THE DEFINITIVE YOUTH MAGAZINE

SHOUT

DHAKA THURSDAY JUNE 8, 2023, *JAISHTHA 25, 1430 BS* | A PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

DO YOU HAVE ANALYSIS PARALYSIS?
PG 3

PAN ASIAN CUISINE IS TAKING DHAKA BY STORM
PG 6

THE STRUGGLES WOMEN FACE ENTERING THEIR WORK LIVES

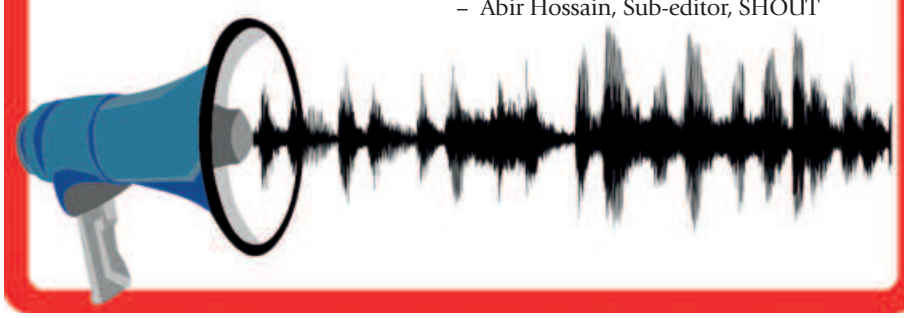
PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

EDITORIAL

The lead stories we cover here at SHOUT are all important and we work on these issues because we feel very strongly about them. More importantly, we strive to talk about them when we feel that the time is right. Some cover stories, however, are important to talk about no matter what time of the year it is. These subject matters are relevant all the time and this week's cover story is one of them.

But I worry whether or not any kind of progress really does come out of our effort. I worry because of the kind of things I see and read. It feels as though we are regressing, stripping ourselves bare of empathy, and sliding back into a place that doesn't feel safe. If we keep retracting our steps, can we even expect to be having discussions of progress? And if we cannot even begin to fathom having discussions about progress, we will continue to encroach further towards a world plagued by apathy and vilification. Unfortunately, the world is already incredibly distressing.

– Abir Hossain, Sub-editor, SHOUT



A	B
Give Me Everything Pitbull ft. Ne-Yo, Afrojack, Nayer	Smack That Akon ft. Eminem
I'll Keep Coming Low Roar	Hummingbird Metro Boomin, James Blake
Promiscuous Nelly Furtado	...Baby One More Time Britney Spears
MORE & MORE TWICE	MORE FAYDEE

Email us at shoutds@gmail.com with feedback, comments, and reader submissions within 500 words.

PLAYWATCH

GAMING

The lasting legacy of *The Legend of Zelda*

RAIAN ABEDIN

Puzzles in video games often work against us, creating a cryptic challenge that feels near impossible to overcome. Yet, with every puzzle comes a set of tools, almost like toys the player can utilise how they see fit. When I think of difficult puzzles and innovative tools that shape the mechanics of the game, I always think of *The Legend of Zelda*, a storied franchise that has, over the last nearly four decades, mixed adventure, action, platforming, complex dungeon-crawling, and so much more.

Tears of the Kingdom, the latest entry in the franchise, came out less than a month ago, and it has already garnered universal praise. With its fancy gameplay mechanics, a vast and dense world filled with places to explore, and open-ended puzzles that can be completed in many ways, the game has opened eyes to what is possible in this medium. And this isn't uncommon for the franchise. Nearly every game is released with a baffling level of polish and care that most contemporary franchises can't hope to live up to.

When I was ten years old, I played *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*, falling in love with not just the characters but the world of Hyrule at large. There, I discovered that my protagonist Link turns into a wolf, which led to a completely different style of gameplay and a very intriguing narrative experience overall.

