

RISING STARS

Write and Wrong

by Naheed Kamal

"Don't let school interfere with your education." Mark Twain. Education is said to be the basis of everything a man or woman does and can do. It allows one to learn and so express oneself better. School and colleges are not the only means of education, we are able to learn from every aspect of life and often learning is left up to us. Only if we wish to learn can we do so. In the case of Bangladesh school does not seem to play any significant part in a youth's life let alone interfere with it. Half the schools are filled to the brim with mediocre teachers and the colleges are flowing with violence. It is a wonder that half of us can either read or write.

Writing is said to be the sign of a civilized man. If the state of writing in our country is to be of any significance then we are the most uncivilized nation to date. Every year a hundred and one news magazines, whether weekly, bi-weekly or annual or even bi-annual emerge and submerge.

A few of these by sheer dint of merit or luck last through the years and carry on giving readers decent reading material. Others, meanwhile, give the readers what I am forced to define as 'rubbish' for lack of better definitions.

No doubt English is a foreign language to us. We take pride in our mother tongue and would no doubt go into a

spasm each time a foreigner or a Bengali uses it wrongly. So why then when we have accepted the fact that English is a universally accepted language don't we learn to speak and write it properly? It is obviously not expected from each and every one of us but those daring souls who take up the task of 'reporting' or writing in English should be able to write it well or stay away from it altogether. When I come across some of the articles printed in some of these so-called "popular" magazines I go into shock. "Did I really read that or am I hallucinating due to seven cups of coffee? A second look confirms that I am not hallucinating but that this darling soul has written this absolute disaster of an article and some daring soul of an editor actually printed it! These articles are bound to make you think that:

a) you are a candidate for the funny farm, or
b) the writer is a funny farm fugitive.

c) better yet, he or she is an avid follower of Mark Twain's sayings.
The fact is if I continue to read such stuff in the magazines each time I open one then I will go crazy. Said playwright John Osborne, "... when writing is going right it is the most glorious thing in the world." Anybody who

writes will vouch for that. When writing goes wrong and one fails to register the basic grammar rules then one is ready to jump off a ledge in frustration. If these articles are anything to go by then a lot of these people are suffering from acute frustration. A word means exactly what I want it to mean, nothing more and nothing less, said some wise man, if this to be the case then take for example the following excerpt from a local (popularly read) news magazine and you make out that this person is attempting to do here.

The article is about, are you ready for this? ... "Video fever rampant in Chittagong," and was published in the 27 March-2 April, 1992 issue of the magazine. It starts as follows:

"Video shows caught on the life of a sizeable number of Chittagonians. The animated viewers keep glue their eyes on video shows for hours together. The society here seem to have gradually getting seduced by the video craze that play up martial arts or action, ... Rock music and Rambo type English Films, ... and then what not. Even Western Fade like the "break dance" a form of street dancing popularised in New York are popular video shows of upper crust society here." If this is not bad enough he goes on to tell us about,

"The clubs with their front door-pane garishly cover-up of posters and festoons invariably draw the attention of everybody. The twinkling lights that glare the front side of the club further dazzle the eyes of passers-by despite the high excise taxes, these clubs are mushrooming!" What is he writing? Where did the grammar, punctuations and correct English go? Did the esteemed editor ever bother to read and correct this one? Did he even notice the mistakes?

To add to the thrill of a reader the reporter continues, "... the clubs still choice the customers carefully. The middle class people are seemingly more craze for video shows." Point taken. The writer is obviously upset over the video fever that has got hold of Chittagong. Perhaps his kids are running wild due to the bad influence these movies have on everyone. He complains that families watch videos together "in the cosines of their homes. They are not least embarrassed if visitors drop in." Obviously the poor reporter was insulted when he went to visit someone who was busy watching a movie. But please explain to me why one should be embarrassed if guests drop in while watching a movie? I could go on relating the article to you word for word and have you cracking up

with laughter. Will it make a difference?

The point is, unlike the not-so-educated types who paint slogans on walls, this was written by a reporter for publication in a magazine read by many. If he can get away with writing such nonsense then why should anyone bother to improve their language? It is funny when we read it but the joke's on us because it is our society printing them; after all it's what we've done that makes us what we are.

