

LIVING

The Loving Couple

A short story

by Farzana Haque

SHAKIL sank amongst the neat pile of soft lacy cushions with a book in his hand. Everything felt so peaceful, with the Claydeman tune playing in the background, the rubber plants guarding him against the sun and the lulling sound of the sprinkler watering his favourite rose beds. He sipped the cool lemonade with satisfaction, not just quenching his thirst but really savouring it. Everything looked perfect in his life.

Out of the midst came Sanjana's face into his vision. Sanjana — his dearly departed wife; who in the most mind-shattering manner had been the most noble creature, being completely faithful and submissive to him.

Their marriage had been a seven year's affair. The world had gaped and admired his chivalry because they thought he loved the beautiful heiress. Sanjana believed that too. But what every one had failed to see was the smirk that lay behind his cool and charming facade. On the day of the wedding reception, he had the satisfied smile of a cat who had the cream — he was planning on how to be the sole possessor of her huge inheritance. A childless marriage had been over shadowed by the fact that they seemed totally content with each other. They were dubbed the perfectly loving couple — the icon of modern day romance after marriage.

Shakil was never an impatient man and set about in achieving his goal in a cool and calculating manner. He knew he would soon be the holder of the trump cards. He played submissive and put up with all her whims and restrictions on his bouts with drinking and infidelity. Not that he missed much when she was on her shopping spree abroad! He never forgot to sing praises at the tasteless food she prepared or at her unsuccessful attempts in sketching and sculpting. For seven long years he never raised his voice against her nor forgot to exhibit his adulation. He was a success for other men's wives congratulated and envied Sanjana for having captured an ideal and dotting husband.

He felt no remorse when he killed Sanjana by mixing sleeping pills with her milk and pushing her tottering figure from tenth storey balcony. Everything had looked normal. Everyone believed (including the police) that the poor heiress had lost her balance and plunged to her death from the hotel balcony to the

peeping under it. But Sanjana was dead! He shouted but no words would come out. He rushed out of his bedroom door, stumbling out to stop at the top of the stairs over looking his living room. The door opened and she walked in with the crutches. Someone was switching on the lights. His eyes were blurred.

under arrest for the alleged murder of Mrs Sanjana Ahmed.

"But I did not succeed in killing my wife look, she is alive and well." He kept on blubbering as he was led away. Shakil had been careless in his calculation. He expected his roses a bit too early in the season.

The police in their thorough investigation had discovered a personal diary belonging to Sanjana. It had made an



lawn below. No one had any idea about his malicious pair of hands in the weekend adventure they had planned together. Sanjana had been the inventor and he had lamely agreed to her wishes. Their friends had teased them about going on a second honeymoon. He awoke from the reverie at the sound of a car entering his house. It was his newly acquired black Mercedes-Benz which had been sent to pick up the papers of the new deal he was entering with the Americans. A shade of blue and pink chiffon flashed before his eyes. He was startled! It was the colour of her saris! Had he gone crazy? There was someone getting out of the car parked under patio. He leaned over the balcony to pass and saw the crutches and the blue pink sari with a pair of feet

heart was thumping in his ears and his mind went blank. He reeled over the banister and shouted with all his might "How can you be here? You died a week ago... I pushed you over... You are not haunting me are you?" His confession poured out helplessly and a recorder was shut off.

In a dash, all his plans vanished — Sanjana's huge property all over Dhaka and the places he would soon go and the girls he would meet — Casablanca, Hawaii, Las Vegas, Rome, the Bahamas...

He felt a hand on his shoulder and turned to squint into the not-so-friendly eyes of a policeman, who was waving a paper into his face. It was the investigating officer who had questioned him arduously. He came out of the doubting shadows to say, "We are placing you

interesting reading. She had written every single detail of their marital life — how he had behaved on certain occasions, what she had worn to parties etc. She was an observant person. The police loved the entry, she had made before leaving with her husband for the adventurous weekend. She had written rather confessed about his shower of false affections and other idiosyncrasies and his apparent apathy towards her. She was too sensitive, too perceptive. She had further written how she was planning to spike his tea with poison and rid herself of him. She was also planning to remarry another industrialist friend of his, and move to London.

