

The Treasure Hunt - Tasnim Chowdhury

Ring! Ring! School was over. The only homework I had was to write a paper on a country in Asia. That was easy. I was going to write about Bangladesh. Well, it seemed easy, but I hadn't been to Bangladesh for a long time.

I ran home from school and sat in my desk to write my paper, I couldn't think of what to write. I went outside for a walk and saw a piece of paper sticking out of the ground. I picked it up and saw it was a picture of a Bengal tiger with a number 1 (one) on the corner. The next thing that happened was beyond anyone's imagination.

I was in front of a real Bengal tiger. I was a little scared. I knew I had to have been in Bangladesh because there was a sign. The sign said "Sundarbans Forest: Be Friendly to Animals". I saw the tiger was sleeping where I noticed there were many trees.

I also remembered the story my parents used to tell me about the flag of Bangladesh. It's green with a big red circle in the middle. The green stands for the many trees in Bangladesh and the red stands for the blood that was lost for independence.

I looked down and saw another sheet of paper in the ground. It was a picture of a water lily which is "Shapla" in Bangla. It had a 2 (two) on the corner so I knew it was the second picture. When I was in front of a real water lily I was amazed. It was so pretty that there was no doubt why it was the national flower of Bangladesh. A water lily can be pink or white, but it always has a yellow center. It is like a daisy in water. Around the water lilies were lily pads.

I was looking around and something caught my eyes. In the water was a sheet of paper, I grabbed a stick and started to pull the paper toward me. I was thinking if it was the third clue? I was right; when I took the paper from the water I saw it was a picture of a bird. The 3 (Three) on the corner told me that I found the third clue. Next I saw myself looking at the tree; I looked up and saw the bird in the picture and it was a Magpie Robin which is "Doel" in Bangla. A Magpie Robin is the national bird of Bangladesh. It was so pretty and it was black and white and it was sitting on a thin branch. I had never seen one like this before. It was really hard to see the eyes because they were black and so were the beak and the head.

A leaf fell to the ground and I picked it up and saw there was a sheet of paper taped to the back, I took the paper and saw it was a picture of a jackfruit. It was the fourth clue because there was a 4 (Four) on the corner. Then, I was in front of a real jackfruit. In Bangla it is called *Kathal*. It was green and really big. I cut it from the tree and opened it and took the fruit out and ate it, it tasted sweet and juicy, so yummy.

I was looking around the tree and noticed there was a hole in the tree. I looked inside and saw the next clue. Clue #5 had a picture of a fish. The next thing I knew I was in front of a fisherman. I went to the fisherman and asked him what kind of fish he was catching? He said that he was catching "Hilsha" the national fish of Bangladesh. It was also locally called Ilish. I thought Ilish was a salt water fish but the fisherman said that Ilish fish was a salt water fish but they lay their eggs in sweet water. They normally come to lay their eggs in monsoon season which is late summer and

early fall. When they lay their eggs in sweet water rivers, fishermen catches them. I saw that as soon as the fisherman took the fish out of the water it died, because it is a deep water fish and as soon as it comes in contact with air the pressure difference causes instant dead. The fish was silver, scaly, and medium-sized.

I saw a sign nearby that said Padma River. Under the sign was a piece of paper. I picked it up and saw it was the picture of National Monument of Bangladesh. There was an unexpected word on the corner of the paper where there was normally written a number, instead it said "SURPRISE" in big bold letters. As soon as I read the letters I was at the National Monument of Bangladesh and it was so beautiful and located in Savar, Bangladesh and shaped like a triangle from far away. I asked the tour guide what was the reason of the National Monument? He said that it is a memorial that reminds us of the people who gave up their lives for us so we can be free. It had a big Bangladeshi flag on a white pole. It also has a reflecting pool right in front of the monument. And of course, there were trees in the background. I went to the monument and there was a saying engraved in the monument. I couldn't read it because it is in Bangla. As soon as I touched the monument I was in the same place, in front of my house.

I reached into my pocket and found all the clues. I went to my room and started writing my paper. I didn't know there was a treasure hunt in my front yard. It was a special experience. I learned a lot about my home country. I will never forget it.

বলাই বাহুল্য

ডঃ মঈনউদ্দীন সরকার

আলো ছিল আঁধার ছিল না
ঝড়ের মাঝে ভয়ের রেখা
রাতদিন ভর বাজছে বাঁশী
বনের পাশেই শূন্য মাঠ
তারই মাঝে নামে সং এর ঢল
ঘাটতি পুরণে কতই অলীক
সুশীল বালকের টিম
বিশ্বচরাচরে- একাকার হয়ে
বিজ্ঞ জনেরা সাপের ফনার
আহারে জীবন পল্লী পাড়ায়
শুদ্ধ বাতাস মনে ধরে নাকো
শ্রেষ্ঠ হয়েও গ্রুব তারা নহে

সৃষ্টির মাঝে ভ্রান্তিযুক্ত খেলা
সুবোধ মানব আশে'
কা কা ডাকে কাক -

এমনটা তো কখনো দেখিনা
সাহস সেথা একা ঘরে থাকা!
একবার হাসি পর'বারে ফাঁসি
অমিলের মেলা ভবের হাট-
বিধূরের চোখে অশ্রু জল
জন্ম দিচ্ছে চান্দু পথিক
দেখে পাখীর বাসায় ডিম
তাদের মাথায় ধরে
ভীতি সঞ্চার করে।
শহরের আশ জাগে
অশুদ্ধ বিষ ভোগে
মিটি মিটি তারা সম
দূর আকাশে দহে !
গ্রাসিছে নিত্য সত্য শুভ্র মেলা
হোক এর নিরসন !-
রাতদিন প্রতিফণ।

Two Translations from the Verses of Rubaiyat of Omar-Khayyam

- Rokeya Farooque, MD

১।
এবং যখন কাক ডাকা শুরু করে
যারা দাড়িয়ে থাকে
পাহাড় তখন চিৎকার ক'রে বলে
দরজা খুলে দাও
তুমি জান কত কম সময়
তোমাকে থাকতে হবে
এবং যখন একবার আমরা চলে যাব
আর কখনই আমরা ফিরে আসব না।

২।
ইমাম চলে গেছে সব গোলাপ নিয়ে
এবং জামশেদ তার পেয়ালা কোথায় রেখেছে
তা' কেউ জানে না।
কিন্তু এখন ও রুধী উপচিয়ে পড়ছে
আঙ্গুরের থোকা থেকে
এবং বাগান এখন পানিতে ভেসে যাচ্ছে।