



AN ODE TO HANDWRITTEN LETTERS

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Rushing to the mailbox in the hopes of receiving a sealed envelope addressed to your name seems quite unnatural to us today. However, a proper, physical letter has almost a majestic feel to it. This article is an attempt to bring back the mailboxes and the romanticism that handwritten letters possessed.

Waiting days, or even months, to receive letters from our loved ones only shows our undying passion for that person. Emails and text messages can be received in a matter of seconds and no one really plays the game of patience anymore. As our attention spans shorten, we grow more accustomed to receiving messages from our friends.

One of the biggest things that I miss most about handwritten letters is the actual feel of paper in our hands. The smell of paper and the touch of the indentations where the pen wrote over it can no longer be cherished. I feel as if though, letters carry more emotion than messages sent over the internet. Moreover, the personality of the sender is no longer evident to us in messaging apps. For example, a heartfelt letter from one's lover written in his own handwriting with his favourite pen on his preferred piece of paper definitely shows the type of person he is. One can almost visualise the person sitting on his table and penning down the words of his imagination as the table lamp shines on the piece of paper from top.

Along with handwritten letters, the art of penmanship is losing popularity. The beautiful cursive lettering and neat handwriting to impress the receiver is long

gone and has now been replaced with typed out messages. Thanks to autocorrect, many people now don't even practice good grammar or spelling and are completely dependent on computers. Once, the people used to collect stamps from all the letters that they received but now, it is high-end bags, makeup and watches that they collect. Not that collecting these items is bad, it's just that the romanticist within me misses the particular emotion that stamps possessed.

Penfriends were once a thing and now they have been replaced with online friends whom we chat with once in a blue moon or maybe never manage the time to do even that. They are more like trophy friends that we remember are a part of our life when their photos pop up on our newsfeeds once in a while. I remember feeling almost jealous of the people with friends abroad whom they used to communicate with by mail. Just thinking about receiving a heartfelt letter from a friend, perhaps writing about the harsh winter in London and how he wished he were in the sun kissed land of Bangladesh, takes one back to the majestic era of the seventies and eighties.

Something cannot but come to my mind: where are all the DaakGhor or post offices? Similarly, what has happened to the stereotypical red mailbox that used to be a part of every house? The mailboxes



present in older houses are now dust-ridden and haven't been used in years. Perhaps it is more for decorative purposes. Postmen are nowhere to be seen. The sight of the man on a cycle with a bundle of letters, delivering these envelopes to our mailboxes was once the most exciting view from one's window. Now, instead of the postman ringing our doorbell, we are left with notifications on our phones with non-existent mailboxes and only have online messages to check rather than actual letters. What has happened to all the

postmen? Are they still at the post office waiting for us to post a handwritten letter for them to deliver?

We have lost the emotion that handwritten letters possessed. It is the sentiment attached to a handwritten letter, the hard work that went into writing and posting the letter and the feeling of excitement that built up to actually receiving the letter that made it so special. It is because of these reasons that I believe handwritten letters should make a comeback.

Please let me know of your views on whether you think handwritten letters are better than emails at tahsinabedi@gmail.com (Ironically, you will have to send this message electronically because even I don't have a mailbox!)