

# Being American Can't Be Easy



There are certain advantages to being Bangladeshi. (This is not actually true, but for now let's pretend.)

One of the advantages is that a Bangladeshi will never experience existential dread, as we have grown up understanding that we are completely inconsequential.

This relates to the second thing we have going for ourselves—we are internationally guiltless. It's great.

deeply involved in the private affairs of everyone in the neighbourhood, forging alliances, pitting people against one another, spying and trading information for the buzz of it, destabilising relationships and toppling regimes. Like a Bengali *bhabhi*, the US does not do this as part of a grand Petyr Baelish-esque master plan, but in a very stupid, almost atavistic fashion devoid of strategy or calculation,

*To a degree, this is a criticism of the US government and not the American people at large; but only to a degree.*

*Those who benefit from great power politics in a democracy can hardly be absolved of all responsibility.*

You know when you're on a road trip and none of you can find the hotel? But you've been sitting way at the back of the car with the luggage minding your business through all of it, so when everyone up front is cursing each other for not asking for directions or knowing how to read Google Maps or spending too much time in the highway restaurant bathroom and now you're going to get robbed by bandits in the middle of nowhere, you get that deep sense of satisfaction of knowing that you have done literally nothing to get everyone into that mess. That's everyday being Bangladeshi. The world may be going to Hell in a handbasket, and we're probably one of the first countries that'll get it in the neck, but it's not our fault and so we can at the very least be smug about it.

Who else can boast such clear consciences? Not Indians. Not Israelis. Maybe the British, because they like to pretend that they've never done anything to anyone anywhere.

I've wondered at times how it feels to be an American. This is because I am not a middle-aged Bengali *bhabhi*, who knows exactly how it feels to be an American. The USA has made a long career of getting

motivated by a very personal sense of moral justice that applies to everyone else except themselves. *Bhabis* and Americans wreck people's lives and sit smugly in the remains, sipping tea, commenting on the results, and being genuinely confused and outraged when someone challenges them on their crimes.

To a degree, this is a criticism of the US government and not the American people at large; but only to a degree. Those who benefit from great power politics in a democracy can hardly be absolved of all responsibility. Nevertheless, we—the powerless majority—should feel a certain degree of pity for the average American. We know that the reason our countries don't hurt others isn't purely because we're just better people, but because our states don't have the capacity to meddle internationally. The dumpster fire of our domestic politics is wholly in sync with our preferences and capabilities in external politics.

We don't live in a country that couldn't provide fresh water to an entire town for half a decade, while simultaneously being capable of fighting six separate wars an entire ocean away.

*Continued to page 15*



THEY SAY I DESTROY FAMILIES

THEY SAY I'VE DESTROYED COUNTRIES FULL OF FAMILIES

THAT I SPREAD MISINFORMATION

YEAH, SAME HERE

BUT I ONLY BRING FREEDOM

I'VE BROUGHT FREEDOM TO MANY COUNTRIES

I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING WRONG

AH, WE'RE MADE FOR EACH OTHER

ILLUSTRATION: EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

us on f /Sandalina



ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নাম আধুনিকতা  
ঠিক যেমন রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য মানেই

স্যান্ডালিনা  
সোপ

রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য...



KOHINOOR CHEMICAL