



LIFE'S LYRICS
NASHID KAMAL

Adieu Nayokraj Razzak

It just seems like yesterday. But it isn't. While East Pakistan TV had started and my friend Shimul Billah (Yousuf) would take part in a drama serial called *Ghoroa*. The handsome gentleman starring as her father was Mr. Abdur Razzak. When I went to the DIT building to perform, I would often chat with Shimul and got to know Mr. Razzak and his wife in the drama serial was played by beautiful Sharmilee. Razzak Uncle called me by my nickname, Evu.

Around the late sixties, my aunt Ferdausi Rahman was going to a program in Comilla. I pleaded to my Mom to let us go, we meaning my sister Naeela and I. When we arrived in Comilla, the room next to us was occupied by Mr. Razzak, he and actress Suchanda had come for the function. They had arrived by separate vehicles and we peeped to see if Suchanda was still in her puffed up bird nest-like hairdo. She wasn't. Both Razzak uncle and Suchanda were very sweet and humble. They were great fans of our aunt, lovingly called Moyna. Moyna had taken us in her car and we enjoyed chatting through the ride, singing, enjoying the riverine Bangladesh through the ferries of Daudkandi. The ferry was bombarded with beggar women who sang 'E Modina ja boke mone'. Watchers peeped to see if hero Razzak or Suchanda could be spotted in the car while it crossed the river. Their cars were covered with dark paper, they were hardly visible, in spite of that people flocked around with curiosity.

Finally the hour of the show arrived. We were backstage when Razzak and Suchanda made an appearance and within minutes the gates were crashed, chairs were being broken, there was pandemonium. The organizers ran to rescue us from the green room and whisked us off to someone's house where we met a girl of my age, her name was Sharmistha.



We kind of hid there while her Mom made us dinner and a few minutes later Razzak and Suchanda joined us. We ate together, all horrified at the fate of the function. Khondoker Faruq Ahmed (the singer) and Moyna had not even performed! That was quite an experience for us and we were never allowed to accompany Moyna outside Dhaka again!

Later on, in the late 60s Moyna lived in Elephant Road Dhaka with her husband and first born Rubaiyat. I was playing hop scotch in front of the alley leading to their flat when suddenly I found a car drawing up near me. Razzak Uncle was driving, young and beautiful Kabori was sitting next to him. Kabori said, "Nashid, where is your Auntie?" "She has gone out," said I. "Please tell her that we came to invite her to an occasion." I forget what it was, most probably the inaugural (muhurat) of their film together. Kabori waved at me and said, "Nashid, don't forget."

How can I forget? Those beautiful days of simple movies like *Neel Akasher Neechey*, *Tero no. Feku Ostagar Lane*, *Jibon Theke Neya*, *Ora Egaro Jon*, later *Rangbaaz* and many more. During the late seventies I was hosting several shows for the Bangladesh Betar in Shahbagh. In a series of interviews of all top actors and actresses, I had an interview with Nayokraj Razzak. By then, he was the most brilliant and shining star of our movie world. I felt a bit anxious, wondering if he remembered me from those childhood days of the 60s. He showed exactly the same cordial, loving behavior as he did when I knew him as a child. His answers were also brilliant. I felt very touched and until he bade us goodbye on 21 August 2017, his endearing behavior remained the same. In movies and otherwise, his achievements are a lore.



Choyonika Chowdhury's Sweet Sixteen

Choyonika Chowdhury is a well known name in the world of showbiz. She has been directing dramas since 2001 and has directed 347 dramas till now, amongst which 'Ek Jibone', 'Bhalobashar Gaan' and 'Kalo Chithi' are considered her best works. Soon she will also direct her very first film 'Bhalobeshei Mori'.

You have been directing dramas for 16 years. What has the experience been like so far?

I started directing dramas in 2001 with *Shesh Belay*. I will always be thankful to Mujibur Rahman of "Light & Shadow" for supporting me back then. Had he not been there, I wouldn't be able to reach where I am today. However, my turning point as a director came when I directed *Ek Jibone*, which was possible due to Tomalika's insistence. I have been a regular director ever since!

In your journey as a director, who would you say had the most influence on you?

There are a lot of people who have supported me during my journey. It wouldn't be possible to name them all. However, some people whose name I just have to mention are Tomalika, Mujibur Rahman, Zayed Rabbi, Mahfuz Ahmed, Imdadul Huq Milon, Shakoor Mojid, Tuhin Barua and of course, my family. The people who supported me a lot during the beginning years of my journey are Bipasha Hayat, Mahfuz Ahmed, Aupee Karim, Srabanti and Shahid. In my later years, Tarin and Apurbo have also been there for me a lot. I shall forever be grateful to these people.

How did you learn the tips and tricks of directing?

There was a lot I didn't know in the beginning. I grew up watching and acting in dramas since I was 3 and half years old. I learnt a lot from my mother. After I got married, I learnt a lot from Arun Chowdhury as well. I used to visit him on set a lot and watch how things work. You could say that I basically learnt it all by watching and observing others.

Did you ever have any bad experiences when directing?

There are people who have hurt me but for that I am grateful. Had they not done what they did, I wouldn't be here today. The bad experiences have given me strength.

In these 16 years, what changes did you see in yourself?

At first I was very impatient and short-tempered but with time I have been able to change that about myself. I have also become very picky when it comes to work. I only select stories that I feel are worth telling. I also choose the actors very carefully now. But what hasn't changed is love for my work. I would not say I am a talented director but I am definitely hard-working. This characteristic of mine haven't changed since the get-go.

What would you say are your achievements?

I would say my fame and the love my audience has for me are my biggest achievements. When I travel, people ask me if I am the same Choyonika Chowdhury that makes dramas. Mahfuz once told me after coming back from a trip in Australia that everyone he met there has seen my dramas and there was even a store that had a rack with my name that held my dramas. To me, this is a great achievement.

There were talks of you making a film. What happened to that?

It's my dream to make a good film. I have been thinking about this since 2014, but I haven't been able to start working on it yet. I have decided on the name though. It will be called *Bhalobeshei Mori*. But that name might change later on.

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Interviewed by Zahid Akbar
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