

RISING STARS

Teenage Suicide

by Kate Ramsayer 8th grade, Malaysia

By the time you have finished reading this paragraph, around one teenager in the United States will have attempted suicide. About 500,000 teens in the US alone try to commit suicide each year. Because of these facts, adolescents make up one fifth of the total suicide cases.

There are many reasons that teens commit or attempt suicide. Some may be feeling depressed because they broke up with their boyfriend or girlfriend, or maybe the victim felt let down when they asked for help. Teens may also commit suicide if they aren't allowed to meet with each other because their parents won't let them. Family problems can also be a factor in suicide. If the parents divorce, or one of them dies, their child would feel very grief stricken, and could feel like they want to die too. If a family member or a famous person commits suicide, that also might give the teen the idea, which can result in suicide. A lack of communication between family members could also be a reason that teens try to take their lives.

Other reasons experts have come up with are the three H's: helplessness, hopelessness, and hopelessness. Helplessness means that the person is unlucky or unfortunate, helplessness means they're unable to take care of their needs, and

hopelessness means they are out of hope. Some of the teens that commit suicide even have a misconception about death, and don't realize that it's final. These teens turn to suicide, thinking it is a temporary way out.

School life is also a common factor in suicide. Some students might feel that the pressure to succeed and do well is too great. Others might not be accepted by their peers, or have very low self-esteem. Political problems might have something to do with suicide as well. For example, in East Berlin, before 1961, the suicide rate was one per day. After 1961, when the Berlin Wall was closed, the suicide rate rose to 25 per day.

Sometimes suicides occur in a small town with a lot of suicides over a short amount of time. Bruce Carrjo, Steven Gundalah, Mary Jacobs, Scott Difiglia Glenn Curry, and Henri Dartot, ages 14 through 18 all committed suicide from February to August one year. Bruce Carrjo was the first one. He was upset because of a friend's death in a drag racing accident. Steven Gundalah and Mary Jacobs' parents had told them that they couldn't see each other any more. Scott Difiglia had just broken up with his girlfriend. Glenn Curry was feeling pressured with school

and a time consuming romance, and Henri Dartot was upset over Bruce Carrjo's suicide.

Most suicide victims give hints before they attempt. Sometimes they're direct, but other times their family doesn't realize them until it's too late. A person contemplating suicide often has a pre-occupation with pain, death, or even suicide. They also might give away prized possessions, or develop strange sleeping patterns and appetite loss. Some might start abusing alcohol or drugs while others might cry for no apparent reason or behave recklessly.

One of the main causes of suicide is depression. Some of the reasons are school work, breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend, friendships, appearance, and plans for the future.

There are also signs that can show if a person's depressed. Usually they're tearful and sad, and sometimes irritable. They also can change the way that they think, maybe becoming an anorexic. Depressed people also daydream a lot and often have trouble concentrating. They can also get in trouble in school, letting their schoolwork and grades slip, and maybe making attempts to skip or avoid school. Another sign of depression is having

either too much energy or being constantly tired. A person could also start to overeat or seem to always have had lost their appetite. Some people just stare at the TV or listen to the radio hour after hour. Most become disinterested in their friends or hobbies that they enjoyed before. Even though 5,000 teens committed suicide each year in the mid 1980s, 500,000 attempted but failed. A 1986 survey showed that eight per cent of teens that were interviewed had attempted suicide at least once before. When prevented, most are glad that they were stopped.

After receiving help, 80 per cent of the victims survived. When they get released from the hospital, though, they sometimes feel lonely and some of their friends tend to be scared of them.

The people who do manage to kill themselves, though, leave behind a very confused family. The main feelings of the family are guilt and grief. They blame themselves and anybody else they can think of. They're hurt, angry, remorseful and sad. They wonder why the victim committed suicide and what the first sign was. Most blame themselves for not recognizing hints. The parents usually had thought that their child was just a normal kid with normal problems. They didn't think of them as a suicide victim.

'I WANT MY VISA.....'

by RiMaz

"BARIDHARA, ho!" I yelled and jumped into the car. The driver was unimpressed. "Haven't had breakfast yet," he mumbled. "Look, man! You get me to Bardihara by 8 am today, and I treat you to lunch at Sheraton tomorrow."

"Already been there once." "How about Sonargaon?" The driver heattated. "OK, it's a deal. Get in."

And so we set off on the fateful journey — from Eskaton to Bardihara.

During the half-hour journey, I was not nervous at all. In fact, I was so non-nervous that

I couldn't even remember my sister's name. Sameen... Sanchia... Sasha... Shohon? Nope. I knew that it began with "S" but I couldn't remember it. Anyway, before I could recall it, I had arrived at my destination.

The imposing red structure did not frighten me because I had used self-hypnotism to convince myself that red was my lucky colour.

What was that? At first, it appeared to me that they were giving out money or something. However, as I got down from the car, I realized that I would have to stand in the huge queue simply to get in-

side the fortress. As my car zoomed off, I also realized that I would have to face the ordeal all alone.

