

A Step-By-Step Guide to Dealing with Your Pun Obsession

MustFeed RAIYAN KHAN

STEP 0: PUNCH THE MACHINE

Punning is not a punishable offence, so punch the machine. Pun to no end. Be the pundit of punch-worthy puns. You need to punk everyone before anything else.

STEP 1: ADMITTING THERE'S A PROBLEM

It may be hard to come to terms with the fact that you have a problem. "What? Problem? That's PRO-LAME!" may be something that comes to your mind when faced with the dilemma. You possibly lack the self-awareness (willingly or unwillingly) to realise there's something wrong - because no, the last person to cringe away at your well thought out pun/joke didn't just secretly like it and pretend not to. Here are some symptoms to watch out for:

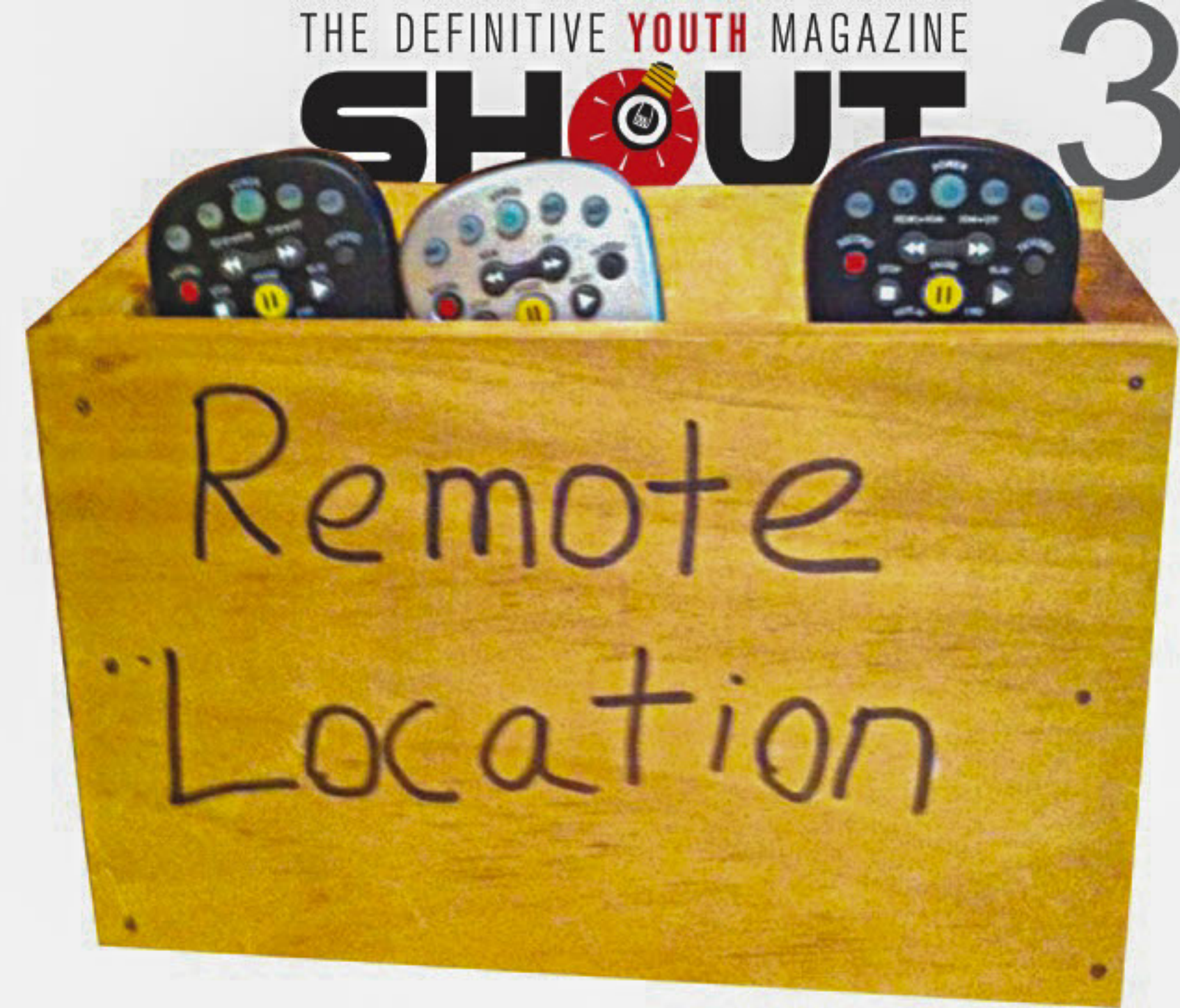
- Are all puns equal, with no good or bad pun?
- Do you have no friends/do your friends hate you/your jokes/whenever you open your mouth? Do you often face disapproving glances, cringing, people wanting to hang themselves etc. while punning?
- Do you find yourself punning in extremely serious situations - like funerals ("Dead folk are so down-to-earth, man"), or when the house is on fire ("Bro, my house is so lit right now"), or when you're getting mugged ("Don't take my phone, you phoney!")? This one's self-explanatory.
- Do you say/do things for the pun? Or take words out of context for the pun? Example: Someone telling you about a teacher not caring about late students, and you angrily exclaim, "What the heck, a dead student is a serious matter!"

