

RISING STARS

The Under-Sea Rescue At a Depth of 500 Metres

by Zahid Anwar Haque

ON 29th August, 1973 the midgeet submarine Pisces III (the name is Latin for 'fish' and is pronounced 'pis-seez') was lying on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, about 100 miles from Ireland. The two men in it were just finishing a six-hour work shift, for the submarine's job was to help in laying Trans-Atlantic telephone cables. On the surface above them was the mother-ship, Voyager, a specialised cable-laying ship.

Their work done, the men were looking forward to breakfast and some sleep. They requested permission to rise, and this was granted, so Pisces III slowly surfaced. But just as it was nearly back on board the Voyager, something went wrong. A cable slipped and the small submarine fell back into the water. As it did so, part of the submarine — not, fortunately, the main working area where the two men were — flooded, and Pisces III went into an uncontrollable dive towards the sea-bed, finally coming to rest nose-down at a depth of 500 metres.

The men were uninjured and had enough air for three days. They could still communicate with Voyager by radio. The captain of the Voyager immediately reported the accident to his head office, and international rescue attempt began. A submarine had never before been recovered from such a depth. There were few submersible vessels in the world which could operate at that depth, and these could work only with the help of specialised surface ships. Meanwhile, the men's life-support system would run out after three days. The experts were privately very pessimistic.

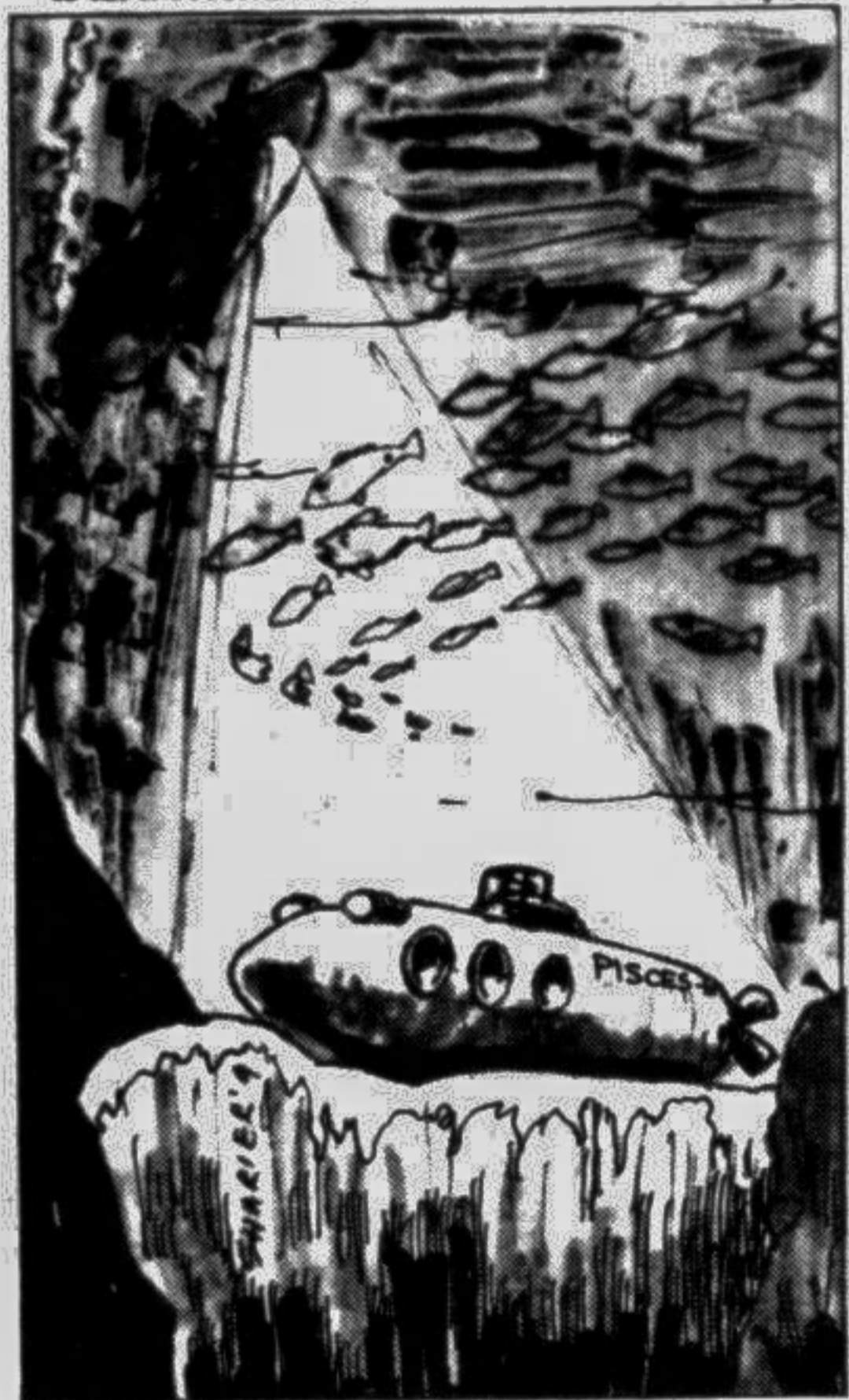
Simultaneously, several things were arranged. Pisces II, sister-ship to the unlucky submarine would be flown out from England to Cork, in Ireland, which was the nearest place to the accident, having both an airport and port facilities. Pisces V, another sister-ship just built, would be flown over from Canada. Royal Navy ships would go to where the Voyager was, so that they could stay in contact with the men on the sea-bed while Voyager sailed to Cork to collect the two submarines. In addition, an American submarine known as CURV (for Controlled Underwater Reconnaissance Vessel) would also be flown to Cork, and a Canadian cable laying ship would arrive there to collect it and its team of operators.

