

*Translating Words to Images: Adaptation in Practice*

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Inspiring Excellence

**BRAC University**

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*Translating Words to Images: Adaptation in Practice*

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## Abstract

"A film critic asked me recently if you should read the book first and then see the movie, or see the movie and then read the book. I told him they don't have anything to do with each other. There are all kinds of movies which I would go to see that I would never, ever read the book of. Like the Jane Austen movies, or the E. M-Forster movies. There are so many books its way too late for me to read. I'm not going to read Jane Austen now, but I enjoy the movies. I try to keep up rather than go back" (qtd. in Strong ii).

This thesis stands between the theories of adaptation and my attempt at adapting multiple texts of different genres into a photo story. I am going to focus on the journey of the adaptation to understand the theories better and to understand the realistic concerns while adapting. In addition, I will look at why it is difficult to film Literature - the text with the potential to be adapted to a visual form often proves to be difficult. As primary materials, I have taken texts such as – *Book of Dhaka* edited by Arunava Sinha and Pushpita Alam, *Published in the streets of Dhaka: Collected poems* by Kaiser Haq, and a song “এই শহর আমার” by Shayan Chowdhury Arnob. Through practical adaptation I will demonstrate the changes which occur in the transition between media - between text and visuals. Movies have always been inspired by novels and there is no doubt that today the opposite is trending too. They both have a narrative and the capability of storytelling and hence mutually influence each other. In literature the reader imagines the setting and the characters themselves, but cinema provides the audience the characters in flesh and a defined space. This thesis is a unique experiment to comment on the practicality of adaptations which we see in movies or discuss in our classrooms, often theoretically.

## **Epigraph**

“In retrospect, the concerns that literature is not filmable because of the difference between the two media, seem to be completely unfounded” (Domonkos 4).

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Adaptation, one may argue, is a practical skill. One needs to do it in order to appreciate its practicality. My thesis, heavily inspired by the courses I have done in my Masters at BRAC University, is an attempt to try out adaptation, and to intervene in the debate of adaptation. It blurs the boundary between critical and creative stance of adaptation. After finishing a good novel I have always looked for its film adaptation so that I could compare the two. I always enjoyed pondering on the differences between the novel and its adapted film speculating the reasons that may have led the movie maker to their unique expressions. This was also my motivation for choosing such a thesis topic, however, with an additional twist. This thesis is a study on first hand adaptation. I read all the texts and expressed them through photos; therefore it is not a study of someone else's adaptation. And that is what makes this experiment special. This process of adaptation makes critics worldwide enthusiastic to discuss the extent to which an adaptation is faithful to the literary work it was adapted from. These issues have also been considered in this thesis.

In the beginning of the paper, I want to layout the ground by engaging with the idea of adaptation and its relationship with different media such as creative arts, films, and photography. An adaptation is a series of pictures, film, drama or even a play that has been adapted from a written work. Every adaptation, be it theatrical or cinematic, is an interpretation of the text. Starting from the early Greek times to Elizabethan times when it strengthened with the expansion of popular culture. Adaptation has always been there. As Deborah Cartmell argues "Among the earliest films were adaptations of literary works. If we take the year, 1900, for instance, we find



titles such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*, *The Stocking Scene* from “*Naughty Anthony*.””(2) However, adaptation theory came much later as an academic practice which was triggered by the changes in the academia when both post modernism and cultural studies became very important. Therefore, adaptation really stands between post modernism, cultural and film studies. George Bluestone was one of the first to talk about adaptation theory in his book *Novels into Film* which was first published in 1957. In this book Bluestone presents a thorough analysis of adaptation theory in terms of the techniques and limitations, of both novel and film when the first is translated into the latter medium. He examines a total of six adaptations to critically analyze the theories of adaptation.

Fidelity has always been the common debate of argument flowing from the early theorists to theorists till date. Fidelity in adaptation is said to be deliberate or the inevitable amendments of the source text. These changes could be deleting or adding scenes from the original text or even changing the intensity of parts of the story. Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* included one whole chapter in her book called “*Treating Adaptations as Adaptations*.” She argues that “an adaptation has its own aura” (12). She further argues “An adaptation’s double nature does not mean, however, proximity or fidelity to the adapted text should be the criterion of judgment or the focus of analysis.” (12). Hutcheon argues that one should go beyond fidelity to analyze an adaptation. There is more to an adaptation than just fidelity.

