

by Auditia Aura Aunima

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 any-

thing 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, Kyoel, 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 end-

Scientific names drive me nuts. Who'll explain why scien tific 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 Brooki? 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.

DAVID

BOWIE

ARNOLD

SHWARZNIGGER

By the way, what do you think about Periplaneta Americana? Does it make you feel like roaming all-over the planet or immigrating to America? Think carefully, cos as a matter of fact. Periplaneta Americana is not that appealing in real life. It simply refers to good ol' greasy, greedy. gruesome cockroach. Goodygoodygosh!

Names of places make me wonder. Places can be named after rulers, e.g.:- Jahangeer Nagar (Dhaka) or Alinagar (Calcatta). But can anybody tell me how some places in Bangladesh got names like Chagalnaia or Gaibandha? And oh, why is an icy land is called Greenland and a green land called Iceland? You know what I'm saying.

Okay, now tell me one thing, what kind of image flash in your mind with the mention of 'Rusper X Ramboda'? It reminds me of UFOs and the aliens. But peculiar as it is, it's just the name of a harmless exotic orchid.

Now, what is pea-like and cock-ish in Peacock? And what is so pig-ly about a Pigeon? Where is the connection between love and Love-bird? Where is a paddy-field in Dhanmondi? What is so foxy about Michael J Fox?

D-uh, let's stop pondering about names. Even sucking my thumb and counting one to thousand backwards would be better than to confuse ourselves with names. Besides. what's is a name, anyway!

Probably it was the list of 1 F .... THE FOLLOWING PERSONS HAD NAMES LIKE THESE ....

'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 re-

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

and felt like banging it with the history book. 'That's good. What does it

'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

'That's wonderful'.

So on and on it went until we knew 25 synonyms of good/wonderful/nice, and of course the names got all mixed up. By then the bell had rung and the gossip of break-time was the goody goody Miss

But she wasn't always the nicey type as we had expected. When it came down to history lessons she was the down-tobusiness teacher. I remember the time she asked me when the World War 11 came to an end.

When Japan had enough of t, miss.

'But when was it?' When the Germans surren-

dered.

Do you mind mentioning the year?' Unfortunately my devilish

mind couldn't help saying. Yes,

Then I would mind if you don't stand up on your seat

right now'. Now it is quite a shameful thing for a grade VI student to stand up on the seat. No 1. —

because we were considered to be senior students. No.2-Grade 1 could see us standing up through the common window. All the same, I obeyed. 'Now tell me when it

ended. 'In 1945,' I replied looking down on the 4'11" teacher.

'Okay.' She was then going through the chapter looking for more questions.

Now tell me, she looked up again, 'hmm, I don't like the idea of you being superior

to me. You may sit down. I scrambled down, praying the juniors had not seen me. What was I saving?

What's in a Name! Good Old Miss Nosy and Us by Zinnia Ahmad T was her rather long maids to wipe of this stuff. nose than a poking into And she left. Nothing worth rememberthe last bench. Sretlana, sitother's business char acter which led to the

ing, 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

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 com-

class, sat down took the atten-

dance 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 wait-

occur. Then it happened.

ing for the historic moment to

keep a straight face. After a

few suppressed laughs which

she couldn't hear as I was in

AKE it from me I am a

about what is considered

acceptable behaviour inside an

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

Fallas 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 stagger-

ing number of public exams

(14 O'Levels & 8 A'Levels un-

successfully, as yet) and being

an irritatingly perceptive per-

son, I know that your fellow

examinees' gestures and facial

expressions can really make

So here are a list of rules

which I suggest you obey the

next time you enter that exam-

ination hall for the sake of your

Rule # 1: Stifle that smile.

or ruin your day.

fellow victims:

exam hall.

veteran. There is really a

set of unwritten rules

**Examination Etiquette** 

by Zaki Wahhaj

Unlike the others I couldn't

Miss Nosy entered the

mence of the history period.

I vividly remember the first day she entered our classroom. A teeny-tiny, slim and trim white haired creature. It was behaviour today. After that I never dared to



invention of the infamous

nickname Miss Nosy for our

unforgettable Miss Smithers.

the prominent nose that at once caught our attention.

Zubair had poked me at the back and jokingly whispered, 'I bet she lies a lot,' referring to the popular story of Pinocchio. She wasn't a regular teacher, only a substitute for our history sir who had taken leave for a few weeks.