At first all went well but because of the distances involved, it was late on Thursday, before Voyager returned with its cargo to the scene of the accident. The two submarines were cold and hungry but were otherwise well after a day and a half below the water. Soon they were relieved to hear on the radio that Pisces II had been sent down to look for them. After several hours of searching, it failed to pin-point their location. Then it developed a small leak which forced it to return to the mother-ship for repairs.

Next it was the turn of Pisces V, with its Canadian crew. It too made the long descent, and began to search through the thick black water. Eventually it found Pisces III, and moved in to attempt to attach a line. But here too there were problems. Pisces III had come to rest on the bottom of the sea at a sharp angle, so it proved impossible to attach the normal hook and line. All that Pisces V could do was attach a thin line, not strong enough to lift the trapped vessel. Pisces II was being repaired, and CURV was not yet ready, so Pisces V stayed down until, after 18 hours in the sea, its batteries were exhausted and it had to be taken to the surface. Pisces III had then been under water for 51 hours, with only 24 hours remaining before the life-support system would fail.

At 4 am, on Saturday, 1st September, Pisces II, its leak repaired, and armed with a specially-made locking mechanism, dived again. This

time, in little over an hour, success came. The mechanism worked, and a strong line was attached to Pisces III. But would it be enough? If the line should slip off when the attempt to lift the submarine was made, the rescuers might lose contact with Pisces III again. It was therefore decided to put CURV into operation. There was just enough time to give it one chance to fix a second line.



Here the technique was different, for CURV was unmanned. Its operators stayed on a ship above water, directing it by remote control, seeing its movements only through the eyes of its television cameras. But again luck was with them, and at 10.35 am CURV succeeded in attaching a second-strong line to Pisces III. With only a few hours of oxygen remaining, the two men were finally on their way up. The lift was rough, and they were knocked around, but the lines held firm, and when the vessel was within 50 feet of the surface frogmen were able to reach it and fasten several more lines, just in case. Eventually, at 1.17 pm on Saturday afternoon, Pisces III surfaced again, and the men were immediately helped out and on to the Voyager, exhausted and starving, but otherwise in good condition. Thanks to an efficient international rescue effort, the deepest ever submarine recovery had been safely completed.

