

Life through the Eyes of a Ride Sharing Bike

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I remember when I was new. Fresh out of the factory, with that “new bike” smell. The display window in a bike showroom was my second home; I was proud, proud of the fact that I was what young college boys lusted after. Every high school boy would ask their parents for me as their graduation gift; and while I couldn't smile, it made me feel warm and fuzzy in my piston chamber.

The parents would always say, “No! A bike is too dangerous!” and I'd feel further delight at the idea that I wasn't just an alternative to a car, I was a thrill ride.

Every passing day I would put on a show behind my glass window, like an animal at the zoo, and watch as eyes of wonderment stared back at me; and one day, the owner of one such pair finally decided to become my master.

I was no longer just a display piece, I was alive.

My master loved me, he spent our first day together showing me off to all his friends and cousins; I was an immediate hit! Everyone wanted a turn at riding me, but my master wouldn't trust me with anyone but himself.

I remember so many things; the pride in my master's voice as he told every other biker stuck in traffic about how fuel efficient I was. I remember the long days, which would end with him cleaning me up in preparation for another brilliant day.

I loved my life.

Slowly, but surely, my master's fondness for me faded. I was no longer his pride and joy, and instead just a means to an end.

He began using the widely popular ride sharing apps for some extra income on the side. And soon, I would find myself going all over Dhaka; awed at its beauty and culture. So many people would sweat through public transport journeys to get to work or classes every morning.

The tenacity of the people to bear through the harsh weather and never ending traffic made me see everything in a different light. I was making a difference, my small size and fast pace meant I could get people anywhere quicker. While I may have stopped being appreciated by my master, I now realised that waiting for the appreciation of others would only leave you aging.

But instead, having the ability to change the lives of others for the better was a reward in itself.

I took pride in myself once again, for my purpose and not just for my looks or power.

Alas, it all came to an abrupt halt when, on one fine day, as we were speeding towards Mohakhali, hoping to ensure our passenger was not late for his 9AM office time.

My master lost control and I toppled over, with both him and the passenger falling onto the road. Thankfully, due to them both wearing helmets, they did not sustain any injuries past a few scratches.

But for me it was over, I had been totalled.

My master cried over my carcass that night, remembering how hard his father had worked to pay for me. His livelihood had been brought to a stop along with me. And while I was gone, I felt loved once again.



PHOTO: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM



Helpful websites to assist you with writing

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Moulding a write-up to perfection can be a very difficult task. However, there are certain websites and tools which can be used to eliminate most of these difficulties. There are a lot of such tools and websites available on the internet. We'll be looking at some of the most popular ones available and mostly free to use.

Thesaurus: If you're looking for alternatives to a certain word, thesaurus.com is your place to be. It will show you all available synonyms for that word and you can pick which one to use. However, while using the alternatives, you need to be sure that the meaning you're aiming for is not changed in any way. The alternative words may not always have the exact meaning you're looking for. So be sure to check the meanings before you go on to use them. *Onelook.com* is also a good place for the purpose of finding alternatives.

Grammarly: Grammarly is very useful when it comes to identifying grammatical mistakes in your writing. It will provide you with suggestions to correct your tense, spellings, conventions and other small errors that might go unnoticed when you're initially done with your writing. It is a free tool to use and can also be downloaded as an application or an extension for your browser. Grammarly also offers premium features such as word choice, change in confusing vocabulary, misplaced words, etc. For amateur writers however, the free version is enough.

Online Dictionaries: The only reason I am being vague here is because there are a lot of options to choose from when you're looking for dictionaries online. I always prefer using Oxford or Merriam-Webster as

they are more widely used than the others available at hand. Online dictionaries also have the options to check for grammatical errors or for synonyms and antonyms when you need them. In short, they are the most important tools for you to use while writing.

Urban Dictionary: Keeping up with the latest trends or slangs on the internet can be a tedious task. In order to keep track of the latest words or references trending around the world you can try using Urban Dictionary. It will show you everything that's trending around the world and the internet so that you don't have to go through the trouble of keeping up with each and every one of them. While picking a word of your need, be sure to check the ratings or the likes to dislikes ratio. This will ensure the accuracy of the word's meaning.

RhymeZone: Rhymezone.com is very useful when you need to find rhyming words. It will suggest you a wide range of words that rhyme with the one you provided. The words are divided into different sections based on the number of syllables they contain. Apart from this, the website also has a forum where you can submit your work and get it evaluated by experts and other readers. The feedback they provide is really useful as it's quite technical and easy to grasp.

StackExchange: Although the website is mostly known for bailing out programmers. The sub-sites *english.stackexchange.com* and *writing.stackexchange.com* have a host of questions available that you might have. Do check out the resources that are available in the site as they can address a lot of confusion regarding language and writing.