

CINDERELLA: THE RESURRECTION (continuation)

By Mohammed Farhad

Anyway, life went on and the day arrived when there were only 2 days left for them to leave high school. The three girls got their diplomas (although Cindy deserved all three) and everyone was busy planning for Prom Night.

Everyone except Cindy of course. Her stepmom didn't want her to go because if she did, all the fly guys at the dance would want to dance with her instead of her stepsiblings because she was far prettier. And besides, who'd buy a dress for her? So on the couch she sat, watching MTV and munching on stale popcorn, while Kimi and Miki were out dancing with the hot guys mentioned above. Nikki was out on night-duty and wouldn't be back before dawn the next day. She had to take the bus because her daughters had taken the miraculously-still-running Volkswagen to the prom.

Ding dong. The door. Cindy leaped from the couch and reached the door without touching the floor with her feet. She touched it with her left shoulder though. She turned the knob and opened the door, because that is how most doors open. Outside, there stood a fat middle-aged lady clad in denims too sizes too small.

"Who are you? You look so much like Dhaliwood's Moushumi!"

"I'm your fairy godmother, Cindy. Moushumi lent me her genes."

"I can see that! How did they ever fit?"

"No. no! Her GENES! DNA stuff."

"Oh."

"Okay, now you wanna go to the prom right? I'm your fairy godmother. FGM for short. You can ask for anything you want."

"Don't give me that s*** about fairies! If you were my FGM, how come you weren't here all these years?"

"There, there, calm down. Mind your tongue dear. To get here from Fairyland, you ride on a magical flying jharoo. Some moron stole mine and used it to sweep floors! Can you believe that? Using a jharoo to sweep floors! Well it takes all kinds to make a multi-dimensional universe. Now, back to your wishes."

"I'm not taking that as an excuse. You could have used public transport."

"Nah, too hairy. I meant airy. We're wasting time. Tell you what, I'll give you a seductive evening gown, a new hairdo, DMX Reeboks and some other titbits. You'll get to the prom in a Dholaikhal Lexus. Okay?"

"Sneakers with an evening gown? Dui nambar Lexus?"

"Either that, or rags and your father's undies."

"Okay."

"But there's one important condition. You'll have to be home by midnight!"

"Midnight? C'mon! It's my first night out for heaven's sake!"

"FGM laws. It's to ensure that you don't run into your stepsisters when they come back. And one more thing, when the clock strikes midnight you'll be back in your rags, except for the sneakers. The car is a little something to make up

for all these years I've missed."

"Oh alright", Cindy sighed.

After that long talk with her FGM, Cindy sped off into the unknown. It wasn't unknown for long because the Dholaikhal people installed a Global Positioning System in the car. For the non-technical folks out there, a GPS shows a map of your location on a small screen. So if you're lost in the Himalayas, all you have to do is ask the tiny TV thing to get satellite info on your location and in a minute you'll know your exact coordinates. Match that with your map and you'll discover that you're actually standing on the mountain two miles to your left. Whatever. Now where was I? Oh yes. Well, she made it to the ball.

When she entered the huge room, all eyes turned to her. All male tongues dangled drooling. All female noses sprang high into the air, their neglected nose-hairs showing. These included her stepsiblings. They didn't seem to recognize her with the plastic freckle that she wore on her left cheek as a disguise. She walked, nay, slithered towards the hunkiest kabadi player in the school. She held out her hand to be kissed, but instead it was shaken.

Then they danced and danced while all eyes glared at them. Some lustful, some jealous, some saying I-have-to-go-pee-but-my-date-won't-let-me. Cindy and her new-found-boyfriend whispered sweet nothings about love at first sight, the Bosnian war, penguin mating practices etc.

Time flies when you're having fun. When it's with a handsome kabadi player, it's Concorde flight #420. The clock struck midnight. Bong, bong, bhrrrrt...

Oops, it's just someone telling everyone else that s/he is Gas Chalito.

Midnight's another half-hour away. Cindy noticed this and politely told her date that she had to go.

"Oh please stay, lovely princess! I need you so!"

"Cut the Shakespeare crap. I've gotta go."

"Alright, but just one final kiss goodnight?"

"Okay", Cindy agreed.