I'll never forget you!

by Shakila Sultana Lima

If I could show you my heart, you could see how great was the pain when from each other we had to part. I'll cherish you in my heart. Though we live far from each other, I'll never forget you and my feelings will never alter. Whenever you feel lonely and tired I'll be there with you these five words I swear to you.

When Science Interferes With My Imagination

by Zinnia Ahmad

TWINKLE, Twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?

Up above the world so high like a diamond in the sky.

Only a few years left, and my five-year old sister will know that stars are far from being diamonds in the sky. That apparent twinkling of the stars is nothing but some extremely logical scientific explanation which I myself don't want to know. You know why? Because then there would no longer be the wonder with which I gaze at those twinkling little stars every night. I'll probably be saying, 'that's nothing wonderful; the stars seem to twinkle because...' and I don't want science to break that image I've already created in the depths of my mind.

Nature has its other wonders too. A quiet starless night. A gentle breeze blowing. I am sitting by a lake watching the reflection of the moon in the lake which seems like a thousand scattered glittering diamonds. But as soon as I recall that the moon is a dull, bleak revolving body with no light of its own, I jerk back to real life.

I may sound weird but true enough whenever the lightning strikes and thunder roars, I am reminded of God's wrath. I wonder if he is angry at something I did, or the people in this world did. But then I give a sigh, partially of relief and partially irritably. Irritated because

the scientific explanations of clouds clashing, electrons discharge, etc ruins my mythological point of view.

Rarely will you find someone who will not, during a heavy downpour, stand by the window and get lost in his reveries. I have no idea why. But for some unknown reason, it is such showers that lure me away to an imaginary world. And just then 'the water cycle' pops into my head. Science and nature gets all mixed up until I'm thoroughly confused whether to lead a down-to-earth life or let myself be carried away by nature's occasional features.

Sunset and sunrise (the latter of which I rarely get to see) are others of nature's features, yellow, red, orange, purple a world of colours and calmness. Such picturesque scenes pacifies my otherwise troubled mind and reminds me that the earth still has a beautiful part left. But when I read articles like 'why do the sunset look beautiful?' and then the following derided answer, I get totally irritated. Is there anything left for these humans to be investigated, analysed and explained? Are they so restless that they have to ruin beauty with the harsh world of science.

Eyes. They are the window to light, 'like a pool of water' as the poet describes them. But look up page 216 of 'New Biology for Tropical Schools' and you'll know what I mean when I say science interferes with my imagination.

Dear Diary

by Razin Alam

DRUGS are like Brutus who pretends to be your friend but stabs you on the back.

At first when you take it you think you can stop whenever you want. But soon it takes over and becomes the master while you become its slave.

I have fallen into this devil's trap. This is the last time. I'll write to you. I hope whoever reads you, will not make the same mistakes that I did. (Stops writing and turns the pages back to 13.2.92)

Today was a wonderful day. Guess what?

She accepted my engagement ring. Everything is going perfectly.

Tomorrow will be my first try out for the basketball team. I hope that I am selected. My parents, my friends are all sure that I will. I must not let them down. (18-4-92)

I couldn't make the team.

But I made a new friend. The coach said that I did not have enough stamina. My friend Ben promised me that he would help me to improve my stamina. And so he gave me some pills. I know drugs are dangerous but I must do it for my family and I promise you that after I pass the selection I will quit.

I did it! I have passed. The world cup is next month. I promise you I won't use it after that.

(turns the pages back) Let me tell you what has happened after that. I became so addicted to the drug that I just couldn't live without it. After the world cup, I was caught taking the drug and was banned for life. I lost my friends, my family. My whole life revolved around the drug I have now found out what a price I had to pay. I know no matter how hard I try the devil wouldn't release me.