Gertrude Stein told Earnest Hemingway, "you should only read what is truly good or what is frankly bad." What we have here is certainly not "truly good" nor is it "frankly bad." It is tasteless and silly.

Why do I complain? Do we need proper English? The answers are simple. I complain because if anything is worth doing we either do it well or not at all. If we are unable to speak or write any language properly and still have the audacity to use it to write an article for publication then it is a shame. It is a pity that we must ridicule a fellow writer but in the words of Oscar Wilde, "the truth is rarely pure and never simple." Am I justified to ridicule and complain? Perhaps I have taken liberties I am not entitled to. I leave it up to you to review those few lines I have picked and then you be the judge.

THE MIRACLE

by Judith G Decosta

Why, why, why. Lisa wondered did Susan always invent excuses every time she pointed out "the weird factor" in her love-life? What was he telling her that had her convinced that he was a hundred per cent faithful? Why couldn't she just leave them alone and bury in this relationship she'd never forgive herself for not helping when and where she could.

She had found the perfect opportunity to answer her own questions when, one Sunday morning, Susan was on cooking lunch for the day.

"How come you're home today?" She asked in an innocent tone while Susan stood at the kitchen counter cutting up vegetables.

"Because I've grown tired of restaurant food and your

me go and fix it up!" This, thought Lisa, was a flaky story. Poor Susan was just too starry-eyed to notice "the weird factor" herself.

"So don't you suppose, that if he really cared to show you the place he'd make the effort to clean up and then call you over?"

"If you're so interested why not ask him," retorted Susan, suddenly roused to anger. "Why do you keep on asking me things like this? She was on the verge of exploding now. Susan looked at Lisa through narrowed eyes and added,

"Why I don't go to his house or any thing regarding my relationship with Richard is none of your business, so don't EVER interfere!"

To be continued



Cinderella in the 20th Century!

by Mahruha Sameen Hussain

"Cinderella!" I turned. Standing in front of me was a fat little girl of my age. I thought I had seen her somewhere. Of course! Drizella from a fairy tale. From a fairy tale? Was I going nuts or what? Unbelievable but true. I had somehow become Cinderella.

"Cinderella!" It was a tall thin girl, Anastasia Cinderella's other sister. Oh God! How have I landed myself in so much trouble? I had always been a normal girl from the 20th century and I had ended up being Cinderella? Positively weird. Most unusual.

Finally, the mother came. They started giving me orders. Dust the room, wash the dishes, make the beds, cook,

bring firewood ... EEEK! I was terrified. How was I supposed to do all that?

I was given heaps of clothes to wash; fortunately I knew how to do that. But what about cooking ... As I was looking around the kitchen, wondering what to do, there was a flash of smoke and a fairy godmother appeared (she had to be — she had wings). Strangely, she resembled my Aunt Judith.

She gave me a locket with "C" engraved on it and told me to wear it. She also told me to get some flour, one cup of milk, sugar and two eggs. Was she going to teach me how to bake? I wondered. She told me to mix them all up and leave it there. She also asked me to

close my eyes and repeat what she said. She muttered some jumbled up words in a weird language (a cross between Latin and Cantonese) most of which I could not comprehend.

I slowly opened my eyes and lo, behold! In front of me there were dishes of soup, rice, vegetables and meat — complete meal!

Man, was I lucky! I But I couldn't escape each time. Something had to be done. With a little luck, I managed to scrape through the other perils of the day.

In the afternoon, a stately-looking gentleman came and delivered an even more stately-looking invitation card.

Oh dear, it's a ball given by the Prince. I feared. I find princes rather silly. Thankfully, it was an invitation for dinner at Lady Whatzname's house. Whew! I was not invited.

Now came the worst part. I had to help my dear sisters to get dressed. Heavens, I knew nothing about their elaborate gowns, ribbons and stuff. What was I going to do? Thankfully, they managed to dress themselves but expected me to do their hair.

Yikes — I never properly tie up my hair back home and they expected me to do their hair!

First it was Drizella. I took up her hair and tied it up in a pony tail and ... man, did she yell! She screamed and almost

destroyed my ears. Luckily, after that Anastasia and her mother did not want me to do anything more (Hey! Wait a minute, it wasn't like this in the fairy tale).