Evidently Shakil got to his beloved Sanjana first! But all credits went to her for writing down the details to the end!

Special Treatments

Your daily skin care routine is designed to keep your skin healthy and clean, but there are a number of special treatments that can be used on an occasional basis to keep your skin in ideal condition.

The treatments you need and the frequency with which you perform them depends on your skin type, your age, and whether or not you have any skin problems. Never use scrubs or masks if you have spots as your will spread the infection.

Types of mask

Moisturizing masks often have an herbal content and are cream based. They are very gentle and are ideal for dry or sensitive skin. Cleansing masks are clay-based, are best for oily skin as they dry out the skin and help to draw out excess oil. They dry to form a firm hard mask and should be removed with lukewarm water. Exfoliating masks are often gels or creams. When they dry, they are gently peeled or rubbed off with the fingertips, and remove the top layer of dead skin cells at the same time.

Applying masks

Masks should always be applied to clean, dry skin. Tie your hair back off the face, then apply the mask with the fingertips, avoiding the eyes and lips. Spread the mask evenly over the skin, working it upwards and outwards. You may want to lie down with dampened cotton wool pads over the eyes and rest while the mask is working. Leave it on the skin for the recommended time, then remove according to the manufacturer's instructions. Whichever mask you choose, always apply it according to the instructions, and do not leave the mask on for longer than the suggested time. Always wait a couple of hours after using a mask before applying makeup to allow the skin to settle.

Exfoliation

Regular cleansing helps to remove some of the dead skin cells from the face, but some always remain which can give the face a dull, lifeless appearance. Exfoliation is the process of sloughing off the dead skin cells, which are then replaced by fresh cells underneath. If this is done regularly, it will speed up the turnover and replacement of cells, which helps to open blocked pores.

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Dress and the Dress Code

by Parveen Anam

THERE was a time, in days of old, when dressing was seen as a matter of great pride and joy for those who could afford it. Any occasion was good enough to take out the finery and dress oneself in the most elaborate manner. It was a sight pleasing both to the sight and the sensibilities. And enjoyed both by the person dressing and the person looking at the person so dressed.

Alas, times have changed. Dressing these days it seems, is not viewed with pride and pleasure but more as a chore. It's all one can do, to put on something decent and rush off to work or wherever. And those taking care with their clothes are not looked upon as either efficient or "with it". By "with it" I mean trendy, as the younger generation would like to call it!

There seems to be no lack of clothes shops in Dhaka. In fact, it is fascinating, how these stores have sprung up all over the city. Somebody must be buying these clothes or how else would there be so many stores? The only question which springs to the mind is, who? We certainly do not always see evidence of it in the "trendily" dressed young men and women in offices or on the streets. It's not that they cannot afford to buy these clothes. It's just that the entire concept of dressing has changed and we cannot always claim for the best.

The "shalwar-kameez" once viewed as the most sensible, simple dress, has changed the fastest in the way of design. Nowadays, it will range from anything to an ankle length "kameez", to a short "shalwar", giving one the impression of a

baggy pant, barely covered by a top. Gone are the days when the tailor could make do with a couple of yards of material for

"Sarees" seem to be taking a back seat when it comes to the working woman's dress code. But fortunately, she still likes to



"Shalwar kameez" is still favoured by working women

the "kameez" and an extra yard for the "shalwars." Nowadays, he needs more like seven and a half yards to clothe a slim lady, five feet tall!

wear the elegant "saree" when out to dinner or when attending the wedding, though it is more and more common to see the odd woman dressed in a

"shalwar-kameez" at the wedding reception. One reason the "saree" will probably outlast all other dresses in this part of the world, is the sheer elegance and timelessness of it. Very few dresses can match it in either grace or beauty. It is a dress handed down for generations and sarees are known to pass from mother to daughter to granddaughter over the years.