As I stood in the line, I looked around me. Most of the others were grim-faced zombie-like people. There were a few smiling faces, but they were smiles of terror (!?).

I suddenly began to feel that I had forgotten something — other than my sister's name. I looked at my hands. They were empty. Empty? Oh no! I had forgotten the documents, certificates and all that junk in the car. By now, the line behind me had become about two kilometres long, so I asked the zombie behind me if he would kindly save my place for me. His silence seemed to indicate that he was either deaf and dumb, or he did not want to save my place for me. Nevertheless, there was no alternative for me but to go in search of the car.

It is not necessary to describe the next forty minutes as I searched for the car. Suffice to say that it was not one of the most enjoyable searches in my life. I finally got the junk, but the thought of standing at the end of a line three kilometres long did not appeal to me. Therefore, I decided to engage in one of our national pastimes: queue-jumping.

I went near the beginning of the line and inserted myself cautiously between two of the zombies. I need not have worried, because they did not even notice me. By virtue of this useful trick, I was soon at the entrance of the fortress. It was then that disaster struck.

The guard at the gate took one look at me and said, "Sorry, my good man, you can't come in."

"Why not?" I demanded.

"Your face."

"What's wrong with it?" I asked, feeling insulted.

"Too many pimples on your nose," he said. "Now please go away. There are a few thousand people behind you."

I walked away thoughtfully. It's true that my nose is very pimply. But that's not my fault, is it? Anyway, I spent the next forty minutes carrying out Project S-29178 (alias pimple-removal), and rejoined the line. This time the guard let me through without saying a word. He didn't even check any of my documents. So I was inside the fortress. Now to complete my mission...

On my right was another huge queue; on my left was a door. Naturally, I tried the door first. It was locked and there was no sign of any lock.

However, with the help of my keen intellect, I deduced that the five buttons on one side of the door would probably open it. I pressed all five buttons together and got the shock of my life — the door opened and in front of me stood President Bush. Actually, I'm kidding. It was only a photograph of him.

I was now in a room from which opened six more doors.

I did not have the nerve to open any more doors and find photographs staring at me. So, I took the easy way out and joined the huge queue. Somehow, the long, dark corridor reminded me of the phrase "Death Row."

Anyway, by doing some more queue-jumping, I reached the front of the line. Here, there were two doors, with signs above them. One said "Visa Applications" and the other said "Free Food." I decided that now was the time to open the envelope my Dad had given me and to find out what my secret mission was, so I opened it.

There was only a small piece of paper inside. On it was written "Get a visa." That seemed to indicate that I would have to go through the first door and forego the pleasures of a meal at someone else's expense. So I did.

Inside the room, there were several counters. I went to an empty one, placed my passport in front of the person at the counter and said, "I want a visa."

"Fine, here you are," he said, beginning to put a seal on my passport.

"Hey! Wait a minute! Aren't you going to take an interview?"

"Nope. Haven't got time." "But my Dad coached me all through yesterday night. You have to take the interview."

"Okay, okay. Go to room number 71 and ask for an interview," the guy at the counter said.

When I entered room 71, I found two guys playing chess. They seemed very annoyed when I said that I wanted an interview, but they told me to sit down.

"We are first going to test you to see if you are fit to study in the US. What are you planning to study?"

"Physics," I answered. "So we will ask you questions on Physics. What's Newton's eighth law?" one of them asked.

"Don't know," I answered cheerfully.

"What's a proton?" the other asked.

"It's a Malaysian car company. It is 30% owned by Mitsubishi Corp and 70% by the government of Malaysia."

"What's two plus two minus four?"

"Ahsan! Sorry, I mean zero." "Good. You have obtained 97 out of 100. Now be a good boy and go and get your visa."

As I was about to leave the room, one of them asked, "By the way, what university college are you going to?"

"Samia!" I exclaimed. "Where is that?" they asked, puzzled.

"That's my sister's name. I just remembered it. I am going to OWU," I said, going out of the room.

Thus, I got my visa, walked back past the zombies and out of the fortress, a free man again.



by Afnoor Jameel Class I

Picture Quiz



Our Earth is rich in animal species. So many wonderful and strange creatures roam the continents. Can you guess what this peculiar bird is and what continent it lives on? Answer to July 25th's Picture Quiz is: The Secretary of the West Bengal government, Writer's buildings, Calcutta

Riddles

Three white horses Upon a red hide Now they tramp Now they champ Now they stand still (Ans: Tongue and teeth) My body is thin I've nothing within I'm silver from my top to my toe I have no feet But I make things neat And I help every one to sew (Ans: Pin)

QUIZ CLUB

These questions are all related to the Olympics. So let's see if you have all paid attention during the past two weeks to the nightly highlights from Barcelona! Remember, answers must be in by next Thursday.