Wurth in his introductory chapter in *Between Page and Screen* refers to adaptation as a “the recreation of effects, like those of simultaneity—and how this affects the ways in which media can remediate each other, or rather, force each other to change” (19). When the idea of

forcing “each other to change” comes up, it is once again playing around fidelity. Wurth argues that these changes are natural because the media demands it. Therefore, he echoes what Hutcheon said that adaptations should not be limited to fidelity, changes are natural and one should get over it.

McFarlane in *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* echoes what Hutcheon already said which is to get over fidelity. One loses focus on the artistic value of an adaptation both as a complex process and a product because one cannot go beyond the issue of fidelity. He says the only superiority novels have over films are because of power. And one should be aware of all these issues before they judge an adaptation. “The insistence on fidelity has led to a suppression of potentially more rewarding approaches to the phenomenon of adaptation. It tends to ignore the idea of adaptation as an example of convergence among the arts, perhaps a desirable--even inevitable--process in a rich culture; it fails to take into serious account what may be transferred from novel to film as distinct from what will require more complex processes of adaptation; and it marginalizes those production determinants which have nothing to do with the novel but may be powerfully influential upon the film. Awareness of such issues would be more useful than those many accounts of how films 'reduce' great novels.”(10)

Critics of film adaption have always focused on the quality of adaptation rather than the interesting issues of it. Literature has general history of priority over cinema and hence has always been spoken in favor of whereas; adaptation has always been accused of being a bad or good copy of it. Adaptation should be thought as a process, as a product. And they are

aesthetically independent and equally important. Therefore, adaptations should not be compared to its source text or media. The purpose of this paper is to explore this debate in depth.

Most papers on adaptation have probably dealt with adaptations that already exist that too of novels that are renowned. As mentioned above my thesis includes my personal adaptation. I did not want to rely on anyone else's understanding of an adaptation as I wanted to experience the "intermedial" (Wurth 3) translation and the process myself. And hence, I wanted to adapt the texts that I chose to photo stories myself. The texts I chose have not been adapted before, so I had a fresh mindset, which is also another reason why I chose them. I did not want to have a preconceived perception on them.

A photo story as the name gives away is a set of photographs, not necessarily sequential, used to tell a story. A photo story adaption therefore, means a series of photographs adapted from a written work. Today, adaptation is considered an art in itself.

Photographs can be universally identified by anyone and everyone throughout the world, no matter what their native language is. When photography was invented it was known as the perfect medium for documentation as it replicated the subject matter. Over time with technological advancement and the mechanical ability to reproduce photographs brought about the idea of images – what an image represents. And that is when a photograph became an image meaning it is not what is in the photograph but rather the emotions or perceptions it evokes. One can read a photograph of a book as a book, but one can also read a photograph of a book as a representation of knowledge. Unfortunately, that makes a photograph more vulnerable as it

opens the window to multiple interpretations making it very easy to misinterpret; unless it is accompanied with a brief caption or description, then the picture has an added value of meaning and interpretation. Keeping all these factors in mind, before I move onto adaptations I want to talk a about photography as a form of art.

### **1.1: Photography as an Art.**

It is essential to begin by defining why or how the above form of media is considered to be a form of art and not just a representation of one's mind or reality. The problem is we can capture what exists physically, or photograph what can be made physically exist. That is why it is understandable that some people do not recognize photography as a form of art. But, as a photographer it is my duty to convince you. Some forms of photography can be acknowledged as art. Art influences photography immensely too.

If one looks closely at landscapes and portraits one might understand that it has been influenced by paintings. As photographers, we often setup groups of people physically mimicking paintings, including the interesting facial expressions and moods. Therefore, photography, although digitally produced and reproduced these days are not mindless. Thoughts have been clearly put into capturing it, and both technical and artistic skills come out evidently in the final product. The most stunning images be it landscape or portraits have clearly not been just 'clicked,' they have been thought about over and over again before pressing the shutter. Producing images also take a lot of time and efforts - to get the correct lighting, hours are spent getting the imagined set up correctly. This process ensures a relationship with the subject which

becomes evident in the final result. The skills involved in taking these images speak to the viewer directly and provoke a reaction in them which is nothing less than a reaction evoked by a piece of art.

