

RISING STARS



What's in a Name!

by Auditia Aura Aunima

I bet you couldn't help staring at my name. What's wrong with it, if I ask, your answer may be it's too long. And there are too many 'Au-'s in it. Awesome, eh? Nah, maybe awful is the word. However, I'm sure you'll admit that it's not only me with an odd name.

I have noticed that just anything in the world can be a person's name. In this country, I've come across fruity names like *Aapel* (Apple), *Angoor*, *Anar*, *Komola* or *Chirpy* names like *Doyel*, *Kyool*, *Nightingale* or fragrant names like *Champa*, *Beli*, *Tagar*, *Jesmin* or wealthy names like *Dollar*, *Yen*, *Lira*, *Rouble*, or historical names like *Tipu Sultan*, *Bahadur Shah* or geographic names like *Riyad*, *Tahiti*, *Medina* ... Sheesh! the list is endless.

Scientific names drive me nuts. Who'll explain why scientific names must, must, must be Latin or Latinized? As if there aren't enough problems already in this world to trouble our young minds. There has to be Latin names in our syllabus to contribute to our misery, why? Homo Sapiens is easy enough to memorize. But how about *Hemidactylus Brookii*? Thank God, Lizard don't bother much about us human beings. 'Cos if Mr Lizard ever got the slightest notion about what damage we have done to his personality by giving him such a peculiar name, I bet His Majesty would chase us to hell for humiliating him.

Good Old Miss Nosy and Us

by Zinnia Ahmad

I T was her rather long nose than a poking into other's business character which led to the invention of the infamous nickname Miss Nosy for our unforgettable Miss Smithers.

I vividly remember the first day she entered our classroom. A teeny-tiny, slim and trim, white haired creature. It was Nothing worth remembering, whispered Alicia from the back. And I burst out laughing, immediately it was, I don't approve of laughing during lesson time. I would like to have a 250 word essay from you tomorrow explaining your behaviour today.

After that I never dared to neglect history. And there was this other incident when Dedro decided it was high time for 'pranks'. We applied glue to the long plank of wood which joined two shorter planks which in turned joined the legs of the teacher's table, knowing that Miss Nosy had a habit of resting her feet there. The bell announced the commencement of the history period.

Miss Nosy entered the class, sat down took the attendance call then said, My dear children please read page 217 where you'll get to know about Alexander the Great. There was a simultaneous shuffling of pages but 25 pairs of eyes were fixed on Miss Nosy's feet waiting for the historic moment to occur. Then it happened.

Unlike the others I couldn't keep a straight face. After a few suppressed laughs which she couldn't hear as I was in

the last bench, Sretlana, sitting beside me, handed me her hankiechief and told me to stuff it into my mouth. As I tried to do it a funny weird noise—a mixture of a laugh, a short and a cough escaped from my mouth.

Young lady, what is wrong? asked Miss Nosy looking up.

I have a cold, miss. My answer was muffled as the hanky was pressed over my mouth and nose.

I'd appreciate it if you would go into the toilet!

Yes, miss. As I hurried out another strange sound was emitted.

After laughing to my heart's content, I came back to find the class silent, everybody appearing to study. I did the same, until the bell rang and butterflies once again entered our stomachs. We all stood up, waiting for her to stand up and leave.

As we had expected she struggled sometime before the glue (fina) gave away, while some of us at the back bench giggled softly. Then it suddenly occurred to us how horrendous the aftermath of this joke could be. Surprising she just looked at Omar and said,

An Encounter

by Susmita Roy

I had been pacing up and down for the last half an hour or so. I drew to an abrupt halt at my ailing sister May's bedside and looked fixedly at her pale face.

Even at five, May's face astonishingly resembled that of Grandmother whom our parents had gone to visit. The burning sensation of my palms resting on May's forehead broke my momentary absent-mindedness and at once I made up my mind to take May to Doctor Jones by bus.

May was a delicate creature from birth and it was not uncommon for her to have a fever now and then. However, this time, I felt an odd fear churning up within me. It was midday and the bus were in was devoid of the usual lunch time passengers.

May's head rested peacefully on my lap and I comforted myself by looking at her serene eyes staring out the bus window towards a little dark cloud which had probably escaped the notice of everyone but herself.

I was quite at ease until I heard a faint rustle behind my neck. From the corner of my eye I saw something grey move up slowly and stealthily from behind me. The obscure figure now came into view as it seated itself directly before me.

The man in grey sitting before me seemed no ordinary passenger. At least his gesture seemed to imply that he was more of an undertaker than an ordinary gentleman. Maybe it was my imagination but his presence had cast a sepulchral atmosphere in the environment.

Realizing that I was not living in middle ages I shrugged off my unfounded mental weakness and intrepidly looked straight at him.

In spite of his overlarge hood shadowing his face, I observed



Examination Etiquette

by Zaki Wahhaj

TAKE it from me I am a veteran. There is really a set of unwritten rules about what is considered acceptable behaviour inside an exam hall.