To believe or not!

by Trishna



I would not be wrong to say that we are slaves of superstitions. Those illogical feelings, whether supernatural or magical influence the events in our daily lives.

The word superstition comes from the Latin word 'superstitus' which means 'those left standing after battle' in simpler words, survivors.

Most of the common superstitions of the present days, descended from older ones, whose origins are lost. Let's find out how these beliefs come to conquer our lives.

The belief that a broken mirror brings bad luck for seven years is believed to stem from the ancient notion that a man's reflection in water portrayed his soul, and the ripples destroyed it.

The horseshoe, which is roughly crescent shaped, have been derived from the Egyptian worship of the moon. The iron makes it more potent, because the first known specimens of iron fell from the sky as meteorites. Its mounted with ends facing up, so the luck doesn't fall out.

A rabbit's foot is often carried by many, even today, for luck. In Britain, the hare was an object of worship. As Christianity commenced, this practice was outlawed.

Almost everybody believe in superstitions even if they laugh at themselves for doing so. Knocking on wood — just to play it safe, has a strange background. The sound of knocking was believed to scare off evil spirits. Crossed fingers were a secret greeting, for the member of the church, who concealed their faith, fearing persecution. It was a way of making the sign of the cross.

Now you wanna know about the most common one — the sight of black cats? Well this is how it started. Napoleon was terrified by them, while Winston

Churchill used to touch them for good luck. Black was considered to be a sign of evil, and so started the treatment towards black cats. Why is 13 thought to be unlucky? In Babylon, 13 people were chosen to personally the Gods in certain religious rites. One person, somehow, was always seated apart from the rest and was put to death at the end of the ceremony. In the Bible, 13 were present at the last Supper and Christ foretold that one of them would soon betray him. In China and Japan, 13 has no significance but 4 is unlucky, perhaps because the Chinese character, or ideograph, for 4 also signifies death.

But surprisingly some superstitions have proved to be remarkably practical. Once in England, there was this superstition that people infected by cowpox from cattle would be immune to smallpox. In the late 1700s, Edward Jenner took this seriously and discovered that an inoculation of cowpox prevented smallpox. This led to the establishment of the principle of vaccination. During World War I, a superstition arose that the third man to light his cigarette on one match would be killed. In just the time, it took for the third man to get his cigarette lit, the enemy was able to draw a bead on him with a rifle.

Superstitions are rather harmless. If wearing a lucky shirt or chair makes you feel sure of success and if you are convinced that you sleep better by putting your right foot into your pajamas first, then you are using superstitions to make your life pleasanter. Superstitions can be harmless as well as helpful to the ones confused about making certain decision or caught by fear.

Information collected from 'ABC's of the Human Mind'.



POLLUTION IN REALITY A Sweating, Smoky, Sticky Chaos

by Camellia Ahmad

OUR day started with the usual assembly on the school terrace, at precisely 8:15 am. Then the entire class XI tramped out of the school-building and into the school bus. We all expected it to be just another school field trip. None of us, therefore, were prepared for the polluted shock that lay in our imminent future.

It was either because we had a thoroughly lousy driver, who could not figure out the detours to our destination, or else it must have been our combined bad luck that continually gets our class into a mess... be it surprise-tests or unsuccessful field trips.

The bus was barely out of the long, clean airport road when our troubles began. It was the biggest and the most confused of all the traffic jams that we had ever been unlucky enough to experience. One of my classmates, who recovered her lively sense of humour only after a week of rest, joked later that compared to the jam we spread on bread, the latter was the stickier of the two I could not have put it better myself. It was certainly a sweating, smoky, sweltering, sticky chaos. What had started out as a beautiful, cool morning quickly turned out to be one that nightmares are made of.

My experience, though, was far more gruesome than that of my stronger and healthier classmates. The dust and grime combined with the smell of sweat and exhaust fumes soon made me terribly nauseous and ill. The teachers accompanying us noticed my plight and got me a seat near the window where it was n't so stuffy. So I had a clear view of all the places we drove through as the driver did his best to lose the way.

