

# RISING STARS

A Modern Fairy Tale

## Once Upon a Time in a Far off Land...

by Ziaul

ONCE upon a time, there lived two kings and two queens in two far away lands. The first pair, wanted a son. But due to some unknown reason they just couldn't manage one. What they ended up with were seven daughters. So they prayed for a son every night. One night while they were praying down came an angel in his space craft, cleared his throat and said, "My dear fellows, your constant praying has got on our nerves. So we have decided to give you a son. You might think of this to be a blessing but we are in fact cursing you. So here is the final word, on behalf of all the angels I curse you with a son." Z-A-P. And for an instant there was a blinding flash of light. When their eye cleared they saw a baby pig and the angel looking at his wand with a surprised look. Then suddenly his face brightened. He opened one side of the wand and shook out two pencil batteries and put in two new ones. "Always forget to change the batteries. I'm using Sunlite so now it should work." He said and zapped. This time there was a baby instead of the pig. "There you go. Now you have a son."

Meanwhile, the king and the queen were so happy with their new son that they decided to give a huge dance party in his honour. On the day of the party while every one was enjoying themselves there was a knock on the door. It was the gossip columnist of a daily newspaper fuming outside. "So you did not think I was important enough to be invited to your party. I will curse you. Your son at the age of fifteen will turn into a beast and will sleep until a princess kisses him. The princess has to be a perfect princess. And in the meantime I will write the worst kind of gossip about the royal family in my newspaper."

Saying this she stomped off towards the food. (She forget that she was not invited). The king and the queen got worried. But fifteen years is a long time. So by the time the prince was four, they forgot all about the curse. The prince was growing into a fine, spoilt, princely brat. He had his first car at the age of eight. By the time he was nine

he had broken all the traffic laws. But since he was the only son they let him be. The prince looked like Tom Cruise by the time he was twelve. But on his fourteenth birthday he had hair all over his face and body and looked more like George Michael than Tom Cruise. On his 15th birthday, he looked as ugly as a-a I don't know what. So one day he was walking through his castle when he heard a noise in a room that was supposed to be unoccupied. He went in and

They were missing every night. Finally they were caught red-handed with seven young men whom they claimed to be teaching how to dance. Finally when they found their son in deep sleep they called all the specialists but all they could say was that he was in a deep coma.

Now this pair was nothing like the other. They did not want a son. In fact they did not even want a daughter. They were very happy the way they

your phone bills are going to be very high when she reaches her teen years. So enjoy Z-A-P and a beautiful daughter. The king and queen saw the daughter and fell in love with her at once. So they decided to give a party and didn't forget to invite anyone (they saw what happened to the other royal family on TV). The gossip columnist came up and blessed the child saying, "She will have long hair, very long hair indeed." So by the time our dear princess was

time she was stopped by a policeman for speeding. "And where to you think you are going, young lady?" he asked. "My, what big shoulders you have." That's our princess trying to flatter him.

"Maam, I need to see your licence."

"My, what a big nose you have."

"Maam, I want to see your licence."

My, what big, swollen toes you will have when I drive over them," saying this our dear sweet princess drove over his toes doing all this with a smile. But luck was against her, because her car broke down so she got out and walked down the road, to look for a mechanic. Meanwhile Goldilocks found a mechanic, fixed her car and reached the castle of the first pair of king. She knocked and was let in. It was pretty late at night so she went to bed. What she did not know was that on apple was placed on the bed and then covered with 22 mattresses. This was meant to test whether she was a perfect princess. When the princess saw that she had to sleep on so many mattresses, she became so angry that she threw every single one of them out the window and found the apple which she ate. The next morning she went out shopping and managed to spend 30 million dollars in half an hour. Seeing the amount spent, the king and queen sighed because only perfect princess could manage this. So they took her to their sons bedroom where he was sleeping. She bent down and kissed his forehead. He woke up looking as handsome as ever. He smiled at her and said, "Hi. Thump. The princess faints when she saw how ugly he was. So the prince now knelt down and kissed her thinking it would wake her up. Z A P. The princess had changed don't a load with long hair. The frog jumped and kissed the prince, who turned into a goat.

