

# LOOKING FOR PABNA

*Disclaimer: This work of fiction is a parody of clichéd YA tropes. We hope you are able to retain your sanity after reading this.*

TASNIM ODRIKA & FARAH MASUD

**Parvez**

I've never been a fan of traffic and noise pollution, but my dad recently took up a new job in Dhaka and we had to move all the way from Noakhali to Dhanmondi. It was a pretty tiring journey, but here we are. I am now faced with a new town, a new school, and most importantly, a bunch of new people.

**EARLIER THAT DAY:**

**Pabna**

A new kid just joined my school. Seems like a sociopath from the way he looks and acts. Scholarmind must have really set the admission standards low this time. Euughh. He just looked at me. C-R-E-E-P!

“Are you even listening to me, Pabna?” – Hassan asks me.

“Yeah, I was just thinking about... what you were saying,” I reply.

Hassan and I have been seeing each other for six months now. He's the hottest guy in school and naturally, the meanest.

Tasnia is rambling about her Valentine's Day ideas and Mashrur is just nodding. Most days, it feels as though my friends can go on with their conversations without a single input from me. It's not that I'm introverted or anything. I just generally hate life.

That new kid just stole another glimpse. Time to give him a piece of my mind.

**Parvez**

I have never been a fan of school. I've always been more into locking myself up in my room and listening to Alesana tracks on repeat. But on my second day of school, I met an angel with no wings, or what the kids these days call “*dana kata pori*”. I actually have no idea what kind of person she is. For all I know, her Instagram bio might contain her zodiac sign, but I'm just going to assume that she's the perfect embodiment of a human being. My favourite pastime is now staring at her from a distance while she's just trying to hang out with her friends.

Oh no...she just caught me looking at her. Damn, she's coming this way. Uhh...what do I do?

“Hey, new kid! Listen up real good,” she says as she slams her hands on my table. “Staring like a creep will not make you a part of our group. You can't sit with us.”

I nod, not knowing how else to respond. “Don't do the innocent guy act, please.

I've seen this a million times before,” she says.

“I'm sorry, I– didn't mean to...” I mumble as I feel my eyes well up.

“I'm done with you,” she says and walks away.

