

Miles Per Hour

HUMAIRA NASHMIN

60 mph

Wind in my hair. Thoughts in my mind. Both running wild.
 I close my eyes and feel the wind on my skin as I drive away from our worries.
 Leaving behind the scars and the wounds.

50 mph

For a moment I forget the past.
 Captivated by the beauty of the crescent moon,
 Hanging low in the sky.

40 mph

The night clouds are hard to spot,
 But if you look closely you can see some floating by.
 The stars are playing hide and seek,
 Some shining bright, some shy.

30 mph

You can hear the rustling of the leaves,
 Crisp and sharp
 In the silence of the night.

20 mph

The street lights splashes all over the dashboard
 Creating a beautiful orange hue.

10 mph

We drive by houses.
 Houses with families and 101 problems.
 I drive past families, happy and smiling, as they end the evening together.
 I drive past families, sad and dull, with nothing but silence among them.

5 mph

I'm slowing down, going back to what I ran away from
 The reality is slowly coming my way.

0 mph

There's no wind in my hair, but the thoughts are there, still running wild.
 I close my eyes and breathe in the air.
 It smells of pain.
 Here I am again, the same person I was before.
 The scars are back, deeper than before
 And the past is catching up to me.
 I thought I escaped this but I am back
 Stuck at the bottom of this blue hole
 Waiting for someone to find me
 Wishing to feel the wind in my hair again.



SLEEPLESS

SHAH TAZRIAN ASHRAFI

Eyes are wonderful. At times, they remain wide open and welcome all the light that the universe has to offer. Also at times, they flutter shut only to consume the darkness that is necessary to sink into a pillow and float in a colorful void. Hasan's eyes, however, were only for the light. Though his eyelids longed to lock with each other, they were forced to stay apart.

It's 7 on a holiday morning, and the mist outside is still settled. The fog plastering his window urged him to sleep some more, but then again, he had an alarm to shut, parents to obey, and many classes to attend. Stretching his hands in the air, he rises up from the well of a comfortable sleep, his eyes still blurred from the slumber that they were in need of. He advances towards the sink inside his brightly lit washroom — enough to hurt his eyes. The sleep goes away after he splashes his face a couple of times. He sees an unfinished good night's sleep swiveling down the drain, and the sadness of letting a good sleep go cuts the bright light of his washroom to make it gloom.

His father opens a newspaper after digging into the mob of letters, comfortably settled in the head chair of the dining table. It always amazes him how he can hit the bed at 12 and wake up when the owls are still there. His mother slams the breakfast plates on the table while blabbering on and on about all the coaching classes he has after school, travelling to and forth between the kitchen and the dining room. Hasan thinks that coaching classes are redundant and cumbersome for many. But then again, his parents are not ones to take any risks and shudder when they see their relatives plastering coaching classes after classes to their kids' schedule, leaving no space for anything else.

After breakfast, Hasan puts on his teal t-shirt and jeans and ponders for the umpteenth time why he has to hurry for private classes after school when his exhausted eyes are meant to rest.

"Why are schools there in the first place if private classes were meant to dominate?" Hasan asks his mother while tying his shoelaces wrongly.

"You don't want to regret when the board results come out, do you?" his mother replies as she readies herself for the market.

His eyebrows pucker as he slides through the door. While making his way to the bus stand, his gaze shifts at a kid who is probably in grade five or six. His fingers are laced around his mothers', and his eyes are struggling to remain open. His mother is taking him to a private tuition of course. The kid's eyes reminds Hasan of how many kids of his country are made machines to score well even if it means keeping your eyes open when they are exhausted, because of course, schools aren't enough to score well. Hasan shrugs on the thought.

On a brighter note, his eyes are welcoming more light than darkness though.

The writer is a grade 11 student of Birshreshtha Noor Mohammad Public College.