Don't ask me whether they lived happily ever after because the last I heard of them, they were still busy converting from one animal to another. So the moral of this story is next time you see a name like this don't bother reading the story.



saw an old lady sewing something. He went towards her to throw her out but since she knew karate and judo, she had him flat in 10 seconds. Then she removed the needle from the sewing machine and pricked him with it. The prince fell into a deep sleep. The king and queen did not find out about this until the next week because they were having some problems with their daughters.

were. But the people up there had a very weird sense of humour. One night while the king and queen were partying our dear angel came down. He said, "You two have been very nice. So we are going to bless you with a daughter. We are giving you a daughter because daughters are very nice and also because we ran out of boys because they seem to be in high demand. The only thing in that

nine, she had very long hair. How long? Well let's see. She would use it as a belt to hold up her pants and use it as a shawl at the same time with about 7 feet of hair to spare. She was called Goldilocks. When Goldilocks was seventeen, she heard about the sleeping prince. So she decided to try her luck. She wore her favourite red riding hood and got into her Porsche. After driving of some

## Shakespeare: Judge of Human Nature

by Rex Rahman

WHY do people become enchanted by the dramas of Shakespeare? Why is Shakespeare regarded as the greatest playwright the earth has ever known? The answer is quite simple: because Shakespeare has depicted human nature through his plays. In all of his plays — comedies, tragedies — Shakespeare shows us the human nature. His characters act and react in the most extraordinary ways — and sometimes in the most incomprehensible ways.

People are always trying to find motivations for what a character does. They ask, after going through "Othello", why does Iago want to destroy Othello? The answer is quite simple: because that's the way Iago is. That's just his nature. Shakespeare doesn't explain his characters; he sets them in motion — and away they go. He doesn't worry about whether they're likable or not. He's interested in interesting people.

