

RISING STARS



Orphan Girl

by Ambareen Rizvi

SUE'S parents had had a car accident and were in agony. Soon they died. On the day of their death she missed them and wept. At the funeral when she placed the flowers on their graves she

which she was told to be Alice. Before leaving Sue to unpack her suitcases, she asked Sue if she would like to be shown around after she had washed. She told her she'd appreciate that very much so she told



felt as though they were acknowledging to her.

Sue felt guilty in some way. She didn't have any relatives so she had to be sent to an orphanage. At the orphanage she was introduced to the head. She was an old woman in her fifties.

She had grey hair and she was plump. She was very kind. Her name was Mrs Church-horn. She called a maid and told her to show Sue to the dormitory.

While climbing up the stairs, Sue asked her name

her she'd come back after an hour.

The dormitory had many other beds in a row. It was very quiet and the beds were neatly spread. Sue unpacked a bit and went to the bathroom to wash up.

After she had dressed, Alice came in. First she took Sue to the sports section where Alice introduced Sue to a few girls about the same age as her.

Then she took Sue to the dining hall. Wow! It was so big! Anyway, after showing Sue around, she took her back to

her dormitory where Sue unpacked the rest of her clothes. She came upon her pink cardigan which her mom had knitted for her on her birthday and she came upon her bead necklace which her father had bought for her from Italy and began to remember the past.

How her father and she used to like each other and how he used to buy things for her. She remembered how her mom used to comb her hair and how she used to praise her oh, how happy they were!

Little tears came down her cheeks. She put the photograph of her family on her bedside table. After a while she heard footsteps and children's voices coming towards the room. She quickly wiped her tears and put her clothes away.

The girls who Alice had introduced to her had come in. One girl had acne and another had bandy legs. The girls came up to Sue and began asking questions. Their names were Liza, Debbie and Carol.

Debbie was very friendly. She soon became friends with her also because her bed was next to Debbie's. At dinner time, when she went into the dining hall the aroma of the food was everywhere.

In the hall she saw assorted children, munching away at the food. She remembered how the kitchen used to smell when her mother used to be cooking food.

Before going to bed Debbie asked Sue how her parents died. She began acquainting her with the story. At the end she felt a little tear roll down her cheek.

Debbie began to tell Sue about her parents' death as well. Her father was a truck-driver and one fine morning when going to work he had an accident and died. When her mother heard this, she became ill and soon died. She started crying.

It was very hard to live a life in an orphanage. Mrs Church-horn would come at bedtime and tuck the children into bed. She was just like a mother to the children even though she was old.

Days passed very quickly and at Eid everyone got presents and also on someone's birthday it was lots of fun. Everyone's birthday was always celebrated.

Courtesy — Young Times

"My Sweet Experience in Hong Kong"

by Tarannum Laila

I had always wanted to go to Hong Kong for two reasons. One reason was to see how a British colony is and another was to visit my dear cousins. Well, my chance came. My mum and dad decided to take us to Hong Kong for a holiday during the one week Eid holiday. I was excited like anything.

The day for which I was longing soon came. On 23rd June '94 we reached Hong Kong. I had expected tall buildings but, when I saw millions of sky scrapers posing boldly to the sky, I was amazed. Anyway, outside the airport we called a taxi and instructed the taxi-driver to take us to Baguio Villa on Pokfulam road. The driver, unfortunately could barely speak English. Finally, after lot of stopping and looking about we got to our aunt's and uncle's place on Pokfulam road.

After a hearty meal they showed us around the neighbourhood. On our first two days in Hong Kong we did a bit of shopping in the town. The place called central is a busy place. It has most of the sky scrapers I saw from the plane. While shopping in the central we had a quick lunch at McDonalds. There are lots of Chinese people selling hand made crocheted wear. I liked a crocheted waist-coat so much that I couldn't resist buying it. Enough of shopping! Next day we visited Hong Kong's best fun park — Ocean Park.

I had heard of Ocean Park a lot and was longing to see it. We bought the tickets and entered it. By the look of it, I knew I was in for a great day and I really did have a lot of fun. First, we got inside a cable car to cross over to the main parts of Ocean Park. Mum, dad, my sister and I looked out through the window and saw the hills and the buildings we were passing by.