If the "shalwar-kameez" can take a competitive place in today's dress designers world in Dhaka, the "saree" takes the first place. It is hard for the capricious "shalwar-kameez" to beat the versatility of the "saree".

The Mirpur silks, the eternal Jamdanis, the Tangail silk and the timeless Dhakai "Taant", all beat the other forms of dress hands down actually. But the Dhaka woman, in keen competition with each other, sometimes seem to forget the "saree" and settle for other forms of dress even for formal occasions. That is when they are beaten in beauty and elegance. But let us hasten to add that the other modes of dress are just as beautiful and elegant as any other and we should not deride them. Some of the "shalwar-kameez" these boutiques design are joy to behold and many a woman has adorned herself very elegantly in these. The beauty of the dress perhaps is not so much in the dress as it is in the person wearing it. Because in the end, let us admit, that the person is the one who lends the dress its beauty.

And the Dhakate must remember, that the wearer is the one who carries the show.

From Sylhet to Downing Street

by Fayza Haq

TOMMY Miah from Sylhet, at the age of 34, is the owner of a chain of Asian restaurants in Britain. Joining his father, who was a factory engineer in Birmingham, in '69, at the age of 10, he learnt cooking along with his regular work at school till the age of 16. By the time he was 17, he had opened a fast food take away shop selling curry, "samosas" and other Bangladeshi food, and at the same time pursued his career by doing courses in management. "I wanted to be more than a 'baburchi'", he elaborated. Tommy had begun his first venture with 10,000 pounds which he borrowed from family and friends.

By '80 he moved on to Edinborough to open a restaurant of his own called "The Verandah", rejecting London as his base as he realised that he would have too much of competition to deal with. His speciality was "boal" fish curry, the fish being obtained from shops that dealt with Bangladeshi fish and groceries. This cost him 95,000 pounds and although he stressed on Bangladeshi dishes, he catered for European tastes as well. He employed 18 people, the majority of whom were Bangladeshis, along with Malaysians and Indians.

Tommy was ambitious and did not wish to limit himself to a single trade only and went into buying and selling of properties. By '83 he opened two other restaurants, "Alcove" and "Rickshaw". By '86 Tommy progressed to buying the famous place which once

screened Charles Dickens's silent film "A Tale of Two Cities", which was spread over an area of 4,000 sq. feet and took two years to renovate. He had hired the elephant "Maureen" who had acted in the



Tommy Miah — Star photo

film "Gandhi" and had her parading in the streets, along with traditional eastern music on the opening day. Calling his restaurant "The Raj" he employed 40 workers. This eating place which opened in '86 cost him 450,000 pounds but

Tommy never lacked financial backing.

Did he face any problems with his work? It is always a big gamble to start a business. It was at first hard to decide which staff members to choose. While walking in the streets in UK the hoodlums might pass some occasional rude remark but this is not a daily incident. I have always had strong convictions that I was going in the right direction but there were no problems that I could not surmount," Tommy remarked.

Tommy's drive took him to set up "Miah's", yet another restaurant in '87. This was at the same time that he launched his first book on Bangladeshi recipes. He had heard about Pat Kerr of the British Airways who was helping an orphanage at Andira Road, Dhaka, and got in touch with her. Through her he got British Airways to sponsor his book, and the money raised from the sale proceeds of the book was given to the orphanage in Dhaka. Ten thousand copies of the book was sold out in two years. He furthermore organised charity balls and dinners for more funds for the orphanage.

In '89 after receiving many requests from friends and colleagues to open a club that would give entree to special restaurants which would give them 10% discount on the presentation of the cards, he set up "Tommy Miah's Curry Club" which had a huge success and a membership of 8,000 throughout U.K.

In order to further promote Bangladeshi cuisine he ran a

competition "International chef of the year". This was based on Asian food and the competitors would have to send a written recipe. Based on these eight finalists are chosen to participate in the competition in Edinborough, with all expenses paid. The winner gets a thousand pounds plus the award, and the competition is run every year.