You might ask how is that possible? When your heart is beating 140 times a minute and the perspiration on your forehead can put the Niagara Falls to shame, why should you care about how your fellow examinees are behaving? But like I said, I know about these things. Having taken a staggering number of public exams (14 O'Levels & 8 A'Levels un-successfully, as yet) and being an irritatingly perceptive person, I know that your fellow examinees' gestures and facial expressions can really make or ruin your day.

So here are a list of rules which I suggest you obey the next time you enter that examination hall for the sake of your fellow victims:

Rule # 1: Stifle that smile. Countless times, I have seen a friend of mine flaunting all thirty-two of his teeth after a particularly satisfying exam. That is a definite 'no-no' in the book of examination etiquette. I mean, do you ever consider how the persons sitting next to you might feel when he sees all those teeth.

If his exam hadn't been as satisfying as yours, then he will find your grin quite agonizing. So, when you are in a situation similar to the one described above, please try to put on a gloomy face for the sake of your fellow examinees. However, when you have an unpleasant time at the exam

will definitely get an 'A'. When I insisted that I was actually thinking more along the line of C's and D's, he kindly put in: 'That's just you, Zaki, always the modest chap.'

I didn't want to dampen his spirits since he obviously looked upon me as an idol so I kept my mouth shut. But those of you who have been in similar situations know exactly how it feels. So do your friends a favour, and stick to your own praise.

Rule # 4: Out out the sympathy. This paradoxical rule is almost the reverse of # 3. Just as your friend will desire praise after an exam, he will find post-exam sympathy a pain in the neck. You may not know this but it doesn't feel very nice when each of your friends offer their deepest condolences one by one while you have to put on a sorrowful face for leaving out 40 marks at the exam.

The next time a friend of yours blunders badly at an exam, try expressions of horror, shock, or amusement.



Kushan's Letter to his Grandparents

DEAR Nana and Nani, Miss you and love you both. It has been three months since we parted. I miss every single second of your absence. It is queer how things turn out. Just a few months ago we were all watching together 'Abak Jalpana' which seems like yesterday and now I am sitting millions of miles away and writing letters to you.

Here I am captured by solitude looking back at time. I think this is the first time I am looking back at the times that have already passed by. I think I hadn't reached a stage to look back until now. And did not have anything to look back at. And now I do.

My memories of my days in Dhaka — a place I had stayed from childhood to youth, nothing great, not such a clean and nice place. In fact very noisy and dirty, but it is still very special. It is the air I breathed, it is the soil I played on, Aneire, Almer and Babu hardly had any friends from the neighbourhood. But I did. I spent a lot of time outside playing football and cycling on the DOHS field and those memories will never leave me. DOHS means a lot to me and so does Dhaka and so does Bangladesh. And of course the people that stayed in that place. The people who made my days in Dhaka wonderful, my friends and of course my family.

They are the ones I should thank, for those wonderful memories. Time passes by but what you absorb from that time is your memory. The memories never leave you, just like smile which lasts but a second but somehow people remember that all their lives.

Nana and Nani no matter where I am or what I do I shall always have a special place in my heart for you two. Now sitting here on the other part of the world, I have realised how much you both really mean to me. You are both heroes. Heroes of our country 'Bangladesh', working day and night for its betterment. You two are perfect examples of the kind of people Bangladesh needs.

Nani, you are a gift to this world. You care so much for the mentally retarded and the children of Bangladesh, the country's future. What I like best about your work is that you don't work for yourself and not even for one person but for the whole country I respect that in you and hope I can follow your path.

Nana, my Hero Tribune of Bangladesh. I like almost everything you do (work). Some of them are: your devotion to Bangladesh, serving humanity, and of course speaking for the people or standing up to what you believe. One more thing — not losing confidence. I am proud to have a Nana like you and will always look up to you.

Nana and Nani I got your 4th letter and Aneire's too. Please write more about 'Kalyant', 'Swadesh Party' and 'Deep-Shikha'.

The weather is much much better. The school is not so boring anymore. Karate is fun. We are going to go fishing again. But I still want to go where I belong. I want to go back to my childhood. I want back the life they took away from me. I never wanted to come here and still want to go back, but starting to accept it.

Love, Your Grandson,
Kushan Omar Sufi

Substitute teachers were always fun. You could play pranks on them, fool around in class, and of course bunk their classes while the best part is they don't write your report cards. So you could be really (well not too much maybe) bad for once.

Probably it was the list of forbidden things that were revolving in each of our heads as the principal announced that Miss Smithers would be here for a few weeks and 'make us great historians'. After a few more words of 'be obedient and good' and etc. cliché advice, he left.

'Oh you all look like such nice children (all that glitters isn't gold) I do like all of you (hun, already? We're sorry the same doesn't go for you). It shall be wonderful to have you as my pupils (don't count your chickens before they are hatched). I hope you like me, too (we seriously doubt your fervent hope). And so on and on went her shrill voice while we silently replied to each remark.