The ride in the cable car was smooth but a bit long. Actually, that was my first cable car ride. We walked and saw a beautiful fountain. The fountain had lots of dolphin shaped statues in different poses. And the water was flowing between the gaps around the dolphins. We took some pictures of ourselves and then, moved on. Soon, we came near an artificial lake with huge boulders. The lake had lots of seals. Some of the seals were swimming to and fro. One of the seals was basking in the sun. It was spectacular, the seals were almost in their similar habitat. We went down some stairs and came near the Raging River. It was actually a ride on a raft though bumpy areas, dark tunnels. The thrill of that ride began when the raft fell from a steep slope with a lot of force 30 feet below. When we were going down that steep slope, I felt as if I was going to fall out of the raft. I was screaming because the water had soaked me during the ride. It was fascinating and memorable experience.

At 2.10 we went to the Ocean theatre to watch the dolphin show. First, the dolphins came in and swam around. Then they twirled batons and spinned a ball with their lips in the water. Later after some very entraining tricks, they were taken away. The huge stadium with a huge pool was where the show takes place. There is an artificial island in the middle of the pool with palm trees and little caves where the seals stayed. Soon, the seals came out and performed some acrobatic tricks. Then, a whale came and swam about. It jumped several times around the pool. The pool was outlined by glass. I was standing behind the glass and the whale was just a few inches away from me. At the end of the dolphin show the dolphins wagged their tails and waved goodbye while the whale was singing. That afternoon was very enjoyable.

We wanted to go, well, rather, I wanted to go to the Kids' world (a part of Ocean Park) which was across the hills. First we went up in a thing called 'The tower'. Actually 'The tower' was a tower which had a ring shaped cabin with huge glass windows, around it. The ring goes up gradually. You can see the whole of Ocean Park from it. The view from the top of the tower is breath taking. There was a canoe ride for children under 8. My sister enjoyed sitting in the canoe which went around swiftly through tunnels and a small miniature river. Then, we went on a western version of 'Nagore Dola'. The cabins were shaped and painted like gas-balloons. Mum and dad said that Ocean Park was a place where both adults and children could equally enjoy themselves. From kids world we went to an ice-cream corner and stuffed ourselves with cool ices. There were many other places in Ocean Park that we visited but you'll get bored if I write about it all. Well, a happy day soon comes to an end. We returned to our cousin's place at dusk.

My mum had always wanted to go to China. As we were so much near China we decided to go there for a day on a package tour. On Saturday 28th May we set for China by a coach. The guide told us that we were going to the Shenzhen province of China. After passing, the Hong Kong immigration border checkpoint and the Chinese checkpoint, we soon reached a tourist spot called Splendid China. There we saw miniature versions of typical fishing village with one foot bridge. There was a miniature stone forest. Everything in the stone forest was stone. We could see a miniature version of the Great Wall of China. We also saw a miniature dragon wall, a harvest temple, Genghis Khan's tomb, Ming tomb, and the Dalailama's palace. There was about 80 miniature version of 80 tourist attractions of China. So you could actually see Yangtze river, Wee Chao's tomb, Chinese Buddha's etc in 2 hours. All the important places of China can be seen within 2 hrs.

Soon, it was noon and all the members of the tour including as hopped into the bus for a meal at an expensive Chinese restaurant. We all had a scrumptious lunch. The dishes were fried rice, prawn

first floor, from the ground floor. We climbed up, then I saw the resemblance between the village homes in our country and that Chinese village home. There was a pleasant, young girl wearing a white knee-high dress, with lots of ornaments on it. She was wearing a very nice headpiece,

which had different small balls embedded with stones, dangling from many pointed silver sticks. Anyway, after taking some shorts of her, we continued further. Then, we came across an enclosed courtyard, surrounded by trees and small thatched rooms. There was a huge thatched room, like the village store-room in our country. The air was fresh and pure. I was amazed at the similarity



niée and cute brown monkey, and handed it over to the lady in-charge. After receiving the monkey, Aashna and Aadeeb presented the monkey to me as a reminder of that day.

