LISTERING Barnacles' [had sweared the other day. Shaila had looked at me with a gleam of enlightment in her eyes and smiled knowingly to say. "Tintin-right?"

Yes, I had quoted from the world famous and immortal comic book pages of 'The adventures of Tintin'. I bow down with reverence and respect and gratitude to Herge for presenting to the millions of young people of the world with twenty two fantastic adventures of Tintin. Already 'Tintin' has been published in over thirty two languages including Bengali and undoubtedly all have captured the hearts of

young and old alike. Tintin, a young reporter with brown tuft of hair is the hero of the series and snowy, his faithful, clever dog appears in all of his adventures. Tintin a character created by Herge is, a French writer, is unique with his own personality and behaviour. Tintin, whose age remains a mystery, is a vibrant and courageous journalist. This young man of strong character fights crime, solves mysteries, rescuses his friends and even hunts down treasure in the most ingenious and skilful way. Tintin's virtues of patience and cool headedness in difficult situations and his ability to take the right decisions make him a reliable person. Tintin is not a superhero who flies out into space to save the day. Though he lacks supernatural powers, his tactfulness in dealing with trouble gives the reader excitement and thrill. For example in an adventure where he is about to be killed, he tricks American Indians in such a way that there is chaos among themselves and in India Tintin jumps over a high wall by using a fat Indian's belly as a spring. When his friends and he had been offered to the Sun god by the lncas as sacrifices. Tintin had wittily used an

Herge's Tintin & Co.

by Susmita Roy

eclipse of the sun to save swearing and drinking ability themselves. Once Tintin had risked his own life in Tibet to save Chang who would have died otherwise, while on another occasion he had saved a cargo of slaves aboard a ship. Tintin, however, hardly ever goes unaided by his companion, Snoway - a lovable little

 which probably had been handed down from his ancestor he is certainly one of his kind. Unfortunately the captain has uspet plans on a number of occasions (for example when Tintin met him aboard the ship Karaboudjan) but more often, the whole story turns



snowwhite dog. Though snowy often manages to get himself into trouble, far instance when he fulls down a crevasse on the moon, Tintin never moves on without him by his side. A big 'hip-hip-woof!' for good ol'

Another character in 'Tintin' of whom many readers grow fond of is Captain Haddock - a retired sea merchant. He's the bearded one who adds a touch of humour to some of the 'Adventures of Tintins'. With his unique

out to be more full of life when the Captain's there to stir things up. The captain's rash, impatient behaviour and his vocabulary of words like pirate, pockmark, nincompoop, squawking popinjay etc etc' makes the readers giggle out loud once in a while. (Even the captain admits that he's always falling flat on his face or getting stuck with a bit of plaster every now and then.) Though the captain would rather be at Marlinspike (his

home) with a pipe and bottle

of whisky, he's more often unwillingly but inevitably trailing behind Tintin around the globe so as to 'keep an eye on the young whipper snapper'. I must finally say by Billions of blue blistering barnackes and ten thousand the enolesing typhoons' that we readers could never get enough of Captain Hoddock.

And if there over was a brilliant professor who got on the reader's nerves with hearing everything wrong but at the same time was lovable, it's certainly Cuthbert Calculus. This amazing fellow with his pendulum and inventions keeps to himself but all the same is an important part of the family. Oh yes, it would be very wrong to forget the two detective twins known as Thomson and Thompson. 'To be precise' as they would say — "Thompson with a 'p' as in psychology'.

They are constantly getting themselves into trouble, for instance when they started growing coloured hair after taking pills in Arabia and when they accidentally became unwanted crews in the moon rochet. (These 'heavenly' twins make fools of themselves so very often that are we may wonder why they never became professional comedians) villeins like Rastapopulous and Allan and the great (intolerable) singer Bianca Castafiere are among the many more interesting characters created by Herge.

It must be emphasized that the 'Tintin' comic books are not just ordinary comic strips that you read and get tired of. Personally I have devoured each of the books in the series over 15-20 times and have yets since my tender age of six, not got bored of them. I suspect that I have acquired mare knowledge though them than through many other books and wouldn't be surprised if I found out that through the years they have helped me to expand my vocabulary to a great extent. The plots, the dialogues, the cartoons are all so extraordinarily perfect and detailed that it is no wonder millions of copies of 'Tintin' are sold all over the world each

I salute Herge on behalf of all 'Tintin' lovers but my complaint is that I'm searching for more new books from the 'Tintin's series and there aren't anymore! Sob!

schedule fixed by the very hosts was much, much, much earlier!).

One is exposed to intolerable humiliation while at the dining table. It's not the food, or the rash way it's served that turns me into a statue leven though they succeed at miraculously ruining my palate) - it's the video camera bit that makes me perfectly motionless. It's the age of VCR

 Video Camera Revolution, I understand. They have to video tape all the birthdays, weddings, cultural functions. Exactly what for do they video tape the dinning part? Is it to record the corpulence of the diners, opulence of food or to analysise how many diners eat with their mouth shut and how many with mouth open? I'm turned into a statue during this 'very, very bright' (you know the reason) moments, cos (I don't mind telling you). I don't feel like videotaping my sort of vellow teeth.

