

RISING STARS

Turning Your Heart Up-Side Down

by Sanjida Shaheed

It seems rather strange to me: right now even stupid, meaningless and infuriating — the series of events I mean; the way they occur. Not that I itch to have any knowledge of future. No, I wouldn't want that, not that. For that would only rob life of longingness for the unknown. That would make life dull, uninteresting; maybe even threatening in some way — a bit like attending somebody's funeral, perhaps — whoever's — over and over again. But I didn't need this staggering imbalance between things either. Could do with some sort of rhythm — if not rhyme — ratio of some kind at least, so as not to spring a sudden surprise of shock on you.

But life has its own ideas, not necessarily according with mine — no, they actually tend to be the very opposite. And they tend to be rigid, grabbing you by the neck, making your heart jump up your throat, stunning your inner being, freezing all your blood cells — all when you're not the least ready for any of it.

Just when you're enjoying a rare perfect moment blessed with the simple nitty-gritty of life, life'll make sure something goes wrong — and jeeps, something does go wrong, wrong enough to stir your entire soul, turning your heart upside-down.

A moment ago, you were, say, taking a leisurely stroll round the lawn, or your mother was baking a birthday cake, or your father fixing an electrical switch — a moment later you'll encounter with one tragic incident (accident is more like it) or another, directly or indirectly involving (damaging I mean) your sanity, your identity, your whole life — for instance, either you manage to slip and fall, the acerb consequence of which is a broken spine; or the corner of your mother's saree ignorantly embraces the fire, and she burns to death; or it's your father, electrified and left partially paralyzed virtually for ever.

God bless you. Today you see the sun in the morning, tomorrow you'll see Devil laughing like hell in the eastern sky — I'm kidding, just kidding — I have a peculiar sense of humour though.

And time has a particular stubborn way of its own. When you need to lavishly suck a moment, with all your senses open, it'll gather a hundred wings (you've noticed, the bubbles of sweetest dreams in the night, burst too often too quickly). And again, of course, when you want time to leave you alone to enable you to live at ease; it just lingers on, hanging around like cold dense fog round the shivering naked street kid in long winter nights. Why? But then, isn't it really one's feelings towards time rather than the actual speed of time itself that makes all these differences?

My rickshaw keeps on moving, moving. Time, most dutifully walks on in its usual steady pace — not giving any heed to my urgent need to fall into the lap of future. The rick-

It was a Friday

by Tasneem Ayub

I was Friday, 13th May, 1994. I woke up, startled by a scream from my mother. "Have you seen the time on the clock?" In fact, I had a monetary sensation that her oesophagus was going to tear.

Giving a hasty look at the watch, I saw that it was only 9.25 ... Eeeks! I will miss the TV show Batman. Scurrying to the bathroom, I vaguely heard my father's voice joining mother's.

Within five minutes, I finished my morning chores and went to watch Batman. Breakfast was served, and I took it to the drawing room, where the TV set was. Half-an-hour later, I found myself in my desk, leaning over a book, like an ever-innocent child. My mother said that they were going out, without me. Hear that — WITHOUT ME! I shouted out in protest. "It's a holiday and still you're going out without me and blah, blah, blah ..." I sulked and they were convinced that I was really disappointed. As soon as they were out of ear-shot, I cried out "Yahoo!" Now, I could gossip around, without anyone to bother.

RED

Shumon Momen

Red is the colour of roses. Blood might come down your noses. Volcanoes go red hot. My mum has a red teapot. Red is the colour of my cartoon book. Red is a colour to look. Red may be nice. But it also means danger. Red is like fire. Red is the peaceful sunset.



Asian Games : A Sad Story All the Way

by Rabeth Khan

FAILURE is the pillar of success — but no matter how high that pillar is we never seem to reach it; even after so many successive failures. The Hiroshima Asian Games is one of that same repetition of failures. But despite the disappointing results again and again, our high-ranked government officials are still eager to send a large contingent. As if it is a fun trip, (minus the embarrassment).

So, where to now? I don't know. I can't think of anything now. I just need a little rest, a little rest, please.

A little peace — dear life, that's the much I really ever wanted from you.

But I felt dull and lonely in a rainy day. Suddenly, an idea came to me. I called my friends to my house. Four out of five agreed to come, and they were in my house by long, 5 minutes. One of them put on a cassette into the stereo, and played it on full volume. One began to fiddle with the VCR, the one with the TV antenna, and the other looked around for food. We played games, and suddenly I found me and my room in a mess. My friends had crept out hearing the Pajero zooming and I was left alone in the world with my parents staring down at me. Boy, now I'm really in deep deep trouble?

Let me forget what happened next.

Anyway, three cheers for our kabadi team. The shooting team led by Ateqr Rahman in the men's section and Kazi Shahana Parveen in the women's section has done moderately.

In boxing, the Bangladeshi boxers with the exception of Harunur Rashid were busy dodging and running around the ring rather than fighting. There was no logical reason to send eight boxers and the athletics squad, looked like they were more serious in their jogging skills rather than sprinting. All the athletes were placed last in their individual events. Only Bimal Chandra Tarafdar, the fastest man of South Asia was placed fifth in

would have taken the fourth place. His time was 10.84 secs far below than 10.61 secs he took in the last SAF Games.

The swimming team and the lone weight-lifter made us blush. The soft tennis team went to Hiroshima just to participate so their performance is not much of importance. Finally our hockey team played inconsistently and came back without any trace of success. They fought bravely against India only to go down to a controversial penalty goal. In that match, there were no other sports officials of Bangladesh to cheer the team. They were busy marketing. In the other two group matches, there were thrashed by South Korea and beaten by China by a solitary goal.

