

RISING STARS

'Yak, Yak, Yakity Yak . . .'

by Susmita Roy

ONE of Auden's quatrains goes:

Louis is telling Anne what Molly Said to Mark behind her back:

Jack likes Jill who worships George

Who has the hots for Jack.

Thankfully our daily dose of gossip is usually a little less confusing than the kind above. Confusing or not, a few of us may nod approval to the fact that gossip is almost as vital for our well being as nutrition, clothing or shelter. At least the average teenager will find it difficult to deny that gossiping is a part of their daily routine.

In fact, almost everyone starting from the very young to the very old of every nationality and race find gossiping an amusing past-time. Gossip may unfortunately not be recognised as a form of art but those who practice it display a talent which many of us do not possess.

There are a wide variety of gossip in the world of gossipyology and we are the ones to choose our type according to our own taste and mood. And the choice may range from idle gossip to intellectual gossip and the intermediates may include juicy, boring, tasteful, sick or made up gossips.

Gossip naturally vary according to the class of people involved. For instance, we don't usually expect businessmen criticizing their new neighbours which seems to be the topic for nosy housewives. It is often noticeable that mothers of kindergarten and nursery children stay over at school during school-hours making themselves at home on pavements or stairs so that little groups of gossips are neatly formed.

They engross themselves in the most amusing discussions of the latest fashions in sarees and jewellery and often there is the 'competition' and bragging gossip about their husbands' salaries, husbands' bosses, husbands' colleagues' wives and soon. These all-caring groups of parents, being conscious of the rapid degeneration of the society, often go into gossiping about how their next door neighbour's girl cousin ran off with a mere clerk.

Now, to talk about the real gossips of all times.... the rising gossips.... us! Yes seniors and senioritas, we, who are associated with the 'great system' i.e. education, excel in the skill of gossip. There exists in the students' world a form of news and information which cannot be delivered by the newspaper, radio or television and that is told, heard and digested only by a gossiper and a gossip listener (while the gossiper suffers due to natural processes). Unbelievable it may seem but there are to be found in this world some gossip-addicts who actually go about in search of tittle-tattle with the pathetic 'por-favor, uno-bito-de-gossipy' look on their faces.

One may naturally ask the reason for this insuppressible craving for gossip. The core of the answer is probably related to the fact that man possess this inborn desire to poke his nose into his fellow creature's

affairs. Since the same kind of characteristics are inevitably found in most school or college-going individuals, (often in the absence of those ever-condemning eyes of teachers), orderly groups of young people are formed and gossip commences.

Once you find yourself as a part of a distinguished gossip group, you might gradually learn to ignore the fact that somehow yours losing the willpower to abandon your new life of laughter and fun and return to the real life of books and homework. In the more unfortunate cases, the gossiper looks for new approaches of

privacy only to our bosom buddy (ignoring the cross connections of course).

Unless there's a catastrophic, unexplainable and sudden fall of gossip topics, there's usually always a good supply. Although it's more interesting to hear the latest hot rumors and scandals of one's own locality, one never tires of reading about the celebrities at the top such as film stars, pop singers, politicians and so forth. Since celebrities are public figures, we get the notion that we ought to know them and their affairs like the back of our hands.

We thus, casually make



bunking classes and joining the gossip-team.

It is not impossible for the member to return home and spend the day lolling about on his comfy bed researching the day's gossip, scribbling away useless gossip in a diary and then ending the day with a 2 1/4 hours of buzzing on the extension in his room. The daily minimum dose of one hour of tele-talk is, as every living should know, a must for the average modern teenager. And there's no need for us to be familiarized with the fact that this great instrument is the telephone is a life saver when we want to transmit secrets and scandals in the utmost

their business our business. It's fun and besides since we love them, we love talking about their affairs also — whether they be true or not (who cares?). Everyone knows that half the "true" gossips that travel in the forms of chains of alphabets in the air above school and college buildings are lies. However one has to acknowledge that since there's no smoke without fire, there is great probability for a widely talked about topic to have a ring of truth in it.

The process of initiating and circulating gossip is most interesting. The birth of a piece of gossip is by tradition inside the stomach of a gos-

siper. Most of the times the gossiper, being a gossiper finds it very difficult to retain info of vital importance from his colleague.

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RATUL'S backside could be seen only. She is weeping. A photo of Ratul and her Mum is on the floor. It is her favourite photo. Yes, there must be something wrong and nine years old Ratul is very, very angry with her mum. But, why? Let's go through Ratul's past four days' short history.

Four days ago, Ratul was back home from school with a beaming face. She stood first in the exams. Her mum had promised that if Ratul could do very well in the Annual Exams, she would let Ratul go to the local children's fair all by herself. So, according to this contract, today Ratul did go to the fair, all by herself and guess what.

Any Comments?

by Syeda Mushreque Shabber

The USSR covers 15 per cent of the land surface of the world.

A tortoise takes four hours to travel one mile (1.5 km).

Only one athlete has ever run a mile in exactly four minutes. He is Yorkshireman Wrek Ibbatson in 1958.

All snow flakes, though markedly different in appearance, are constructed on a hexagon.

The seven deadly sins are: pride, avarice, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth.

Eight travels the equivalent distance to seven times round the world in just one second.

The ancient city of Troy was rebuilt nine (9) times.

The ninth most intelligent animal is the pig.

Air consists of ten invariable gases: nitrogen, oxygen, argon, neon, helium, methane, trypton, hydrogen, nitrous oxide and xenon.

(All these facts are true)

Ratul went along the shops.

Gazed at the dolls, music boxes, toys, book stalls full of colour books, story books, etc. etc and balloons many, many balloons, colourful balloons of various sizes. There, in the fair, were children of different ages and were from different parts of the locality. Among them about twenty children had come to the fair from the local orphanage.