Well, after so much of hustle and bustle I'm exposed to pushes and jostles - it's time to wash. But once I'm near the sink, I'm one happy, smiling queen - soap or no soap, doesn't matter a hang. While poor, helpless others just look on enviously, I wash my hand with my personal soap that I carry in a pocket. Ingenious, eh? Sure! But not very cool, since others will throw you glances that are fit to kill!

One thing that I really hate at a wedding party is a crowd. According to me and a friend of mine, sixty guests at best are permittable - you know, people who are really close with the hosts - kins and cronics. But a thousand guests is obviously ridiculous. One vaguely remembers the ex-existence of a rule restraining more than a certain number of guests. If the hosts want an ostentatious display of food, and a record-breaking number of diners, why don't they, pray, spatter food openly, generously at the marketplace? Many a poor should there could have his life's treat and also bestow the new couple with the 'blessings' I was talking about earlier. But do the hosts have the intention of a philanthropic mission at all? Yeah, and may be pigs fly.

Grumble as I do. wedding parties won't cease to be ludicrous, ostentatious, inauspiscios and splendorous a gather-

Hello Wrong Number

by Sonia Hossain

ELLO, is that you Russell?" Yeah, this is me, who are you?" ▲ "Very, funny, this is Tania, who else stupid?" Tania who...

"No time for jokes. I really need your advice on something,

matter of life and death..."

"No time for buts. I know you are busy with your guitar, but

need help....

"Okay, so what's your problem?" "Why does your voice sound so funny?"

"Is that your problem?" "No please don't hang up okay I'll come straight to the

but your voice still sounds funny!" "Okay. I have a cold, satisfied?" "Alright, okay, don't be so picky"

'I'm not being...

"Do you know the new guy?"

"The new guy, in my chemistry class?"

"Don't think I do. why?" "The guy is something else, he takes my breath away...".

"I don't know his name, but not long before I know it,

"Tania...?" "Okay, to the point, have you by any chance read the book "Never love a stranger" by Harold Robbins, I think..."

Taaania... "Okay, this guy, he looks a lot like Huge Grant, you know,

guy in "Four weddings and a funeral"?, Russell, are you there?"

"Don't scream, I'm not deaf!" "Sorry. I thought you left, he was wearing demin jeans and

emerald coloured shirt, my favourite colour, emerald

mean, and then do you know what?" "Am I supposed to?".

III 7 OU selfish beast.

threw the skirt at her face.

The old routine had started

again - "me wanting my elder

sister's things and she not

giving it". My mother ran into

our room when she heard my

shrieks and then rolled her

eyes. "Sadaf, stop it, will you.

When will you two grow up?" I

stormed out of the room, al-

most tripping over a tool in

the process. This was so unfair.

Why should I be the one to

stop when it wasn't my fault at

all? I had, very politely, told

that mean sister of mine,

"Eram. I'm taking your skirt.

And you can't say no since you

wore mine last week." And

sat down on the floor, tears of

I went to the veranda and

that's where it had begun.

JOY in

don't need your

skirt," saving this I

"No, he had Faherenheit after save on, I think, you would

the smell too, in fact, I think you should buy one too, you know.

it attracts a lot of women!" "Women like you, no thanks!"

"Get lost!, okay where was I?" "He puts on Faherenheit to increase the room temperature.

If you make one more remark like that, I think I'll kill

"In that case I better have my will ready..."

"Why do I waste my breath? so then guess what?"

"Look just tell what happened?" "Okay. I was reading that book and he comes up to me,

asks me if I could lend him the book! What do you think?"

imagine, that's how I figured out his after shave, and then

"It's stupid to go to somebody you hardly know and ask for

book like that, you should have been reading "Never talk to

a stranger", instead!" "Russell I swear if you were right infront of me you would

have a broken nose to think about!" Can t?

"Can't, what?" You can't make me think of I broken nose, because you

going to kill me first."

"Why do I even bother?, you know what I think I like him a

ever since I got home I have been listening to Micheal Bolton's

"Love is a wonderful thing", my cassette is becoming obsolete, and I'm feeling really hot, what do you think that

could do?"

"You want my advice?"

"Yes."

"Listen to the Counting Crows they are much better, and

weather is really hot, so why not take a cool bath or something? HELLO?"

You pig, I asked for advice and you make fun out me, how

dare you, Russell Alam?, I'm never going to speak to you

"I'm not Russell Alam, I'm Russell Rahaman!"

"What do you mean you're not Russell Alam, isn't this 400000?" "Nope, this is not that number, next time..."

"WHAAAAAAT????!!!"

"I SAID WRONG NUMBER!"