Finally she proceeded to get acquainted with us. She walked up to the seat on the first column in the first row.

'What's your name, dearie?'

'Zinnia, miss.'

I stared at Zeenat's black head (I was sitting behind her) and felt like banging it with the history book.

'That's good. What does it mean?'

'It's the name of an extinct poisonous insect. Very funny, I thought, my head sizzling.

'Oh really? How sweet!

My anger turned to surprise. What was so sweet? Then taking one step forward, 'what's your name, honey?'

My obvious answer was Zeenat.

'That's wonderful.'

Naturally Loving

by Robin

It was an evening so nice a cloudless evening. I was alone, sitting by a river.

When the sky asked, 'what are you thinking?'

I replied, 'I lost a friend.'

She was soft-hearted and lovely.

She had long black hair and a pair of black eyes, clear as a stream.

Everytime when I think of her love comes to me and requests me to love her.

When I look at her, I turn to stone.

I can't move my eyes. I can't speak.

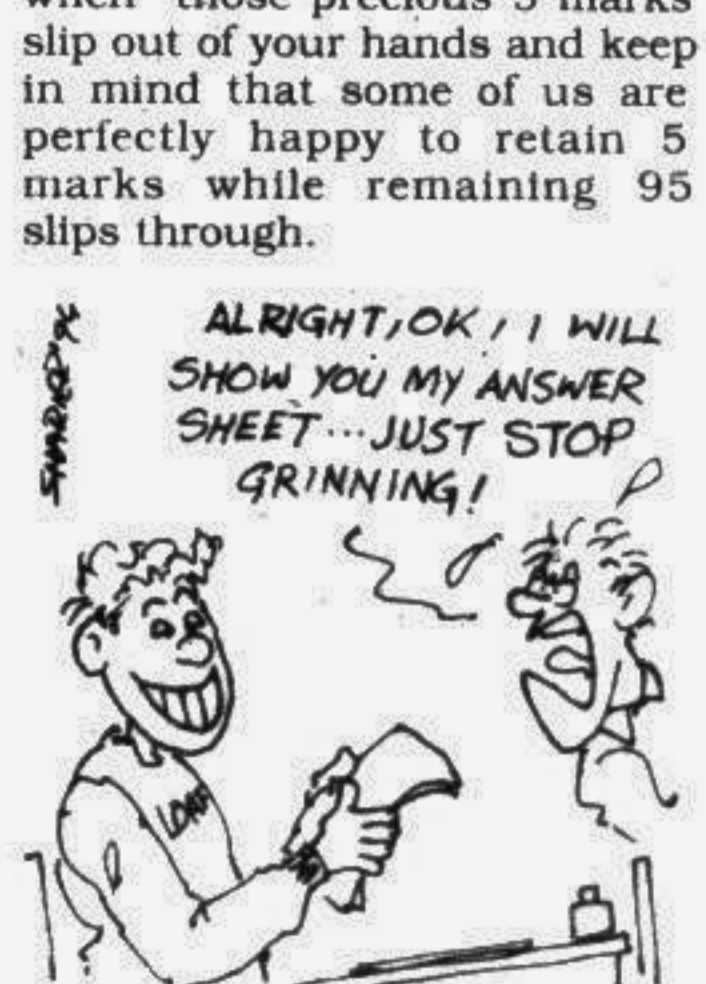
When I kiss her, my lips begin to tremble.

When I hug her, my heartstops beating.

I lose my mind in the blue sky.

When she is by my side, I am gonna die.

When I lose her



Give me a break!

by Nishat Hussain

ZAHID was a kind of social outcast. He was different from others in many ways — unique in his own ways. For his weird behaviour and insanity people thought that he was mentally disturbed, though he thought, that everyone else was a maniac.

He had enrolled into a new school where he surprised everyone — especially his classmates by his calm attitude. He was habitually a taciturn. They even tried to bring him out of his shell. That was the cue for him to show what he was and when he did, he surprised them all.

The guys would make fun and joke around about him. Not only that, but they would do it in front of him too. How insensitive can they get?

There were two comics in the class, Jamal and Kamal. They were always upto mischief. One day after class, Jamal did his ape dance in front of Zahid while Kamal sang 'welcome to the jungle'.

Zahid couldn't help doubling over with laughter. Little did he know that the motive behind it was to bring out his big canine teeth.

'Look at Count Drack's teeth!' yelled Kamal pointing at Zahid. Everyone would take one look at him and start laughing themselves.

'So what huh? You are all ridiculous.' He spoke to them as if he had a clogged nose.

The ultimate results of all this happenings was that Zahid left school. He had talked to his parents to send him to a new school. But he never got to know that everyone who knew him really liked him for his honesty and politeness. Nadeem upto this day remains one of Zahid's very best friends.

Zahid did go to another school. What happened? He was teased constantly by his new classmates and the same events followed. Not able to stand it any longer, he broke down. 'Come on Guys haven't I gone through enough of this? GIVE ME A BREAK!'