The orphanage was just opposite Ratul's house. Ratul knew some of them. She asked one of the children, Hi, Uma! How do you do? Do you like the fair? I bet you do. I just love it!

Ratul was puzzled to see Uma a little sad and to her surprise the other children were with sad eyes too.

Ratul said, very softly, "Uma, please don't mind; don't you have money? Are you hungry?"

Another orphan, Lily, now spoke. "We are orphans. Ratul and we live in an orphanage.

Where can we get money to buy toys or dolls or balloons or to eat chocolates and ice creams? We just came to see the colours and lights; come on girls' and boys', let's go."

Ratul remembered, her father died in an motor accident and she was an orphan too!

Only because, she had her mum, she wasn't left in an orphanage; unless she would also have to look at the colours and at the laughing souls of other children. Lily and Uma and the others had gone away and two and ran towards them.

She stopped them, she

The Colours of Balloons

by Samia Israt Ronne

Miss Ratul had Taka 50 with her to buy whatever she pleases, except open food-stuffs.

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So, according to this contract, today Ratul did go to the fair, all by herself and guess what.

And that was what they did. They walked, ran, gazed, watched, last of all Ratul bought many balloons with all her money. She gave those to her friends. They were happy, really happy. And Ratul was too. But, when she returned home with her eyes glowing with the light of the joy of sharing and a heart filled with a new kind of happiness, there was a surprise waiting for Ratul.

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Ratul said all these very calmly with tears in her pink cheeks.

No, dear, do it again and again, I won't tell you anything. Ratul, what I did was wrong, I didn't realise it. But, I went over your thoughts. The balloons you gave them, they are not adequate enough to make them happy for the rest of their lives, but they need care and love and a constant flow of colours. Sorry, Ratul, to hurt you. I hope, I'll try to do something for the orphanage. My office, it's an NGO it will help. And I pray, that my daughter may grow up to be a great lady who will bring oceans of colours for the dry and gray world; but she will have to take dinner with mum first!

Help!

Kazi Khaled Arafat

Address-House No-2 Road No-7 Dhanmondi R/A Dhaka 1205
Phone-505767

Hi! Anybody who's reading this out there —

You may be far or you may be near

I study in Class VII, and, I'm crazy about musics sports, books:

What I don't like is school and the hours which it took.

I'm looking for myself a pen pal

He may be a guy or she may be a gal

If you're interested, you won't be a loser

(Unless you happen to be a very fussy chooser).

Write to me at — House no-2 Road no-7

I guarantee it's on Earth — not on Hell or on Heaven)

I live in Dhanmondi R/A, and you can also give me a call

At 505767. I'll be seeing you all!



— "How's school going, Aumi?"

— "Not good, Miss."

Maybe the teacher did not expect a negative answer. Because when asked about your whereabouts, it's always polite to answer 'fine, thank you'. But Aumi knew no formalities. Rules and formalities only help build a mask over your face.

The teacher was not content with his answer.

— "Why not?" Sincerity was plain in her voice.

— "It's just that I ... don't like to study. They don't lead me anywhere."

— "Oh? then what do you want to be?"

— "I want to be an artist."

— Do you like to draw? The question came from the physics teacher. She'd been listening all along. She was the kind of teacher you always like to stare at. So homely, so easy ... and loose. You don't feel she's a teacher, you feel she's a person. Aumi liked her.

— "Yes, miss."

It bugged Aumi, the way he put 'miss' after each reply. He didn't do it intentionally, and he had little control over it.

— "Do you learn art anywhere?" She still went on asking.

— "It's easy, Aumi. Miss." He is not Aumi, he always wrestles inside while looking into a teacher's eyes.

— "Oh no, I do it on my own."

— "Yes, miss. I do try to

persuade myself. Because if I fall by any means, then I'll have to stay another year to finish it off. And I don't want that."

Aumi is feeling so different today. All the way home the faces of the two teachers had been projected in his mental screen. And his mental tape-recorder played on and on: "But you can't enroll at art college without finishing school. Shouldn't you remember that?"

The sky is fleeced with feather clouds today. The air is comfortably warm. This crow friend is calling him again. He feeds him. But the novels are safely tucked away. And the piano is silent.

"But you can't enroll at art college without finishing school. Shouldn't you remember that?" Things have at last started to make sense. Things are beginning to work out. There's still one month left, before the final exam. He can make it. He is the ol' number one student. And school is really no damn big deal, no real enemy.

Sometimes you have to injure yourself to the unwanted situations, in order to have the last laugh on 'the real world'.

And then, late in the afternoon, when he is perfectly relaxed, he filled his lungs with a deep breath, and sitting miraculously he opens his long-forgotten chemistry book.

Return to Reality

The end of a dream

by Kazi K Arafat

THE sun has set in the land of dreams — Everything's back to what it seems; Farewell to Fantasy; greetings to pity — Everything's back to reality.

No more dales where flowers bloom— Fantasy has reached its doom. No more roaming in Paradise City Everything's back to reality.

Goodbye, joined sunny sky! Clouds have gathered — awakening is nigh — Cheery spirits no more be high — Sad truth appears, so that the dream may die. An avow, Happiness! And welcome. Pity! For everything has returned — To reality.

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knew nobody was about, he would talk aloud with his favourite characters from the books, converse with them avidly, share with them his deepest hopes and fears.

They were all his best of friends. All these people, of course, didn't exist in reality, everything happened only in his imagination. But what did that matter?

He played the piano. Every day, whenever he could — sitting upright, eyes on the stare, fingers on the keyboard, he would play the piano. But nobody heard his playings, nobody could, ever, even if they were in his room, for the piano existed only in his mind.