## **1.2: Photography as Adaptation**

Paintings first gave humans an idea of drawing the reality, from which photography eventually came about as it could capture the reality. James Monaco in *How to Read a Film* said that recording photographic images was first announced to the world in 1839 (39). Within a few years after the announcement thousands of portrait galleries came into being. He also said that the development of photography took place during 1840s to the 1870s (40). Simultaneously, the theory of painting also developed to a more sophisticated expression and was liberated from the idea of making portraits. Paintings could then focus on other genres like landscapes.

As photography developed, more genres of photography came into being with the process of advancement very recently that photo stories became popular. A photo story requires enormous personal skills as it involves a completely different setting. Today, photo stories are well known genres of entry for every photography competition, both nationally and internationally. There is a different category for artists who want to send photo stories apart from single shot entries for photographers. If one considers the current affairs of Bangladesh for example Rohingyas – a three day photography exhibition called 'Refugees: Displaced Rohingyas' was being held at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy which ended on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2017. These exhibitions are basically photo stories displayed by renowned

photographers of our country, in this case the photography exhibition, was being organized by the Prothom Alo, featuring photographs taken by the daily's photojournalists of the Rohingya crisis. TV obviously is a common form of media from which the audience gets updates on these issues, but the increasing number of exhibitions presenting photo stories to attempt to tell the stories of these victims, should be taken into consideration. These changes should be noted.

Photo stories are becoming popular right in front of our eyes, the previous changes or developments of photography are matters we only read about, photo stories on the other hand, are something we are witnessing.

Photography as adaptation theoretically is still rather unexplored, so I shall be borrowing from theories of film adaptation. Both photography and videography use the same medium – camera. Hence, they share many similar properties for which the theories are applicable for both too. Photography has no time dimension and is only a two dimensional, static space in its mode of expression. Therefore, as one is still and another is in motion there are certain differences too. However, they both possess certain qualities which mean film directors control the meaning or effect of scenes in film much in the same way photographers do. The camera is a tool that enables the manipulation of images and vision. Also the photographic image as its output, allows the viewer's point of view as opposed to the static pattern of a viewer's series of visuals in cinematography. Images are also open to incorporating a variety of scale and perspective.

This thesis is unconventional and a very new way of writing one, it really blurs the lines between creative and critical writing. However, that enabled me to produce something very original. In the post modern time achieving something original is almost impossible, but this is a

new perspective to originality itself. This paper deals with adaptation at a practical level. Theories have been talking about adaptation for a while now; people have been studying adaptation in classrooms too, as I have done myself. I recall doing two courses where I already have presented my paper about adaptation, both of which I have attempted in doing the adaptation practically, and both of which have been critically acclaimed. In spring 2016 I first across adaptations in Eng 625: Translation and the Study of Literature. This course was entirely about translation – between not languages alone but also media. This is when I first tried adaptation practically. Last semester, Summer 2017, I enrolled for ENG 617: Literature and Popular Media. This course also partially focused about the interconnection between literature and media such as film and TV. I tried practical adaptation for the second time; which boosted my confidence and gave me the push to choose such a topic for my thesis. We do not always get the opportunity to practice it, this is a way of pursuing adaptation it practically, and the theories and the experiences that I have talked about in this paper are based on practicality. I believe it is a very important way of engaging with the theory. This topic was chosen to get the first hand experience of adaptation and also to intervene into the theories of adaptation.

Urban and urbanite life are very important elements of cultural studies and sociology because increasingly we belong to that space. Therefore, we cannot talk about photography without talking about its cultural aspects. That being said, the growing attempt to understand Dhaka city has given me more reasons to have chosen Dhaka as the main context while choosing the texts from which I adapted. Adapting these particular stories, song and poems were nothing but a further attempt to understand Dhaka city. A photo story gives one the flexibility to bring all of these aforementioned genres together in one space and to present a new story.