I found myself wondering if other games in the franchise offered similar innovative mechanics, so I booted up whatever emulator would run the games I needed to run, and with every step of my journey I fell more and more in love. There was the magnificent world of *Ocarina of Time*, the colourful graphics that hid away a much darker story in *The Wind Waker*, and the rather overlooked *Skyward Sword*.

The most surprising out of all the games I'd played was perhaps *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask*. Surprising not just in terms of quality but also in design seeing how the entirety of the game takes place in three days of in-game time. Here, Link must find a way to stop the moon from colliding with the planet and destroying the land. In this race against time, you are also given a device that allows you to reverse time itself, allowing you to return to the starting point three days before the moon collides. This is an ingenious design choice, as with every failure, the player is encouraged to keep trying by reversing time over and over again until they figure a solution out.

Much of the philosophy behind the design of every *Zelda* game always tends to remain the same – unique gameplay mechanics and puzzles that are challenging but only in a way to encourage players to try harder. Though it may be tacky to say, the challenges I face in games like these often push me to look at my own actions more objectively – a lesson I have carried only thanks to these games. And though accessibility can sometimes be a problem with the *Zelda* franchise, if you're up for trying out emulators, there is an entire world full of strange obstacles, adventures on horseback, and sometimes a lot of crafting waiting just for you.

Are the *Gilmore Girls* a glorified portrayal of an unrealistic mother-daughter relationship?

NAWSHIN FLORA

If you are one of those people who watched *Gilmore Girls* as a teen and didn't immediately want a relationship like Lorelai and Rory, I would have a hard time believing you. A mother who doesn't restrain you from eating as much fast food as you want and indulges in movie marathons with you? I might sound overdramatic to some but she is almost every teenager's dream parent.

The unorthodox mother-daughter relationship between Lorelai and Rory Gilmore and their vibrant life in the town of Stars Hollow were what captivated viewers in the first place. Even after twenty years, the show's popularity hasn't waned a single bit. Rather, Rory and Lorelai Gilmore have procured a permanent residence in pop culture. From an exterior vantage point, Rory and Lorelai have an endearing dynamic. However, their relationship is dangling on the periphery of dysfunctionality most of the time, perfectly embodying a co-dependent relationship between a parent and child.

DESIGN: **SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM**

It was conveyed multiple times how Rory has had to disregard her own needs to help her mother out with her personal problems. We see this in season two when Lorelai breaks off her marriage to Max Medina without even telling Rory. Later, Rory had to confront Max on her own about the lingering awkwardness between them. Again, in season five when Luke breaks up with Lorelai, Rory leaves everything at Yale and runs to her mother. While this shows that Rory shares a great bond with her mother, a child should never feel compelled to become their parents' support system.

The friend-first and parent-second dynamic also led to an acute lack of boundaries between the two of them. In the show, we often see Lorelai pressurising Rory into telling her things that she would rather not and unnecessarily interjecting herself into Rory's love life. She also projects her own dreams and aspirations on Rory at times, like going to Harvard, and even getting mad when Rory applied to other colleges.

Despite trying her hardest to disassociate from her parents and their lifestyle, Lorelai ends up mirroring Emily Gilmore's disapproving nature. She is also similarly controlling like Emily, only on the other end of the spectrum. She wants Rory to be a certain way, seeing Rory as an extension of herself. As long as Rory plays her role of the "perfect child", Lorelai is pleased. But the moment Rory does something that does not align with her version of Rory, all hell breaks loose.

Many fans detest Rory's characterisation in the latter seasons. But given her upbringing, it was apparent that someone who was coddled and praised to the moon her entire life by her mother, grandparents, and everyone in her town would have a hard time accepting criticism. When she finally cut the umbilical cord and moved to Yale, she struggled to form her own identity. All the people pleasing since childhood and living in the fear of disappointing her mother led to her having a delayed rebellious teen phase and becoming a confused adult.

Gilmore Girls is a comfort show for many and for the right reasons. As viewers, we are made to envy the magical bond between Lorelai and Rory, but we should never idolise it as the perfect mother-daughter relationship.