Tommy then got his entry into the Guinness Book of Records for making the biggest curry which was done in a pot that was 8 feet in diameter and three feet deep, and which fed 8,000 people at one go. In '93 he launched his next book "The Secrets of the Indian Masterchefs" at the House of Commons. This had four sections, including Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani and the "chef of the year" winning recipes. Shortly afterwards he presented the British P.M. John Major with birthday curries of lamb, vegetable and "boal" fish.

One of his latest venture is setting up a manufacturing plant which will prepare ready-made cooked food which will be available throughout the world to the supermarkets. In August 25 he hopes to launch, in conjunction with the Edinborough International Festival, the Bangladesh Festival of food and culture in which a million people are expected to participate. The Bangladeshi Prime Minister has agreed to write the forward for his next book "A Taste of Asia" and the sale of the books is to raise funds for the orphanage that he patronises.

Having married in his teens, he now has two boys and a girl.

TONERS, often called skin tonics and fresheners, are the second step in a skin care routine. Their job is to remove any remaining grease, dirt or makeup left after cleansing. Proper toning will also refresh your skin, making it feel cool and clean.

All toners are liquid, but there are various formulations,

Beauty Tips

peratures, central heating and air conditioning. A moisturizer is probably the most important skin care product you can use, as it helps to slow down the normal dehydration process by

down the dehydration process or for women with very dry skin. As with all skin care products, choose a moisturizer for your skin type. Ask the salesperson at the cosmetics counter to recommend the appropriate moisturizer.

A moisturizer should be applied after cleansing and toning. Don't apply it heavily, as only a light film is needed, and don't apply moisturizer around the eye area as it can cause the delicate skin in this area to retain fluid and become puffy. Don't forget to use it on your neck and throat, which can become dry and dehydrated just like the skin on your face. Always wait a few minutes after applying moisturizer before putting on your makeup; this allows time for it to dry and form a smooth base for your foundation.

Eye makeup removers

The normal cleansing and toning routine is only to be used on the facial skin, and should not be used around the eye area, where the skin is very thin and delicate. To remove eye makeup, there are gels, lotions and creams that are specially designed for this purpose. If you wear contact lenses seek out special eye makeup removers that will not smear on the lenses. If you use water resistant or waterproof eye makeup, the product you use must be oil based to be effective, and should be used sparingly.

To remove eye makeup, go over the lids and lashes with cotton wool pads dampened with remover, and keep cleaning until there is no makeup left on the pads. Never pull at the delicate tissues around the eyes — treat the skin in this area gently. When all eye makeup is removed, dampen a cotton wool ball and gently wipe over the eye area. This will remove any residual oil and prevent the eyes from being puffy in the morning.

After all your eye makeup is removed, apply eye gel or cream in sparing amounts around the eye. These are specifically made to be used in the area around the eyes to add extra moisture and protect the tissues. A number of these products can also be used during the day and can be worn under makeup to provide a smooth base.



The young generation enjoy sporting western type clothes

depending on the amount of alcohol they contain, available for all types of skin. Some are particularly good for dry skin, being alcohol free, while others have astringent properties that are particularly good for greasy skin and help to remove excess oil. To use a toner, just apply it to a cotton wool ball or pad and wipe over the face, avoiding the eye area and lips.

Moisturizing

Every day skin loses some of its natural moisture. This process, called dehydration, is made worse by extreme tem-

creating a fine film on the skin's surface to prevent moisture from escaping. Moisturizers are what help to keep the skin smooth, soft and elastic, and gives it a fresh youthful look.

The majority of moisturizers are emulsions of oil and water. The oil-in-water moisturizers have a higher water content and are lighter and less heavy; these are good for use during the day when makeup will be applied over it, or for women with oily skin. The water-in-oil types consist of more oil than water, and are usually used at night when it is important to slow



Janet Jackson of MTV



Kamel Sidhu of Star Plus