

MUSINGS

GROWING up was really hard for all of us, the flock of three sisters who hurdled and messed up things, sometimes wondered whether the society was considering us as burdens. We were not all the same, but yes, there were few similarities. Cursed, hampered in life and sharing the same unfortunate circumstances to be raised without a mother on the side. And here I stop like a summer migrated bird, flying in the relentless sky reticently—does it make sense? Birds don't fear, don't equate the height with fright; they fear inhumanity that can come and touch them

young minds. They look for the similar faces but do they reckon any? Long ago, one fine day, luck played this trick that we would recognise as our bane, our nightmare.

If there is anyone in the world a child loves most, it is her mother. In this cryptic universe when tiny toddlers open their eyes the person to be seen first, fearfully looking among all the protruded heads, is that woman whose love for us increases as days pass and life changes. I have never wondered about the miracle of birth. Sometimes, it does bring tears out of hap-

on with it? But they say life has a way deeper meaning that just 'death'. The going of a single person doesn't stop you from living, it always goes on, and so would mine here. But some lacking always stays and no longer do you have the urge to resist. This is what happened to me at first. It came like a howling storm in my life and tore everything apart....

A murky afternoon with the sun set high above the mountains that reflect a grey daylight shadow in the skies. It was 29 June, 2000 when I happily sung out my lungs rehearsing for my musical play at school hoping to tell mom I was selected for the annual function. She would really burst into laughter and hug me tight. The school day ended and as everyone queued out, I waited very long, and when our car finally buzzed in and the 'darowan bhai' took my bag from the usual place it was positioned and yelled 'hurry up car's here'. Mommy wasn't there waiting, but maybe she had some work needed to be done.

Then it all became so uncertain and finally she left us. We hadn't counted on the prospect of it and seen the luggage being packed and unpacked many times, how they smashed and she knocked him down and went away, very far. But everything was a mere blur. My dad no longer smiled at random nor he had this broad grin, and I understood what it meant to be living without your "same-old queen". It never seemed to matter to anyone. People came and showed sympathies knowing we had lost our mother, no one really felt the pain like we did. They just came and overheard our taunts that we learned all these as motherless daughters.

Today after the long race of 7 years, its 2007, when we stand almost changed: all grown up faces, faded pains and suffering from flashbacks that come as a big force sweeping us away...with a heartburn that never really fades. But you are always there in my heart, maybe your position is slightly vague: you under a bigger, greener sky where you can see the stars shining down.

By Fariha Shafi



making lives hell.

So this is how my life starts entering the invariable misery and suffering— I was not killed or tortured ruthlessly in some military camp, jihads or something nor there was money crisis; what I lacked was the proper attention of love that one needed. The bread for stomach can be left behind for the soul food: love, affection, affirmation, someone to live for. Left in the middle of nowhere, to walk on such a big path, for two 6-year-old kids and a just grown up teenager is really a big dilemma for the

pininess to appreciate God's great gift, to the womankind. How would it really feel when your child holds your hand and smiles tenderly? We would also know it one day, we'll be mothers as well and will always try level best to grow our up children as proper human beings.

But such feelings, for my part no longer exist. Not that I can hug her and pick my stray hair off her cheeks; she doesn't pray for me to pass my exams, not anymore, nor does she tie my hair into a bun. Life without her is meaningless and how do I carry

SPOTLIGHT

Local fabrics

THOSE who are thinking of shopping on a limited budget can think of buying clothes produced by our local brands. The local brand fabrics are less expensive, comfortable and sustainable, available in various designs and prints. Besides, the prices of the daily goods and commodities are increasing at such alarming rates that purchase capability of the various classes of people has decreased to a terrible extent. So, why not try the local brands? This will serve two purposes: shopping, as well as showing patriotism. Here's what's going on in the textile scene.

Nowadays, most people prefer to buy dresses so that they can wear them all through the year and everywhere. For them, Pride's collection can be a wise choice. Pure cotton three-piece suits can also be a comfort for those suffering from the excessive heat. The price ranges from Tk 400 to Tk 1300. One special thing about these three-piece items is that their dupattas are quite broad. Pride has some soothing colours in their collection that cater to women of different age groups. These colours include pink, sky blue, peach and orange in floral and stripe designs.

Bexi is another renowned local brand that produces quality fabrics. It doesn't have any three-piece suits but has a huge collection of printed fabrics that are available in deep blue, parrot green, mauve, sky blue, pink and red. Prices of these products are: Bexi prints at Tk 75, Bexi voile and

poplin at Tk 60. All you need to do is find the suitable fabric of your choice. Bexi's fabrics are so soft and light that they will make these hot and sweltering summer days a little more comfortable for you.

Dandy Dyeing, another known local brand, produces unstitched shalwar kameez sets that range from Tk 500 to Tk 5000.