Do you have analysis paralysis?

TAASEEN MOHAMMED ISLAM

Imagine you're out to eat with a bunch of friends. After everyone's arrived, the whole group starts ordering food. Everyone seems set on what they want to order, but when it's your turn, you just freeze. Even though you've been ruminating over the menu for a while now, you're torn about what to order. You start to panic, unsure of what to choose, and everybody impatiently waiting for you only adds fuel to the fire. Ultimately, you just give in and order the first thing you can read off the menu without giving it a second thought.

If that's something you've experienced, you may have analysis paralysis. Analysis paralysis is a form of overthinking where you spend considerable time researching all available options to ensure you make the best possible decision. But as a result of overanalysing the situation, it's easy to fall into an endless loop of rumination and ultimately become unable to decide. As a result of being stuck in a state of analysis paralysis, a person may feel anxiety, inability to focus, fatigue, and a rapid heart rate.

Overthinking and analysis paralysis can affect all decisions a person makes, from the most trivial to the most high-stakes ones. Thus, something as simple as choosing a drink to get or what to wear could become crippling issues to grasp. Ultimately analysis paralysis can wreak havoc on a person's performance academically, at work, or at any task that requires a bit of thought and effort.

ILLUSTRATION: **FATIMA JAHAN ENA**

You may be inclined to ask why a person would develop this condition. According to specialists, the roots of analysis paralysis and overthinking are more or less the same. So, a person who tends to overthink and overcomplicate matters will almost inevitably become paralysed by the weight of making decisions.

However, certain traits may influence people to be stuck in analysis paralysis. Perfectionists struggle to make choices as they fear they'll make a bad decision. On the other hand, people pleasers may find difficulty making choices that may not sit well with others, even if it's best for themselves. Additionally, people with very rigid, structured styles of thinking and those who lack self-esteem and confidence commonly fall victim to overthinking and analysis paralysis.

So, is there a way out of this? Well, if there's a will, there's a way. The first step in beating analysis paralysis is to recognise it. After identifying when you become paralyzed by overthinking, you can start to coax yourself out of it. It also helps to make small choices quickly so that you don't have the chance to overthink it. Even though it's easier said than done, getting to the bottom of your overthinking problem can also work wonders for analysis paralysis.

At the end of the day, it's important to remember that no decision is perfect, and it's ok to make mistakes. Through self-acceptance kindness, and trusting our instincts, we can try overcoming analysis paralysis and make confident, informed decisions with more ease.

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1. Clarke Ma, J. (2022). *What Is Analysis Paralysis? Verywell Mind.*
2. Raypole, C. (2020, April 27). *How to Beat 'Analysis Paralysis' and Make All the Decisions.*

Taaseen couldn't decide on a blurb to use, so he just wrote this. Give him ideas at taaseen.2001@gmail.com.

PHOTOS: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

The struggles women face entering their work lives

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TAZREEN JAHAN BARI

"Are you married?"

"No. Excuse me, but how is this question relevant?"

"There have been cases of teachers leaving their position because they got married and moved away. I need to know if you have already settled. I am sure you understand."

During my final job interview there, I had this conversation with the headmaster of a well-known English medium school and decided to say no. While I was privileged enough to risk saying no to a well-paid job, most women face these unwanted remarks day in and out, unable to leave their jobs. They bite their lips, brush it off, and go to work the next day.

On paper, it may appear that in today's professional environment, women have similar, if not the same, experience as men. The reality for young women entering the workforce however, looks somewhat different.

Women's appearance seems to be something everyone takes free reign to pass judgment on, completely disregarding professional decorum. You can't look too put together because you're just a silly girl obsessed with your appearance.

Tonima Rahman*, who started as newsroom editor for a well-known television channel in 2021, shares, "I had a female colleague who joined with me. She was good-looking, always well-dressed, and used makeup. Every time she made a mistake, this was always brought up. They mentioned it jokingly, saying she's more interested in doing her makeup and looking good than her work as if that somehow demeans her credibility as an employee."

