

DECIPHERING FACEBOOK PHOTO CAPTIONS

MASHIYAT NAYEEM

Gone are the days when photos came with definitive captions like "My friend Montu and I in Noakhali". As someone who rarely posts anything but memes, I found myself researching before changing my profile picture. As I delved into the world of photo captions, I laughed, cried, and questioned the meaning of life.

Photo: A makeup free selfie

Caption: Woke up like this/Barefaced today/Au naturale

As overused as your toilet, all these do an excellent job of subtly hinting at your stripped down beauty. Yes I get it, you're pretty but it's absolutely unnecessary to announce it every time you post such a picture. It must feel pretty good to be an anomaly among the abundance of heavily made up faces but trust me, it's noticeable without the caption too.

Photo: A particularly spicy picture
Caption: Band-aid on my heart/You replaced me but no one will replace you

There's no need to publish self-diagnosed progress reports of the delicate condition of your heart every now and then. I don't see how a touching tribute to the former beauty fits on a picture that obviously screams for the attention of future

potential lovers.

Photo: Munching on a chemistry book

Caption: It's a metaphor, see: You put the killing thing right between your teeth, but you don't give it the power to do its killing

The release of a certain starry book/movie had once triggered depressing quotes paired with non-depressing photos. Brownie points for a refreshingly funny take on a clichéd quote.

Photo: Any selfie

Caption: Um so ugly i cri :(

Why on earth would you post a picture if you are so insecure about looking ugly there? This by far is the loudest cry for attention I have seen as a caption.

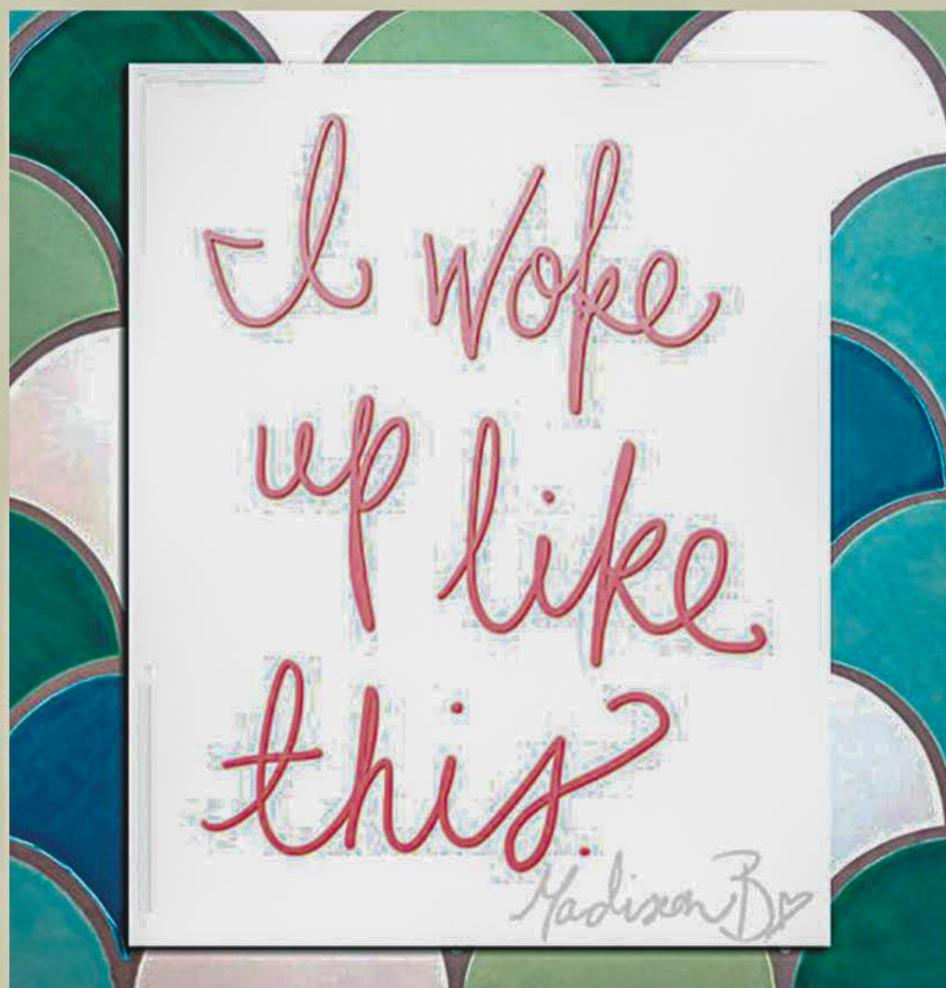
Photo: A fake candid with the head strategically turned to the right

Caption: I'm looking right cause you left

Some puns are good, some are bad. This is just terrible.

Facebook photo captions are a strange realm. I think I should forego stepping into the territory at the moment.

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



BEING UNEMOTIONAL

BIG RED JANE ANGER

I feel that being an unemotional woman is like being a sensitive man - people just can't deal with it. Of course, I can't be certain about what it's like being an emotional man, but in my experience, people put in a lot of effort to point out that it's not "normal" and it acts as fodder for a lot of ridicule.

I'm often told that I am different from others of my gender, with multiple reasons cited for the claim, but one most frequently mentioned is that I don't react/express my emotions like "other women" do. I can live with that. Emotions have been put into gendered boxes like most things in the world. The strange and problematic part for me is that being unemotional is often equated with a) not having any emotions and therefore an inability to feel hurt, anger or joy and b) being a dude.

I'll start with my first issue. When you're taken to be someone who has, as some of my friends put it, "no sh*t to give", people put you on a pedestal and treat you as a superhuman who feels nothing. While that can be both amusing and flattering at times, it's important to remind people that it's not humanly possible to not feel anything at all emotionally. What is

simply a case of being really bad at expressing emotions gets turned into something that is joked about for providing comic relief and revered as "strength". The latter is somehow then equated with "manning up" and then you're a "dude" for life. You've grown a pair simply because you didn't burst into tears when things went south. The standards are really quite low.

I suppose being unemotional has its benefits. I don't manage to properly panic before exams or when I'm met with an issue that needs to be resolved quickly. I panic in my dreams later that night. I don't easily get caught up in emotional drama. I don't lose my cool when I get into accidents; I'll probably feel the pain about an hour later. There are sticky situations once every so often. When there are tragedies in the family or in the life of someone I know, my apparent stoic nature looks very visibly out of place. My stories usually provide very solid entertainment to those around me, before I get equated with problems "a" and "b".

It's actually all great till people stop validating your emotions because you have a reputation for having none and when you get bro-zoned for life because guys don't feel like you need them.

Then it kind of sucks.