

RISING STARS

Sir Knobbly-Knees in the Quest of Spookdom Castle

by Tazeen Mahtab

My life as a wooden pencil

by Fermi Nasir

I was a warm sunny morning. Sir Knobbly-Knees had just eaten his breakfast and was relaxing in his hammock. The hammock was a trifle uncomfortable, being made of old pieces of chain-mail armour, but the knight was too used to it to mind.

He settled down and opened his morning's newspaper. The Knight's Bugle, Knight Awarded For Courage, 'New Type of Armour Invented', there was nothing very interesting that morning. As he flipped through the pages, his eye fell on an advertisement. It was rather noticeable, being decorated with flags and banners, but what had caught his eye was a picture of the Princess Rosamond. All olden day princesses were supposed to be beautiful, but Rosamond put the others to shame.

Sir Knobbly-Knees peered at the ad.

His Royal Highness King Edward the 13th is in need of a courageous young knight to rid the country of the ghosts haunting the ruins of Spookdom Castle. The reward for accomplishing this deed is the hand in marriage of His Majesty's beautiful daughter Princess Rosamond and half the kingdom. His Majesty says, "as there are no professional ghost-catchers in this country, a knight is the next best thing." Those interested are asked to collect at his Majesty's Grand Palace.

The knight folded the paper and gave a long whistle. "Half the kingdom and a princess thrown in too!" he exclaimed. He reached below him for a blade of grass and chewed thoughtfully on it for a few minutes.

Presently, he got onto his feet and strode in the direction of his stables. Sir Knobbly-Knees' squire was there, grooming the horses. "He strode up to him and boomed out, 'As soon as you are done with the horses, Squire Vernan, I want you to saddle them' and then go and pack our luggage."

"What's up, Sir K.?" Vernan questioned the Knight.

"I am going on a quest to win the Princess Rosamond. We have to scare away a couple of ghosts haunting Spookdom Castle."

"What?" Yelled Vernan, his eyes popping out of his head. "Spookdom Castle! Begging your pardon, Sir, but are you crazy? Not even the bravest Knight dare go into that haunt of ghosts!"

"I'm braver than the bravest Knight!" roared Sir Knobbly-Knees. "You, a mere pup, a new-born fledgling, dare question my courage! Don't you even doubt my bravery again!" And he stalked away with his head in the air, leaving Vernan to pack their luggage.

By the evening of the next day, Knight and Squire had arrived at the palace gates. Unlike Vernan's words of the day before, many knights had assembled at the palace and were standing in the courtyard.

They now stood up as the king entered the courtyard. He delivered a short speech, wishing them success in their attempts. He then said that as there were about 30 knights present, the order by which they would start would be fixed by a lottery.

The knights were instructed to write their names on pieces of paper, which were then mixed together and drawn.

The first knight to be picked to go to the haunted castle was a pale young man with freckles. He set off for Spookdom Castle that night.



He returned in the morning unsuccessful and trembling slightly. The next two contestants had the same results. The next knight looked more promising. Upon arriving at the haunted castle, he started work immediately and he had almost caught one spook when he began to feel very drowsy, the cause being a few extra swigs of strong wine, drunk for luck. In a few seconds, he was in a drunken sleep, while the ghosts frolicked above his head.

Now, all this time, what had Sir Knobbly-Knees been doing? He had been busy preparing

use, and settling on one, sat back to wait his turn.

At last the night came. Sir Knobbly-Knees set off in the direction of Spookdom castle wheeling a wheelbarrow piled with things in front of him.

Spookdom Castle was an old, half-ruined castle perched on the edge of a cliff. Surrounding it on three sides was a forest of trees. Weeds grew out of its walls and bats flew in and out of the windows.

Sir Knobbly-Knees opened the garden gate and approached the main door. As he neared it, it swung open of its own accord and as Sir K. stepped inside, it banged shut. An eerie laugh sounded somewhere in the castle.

The knight took a lantern from his wheelbarrow and lit

it, then placed it at his side. He then took out a number of empty bottles, and removing the corks, placed them beside the lantern. He now settled down to wait.

It did not take the ghosts long to arrive. They came with whispers and rustles, until the whole room was filled with transparent shimmering forms. All at once, as if on a signal, all the spooks bore down on Sir Knobbly-Knees. There was horrible shrieking and howling as the ghosts made chilling grimaces.

But the knight was prepared for them. As the chilling hullabuloo came to a head, he leapt to his feet and grabbed a large square shape from the top of the wheelbarrow. It was a mirror! As he held it in front of him it showed the ghostly phantoms portrayed in it.