I would blame the government for this disappointing performance. Astro turf hockey fields have been common in all hockey playing countries except Bangladesh. If our teams could have practised in astro turf field for the last two years, our hockey team would have surely made us proud. What is gone is gone, but the government should prepare astro turf hockey field as soon as possible.

In all the sports event, everyone performed below their best performance. The reason is simple — lack of practice. The two gold-medal winners of the last 'SAF' games, boxer Mozammel Haque and ace swimmer Mosharaf Hossain has clouded our minds. We want to know the cause of it. Lastly, we request our high-ranked officials to select proper athletes and delete marketing as their prime object in their foreign schedules.

There is still time left before the next Asian Games and SAF Games, we are sure that hardwork, skill and confidence will give us the success we want so much — whether it is a dream or reality, only time will say.



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THE MISSING MACHINE

By Sharier

"It has Its Thrills and Moments"

by A Ryter

BEING a teenager is not the most interesting of occupations. It has its thrills and moments and those who are not teenagers covet it and the more elderly reflect upon it. But the teenager himself comes to realise that it is an age that has both the brighter and frustrating sides to it.

Unescorted journeys to school, parties and fatter allowances all have their own delights. Plus there is that "air" of being what a teenager is. Only when household chores, endless errands and tougher responsibilities are clamped on us we are not so optimistic about the "I am a teenager" expression and begin to have second thoughts. And for those of us who have younger siblings and parents who, with every good intention, think highly of us, we complain of having to look after the younger ones and pretend to be young ourselves (Sometimes this sort of "acting" is necessary).

There are numerous "problems" we can have with our parents at home. Most of these can be solved by a ten-minute conversation with lots of smiles coupled with a big hug at the end! But some of them require "long-term" negotiations. To buy the new dress or the latest watch we have to coax (bribe sounds

more like it) our parents into making their purses lighter. This "bribing" has to start at least a couple of months before purchasing the item. Then there is the universal problem of getting a raise in allowances. We never seem to have enough money for our needs; it seems we have bottom-less wallets! Whenever we get a raise, however large, our needs somehow gobble up all the money.

A bit scientifically speaking, our raises are directly proportional to our needs! One problem we all share is that of having to go to the shop to buy something when we are watching our favourite TV serial. Another instance when we scowl at our parents is when they shout at us for the third time to hang up the phone after we have been talking to a best pal for only about one-and-a-half to two hours! Sulking, we hang up but are babbling away again when they are not prowling nearby!

On the brighter side we can look at ourselves and think of how responsible we have been in carrying out our responsibilities and think (a bit selfishly) that our parents told us to carry out the responsibilities. Secretly we feel a bit like adults but lets not go that far yet!

Tales of the Supernatural

by Mir Saaduddin Ahmad

RUHAIL Ali, and his wife Rukeya, had gone to visit his brother Salman, living in the village Thelapara. Salman was honouring the newly-weds on their marriage by inviting them to a family dinner. Even though they were villagers, both the brothers were comparatively well-off as they had started a joint business. The brothers' parents were there and so the happy family gathered around to eat. While eating, everyone was chatting away except Rukeya. She hardly spoke, let alone ate. However, no-one made a fuss about that as that was what they expected. The new bride would be shy.

Ruhail and Rukeya returned home late that night. It was in the house that he saw his wife was quite pale. She hadn't spoken a word after leaving her in-law's house. Thinking she was ill, Ruhail asked her, "Are you all right, dear, you look a bit ill."

Rukeya answered, "No, I'm fine. It's just that I had a strange feeling in that house."

"What type of feeling?" "I don't know. It was really weird! I felt the presence of great evil in that house."

Ruhail burst out laughing, but one look at his wife sobered him down. "You're not serious are you?" he asked.

"Very serious indeed," came her retort. "I felt that evil in the form of one person."

"Oh, come off it Rukeya, you know my father is a very pious man."

"Oh no, it's not your father I'm talking about, it's, I think, your brother!"

Rukeya please! Don't go accusing my brother of being evil. We've been very close since childhood. You're lucky that I don't believe in ghosts otherwise I would have made you proud. What is gone is gone, but the government should prepare astro turf hockey field as soon as possible.

That brought Rukeya to a silence. The thought of witch-doctors and the sort, beating her to a pulp to rid her of a ghost was terrifying. But no matter what anyone said, she knew that there was a great evil present in her brother-in-law.

Soon a year past and the brothers' business was thriving. Then one day, Salman went to his brother's house with a strange proposition.

"Ruhail," he said, "I have decided to go abroad. I need some money so I have decided to sell off the business. I've talked to some people..."

"Wait, a minute! What makes you think that I want to sell the business?"

"Oh, you have to, because I'm going to..."

"Stop! If you sell the business and go abroad, what will I do?"

"Clang!" something dropped behind her. She turned and saw water pouring out of the over-turned kholi; someone was in the house! Echoes of the clang seemed to be vibrating all over the room as her eyes fell on him. It was then that three expressions came across her face in rapid succession. Satisfaction, as she knew who it would be. Terror, as she saw him approaching with a dagger in his hand. Vengeance, as she lay dying in a pool of blood.

By now, Ruhail had awoken. Someone was calling his name from the front room. He got up. Rukeya wasn't there. Some how he sensed that something was amiss.

What he saw when he walked into the room literally tore him to pieces. "No," he screamed, "No!"

As he was about to move to his wife, someone laughed out from behind. He turned around and there he saw Salman looking deliriously at him.

The last words Salman heard his brother say before he killed him were, "My God, she was right. You really are evil!"

As Salman left he didn't notice that he had dropped a red handkerchief with a bottle wrapped in it. Luckily (or should I say disastrously) for him, those were never found.

To be continued