On the flip side, you can't look too shabby, either. Especially in the corporate sector. Afsana Haque*, working as a junior officer at a financial institution, shares, "Corporate spheres are very critical of women. There's a lot of focus on external appearances. I get unwelcome comments regarding my lack of makeup or how I dress or do my hair. On the other hand, my male counterparts have come to work looking unkempt, and it's acceptable for them."

Regardless of which spectrum your looks belong to, if you are a woman, you will eventually get unwanted and uncomfortable glances from your male colleagues.

Ishrat Zahan Shuchi*, a lecturer at a private university, shares, "As a teacher who was a student just a few months ago, I often do not know how to deal with student-teacher problems. Most of my students are absolutely amazing. But then, some students would send suggestive messages to me on social media platforms or stare at my chest during classes. I am so dumbfounded I do not know what to do."

Ishrat continues, "I can brush it off for students, saying they are young and don't understand professionalism. But these are university students. Worse yet, university lecturers and far senior professors treat me like a woman first and a colleague second. For example, I once complained about not having a microphone in my class, and a senior faculty member said, 'You're a woman! Just pretend you're arguing with someone. Don't women talk loudly in general anyway?'"

The bar for women is set higher than for men in the professional field. So naturally, they are forced to overcompensate. Afsana continues, "People's expectations of me seem higher since I'm a woman. I must be polished, perfect, and knowledgeable, which is a lot to ask for someone who has just started. It's like I am not given enough time, and whenever I fail in any aspect, people are way harsher with me than I have seen them be with male colleagues."

A shift from the comfortable cocoon that is student life to work life comes with a realisation that you cannot make mistakes now, which can be overwhelming. When you are a woman entering the workforce, you learn that it's very much a man's world where you will be judged twice as hard for any mistake you make, making it even more overwhelming.

Sazia Khandaker*, working as a brand officer for a renowned multinational company, shares, "It took me six months to stop having panic attacks, learn my work, and adjust to the new environment and new expectations. I was lucky to have a manager who was very supportive and candid. But, unfortunately, I have seen that some women tend to become timid once faced with this adjustment period."

On top of the difficulties of navigating through the adjustment period, new recruits feel isolated in their workplace. Work-life can get very lonely with no one to talk to without having to calculate every word.

In specific male-dominated sectors, this isolation feels worse as the female employees feel like they're the odd ones out. Afsana explains such an experience saying, "Since I work in finance, it's very much a boy's club. Sometimes, I feel very bothered by male teammates who are more comfortable sharing knowledge amongst themselves. It feels isolating."

Social activities surrounding work are also organised in a way that often separates male and female employees. They don't get to socialise as much, so gendered bubbles are formed among the employees. Beyond the bubble, a different set of issues arises when women interact with their male co-workers. Anything goes, from unwanted personal questions to inappropriate jokes.

While the workplace culture is considered to be comparatively better at more prominent companies, more well-known organisations do have more inclusive policies at play. Company image plays a role in ensuring accountability, so more often than not, the guidelines are actually applied. However, this differs for lesser-known companies, and the phenomenon exists across job sectors.

Aroti Mukharjee* shares her experience of becoming a model in the Bangladeshi fashion scene,

"Unlike what most people believe, the higher-end fashion industry is very organised and gender-sensitive in my experience. I have worked for multiple brands and shows but faced no harassment or discrimination. This is not true for the lower end of this industry, though. Newcomers on this end often face unwanted remarks and questionable proposals that are borderline sexual harassment. When I was just starting off, I went for an interview, and the director asked me if I would show cleavage. He went as far as to place his hand on my chest. The director probably thought I would not say anything since I was new. I ended up filing a GD," she shared.

While there are too many instances of sexual harassment cases that remain unresolved, on a more positive note, a lot of smaller private companies are adopting a zero-tolerance for sexual harassment policy that they adhere to.