700000007 7000000007 7000000000000

The Horrors of Having an Elder Sister

by Sadaf Mustafiz

frustration filling my eyes. What would it have been like if hadn't had an elder sister? (The elder sister is the problem not just any sister because I almost never fight with my younger sisters.) Oh, the peaceful life, the wonders of not sharing. I would've had a room of my own where I could have done anything that pleased me. I wouldn't have to switch off the music because it disturbed her studies, nor would I've to wake up early in the morning because of her Sa Re Ga Ma. What a pain!

AVIK & THE MISSING MACHINE

I remember the time before my O'level exams when I'd had to study till late in the night. She used to refuse to keep the lights on in our room because she had trouble sleeping otherwise. (Well. I've to admit that I did the same thing during her O'levels, but still she should be nice to her sweet little sister. Even though she is almost an adult, she never ceases to behave like a spoiled brat.) Then our rows would start again. Imagine at one o'clock at night, 'shouting our heads off and we didn't give a

advantages of having an elder sister. I can talk to her about the activities in school, my opinions about movies, gossip, and have fun. But the time we

Of course, there are some

damn about others asleep.

far outweights the time that we spend talking to each other like friends. And the other advantages... Oops, I must be suffering from temporary memory loss. I can't remember the other advantages! Maybe, I am not realizing

spend arguing and fighting by

the importance of having an elder sister but she isn't helping me do that either. Maybe, I'll miss her when we are apart, but I'll have to wait till then to know if I really will. Oh, I just can't (kidding sister, don't think I'm giving hints!).

"The 'Party' I Dread So Much"

by Auditia Aura Aunima

HE very word party gives me the blues. The 'party' L I'm scared of is not the political one in position or opposition (cos politics is the last thing I'll ever care for). The party I dread so much is the kind that comes once in a while to drive me outta my brains (I do have 'some' brains!) — they're the menacing wedding parties.

The whole thing starts with the distribution of cards those gaudy, showy wedding cards have all sorts of decoration outside, and in the inside. I wonder why they ever care to arrange the schedule so meticulously. You'll find for instance, the 'boragomon' is at 7:01 pm — they've got to be kidding, for who makes it sure that one minute past seven. nothing more or less, it will be? After all, we Bengalis have quite a reputation for punctuality(?). In the invitation card they mention they'll be ever so grateful if we attend and bless the new couple. You see. they're kidding again - for if it's blessing they really wanted. they'd arrange a milad. And anyway, the guests know why they're invited, so who cares for blessings?

What bugs me most about weddings is, most often I don't even get to know whose wedding it really is. Sometimes the relation is too distant (going all the way back to Adam and Eve, I suppose!). Gosh, I never knew I had so many relatives so the weddings are probably there to remind me and find far-off branches of the family

The Bengalis are too little too hospitable and there's a special breed of hosts to prove that - the fellow officers of the office where the breadearner works at. The clever one at my pops' office, do they think inviting the boss along with his family will help them get a raise or a promotion? Pops could be invited, but the whole family? What can be a greater torture than sitting among a bunch of strangers, all alone for ages and try to look like you're enjoying every minute of it? Mom somehow gets to meet with an old bhabi and occasionally, as it happens, with an old 'bhai'. Those adults

can chat about anything endlessly. But think 'bout poor of taciturn me! Those weddings have one advantage though. they help me discover a hidden fact about myself (and to know oneself is such a wise thing) - I'm quite xenophobic. when the occasion calls for it.

It's the endless rituals of a close relative's wedding that prove to be a pain in the neck. And it becomes a pain not only in the neck, but in the whole body when they insist that I being a member of the fair sex, must wear a saree. Saree is quite okay, I'm sure - but it's simply devastating if you don't know how to manage it! I hap'n to be a first-class clumsy oaf, whenever I wear saree, sooner (rather than later) I end up moving bout in a tangled web. And imagine, all the guests, including the guys looking at you at the most unwanted moment!

Knowing the tarrying business of the hosts, I once decided to compel my folks to start late - the only way I could do that is finish dressing up late. I made all sorts of fuss, so instead of starting half an hour before the given time, we started half an hour later. I began to feel the jeeters when

all the vehicles stopped for what seemed etertity. I guess, a snail was crossing the road and so the vehicles stopped in mercy (Maybe I'm wrong, cos there're no snails in Dhaka streets - perhaps it was 'just' a traffic jam). When we arrived at the place, inevitably a community centre, we were so late that all the cars had left except one or two. As we entered, nevertheless, we were greeted cordially. Imagine, not even a single person asked us why we were late. Well, late as we were, we still had to do the traditional, conventional sitting around and chatting around bit before the more traditional, more conventional stuffing around (what else, but your tummy) bit. This is when I got a big surprise. Yet another late party joined us! What's more, the whole place began to be overcrowded with people! This is when I realised, instead of being late, we were extremely early. It was a Friday noon, so obviously the religious people didn't even think of attending a wedding party before jumma namaaz. My pops being a non-namaazy (what a shame on him), caused us all the trouble and perplexed the hosts by arriving so.



Wedding Horrors as Sharier Visualizes: pre wedding milad mahafil. A reprint of one of his works.