Both of them had pierced tongues (the ills of excessive MTV viewing). After the first five seconds of their passionate kissing, they noticed that their tongue-rings had merged into one big ring due to all the acidic lemonade they'd been drinking. Cindy thought at first that it was an omen from God.

Later she realized the seriousness of the situation. They were bonded like this for twenty minutes when finally the entire ring dissolved in what remained of the lemonade. Cindy began running immediately but couldn't do so quite well because of all the hundreds of people in her way. By the time she got to the gate, it was 12:01 am. Her plastic freckle popped down to the floor and she was back in her rags. She could hear hundreds of voices jeering and laughing behind her. All except her new boyfriend who was running after her trying to call her back. He wasn't very successful mainly because he kept

saying "Kabadi come kabadi back kabadi come kabadi..."

While getting into the car, one of Cindy's sneakers fell off on to the pavement. "No big deal," she thought, "My cute little toes were itching anyway". She turned on the ignition, pushed the shift to drive and floored the accelerator.

She reached home before everyone else. After checking if the cat ate the goldfish while she was gone, and being relieved that the goldfish ate the cat, she went to bed. The next day, as all other days, she cooked and cleaned and washed for her stepfamily, checked on the goldfish, and went to bed. The weeks rolled by, gathered moss, and kept rolling by. Meanwhile, Hamba, the kabadi player, searched desperately for his lost love. He had absolutely no idea about where Cindy lived or her real identity. All he had to go on was a stinky pair of Reeboks that made him black out when he sniffed them. Then a wonderful idea struck him. "Eureka!" he thought, "I'll just go around sniffing every girl's feet until I find a pair that knocks me

out!". So our prince in shining V-neck armor put an ad in the classifieds telling all girls between 17 and 20 that he'd be coming to their homes. The girls' responses varied, albeit not by much.

"EEEEEEK!! Hamba the hunk will sniff my feet!"

"WOW!! That filthy rich, handsome jerk's gonna smell my tootsies!"

"I wonder if he'll like my feet better if I sprayed them with chloroform?"

"Drat! I shouldn't have taken my annual bath yesterday."

The last two were Miki and Kimi respectively.

Hamba commenced his quest with his best buddy by his side to wake him after he fainted, if he fainted at all. Everything was moving along like clockwork. Knock, sniff, and leave. After sniffing all other young female feet in the city, he got to Miki's home and sniffed her feet. He fainted. On coming to, he was ecstatic. He thought he had found his fair maiden. But just to be sure, he asked her to stick out her tongue. It wasn't pierced!

"Aha! Fraud! Cheat! Bamboozler!", said he of the impostor. In case you were wondering, yes, I do have a thesaurus sitting next to me. Then Kimi waddled into the room, her feet covered with a thin layer of what looked like rotten shutki bharta. On smelling that, Hamba slipped into a coma. When he was released from the hospital a week later, he was half insane. The doctors recommended Pabna.

"Buddy, feet stink. But I've never before heard of one that could immobilize an army", he said to his buddy who had been there beside him all throughout this experience. Infact, he had been there for Hamba when he flunked his SATs; when he lost his job; when he got dumped for the 58th time; when his tongue-hole got infected; when he got shot; when he wore pink shorts to school; when he lost Cindy; and now through his coma. He wasn't loyal or devoted, he was just

plain old bad luck.

The Kabadi King sat under an apple tree, alone, thinking of his lost girlfriend. Sigh. All of a sudden, an apple fell on his mostly hollow head.

He began wondering why it fell down instead of falling up. What is it about the earth that pulls everything towards it? Then he ate it up. He walked over to the Census Office and asked the guy at the counter how many girls, aged 17-20, there are in this city. The counter guy didn't budge at first but went right at it after getting some money which magically appeared under his table. Ghoshey vitamin aasey. Ekdom concentrated steroid marka vitamin.

A few keystrokes later, Mr. Ghossh-khor told Hamba that the exact figure was 852. "Hark!", thought Hamba, "there is still one young pair of feet left!"

He had sniffed 851 pairs of feet, and the last pair sent him to La La Land.

Who could the 852nd girl be? Over the years, Hamba's IQ gradually dropped to below room temperature, so he couldn't figure out which house the last girl lives in. Burying the pain of loss, he went to Kimi's place to ask for the medical expenses.

