

# A TRIP TO THE DENTIST



MAISHA NAZIFA KAMAL

A frivolous bite of Hershey's, a handful of chocolate chips, an ample spoon of innocently melting ganache and then one day a stinging, nasty pain in the teeth. And before I know it, I stand before an ominous looking chamber. Yes, the dentist's.

## HOW HARD COULD IT BE?

At first, when the pain slightly manifests, I pay it no heed. I mean, what can't five whole minutes of extensive brushing solve, right? But, that sentient pain slowly expands its tentacles all across my jaw, to my forehead and even my ears. As the pain doubles, I'm suddenly begging to be taken to the dentists. I try telling myself, "How hard could it be? I somehow graduated from school, this should merely be a piece of cake."

## OKAY MORE THAN A PIECE OF CAKE

As I'm ushered inside, great monoliths of shades of teeth, pictures of women grinning like there was no tomorrow, sophisticated machines and dental paraphernalia greet me. The dentist is, in fact, quite friendly and she tells me to take my seat on the recliner. As soon as I do though, a dozen machines encompass me; not to mention the huge beam of light that is needed for the dentist to peer into the abyss of my mouth. The light is so bright and perfect that I am tempted to take a selfie right there or ask my mother to snap a candid for me.

## SLITHERING INSECURITIES

As the dentist and the nurse prepare everything, I can't but feel a bit timid. Firstly, this lady will see the entire expanse of my mouth. Tongue, teeth, gum, all of it. What if I have too many cavities? Surely, it

won't be a nice sight. Plus, I desperately try to remember fast what my last meal was because I'm in no mood to hear "Oh, you had spinach for dinner" from a complete stranger.

## PAIN, PAIN AND ONLY PAIN

The little insecurities that had slithered into my mind before, like a good serpent, now, scampers its way out. Because, what my mind only can focus upon are the painful shoves and pokes the dentist is making with those scary medical instruments. I'm sure the woman has managed to make my gums more swollen than they already were and the toothache is excruciating.

## TIRED IS AN UNDER-RATED WORD

The only thing good out of this whole experience is that my name is going to get enlisted in the Guinness Book of World Records for *most spitting and rinsing*.

Throughout it, the dentist's every sentence was punctuated by a nimble order to spit the blood out of my mouth and then rinse it like it was nothing. I also don't get why people get those plastic surgeries done to morph lips. The number of times I was ordered to *properly* open my mouth and make a gigantic O, my lips must have now been shaped as perfect as that of Angelina Jolie. The whole experience made me tired and all I wanted was to go home.

Finally, the dentist disapprovingly gave a professional briefing of the details of my dental life and then prescribed me some painkillers. And all the while I was thinking to myself:

*"Won't I at least get a lollipop?"*

*Maisha Nazifa Kamal doesn't understand why the black cats meow at everyone else except her. Send her ways to communicate with them at 01shreshtha7@gmail.com*

# Finding Winter

AAQIB HASIB

I woke up, sweating profusely. My mother's voice had once again successfully played the part of my morning alarm, unlike the alarm on my phone. Even though I was still tired, I was also too uncomfortable to return to my slumber.

The comforter I had kept on through the night had little purpose to serve, not when winter was nowhere to be seen. Everyone would always say, "Winter is coming to an end", yet it felt like winter never really arrived to begin with. I mean, is the sole criteria of winter in Bangladesh that it is not summer?

I am pretty sure someone from Canada vacationing in Dhaka right now is enjoying a pretty good summer.

Finally having got the energy to push the comforter off and get on my feet for the journey to the bathroom, I was ready for my mission. I'm sure winter was somewhere in Dhaka, and I would find it.

Having freshened up and filled up on a hearty breakfast of *ruti* and *bhaji*, I set out. I took with me my cycle and a jacket, just in case I did manage to find the cool icy winds I was craving.

I knew to find winter I would have to go north, Game of Thrones had taught me



that much. Starting from Dhanmondi, I began cycling with no knowledge of where I would eventually end up.

Today was my day. I would find winter, elusive as he/she may be.

It wasn't long before I found myself in Lalmatia. The roads were broken, and every alley seemed darker than a piece of burnt eggplant. And it was only 11 AM.

Things grew even more ominous as I entered Mohammadpur. The stares I received from inside each dark alley I passed almost paralyzed my heart with

fear. And yet winter wasn't any closer. Very soon I found myself riding through Geneva Camp; attempting to leave Mohammadpur unscathed, I found myself face to face with heavy traffic.

Seeing as it was a weekend, traffic wasn't supposed to be my most formidable adversary. Yet here I was, face to face with lines of cars, rickshaws and buses.

A few minutes into daydreaming with my elbows on the handlebars, I realised why I was stuck in gridlock. The trade fair

was in town.

After half an hour of waiting, I was on my way again, northward. The journey was getting harsher; the scorching sun seemed to spare no one, made apparent by everyone entering the *mela* with their arms on their foreheads.

Taking a left at Begum Rokeya Avenue; the next place on my journey was slowly becoming obvious. Mirpur beckoned to me, and even though the wisest of people would've told one to stay as far away from Mirpur as possible, that it was a place which would not yield anything close to winter, I chose to persevere.

Soon I was greeted by a sandstorm to the face, just as I neared the Mirpur-10 bus stop. It was as if I had entered a desert, and there would be no mercy. Reeling my bike back, I closed my eyes which were now filled with sand. There was no other choice.

I turned around, heading off home before encountering an evening worth of trade fair traffic; dismayed with the fact that I had not been reunited with the Januaries of my childhood.

But if winter was really northward, across the barren desert land that is Mirpur; then maybe winter was better left alone.