

Once upon a time, when I was at DU

A university is often referred to an alma mater, literally a kind and nurturing mother. Just like our relationships with our mothers, each student also has a unique relationship with their university. Often, this relationship is imbued with joys of discovery, learning, and of course growing up. For many others, it is a time of intense struggle, both financial or personal, bullying, and in terms of universities in South Asia, often marred with dirty politics. And yet, the institution and its legacy is always larger than the sum of its parts.

As an alumnus myself, the greatest take from university is a group of wonderful people I call friends, and some lifelong lessons but not the academic kind, as I scarcely remember anything from the complicated derivations and theories, and the horrors of exams. I am not alone in cherishing the other side of university life. For many, the time has yielded lifelong relationships, and beautiful memories. Here are a few, of the mischief and carefree nature of youth, a young man's quest for kodomo blooms for his beloved, and a student's journey to becoming a mother, all around the DU campus.

Compiled by **Sania Aiman**

MIDNIGHT MANGOES

We had just started living at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall then, fresh first year students, minds full of mischief. About 20 of us gentle folk were stuffed into the 121 Mass(Gono) Room meant for four, and I could probably name all of them accurately if I tried. But the following tale might leave them a bit embarrassed, so I won't!



On this particular night, after wrapping up our "Guest Room" activities, which often included long-winded "talks" from political seniors about things most young students don't care about, we suddenly had the urge to go roam around the campus.

After walking about randomly for a while, shouting tongue-in-cheek slogans about some "boro bhais," someone suddenly suggested we must go find a mango tree and get our hands on the sweet summer fruit. The closest mango tree we spotted happened to be just adjacent to the Shamsunnahar Hall, opposite to the TSC swimming pool, and inside the boundary walls of the Teachers' Bungalow. The only apparent hurdle – obviously closed gates of the compound!

But that was no real deterrent. Coming

to the base of the tree, we realised there were others smarter than us around, two of these legends were already on high up on the tree, picking off the choicest of mangoes. Even though our first reaction was to contemplate herding them off with shouts of "Stop! Thief," the two parties with the same goals came to an understanding. They would have free choice of mangoes first, and then lend us their prized make-shift fruit picker, which we would later return to them at their Hall.

A couple of us quickly climbed over the wall, ignoring the barbed wiring on top, and some others climbed up like monkeys trained for the job. The mangoes kept falling as the rest of us on the ground filled our bags. As holding a bag too, and standing in a position I felt was

optimum— to make a run for it in case the need arose... Suddenly, a gentleman in a T-shirt and half pants coughed to get our attention, and sombrely asked, "Who are you all?"

I replied in an equally brash tone, "We are from this campus! Who are you?" He said, "From the campus? Do you have ID cards with you?" Upon being assured of our identities, his manner became more amiable. Taking a bunch of keys out of his pocket, he opened the bungalow gate, and said, "Lock the gate once you are all done, but please do not be too loud, my father is a cardiac patient, and startling him at this hour could be dangerous."

At that moment, he felt like a kindred spirit. I took out a couple of mangoes from my bag, and handing those to him, said, "Bhai, please take these for bhabi." He seemed fairly pleased with the unfairly small portion of the mangoes stolen possibly from his own tree. "You must be new on campus, which is why you don't know which trees yield the best fruit here. Try the mangoes of the tree inside bungalow number 11, they are the sweetest around."

We never got around to vet his claim, within a short time all of us were assigned our own rooms and became former Mass Room roommates, and off to what felt like new adventures at TSC, Fuller Road, Library and the nameless yet beloved nooks of the campus. I too, have been off in search of my own adventures since.

Alal Ahmed

Session: 2009-2010

Department: Department of English

CONTINUED TO PAGE 10

HOROSCOPE



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Ask for help if needed. Jealous co-workers may attempt to sabotage your work. Don't turn down any invitations. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Don't lose your patience. Help elders with their work. Find ways to make more money. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Take extra care of your possessions when travelling. Invest in your own small business. Don't jump to conclusions. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Put your efforts into home improvement projects. Join humanitarian groups. Use your charm when dealing with new clients. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Opportunities for romance are high this week. Residential moves will be beneficial. Keep your calm amidst volatile situations. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Avoid lending or borrowing. Loved ones may not side with you. Avoid getting involved with co-workers. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Social activities will be enjoyable. Expect changes in your financial situation. Catch up on correspondence. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Don't overspend on entertainment. Children will be a handful. Keep your guard up with new contacts. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Watch out for insincere gestures of friendliness. Involvement in groups will be worthwhile. Pamper yourself. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Make changes that will enable you to advance financially. Go after your goals. Don't gossip. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Do more research before making any final decision. Find something constructive to do. Your innovative ideas will attract attention. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Don't use emotional blackmail. Make plans to travel. Don't let emotions interfere with work. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.