

# RISING STARS

## The Miseries of Life

by Riad-el Shams Ahmed Chowdhury

LIFE has always been weird for me from the very beginning. It all started with my birth. It is a very well-known fact that babies cry when they are born (not that I blame them for it, maybe they already know what life is like). But not me. Oh no, not me. I had to be unique. I was laughing my head off (I didn't know what life would be like). The doctor was pretty surprised. The reason for my laughter was that I was looking at the reflection of my face on a stainless steel container from my upside down position. When the doctor saw my face, he started to laugh so hard that he dropped me on my head. So, I had a pretty bumpy start to my life. It is rumoured that I was the only baby in the maternity ward as all the other babies had to be removed. They would start laughing and end up with blue faces. The nine days that I stayed at the hospital must have been the funniest time in the whole history of the hospital. People were seen laughing or collapsing in fits whenever they saw me. And the centre of all this laughter, that is I, did not even have the faintest idea of what the joke was about. Then I came home.

this conversation became pretty boring. As I grew up, I understood what was so funny. It was my face. There is only one word to describe it — weird. As I grew up my actions

the other on the bikes! So he tried and managed to do it right. Then it was my turn. I wanted to quit but there were too many pretty girls around. So there I was going at full

mosquito larvae running down my back. A very dirty Riad went back home. There was this other time when I was playing soccer at my grandfather's place. A high



started to match the peculiar characteristics of my face.

There was an incident that I will never forget. We were playing 'follow the leader' on our bikes. There was this wading pool which had some very dirty water in it. Our leaders decided to go in through one side and get out through

speed into the pool. I got the first part right but getting out was another thing. I was half way up when I noticed something was wrong. The angle in which I was looking at the world was not right somehow. Then I started to topple over backwards. W-II-A-M! There I was in the water with

kick from me sent the ball over the wall and into Dhanmondi lake. I had just finished my swimming courses so I decided to swim and get the ball. I stood at the edge, performed a perfect dive into the lake and discovered the secret of Dhanmondi lake. When I came up I discovered

that I was surrounded by human waste product. Believe me it wasn't a nice swim. Anyway I got the ball and came back on the side of the lake. As I was climbing up I slipped again and fell into the mixture Y-U-C-K!

The final incident occurred a few days ago. I was going home in my car and was in a little bit of a hurry as I had to answer nature's call. So there I was listening to 'Metallica' and counting the minutes, when this baby taxi stopped beside me. I turned and saw this black goat staring back at me. I smiled at it but it did not smile back. Before you ask me, I'll tell you I haven't got the faintest idea what a goat was doing in a baby taxi. Me, being a smart Alec said, 'Baa Baa, black goat.'

Have you any .... This was as far as I got when the goat bit me. Now either this goat was a music critic in disguise who didn't like 'Metallica' or maybe he didn't like my poem. While I was thinking of these things the goat had finished eating part of my shirt's sleeve. But now that I think about it, it might have been my face. Maybe I look like it's brother.

So, readers could you please tell me if I should continue living in this miserable world or go to the moon and join my friend, Zero, who is already there. Life treated him the same way it had treated me.

## The Power of Prayer

OLD Jim, it seems, was driving into town in his Model T Ford. He was within five miles of his destination when the ancient chariot wheezed to a stop and refused to budge another inch.

humour him." So Jim said a few words of

thank the parson when he heard him exclaim, 'Well, I'll



Out jumped Jim, opened up the bonnet and started to tinker around, trying to locate the cause of the trouble. Having no luck, he began to get hot under the collar and called down all his wrath on the benighted inventor of this sanguinary rattletrap.

He'd reached the culmination of his blistering tirade when he suddenly heard a gentle voice behind him say, 'What's the trouble, old chap? Turning round, 'Jim saw the local minister.

'This old car of mine won't start, reverend,' he said, a little shamefacedly.

'Well,' chuckled the minister, 'there's no need to curse it, my dear fellow. Have you thought of asking the Lord to help you?'

'No,' admitted Old Jim, 'I haven't.'

'Well, try it and see what happens.'

Old Jim looked a bit bewildered. 'I've tried everything else,' he thought, 'so I might as well give this a go, just to

prayer. Then he picked up the crank handle, gave it half a turn, and the Ford came to life. Old Jim stared at the car in surprise and was just going to

be blowed!" A Tale from laughing together — a UNESCO publication

## THE WORLD OF SMELLS

by Alexander YEMELIANOV

"IRA, where shall we put the flowers you were given for your birthday?" asked Ira's mummy.

"Let's put a bouquet in each room," answered Ira. "Then there'll be a nice smell everywhere."

Scents and smells... We sense them with the olfactory nerves, inside our noses. With their help a person can sense the smell of a substance if there is just one billionth of a gram of it in a litre of air.

That's not bad, is it? But we humans are not the best at sensing smells.

Most animals, from tiny hedgehogs to enormous elephants have a far stronger sense of smell. There are animals on Earth which cannot see or cannot hear, but all animals can smell things. Smell can help save a weak animal from danger or help a predator to catch its prey. For instance, a hare may not see an approaching fox but it will certainly smell it and run away. And no doubt the fox found the

hare by its tracks, that is, by its smell.

