

LS EDITOR'S NOTE

Aggression: It's the name of the game now

What separates man from animal? The fact that we can speak? Or the fact that we have opposable thumbs? How about that fact that we have a complex society and technology that hurtled us to the moon? What if I said it was our innate destructive nature that separates us from the animals? If you find my words hard to swallow, simply open the front page of the news and see what is leading.

In a world where human lives sell at the cost of peanuts or the innocents are killed for no fathomable reason, who has the luxury to think about animals, the forests, the birds, and the insects? It's just too much to ask from these selfish louts who now seem to rule this beautiful mother earth of ours.

Right now, it's the humans who are more beastly than the wild animals; they cannibalise their own kind and forage lush green forests in the name of development. Without the animals, the jungles, the oceans or even the minuscule planktons, our existence would be at stake; and people who actually have the power to make a difference do not have the aptitude to grasp this rudimentary formu-



la on which the eco system runs on.

Why such meaningless loss of lives happen is beyond my comprehension. I just wanted to jot down my two cents in this week's Star Lifestyle.

While going to my cousin's, who has the good fortune of living besides one of the rare few thickets tucked inside this dug-up, battered city of ours, I saw monkeys prancing up and down a high wired wall, and coincidentally an elephant stopped my car for extortion. The free monkeys and the tamed tied up elephant were enough to pull the strings of my sentimental soul.

It made me think how lucky y cousin was to have a beautiful view from her room — pretty pink bougainvillea, golden showers, mango, jackfruit trees, and other tall trees. And therein live squirrels, geckos, monkeys, birds, and other fauna.

My cousin has an eye for the camera, and her favourite pastime is to take their cameo shots.

Monkeys chattering or frolicking in the rain or the sun, curtsied squirrels scurrying past her eyes with nuts in their hands and the poor geckos often seeking shelter in her larder; such beautiful moments in the otherwise busy city life.

Whenever I visit her, I look for the monkeys; walking on all fours with a baby hung from the neck or feeding a young one, or just mocking me with an angry stare for vio-



lating his peace with the car honks, and the day I see them, I feel relieved that they are still around, and when I do not see them, I fret what if they are fired out in the name of road developments!

During my morning stroll in my garden; the time when I tend to my plants and talk to them, coax them to bloom or bear fruits, kiss a weak sapling, pray for the plant whose growth is stalled, I look for my birds. I love to see the spotted doves perched up on my frangipani branch kissing each other, or sparrows hurrying inside my pigeon coop to take their share of the grains, the naughty parrots looting my guavas or chillies and tomatoes, even the earthworm — how it silently helps to aerate and mix the soil — playing a major role in the conversion of large pieces of organic matter into rich humus, thus improving soil fertility for my plants. But among all these beauties that elephant was so out of place.

I love all, from the insects with no spine to the majestic wild animals in the jungle; we all have our role to play in this beautiful world that God created for us all; instead of loving it and taking care of this Earth, which to me is like our, the mortals' Garden of Eden — we are all choking it to death.

This week, Star Lifestyle has tried to bring to the forefront issues concerning animals, as a reminder that they too exist and are very much our brethren, and we share the same earth together. We cannot possibly address all issues regarding the matter, but tried to portray their current state.

Our photoshoot with the elephant is to show how majestic these animals are, and that they are not meant for captivity or toll collection; rather, these poor mahouts could work together to make an elephant orphanage for their welfare. Just a thought.

Please enjoy reading our photo story: wild lives we can still save, on reforestation and our cover story accompanied by a lovely photo shoot.

-- RBR

Photo: Nasira B. Mansoor

DISCLAIMER: No animal was hurt or treated in a cruel manner during the photoshoot used in today's feature. The Daily Star adheres to the provisions of the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1920 and pledges its support for the animal rights under the applicable laws and legal instruments.

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