Alas! There was only two days left of our visit. So, on the 2nd last day we went to Victoria Peak, Hong Kong Park and Pacific Place. At first, we caught a tram to the Peak. Once we got out of the tram I began to glance around. All around was beautiful scenery of lush green trees. Hills covered with trees looked like rocks covered with moss from a distance. There was some very nice houses in the Peak. Only, very very rich people could afford to live there. We could spot, a marvellous fountain, a big shopping centre and some small tourist shops, as we moved on. At first, we went around a part of the Victoria Peak by a proper path. We looked over from the path at times, and saw the sea, the skyscrapers of Hong Kong. We could also see the airport. It was wonderful, being so high up in the air. But I was, getting annoyed by mosquitoes. We descended and noticed a place like a balcony. It was built smoothly with stones and had a Chinese sort of gate. We went in, and took some snapshots of ourselves. Then, we walked along the path and went into the 'Peak Shop'. We bought a box of chocolate and moved on towards the fountain. The fountain did catch a lot of my interest. As I munched on my piece of chocolate, I observed that the fountain had a flat marbled surface. The size was



between the two villages and our villages, here in Bangladesh. Soon, we had to get on our bus to return home. The day was quite educational as I learnt a lot about Chinese history.

At our uncle's place, we played basketball and had fun. I was named by my cousin as a fashion crazy bum. Well, Aashna, my cousin invited over her friends for a slumber party.



We had a lot of fun, gossiping and watching Channel V, which had just opened. My cousins helped me a lot more to enjoy my stay in Hong Kong.

On Sunday, we went to a great place called Whimsy. There, you can buy tokens and play at several, rather, lots of places. If you played well enough, then you can get tickets. If you can collect enough

tickets, then you can collect a prize (a toy). My cousins and I bought 15 tokens, and split into different directions with our own tokens. I tried my luck by shooting ducks. A-ha, finally I collected 20 tickets. I met my cousins in front of the prize counter. All together we had 70 tickets. We chose a

The pools of course resemble swimming pools, with tiles and chlorinated water. Well, when you go to the circular pool you can sit and enjoy the moonlight in any of the rows of cemented benches, enclosing the pool. You'll be delighted, as I was when I saw my reflection in the water by the moonlight. The atmosphere was silent, but the silence was broken by my cousin's and my sister's cheerful laughter. I tried to ignore it all and enjoy the view.

I was so close to the water, that the water was creeping to my toes through my pumps. Anyway, as I did not want to fall behind the others I moved on, after them. I saw my companions stop nearby. As I joined them, I saw another fountain. I must be sounding like some sort of fountain maniac, but this one was exceptional. It was situated in the middle of a shallow pool, with stone steps leading to it. The water was spurting out from the top of the fountain in such a way, that something like a screen was formed. So, you could stand behind the 'water-screen', or sit on the bench enclosing the fountain. Aashna, Aadeeb, my sister and I went behind the screen and stood on the benches. We did get slightly wet, but nobody seemed to mind. After some time we got out, but my sis was, touching the water and throwing it to us. Rather annoyed, we moved out of the Hong Kong Park to Pacific Place.

After crossing a series of escalators, we reached the first floor of Pacific Place. As I stood there, I was hit by the humongous, clean, marbled floor and modern chandeliers. I thought, what a vague idea I had about Hong Kong, even a week ago. I certainly was surprised to see how balanced and modern a colony could be. All along I was thinking, 'Wow! This place is cool.' I glanced at my watch and urged my cousins to get a place where we could eat. We went to Pizza Hut and ordered our dinner. Soon a jug full of coke arrived, followed by garlic bread, meatballs in Mexican sauce and the pizza. I enjoyed my junk food a lot. The pizza was my first, proper pizza and I did help myself to, two huge slices. I was having such a perfect time, that I was forgetting that I had to leave. Sadness did creep into me a bit, but it couldn't survive, at my cousins' efforts to keep me cheerful. We came out of Pizza Hut and stood in a place, where, any sound will create an echo. As soon as we got to know that, my cousin's began chanting, 'Hi Hello' etc. I joined in too with my sister stamping her foot. We were not hard to miss as we were a jolly bunch. We decided to look around a bit. Soon, I was greeted by designer shops eg. Calvin Klein, Joyce, Giorgio Armani etc, with cool clothes and big tags. There were mazes of designer shops, with suede boots, crocodile leather bags, cashmere sweaters. I felt as if I was flipping through the pages of Vogue.

