



# Finding A Piece of Peace for the Mind

By Anindita Chakraborty.

**'P**ace! Try pronouncing the word with all the happiness and gentleness you feel inside. Close your eyes softly. Take a deep breath. Exhale very softly. Try this several times. Take your time and then try to forget about the things around you. Very slowly get yourself out of all the thoughts you have within you. Concentrate on nothing; nothing at all. The concentration must be so strong that you won't even be aware of your existence. There is a vacuum within and around you; you still feel fulfilled. You find yourself to be exactly where you have started your exploration through the spaces of peace. Yes! You are right. You have completed a full circle exploring your Silent Mind for "The Land Of Peace", looking for peace of your mind. It's amazing that you have found it!

Now can you feel a change around you? A while ago something that seemed so disgusting; looks like the most beautiful thing you have ever

seen. You seem so satisfied and there is nothing that irritates you; no one to make you angry. Now you love everything, everyone. All the people you see are polite to you. They are so kind. Now your world is beautiful and an appropriate one to live in.

Is it really the world that has changed? No, it isn't. It is you. You are the one who has changed. Look at yourself in the mirror. Who is it? See those twinkling beautiful eyes? The sweet innocent smile at the corner of your lips? You seem so satisfied! Are you really the one you used to know a while ago?

Isn't it great? It can really change you and your world. I can assure you of that. Trust me. Try it at least once a day and the success is bound to come. You will find the peace you have been looking for all these days. Let this be the first step to make the world better and more peaceful.

I would consider myself relieved to be able to narrate to you the incidents of my last summer vacation, which comprised of a surfeit of venturesome events I have ever experienced in my life.

It was a nice morning when I woke up to find a cheerful sun shining through the window directly on my face. Mom and Pop were still sleeping. I refreshed myself in the bathroom and switched on the computer to check the day's e-mails. While in the process of perusing my mails, mom started calling me at the top of her voice. I might as well inform you that my beloved mother could be a vociferous figure when it comes to calling us family members to the breakfast table. Well, to think of not responding would be to imagine myself in a place that is worse than hell, so I put my computer on standby and dutifully attended the morning rituals, a sweet hymn playing on my joyful lips.

"O hello, hello, good morning! Such nice sunny weather! So, how was sleep? I'm sure you dreamt of me being the president of the country"

"Yeah, right, I dreamt of chasing you with a broomstick! Now, just shut your babbling mouth and sit down! Poached or omelet?"

"Aha, no eggs please!"

"Chup!"

"C'mon! So where's Pa? Enjoying life and the newspapers I guess?"

"Would you just stop talking, please?"

"All right, all right!"

So, succumbing to the demands of my mum, I went through the rest of the breakfast session without another word. Having done with stuffing myself with bread, butter and an undesired egg, I returned to my mechanical friend. Not a second or two had passed when another series of shouts, similar to, but louder than the ones before, had begun. It was my father this time. I again put the computer on standby and went to check out what the problem was.

"O hello, good morning! Such nice sunny weather! So, how was sleep? breakfast? coffee? the news?"

"To hell with the weather and the news! Get me a bottle of aspirins from the shop. I'm not feeling well!"

"Oh, I'm soooo sorry"

"And be quick, I'll have to leave at nine"

"Sure, I won't be a minute!"

And so to save an anguished father the obedient son hastened away towards the nearby pharmacy. I wished the pharmacist a delightful day, and was half-way through my journey back to my home when, on the other side of the street, there was dear chap Charles adorned with the most beautiful of smiles that I had ever seen on a human's face.

"O hello, hello, Charlie boy, good morning! Such nice sunny weather! So how's life? Great, no doubt!"

"Yeah, yeah, life's great!"

"Says me!"

"Where going?"

"Getting Pa his aspirins."

"To hell with aspirins. My PC's out of work, and I'm really mad about it. And the document that you sent didn't work. Just have a dash in and check it out, will you?"

"Oh, I'm sooo sorry. But, at first let me give my father these tabs. And I hope your mom's out of the way."

"You've got to be fast! She's out somewhere but will be returning pretty soon."

"Okay, never fear, I'm here! Yee-haa!"

With that we ran into our building, and I gave the guard the packet of medicine asking him to ask the receptionist to go

