

A Girl Driving around Dhaka at Midnight

ZARIN RAYHANA

It'd probably be considered "defiant act" that I have had midnight trips around Dhaka as a girl. There is something about my city which creates a craving in my heart to explore the desolate tarmac roads when they are taking a rest from all the commotion that has become a part of our lives. The crumbling walls, the rusting iron, the cracked paints – everything hold myriad memories that Dhaka has endured over time.

Flummoxing are the activities that go on as late as 3 am; little children in groups collecting plastic bottles and other sellable items from litter at a time when they should be sound asleep. The mere sight of these children whose childhoods are being robbed by poverty tells me what we take for granted every day.

I have seen people sleeping on the pavement in Arambagh and women cooking on low fire by the road. Some women sit wearily under the dimly lit lamp posts of the city and count the money they had earned from begging throughout the day. In Gulshan, there is



usually this group of young boys who like to race their cars after midnight, playing loud hip-hop music that combines with the cacophony of the engines and cuts through the tranquillity. I have also seen them speeding on the Airport Road until their car turns upside down and they are fortunate enough to crawl out of the window uninjured – laughing

off the accident while I find myself questioning their sanity.

One of the biggest challenges of driving after midnight in Dhaka is ensuring one's safety, especially if one is female. From robbers to rapists, there is a big list of potentially dangerous people you could encounter. I have always brought along a trustworthy company of people

with me, and we have avoided restaurants that stay open during the late hours. Is it crazy that I have carried sticks and practiced karate moves so I would always be prepared for any awful situation?

Often, you may spot drug abusers, obscured by bushes, injecting needles into their arms. Dhaka in the wee hours is all the things your parents warn you about; it's also places that induce soothing memories. The air feels fresh, devoid of the harsh pollutants of traffic during the day; our ears spared from the constant, obnoxious honking of vehicles. And as the chilly air gives you goose bumps, you will find yourself staring at the shivering street dwellers with *gamchha* or plastic bags covering their bodies, and wonder how you ever could be so selfish and ungrateful.

Zarin Rayhana is a self-aggrandizing ambivert who ponders over philosophical epiphanies during rainy evenings and waits for her crush to jump straight out of her favourite novel. Treat her with novel suggestions at ericaavianazarin@gmail.com.

How pet preferences profile you

SAMIN SABAH ISLAM

Whether it's the bark that calms you down or the meow that thaws your heart, your pet of preference goes a long way to reflect on who you are.

CAT CRAZIES

There's no shame in staying up till four in the morning watching kitten videos on YouTube. It happens to be a prevailing hobby of most cat people. A very passionate aspect about cat enthusiasts, they *really* adore their kitties. It's no secret that cats aren't the most appreciative beings. Naturally, it takes heaps of patience, unconditional love and scratch-resistant furniture to own a cat. Cat people, much like their animal of affection tends to avoid human interaction and are less sociable. However, cat lovers are usually far more independent, intelligent and creative than most. They're curious people, always game to try new things. Cat owners tend to be artistic and have a non-traditional mindset and unconventional way of thinking. So to all the haters out there generalising all cat people as the "friendless lonely cat lady", cat got your tongue now?

PUP PARENTS

If Hooch's death was the greatest TV tragedy and Brian is the sole reason you watch Family Guy, then it's possible you're a dog fanatic. People bearing a soft side for dogs usually tend to be extroverted and outgoing. They're typically social butterflies, exhibiting an aura of confidence and dominance. Nimbleness and positivity come with their friendliness. Resembling their favourite animals, dog lovers are commonly obedient and loyal. Their canine companions aren't

just a pet, they're family. Dog people make great friends. They're affectionate, altruistic and very dependable. With their level of fidelity, you can always be sure about one thing, they'll never and throw

you to the dogs and ditch.

FISH FANATICS

Owning a pet has never required lesser work. People keeping fishes are either indolent or busy bees. Fish are relatively

low-maintenance and don't require much besides routine water changes and regular feeding. You don't need to take sick goldfish to the vet. Your goldfish won't go barking and wake the neighbours or need routine walks around the block, so it's simple. People owning goldfish tend to be sensitive and introverted. They find solace in privacy, quietness and watching their fishes go in circles around the bowl. Living a life in a goldfish bowl isn't their forte, so instead they find a friend whose is.

ABSURD PEOPLE WHO THINK PETTING TARANTULAS ARE NORMAL

If God created two types of people, one recites Ayatul Kursi seeing a spider, the other consciously volunteers to domesticate these ghastly creatures. It's no secret that people owning tarantulas are bold and fearless. Or perhaps they're desperate attention seekers or someone who stepped into a perilous dare. Either way, even though it's very low maintenance, it takes an audacious, committed "arachnomaniac" with very lenient parents to pet these six-legged hairy little devils.

Stereotyping people into these categories isn't our intention. You just might discover a kitten in the class-clown's house or encounter a shy girl with a dozen little pugs. And despite our differences as pet parents, we're all tied by one commonality - we love our multiple legged/ finned/ winged buddies to the ends of the world.

Samin Sabah Islam is on a quest to find the perfect diet while simultaneously drooling over pizza. Throw her some tips at sabahsamin11@gmail.com



someone: your pet is fat

dog person: WHAT how DARE you call my dog fat ill have you know that hes 100 POUNDS OF PURE LEAN MUSCLE

cat person: haha yeah

Source: paleships