When they were finally gone, I sat in the kitchen waiting for my fairy godmother. (Don't forget, I knew the story). Finally she came.

She blindfolded me and started mumbling more jumbled up words. A strange sensation swept over me and I began to feel drowsy ... I fell into a long deep sleep ...

I opened my eyes found that I was back in my room. When I was home, I guess I was dreaming the whole thing.

Suddenly a shiny object on the floor caught my eye. It was a locket ... with the letter "C" engraved on it ...

Free by Trishna class IX

It is true that in the Liberation War, the people who sacrificed their lives were mostly males. But the ones who suffered and lost peace and happiness were mainly females. Maybe it was the brave males who fought and snatched liberty from the enemies, and it was because of them that we are free, but did that mean that this country was now to be ruled by males? Lets look at the streets of our country. How many females do we see? A girl walking alone would probably be teased or followed by those ruling men, and she might as well have to stand some dirty comments. Women are now even the product of import and export. They are being bought and sold like man-made things. Shameful, but true, that there are many brothers, sons, husbands and fathers whose source of wealth is the use of females.

Parents are getting strict day by day about their daughters, why? Why is it that men can stay outside till late night, but the women can't? Why do the parents allow their sons to journey around the city throughout the day, while they expect their daughters to be caged up before dusk? Have they made it impossible and rather dangerous for women to move around freely in this so-called FREE country? I ask all those men, 'why have you caused such a mess and why can't you see us in equal eyes?' The war was not only meant for the males. It was meant for the whole country and its people. The freedom was meant for each person living in Bangladesh, to live freely and according to one's wish. But the males now seem to be ruling over the country. What do the females do now? Fight another liberation war against those men?

The Patient in the Waiting Room

by Munazah Alam

A Levels

He enters the crowded Waiting Room. A nervous smile on his face. A glance at the grave, unsmiling figures Extinguishes his smile, slackens his pace.

A swollen face across the room. Another with a bloody ear. Constricts his already shrinking stomach, Ashens his face, increases his fear.

Eyes dark towards the formidable door. Hoping it'll open, hoping it'll not. Will he be the next one to go in? Just the thought of that makes his stomach knot.

Closing his eyes he wonders again. Will it be a shot, or only some pills Or maybe? no he mustn't think of that. He mustn't forget the outrageous bills.

Finally, at last, the door opens; A name — yes, his name — is finally called. What will the final verdict be? His stomach squirms, his heart is stalled.

Star Profile

Name — Rob Lowe
Date of Birth - 17/3/64
Marital Status - Married
Interesting Info : — His mum is a poet.
He has to wear glasses but sticks to contact lenses in public.
He loves Pizza!
He's dated numerous beautiful woman, including princess Stephanie of Monaco



LIFE IN A LONELY LIGHTHOUSE

By Ehsan ul Haque

I have lived out half my life. Well half is what I would call it as I have no intention of living after I am eighty years old, after all "Only the good die young, all the evil is said to live for ever." I have been a loner all my life, well actually I had to be ... Who wouldn't be living in a lighthouse for thirty eight years? Now that I have found you, I might as well share some words with you about my life.

My mother died when I was only two years old. It was then that my father willingly took up the post of a "light house operator" at a light house somewhere out in the Atlantic, a lighthouse that I got to inherit, and have known as home and abroad since my childhood. My father brought me up in that massive block of idiotic architecture. He taught me how to laugh and how to cry. He taught me his skills and to swim like a merman, to evade the waves and the undercurrents; taught me how to play with the fish and their dancing styles. He showed me how to hunt for treasure under the sea bed and maps telling me how to find them. I loved him above all things in the world. Then one day a violent storm arose: the sea wrinkled with the tide, was crashing against our little light house. My father went to save the little boat that he used to fish in. He went down and never came back. I went to look for him and discovered that the tempest had claimed his life. I still lament for him. May the Almighty have mercy on his soul. Since then loneliness has been my only companion, until the day I met you. Since my childhood, I have met very few people. Once in a blue moon a ship's captain would be kind enough to lend me some of his precious time and anchor his vessel close to my humble abode and come in for a chat or two while his sailors refreshed.

