

# Feather- tales

MAISHA NAZIFA KAMAL

The wind will never whisper some stories  
The stones will rather quietly bury them,  
The creepers won't let them grow alongside  
And so the ethereal sea must drown them.

Thus these stories fly over the arch of a feather;  
A white insignificant little blunder,  
That flows delicately, tentatively in the air.  
It whirls and flits to the melody of its own magic,  
And smiles at whoever would bother to notice.

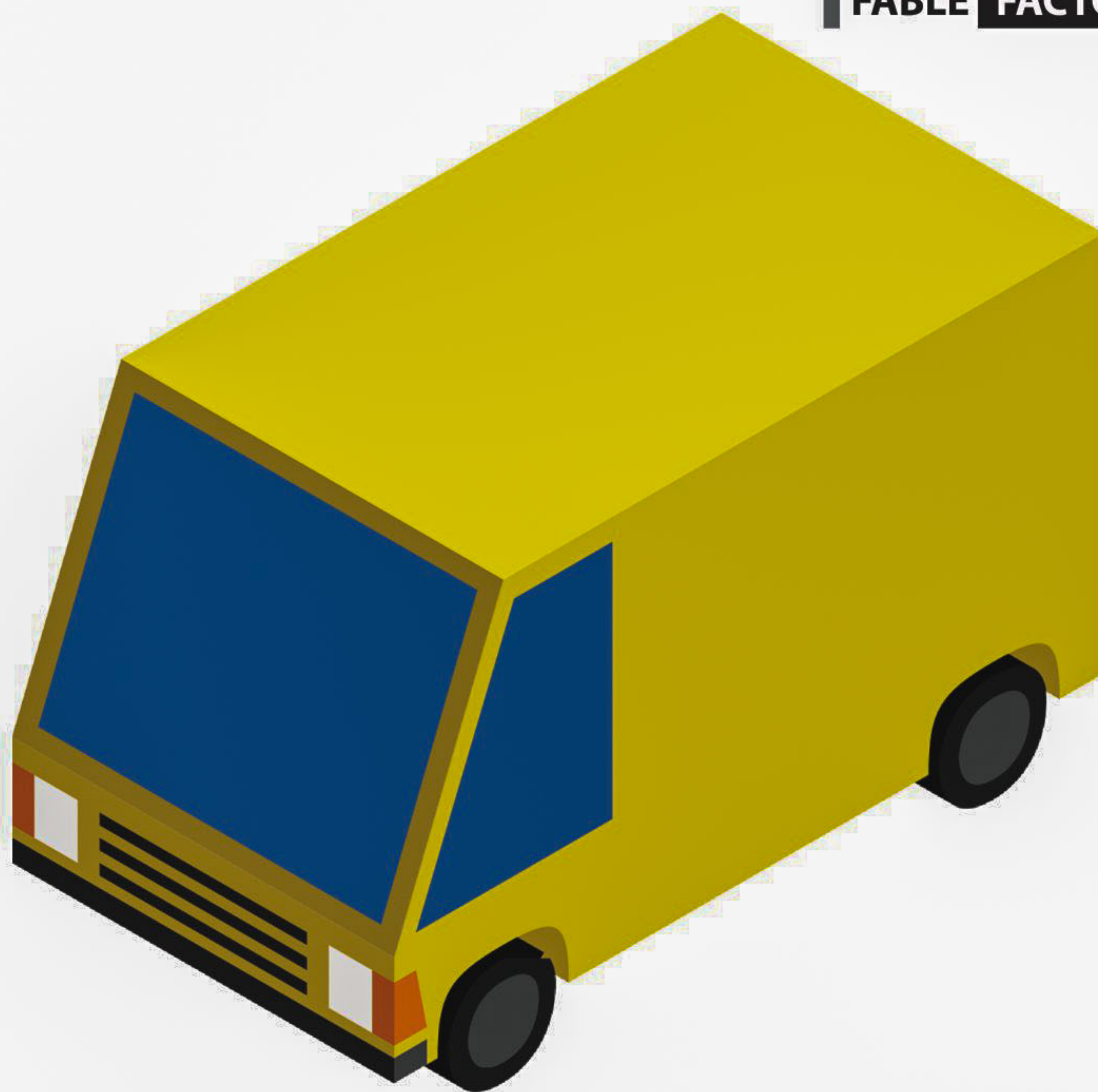
But sometimes it lands over your shoulder;  
As afraid as a gazelle stopped by her hunter.  
You gaze at its beauty, at its innocent surrender,  
Your eyes brim with tears, your fingers lift to console;  
And then, without any trepidation, you just brush it off.