“The Princess and the Father” is the short story I selected from *The Book of Dhaka*. This book consists of short stories about Dhaka city which the tagline of the book claims itself “A city in short fiction.” This short story was originally written in Bangla “Babar Swapno O ek Rajkonne” by Bipradas Barua, which first appeared in *Ittefaq* in 1994. This book is already in an adapted form, as the original stories were written in Bangla. Being an adaptation already, the book has its losses and gains obviously. The book has been edited by Arunava Sinha and Pushpita Alam. “The Princess and the Father” has been translated by Mohammad Shafiqul Islam. “এই শহর আমার” (Ei Shohor Amar) was the song I picked because of its context and the beautiful imagery it gives. This song was both sang and composed by Shayan Chowdhury Arnob. Both the poems that I adapted from were from the book *Published in the Streets of Dhaka*, all the poems inside this book has been written by Kaiser Haq. The poems I have chosen do not talk about Dhaka city; however, they are culturally very relevant.

Chapters 2 to 4 are basically my interpretations of the original texts. These chapters have been broken down into multiple subchapters. Each chapter consists of three sections – an introduction or background to the original text along with my Photo story adaptation from it. Next section includes my adaptation experience which is reflection of my physical experience and the obstacles I dealt it while adapting in addition to the technical advantages and disadvantages in terms of the camera and equipments. The last section is my theoretical understanding of the adaptation. The rest of chapters are basically the conclusion of my thesis.



The following adaptations were performed under a certain time frame, especially the first one as it involved performers. One entire afternoon was used to stage and perform this adaptation. The performers are my friends who volunteered (see Appendix A) to act for this photo story and adaptation without any monetary remuneration. The latter three adaptations did not require any models; they were usual scenarios of Dhaka city or sets created indoors. Some of the photos were taken from my archive; however, all of the photos regardless of the date have been captured by me (see Appendix B). These adaptations required use of certain technical equipments the list of which can be found in Appendix D.

## Chapter 2: Photo story adaptation of the story “The Princess and the Father”

Choosing a story in itself can make one realize the limitations of the medium to be adapted in. I had to choose a scene from a story that I thought could be adaptable. Of course time plays a huge role in this, all stories can be adapted eventually somewhat but I obviously had a time frame. Other than that, settings of many stories from the book, *The Book of Dhaka* were of slums or similar to that. One or two were about gangsters, or about wars none of these settings could be achieved in this short span of time realistically speaking, nor did I have so many actors to play those roles. The models I have chosen who volunteered are all working people; and were only free on weekends for a few hours. So this adaptation was a one-take and one-day shooting.

The staging of this photo story required only one performance space (a park). In addition, a few props and actors were also needed as I adapted a few scenes from the short story. The scenes I chose involved a teenage boy, two teenage girls and an old man. I had to do my friend’s makeup to make him appear as an old man, as I did not have an elderly actor available. None of them are professional actors, they are all my friends who helped me out for this thesis, nor am I a professional makeup artist. Keeping all these factors in mind let’s move onto the scene that was adapted first.

I have chosen the first few scenes from this story, which is basically from page 91 to 93. The story has been included in Appendix C for reference. Bokul is a teenager who skates regularly in Ramna park. The description of weather given was foggy. Bokul ,was wearing a hoodie blue, white and black in color bought from Bongobazar as per the story. A description of

Bokul's face is also given in this scene. He was going to Ramna park like any other day. There he usually meets more skaters there, and two of his crushes which he refers to as 'princesses' in his mind. He usually has flirtatious interactions with these two girls. These two girls have responded to his flirting and also have showed their houses to him. Soon he could hear their laughing voices in the background as they were leaving, so he could not see them anymore.

Bokul notices an overweight old man with thick beard sitting outside struggling. Bokul thinks that this man is drunk at first glance but eventually realizes that the man is just old and sick when Bokul sees the man struggling to get up to walk. Bokul goes to him thinking he should help the man but gets distracted by the reappearance of those two girls. However, they leave again and so Bokul looks at the man again who addresses him as 'khokha,' a word only his mother uses to address him. The man asks Bokul to help him reach home which is not far according to the old man. Bokul unties his skates and helps the man up and they walk.