Man's age-old friend, the dog, has an excellent sense of smell. People have made use of this. They have bred various types of dogs like bloodhounds, for example. These dogs have a particularly developed sense of smell and can easily track something down even through a twelve-centimetre layer of snow!

What about humans? We can determine by smell the cleanliness of the air we breathe. If we sense a sharply smelling substance, a signal DANGER goes straight to our brain. Indeed many smells are harmful for humans. For example, if you sniff poppies you may fall asleep and the smell of bird-cherry or ledum can give you a headache.

So as not to risk their health, people have invented artificial noses, devices called gas analysers, and have taught them to "sniff" and determine whether a smell is harmful or not.... The artificial noses of

certain robots can distinguish between several dozen smells.

Smells can be both pleasant and irritating. The scents of many flowers like roses, lily-of-the-valley and lilac improve our mood.

Smells also influence the activity of the internal organs. The smell of a tasty cake, for instance, increases the amount of saliva in your mouth. Also, although you may not notice it, you begin to breathe faster.

Sometimes smells affect humans in unexpected ways. If you sniff a substance called camphor which is obtained from some trees, the colour green will seem much richer and brighter. And if you cut yourself, graze your knee or simply bump yourself painfully, the smell of ammonia gas will increase the pain.

When the Japanese want to remember an event, they sniff something, like a flower or some perfume. They claim that as soon as you sense the smell, you will remember the event.

So you see how much depends on the sense of smell.

## Encounter with Death

by Mahruba Sameen Hussain

A wolf howled. I stiffened. My heart started pounding. The dark and gloomy atmosphere gave me no hope. I thought of my

companions lost in the depths of this strange and mysterious place. Maybe I was destined to vanish like them. Only time could tell. I began to recall the events which had led to my present state.

I always had an unquenchable thirst for adventure and excitement. My dream of taking on adventures remained unfulfilled. I lived reasonably well with my family until one day an old school friend visited me. He informed me of a reward which had been offered for the killing of a fearful man eating monster which lurked in the depth of the Akawaki Forests. He was prepared to try his luck along with another of his friends. I readily agreed, strangely not fearing for my life. Anyway, I did not have anyone who would stop me from going, for I had a family who couldn't care less whether

I lived or died.

During our hunt for the monster in the forests one day, my companions simply disappeared. Whether they had run away from the danger or had been devoured by the monster, I do not know. I feared the latter.

A faint rustle of leaves arose from my thoughts. I pricked my ears to listen. An ominous silence followed. Then all of a sudden a hideous creature sprang out from behind the bushes and confronted me. Its roar rang out, almost deafening me and violently rocking the surroundings. Its eyes shone like two balls of fire. I trembled with fear. It opened its mouth. I could see its deadly teeth. Soon they would grind my flesh, I thought fearfully. I gave a last desperate cry as the animal sprang towards me.



## STAR PROFILE

Name: Lisa Ray  
DOB: ?  
Did you know that:  
— She is only 5 feet tall?  
— She has brown hair and green eyes?  
— She lives in Canada?  
— She is a Bengali?  
— There are rumours of Sunjay Dutt having a major crush on her?  
— She is taking acting lessons and learning how to speak Hindi so that she can start signing in Hindi films?!

## A man's best friend

by Jasim Gani

ONCE there lived a crippled man who spent ten years in a wheelchair. The man's name was James Woodman. His doctors told him that there were possibilities that he would walk again. But as the years went by, he became tired of life, as he could not walk. James was a rich man and had large industries in the city. Nobody liked James because he was crippled and for which he had no friends. Many people who were jealous of his success in his business wanted

to take away his property. One day while he was going for a ride in his car he saw a puppy lying by the road side. He stopped the car and told his driver to bring it to him. When James took the puppy in his arms he saw that it was injured. He took it to the vet and the puppy was treated. In a few days it recovered from its injury. James liked the puppy and so he kept it and called it "Brandy". James took care of Brandy himself and fed it too. In this way, the days went by and Brandy became friends with his master. Brandy had soon grown into a full sized dog. Life went on happily for Brandy and his master. Until one day a robber came into the house. As the robber was going to the bedroom to look for money he was spotted by Brandy and was attacked. As they were fighting, James saw this and wanted to help Brandy, but knew he would just cause more trouble. Eventually the robber fell unconscious by a bite from Brandy. But just before the robber fell unconscious he managed to stab Brandy in the leg and the dog fell to the ground. When James saw this he was in a great shock and shouted "No", stood up from his wheelchair and ran to his dog. At that moment he did not realize that he was walking again. After a few moments, when he took the knife out of Brandy's leg he saw that the dog was just a little hurt. But at that moment he was more shocked to know that he was walking and he was so happy that he began to dance with joy. After a few minutes later he took Brandy to the vet and the wound was bandaged. And so they both lived happily ever after.

## Bet You Didn't Know

Why Are Dogs So Loyal?

Compared with cats, we mean. Even the dachshund feline apologist has to admit that few cats can muster the kind of mindless, slobbering enthusiasm for their owners that seems to come naturally to dogs.