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

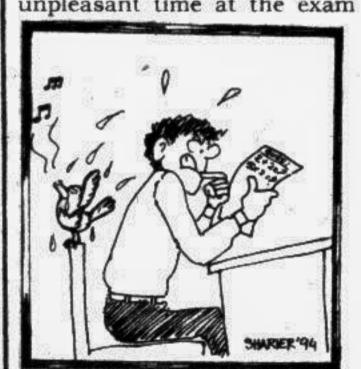
forbidden things that were revolving in each of our heads as the principal announced that Miss Smithers would be here for a few weeks and 'make us great historians'. After a few more words of 'be obedient and good' and etc. cliche ad-

vice, he left. mark.

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 head (I was sitting behind her) the book of examination etiquette. I mean, do vou 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 mien 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



hall like I regularly do, there is no reason to restrain your emotions.

Rule # 2: Beware of the cliches. Ever had a friend who would say something like "How's your preparation?" in the exam hall? If you have ever had that kind of an experience, then you know that the next thing you feel like doing is taking a firm grip of your friend's throat and shaking him vigorously.

Never, ever, ask dull questions inside an exam hall. When nerves are on the edge already, it doesn't do you much good to be invaded with questions asked a thousand times before. These cliches can really light the fuse and perhaps cause an unpleasant accident that you might regret later on. Other cliches to beware of are "So what do you plan to do after the exam?", "Best of luck!", and "What's your candidate number?"

Rule # 3: Spare the praise. remember one occasion when I was leaving the exam hall after a particularly horrendous exam when a friend of mine patted me on the back and declared confidently "Zaki, you

ting beside me, handed me her hankerchief and told me to stuff it into my mouth. As tried to do it a funny weird

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

noise - a mixture of a laugh, a

short and a couch escaped

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

'I'd appreciate it you would go into the toilet Yes, miss. As I hurried out

emitted. After laughing to my heart's content. I came back to find the class silent, everybody ap-

another strange sound was

pearing 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 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,

will definitely get an "A'.

When I insisted that I was ac-

tually thinking more along the

lien of C's and D's, he kindly

put in: "That's just you, Zaki,

I didn't want to dampen

his spirits since he obviously

looked upon me as an idol so

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

thy. This paradoxical rule is

almost the reverse of # 3. Just

as your friend will detest

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

yours blunders badly at an

exam, try expressions of hor-

Believe me, they are a lot more

stop being finicky. There is

this exasperating category of

examinees who regularly score

95 on their exams and then

burst into tears for the other 5.

It's only when you experience

a scene such as this that you

truly understand the advan-

tages of modern day contrap-

tions such as the hand-

grenade and the electric

chain-saw. "If you belong to the

category described above, then

please restrain your emotions

when those precious 5 marks

slip out of your hands and keep

in mind that some of us are

perfectly happy to retain 5

marks while remaining 95

ALRIGHT, OK / I WILL

SHOW YOU MY ANSWER

SHEET ... JUST STOP

All this might seem like a

big joke but think again. Didn't

you find yourself in one of the

situations 'described above at

least once? I know the next

time you go inside the exam

hall, you wouldn't want to

think beyond Newton's laws of

motion or the position of

potassium on the periodic

table but just keep these un-

be doing your fellow examinees

a big favour

written rules in mind. You will

GRINNINGI

slips through.

Rule # 5: Last but not least

ror, shock, or amusement.

The next time a friend of

Rule # 4: Out out the sympa-

praise.

at the exam.

tolerable.

always the modest chap."

Honey, could you tell one of

But we left behind didn't know whether to cry or laugh. Our joke geemed to have backfired 180

But soon we forgot the whole thing and gossips were centered around Valentine's Day, only two days



away. Zeenat, Reshmi, Julie and I decided to send a valentine card to the dumbest guy in class, and sign it by Zeenat.

The period before break time on 19th Feb. was history. We had some classwork to do. I answered the given questions as briefly as I could, anxious to get over it. I submitted in the copy to Miss Nosy, who was checking copies she already received. I opened my history book appearing to read it.

A few minutes later Miss Nosy's high pitch voice was heard. Would Miss Zeenat please come to my desk.

Without looking up. I thought, 'Oh dear, she does sound mad.' Then again, 'Miss Zeenat' please stand up.

And I wonder, 'Has Zeenat gone deaf?' Then it was the tick-tick of

the stillefo heels walking towards our column. 'Well, Zeenat is sure in for trouble,' I thought still looking at the open history book.

'Miss Zeenat!' I looked up to find her glaring down at me. And in a flash I remembered telling her my name was Zeenat. Oh God! Now what?