**ONE WEEK LATER:**

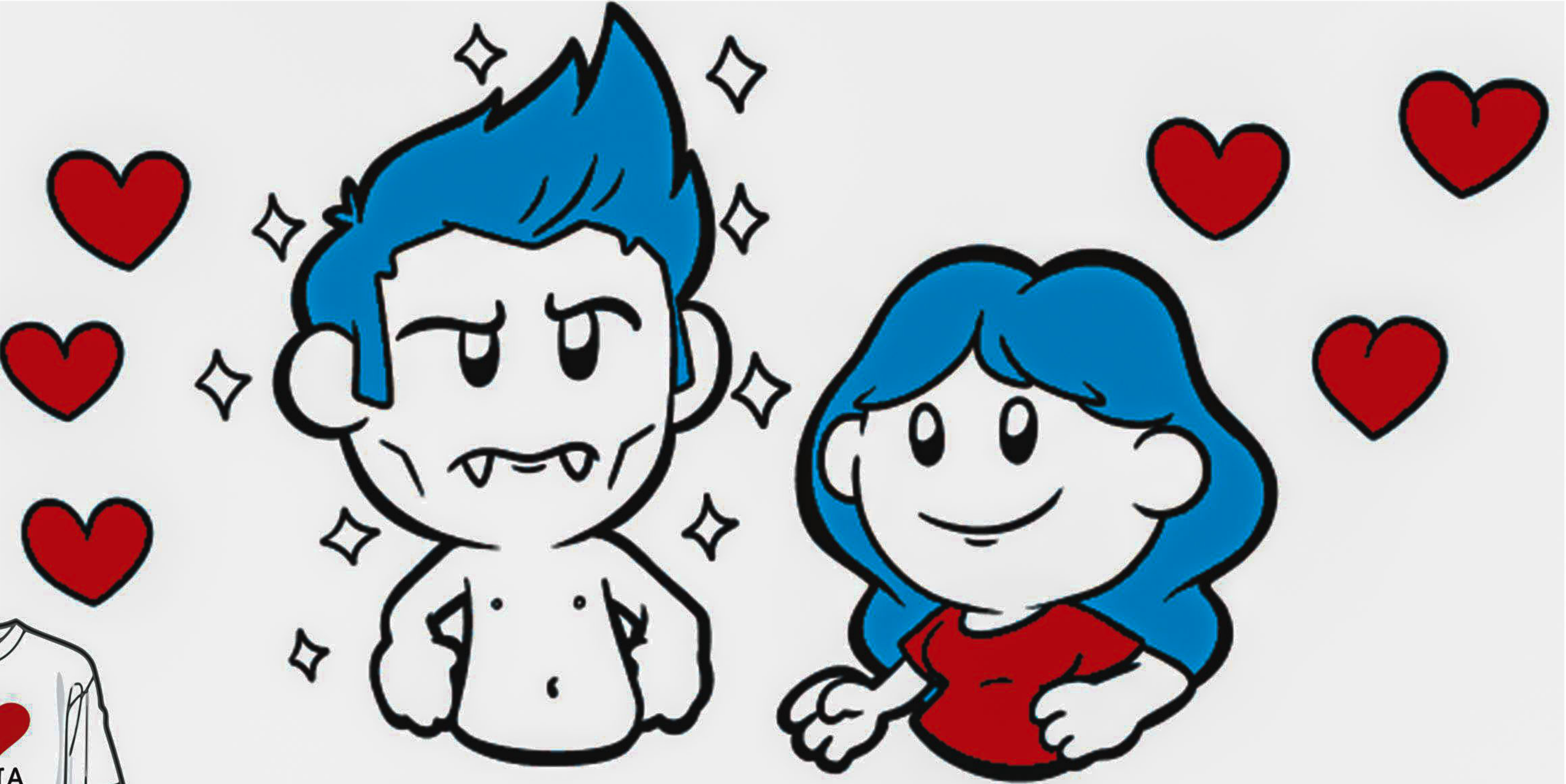
**Pabna**

I can't believe I got paired up with *him* for the chemistry project. This guy can't tell a beaker from a funnel.

I look at him from the corner of my eye. He's so pale. Like...unnaturally pale. Probably has vampire genes.

I look over to the other side of the room. Hassan is paired up with Ameena. They're giggling and shoving each other without a care in the world. As if they're made for each other. As if I don't exist.

Alright, I see how it is. I lean in close to Parvez and tell him, “Okay, fine. I think we can reconsider a bit. You can join our group. But first, I'll have to teach you “de wey” of our school and hence you'll have to spend an absurd amount of time with me which will make my bf question whether something is going on between us.”



**Parvez**  
OMG OMG. SHE LIKES ME!

She definitely likes me.

**A FEW DAYS LATER:**

**Parvez**

I think I'm actually going to end up liking this school. Most importantly, I like this one certain person in school. Ahhh, Pabna! She's the best thing that happened to the human race since the plague. The last few

days she spent all her free periods with me and she let me sit at her table during lunch hour. She even introduced me to all her favourite bands.

But, the only bump in our relationship is this guy Hassan who always seems to be eyeing us from a corner and muttering something to himself. It's almost as if he's making an evil master plan.

**Pabna**

This Parvez guy seems like an okay dude. He's just so different from all the other Dhanmondi guys I hang out with. Unlike other guys, Parvez seems to sparkle in sunlight.

Like, literally sparkle.

Now, one of the most important events of the year for me is the annual inter-school MUN, since I'm the president of our school's club.

**THE DAY OF THE MUN:**

**Pabna**

“Pabna! Come here I want to show you something,” Hassan yells, standing in front of an empty classroom. Everyone is in the auditorium right now for the MUN, so the entire corridor is deserted.

“I'm very busy right now. I have to prepare for my speech,” I yell back.

“No, just come here. You have to check out what's inside this cupboard!”

**Parvez**

I haven't seen Pabna's burnt chicken coloured eyes in a while.

“Hey, Tasnia! Have you seen Pabna anywhere?”

Apparently, no one has seen her for the past hour or so and it's almost her turn to give the speech. People have started calling out her name.

“Maybe she's with Hassan,” Mashrur suggests.

“Oh yeah, you're right,” Tasnia says. “Okay, let me call Hassan then.”

“*Mwahaha, you have reached Hassan the Brown King of Jharnia. Leave a message.*”

“No luck, it went to voice message,” Tasnia says massaging her temple.

“Guys, I think we should start looking for her...” I try to say to them but the Principal makes an announcement

through the auditorium speaker, “Parvez Musharraf, please come to my office right now.”

All heads turn towards me as if I've committed a serious crime. I keep my head down to avoid everyone's gaze and walk out of the auditorium.

As I enter his office, I notice that the Principal has a rain-bow themed room, with socks hanging from his walls instead of frames of his degrees.

“Ohh Parvez, come here me boy.”

