



THOUGHT CRAFT
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Life and a bed of roses

Dhaka weather is so beautiful, cool and fresh at this time of the year. It is the perfect season to sit in the garden or on a terrace, sipping tea and gazing at flowers. On these evenings, I enjoy watching the sky change from the palest blue to violet to pink, as the sun begins to set and the moon appears.



This is the time of the day my damask rose is at its best. By the next day, it will have wilted and shed its petals, but for the moment it is a symbol of joy, with its soft pink petals unfurled and its fragrance filling the air with what must be the perfumes of paradise.

While walking in the park the other day, I came upon

many roses- red, orange and ivory blossoms laid out in serried rows to greet visitors. They reminded me of the Rose Garden in Regent's Park, where in the month of June the roses are at their magnificent best.

I used to take sandwiches and a book to the park and find a bench in one of the arborees from where I could see



the masses of colour and roses of every variety: hybrids, creepers, tea roses, and even the heart-warming dog roses that border country roads everywhere.

Roses set me dreaming. Sometimes they draw me back to my girlhood memories of walking with my mother among her rose beds, where she would trim a few branches, cut a few blossoms for her vases, and tell me about her plans for the next season's plantings.

That was when I first read the story of the Nightingale and the Rose, and the story of the Little Prince and his love for his rose. I knew nothing then of the interpretation of stories at multiple levels, but for me there was an instant connection because there were roses in our own garden, and I lived with them and loved them, as most little girls do.

There are bunches of brilliant red and yellow rosebuds for sale on Gulshan Avenue, carried from car to car at the traffic lights by young boys and girls. The blooms are irresistible, and I buy them for the sake of the sellers, knowing that they will wilt the moment I unwrap them after getting home.

Roses in their fleeting transient beauty are like nature and its seasons. In the cycles of birth, growth, life and death they are a metaphor for human life. Things in nature are run by immutable rules, but for us as sentient beings, while we must submit to life and death, in all other things we have free will, a multitude of choices and the right to choose our own destinies.

We also have the privilege of spending many years in the sun before the time comes for us to move on. It is up to us to decide which road we will take and what rules we shall live by, before Nature comes to claim us.

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