When the ghosts saw their ugly selves, trying their best to frighten Sir Knobbly-Knees, they got a great shock. They were scared out of their wits at their own selves! The ghosts were paralysed for a minute in fear.

Sir Knobbly-Knees made good use of that minute. Grabbing the ghosts, he popped them one by one into bottles and closed the mouths with corks. In a twinkling, all the ghosts were caught and bottled like pickles.

Sir Knobbly-Knees then gave a yodel of joy and turned several cartwheels, although it was rather hard to do in his armour. Having given vent to his happiness, Sir Knobbly-Knees loaded his barrow with the bottle full of furious ghosts and wheeled it back to the palace.

Such a rejoicing followed! A great feast was held in honour of the knight and preparation for the wedding went under way.

The king was very pleased that Sir Knobbly-Knees was to be his son-in-law. He was quite good-looking, and was brave and clever (though his knees were rather knobbly, hence his name). He and the princess would make a good match.

The wedding took place with great festivity. "And I suppose they lived happily ever after?" You ask me. Not quite. Rosamond was usually very charming, but when she was cross, she tended to complain about her husband's knees which rather hurt his feelings.

Well, that's life, isn't it?

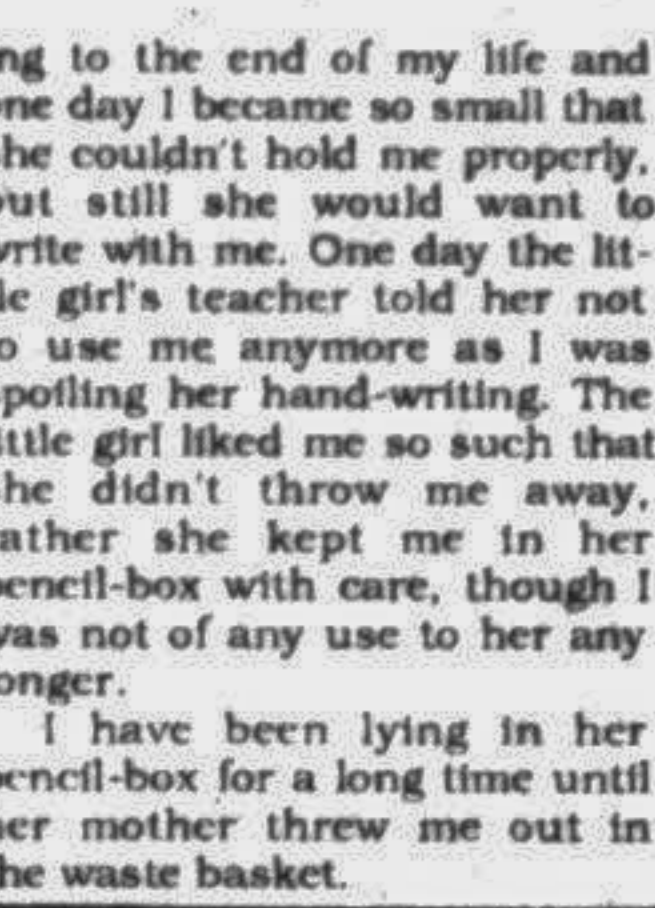
I am one of the biggest trees of this forest. I am also one of the first trees to receive the kiss of Spring! I have big, strong branches with a wonderful combination of green leaves. I have a huge trunk with dark brown bark.

One Summer night as we were all enjoying a gentle breeze, all of a sudden the speed of the wind increased and finally turned into a storm. As a result there was a lot of breaking, cracking uprooting. I lost many of my branches and countless leaves, and I also happened to crack my trunk.

The next day the woodcutters came and chopped me into pieces as I was useless. Then I was taken to the saw mill and I was cut into planks of many size. The I was waiting to be sold off, along with many other trees. Some people came to buy us and we were taken to a place which was a factory. In that factory we found out that we were going to be made into pencils.

Then we were made into nice pencils and taken to the stationary shops. There we were kept on shelves, ready for sale. Then a little girl came to the shop to buy pencils with her father.

The shopkeeper showed her many pencils and I considered myself to be lucky, because she chose me. Then she took me home and kept me in her pencil-box, where I was resting. Soon I met three new friends called the eraser, ruler and sharpener. Then I felt that I was being carried to some place. I was happy to be out again when she opened her



ing to the end of my life and one day I became so small that she couldn't hold me properly, but still she would want to write with me. One day the little girl's teacher told her not to use me anymore as I was spoiling her hand-writing. The little girl liked me so much that she didn't throw me away, rather she kept me in her pencil-box with care, though I was not of any use to her any longer.