One day, another human came to my house. They called this person a woman. She was

gorgeous and I felt something for her ... something that I cannot describe ... something that my vocabulary does not hold. I felt that I needed her ... I wanted her. She was very kind to me and patiently heard the story about my life. Then like the others, she also had to go. Her visit lasted for about seven hours.

My day to day life in the light house may be boring for one who loves adventure and activity, and especially for those who are very choosy about their diets and their health. I know that this is going to sound gross and disgusting but I eat octopus with seaweed, starfish, crabs, lobsters, shark and soup ala-electric eel, octopus' eyes, sea horses etc etc etc. A shallow under ground stream supplies me with fresh water. It has probably been there since the beginning of time but it sure holds a lot, as the water gushes out with the same speed every time I turn the tap on.

Now I think that I should resort to describing my house to you. My room is at the top of the conical light house, it is eight hundred and ninety eight steps from the bottom of the light house. The rest of the facilities are situated at three hundred steps from the ground. The light house itself is about sixty fathoms high. That converted to feet would be three hundred and sixty feet and that converted to stories would be thirtysix stories. There were massive and powerful lights at the tower which I light up every night. This is my house and as you may well be able to see was an ill-designed pile of architecture very simple to the one who stays in it but complex to a "passer by", passer by as in anyone whoever comes and visits me in my lonely abode in the wilderness. As for the aspect of amusement, I am not quite the pleasure seeking type. My games

are quite simple but daring, which of course is the term I would use for treasure hunting on the surface of what used to be a massive island of some sort and playing with the children of the ocean — fish. Until now, I have discovered many priceless treasures ... yes I probably own twenty times a king's ransom, I thus intend to trade it with the next passerby for some of what they called the food of a civilized human being ... which I must admit, tastes Ok.

Sunrise in this place is a sight to see and worth remembering. For thirty eight years I have been seeing the same thing but never get tired of it. The air here is fresh, the temperature is cool. The place is my home and I never intend to leave it ... after all it is my home sweet home.

Jokes

Tomorrow: The procrastinator's labour-saving device. The parents of an 8-year-old boy who was away at camp for the first time had not heard from him.