- Who won the eleventh Olympic medal of his career at the Barcelona Games and where is he from?
- Name the 15-year old gymnast who scored a perfect 10 to win the floor exercise gold medal.
- Name the fastest hurdler in the world, who participated in the XXV Olympiad.
- What is the Olympic motto and what does it mean?
- Who is the president of the International Olympic Committee?
- Name two basketball superstars of America's Dream Team.
- Who is the youngest female world champion in diving and how old is she?
- How many Bangladeshi women athletes participated at the Games?
- Name two opera singers who performed at the opening ceremony in Barcelona.
- What height did Germany's Heike Henkel clear to win the high jump gold medal?

Answers to July 25th Quiz Club are:

- Goran Ivanisevic
- CAT stands for Computer Assisted Axial Tomography.
- The Great Wall of China (about 200 km)
- La paz (Bolivia)
- Olympic
- Washington Irving
- Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who visited India during the time of Chandragupta II
- E.M. Forster
- Manrovia
- Happy Birthday to you.

The Miracle

by Judith de Costa

To punctuate her statement she threw the knife on the table and stormed out of the apartment.

The story so far: Susan has fallen in love after remaining in seclusion, or nearly so, for about two years. She was on the verge of completely giving up until she met Richard and she humorously believes that he is the miracle she yearned for. But then, this is no fantasy and no perfect situation and a few things out of the ordinary have popped up which this fatal victim of love refuses to acknowledge.

It had been three weeks since the scene in the kitchen and a strong barrier had been set up between Susan and Lisa.

They had become uncharacteristically polite and coldly formal to each other and neither was willing to say the name Richard to the other any longer.

The funny thing was that both wanted to reconcile but both were too proud to make the first move. Susan secretly wished that one day

Richard would come over and see the change in the girls' relationship and that he would be the one to open the floodgates.

Nevertheless, Susan had given her best-friend's views on her love-life some serious thinking.

At first, the day that outburst took place she was simply shocked at what Lisa was implying. Shock gave way to outrage and she had stormed out screaming at Liz refusing to hear another word. But in the next couple of days, when Lisa didn't seem forthcoming with any apology, she began to wonder just whose well-being was at stake. Yes, Susan admitted, she had become reckless with abandon, having too much fun and drowning in the sweet wine of love.

Perhaps it was a bit peculiar that he never seemed inclined to invite her to his home but to Susan it didn't matter where, as much as with whom, she spent her time.

Long walks, fresh air and one or two refusals to a date gave

her the chance to clear her mind, and think about it but still no apology seemed due to Lisa.

Then suddenly, once more, Richard was back in the limelight and good old thinking was back on the shelf.

Sometimes she thought of bringing it up to him but every time the words formed in her mind they sounded like a whine which would sound more appropriate if she saw him once a week instead of five times! How would you complain about neglect, or the like, to a guy who was always eager to please you, whenever

you wanted pleasing? Susan was so in love that she would end up saying that she wanted to relive the few precious years of her adult life this time with him instead of Jake. Oh, how she would ramble on about Jake, sometimes feeling guilty about mentioning him but still unable to stop. And hadn't he always told her about the bad experiences of love he had had?

How on earth did you doubt a man who opened up to you that way? She would sometimes sulk at the wistful note in his voice but he'd notice it, hold her close and kiss her and then she'd feel better.

So much better and secure in the knowledge that this was one catch she wasn't going to let loose, devil may care how peculiar things may seem.

Thus, two sides had grown inside her: the Susan who spent time on her own was nagged by Lisa's words. The Susan whom Richard would hold close to him knew no Lisa and no conscience, to whom nothing but the wonder of Richard mattered. Not even the fact that she still didn't know his surname. It was irrelevant, so she never thought to ask.

To be continued

THE NIGHTMARE

by Munazah Alam

It was quite late and the house were dark. Once in a while you could hear a dog bark. The shops had closed, so the streets were bare; Everything was still — there was mystery in the air. I felt uneasy as I walked up a street. When all of a sudden my heart missed a beat. Everywhere was pitch dark; the streetlights had gone out. The atmosphere seemed to change, and I nearly shouted out. A huge mansion had appeared out of the blue (Where it had come from, I hadn't a clue). Although it was dark, I could see it clearly. How all this happened, remained a mystery. I entered through the gate and went up to the door. Why I did that I wasn't very sure. Standing in a state, excited but frightened, I tried not to breathe, anxious to be silent. Suddenly the door opened without a sound. As I stood there glued to the ground, I stepped to the unknown unconsciously. The door closed behind me automatically. An invisible hand closed round mine. (A shiver of fright went down my spine.) I opened my eyes and found myself in bed. My mother was holding my hand, "Wake up," she said.

STAR PROFILE

Name: **Kylie Minogue**
DOB: May 28 1968
Birthplace: Melbourne, Australia
Marital Status: Single

Did you know that:
her favourite cartoon character is Bugs Bunny
she's vowed never to wear a wig again after having to wear a little



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: _____