

Reconstruction

NASHEETAH HOSSAIN

Close your eyes now,
 Feel the fire set in,
 Ignite the gold still left in your heart.
 Don't turn on the music to cloud your mind.
 Listen to the silence
 Feel the agony in the torment.
 Take your time,
 Learn your lesson.
 After all,
 You'll have to move on soon enough.
 There won't be any time left for you to look back
 For the dismal truth
 Is that the world never stops spinning
 And time is unbeatable.
 But on the brighter side,
 Life goes on.
 Open your eyes now,
 You're safe now.
 You're stronger than your fears,
 Smarter than your mistakes.
 Tonight,
 You're tougher than your bones,
 Better than your past.
 You're bigger than your body.

The writer is a grade 7 student of Sunbeams School.



Juxtaposed

NUREN IFTEKHAR

"Excuse me, can you tell me the time?"
 A simple question which would take 5 seconds to answer is not supposed to perplex Kamal the way it did. But it did. Not because of the question, but because of the person asking it. Kamal stood there staring at the person for a good minute until he broke the silence with a hurried repetition of the enquiry.

"Sir? The time please?"

"Oh, yeah it's 5:30. I'm sorry you caught me off guard," Kamal was quick to reply.

"Sorry," he apologised as he looked to take off, an understandable reaction to this awkward situation.

Kamal couldn't let him leave. No, he has to get the answer. Why does this person look exactly like him? Why is that person not fazed by the similarity at all? Kamal did not know what to ask him. Surely "Hello sir, why do you look like me?" is not a good way to approach it. Kamal decided to start off with some small talk before asking the big question.

"So, where are you off to if I may ask?" he said warily.

"Home actually. Tired day at work. I work here, the *Excel Consultancy*"

Kamal regretted his question instantly as it made the situation even more confusing if it was even possible. Kamal worked there. And he never saw this person who looked exactly like him.

"Look, I'm sorry. It's just that you look like someone I know," Kamal blabbered "Which school did you go to?"

"Chittagong Ideal School till the 7th grade," he answered hesitantly "Then I went to Dhaka because-

"Your father got a new job there," Kamal finished sternly.

".. Yeah, how did you know?"

"Just... a guess," Kamal lied. It wasn't a guess. It's exactly what happened with him. This person who

looks like him, works at the same place he did, also had the same childhood and he's the only person who understands the impossibility of this situation. Kamal didn't know what to say anymore. Lucky for him, the doppelganger took the initiative.

"I'm sorry but I don't think I've ever seen you," he said barefaced.

"I think we might live near each other. Are you by any chance from Malibag?"

"Yeah actually. That must be it. I live near the water pump," replied the person, finally finding a bit of enthusiasm in this conversation.

"Same here. In *Choudhuri Estate*, on the 4th floor," Kamal half lied. He lived on the 2nd floor.

"That must be it then. I live on the 2nd floor," the not-so-stranger replied, finally glad that this conversation is coming to an end. "We're neighbours. Good to run into you. Well I got to go now. Are you on your way home too?"

"No. Not really. But I'll see you there some times," replied Kamal. He was close to giving up. Nothing made sense and it kept getting worse. He kept doing mental gymnastics to find something that set him apart from this person but he found nothing as he watched him leave.

"Wait, I know this is weird but do you like Coldplay by any chance?" Kamal shouted suddenly at the person.

"What? No, I guess," he said with an irk to his voice.

Kamal found the smile on his face at last. This person might have stolen his entire identity but not completely. Kamal loved Coldplay. He finally decided to leave the place with a satisfaction that didn't make the faintest amount of sense. But neither did this situation.

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Kamal didn't know why he just lied about not liking Coldplay to that strange man, or why he talked to him for so long. But he's happy that he can now finally walk away from this weird conversation.

