Reasons to say 'Oh what a rotter of a Day!'

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

It may be as simple as the alarm going off and with you wondering why it's still so dark at 7am. Being the tech-savvy person that you are the alarm has been set at 3am with a screaming rendition of Deep Purple's 'Mistreated'

Apart from raising the dead along with most of the household, you will find that waking at that unsavoury hour is quite a test on not just your raw nerves but also your motor skills. Stubbing the toe against the bed is a common inconvenience of this hour as is feeling helpless because your throat is parched but there is no way in Hell that you are going to go all the way to the fridge to get water; this is party time for all kinds of beings - roaches, rats, robbers and raging ghosts - all lurking about waiting for the kill.

But there are other hurdles to cross. For insomniacs, being unceremoniously awakened is akin to breaking the silence in an orthodox monastery during prayer time - just not done. Once the eyelids lift it is very *very* difficult to get them to close - honestly that is. You could squeeze your eyes shut till your head throbs but sleep will not come. Instead, all the unpleasant things of life will replay themselves in excruciating detail: the look your wife gave you when you came home late only to realise that it was 'kancha bazar day' and she had been waiting for the last four hours for you to turn up; the way the words she spew out - 'inconsiderate', 'imbecile', 'fool' keep banging into your head...



No matter how hard you try not to 'think' at all, the more virulent will be the attack of negative thoughts -

Why did I have to ask the unexpected guest at the office, who did he think he was - the owner of the company which, most tragically, he was?

Did I have to be singing 'O Chikni Chameli..' and making suggestive moves just when my boss walked into the room?

Did I have to have the fourth chom chom, when my stomach was already making its objection known?

Am I really an imbecile?

By some miracle you may actually fall asleep - eventually- but alas happiness is so short-lived. It may seem like the cacophonous barking of a pack of rabid dogs that has so rudely brought you back to the conscious world. Actually it is the synchronicity of the morning call of the mistresses of several adjacent houses, including your own. It may be the wife, the mother, the mother in law or the divorcee living on her own and therefore declaring independence each and every day.

Surviving the ear-numbing ordeal there is the whole ritual of getting ready to take on the day. Of course there will be a turmeric stain on your last, clean shirt - discovered after you have meticulously ironed it. There will be only a trickle of water for a shower, you will have used aerosol insect spray instead of deodorant thus repelling both mosquitoes (plus point) and humans (could be a plus point) while making your armpits feel they are on fire. Traffic will naturally be extra charming, going at amoebic pace while you sweat it out in a bus with a flatulent passenger's posterior dangerously close to your perspiring face. If you are lucky you may pass out from the sheer anticipation of what may happen and the rest of the ride will be easy.

You will be an hour late for work, the day the boss wants to have an impromptu meeting about increasing efficiency. You will be held as an example of what the company frowns upon and all your insufferable rivals will smirk and snigger while you fumble and stumble to the last empty chair.

The day will keep beating on you relentlessly - piercing your self confidence with poison darts - until finally you reach that place - the cocoon of your bed. The spouse is mercifully asleep, the house is quiet, you are so exhausted that you enter slumberland within three seconds of hitting the pillow. You are in a green meadow, the air is so breezy, Katrina in a flaming red dress is feeding you cream puffs, when out of nowhere comes that old lament "I've been mistreated, I've been abused/I've been struck downhearted, baby, I've been confused" - your innermost feelings expressed by Deep Purple, followed by an unmentionable expletive from Sleeping Beauty next to you.