It was getting a bit late, so we caught a bus for home. On the way back, I realised how much, I would miss Hong Kong. I even thought, how much I would miss Ocean Park, Central, and the most of all my cousins. At home, I went to my cousin's room in that, sad mood of mine. I was crying that night, and practically emptied the tissue box. I was consoled by my cousin. She told me that I led a better life than thousands of children in our country. So, I cheered up a bit.



When I left Hong Kong, on 30th May, I sat silent in the plane and thought, what a short time I had stayed in Hong Kong and what a sweet experience it had been and that I would remember it for the rest of my life.

Photos Courtesy Highlife

How ruthless you are! But Yet I am yours, my broken heart will never cure. After my death If God wants to know my desire, My sinful soul, Will insist childishly; To see your innocent face who once avoided me cruelly. Oh! Lipika, I cannot write, I am crying. No! No! My heart is crying. Nobody can hear that. Nobody can. The birds of love has gone away. Now they may be found far away. It is you who uttered in passion the maxim of love, then why today I am alone?

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Lean Red Riding Hood

by Sanjida Shaheed

But as if he read my mind, he came back to my lane, and I found myself calling him. I am never tempted to buy 'chanachur' from by the school-gate. I ask myself a series of questions like: Is the hawkers hygienic

of their voice to offer their articles, he'll simply speak into a metal cone to amplify his voice. The hackneyed slogans of rest of the hawkers bug our ear-drums — yet the chanachurwallah's cry

When one day I had been very tired and by the evening I felt pooped out, suddenly a cluster of bells and the very captivating chant Hrrr, Hrrr, Hrrr, Chanachurrrrr. Chanachurrrrr-RRrr-RRRRH caught my ears. My traumatic feelings annihilated magically — instead my mind recalled the picture I used to imagine of the 'Doiwallah' while reading 'Dakghar' by Rabindranath Tagore in my childhood. (I admit, some people would comment that I am a little bit too dreamy). Perhaps 'Amal' was fascinated by the chanachurwallah's sight just as I was then 'by the chanachurwallah's appearance'.

Richard Marx, Tom Cruise and other celebrities seem to attract millions with their special talents, but right then I wasn't yearning for any of those megastars, but for someone far more special in a different kind of way. In the mean time, my dream man walked away further in the neighbourhood, fading into silence.....

enough? Are the paper cones clean enough? Will I get diarrhoea or nematodes? But now I found myself ordering for two taka's worth — 'cos now it was presented by the Lean Red Riding Hood, a Man-From-The-Land-Of-Dreams (though, if you ask me to be strictly realistic, then I wouldn't advise you to go for it).

The chanachurwallah is quite distinguished among other peddlers. While other vendors peddle wares during the sun, the chanachurwallah darts along the neighbourhood after sun-down. Unlike other vendors wearing lungi-genji, he will dress up comically in a gaudy, red outfit — conical hat and all — these are part of his unique trading concept. While other hawkers shout at the top



brings you an out-of-this-world, out-of-this-time feeling. And then there's the inevitable, unmistakable, repetitious, catchy tinkle of the bells that follows him wherever he goes. In fact, the very presence of this winsome soul adds lots of frivolous jest to the monotonous night-life of the city — even if for just half a moment.

Quite a number of ice-cream parlours and bakery shops have been popping up lately, yet chanachur will be the ever favourite junk food to all. In fact this is full of proteins. The zany chanachurwallah will remain an ever welcome figure to many and may have more impact on us than the little Red Riding Hood of the children's book.

'JUST FOR YOU'

Dear Bushra

Did you know that something terrible had happened 16 years ago? I'm not talking about any war on an earthquake. It was the day you were born. How could the Almighty created such an Atom bomb like you? Anyway, days have passed and you have changed. Have a wonderful Birthday.

Love Nusrat.