



# NO, HIGH SCHOOL WASN'T ALL THAT GREAT

NUREN IFTEKHAR

Nostalgia goggles have always been my least favourite accessories. It has the terrifying power of making even the most painful of times feel not just tolerable but something that you would crave to go back to. All the tension and insecurity that haunted you when you were living that time suddenly become an alluring memory.

While it is true that it's better to look back at the past with adoring eyes and a wholesome outlook, the truth of the matter is that even if we prefer it to be a concoction of sugar, spice and everything nice, doesn't mean that it actually is all that. And if you ask me the high school cocktail had a lot more spice than anything else.

If I ever look back at my friends' recollection of their high school life, it feels like the pitch for a brand new sitcom filled to the brim with adventure, romance and a happy ending, finished by a cartoonish pig stuttering "T-t-that's all

folks!". I hate playing the Grinch but I vividly remember it being vastly different. To me high school had all the stress of school multiplied by a large integer, and none of the charms that made school bearable.

Perhaps the worst thing about high school is the ever present sense of an impending doom. Suddenly the grades hold far more importance than they ever did and you're left with the stress of the admission war that is waiting to greet you afterwards. High school took the worst out of university life and school life and made an unholy amalgamation that neither has the freedom of university nor the blithe nature of school.

I know what you're thinking. "Surely you're overdramatising it." Well I really wish I was. But the fact is whenever I try to reminisce about high school the first image that comes to mind is the long boring walk from home to some tuition that I apparently needed because the classes in the institution weren't enough, carrying a bag that felt more like a prison

chain strapping down on my shoulder.

The structure can vary from the Bangla medium curriculum to the English medium one but I doubt the experience changes much. High school, or college if you're under the Bangla medium curriculum, was noticeably short in my case. The syllabus, however, was not. This fantastic combination fused into a lovely stream of anxiety and stress that I slowly had to become used to over the short course of my high school life.

Now when the going got tough in school, you almost always had your friend circle to lean back on, to set things straight and take a moment of breather. But high school had to ruin that as well. I'm not saying you won't have your friends beside you at that point but it is true that I never really got to enjoy that aspect of my life in high school much. This might have been something that was perhaps only true for me and not for many of you but nevertheless it's something that soured my high school experience even further. I had to watch my

circle get separated ever so slowly due to a distance that can only be attributed to "I guess we just grew up". It is true that you can find great new friends during this phase but I doubt you will have much time to spend with them.

Maybe high school wasn't/ isn't/ won't be that bad for many of you, maybe I'm just being a bitter old man hung up on trivial things. But I still can't reiterate enough how much of an emotional rollercoaster high school really is, except for the fact that instead of adrenaline this rollercoaster only pumps migraine.

The rosy tint of the nostalgia goggles may make it sound like an exhilarating journey but I'm fairly certain that I would just leave it at the memory that it is and never live it again.

*Nuren Iftekhar is your local stray cat in disguise; he interacts with people for food and hates bright light. He got Hufflepuff 3 times straight in Pottermore so no walking around that one. Send him obscure memes at [n.iftekhari8@gmail.com](mailto:n.iftekhari8@gmail.com)*



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