



My Queer Friends

by Shahreen Munir



She will either become a model or a fashion designer (we become partners in case you become the latter)! Maybe she will just spend the rest of her life doing crazy stuff!!

Now, let's move on to the Body Builder/Scientist/Obsessed One (did I say too much?). Always finding problems out of solutions, he is surely to deal with computer, science and technology (yawn! How boring!).

Please welcome the Ex Tombola, who has lately changed her appearance (you still need that makeover which we are working with!). Over the past six years she has come to be my best friend besides Miss Famous Model! She's full of jokes and is always ready to create the most extraordinary funny faces (does it make sense?). She is an excellent basketball player and will hopefully succeed in becoming a pilot. My advice to her would be: Learn to protest otherwise justice will never be served! Stop being so afraid or else there will be no place for you in this cruel world!

Now, coming to Mr Troublesome (no guesses) whose smile even gets on the teachers' nerves. Whenever I try to think about his future, I can see him behind bars (did I mention any-

thing about the Central Jail?).

Our class introduces the Musician who has got many prizes for her talent. She is simple (indeed too simple) for our class. She is very intelligent and her face reflects shades of Indian actresses. I'm happy to now introduce The Class Clown who is not serious even after getting scolded by the strictest teacher. He is a tall guy and no one can imagine how much he eats; (he means it when he says, 'I can eat an elephant!') seeing his thin physique. Finally, his future will be running after, no, no, I mean probably joining the circus (O.K. I'm sorry!).

Spotty loves to say her name with emphasis and lately she has fortunately gotten rid of all the characteristics her friend owns. She is nice although she just can't accept my victory. She is good in basketball and has other talents, she's going to build up a great career as she's very ambitious.

He is said to be the best sportsman and he's nice except when he teases me by calling me 'Moga'! (what does that mean

now, you want to know anything about the 26th extraordinary student in our class? Well, I am (the unique one) on the track of becoming a model/fashion designer/business woman/choreographer/photographer/and let's see what more I can manage! So this is our class, and promises of a fantastic future.

What are X-rays?

X-RAYS were discovered in Germany in 1895 by Wilhelm Roentgen, and thus are sometimes called 'Roentgen rays.'

They are penetrating rays similar to light rays. They differ from light rays in the length of their waves and in their energy. The shortest wave length from an X-ray tube may be one fifteen-thousandth to one-millionth of the wave length of green light. X-rays can pass through materials which light will not pass through because of their very short wave length. The shorter the wave length, the more penetrating the waves become.

X-rays are produced in an X-ray tube. The air is pumped from this tube until less than one hundred-millionth of the original amount is left. In the tube, which is usually made of glass, there are two electrodes. One of these is called 'the cathode'. This has a negative charge. In it is a coil of tungsten wire which can be heated by an electric current so that electrons are given off. The other electrode is 'the target' or 'anode'.

The electrons travel from the cathode to the target at very great speeds because of the difference between the cathode and the target. They strike the target at speeds that may vary from 60,000 to 175,000 miles per second.

The target is either a block of tungsten or a tungsten wheel, and it stops the electrons suddenly. Most of the energy of these electrons is changed into heat, but some of it becomes X-radiation, and emerges from a window at the bottom as X-rays.

Have you ever wondered how X-ray pictures are taken of bones in your body? The X-ray 'picture' is a shadowgraph or shadow picture. X-rays pass through the part of the body being X-rayed and cast shadows on the film. The film is coated with a sensitive emulsion on both sides. After it is exposed, it is developed like ordinary photographic film. The bones and other objects the X-rays do not pass through easily cast denser shadows and so show up as light areas on the film.

Today, X-rays play an important part in medicine, science, and industry, and are one of man's most helpful tools.

What Are Cosmic Rays?

YOU have read, of course, that when a satellite is sent up into the air it carries all kinds of instruments and measuring devices. Did you notice that in almost every case there is some detecting or measuring instrument for cosmic rays? These rays are still as exciting and mysterious as anything you might find in science fiction!

About 60 years ago, scientists noticed a strange occurrence. They found that a sample of air in a close container showed a small amount of electrical conductivity. Even when they surrounded the container with thick shields, this was still true. It meant that some kind of radiation was entering the container, radiation more penetrating than any known before!

