

Women on the Move

The Worst Kind of Hell

— A True Story

by Moushumi Nasser

This is a true story of a young woman who became the victim of an abusive boyfriend. The name of the victim has been withheld in respect for her privacy.



kick with his boots. ...times (I can't recall).

Then slowly I tried to get up, when he held my throat again and pushed me to the floor and spit on my face three times. He looked like a maniac! (a psychopath maybe). That face will haunt me till the day I die. I did not want to fight back because there was no use, and I found that he was drunk and as usual (as for the last two years) he was saying things which are totally nonsense.

I lay on the floor and saw him taking off his belt. Knowing what was coming, I covered my face only and felt countless slaps on my back. I prayed for "strength" and someone to come before he killed me. I tried not to concentrate on him and I believe, that is how I got the strength to "bear it".

When it stopped, I got up. Immediately, he punched me on my face. I felt blood oozing out of my nose as I ran towards the bathroom. Then I tried to get up on my knees when his left leg came hard with a kick on my stomach when I was totally breathless. That was the only time, I called out my friend's name and fell on the bed.

By this time my friend brought his friend and opened the door. As I ran into the bathroom to wash my face, his friend ran for ice and my

friend tried to stop him as he came inside the bathroom to hit me for the last time on my left cheek just below the eye. No one was prepared for such a quick blow.

My friend dragged him out with the help of his friend and I fell on the basin only to watch the flow of blood.

It was 9:45 pm. I was taken to the clinic, where I was told to see an ENT specialist right away for the nose. The doctor and nurse helped to stop the blood flow, gave two injections and wanted to see the bruises on my body. A tiny part of my upper front teeth had been broken. I had terrible swollen black eyes.

My mother told me later that he had come to my parents that morning to tell them why we broke up and that we would remain friends and not get married. During the party in the same evening, he called all the guests outside and told them the same thing. Then within 15 minutes he did such a horrifying thing to me!

I am totally confused about my five-year relationship with him.

People ask me why I didn't run or scream for help.

My answer is: a victim usually loses strength to run while being beaten. He could become more ferocious if I tried to run. Besides, my parents could never tolerate their

daughter being attacked like that. If I screamed or ran out, it's very well understood that my father would have gone to fight with him. Could an old man win in fighting against a strong monster? My father would have been physically assaulted, even my mother could be hurt by him, and the whole situation could get worse. But what really stopped me from screaming was that apart from the neighbours, the guests would know what was really happening. I was too ashamed.

Why didn't I file a case, when my parents insisted? First of all, his monstrous attitude reminded me of his worst capabilities and I was afraid that he'd become more ferocious after being released. Released? Yes. Because he has good connection with the police. Within 2/3 days he'd be out. The police officer when contacted, wanted to know if we had enough witnesses from both sides. Yes, but the witnesses on his side would never come forward for me. So, I forgot about filing a case. What's the use?

This is happening to a lot of women and everyone needs help, the way I need. Day and night, whether at work or at home with family, whether being busy with friends or with something else, whether alone or at sleep, I am haunted.

Most victims of such abuse do not talk about this kind of experience, because of many obstructions. The society is dirty, some people wait to spread the news to their shock the people we most trusted, become enemies.

But silence is our enemy. We need to win this fight. I would tell every woman not to make the mistake which I have made. Think twice, whenever you are in doubt, before letting yourself face this sort of incidence, no matter what, no man has a right to abuse a woman in this way. This is physical and mental torture. Physical pain and scars will go away but mental scars will remain all through life. Those who can survive with that, are very strong, bold and courageous and very very lucky.

I am a working woman totally self dependant, and could never imagine this kind of incident happening to me. But, nothing could stop me. I went to the office and everyone knew. Women colleagues were proud that I haven't been scared to hide myself. Why should I? My face showed how brutal a man can be — a man who boasts that he comes from an educated family, he is himself an MBA, that people offer him good job and that he is not just like other men?

I am enjoying my freedom because I never felt free with him. Giving my parents, friends time, which for him I couldn't do because he was always keeping me busy with him.

Now that it is all over, I am still haunted by that incident. But I really thank my stars that I was saved from a marriage that would have been the worst kind of hell.

More Girls Dropout of School in Meherpur

by M M Islam

MORE and more girl students are dropping out from schools across the district of Meherpur despite government efforts to promote female education. Lucrative offers like stipend and free education up to class eight seem to have failed to retain girls at schools.

Meherpur is still grappling with numerous traditional socio-economic barriers and cultural hangovers — superstition, early marriage and, above all, poverty. As a result, campaign for girls' education failed to arouse the people of this remote frontier district. Even the financial help has had little or no effect.