For these stories were never meant to be told,  
Never meant to be written of, or to be portrayed.  
They are only meant to ride such stray feathers,  
And float meaninglessly in mid-air despite harsh weather.

Yet once in a while some stretch their hands;  
Giving the sanguine feather a haven to rest.  
They cherish these stories and for their sake,  
They fight, try something new, but they fail,  
And their effort itself has to find yet newer feathers to sail.

But these feathers are fuelled by hope itself  
And hope is a strange thing, my friends.  
It beguiles these clumsy feathers to be elegant,  
And so they fly again, these feather-tales.

Maisha Nazifa Kamal is on a highly confidential mission to defeat all Muggles in procrastination. Join forces with her on 01shreshtha7@gmail.com



## ROBBERS OF INNOCENCE

AFRIN HAQUE ARANYA

*Disclaimer: The following story is a work of fiction. Any similarities found with any real life story or incident is purely coincidental.*

Mira delighted herself with dadu's poetry as she sat by the window of their hut. She glanced beyond the gold dusted harvest, reaching her hand out to the cotton candy clouds. "What are you doing?" Poorna giggled as she scrutinised her dearest friend's dazed face.

"Someday, I'll catch a cloud for you," Mira whispered, clasping their hands together whilst dragging their feet out in the bushy garden adjacent to their backyard. It was the last time she ever saw Poorna smiling, her pink gums stuck out from her thin lips while her set of teeth flashed jollily.

For Mira, it was only possible to bring about this smile in poetry, between pages and with ink; for the unthinkable had come to steal it off their faces.

It was a week after the day Mira promised her friend to go see the pineapple harvest together that she went missing.

The last time she had seen the girl, they were in their blue school uniforms.

She peered through the tin gate of their garden to find that Poorna had been tying her shoe laces whilst she sat on the cool muddy stair of their hut. She had asked to Mira to go ahead because

she hadn't packed yet. "I'll see you at school." Her eyes were smiling, two of her thickly braided pony tails hung from her head, as she assured her friend walking alone wouldn't scare her as much as it did before.

As she rushed out of her home a few minutes prior to school, she spotted a truck parked a few feet away from their house, which was nothing out of the ordinary. Rather it was the men inside it that sent a shiver down her spine.

As she took a step ahead, she felt inclined to look back because it was like someone had been watching her. One of the three men pushed the ugly yellow truck and folded his arms as he shamelessly stared at her. "Babu, please come here, where is your mom?"

Poorna's face went pale, her body froze as the man continued to approach her while the other men had grim smirks plastered on their faces. She knew, the remoteness of the lane would do little if she called out for help. "What do they want?" she thought, "How bad could it be?" The man picked her up and held her frail body against him.

"Give me a glass of water," he said, placing her down as she nodded. Clipping open the door to reveal their entrance, she poured from the tap and handed the man the glass of water. Noticing his face had been possessed by an odd grin, the three men followed behind, all of them

having piercing gazes that would froze the warmth in their abode.

\*\*\*

It was then this evening that Mira was cautiously asking around about Poorna, knowing she'd never missed a day of school. It was strange, like something was unspeakably wrong about the way it all seemed to happen. When the sun fell behind the hills, Poorna's mother had come home to an empty house, a steel mug rolling around on the pavement. Her daughter, nowhere to be found.

Locals had assisted the search for Mira's friend as she was trying to assuage the bawling parent Poorna had made out of her mother even though fear clutched at her own throat unforgivably.

She sat down near the very spot where she remembered her friend's face glistening under the crimson sky, catching onto a horrible stench. "Abba, why does it smell so bad here?" Her question made her father's body stiffen, as he advanced towards the odd smelling bush near Poorna's hut to reveal what was going to be an aching nightmare. Mira's father fell to his feet, tears silently rolled down his cheek, she ran and looked behind the bush to see Poorna's lifeless body, her smiling face had now disappeared, never to be seen again.

The writer is a 10th grade student at S.F.X. Greenherald School.