'What's this?' She put the open history copy (which was actually Zeenat's) in front of me. As I saw the card, I understood what authors mean when they say their so-and-so character wished the floor wound open up and swallow him/her. Coz that's exactly how I felt!

Ex...miss...Ex....

And worse turned to worst. Just then the Principal entered the classroom. (He had a habit of walking around the school once in a while)

'Any problem, 'Miss Smithers?'

My heart missed a beat. 'Oh, no, sir. They are all such good-behaved children.' 'Hmm that's good'. With a nod he left.

You shouldn't keep these in history copies, dove'. I was shocked. Where was

the 10 minutes lecture, the stern looks, the threat to tell parents? It was the greatest anti-climax I ever experienced

That was Miss Nosy, just the opposite of being nosy. She never laughed, she never scolded. It was always 'honey' 'deane' or 'dove'. She was just the 'sweetie-pie' type, and during the few weeks she was with us she puzzled us with her heretical attitude towards our numerous nonsensical behaviour which made her more memorable to us than any other teacher.

### Naturally Loving

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

When the sky asked, "what are you thinking?" I replied, "I lost a friend."

She was soft-hearted and She had long black hair and

a pair of black eyes, clear as a stream. Everytime when I think of

love comes to me and requests me to love her. When I look at her, I turn to

I can't move my eyes, I can't When I kiss her, my lips

begin to tremble When I hug her, my heartstops beating. I lose my mind in the blue

When she is by my side. I am gonna die When I lose her!

## An Encounter

by Susmita Roy

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 absentmindedness 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 we were in was devoid of the usual lunch time passengers.

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

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

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

served that his bleached white face was in a way strange and mysterious capable of holding the gaze of any curious onlooker such as myself.

The smooth alabaster face of the man was expressionless but the sheer indifference written all over it was painful to my eyes. His closed eyes set deep in their sockets, the faint outline of his tightly closed lips and his relaxed facial muscles made my solemn companion look so pacified that he reminded me of a Buddist monk in meditation.

I removed my stare from his direction and once again looked out at the distant dark cloud which was curiously growing every minute. May had never transferred her gaze from that grey cloud. Her eyes had turned red and her lips deathly white. My blood froze when my cold fingers burnt at

her cheek. Instinctively I swiftly turned towards the grey man opposite. His blood-shot eyes, now open, protruded from their orbits and pierced into my weary ones. The grey man's lips turned up at the corners to express a cruel smile and he held out his aged bony hands to utter a single word - 'May'.

Within seconds my senses grew alert and my secret realization of my sister's death came to life and stirred my innermost soul. But I would save my sisters life with my love and had unknowingly promised this. 'No, no, never!' I screamed out aloud and with all my might I cleeped my little sister in my arms and bid her from the evil world outside.

What's wrong?' a soft voice rang in my ears. Slowly opening my eyes I saw my little Mayfree herself from my arms and go over to the bus window to let some fresh air in. There was a big grey cloud, but it is gone after that sudden rain' she said cheerfully.



#### Give me a break!

by Nishat Hussain

AHID 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 ma-

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. Oneday after class, Jamal did his ape dance in frent 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.

of another day at school. Shahid went over do where Zahid was sitting not aware that the bell had rung.

"See va mad cap," Shahid said pulling Zahid's hair. Zahid didn't give him a damn. Shahid then gave him a slap on the head. That's when they got into a noisy skirmish. Zahid's glasses were knocked off and fell out of the window. Without his glasses he could only see near objects, but vision was still very hazy.

"I am going to tell the teacher about this." He was stopped by the others. They calmed him down by saying that they would get his glasses for him.

Sherry, the wiz-kid, looked outside the window and saw that Zahid's specs was dangling from the branch of a tree.

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

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?

There are some people who love to start up a fight or get involved themselves. Shahid was of the latter type. Zahid was as always reading a book in a corner. The bell rang. Everyone cheered for it was the end

#### He found a long piece of wire and turned the two ends into hooks. After that he took off his belt; tying one end of the wire to the buckle, he lowered it out of the window. Carefully he got the hook attached to the glasses and retrieved it.

friends.

GIVE ME A BREAK!"

# my friends and of course my family.

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

Kushan's Letter to his Grandparents

EINSTEIN

months since we parted. 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 night for its betterment. You

EAR Nana and Nani.

Miss you and love you

both. It has been three

AKKAS

BHUIYA

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 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 every 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 tootball 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 ofcourse the people that stayed in that place. The people who made my days in Dhaka wonderful,

They are the ones I should

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

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 every thing 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 loosing 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 Anerie'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**