Both the dog's amiability and the cat's relative aloofness can be traced to a time before either species knew the sound of a can opener, as Desmond Morris has written in his fine volumes on both animals. In the wild, cats are solitary hunters who rely on stealth and speed to trap their prey. Wolves, however, are team players, and dogs are descended from wolves. They accept their master as the leader of the pack, but only if you get to the puppy prior to about the eighth week. Otherwise it'll always be wild and there's nothing you can do about it.

— taken from 'Why Things Are' by Joel Achenbach

## Dream on

by Trishna

Old lady, look around! They've given you shelter and food. Your children, are smiling, they are no more nude.

See, You're no more being kicked by those dogs of the streets, No more worries, no more worries for those cheats.

No more dreams, it all has come so true, Start smiling, wipe off your tears, never be blue.

Wake up, mother, its dawn already! 'Oh! It was all a dream', thought the old lady.

Dream on lady, you can never have what you dream of, No one will bother to help, to wipe your tears off.

Your children will remain hungry, your malady won't be cured, I guess they've done enough, and so are they bored?

But we'll see You in newspapers very soon, People like you will become the country's boon.

Your dead body, affected by flood or cyclone will be a pity, And so will all the neglected ones, around this city.

Then only will you be noticed, by everyone, Money will come flowing and shops will run.

The country will become fertile and wealthy, All will be happy and all healthy But don't dare ask where is the food you deserve,

What happened to promises for which you had to serve?

## JOKES

What do they call the noise made by the crowd at Wimbledon? A tennis racket.

What is green and holds up coaches? Dick Gherkin.

Man: My doctor told me to give up golf. Friend: Way, is it bad for you health?

Man: No he saw my score card.

Salesman: Can I interest you in a pocket calculator, sir? Customer: No thanks, I already know how many pockets I've got.

Have you heard that Ellen is engaged to an X-ray specialist? I'm surprised he sees anything in her.

For how long did Cain dislike his brother? For as long as he was Abel.

What goes tick tock woof, tick tock woof? A watch dog.

What goes tick tock croak, tick tock croak? A watch frog.

Batty books? When can you go as fast as a racing car? When you're inside it.

If you feed a cow on pound notes, what do you get? Rich milk.

## Accidents and why they happen

by Syed Faraz Rahman (Class VII)

MORE or less every day we get newspaper with a heading 'Five people killed, twenty five injured as a last coming truck hits a bus'. Everyday many people are dying in these accidents. Why do these accidents happen? The answer is simple. Because of our own carelessness.

People do not have licenses for their vehicles. In many cases the vehicle is not fit to be used, but people will still use them. People of this country don't care for the law. They don't understand that these laws are made for their own good. If they obey the laws, then I think these accidents will decrease by a great amount.

My request to every one, those who drive cars and other vehicles, please check every thing in your vehicles before taking them out on the road. To all car owners my request is: please colour the head light of your car half black because at night it really creates problems when it directly strikes anyone's eye. Many collisions occur because the driver is blinded by high beams of other cars. And to the those who always cross roads, be careful while you do so because anytime a vehicle can hit you. Look both to the left and right before crossing.

If we are a bit more careful then these accidents will decrease and lives will be saved.



## QUIZ CLUB

Here are this week's quiz questions. Now don't forget—if you get all of them right you may win a very attractive prize! Please send in answers by Thursday.

We are also happy to announce our January 2nd's Quiz Club. And the winner is again Farhana Sultana Saleh — who has already won 3 times! Good for you Farhana! Please contact our office to know when you can collect your prize.

- Q1. Which is the largest mosque in Dhaka?
- Q2. Which US state is known as the 'Pelican State'?
- Q3. Who invented the wind mill and when?
- Q4. Who invented the Spinning Jenny and when?
- Q5. When was the foundation for the 'Smitri Saudho' in Savar laid?
- Q6. Who is the youngest winner of a professional snooker tournament held recently (1993)?
- Q7. Name the three contenders for the 1993 Jesse Owens Trophy?
- Q8. On what occasion did Rabindranath Tagore write the song 'Aaj Jyotsna Raate'?
- Q9. What is another name for the Morris Oxford?
- Q10. What is the anniversary of the Daily Star (anyone who calls the office to find out the answer will be considered disqualified).

Answers to January 2nd's Quiz Club are:

1. E. S Gardiner
2. Philosopher, Poet, Yogi and politician (1872-1950)
3. 1917
4. Calcutta, India
5. Valletta
6. Mexico
7. American singer known as the Empress of Jazz
8. Geraldine Chaplin.
9. Rome
10. John Galsworthy

## ROBERT THE DUCK STICKER COMPETITION!

The lucky winner is Md Kabiruddin RS No: 0189. Kabir, you will receive the coloured 'Robert the Duck' stickers by post.



## Picture Quiz

Here is another picture quiz for you to solve. Can you guess where this picture was taken and what the names of these monuments are. The answer will be given next week. The answer to the last picture quiz is — Koala bear found in Australia.

The answer to January 16th's Picture Quiz is — Samarkand — Shahi-Zinda complex of memorial and religious buildings XIV — XV centuries.

