

Cooking during the great Bangladeshi summer

SHADYA NAHER SHEYAM

After the sun set, colours floated around the sky, before fading away. This served as my signal to make my way to the kitchen, which I took over when mother went to rest with high fever. It was still light outside when I trudged around the house, waiting for help that would not come.

It was not my first time, cooking. However, this was my first time cooking during the height of Bangladesh's summer.

I had no idea about the harshness of Bangladeshi summers until I entered the kitchen on the first day. The Dhaka heat was nothing new as I have been living in the capital for years. I went on frequent strolls through the streets while splashing water on my face during the hottest summer days.

However, the kitchen is a completely different story.

I entered the kitchen that day to prepare khichuri, which I had never made before. I could prepare the most complex vegetarian dishes with the silkiest cashew, tomato and yoghurt gravy, but I had never attempted the straightforward khichuri. The recipe is basic, but the fact that this dish must be prepared every single day at our household makes it seem pretty burdensome.

Up until that point, cooking had always been my greatest gesture of self-love. However, there I was, combining the moong dal and masoor dal while washing them as if they had just been dug out from under the ground. The warm water from the tap made me wonder how long

it would take to bring the dal to a boil if I just left it in the sink.

The khichuri prepared that day was delicious, or so was my mother's "biased" assessment. The heroes of the dish were chopped tomatoes and coriander leaves. However, soon I had lost interest in the food and was instead preoccupied with thoughts of a cold shower.

Even if the great Bangladeshi summer continues unabated throughout monsoon and autumn, the kitchen, with its open doorway, appears to be merciful on a rainy day. On those days, I spend more time in the kitchen but get little cooking done. When it rains, Bangladeshis like piyaju with a hot cup of milk tea. Rain has been successfully romanticised by the movies.

Even then, the kitchen still remains hot and intimidating. It is still draining to grind dal, trim onions, and fry them in hot oil. Movies omit that scene and instead portray the characters in love enjoying the rain and fried goodness.

At the end of the day, I am nothing but my sweat, making khichuri, and waiting for December.

Shadya Naher Sheyam attempts to live

life like Ashima from The Namesake. Talk to her about Mira Nair films at sadianaharsiam@gmail.com



PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

Is this a rant, or are you trauma dumping?

NAMREEN SHAIYAZ

One of the best indicators of how close two people are is their willingness to share their worries with each other. But have you ever been forced to listen to someone else ranting about their problems against your will?

When someone needs to vent, their first instinct is to turn

to a person they trust, or someone whose advice they value. Most of the time, however, they do not think whether the other person is able to help or not, and go for it without asking beforehand.

This is known as "trauma dumping", because they are dumping their trauma on someone else without considering how it may impact them. The distinguishing factor between trauma dumping and regular venting is that the former involves a listener who may not have

consented to it, which puts them in a highly uncomfortable position.

The person venting might feel the need to let their thoughts out, lest they fester and become worse. The problem arises when they end up oversharing to someone dealing with their own troubles. This can lead to the listener feeling as though their own feelings are not being considered.

Additionally, the advice given by the distracted listener, or lack thereof, paints them as being rude or uncaring, even if that was not their intention. If this continues, the listener may feel like they are simply a vessel for others' venting and not a person with their own feelings.

However, both sides of trauma dumping must be considered. The one who is venting may not be in a good headspace, and asking for permission may have slipped their

mind. Some people do have narcissistic tendencies, but it is usually just an honest mistake.

At the same time, the person who is listening may force themselves as it might feel rude to deny someone the opportunity to speak when they are not doing well. But constantly trying to lend an ear without prioritising your own boundaries keeps enabling this behaviour.

Trauma dumping is usually caused by a lack of transparency of these complex feelings. This is why it is more common between people who are not very close. Furthermore, it is hard to cultivate a relationship in the first place if it is so one-sided. Close friends can also become victims of this and then not stay close anymore, as trauma dumping puts strain on the relationship.

At the end of the day, an integral part of friendship is helping each other through their problems. However, that should not be practiced at the expense of your own feelings. The next time you want to rant, or listen to your friend, make sure to communicate your feelings and be considerate of each other's situations to avoid falling into this trap.

Namreen is sick and tired. Send a reminder that life goes on at namreen.shaiyaz@gmail.com

