

The Cynic



SAMIN SABAH ISLAM

She wouldn't know friendship if it shook her right hand,
 A gesture of kindness, she'll never understand.
 She couldn't tell love if it looked her in the eyes,
 For all she's ever learned, is that life is full of lies.
 Neglecting parents and so called true friends,
 All the smiles and laughter, she only pretends.
 Because she knows when she needs them all they ever do,
 Is console from afar and leave her alone in the blue.
 How could she believe in what she has never ever even seen?
 Because mother never gave the talk when she turned sixteen.
 Daddy has always missed her shows with an excuse about work,
 Always overlooked her love with that of the office clerk.
 Friends, if you can call them that, only sided her in good times,
 Somehow they all fled to dust when life had thrown her limes.
 Do you blame her for her cynicism? Do you blame her for that frown?
 It's not that she was born this way, it's just that life had let her down.



PHOTO: DARSHAN CHAKMA

FAHIM RAHMAN

I've never looked back in time,
 To all that, that was once mine.
 I never valued what I had,
 Which proves how careless I was,
 As a young lad.
 My crown,
 My kingdom.
 And all my dreams.
 Ran past me,
 As my conscious screams.
 For I had made a mistake,
 I was yet to know human nature!
 As a human is the one,
 who has turned me into this lonesome
 creature.

His betrayal is never to forget,
 As his company is my biggest regret.
 But I thank him for this extraordinary
 life!
 As his deeds have I believe,
 Turned me kind and wise.
 I have come to know the difference,
 Between true friends and friends of
 Only good times.
 I've also seen how the bad,
 Outnumber the good.
 And how many bad work together,
 To bring one good on his knees.
 And the way things are turning,
 I see.
 This was brought upon myself,
 Only by me.



The Dive

KIDWA ARIF

This is it.
 I'm doing it. I'm putting an end to it. I'll shut him up.
 I'm standing on edge of a 30ft tall diving board and am about to jump. Why this is such a big deal? Well, you see, I'm a disappointment. I always have been to my father. The punchline to all his jokes. So, when I was too scared to jump off the diving board, he wasn't surprised. In fact, he seemed positively happy at the fact that he had made his point yet again.
 "But, dad, I have acrophobia."
 "That's not a real thing, son. Effeminate men make stuff like these up to make themselves feel good"
 There's no come back to that.
 This was 4 months ago and in these four months, he never gave me a break. Every time one of my friends would jump off one of those boards, he'd scream encouragement, asking me if I saw how wonderful that flip was.
 So, last month I decided to start practicing on my own and show him who's effeminate. I visited the pool when my father nor any of his friends were there. The first three or so weeks, I only used the 16ft and 25ft boards. The trick was to keep your eyes closed and try not to think of the height. Jumping is the hard part. Once you do that, it's actually pretty graceful. And I'm a very good swimmer so the landing wasn't a problem.
 Since last week, I've been practicing to dive from the highest one. This was crucial. None of my friends have ever jumped off that one. Even among the elders, only two of them uses this regularly (one being my father, obviously).
 And today, I've decided I was good enough to show him.
 I casually walked up the ladder, not showing any sign that my heart felt like it was about to break through my ribs. I had told my friends about what I was about to do and asked them not to make a big deal out of it. But I made sure my father was around to see it. I found him sitting exactly opposite to the diving board, chatting with his friends.
 I jumped.
 The dive was perfect. It takes some time to fall. The whole world goes silent in those few seconds and there is a very satisfying feeling of emptiness. Eyes closed, I cut through the air; reaching towards my lost dignity.
 The landing was so flawless, there wasn't even a splash on the water. I saw my father pause for a few seconds. And then, with a smirk, he went back to his discussion.
 An hour later, when we're in the car, he still hasn't said anything about it. He was quietly staring at his phone and I was on the front seat. After many minutes of debating with myself on whether or not I should ask, I finally decide to do it.
 "So, did you see me dive?"
 "Wha.....yeah. By the way, how'd you do in your annual exams? Rahman's son got a 93%."
 With a sigh, I answer, "91%."