The photo story consists of ten images which is an interpretation and my understanding of the scene discussed above. Let us look at the photo story now:

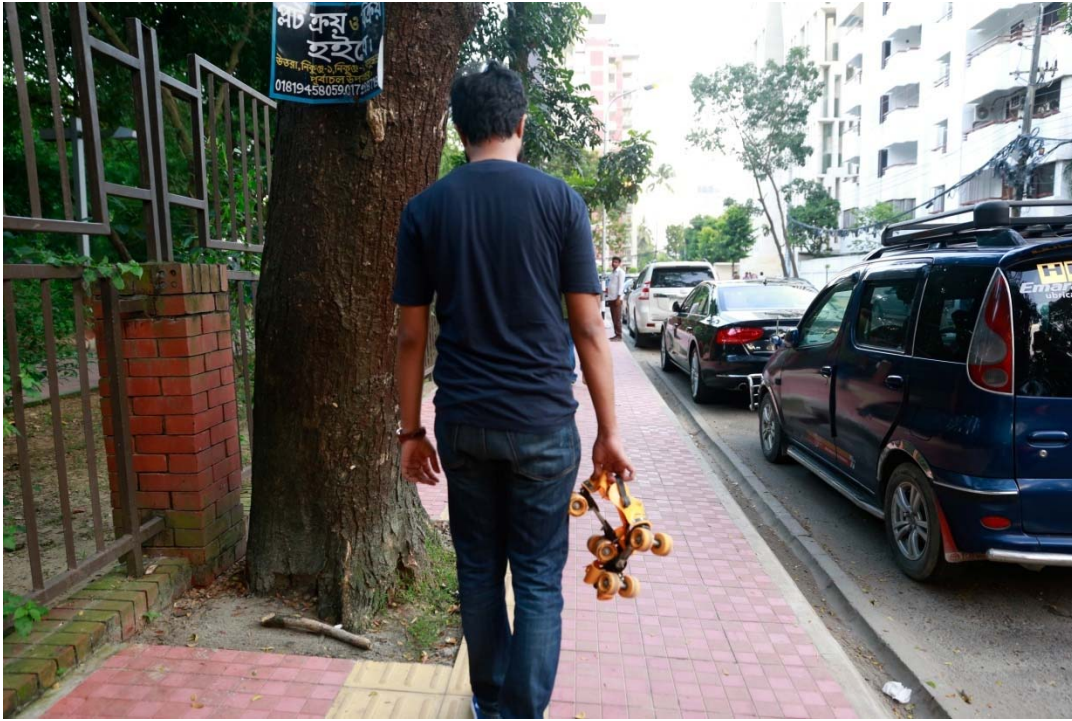


Image number 1: Samiha, Maisha. *A walk to remember*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 2: Samiha, Maisha. *In conversation*. 2017. Dhaka.





Image number 3: Samiha, Maisha. *Exchanging numbers*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 4: Samiha, Maisha. *Of giggles and laughs*. 2017. Dhaka.