Sometimes those dreadful memories all come back. That horrible stench of the drains, combined with the dark, evil-looking gases that just would n't stop pouring out of those huge vehicles. And out went my 600-caloried diet-breakfast, as my head seemed to spin like a top. We had all read about pollution, and seen it on TV, but stuck there on the most polluted section of the Dhaka-Demra road, I realised just how serious it is.

passenger-cars, but trucks and lorries carrying garbage and goods in and out of the city. We were appalled to discover what these 'goods' were: timber. I thought of those beautiful trees, murdered and reduced to those pathetic, lifeless logs and my heart went out to them. I knew now what had happened to the poor trees that lined the roads with barely a single branch intact.

When the jam finally cleared after a two-hour delay, we proceeded to wards the outskirts of the city. On the way, I had another opportunity to witness yet another kind of pollution.

Unplanned garbage dumps, piles and piles of waste lying in vast heaps by the roadside. And yet another ironic and tragic scene appeared before us; pitiful, grey slums... right next to high rise buildings and apartment blocks. I snapped away with my pocket camera until I had no film left. I have very intention of persuading our school magazine committee to publish those photographs.

Apart from capturing the reality of the problems that pollution causes, they show just how desperately we lack public awareness.

As our journey took us, finally, to our destination in Demra — The Bengal

Glassworks' — I saw a lot of lumberyards on the way. I had to endure my feelings of outrage once more. But once at the glass factory, for the first time that day, I was faced with things that did not leave a bad taste in my mouth.

In fact, we were all quite impressed with the pollution control we saw there. I won't go into details about the actual process of glass production but it was certainly the most satisfying sight that we had seen since morning, apart from the time when the traffic-police finally cleared the jam around us! Their use of local raw materials, quality control, and pollution minimising methods helped us get over the environmental degradation we had witnessed all day. And I even forgot my lost breakfast, and finished off another reel of film with shots of cycling processes and other environment-friendly scenes.

Our trip back was uneventful; since our driver, now severely reprimanded by the accompanying teachers, took the right route back. But the memory of the horrors I had witnessed with my own eyes, and taken pictures of myself, still remains with me. Its vivid reality is something I will never forget.