"Hey, I didn't FORCE you to smell my feet, you did it on your own."

"Yeah, but I wanted to smell FEET, not toxic waste!"

"You're so rich! Don't you have medical insurance?"

"I did, but once I faked being sick to skip school and from then on my Dad stopped paying the premiums."

"I'm sorry, but I don't have that much money."

Just then, Cindy stumbled into the room carrying cha-naasta. She recognized Hamba immediately and blushed. Hamba saw her, dived to her feet and inhaled deeply. He was out cold for about 10 minutes before he regained consciousness.

"Oh lovely princess! Marry me!"

"Oh not-so-lovely prince! No way!"

"Huh?"

"Yup."

"But why not?"

"Gimme my shoe back first. Ever since I lost it, I had to wear these ugly choppols."

Hamba returned the shoe and they got married the next day, not giving a rat's @\$\$ what her stepfamily said, and they lived happily ever after.

EPILOGUE:

Hamba got a kabadi scholarship to Harvard and is now working on his Ph.K. Cindy grew up to be a great writer and authored three Nobel-winning books on the proper use of suppositories.

They had seven dwarf sons and a beautiful daughter who looked absolutely stunning except for her snow-white complexion. But that's another story. (SHAAT BHAI CHOMPA).

MY NEW FRIENDS

By Nowaid Ali

Who is a friend? A friend is a person with whom you dare to be yourself, a person with whom you can share your thoughts, feelings and secrets. A true friend would always stand by you in trouble. Friendship is worth more than any other thing in this world.

I myself am quite a very friendly person. I have friends throughout my school. I like to spend time with friends. Raseen, Sharjil, Daiyan, Nasr, Junaid and Shayaan. Raseen, Sharjil, Nasr, Imran and Daiyan have been my friends since the time I joined the school. They had always been kind, friendly, warm, affectionate and honest to me. Disloyalty was never a part of their character.

Now I am in class V and the bond between us is stronger, as we had been friends for a longer time and I have gotten to know them better. Although I have landed into trouble for them on numerous occasions, I know that they had no motives in mind.

Raseen is a friendly person and possesses an interesting character. He is stout and short. He is obsessed with cricket. He plays very well and has a great sense of humor. He always has a frozen smile on his face and his smile grows wider after he comes to school. Nasr is another interesting character with the wildest imagination. He is very childish and still watches Scooby Doo. After talking to him, no one would ever believe that he is the most intelligent boy in our class. You can imagine how innocent he is.

Two of my closest friends Junaid and Shayaan are two of the many new friends I made this year. In this article, I would like to share my thoughts on how friends had influenced my life and thoughts. At first, I used to think that Junaid and Shayaan were both snobs. Even in class IV I used to hate Junaid, we used to fight over almost everything. Shayaan on the other hand didn't talk much, and we used to have very little conversation. He used to invite me to his parties, but I never felt like going, as we were not close enough. When I was promoted to class V, I felt lonely as most of my close friends were in other sections. The only persons in my class whom I knew well were Imran, Shayaan & Junaid. I knew Imran as a friend and knew Shayaan and Junaid as snobs. One day, our class teacher changed our seating arrangements and made me sit beside Shayaan and behind Junaid. That was the time when I got to know them better and changed my point of view about them. I learnt about them, their families, hobbies, joy and sorrow. That was the time when I realized how wrong I was and understood how quickly we humans tend to draw a conclusion about somebody's character without even trying to know them better.

It had only been a year since we became friends and within this time, they have influenced my life greatly and I am thankful to God for giving me such warm and affectionate friends. Even some of my earlier friends are surprised at how we got so close in such a short time. When the year began, I thought that it would be a boring year, as I did not have any friends in my section. Now the year has ended and instead of being a boring year it was a year to remember. I have made two great new friends and learnt a few lessons in life. First, I learnt that we should never make any conclusions about a person before trying to be his friend. Secondly, I have found the answer to the question that lay in my mind for a long time. The question was "Who is a friend and what they are for?" The answer that I have been able to come up with is that "a friend is a jewel, precious and rare, enemies are autumn leaves found everywhere." I have also learned that friends like Raseen, Sharjil, Imran, Nasr, Daiyan, Junaid and Shayaan are not earned they are gifts from God and are beyond human valuation. All of them are only a small part of the answer. The full answer still remains unknown to me and I believe that someday I would make even more friends and solve the great mystery of friendship, which has influenced many people. I want to get to know how a friend warns and comfort us with just a nod and an affectionate look, which speaks from the heart and says many unspoken words when we are lost and beyond hope.