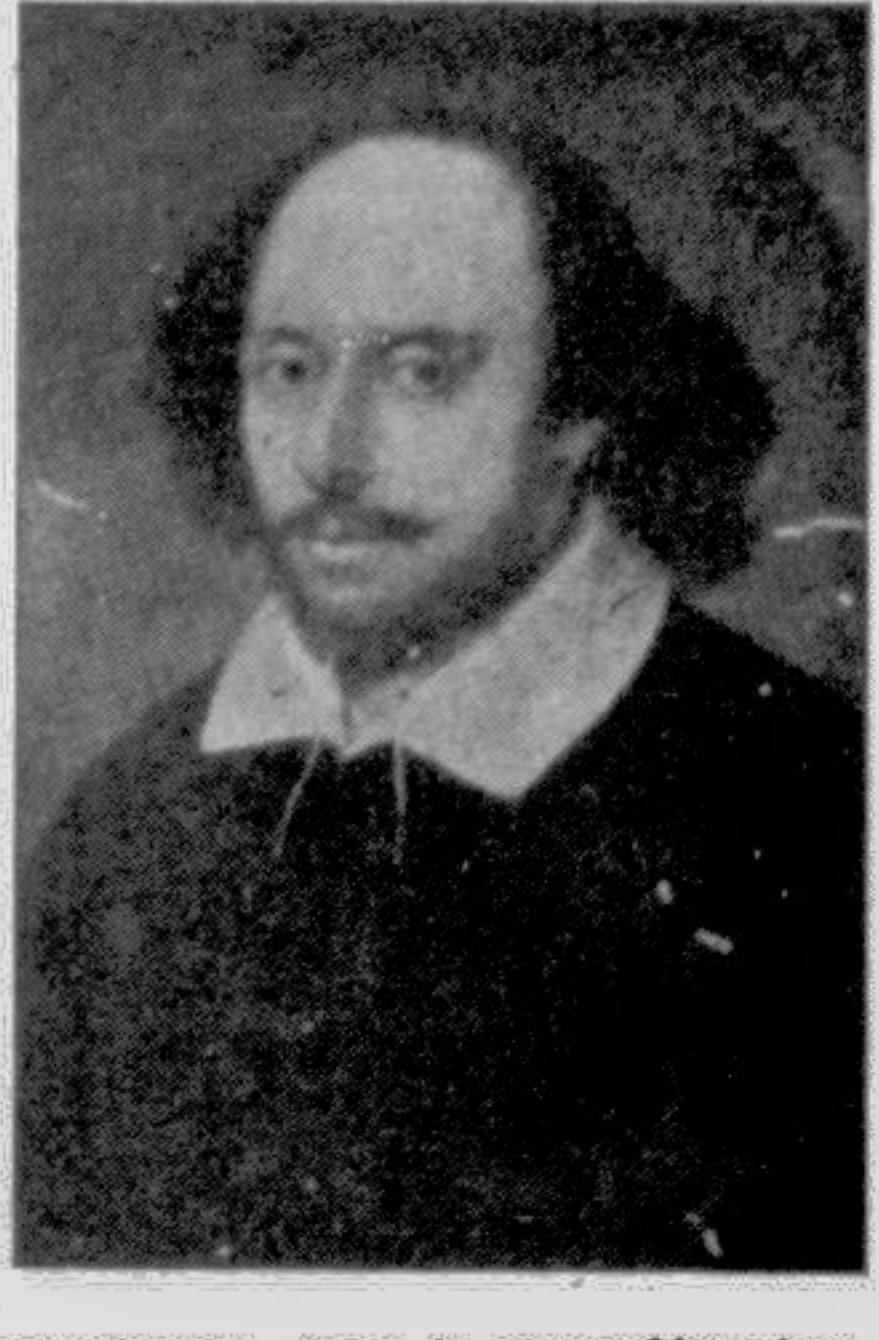
His most fascinating characters are those who are unpredictable. If you lean back in your chair early thinking that you've figured out what Iago (in "Othello") or Shylock (in "The Merchant of Venice") is up to, don't be too sure — because Shakespeare will surprise you every time.

Virgil once uttered: "Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori." (Love overcomes all things, let us too yield to love).

Shakespeare knew it. So he wrote plays about the most favourite emotion of the human beings — Love. In many of his plays, he revealed the truth that "the course of true love never did run smooth." In "A Midsummer Night's Dream" you can easily understand the situation: A girl (Helen) is chasing a guy (Demetrius) who is chasing a girl (Hermia) who is chasing another guy (Lysander). Of course, in the end Helen gets Demetrius and Hermia gets Lysander but not without lots of complications along the way. In "The Two Gentlemen of Verona", the situation is quite tacky.

Here Julia loves Proteus, Proteus loves Sylvia and Sylvia loves Valentine who's Proteus's best friend. In the end, true love prevails but not without lots of chaos. Another reason behind Shakespeare's huge success as a playwright was probably the rhetoric expressions of his characters. For example, you will be thrilled by the speech of Marullus who scolds the Roman in "Julius Caesar". Marullus, the tribune (city official), rebukes the Romans for transferring their loyalties so quickly from the defeated and murdered general Pompey to the newly victorious.

"Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home? What trophies follow him to Rome to grace in captive bands his chariot wheels? You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things! O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome, knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft have you climbed up to walls and battlements, to towers and windows, yea, to chimney tops, your infants in your arms and there have sat the livelong day, with patient expectation, to see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome."



