

IN THE REAL WORLD

by Kaberi Dasgupta

"Tomorrow the earth will be destroyed."

To the average inhabitant of this planet, such a piece of news might be of interest. To a student, however, of greater concern would be an impending chemistry test. In fact, in the days preceding final exams, a student's world becomes constricted to include only pens, paper, books, and the occasional meal.

Thus on 19 December, it was with a sense of incredulity, something like that felt by returning astronauts, that my friends and I finished our last exam.

"So now what do we do?"

Feeling that celebration was in order, we decided to go to the Biology Club party. Unfortunately, however, it was crowded there, and we were all rather tired after having written a 7:00 to 10:00 P.M. exam. Thus we left after an hour's appearance.

"Let's go somewhere to eat something before we go home," suggested Susan, as we left the party. "I'm starving."

Consequently, after some deliberation, Susan, Kim, Kerry, Jan, and I headed for Dairy Queen. (These are not their real names, but my friends are paranoid people who refuse to reveal their true identities. They will make wonderful spies some day.)

Ice creams in hand, we sat down to discuss our Christmas plans, among other things. It was 11:40 P.M. Kerry suddenly glanced at the only other occupied table in the restaurant.

"That girl over there is wearing at me," declared Kerry, in surprise.

"Don't be silly," I retorted. "Why would she be wearing at you?"

"I don't know, but she is."

"Well, they do seem to be looking in our direction," observed Susan, describing the scene for my benefit, as I could not see what was happening from where I was sitting. "There's a girl over there with three or four guys. They look like high school kids."

I soon had no need for a commentary, however, as the girl came striding toward us. She leaned forward, stretching her arms out onto the table.

"***** you."

These were, if I remember correctly, her first words. Needless to say, we were a little bewildered.

"What's the matter?" asked Susan, in concern. (Her concern was not feigned; Susan is polite in all situations.)



"*****," was the reply.

I should note at this point that the girl with the extensive vocabulary was not attired in patched jeans, nor was she brandishing a knife.

The incongruity of her appearance and her manner contributed to our dumbfoundedness.

"What do you want?" demanded Kim, in tones that lacked the diplomacy of Susan's words. I noticed that Kim's fists were clenched, and Susan was whispering something to her, apparently trying to calm her down. Kerry, Jan, and I, however, were in a daze, looking in amazement from the strange girl to Susan and Kim.

"*****. How old are you, anyway?" This was the first indication that she could speak in full sentences.

"Twenty-one," replied Susan, obliging as always.

"***** you," declared the girl, pounding the table with her fists. Perhaps she thought that Susan was lying, though will not pretend to understand what was going on in the girl's mind. It is true, however, that Susan does not look her age; one might even have trouble believing that she is over fifteen.

Kim's blood pressure seemed to be rising with each repetition of the girl's favourite word. This time Kim stood in her seat, despite Susan's efforts to keep her down.

"I think you kids had better go home," she said, addressing both the girl and her male friends, who were giggling at the other end of the restaurant. "It's past your bedtime."

After Kim's speech, I was more or less convinced that this was the end. It hadn't been a bad life, though this was not quite the way in which I had expected it to end....

Meanwhile, Susan had pulled Kim back down into a sitting position.

"Look," began the girl, abandoning her favourite word, perhaps in surprise at Kim's outburst, "We're just trying to drink over there..."

DRINK. Maybe she was drunk. However I could not smell any alcohol on her breath. Maybe she was just insane.

"...and you're making too much noise."

"All right," said Susan, "we'll be quieter."

"*****," was the girl's response. "*****." This

time she jabbed Susan's cheek.

"Leave my friend alone," warned Kim.

The girl's knocked Kim's glasses across the restaurant.

The next moment, Kim, who had been sitting between a partition and Susan, had leaped out of her seat and onto the girl.

Pulling one another's hair, they reached the service counter where the Dairy Queen employees were working, oblivious to the situation. I was certain that this was some sort of nightmare: things like this were only supposed to happen in New York.

We heard a crash. Kim returned and resumed her seat.

"What happened?" asked Susan.

"I threw her into a garbage can," replied Kim, rubbing her head.

The girl had returned to her friends, who seemed to be enjoying the situation immensely. A few minutes

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later, two more girls joined them.

"Let's go," I suggested.

"We can't go yet," replied Kim.

"Oh."

Meanwhile, Jan and Kerry, like me, had re-acquired the faculty of speech.

"I'm shaking," said Kerry.

"No kidding," said Jan.

The girl, accompanied by the two new girls was coming towards us again, though somewhat unobtrusively.

"Not again," I thought.

This time, however, our observers remained a few feet away. Girl number one was explaining the situation to her friends.

"She was laughing at me, and then she punched me in the face," explained the girl, pointing at Kim.

"Her?" asked one of the friends, in surprise. (Kim, like the rest of us, did not look particularly threatening.)



UPSTAIRS

What's Happening?

PIZZA FEST
every Tuesday
Happy Hour all night

LADIES NIGHT
every Wednesday
win fist full of Loonies

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
every Thursday
Jan. 21 Steps Around the House

UPSTAIRS UPEI'S PARTY PLACE

892-4375

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