I try to shake his hand out of courtesy but he embraces me into a bone-crunching hug.

“My boy, I suppose it is time to tell you the truth.”

“The truth about what?”

“You're a Vampire, Parvez!”

“I'M A WHAT?”

“Have you ever wondered why you sparkle in the sun? Or why you can go without food for days?”

“Uh...pale skin? Slow metabolism, I guess?”

“Here, grab this,” he says as he tosses his pen across the room.

Before I know it, I'm already at the other end of the room, holding the pen in my hand.

“Super speed,” He says.

“I-I-I really am a vampire.”

“Yes. And you, my boy, have been chosen to save Pabna from the evil King of Jharnia. He took her inside the cup-

board.”

“I knew there was something weird about that cupboard.”

“Now hurry. Don't forget to take her friends along!”

“Okay,” I shout, as I run out of his office.

**Pabna**

I open my eyes and find myself lying on a pile of dump. Where is this place? I wonder. I look up to see Hassan clad in a hideous black *panjabi*.

He notices me and comes over.

“Pabna! You've woken up,” he says, as he helps me to my feet. “We are finally alone now. Away from all the rules and regulations of the school.”

“Uhh...what is this disgusting place? What am I doing here? And most importantly, why'd you knock me out in the cupboard?”

“Never mind that,” he says. “Welcome, to my castle!”

“First of all, this is a dumpster, and secondly, you're crazy, dude. I'm out of here.”

“MWAHAHAHA there's no escape. You are trapped here with me forever.”

“Dude, you're freaking me out.”

“I have seen you hanging out with that Parvez loser and I knew I had to bring you to Jharnia before Valentine's Day or I would lose you forever.”

“I think you already have!” – I say as I stomp off in a different direction.

Where is that Parvez guy anyway? I thought he was into me. No hope for chivalry these days, I guess.

**Parvez**

When I reach the auditorium, I notice everyone's gone ahead with their speeches. It's time for the delegates to vote. Tasnia and Mashrur seem to have been waiting for me all along.

“Guys, Pabna is in trouble. We need to get to her!” I tell them as I lead them to the classroom cupboard.

“Also, I just found out that I'm a vampire. And we have to save Pabna from...” I say.

“No way!” Tasnia says stopping in her track, “I can't let my best friend date a vampire.”

“Well, this vampire is about to save her,” Mashrur reminds her.

We cram ourselves inside the dusty cupboard and find the door that leads to Jharnia.

“Woah...this place is a landfill,” Tasnia says, pinching her nose to avoid the stench.

We traverse through the waste site and finally manage to find a rickshaw. The rickshaw-puller is a Petni, but we don't have time to worry about that.

So, we set out on our road trip to Hassan's castle. After a point, we reach a pitch black river with toxic fumes rising above it.

“This is the river Buriganga,” the rickshaw puller tells us. “You must haggle with the devil to make it to the other side.”

“We won't be needing that,” I say. “Time to use my vampire skills. Mashrur and Tasnia, grab on to me.”

I run across the river at ultra-high speed and reach our destination.

Reaching the castle, which is actually a dumpster situated beside the river, I find that I'm too late. Pabna has already punched Hassan and he's lying on the floor bleeding through his nose.

**Pabna**

“It's about time you guys came,” I yell at them.

“Pabna, how did you...?” Tasnia asks, bewildered.

“Hassan was so busy being evil I think he forgot to take basic fighting lessons. I've been training since I was five years old.”

The three of us turn to leave.

“Pabna, before we go, I have something to ask you,” someone began as I turned around to find a pale, sparkling form.

“Pabna, these past few days have been the highlight of my life because I got to spend time with you. And now, I'm just a vampire standing in front of the hottest girl in the school asking her to become his Valentine. Will you be my Valentine?”

“Not so fast!”

We all turn around to see a bleeding Hassan trying to get up.

“Pabna is going to be MY Valentine. I was dating her first.”

“But you took her for granted and you blew it,” says an angered Parvez from the back.

“If I may interject, you guys can't really make this decision for her. Why don't you ask her what she wants?” – Tasnia asks, coming forward. Mashrur nods in agreement.

“What I want is to go back and finish the MUN. For God's sake, I'm just a 16 year old. I don't need this much drama in my life right now. I'm out. Tasnia, Mashrur, let's go.”

*Tasnim Odrika is having an existential crisis at the moment and doesn't really know who she is anymore. Send her compliments at odrika\_02@yahoo.com.*

*Farah Masud is a humanbean and that is all you need to know about her. Please don't try to contact her anywhere, especially not in person.*