Chaiti Fashion House, situated in Mascot Plaza at Uttara has some beautiful three-piece suits. Chaiti, which started out its journey very recently, has attracted most of the fashion conscious girls of today because of their wide collection of designs. Women of all classes can do shopping here, because the price ranges are quite reasonable starting from Tk 600 to Tk 2400.

Also available and very much in style right now are the unstitched shalwar kameez sets produced by the local taatis. These are priced at Tk 480 to Tk 690. Available colors are combinations of black and white, red and white and red with zari work. Single or loose taat dupattas are also available, which cost Tk 130 per piece, but the prices may differ from market to market. Taat products are available in some fashion houses and also in shops throughout the country. Furthermore, since many of our weavers have lost their homes and had their lives disrupted due to the recent flood that ravaged the country, your buying their products will also be of great support to them.

Some other local fabrics that are also available in the market are Rajdhani voile, Jonaki print, Orbindo print, V.I.P print, Anwar cloth, Aarong fabrics, Fotullah voile, Paakiza print and Borsha print. Their prices are almost the same, ranging from Tk 35 to Tk 45, except for the Aarong fabrics, which cost Tk 65. But if you have the bargaining skills, then you may get away with Tk 3 to 4 discount per meter.

There are hundreds of designs available and some are really beautiful and exclusive. If you're not into prints, there are also fabrics in solid colours offered by the above mentioned brands, which you can buy and embellish to your heart's desire. Apart from these printed fabrics Khadi and Endi are very popular. Women from all classes and age groups like these fabrics, which are available in red, magenta, maroon, yellow, purple, black and white.

The country's biggest fabrics market is in Islampur. But apart from this market, a huge variety of unstitched clothes are also available in Chadni Chawk, Gawsia, Mouchak market and Shobuj Bangla market in Mirpur. In Shobuj Bangla Market you can buy cloths at a cheaper rate than any other places. Fabrics besides cotton are also available in some fashion houses of the likes of Probortona and Doyel Silk. If you are opting for a simple yet exclusive look this season, then be sure to check out these fashion houses.

By Moonmoon Misty

HOROSCOPE



ARIES

(Mar. 21-April 19)

Focus on your own domestic problems. Travel and creative hobbies will be your best outlet. You should channel your efforts into getting rid of bad habits. Plan your day thoughtfully, but try not to rely on others. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



TAURUS

(Apr. 20-May 20)

Social gatherings will be conducive to meeting new potential mates. Unforeseen changes in your location are apparent. Overexertion and negligence will be your worst enemies. You should be getting into self-improvement projects. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



GEMINI

(May 21-June 21)

Family get-togethers will be interesting. Be on your best behaviour. It will be important that you have your priorities straight. Be careful while travelling. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



CANCER

(June 22-July 22)

It may be a disappointing day emotionally. You are going through a period of questioning. Don't be too eager to give a piece of your mind or even your opinion this week. Emotional partnerships may develop through projects you initiate. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)

It might be time to pick up the slack and do your share. You will have problems with co-workers if you are too extreme about doing things perfectly. You can get a promotion if you put in a little extra detail. You can make career changes that may put you in a much higher earning bracket. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



VRGO

(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Do things for them but don't allow them to make unreasonable requests. Try to keep any mood swings under control; they may result in alienation. Driving too fast or double parking will result in difficulties with officials. You might just as well let others do their own thing. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



LIBRA

(Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

Your personal life will be under the gun and you may want to avoid the questions your lover is going to want to ask you. You may interest some of them in a service you have to offer. Romantic opportunities will be plentiful if you go out with friends. Your involvement in groups will be favourable for meeting new and exciting individuals. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



SCORPIO

(Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

Be aware that you don't get anything for nothing. Losses are evident. Do not lend money to friends, or contribute more than necessary to groups unworthy of your cash. Avoid conflicts with in-laws or other family members. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Stop telling others about your problems. Opportunities for new and exciting relationships will be yours if you get out and join groups. Be careful how you deal with colleagues. Trips, educational pursuits, or projects that could lead to new outlooks should be on your agenda. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

Outdoor sports events should entice you. Plan to get out and do a bit of travel. If you work in conjunction with someone else you may find they're trying to steal your thunder. A lot has changed and so have you. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



AQUARIUS

(Jan. 21-Feb. 19)

Don't hesitate to take short trips. Advancement can be yours if you are assertive in your approach. Take your time; do not make any decisions in haste. You don't owe anyone an explanation. Do your own thing, you need time to yourself. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



PISCES

(Feb. 20-March 20)

You are best to ask questions if you aren't certain about issues that are confronting you. Rid yourself of that which is old and no longer of use. Don't let children hold you back from doing things you enjoy. Someone may be trying to damage your reputation. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.