Where was this mysterious radiation coming from? All kinds of experiments were made to get the answer. First, they proved that it wasn't coming from land, because it was over the sea, too. Since it was the same night and day, it wasn't coming from the sun. And by going up in a balloon to great altitudes, it was shown to be everywhere in space, or "cosmic" — which means "universal".

What actually are cosmic rays? They are atomic particles. They travel in space outside the earth's atmosphere at speeds nearly equal to that of light. Some of them happen to approach the earth and enter our atmosphere.

These atomic particles, called "primary cosmic rays," collide with atoms in the air. These collisions create new particles which also travel at great speeds and in the same direction as the primary particles. These new particles are called "secondary cosmic rays." They in turn collide with other atoms and create more new particles. Thus, a great shower of radiation bombards the earth. One proton coming from outer space may create enough radiation in this way to cover 90 square metres.

As far as we know, this bombardment of cosmic rays is harmless when it reaches the earth, because, after all, it has been going on for billions of years and has not affected life on earth.

Science still cannot explain where cosmic rays originate, though now that we are penetrating outer space, the mystery may eventually be solved.

My Dream

by Maisha Chowdhury

I once dreamt that I was on top of Mount Everest. In a country called Never-rest. I climbed down. And went round and round in the river on a boat. I lost my expensive coat. I swam the Pacific ocean. And drank some magic potion. I suddenly opened a door And found myself on the floor.

I
by Fardeen Chowdhury

I am. I am one. I am one soul. Trying to control. Whatever I can hold.

I am one man. That's the basic plan. How much longer can I stand you?

I am. Breathe a sigh. But I don't know why I guess it's just a lie.

I am. I am alone. Told what to behold. My life is still untold..... to me.

I am one. But don't tell anyone. About the song I've sung.

I am. I am free. And on my knees. With my pleases.

So sweet.... and tender I am. I am dumb. Comes of being numb.

I am gone. For I am one. And you have won.

Departed soldier

by Ahmed Ishaque

WHY think of tomorrow? When you know won't be there. Why waste your life in war? Why do you stand in the front line? Firing your mad gun? When you know one bullet. Might strike you as well. Why think of your family? When you have already departed. Why think of your love? When you have already kissed her good-bye. Why amongst other soldiers? You hesitate to vow your destiny? Why not like the others. You think, this might well be the end.

competition
bet your
Imagination!



The Rising Stars beta various things over the readers' imagination about the future of Dhaka city in 2015. What will the city look like? Will there be more traffic jams? Or subways and high tech commuting systems would replace the jams? Will there be playing grounds or will the roof tops be considered as only playing grounds. Will the city dwellers see sun light from inside the crowded jungle of concretes or will the city be more planned. Shall we be rich or poor? Will the politicians become sacer and honest? Will there be more fights on the streets?... IMAGINE! It's high time for you to think how do you see Dhaka on 2015.

R.S. Editor's Note:
On our November 1st issue, readers must have had noticed this little column and wondered what this was all about. For your clarification, this is our usual competition of the month where you are welcome to let go of your imagination and write for us 800 to 1000 words about how you visualise your favourite city in the years to come.
May be your composition would open the eyes of the city planners (if there is any). Send your piece by 30th of November latest. Good luck!

The Tale of a Tail

by Kazi K Arafat

"Riders on the storm
Riders on the storm
Into this house we're born
Into this world we're thrown
Like a dog without a bone
An actor out on loan."

—The Doors

EVERYBODY considered him a low-class animal.

Monkeys sniggered and said "Look at the way humans are always monkeying around with us — and we never showed them so much as a moment of decent behaviour. See how they respect us — they say we're their great, great multiplied-by-great grandfathers. But even though they're our cousins, we don't give a damn."

Lions and tigers roared predators and iterated with majesty. "These cretins have the audacity to point their pea-shooters at us — but look at them tremble at a growl, even when we are caged in the 200, and their simpering faces are out of our reach!" And they let their vocal chords wage war, giving an excellent idea just what it was humans were so scared about.

Horses just raised themselves on their hind legs and neighed. Of course, he couldn't understand what they said. Even then, it seemed that they were gracefully condescending enough to brag about how these scrawny homosapiens worshipped their beauty. Even the crows seemed to joke about how humans have been favoured by guano toppings to go with the gel in their hair.

And of course, he couldn't, wouldn't be able to do a thing in retaliation.

The object of this last defamatory remark was not man. It was a dog that lived in Dhamondi, Dhaka, in a home with a small child. He was the kid's pet. He would rack his brains trying to save his face among the other animals, and finally came across an old TV series, and a recycled saying. "But they love me!" he would say. "I'm their best friend — look at 'Lassie'?"