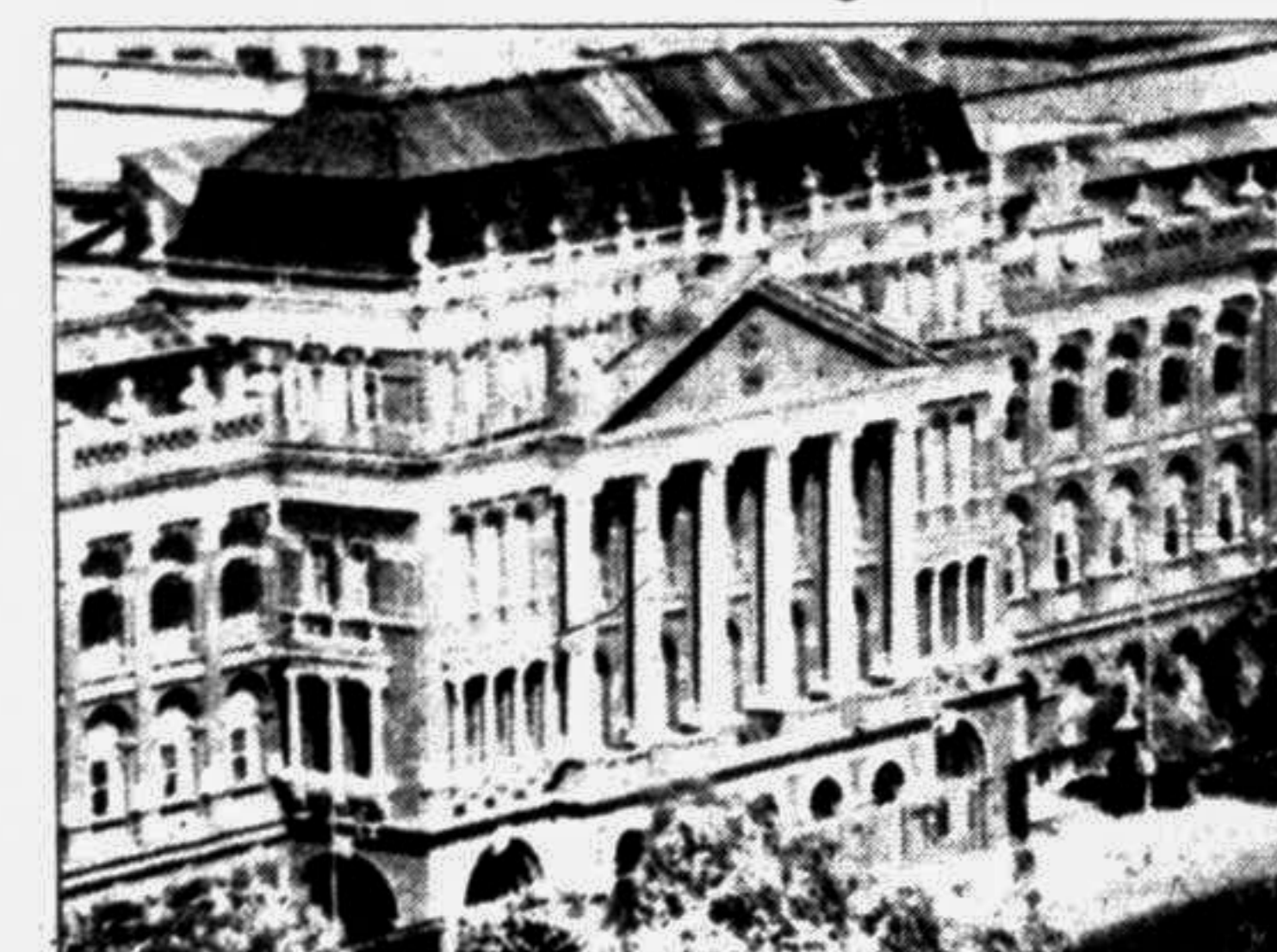
They finally telephoned the youngster and were both relieved, but also disappointed to discover that he hadn't missed them at all. "Have any of the other kids gotten homesick?" inquired the mother.

"Only those who have dogs," replied the little boy.

When a man won't listen to his conscience, it's usually because he doesn't want advice from a total stranger.

If the shoe fits, you're lucky. Doctors say that if you eat slowly, you will eat less. Anybody raised in a large family will tell you the same thing. Procrastination is the art of keeping up with yesterday. The nicest thing about new friends is that they haven't heard your old stories yet.

Picture Quiz



Here is another picture quiz for you. Can you guess what building this is and where? Answer will be given next week!

Riddles

But a tail I do possess
Just how long you'll have
to guess
In the clouds, birds pass
me by
But without any wings I
can fly!
(Ans: Kite)

I live on a very narrow
space
And I have a round face
Twice daily my hand say
the
same thing
Yet every time fresh news
I bring.
(Ans: Clock)

QUIZ CLUB

Here are this week's Quiz Club Questions Remember to send in your answers by next Thursday.

- Q 1. What is the name of the Croatian who beat Stepan Edberg at the Wimbledon Tennis championships on July 1st?
- Q 2. What does the CAT in CAT scan stand for?
- Q 3. Which is the longest wall in the world?
- Q 4. Which is the highest capital city in the world?
- Q 5. Which is the largest island in the world?
- Q 6. Who created the famous character Rip Van Winkle?
- Q 7. Who was Fahien?
- Q 8. Who wrote 'A passage to India'?
- Q 9. What is the capital of Liberia?
- Q 10. What is the most frequently sung song in the world?

- Answers to July 18th Quiz club question :
- 1. Kitchi Miyazawa.
 - 2. Caspian Sea
 - 3. India
 - 4. Rudyard Kipling
 - 5. President John F Kennedy.
 - 6. Austria, 1249
 - 7. Cricket
 - 8. Golf
 - 9. Ian Fleming
 - 10. Sultan Azlan Shah

Fill out this form and send it to us, and you will be a member of the Rising Star Club. Send in your writings, illustrations, and cartoons. It is an ideal opportunity to express yourself through the print media.

Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

School: _____

Full Address: _____

Telephone No. _____

Class: _____