I have been lying in her pencil-box for a long time until her mother threw me out in the waste basket.

PICTURE QUIZ

Can you name the animal in the picture? Where is it found?

Answer to last week's picture quiz.
 San Francisco, California: Golden Gate Bridge, the most beautiful bridge and most photographed in the world — connects San Francisco and Marin County.



The Knight in the Golden Armour

The knight in the golden armour, was actually a gentle farmer. He had a sword and a shield, Made of shining stainless steel. He would always fight. In the golden sunlight. His sign was a black cross. And he liked to be his own boss. He had five pretty wives. And a lot of bee hives. So everybody called him "The knight in the golden armour". Who was actually a gentle farmer.

A Chilling Experience People are strange!

by Mahruba Sameen Hussain

by Sagheer Bin Faiz

I sighed and turned the volume of the music down. It was impossible to concentrate with so much noise. I stared vacantly at the blank page of my English Language homework copy. The clock chimed. Eleven o'clock. I am definitely going to flunk tomorrow this assignment. An essay to be submitted tomorrow and not a single line written. "What a great accomplishment," I thought frustrated. The topic: A chilling Experience. The whole evening I had bugged my parents and brother to

help me with the essay. They had suggested many different things but none of them were good enough.

Creeak! Tap, tap! whats that? I pricked my ears. There it is again. A faint scratching sound. I got up from my chair and advanced towards the door. With a shaky hand I touched the doorknob and — SLAM! A door banged somewhere. My heart started pounding in my ears. I looked around warily. Holding my breath I turned the doorknob very slowly. The door opened with a creak. I came out into

the hall. The place was dark but I dared not put on a light in case the intruders became alert. My footsteps seemed to echo around the empty hall. There were two other doors in the hall apart from the one I had come in through. One led to my parents room and the other to living room. I decide to go into my parents room. As I was going to enter the room I heard the sound of drawers being opened. I grimaced. "Thats it" I thought fearfully. "One two, here I go". The room was dark. Strange. "Mum, Dad! I cried desperately. "Are you awake?" And THEN I saw THEM. Three human figures in black masks and dressed in black from head to toe with knives gleaming in their hands. I fainted.

When I regained consciousness I saw the three intruders standing around me. The masks and faces were removed. Three familiar faces Mum, Dad and my brother.

