

Losing my glasses

SYEDA ERUM NOOR

The blobs of red and yellow lights bobbed up and down as I tread carefully in the darkness. The road beneath me glowed in the sea of fuzzy lights, looking like a picture one might have painted.

The blurry figures passing by didn't have a face nor a shape. They were just moving figures, passing me one by one. Grains of brown sat where there should be features on a face, making me feel almost as if I was alone in the world of buzzing chatter and blaring horns.

Slender man was real. Not only was he real, but there were many because I was living in a world full of them.

Giant boards that hung from the huge towering creatures throughout the city, emitted light of different colours, illuminating the world, being the only thing to help me understand where the edges began and ended.

I climbed down what looked like the stairway leading into a pit of darkness, with a strong grip on the railing, making sure I don't miss a step and tumble into oblivion.

I pulled out the card of the store I was headed to from inside my pocket and squinted at it in an attempt to read the letters printed on it. With insufficient lighting, and the very crucial part of me that was missing, I couldn't make out what it said.

With a sigh, I ran the tips of my fingers over the bold letters. The man had said it would be right next to the foot over-bridge. I let my head fall back as I stared at the signs that hung above me, once again, attempting to read what they said. But all I could see were squiggly lines, some looking like ants that were crawling on the signs forming words from an unintelligible language.

This was going to be hard.

But I sucked it up, pushing every door and asking whether it was the store I was looking for. This was the only way I'd get there in time.

"Yes, this is it," said someone, making me let out a breath of relief. I strolled in and awaited anxiously hoping this would make my day a little better.

After what seemed like hours, the man finally came out with my prized possession. He put it in my hands, and I pushed it onto my nose. And there sat my brand new glasses, making the world a less of a blurry mess.

I finally saw the man's features and was able to tell apart the people around me and read the words that hung everywhere.

"I'm never losing my glasses again," I promised myself.

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



Exploring Family Relationships as an Adult

MRITTIKA ANAN RAHMAN

When we were six years old, we would show up to events at our relatives' houses hand in hand with our parents dressed head to toe in clothes that reflected whatever mood our moms were in. You had a very good chance of wearing matching outfits with your sibling.

As we grow up, our relationships with people around us change in many ways. People often speak about how the dynamics between you and your parents, siblings, and friends change as you age but an often unexplored dynamic is the one between you and your relatives, or extended family members.

As kids, your parents gatekeep your relationship with their families. You mostly visit whoever's house your parents like more and you don't see much of those relatives who your parents either aren't as close with or have whatever complicated issues going on with. You depend on your parents for taking you places along with them and are not mature enough to contemplate family dynamics or understand people as individuals beyond how nicely they talk to you or if they give you presents.

RE-ASSESSING PEOPLE

A part of growing up means realising and forming an opinion on family



members. You now understand their journeys, their characteristics, and their circumstances. You suddenly realise what some people have gone through. Was a family member simply misunderstood in the past? You may have thought a certain uncle or aunt was cranky, possessive, overprotective or a bit of a miser before but now your new found maturity may justify why these people are the way they are.

Of course the opposite applies too. You may have simply enjoyed the com-

pany of a relative or found them funny or entertaining but now you realise how they may be crude, offensive, sexist or downright rude. Often times you also realise a woman vilified by the whole family was one who was simply strong, independent, and voiced her own opinions. You may develop new found sympathy, admiration, or even disrespect for many people.

IT'S YOUR CALL NOW

Before, when you didn't go over to any relative's house enough they would

ask your parents "Why don't you bring them around more?" If they asked you, you would simply reply "Ammu ke bolbo ashte."

But now, I am often told "Now you don't need anybody else to show up. You're out at university, with friends and out alone. Come over when you want."

This is when you realise it is now fully upto you to maintain your relationships with your relatives. You can't use your parents as an excuse anymore. You need to decide who you want to maintain close ties with in your busy schedule of class, work, social events and commit to them. In your tricky young adult world, everything is changing and you may need a system of support more than ever.

Family dynamics are a very delicate and difficult matter. Love them or hate them, you don't get to pick your family or change them. It takes understanding, patience, and a little willingness to maintain a relationship with them.

Especially when you're old enough to make your own choices.

Mrittika Anan Rahman is a daydreamer trying hard not to run into things while walking. Find her at anan_rahman7@yahoo.com