

Road Trip: Dhaka Edition

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"Chips?" asked Warda.

"Check," I replied, throwing the bags into the trunk of the car.

"Water, tissues, headphones, speakers?" I asked in return as Warda dug into her bag fishing for the items I was listing.

"What are in these bags?" I let out, exasperated as I piled on the last of the bags, shutting the trunk of the car and dusting my hands.

"Well, there's spare clothes, more food in case we get hungry, a bag of items my mom told me to take to my grandma's since we're already heading in that direction. I mean, who knows when we'll be travelling that far again," Fatima sighed, as the three of us finally stumbled into the car.

"Everyone get comfortable," I said, strapping myself into the driving seat, "GPS says a good couple of hours. There's crazy traffic on the highway."

We all took a deep breath as the car's engine roared into ignition. We pulled out of the driveway and off we were on our long and tedious journey to the other side.

"I'm excited," said Samiha, "We haven't been there in a while."

A few excited mumbles acknowledged her statement before breaking into loud chatter and laughter.

All four of us beamed as we turned on the music and bobbed our heads up and down to the beat.

Not ten minutes into the trip and one of them asked from the back, "How long do you think it'll take this time?"

"I'm not sure," I sighed as I drummed

my fingers on the steering wheel anxiously waiting for the red light to turn green, "It took us forever last time."

Audible sighs came from the backseat as we weaved through the heavy traffic on the road. Soon, a fight broke out over who should be choosing the music, causing quite a commotion in the back. However, the fight soon turned from being about choosing the music to being about how Samiha wasn't there for Fatima in her time of need. Accusations were made and voices were raised until suddenly, the both of them grew exhausted of the pointless arguments and they quieted down.

I enjoyed a few more minutes of silence as I shifted from gear to gear, my eyes darting from lane to lane, constantly looking for the fastest way to get to our destination.

But my few precious moments of silence was soon over, because yet another fight broke out. This time about who would get the tomato-flavoured chips. This one ended sooner, but not because we 20-year olds were mature enough to end the pointless fight, but because there came a loud shriek interrupting the two.

"Shut up!" yelled Fatima, after which there came a question in a small, high pitched voice.

"Can we make a stop?" she asked, "I need to use the bathroom."

Her question triggered a chain of the same requests, each provoking the other.

Next thing I know, I was standing at a gas station leaning against my now, empty car, anxiously waiting for the rest

of the girls.

The break was used by the ladies for many specific reasons. Fatima was still not back from the bathroom, Warda had made herself rather comfortable in the small store next to the gas station, her eyes scanning the snack shelves in excitement, and Samiha was now making her way back to the car.

She, wordlessly, hopped in the backseat, making herself comfortable and drifting off to sleep way too fast for it to be normal.

After what felt like hours, the rest of the girls piled back into the car and off we were again. This time, having had my fair share of staring at the tail lights of the cars, I swapped places with Warda, letting her take the wheel for the rest of the journey there.

The rest of the car ride was rather silent. Fatima and Samiha were in the back, fast asleep, laying in a tangled mess, and I had busied myself with a book.

At some point during my reading, I had drifted into a deep slumber myself.

Although that didn't seem to last too long either, the peaceful silence of the car was disrupted once more, this time with a loud blaring of the horn.

The three of us awoke with a start, gapping at each other, wide eyed as we tried to snap out of our grogginess.

"Stupid!" Warda rolled down the windows and yelled at a man in the car beside her.

"What happened?" I asked, my heart hammering against my chest at the thought of something having happened to my car.

"This jerk," she sneered as she made faces at the driver passing by.

I peered outside the window to find that it had been a near miss, making me let out a breath I didn't know I'd been holding.

"What time is it?" Samiha asked groggily as she squinted at the digital clock in the car.

"It's 12. We're nearly there," Warda sighed impatiently, the engine revving with the increase in speed.

At some point, it felt as though there was no such thing as time. As though, we had been transported into a dimension where time was infinite. Hence, passing of the time became harder and harder, leaving us with no choice but to gape at the same scenery that we had been surrounded by with deadened eyes. With every hint of movement, we would shoot up in our seats, our eyes lighting up with the hope that, maybe this time, we wouldn't have to stop. That we would reach the end of this road.

After what seemed like an eternity we finally pulled into the driveway of the only outlet of our favourite restaurant in Uttara. The four of us tumbled out of the car with loud groans and sore muscles, stretching and welcoming the fresh air into our lungs.

"We can't travel for this long every time we want to eat here," I sighed.

Warda whined as we entered, "You think they'll ever open a branch in Dhanmondi?"

Syeda Erum Noor is dangerously oblivious and has no sense of time. Send help at erum.noor1998@gmail.com

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