The government has introduced stipends for female students in the district under Female Secondary School Assistance Project to attract the girls to school. Students of class VI get Tk 300 a year as stipend while those of class

VII and VIII receive Tk 360, and IX and X Tk 920.

Married students are not eligible for the stipend. Also a girl loses her stipend as soon as she gets married while in school.

But contrary to improvement, enrollment of girl students in different high schools in the district, in fact, fell this year. The situation in the town is also disgraceful, said a school teacher.

An investigation conducted in Meherpur Girls High School, a non-government institution at the heart of the Meherpur town, showed that 140 girl students enrolled in the school in 1991. Of them, only 36 are appearing in the ongoing SSC examination while the rest left the school since '91.

Begum Badrunnahar, Head Mistress of the school, attributed the alarming dropout to early marriage and lack of

social and economic security.

"It's not unique to my school. It's a common scenario in schools throughout the district," she said. "Our society is not yet ready to recognise the importance of female education. It's unfortunate," Badrunnahar lamented.

The students of Meherpur Girls High School are mainly from poor families with conservative backgrounds and cannot, therefore, avoid traditional practices like early marriage. The headmistress also pointed out various social nuisance, including teasing of school going girls by 'mastans', as one of the factors making guardians reluctant to send their daughters to school.

Police agree that various social nuisance influence the conservative guardians to keep their girls indoors.

"It's a social problem, we will have to fight it socially. But the way our guardians are try-

ing to get rid of this menace cannot be supported. In the pretext of protecting their daughters, parents are destroying their future," said an aggrieved Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO).

Apart from dropout and low enrollment, attendance of girl students is also extremely poor. According to a report, the attendance of 10,000 girl students at 46 primary schools in Meherpur thana headquarters is only 40 per cent.

Opportunities for admission are also limited for girl students. There are only two girls high schools in thana headquarters of the district where women constitute 50 per cent of the total population of 1.60 lakh.

There are allegations of corruption and irregularities in distribution of stipends which again is discouraging poor parents to send their daughters to school. — NEWS NETWORK



Non-formal Education — a solution for female drop-outs from school.

— Photo: Shehzad Noorani/UNICEF

News Briefs

Violence Against Women

The Daily Star (21.4.96): Sabita Rani, 21, was beaten to death, allegedly by her husband, at Munuria village in Sadar thana on April 20th. Daughter of Kalipada of Narayanpur village, Sabita was married to Monojit for 5 years. Sabita's guardian had to pay 16,000 taka in cash, a bicycle and a two in one as dowry. But this did not satisfy

Monojit who continued to torture Sabita asking for more dowry.

On April 20th Monojit beat her up demanding a television set. Police later recovered Sabita's body which was hanging from a branch of a tree near Monojit's house. The body was sent to the morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with the police but Monojit has absconded since the murder.

The Daily Star (12.4.96): (Khagragharia) Mahima Khatun, 21, a young housewife

allegedly committed suicide to escape from the tyrannies of her husband and sister-in-law.

Khatun was married to Emadul Haque, of Polashpur village in Matrangana thana of the district, in December 1990. The marriage turned out to be a failure since she couldn't give birth to any child during six years of marriage. As a result she had been intolerably tormented by her husband and sister-in-law, like countless women in Bangladesh. The poor woman, who was just another victim of the lack of social security, ended her life by

drinking poison.

The Daily Star (9.4.96): (Chittagong) A young housewife was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants at Patharghata in the city today.

The victim, Rekha Rani Das (32), was wife of Balai Banik a goldsmith. According to police and witnesses, a group of six miscreants stormed their house at about 11 am and stabbed her repeatedly. She was rushed to Chittagong Medical Hospital where the doctors declared her dead.

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Thursday 25th April
(All programmes are in local time. We recommend programmes printed in bold)

BTB

3:00 Opening Announcement
4:00 Quran Programme Summary
4:15 Re-telecast of selected programme from TV Archive
4:30 News in Bangla 4:15 Parashrami
4:45 Children's programme 4:45
Cartoon Film: Tom And Jerry
5:00 News in Bangla 5:25
National Television School Debate
6:00 News in Bangla 6:30
E-Shahid: Mass Education 7:00
The News 7:05 Jibon Alo 7:25
Nazim Songs 8:00 News in Bangla 8:40 E-Shahid: Natak
10:00 News in English 10:25
Jannatbani 10:25 Film Show:
The Equalizer 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Friday's programme 11:40 Close down