Zarina Tabassum*, who has recently started working as a Junior Software Engineer at a Private IT Firm, shares, "When I first joined, we were told that this company is very strict about their sexual harassment policy. There is only one reason for which an employee has been let go: a female employee placed a complaint. Not going to lie, it felt reassuring to hear that."

What policies cannot fix, however, is people's mentality. Despite the policies to ensure gender sensitivity, the culture in most workplaces remains patriarchal.

Anika Mehzabin Rifa*, an assistant manager at a well-known think tank, shares, "I was once threatened with an unfair demotion by an HR personnel at my office. When I asked for an explanation, he couldn't give one. So I ended up going to someone higher up for clarification. When the HR person was questioned regarding this, he denied the whole incident, making light of the situation, saying women always make a big deal out of nothing."

The problems with numbers are they often don't count what they cannot see. So, on the one hand, we have workplaces claiming zero percent gender disparity. But, on the other hand, problems plaguing young women in their professional lives are being dismissed as overreactions.

**Names have been changed upon request.*

Tazreen is waiting for the day when women feel safe enough to name names when they tell their stories. Find her at tazreenzahan@gmail.com

Pan Asian cuisine is taking Dhaka by storm

NAHIAN JAMAL JOYEETA

These days, the popularity of traditional *biryani*, the all-time favourite fast-food joints, and Bangla-Chineseis closely followed by the growing craze around Pan-Asian cuisine. If you ever fantasise about sushi boats or are familiar with midnight kitchen-runs for instant ramen, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

In the last few years, the culinary realm of Pan-Asia, featuring cuisines from countries like Japan, China, Thailand, South Korea and more, has opened up to Dhaka's food enthusiasts, conquering hearts.

Rice and fish have long been staple foods in Bangladesh, but we have come a long way from our homely *bhaat-mach-bhorta*. The confluence of Asian food cultures has changed the way many of us eat. Japanese restaurants and sushi bars are now the go-to places for both hangouts and fine dining. Be it deftly wrapped colourful sushi rolls with soy and wasabi, or freshly cooked seafood bentos topped with sesame dressing, we seem to have acquired a taste for uniqueness in our platters.

In addition to embracing sushi, we have now mastered the use of chopsticks. Long gone are our days of fumbling with those wooden sticks while attempting to snag a slick piece of sushi or dumplings. Globalisation has indeed exposed everyone to these practices a long time ago, but for a person like myself who has not travelled around the world so much, these small victories add to the fun of indulging in new food.

We cannot deny the influence of pop culture on our adoration of Pan Asian cuisine whether it is through Mukbang ASMRs, Ghibli animations, or Asian films and TV shows. When I see K-Drama characters preparing these irresistible and delicious looking foods with ease or indulging in them on screen, I would be lying if I said I didn't feel like running to the kitchen to cook myself some kimchi and ramen. Even if it takes us hours to find these rare ingredients or master the cooking methods, we are tempted to at least try and replicate them.

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

Popular restaurants like Kiyoshi and Yum Cha District have led the way in introducing us to the fusion of Pan Asian cuisine when it comes to the more high-end dining experience, although initially Tokyo Express and Umai popularised it about 8 years ago. These eateries not only provide a variety in the menus (Cantonese, Chinese, Thai, Japanese, etc), they also deliver their food in an aesthetically pleasing manner that adds to the experience. While it's debatable if the level of authenticity offered in these restaurants mirrors that of the parent countries, these restaurants have indeed played a significant role in revolutionising the way we view Pan-Asian cuisine.

The glories of Pan Asian cuisine have also taken over our street food and evening snacks. Momo carts have taken up a large chunk of street food real estate around the city. Momos aren't the only economical pan-Asian food being offered; dim sum, nanbans, and ramen bowls are also becoming more and more common in and outside households.