Courtesy — Anandika Mela

Shakespearean Romance

Q. Who were the the bride and bridegroom?
Ans. Romeo and Juliet

Q. When did he propose?
Ans. Twelfth Night

Q. What was her reply?
Ans. As you like it.

Q. From where was the ring obtained?
Ans. The Merchant of Venice.

Q. Who were the groom's friends?
Ans. Two Gentlemen of Verona.

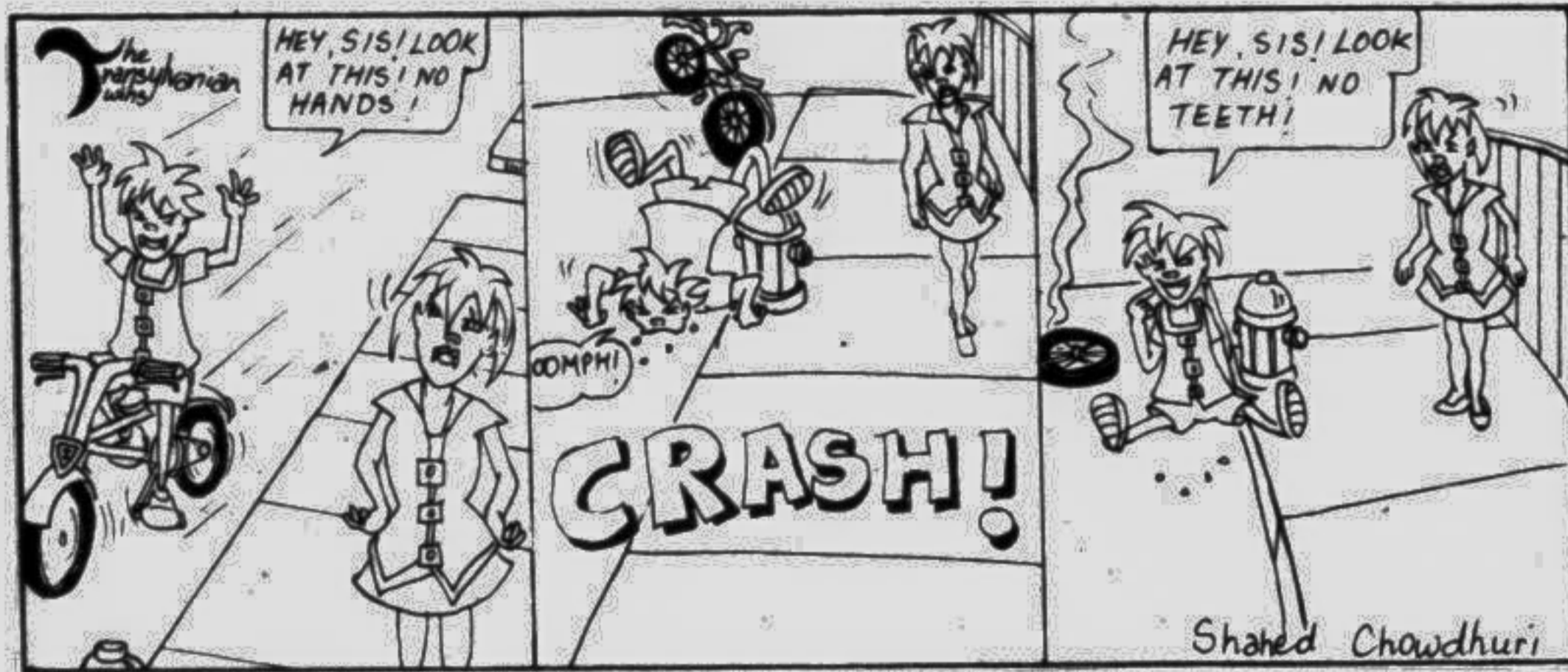
Q. Who prepared the wedding feast?
Ans. The Merry wives of Windsor.

Q. Where did they live after marriage?
Ans. Hamlet.

Q. What was the honeymoon like?
Ans. A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Q. What was the married life like?
Ans. The Tempest.

Q. What was the bridegroom's chief occupation?
Ans. Taming of the Shrew



JOKES

What is black, white and very difficult?

An exam paper.

What do you call someone who breaks into a butcher's shop?

A hamburger.

Did you hear about Larry? He's so lazy, his feet have been known to fall asleep while running for a bus.

Teacher: Louise, name a collective noun.
Louise: Dustbin.

Teacher: Make up two sentences using the word 'beans'.
Pupil: 'My mother cooks beans' and 'We are all human beans'.

Writer: What did you think of my last book?
Critic: Well, I'm glad to hear it was your last.

What do you call a bad tempered pudding?
Apple grumble.

SUSAN

by Tanzeem I Ali

Susan was lovely like a dove, and she was the person whom I loved. Sometimes if I were angry with my friends and started to fight.

She was the one who would say polite words and make me feel light.

Once I lost my favourite kite, and thought to break the others with all my might. But again there was Susy the beautiful and bold, to make my mind go cold.

When came my birthday she gave me a card, and a pair of love bird.

When I lost my job in the mart and had to drive a cart, still she didn't want me get from her apart.

After many years of joy and laughter she once became ill. But she used to say the words which made me feel better, like before till she got ill. Then came a time when she made my heart feel low, and I became a lovely fellow.

When she left me and went away, my life became very slow. I used to feel that someone gave me a hard blow, Now my heart is in thousand piece, but she is resting in peace. She lies under many flowers, and tall green bowers.