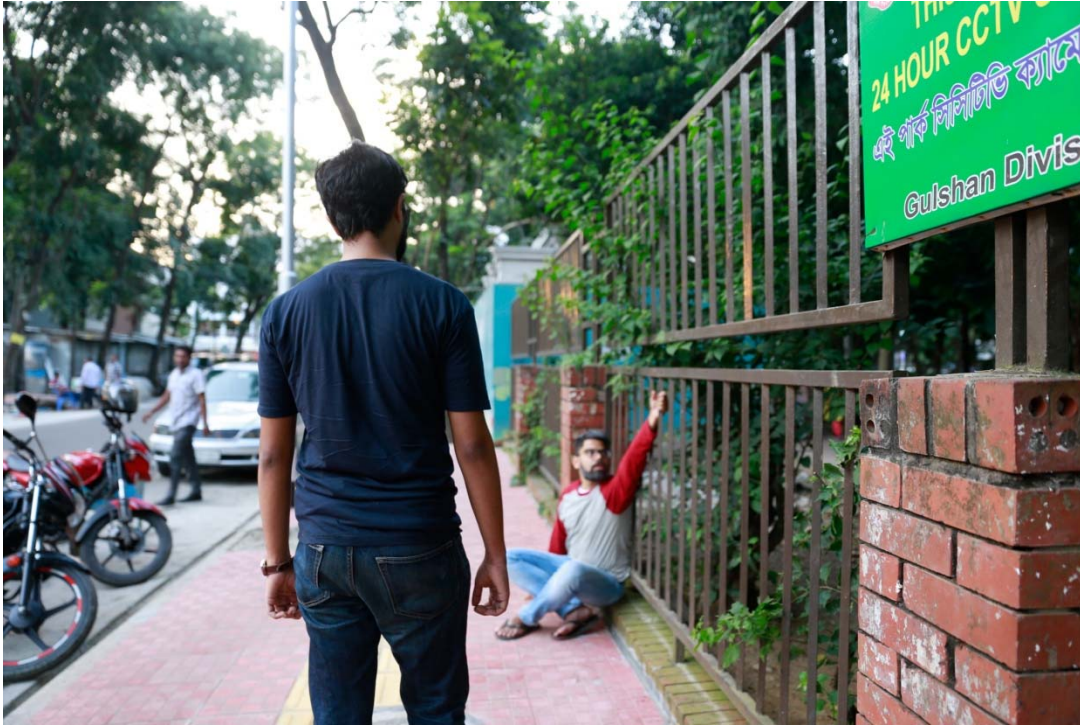


Image number 5: Samiha, Maisha. *The helpless*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 6: Samiha, Maisha. *The distraction*. 2017. Dhaka.





Image number 7: Samiha, Maisha. *In need*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 8: Samiha, Maisha. *Generation gap*. 2017. Dhaka.





Image number 9: Samiha, Maisha. *Lend your hand*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 10: Samiha, Maisha. *Humanity*. 2017. Dhaka.



## Chapter 2.1: My Adaptation experience

It is not possible to directly adapt something without scripting it at first. As mentioned earlier pictures and motion pictures possess similar characteristics, correspondingly directors and photographers have similar tasks too. So I started with the basics, I read the entire story again, took a pen and paper to write down the scenes serially in correspondence to the story. Like a director I also had to script the story before staging it. I also had to list out props and characters.

In the story, the description tells us it was winter and foggy, unfortunately I shot these during summer in September, clearly there was no fog.

The book said Bokul's face was "was long and gaunt, and his sharp nose and jaw protruded like a famine victim's." Like the famous saying goes beggars cannot be choosers, I had to make do with the actors I had in hand, fitting the description was not possible. I tried to compensate with makeup. My friend who played Bokul's role, luckily had a long face but not a gaunt one. Unfortunately, I did not know how to make him appear like that with makeup. That is something I did not have any choice over, so I had to let it go.

As mentioned before, the shots were taken in summer, therefore, no one agreed to wear winter clothes in the scorching heat. The description of Bokul wearing a hoodie did not happen in real. In the story we read that Bokul was confused about which route to take to the park, he thinks of two routes and eventually ends up choosing the first option. The viewer, like the other characters in the photo story, cannot read a character's inner thoughts or intentions as they might on the text, if this was a movie the character could have thought out loud. Unfortunately, in a

photo story it is almost impossible to show what the character is thinking about through photos and what he decides on eventually. At least in this case, it was not possible. I skipped that bit reluctantly, and showed that he was walking towards the park with his skates. My friend did not know how to skate, so if one notices closely through the photos there is not a single photograph where we can see he is skating, I just implied he was skating through the photos. Now that was a technical advantage, I was able to suggest through photos and their angles as opposed to a story where it's all in one's imagination. It is important to notice the complexity of the camera work from an analytical point of view. The camera movement was very important to track away from the direction of Bokul's skates. It is very important to know such camera techniques because as a photographer one is a story teller and sometimes one is not actually telling it but suggesting it or implying it. One is basically playing with the audience and their perception. Kau mentions the same thing in his online article "Film, Adaptation, Photograph," "His stylistic insistence has a story to tell. But it is to be found in his way of doing things, in the very camera movement and its complexity. It is aesthetics as rhetoric."

The story also mentions that there are usually five or six other skaters there, I could only get hold of four people to play the main roles, so the passive characters were ignored. Also the scene does not talk about those skaters, it's only mentioned in the story that other skaters are whipping off caps of other skaters, also this is mentioned in past tense. In present only the two girls are interacting with Bokul. Their flirtatious interactions are something I felt well adapted in my photo story and following with the part where the girls show him their houses.