Pan Asian cuisine has infiltrated our culture, and we can't get enough of it, whether for a lavish night out or a hearty home-cooked meal. At the same time, we must not forget to take pleasure in the culinary diversity that already exists throughout Bangladesh, ours equally being one of the most diverse cuisines in Asia.

Spill the tea with Joyeeta on instagram.com/nahianjamaljoyeeta

The evolution of cooking shows

RUDAIBA MAHBUB

Cooking shows have been around for almost a century now. Their ever-changing nature has helped the genre evolve and expand over multiple mediums to stand the test of time.

At first, cooking shows were broadcast on radios and focused on helping homemakers with recipes rather than for entertainment purposes. It was 1946 when cooking shows made their transition to televisions. According to the Guinness World Records, British chef Philip Harben's *Cookery* was the first show to be broadcast on television. This was closely followed by the first American cooking show, *I Love to Eat*. Shows like these, with well-known chefs, were focused primarily on teaching how to cook certain dishes. Among these was also Julia Child's *The French Chef*, famously known for showing mistakes one might make in the kitchen.

The transition of cooking shows from being educational to a form of entertainment happened quickly throughout the late 20th century. As television became a more accessible commodity, shows became more concerned with their entertainment value and marketing. Simple demonstrations of cooking became outdated, and the hybrid of cooking and reality shows became the standard. These new shows often took the form of cooking competitions, such as *MasterChef*, a show that is still relevant and running in different parts of the world.

ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

With the widespread access to social media platforms across the globe, content related to cooking of all sorts has become a part of pop culture. With platforms like YouTube or TikTok, now you don't even have to be a chef to create your cooking-related content. This fact played out in a rather positive way during the 2020 pandemic. People confined within their homes turned to cooking and social media – often combining the two – and created content. These online contents ranged from commentary, Mukbangs, or even visual ASMR (autonomous sensory meridian response) content.

Food content now serves a variety of purposes. From instructional videos to people channelling their inner cooks, food content now brings people of all cultures together to share the simple pleasure they derive from consuming cooking content.

Speaking of ASMR, neither cooking nor eating rather, just watching food videos trigger a sense of pleasure in people. Content creators often go a step ahead in making their own studios at home, giving an aesthetically pleasing ambience to their videos, with wholesome settings or cute utensils. Surrounding noises and a lack of voiceover are a speciality in creating this ambience. Certain channels go beyond their home or studio setting and create a whole setup in an outdoor place, giving their videos a very rustic feel.

As it often happens online, every platform and each piece of content is ever-evolving and caters to the taste of the consumers. Following this pattern, even food content has adapted and evolved to match the trends.

What started with an early period of focusing mainly on instructional videos to help homemakers with their cooking has quickly transitioned and focused itself on entertainment with the widespread access to televisions. From there it was not long before the age of the internet and cooking videos adapted themselves to online content. One thing that remains constant is people's connection with food thus making this genre of shows or videos everlasting.

Watching cooking videos takes up a lot of Rudaiba's time. Send time management advice atrudaiba.rhymee@gmail.com

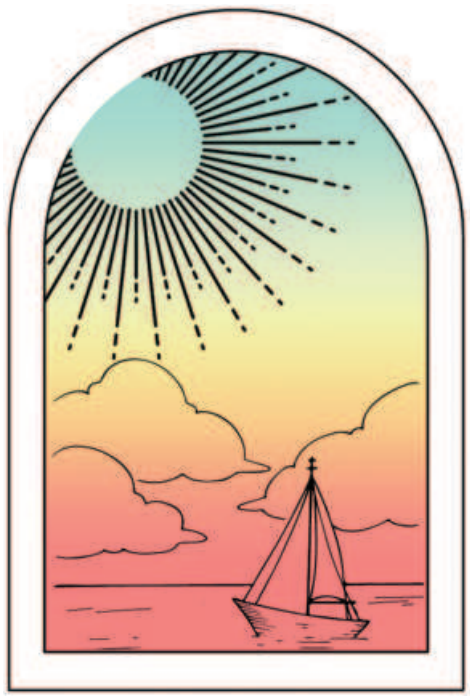

ILLUSTRATION: **SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM**

DROPLETS OF ETERNITY

NAWSHIN FLORA

Floundering, floundering, forever floundering
To take a peek at the droplets of eternity,
To find the ripples of truth,
And make a sonnet out of it.
But all I have done cumulated in vain.