"Look at the Planet of the Apes then!" retorted an equally oldfashioned gorilla who looked like he would very much like Mutley answer, so that he could bash his face. Mutley bit his tongue and his lip. "Besides, what did they name you after? A dog in a cartoon that's always getting kicked around. If they couldn't find any better names, they could always find a better epithet from their talking pictures. Snowy or Hot Dog, for instance. Or Dogmatix. G'ort, even Scoobie Doo or Dynomutt for that matter. It's not like the kid doesn't know these. In all probability he knows of a dozen more better names for a dog. But you had to be Mutley."

"Where's your sense of humour?"
"It's there! It's just that I would never like my name to be the object of someone's sense of humour. Would you, Mutley? Would you? Tell me the truth. Of course, you may not even know. Look at you — you're so pathetic! Even your tail isn't straight!"

This last remark seemed in his ears in the middle of the night until he could stand it no more and would start howling in anguish. He would be told to shut up, and finally he resolved to do something about his tail. The rest would follow.

The funny thing is, none of these remarks were true. Mutley just translated these from all the cartoons and comics his little master was hooked on.

Mutley grew a habit of sitting on a balcony, or by a window all day, trying to divine what the coded chirps and caws and moos really meant. Spring was an especially hard time, what with all the birds flying about and his tail still in existence. He had tried to burn it by sticking it in the gas burner, and gotten a scalding from his master's ammu, the All-Powerful Queen Mother who thought that he was giving her cooking the benefit of his expertise.

He had laid that appendage on the road, hoping that a bulldozer would run over it and he

pend a few units of heart to this doggerel dog. However, they got on well together, since Mutley was the ward of a human Mutley.

Anyway, after a long period of hopeful waiting, Mutley's real owners returned and sacked their darwan for not taking proper care of Mutley. Finally, the time came when Mutley's Gordian knot was cut through, and with all knowledge of grime and pretended divinity shone forth. Mutley was overjoyed, and, with his shoulder straight and head high, he looked backwards at the place that had been itching for so long for satisfaction as well as claws.

There was a slight problem. A catastrophe, in fact, for Mutley.

Things hadn't really worked out the way he thought they would — his tail wasn't straight. His leg, however, had curled up, like a 'Don't worry, be happy' smile — or an inverted scowl, whichever way you look at it. Even the shape of Mutley's bones had changed, and he realized with a sigh the truth of another sentence Orwell wrote:

"Who controls the past controls the future — who controls the present controls the past."

Sadly, Mutley didn't control the present. He was too buried in his own misery, as we walked slinkingly away, to notice another dog, not as handsome or as healthy as himself, but walking by like a king, proud of the marvellous gift Nature had bestowed upon him in the form of a unique tail — different from and above all the rest.

Fool, Look at thy Heart and Write

"RUNNING short of ideas," said my Muse to me. I nodded yes. A female voice roared (thunder cracked, black cat jumped, vamp stared bla bla bla): Fool, look at the heart and write!

Easy for you to say, you deity of creativity, inspiration, and memory — one of the G9. But what is there in this foolish heart to write about? "FOOD-OOL, do I have to tell you every thing I told this to Sir Philip Sidney and he wrote the sonnet sequence 'Astrophel and Stella'." Take an ECG test of your heart then; and write!

How genius of you! But the hi-tech prescription of my Muse could only receive a photographic image of my caricatured past self. The first instance of irregularities involve a minor attack, an attack from a minor one.

I recalled my first encounter with my student Osama. On the first day of my tuition, aunty (That's what I called my student's mom) literally dragged her child from the game and presented a five-year-old standard sized darling before me. We were introduced with a ass-lamalekum and an alaikum-salam. Still gasping from its chhutachhut, osama gave me a not-again look. But my thoughts were engaged elsewhere: there was nothing I could make out of the skinny kid's dress or silky bob-cut hair. As a result, a relationship began with one vital information missing: the gender of my student.

We started with Biology. Osama was reading the lifecycle of frogs and I was reading his/her look. I heard: First the he frog croaks, then the she frog lays eggs. There was a pause, followed by a "I don't get it!"

"What?" I responded in a helping voice. "It doesn't make sense. The he frog makes noises and the she frog lays eggs. How?"

"How?" I echoed. A chill