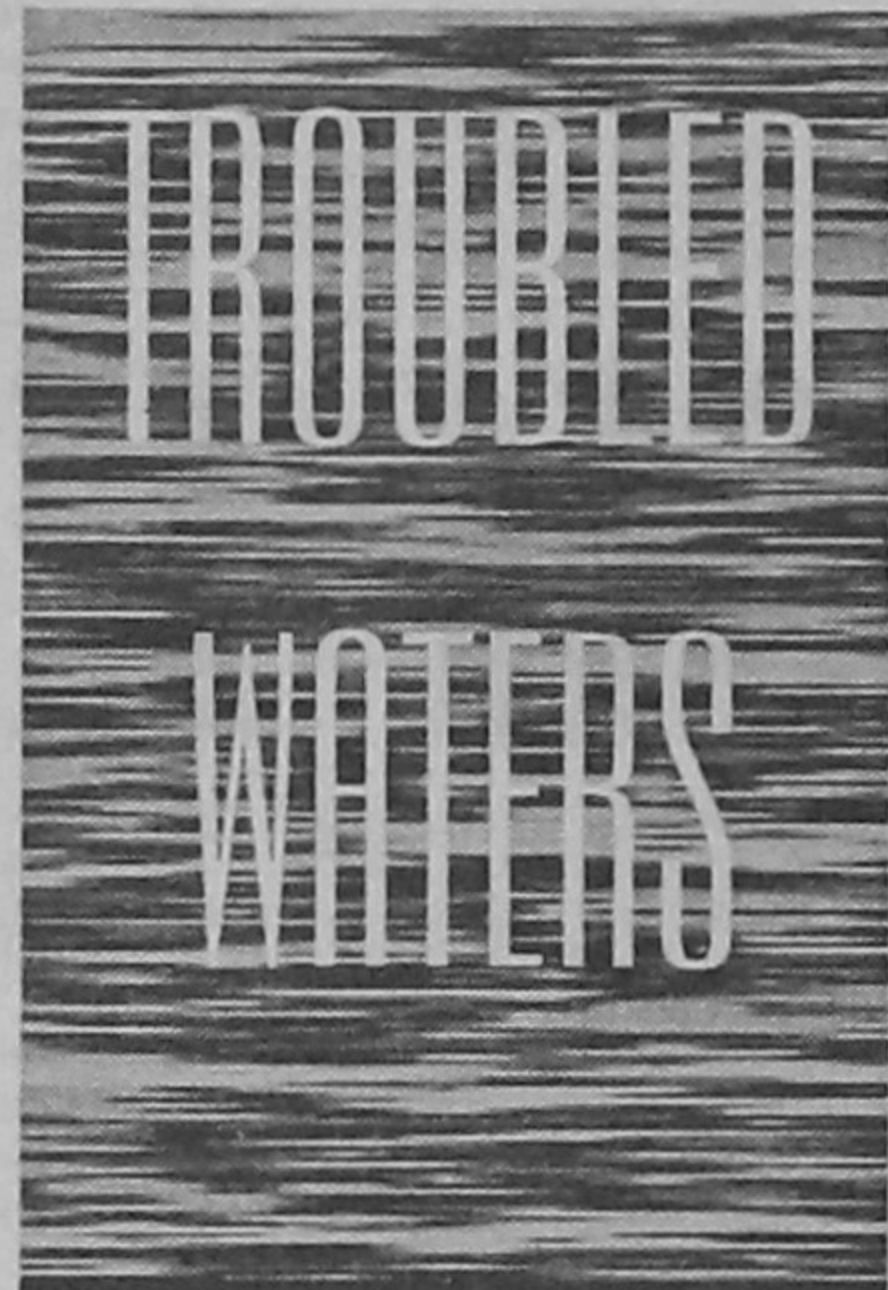
and give it to anyone in our flat: apartment no. C-2.

"Aho, pal, let's get going", I said to my friend and started towards his house next block.

At his residence, we got to work straightaway. His PC was in absolute disorder. No programs would run, and all the files in his hard drive were messed up. Even Windows wouldn't start properly. I spent a whole hour at the computer, and not being able to figure out what was wrong, I asked him to call someone from the computer store.

Thus, I got rid of a friend whose mother, soon to return, is the most dreadful creature I've met on earth. She's a loud woman, and she always seems to eye us with suspicious looks. That revered mother seems very concerned about her only son and so we always try to be at our best with Charlie because I'm sure we'd never want to be pursued by Charlie's mother with broomstick.

Back home, I never expected what had



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happened. Well, I'm sure you'll agree that the sight of an infuriated mother is not a pleasant one. She gave an energetic spring from where she was sitting and got hold of the broomstick lying at her feet. And you know what happened next!

She ran after me round the whole house and in the meantime I tried to find out what could have caused such irate behavior. The empty chocolate-biscuit container on the dining table answered all questions. I being an over-enthusiastic fan of chocolate biscuits have always been devouring such food all the time. My mother, a similar addict to chocolate-biscuits, had hidden the whole packet of it in order to prevent my "destructive processes". But I, investigative as always, had found out where she had hid it, and secretly consumed the 36 biscuits within 5 minutes.

So to save myself from a chasing mother, I somehow found my way to the main door and let myself out, straight down the stairs, to the gate and out of the building.

Just as I was emerging through the front gate, I had a head-on, face-to-face collision with a person whom I would never have liked to meet at a time like that. He was Mickey, a classmate of mine, from whom I had taken a CD and a book 7 months ago and had been promising to return them to "next week" for all that time. It was apparent that he was certainly

not in a good mood, and had come down to retrieve his materials from me.

"O hello, hello, Mickey boy, good morning! Such nice sunny weather! So how's life? Great, no doubt!"

