did not bother to hire a guide. According to all these preparations can you guess what we did the first day? Why, we went and got ourselves lost....of course.

Even when we were lost because of foolhardiness of certain individuals. We had hopes that tough king Kong would get us out. What did he do? He sat on the ground, *sit on the ground* took out a loaf of bread from his backpack. And *crying start* "We only have this to eat. My mother asked me not to come. I should have listened to her". *crying end* After some serious convincing and walking about we came out of the forest. *stand up*

According to all these preparations can you guess what we did the first day? Why, we went and got ourselves lost....of course.

This brings us to the third way of getting from point A to point B. Swimming. Despite all my affinity to the sea and all, I *add mini pause in middle but speak fast* can-cannot swim! Why I say can-cannot is because I almost can swim but really cannot. The whole fault is with my hair *touch hair* and some fool astrologer that told my mom; *Eyes closed. Hands do Irshi preaching gestures. Speak in a mystic tone* "This kid has two whirlpools of hair. If you put him in water, he will drown!" First of all I am impressed by how he managed to find not one but two whirlpools in MY hair. But this also meant that the first time I could do some swimming was after I finished A/L. I kind of learnt all the strokes and peddling and whatnot. But what I did not learn is breathing,*pause* so my swimming is more or less like

*I know it is impressive to see but totally useless. If someday I ever drown and die, I imagine my funeral will be like this;

*Guy 1 playing cards. Shuffle* Bloody pig head went and drowned himself. *deal card* Unbeliever. *deal card* Hrumf. *deal card* Hope he is bloated enough to match his big head. *look at cards*

*Guy 2 playing carom* Whatever it was, *aim* that astrologer was super. *hit* Right? *aim* He said this will happen. *hit* Right? *aim* And it happened! *hit* Right?
And ghost me would be standing there saying; "Are you guys serious? *count one finger* Number one, See the irony of it. Because it was prophesied that I might drown, I was denied of the skill that might save me from it. This is a self-fulfilling prophecy. More importantly, *count second finger* Number two, *point at guy 1* you are playing cards *point at guy 2* you are playing carom. *point at both shake head* How does this game work?"

*move back to centre*
No matter if it is driving, walking, swimming or even flying; I think of each of these only as means of getting from point A to point B. So I do not get this "It is not about the destination, it is about the journey" stories. It IS about the destination because the destination today is the launching pad of tomorrow. This is a never ending journey from one achievement to the next. If we become too complacent, we fall prey to lethargy and decay. So I say, enjoy your trip but keep moving! As Arthur C. Clarke said; "The only way of discovering the limits of the possible is to venture a little way past them into the impossible". If you achieved something that means you have potential to go beyond!

I, myself, have mastered walking, can drive *whisper* but no licence. And can-cannot swim. There is nothing beyond that! You might say. But I say there is always a new destination!

THIS! Toastmasters is what I am working on now; *if there is a hat wear hat* *moonwalk out of stage* *dramatically point at the toastmaster without words*