BBC

6:00am BBC Newsroom inc.
World Business Report/Asia Today/24 Hours 9:00 BBC World Headlines 9:05 Rough Guide To The Americas 10:00 BBC Newsday 1:00 BBC World Headlines 1:05 The Big Trip 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 Time Out: The Clothes Show 3:00 BBC World News 3:30 Time Out: Top Gear 4:00 BBC Newsdesk 6:00 BBC World Headlines 6:05 Horizon 7:00 BBC World News 7:15 World Business Report 7:30 BBC World Newsroom Asia and Pacific 8:30 Time Out: Madhur Jaffrey's Far Eastern Cookery 9:00 BBC World Headlines 9:05 Rough Guide To The Americas 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 Time Out: One Foot In The Past 11:00 BBC World Today 1:00 BBC World Headlines 1:05 Correspondent 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 Time Out: Tomorrow's World 3:00 BBC World Report inc. World Business Report/24 Hours 5:00 BBC World News 5:10 Newswright

CHANNEL V

7:00am Rewind VJ Sophiya



Mano Ya Na Mano on Zee TV, Tonight at 11:00

8:00 Jump Start VJ Trey 10:00
Frame by Frame 12:00 News The
Vibe Down Under 1:00 By De-
mand VJ Trey 2:00 Rewind VJ
Sophiya 3:00 Big Bang VJ Alex-
sandra 4:30 By Demand VJ Trey
5:30 Music Update Tokyo
Awards 6:30 Rewind VJ Sophiya
7:30 First Day First Show 8:30
Big Bang VJ Alexandra 9:30
Flashes 9:30 Classic Rock
10:30 First Day First Show
11:00 Rewind VJ Sophiya
12:00am Haysah 2:00 By De-
mand VJ Trey 3:00 Billboard US
Countdown 4:30 Frame by Frame

STAR PLUS

6:30am Transformers 7:00
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
7:30 GI Joe 8:00 Jem 8:30 The
Wind In The Willows 9:00 Aero-
bics Or Style 9:30 Nanny and The
Professor 10:00 The Beverly
Hillbillies 10:30 'de' Medici
Kitchen 11:00 El TV 11:30
Gabrielle 12:30 Santa Barbara
1:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
2:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show
3:00 Remington Steele 4:00 'de'
Medici Kitchen 4:30 El TV 5:00
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
5:30 The New Lassie 6:00pm
The Adventures Of The Black
Stratton 6:30 Batman 7:00 Home
and Away 7:30 Entertainment
Tonight 8:00 MASH 8:30 21
Jump Street 9:30 The X Files

STAR MOVIES

7:30am Adventure: Let My
Dust 15 (Arabic Subtitles) 9:30
Family: The Silent One 12
(Arabic Subtitles) 11:30 Family:
The Butlers 15 (Hindi Subtitles)
1:30 Western: Butch And Sun-
dance: The Early Days (Hindi
Subtitles) 3:30 Family: Place At
The Coast (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30
Comedy: Carry On Up The Khy-
ber 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 7:00
India Star Five 7:30 Comedy: A
Private Function 15 (Hindi Sub-
titles) 9:00 US Top Ten 9:30
Romance: Book Of Love 15
(Hindi Subtitles) 11:30 Gold:
The Last Seduction 18 (Arabic
Subtitles) 1:30 After Dark:
Mirage 18 (Arabic Subtitles)
3:30 After Dark: The Mean
Season 18 (Arabic Subtitles)
5:30 Comedy: Only The Lonely
15 (Arabic Subtitles)

ZEE TV

5:30am Infotainment (TMM)
6:00 Jagran 7:00 ZED-Naya A
To Z 7:30 ZED-Management
8:00 ZED-Networking 8:30 Mere
Ghar Ana Zindagi 9:00 Ghostrat
Aana 9:30 Hif: Ghar Ka Chirag
(Rajesh, Neelam, Chukky)
12:00 Commander 12:30 Tol Mol
Ka Bol 1:00 ZED-Chota Bheem
1:30 Asian Sky Shop 2:30 Tara
3:00 Shakti 3:30 Film Chakkar
4:00 Film Deswame 4:30 Viral
Naye Tarane 5:00 ZED: Chota
Bheem 5:30 Hingiri Ka Vee 6:00
Natkhat 6:30 Double Trouble
7:00 Dilagi 7:30 Gaane Anjane
8:00 FLU 8:30 Film Chakkar
9:00 Kya Scene Hai 9:30 Das-