"Yeah, right!"

"Of course, of course. So what's up?"

"I want my CD back."

"Sure, sure, I told you I'll return it next week. You needn't have come all the way here"

"Next week doesn't mean 7 months"

"No, no, please, listen. I'm gonna give it back tonight."

So, after I somehow managed to get rid of the determined Mickey, I walked back to the shops two blocks away. I got a King Size packet of Americana chocolate biscuits from the grocery and returned home.

At the reception, the sight of the man in charge reminded me of the historical aspirins. I cheerfully approached him and asked about his proceedings of the day, and imagine my distress on hearing him say (most pleasantly I must include), that he had obediently delivered the medicine to flat no. E-2.

I left the spot immediately without scolding a man so eager to be of assistance. Back at my apartment, I found mom at the kitchen and respectfully offered her the noble biscuits.

After all the troubles of the day, I finally returned to my room and lay down on my bed. No sooner had I started thinking about what was wrong with the world, a phone call came and it was from my father trying to contact me from the time since he had gone to the office.

"Hello, pop! So how's office? Boss in a jolly mood?"

"WHERE ARE MY TABLETS, YOU SICKENING, IDIOTIC, DIM-WITTED, BRAINLESS CREATURE!". He said this so loudly that I was unable to decide whether it was really a human or a reincarnated dinosaur on the other side of the phone; or may be Godzilla does exist after all!

"C'mon, pop, don't get excited"

"EXCITED!"

"Aha, I sent you the medicine through the receptionist. Didn't he give it to you?"

"Did I ask YOU or did I ask HIM to get it?"

"No, I mean, uhmm I was just a bit busy, so I, uhmm asked him to uhmm..."

"Stop it! Let me just get back home and show you how to obey your parents!" and with that he dropped the receiver with such unrestrained force I could almost visualize the crashing telephone.

Well, life's like that, and waiting for Pop to get back home in the evening wasn't much fun. I'm sure you understand why.

And as I went back to bed, my wandering thoughts suddenly happened to return to Charlie boy, and believe me it wasn't amusing. Now that I came to think of it, what I must have e-mailed him was a certain "virus.doc", not the file containing our biological notes about viruses, but a "virus.zip", a compressed file containing all my preserved specimens of precious virus samples; I mean computer viruses. Yes, I am alluding to the fact that I have, accidentally of course, infected Charlie's machine with viruses.

Well, imagine my state of mind as I answered the doorbell to find out that it was a ragged Charles and a deadly-looking woman armed with the most hazardous and terrifying weapon I've ever seen: it wasn't a broomstick but a 16inch stainless-steel wooden-handled spoon. It was new and shiny and certainly not very attractive.



I'm sure all of you are familiar with the word 'Hartal'. I don't think there is any Bangladeshi who does not know about hartals!

There are many of us (the majority) who look forward to hartals. Well I guess I'm talking about those people who have school. I haven't met a student yet who doesn't look forward to the hartals.

I live in Dhanmondi, and even though most of you people who live in Gulshan or Baridhara think that it is a very dirty place, there's no denying the fact that the people living in this area are the extremely friendly. We know how to have fun, and to the Dhanmondians, hartals are like holidays when we get to play and party on the roads without having to worry about cars running over us.

But then again, to those who have no neighbors of their own ages in the area, hartals are a bit of a bore.

Adults usually don't like hartals, the only ones who do are the ones who have called them (the politicians). Most adults I know just sit around and fret all day, thinking about how their works gonna be affected by this extra holiday, the workaholics complain about having no work to do (adults are so weird!)...

Yet even they have to admit that they look forward to having a day off and resting on Hartal days, after a long week.

### The usual ways Dhanmondians spend hartals

Well, the routine we follow may not apply to all Dhanmondians, but as far as I know, MOST of us follow this routine on hartals....

Adults wake up late and then lie down for a little longer, and yet a little bit longer, until its practically lunchtime! After bathing and eating, etc, they watch TV and when they get sick of that, they interfere in other people's business. They scream about things which your children or your helpers do everyday, but which seem highly irritating to them now. They then go about rearranging this and that which seems out of place. All in all, the adults of Dhanmondi spend a very busy day doing nothing but fretting and screaming and enjoying it all!

The children on the other hand, wake up early on hartals, get ready as soon as possible, get down on the roads to play/watch cricket, while the others hang around their neighborhoods with friends and pets! Treating each other after or between matches is another tradition in our area. One will see some guys flirting away with some girls who look new (and positively uncomfortable) in the area... or vice versa... while some others play with their pets.

All in all, adults, children and dhanmondians spend the hartals rather busily, having fun that is!

## My Dad

By Maisha S. Rashid

In life there is a beginning and an end; Relationships form and sometimes they break; For love there is also a beginning, But for true love no end; This endless true love I've gotten from one person. That is my "DAD". Such an understanding, caring and loving person, So brilliant a mind, So pure and clean a heart; I thank Gog for giving me such a precious gift, Which is the most wonderful gift ever Presented to me.