CAUGHT IN CHAOS!

By Shahed Ibne Mahbub

"It was without a shadow of a doubt the most depressing day of my life", or so I thought. Things couldn't possibly be any worse. But little did I know the worst was yet to come. I just came out of my school; it was a perfectly sunny day, but somewhere in my subconscious mind, dark clouds were forming.

I decided to walk for a few minutes and not to take the rickshaw that was waiting eagerly to get a passenger. I decided to continue to walk. For that gave me the opportunity to reflect on my dismal day. Our house was back then in Mirpur and my school in Eskaton, at least half an hour's ride, if I was lucky! It felt peaceful and quiet to walk along the road that day, probably because of some strange reason the streets wore a deserted look, a few rickshaws, the usual pedestrians and a minibus parked on one side of the road, but no private cars! I was walking through the VIP road towards Panthapath, and then it happened.

All of a sudden the ear-shattering roar of a gun going off, and almost immediately a mob came running towards me, I could see clouds of white smoke going up behind them, an outcry of panic was evident, and my eyes started to burn. In a split second I knew what was going down.

The police have dispersed a procession from the opposition party, and the usual tear gas had been released, pickets resisting the cops, well, you get the picture. I was caught in the middle of it all, and as soon as I realized this I took to my heels and I didn't stop until I was out of breath and one more step seemed impossible. By then I had crossed Hatirpool and on the opening of Panthapath. I paused, and looked around, suddenly the sky had formed some dark, threatening clouds, ironically reflecting my frame of mind. I reached down in my pocket to get my wallet, but all I grasped was the inner cloth of my pocket. My wallet was gone! It must have fallen out of my pocket when I was running from the crowd. It started to drizzle, and then it poured, the rain came down like cats and dogs, it would not stop quickly, and I knew it! What happened next is anyone's guess. I came home drenched, with a bad cold with no money or the house keys, which were, so conveniently in my wallet. If any of you out there find my dilemma funny then I would be happy that I could make you laugh. But anyhow from that very day, as I was standing in front of our house, fully soaked in the rain, and with a very bad temperament, I realized that if I took that rickshaw in the first place, all this would never have happened!

MAILBOX

Dear RS,

When I received the last edition of your paper, I was infuriated after reading the article "THE HAUNTED HOUSE" on page 6. It was a slightly summarised, almost a word by word copy (changing only the names of the characters) of an article I had written in the 96-97 Greenherald yearbook (pg 50) when I was in Grade 4. UNBELIEVABLE!!! This plagiarism should definitely NOT be encouraged among the kids of our city.

Not only does this "Shareq" not know how to write, he has the nerve of publishing someone else's original story in a widely read newspaper. What is the world coming to? I mean, I wrote this story when I was 9 years old, and if it weren't for these immature brats still playing with it, I would have long, forgotten about it. This "copying" issue is something that has begun to appear quite often in RS, along with its complaints, you guys should do something about it. Well, I hope I've made my point & exposed this guy for the fraud that he is.

Ushshi M. Rahman.

Dear Ushashi,

Like you, we also feel disgusted about plagiarised articles. We denounce the plagiarists. We are sure 'Shareq' is never going to write in the Rising Stars in the future if he has any self dignity.

But we could not help wondering how you can indirectly accuse the RS for printing plagiarised works. Do you think we print these articles after knowing that such articles were actually stolen?

If somebody wants to 'earn' fame by stealing others' works and send them to the RS- we are not in a position to know it. Even if somebody picked some work from Riders' Digest (thugs' favourite), we may not know it. But after printing it- someone from some corner is able to detect the crime. Then we can take action by printing the allegations. That is the only 'civilised' action we can take.

The trend of plagiarism is may be rising. The 'extreme' we can do is to close Rising Stars on the assumption that our teenagers are becoming nothing but plagiarists. Since that is not what we have in mind, give us a better suggestion about how we can stop or discourage people from sending plagiarised works.