## Music Corner

Top — 10 Albums

1. Fate of Nations — Robert Plant
2. Images and Words — Dream Theater
3. The Vanishing Race — Air Supply
4. Coverdale Page — Coverdale
5. Breathless — Kenny G
6. On the Night — Dire Straits
7. The Future — Leonard Cohen
8. Unplugged and Seated — Rod Stewart
9. Ten — Pearl Jam
10. San Francisco Days — Chris Isaak

Top — 10 Singles

1. Come Undone — Duran Duran
2. 29 Palms — Robert Plant
3. Two Princes — Spin Doctors
4. Bad of Roses — Bon Jovi
5. If I Ever Lose My Faith — Sting
6. Jeremy — Pearl Jam
7. Two Steps Behind — Def Leopard
8. Lemon — U2
9. If — Janet Jackson
10. Waiting for the Miracle — Leonard Cohen

## JOKES

There's nothing in the world I can't do, you know. Have you tried slamming a revolving door?

When is the best time to pick plums? When the farmer isn't looking.

Whose emblem is a leak? The plumbers' union.

Dad: What did you learn at school today, son? Son: I learned that all those sums you did for me were wrong.

Did you hear what happened when the cannibals ate the whole team of footballers? They had to warm up the substitute.

What country is useful at meal times? China.

Why did Dracula take medicine? To stop his coffin.

What did the tie say to the hat? You go on a head and I'll hang around.

## Sine Die Closures

by A M M Adeeb

JUST the other day I read that the JU (Jahangirnagar University) was closed sine die. How nice I thought. They are really lucky. Then it struck me that the students were getting a vacation until further notice (maybe sine die closures should be introduced in our schools).

When I think of the time I get to go to university (I thank God it's a long way off) I get the creeps. Indefinite holidays are fine for some time but then your mind drifts back to your studies. And time. In our country studying in colleges and universities is not easy. There is practically violence everywhere and in the few institutions that are violence-free they are either miles away or hard to find.

Some of us get to study abroad and are not directly influenced by this violence in the educational institutions but those of us who are not so lucky or do not wish to study abroad by principle might be in for some trouble. Colleges and universities are not consistent in

their classes and remain closed throughout the year. I have a few friends who give a celebration party every time their colleges or universities stay open for three months. On my part I have to admit that when there is a halt I get very excited and dance around the house. This magic word spells out only one thing for me — no school. But then again I get school sick, if you know what I mean!

Apart from the violence in the universities there are students who just love cooking up trouble. Eventually they waste invaluable time in which they could have done something worthwhile than just sitting and waiting for the classes to resume. (I always revise during holidays).

The TC (trouble cookers) students are not satisfied only by making trouble. They also induce other students to take up the so called student politics. Something should be done to this never-ending sine die closures of the educational arena.

## Out in the garden...

Out in the garden this fine day

fine day; with my friend I like to play.

Out in the garden this fine day

with my doll I like to play.

Out in the garden on this

fine day, with my pet I like to play.



Photo: M. Harris Uddin

## Not Even Death Can Vanquish Him

by Raffat Binte Rashid

WHAT can a twelve-year-old be to his mama, other than a bundle of joy, high hopes and aspirations? Like every other child, Sharafat Ibn Momen (Shumon) was exactly all this and much more to his parents. He was their pride and at the same time an unexplained pain, an unfathomable suffering they still cannot forget.

Shumon was born on December '79 and died on February '92. He was suffering from chronic myeloid leukemia a fatal disease that spares no one — not even a mere child of twelve years. But Shumon was strong and courageous he did not let his illness ruin what was destined for him. Whatever time was allotted for him, he lived his life to the fullest. For those who knew him, he thoroughly enriched their lives. He was always full of life and mischievous fun.

"Infact he was overzealous and always into sports and activities, he was so much into it, that his disease went unnoticed in its initial stage. It was first discovered when he was only ten years old and by the time he was eleven he knew that life was short for him," said his father M A Momen an employee of National Westminster Bank in London. "Although the incapacity of his disease he strode on courageously with a sense of humour and dignity which I have never seen in any other boy of his age."

It was fortunate for Shumon that he could take life enthusiastically. He was strong enough both physically and emotionally to battle with his cruel fate as long as he could. All his thoughts and desires he compiled together in poems he wrote himself from simple childlike topics like the fish, toys or Easter bunnies to world affairs like Mandela's Freedom and the Gulf war.