STAR Sports

6:00am German Football
League HIL 6:30 International
Motorsports News 8:00 New
Zealand v West Indies 1st Test
Match Day 5 From Barbados
1:30 Chinese National Football
League Hits 2:00 WFLA HIL 2:30
Football Mundial 3:00 The Euro-
pean Tour Cannes Open Hits 4:00
Dong-A Int'l Marathon 5:00 The
Omega Tour Caribubang Classic
HIL 6:00pm US Senior PGA
Championships 1996 Final Day
Florida Feed Times TBC via Sky
Sports 8:00 German Football
League Hits 8:30 Thai Kickbox-
ing Highlights 9:30 Champions
Wayne Mc Cullough v Jose Luis
Suarez 12:00am Thai Kickboxing
Highlights 12:30 Football Mundial
1:00 1996 World Motorcycle
Championship Japan Grand Prix
Highlights From Suzuka, Japan
2:30 Chinese National Football
League Hits 4:00 US Senior PGA
Championships 1996 Day 3 From
PGA National Resort and Spa,
Florida

10:00 Duniya 10:30 The
News 10:50 Business Roundup
11:00 Mano Ya Na Mano 11:30
Hum Paanch 12:00 Tara 12:30
Parapara 1:00 Asian Paints
Yadon Ka Rang 1:30 Ransa
(Arabic) 2:00 Awaraz Mustafa
Kata (Arabic) 2:30 Dastane
South Asia (Arabic) 3:00 In-
formation (TMM)

PTV

8:00am Titawat Aur Tar-
juma/Ham/Nast 8:20 Cartoon
8:30 Khairan 8:45 Cut Piece
9:20 Aahang & Rotini 9:45
Phool Chandi 10:05 Sona Chandi
(Drama Serial) 10:30 Buttons &
Rustys (Eng. Film) 10:55 Milli
Naghma 11:00 Khairan 11:10
Mirage 11:55 Tele Play
(Drama Serial) 12:45 Dawadi
12:55 Duran-e-Hakeem & Bismil-
lah 1:15 Mugaddam (Drama Serial)
2:00 Pusthar (Drama Serial) 2:45
Perspective & Health Forum 3:40
Taleem Maloomat 4:25 Aurat
Aur Qanoon 5:05 Home Econo-
mics 5:25 Humayra Soath 5:55
Varna 6:25 Aau Courts 7:05
Mughal Hai Aama 7:20 Anak
Wala Jin 7:45 English News
8:05 Jawaan Sanget 8:45
Eendhai (Drama Serial) 9:00
Break for Headline News 10:00
Khairnama & Commercial News
10:35 Mast Mast Sanyo 11:15
Urdu Feature Film & Khas Khas
Khatarni Close down

SONY ET

8:30am Yadon Ki Baraat
9:00 The Three Stooges 9:30
Dennis The Menace 10:00 I
Dream Of Jeannie 10:30 Ek Rang

Lamha Hazaar 11:00 Ghaave
11:30 Cine Matinee-Hindi Feature
Film 2:30 Taak Jhaak 3:00 Agne
Jaise Tapes 3:30 Mere Message
Meri Geet 4:00 Surt Wheel of
Fortune (Game Show) 4:30
Fasle 5:00 O'Mania 5:30 The
Three Stooges 6:00 Dennis The
Menace 6:30 I Dream Of Jeannie
7:00 Ek Rang Lamha Hazaar 7:30
Mere Message Meri Geet 8:00
Surt Wheel Of Fortune (Game
Show) 8:30 Ravan 9:30 Hospital
10:00 Aahat 10:30 Taak Jhaak
11:00 Dekh Tamasha Dekh 11:30
Yeh Sadi Nahi Ho Sakti 12:00
Zamana Badal Gaya 12:30 Ravan
1:30 Mere Message Meri Geet
2:00 Yadon Ki Baraat

DD 7

8:10 Shastriya Sanget 8:20
Bindon 8:30 Sur Sanget 9:00
Janani 9:30 Swapner Bazar
10:00 Nazrul geeti 10:15 Lok
geeti 10:30 Ek Shilpi Onk Gaan
12:00 ETV Programme 12:30
Nabi Ganjer Daiyya 1:00 Janani
1:30 Bengali Movie Club Film
Show 5:05 Nepal Program 5:30
News 5:35 Sahitya Samkriti
6:00 Pali Katha 6:30 Chakur
Khahe 6:55 Padi Masier Barri
Shanker Lal

EL TV

00:30am Kishore Kumar Special
01:00 Bachche Man Ke 02:00
Rekha Special 03:00 Aaya Sawan

Garfield® by Jim Davis

