



Planet Nebula

TASNIM ODRIKA

"So, where are you headed?" asked the waiter. Although the waiter was a robot, Chris was glad it had been given a female voice. He hadn't had human contact for such a long time. The only reason he took a detour to this space station was so that he could have a brief conversation with another being.

"Uh, I'm actually headed to planet Nebula."

"Nebula? You know that's in a different galaxy, right? Sir, are you aware of the dangers of intergalactic travels? Our president has recently announced that she won't be taking responsibility for anyone injured during an intergalactic travel. I'm going to have to advise you to stay here."

"Yes, I am fully aware of all the dangers. But, the thing is my soul mate lives in Nebula. I'm going there to find her."

"Well, that's just utterly foolish! There's no life on Nebula," blurted out the bartender.

"What do you know? You're just a robot!" Chris was starting to regret taking this detour. His space ship had enough fuel already. More importantly, he had been given this "there's no life on Nebula" speech by almost everyone he knew and quite honestly he was tired of hearing it.

"Listen, I have no faith in those scientists. They live inside those labs and find their

answers from lifeless chemicals in test tubes. My fortune teller told me that the love of my life lives in Nebula and that's why all of my earthly girlfriends end up leaving me. We're just not meant to be." He looked up to see the beautifully engineered, almost real flabbergasted expression on the waiter's face. It probably thought he was an imbecile. But, Chris didn't care about it. He trusted his fortune teller. She was right when she guessed that he had a difficult childhood and that he had never been truly happy in his life; so, she was definitely not a crook.

The place was more or less deserted and since the conversation was taking a bitter turn he decided it was time for him to leave. When he looked back at the small space station from his ship, it seemed like a ghost town. There were no lights, no sound. This was by far the most boring space station he had ever been to. But, that's what you get near the galaxy's edge.

As the space ship lifted off, a neon sign board on top of the space station flickered for just a moment and what seemed like the word "Nebula" materialised for a second. And then it was gone.

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

SHAIKH SABIK KAMAL

A piece of vivid white paper
And a set of bottles of acrylic colour.
A new brush, set in front of the protagonist
A story to be painted for the pallor.

Each drop of colour, that falls on the new paper,
Each telling a time, different in nature,
But blooming into the new personality itself
A story built, for the story of ourselves.

A yellow, for the happiness to be enjoyed,
An oceanic blue, for the simplicity to unfold,
A treacherous red, showing factions of anger,
Again, a soft green, for the innocence unseen.

Then falls the intermission, for a colour to be sent
The decision, amidst snowy white and onyx black.
Plain white; upholding the newness of age,
Making the character a wall against the dark chronological rage.

But those, painting black on the paper
Shift to a new place; gloomier, deeper.
For that story takes a turn to a darker hue,
Destroying all colours, blocking all emotions in you.

Black bears no hue, yes, that is true
It can't be exchanged, but can be painted over
For a new tint to form, thus creating a new world
Of shades of colour, shades of character.

Thus the story gets bigger and wider as its shades,
A whole new painting, a world full of amaze.
And one day, when the painting has no blank place to be coloured,
You finally can hang the painted picture on your wall.

Your painting ends, but a new one begins.

The writer is a class 7 student at Dhaka Residential Model College



THE PAINTING



FAISAL BIN IQBAL

There are screams I bear witness to,
As I lay awake in my bed.
Perhaps the cries of sad and melancholic people,
Resonating throughout my head.

Perhaps it's a young and ignorant boy,
Disappointing his family and everyone around.
Screaming at the top of his lungs,
For his failure is all they would point out.

Perhaps it's an innocent child
Too naive to understand impracticability.
Screaming wistfully as he was told,
All his dreams were shackles on reality.

May be it's a delusional girl
Her faith in this world almost shattered.
Screaming aloud despite being told
That her voice never really mattered.

As I woke up in the middle of the night,
Thinking of the screams and who it could be.
I lost my mind once I realised,
That the one screaming had always been me.