If the answer to any/all of the above is yes, we have a problem.

STEP 2: ACTIVELY MONITORING YOURSELF

Now that we've established there's a problem, it's time

to start watching out for the things you say inch out of the habit little by little. Take it slow. It's not that hard. You'll come out of this. It'll be a happy ending. A little bit of time, patience and a sense of humour is all it takes. Here's a guideline:



- Avoid the clichés, for God's sake. Seriously, it's not punny. "That's what she said" jokes are not funny anymore either.
- If you've been thinking up a pun in your head for more than 5 seconds, stop. It's probably bad.
- Weigh the pros and cons: possible laughter or losing friends?
- Go on a pun diet and hope it doesn't go like your regular food diets. We know the only cheat day you have in a week is the day you're not stuffing your face.

STEP 3: PUN-CTUATION

This step was only added to the article to highlight the degree of the problem yours truly suffers. Yeah, it can get THIS bad.

STEP 4: WITHDRAWAL

You can't help it. Barely a few seconds into your pun diet and your fingers twitch as you scroll through social media, a vast array of puns not cracked. You hungrily search the internet, desperate for distraction. You try to imagine it away, like the withdrawal is just some sort of fantasy, but you close your eyes and see a sea of orange instead, a "Fanta-sea". And you're drowning fast.

STEP 5: ACCEPTANCE

You typed in "pun" in your Facebook search bar, and have been flitting through pun memes for the last 39749374 hours. You decide to accept who you are, a petite Gemini, and like the horoscope, you reason that there is a Gem-in-I (you), making this okay. It doesn't matter if you're actually Cancer. Oh, but you are.

Because puns are life, making you lifeless without 'em.

Where Them 6 Seasons At?

MASHIYAT NAYEEM

Welcome to Dhaka, the land of eternal summer. Where the weather is warm and the sun is smiling and the birds are out and about. Except that's putting it mildly.

Parched leaves, sweaty foreheads, super-tanned skin, itchy red heat rash and panting dogs are the general scenario year round. One could say it's a desert without being an actual desert. It's October and still 30 degrees outside. While in other countries the red-orange foliage is announcing the arrival of blustery weather, mild cold fronts and shorter days, in Dhaka the only indication that it is THEORITICALLY autumn is the roadside *kashphools* that seemed to have magically mushroomed last week after the too-late-to-arrive monsoon showers.

Did someone say fall? Hold on, stop right there. A bunch of wild flowers suitable for clichéd couple photos should not get you excited for fall. Breaking out the beanies and shopping for an entire "sweater weather" wardrobe is unnecessary and a drain on your wallet because the sun is still glaring down at you hard like your mom when you "forget" to show her your test papers. Why clothing brands here even bring out fall collections is a mystery to me. Don't even get

me started on the pumpkin craze. People please, we don't have fancy food ideas and the only way we know how to eat pumpkins is in *torkari*.

If you live in the top floor like me, good luck keeping your electricity bills in check. It seems every year the number of

dog days gets larger. Honestly I am not surprised, the amount of trees in Dhaka city are reduced to the withering road divider plants.

The most noticeable change in seasons is during monsoon when clear blue skies give away to a grey expanse of clouds.

Even though it quenches the heat bringing much needed relief and provides the perfect mood for doing nothing, it is a nuisance to those outdoors, given Dhaka's nice drainage system. Just last week I had to wade through knee deep water when the sewers overflowed after a heavy downpour. I swear it is the scariest thing ever because you never know when a misstep might plunge you to your death in a pothole, given Dhaka's nice roads.

Winter barely lasts two months and even so, you don't feel the perfect chill in your bones unless you take a trip to the outskirts. This is the only season when I see most Dhakaites cheerful (badminton and *pithas* galore), no winter blues here buddy. But it's so short that it ends before you even finish winter shopping. I have had the same winter wardrobe for the last 5 years...

Basically, summer graces Dhaka all year long with a chunk of monsoon and a dash of winter thrown into the mix. Seriously, where are the six seasons that we, as kids, memorized by heart?

Mashiyat Nayeem has a genuine phobia of onions and has mastered the art of scavenging for beresta in her biryani. Learn more at mashiyat.nayeem@gmail.com

