

# WHEN MEMORIES ARE NOT BEAUTIFUL

8-year-old Aditya lives with his mother in an upscale apartment. His parents got divorced two years back. Little Aditya had never known what a 'normal' family was. Right since he could remember, he had seen his parents fighting with each other. He would dread the time his father came home from work, for that is when it would begin, the constant bickering, unkind taunts and shouting at each other. He never understood how or why it started, but it always was like an ugly drama playing out in front of his eyes. The little boy would cover in his room wishing it would all go away. He even felt himself wishing that his father would not come home. He was traumatized. The long drawn out divorce proceedings also took their toll, as the child had to bear the brunt of the custody battle between his mom and dad. His parents finally decided on an out-of-court settlement, and Aditya began to live with his mother. In an attempt to forget the ugly past, Swati started planning outings with friends and family. She, however, began to notice that Aditya seemed to be becoming increasingly depressed. He resisted every time she planned an outing to the zoo, the mall or a family gathering. At home he was quiet and not interested in watching cartoons like other children his age. At night he refused to sleep alone in his room and nightmares often woke him up.

One day when she was watching a TV series where two people were arguing, Aditya suddenly broke into tears. A worried Swati decided to take her son to the Psychiatrist. The Doctor told her Aditya was suffering from 'post-traumatic disorder'.



The constant fights at home and ugly battle for custody had left their mark on the child and he needed therapy to come out of it. The Doctor told her that she would need to move her residence and remove everything from her house that reminded her son of the episodes of stress in his life. Aditya has been in

therapy for a year now, he goes to a different school, has new friends and is a happier child. The nightmares still disturb him, but they are not so frequent any more.