It has taken a vow to remain distant from me.
It's dancing on the edge, like a teasing bee.
How can it not recognise my palpable agony?

Dissipated, my thoughts wander finally
taking refuge in sleep.
That night, I am visited by a shimmering voice.
The voice whirls around my mind mockingly
After it's done with its charade.
It comes to me whispering and finally
The formless voice takes a shape.

It leaves me feeling like a preposterous fool.
A fool who has been blindsided
By the sheer obsession with the ostentatious mystique.

The river of dreams, the mischief of clouds,
The crescent moon, the ocean waves and,
The moon skull.
Dandelions, tulips, the hundred colors of spring,
The strange sound of crushed bones, the tragic death of winter leaves.
Sunlight rippling out of the winter sun and emanating warmth, a lover's rushed heartbeat – a sonnet can be found in these.

The droplets of eternity are a maze.

And to embrace the ordinariness of life is the key to it.

BLURRY artwork

RAIAN ABEDIN

I swallow the dawn's sun as a shimmer and a blur fills my vision. It is beautiful – the day, I mean – even if blurrier than yesterday. I caress my hair the way the winds do when clouds appear up above. Today is not one of those days, there's a lack of moisture in the air. Even my hair reacts to it as every strand stands up alive and in a frenzy. I gaze outside, it only travels so far before all particles entwine in a blissful dance, I can see less today than yesterday. The way the light hits the nerves deep inside my sockets tells me one thing: it might be time.

My room, a shack I've made home with all things vivid, rests on the south-eastern side of the building. When the clear azure of the morning pulls the sun upward, it illuminates the whole space. But only at an angle. It's God's funny way of reminding me that all that is received is a gift that is broken. *Just like my eyes*. Another funny thought, but I brush it off. Now is no time for thinking.

I hear a call from a distant room, breakfast is served. Outside, children make little noises as they carry weights greater than their fragile bodies. Vehicles like sad animals screech away, as bones and metal push against each other and the emptiness of the road is replaced with the dreary rush of the day's call. The day calls, every day, and I listen to it and make a picture in my head. With each passing day, the details keep slipping me. I have started to forget how the sun looks as it strikes the uniforms that immure the children. They had a particular shine to them, right? My mind returns bleary thoughts, vague movements, jumbled noises, and sharp smells. I see no details. My eyesight is slipping away.

Shivering headaches have plagued me for as long as my memory runs. Another call for breakfast beckons me to go, but there is work for me to do as long as the sun shines in this angle and my hair stands up with this frenzy, and the sounds are this vivid. I bring my pencil and a sketchpad to a tiny balcony that reminds me of a chicken coop, and I begin to look at the world ahead. Not many colours splash on display, and pixelated people yell at other pixelated people to move, too much time has gone by. Yes, it certainly has.

If you had asked me to sketch out the view from my room one year ago, I would have returned a masterpiece to you. My lines now fumble over each other, I snap at the paper and fail to realise how easy it is to rely so much on eyes. I feel my vision blur up some more, as the page soaks the water in. If by tomorrow all of this goes dark, today I still have to prove to the world that I am looking.

Raian likes writing stories about people and the lives they lead.

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

GAZE

Peer and let the broken walkways
Burst at the seams while you watch on
And look away.
Shuddering in search of limerence and optimism
That is hidden light years away from now and forever.

PHOTOS BY: **RAGHEEB FAATIH MOAZZEM**
CURATED BY: **ORCHID CHAKMA**
WORDS BY: **ABIR HOSSAIN**