"Humour was just a part of his character, he was always full of jokes. I found the following joke in his note book. My name is Shumon Momen. The moment you forget me, cut 'T' from the word moment, you will get me. These form my happy memorabilia of him," commented his father.

An innocent joke all right but forget him, his parents will never do. Shumon had an earnest belief that his parents would never leave any stone unturned to save his precious life. From Ajmer Sharif in India to Khawja Baba's Mazar in Sylhet to latest technology of life-saving machine and the best doctors of human hematology of

Hammersmith Hospital in London, they tried everything. His condition became worse when he was attacked by adeno pneumonia, an infection which spread from his bladder to his lungs, which eventually caused his death.

"The death of any young person is hard to bear but it was much harder in this case since the life of such a vigorous son is not easy to replace. In this boy there was so much of talent that could not be realized but we must now look forward to the future," his father said with a mournful yet determined look in his eyes.

All the poems of Shumon will be published in a book with illustrations given by his school friends in London. At the same time a Bangla version of this book will also be printed with illustrations given by his cousins here. But the most interesting feature of the Bangla version is

that his poems are all translated by famous poets like Asad Choudhury, Ashraf Siddique, Subroto Borua, Taslima Nasreem, Ataur Rahman. His father has also requested Begum Sufia Kamal to write a poem on him. Shumon was no doubt the apple of his mother's eye and his loss was more than she could bear. Shumon's mother is a teacher in Thomas Buxton Junior School in London. This school has arranged a Shumon Momen Memorial concerts on two occasions and raised \$550 in the first and \$1120 in the second.

The proceeds from ticket sales went to a school called "School Under the Sky" in Sylhet, run by an organization called Toe-H.

When a first year student of Ilford Grammar School in London Shumon was also a cub-scout. He always remembered the motto of the scout movement "Be prepared", he was prepared for his ultimate fate and was not at all afraid. He embraced death gallantly. He was deprived of life itself, but left behind a legacy of courage and inspiration. His ambition was to open an orphanage in Bangladesh to serve the homeless and the distressed and to dedicate his life to leukaemia research. His dreams will remain as pious wishes until someone finds an end to this fatal disease that kills and destroys so many precious lives.



## Birds with Foster Parents!

IN a nest hidden in the marshes of a wildlife refuge, a fuzzy whooping crane chick struggles out of its egg. Whooping cranes are an endangered species. That makes the appearance of any whooping crane chick a special event. This one was extra special because the whooper hatched in the nest of a different kind of crane — the greater sand-hill crane.

There are large numbers of greater sand-hills, but whoop-

ing cranes have never been numerous. By 1941, human settlement and too much hunting in their home areas had driven the birds to the edge of extinction. That year, their numbers dropped to an official low of 22. Scientists feared whooping cranes would soon disappear entirely. Concerned people began to take measures to protect the endangered birds.

In 1975, US and Canadian wild-life biologists started an ongoing experiment to increase

the number of whooping cranes in the wild. They began using sand-hill cranes as foster parents for whoopers.

Female whooping cranes and sand-hill cranes each lay two eggs during the nesting season, but usually raise only one chick. The biologists decided to take the second egg from a whooper nest and substitute it for the eggs in a sand-hill nest. The sand-hill eggs would then be hatched in captivity. The whooping crane pair would still have one egg to hatch.

The sand-hills would hatch and raise the second whooping crane egg.

Scientists switched whooper eggs for eggs in several nests of one sand-hill flock. When the first whoopers hatched, the scientists were pleased to see that the sand-hills accepted the chicks. Today, of the estimated 154 whooping cranes in the wild, 134 form a separate flock. The others have been raised by sand-hill parents. These fostered whoopers are just now reaching adulthood. Although not raised by whoopers, they seem to recognize their own species. A few males and females have paired up briefly, but so far, none have reproduced. Still, the biologists are hopeful. They think 1988 may be the year the whoopers will produce young of their own — and begin to establish a second nesting flock.