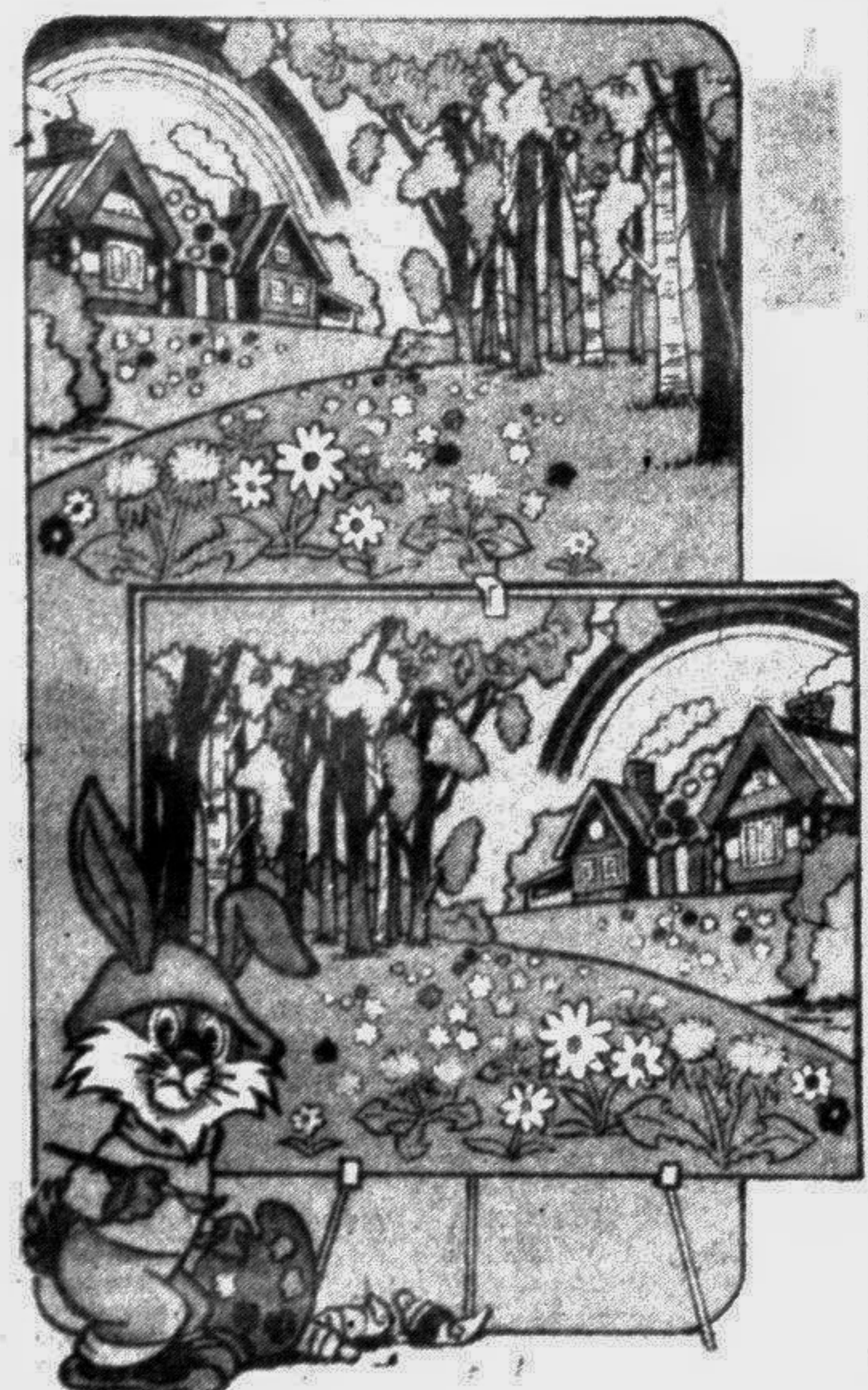
I had nagged so much that they had decided to give me a plot for my essay. I wrote exactly what had happened in my essay and got a straight A in my assignment. After all, it was a chilling experience and its not everyday that your family dresses up as robbers.

must be having on their young, impressionable, minds!

Forget Zero. At least he's manageable, what do you do about the wise crack risk-shawalla who, when asked for a ride to Bhuter Goll, responds with "scare the living hell out of me, that place?" An acquaintance of mine who was admitted into Harvard last year and was proudly trumpeting the fact all around town had his balloon burst one day. He entered an office building and when asked by the receptionist where he studied, replied very pompously, "Harvard!" To which the receptionist queried, "Harvard, where's that?"

This same friend of mine was on the lift to his father's office when he had the bad luck to bump into a bloke who was your regulation apple-polisher, intending get a favour out of my friend's father. He figured that the best way to get to the man was through his son and was showering words of praise on him. My friend was around, and all of a sudden (possibly as a last resort), here he reached out and rigged at my friend's shirt. "Loose thread" he explained...

Another friend of mine, trying to get through to mean the phone got a wrong number and asked, "Is Sags in?". The stupefying answer was, "No. This is a residence". Where do



The artistic little rabbit painted this picture. What has he done wrong?

QUIZ CLUB

- What does 'Chiaroscuro' mean in painting?
- Who built the world's first submarine?
- In which country does the river Salween flow?
- Where is the deepest cave?
- What is the branch of Zoology dealing with whales called?
- Name Shakespeare's birth place.
- Name the coldest place in the world.
- Why is Montie Carlo famous?
- When was the first Olympiad held?
- What is Kimberly (South Africa) famous for?

- Answers for 13.2.93
- Japanese art of flower arrangement.
 - Washington DC.
 - Assius.
 - 'Acta Diurna' (Daily Happenings)
 - Vijayalakshmi Pandit.
 - Two Gentlemen of Verona.
 - Louis Philippe.
 - Mark Twain.
 - 250 million years.
 - Dolomite.

Registration

Here are our new members:

Name	Registration Number
Labiba Ali	0278
Md Ashanul Haque	0279
Kazi Shayan Ekramullah	0280
Joy Alamgir Nur-E-Jannat Shammy Sumna Shamum Khan	0281
Simon Bin Mansoor Rubayat Farhana Bari	0282
Mosarrof Hossain (Polash)	0286
Nasrana Imanam Poonam	0287

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: _____ Class: _____

Full Address: _____

Telephone No. _____