In the story it is mentioned that Bokul could hear the echo of the princesses' laughter and that they were gone from his vision. In image number 4, we can see that these two incidents have been merged into one photo - the girls laughing in the foreground, and Bokul walking away in the opposite direction. Ideally, this situation could have easily been shown as the girls being in the background laughing in a bokeh<sup>1</sup> as stated in the story and while Bokul seemed to have skated past them. As a photographer, playing with subjects is very interesting so I took the turned this scene around, and put the girls up front giggling which I thought was the main element of this scene. The girls were the focus in this scene and not Bokul. By using the right techniques I put them in front and Bokul was bokeh. These little camera tricks make storytelling more fun.

The old man was played by another friend – who was not fat in real life, it was not possible to present him as an overweight person in the photo story. However, I did use makeup to make him look old.



Image number 11: Samiha, Maisha. *Appearances*. 2017. Dhaka.

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<sup>1</sup> The effect of blurriness in the areas of an image that fall outside a photograph's depth of field. (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/bokeh>)

Above is a portrait of my friend after his makeup was done. I felt that he did look slightly older than his real age, but I could not manage to make him look ill. As we can see he was not wearing a coat as described in the story. Therefore, he had no buttons to open. The story also says that the old man was moving to the other side of the street and trying to reach the door of a shop to keep his balance. This photo story was shot in Gulshan 2 park, and not in Ramna. And there were no shops nearby. In my photo story, we can see the old man sitting outside the park and reaching the bars of the park trying to get up (image number 5). Even though it is written differently in the story it means the same – the old man’s struggle. The angle was from Bokul’s back so we can see that he is looking at the old man.

The girls come in again this time in bokeh (image number 6), so the focus is on Bokul. Leaving just the right amount of space in the frame I have shown how his focus is on the girls for a few seconds instead of the man. This is the only scene where all of them share one frame. Although in the story, the man is struggling to breathe and was not looking at the girls. I showed it differently for the visual impact. We can see both Bokul and the man looking at the girls. Bokul is obviously distracted by the girls, but the old man is surprised as to why Bokul is not helping him so he is also looking at the girls to see what Bokul is looking at. I thought it would be more dramatic. This photo is followed by image number 7, the one where the old man is reaching for help. In the story, this is where the man calls him ‘khokha<sup>2</sup>’ and asks Bokul to take him home. The next shots are as told in the story - Bokul takes off his skates and offers his hand to help the man stand up. And they walk, and the photo story ends there.

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<sup>2</sup> Young male child, also a term of endearment. (*The Book of Dhaka*)

## Chapter 2.2: Adaptation theory

The discussion on obstacles posed by the adaptation thus reinforces our dispute over the comparison between texts and visuals. Adaptation is the translation of a novel so that it fits a new dimension, a new target or a new audience. (Alqadi 1)

This thesis was intentionally done to present the various aspects of the adaption process, more specifically the process of adaptation of different forms of text to photo stories. Needless to say this adaptation was done in a particular sequence. It was a process where the photographer, myself, had to look for photographic equivalents for the textual elements. The initial task was to choose a story which later was adapted to a photo story. We can use Linda Hutcheon's 5 W's and H (What? Who? Why? How? Where? When?) framework (1) from the introductory chapter of her book *A Theory of Adaptation* to understand this process of adaptation better. This thesis was obviously written to fulfill the requirements of my M.A degree. I mention this because it is important to understand Hutcheon's process of engagement. So according to the Hutcheon's framework of we can understand why this adaptation was done.

The story chosen was obviously from a particular time, era and context. Therefore, the story is also of a particular context. The text is obviously a medium which has unconstrained imagination as opposed to the photo story. The photo story, however, has its own charm. This adaptation process involves tools; tools used as a medium to adapt, in my case – my camera and lenses. As mentioned earlier, a photo story is a set of sequential photos – photos that tell a story. It plays in the sphere of direct perception.

A photo story uses motionless photographs to present a story which does trigger the imagination of the audience but it is predetermined. One can read the short story “The Princess and The Father” in any way they want. The text has no restriction of time, imagination or context. On the other hand, one has to add value to the faces of the characters, perceive the roles they are playing. One also has to understand the story within the series of photos. Therefore, when it comes to visual both the photographer and audience has to engage themselves in the story. They are both equally responsible.

Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* argues that all forms of adaptation are somewhat a process of translation. Every medium has its advantage and its limitations in terms of expressing its narrative. The one who adapts in this case, myself, the photographer, I had my own language. A photo story has no sound or audio making it very difficult to show dialogues that were written in a story. I had to find show it visually. Adaptation also means to accept the limitation of your chosen medium and to explore its strength in presenting the narrative. For example, we read in the story that the old man addresses Bokul as ‘khokha’ and asks Bokul to help him stand up and go home. There were a few dialogues back and fourth there. In the photo story, I showed the old man reaching his hand out for Bokul, I thought it was simplest way to show that this man needs help and cannot get up on his own.

This brings us to what Hutcheon said next which is: interpretation. Interpretation is the most difficult part I suppose. There is no theory as of how one will perceive a story and how one will present it, it varies from one to another, making every interpretation very interesting.

Everyone borrows the idea, plot or characters from the original text and interprets it differently. In image 6 as discussed before the old man does not look at the girls. He was just struggling to breathe, but I interpreted it differently. I imagined the characters to share the frame together with the men looking at the girls. The nature of interpretation allows the artist to interpret and present a story on the basis of their comprehension of it.

We also need to focus on the types of adaptation to understand it better. Ladislav Výmola in his thesis “Film adaptations of selected English dystopian novels - An analysis of chosen aspects of tight and loose approaches to film adaptations of novels” categorizes adaptation into three kinds; transposition, commentary and analogy. By transposition he means any adaptation which is plainly brought from the text to the screen. Commentary is where parts of the original material are changed by deliberate intention. The last one, analogy is the one where the adaptation is completely different piece of art because it completely departed from the literary text.

This photo story takes parts of the original material. The adaptation does not change the story at all. The only intentional changes I have made are where the medium demanded it. For example, when Bokul is in dilemma about which route to take to Ramna Park, I was not able to express that dilemma through images which is a limitation of the medium, rather than a liberty I took as an artist. Therefore, if one focuses on this adaptation one can understand that this adaptation follows the theory of commentary, as only some parts of the original material were changed and not everything.

### Chapter 3: Photo story adaptation of the song “এই শহর আমার”

I made the most interesting discovery while adapting this song of Shayan Chowdhury Arnob. I realized that the adaptation process and the final can differ a lot if you read something just for the sake of adapting it as opposed to something you have been reading or listening to for a while now. I feel you tend to be more faithful if you have read the story for the first time only when you decided to adapt it. As a part of my thesis I decided I will be looking into short stories to adapt, I did not have anything on my mind so I was read multiple ones from *The Book of Dhaka* until I bumped into “The Princess and the Father” and thought it would be interesting and feasible to adapt it. Therefore, I was only reading it because I had to adapt the story. And I had no existing idea of the story or an image in my head. However, “এই শহর আমার ” is a song I have been hearing for almost a year now, and not something I listened to for adapting but have been listening to it for pleasure. Being a photographer I have constantly imagined the daily Dhaka city chaos in addition to its colorful cultural bits. That being said, the following photo story is not exactly like what the song states, I took complete liberty to paint a picture of Dhaka city through my eyes – the picture I imagined every time I heard this song, the emotions it evoked when I heard this song, the elements that make up Dhaka city and its people.

Before we talk about the adaptation experience and look into the adapted final product we need to look into what the song is about. The song is nothing but a beautiful representation of our city, which is great, but since the song is short and it was written particularly to be a background score of the movie *Aynabaji*, it does miss out on some amusing aspects of Dhaka. My adaptation is completely unfaithful to the image the song gives if we consider the lyrics of the song but



extremely faithful to its aura. And by that I mean the photo story does not follow every line of the song literally, but it captures the main essence of the song which is Dhaka city and its people. And that is the image I felt Arnob is trying to give in his song as he describes the mundane yet happening Dhaka city. The chorus of the song “এই শহর আমার এই মানুষ আমার (Ei shohor amar, Ei manush amar)” is in itself the gist of the song. Now that we have a better understanding of the song, we can proceed to the photo story.

As I already mentioned before this song has evoked a burst of emotions and imageries every time I heard it, naturally the photo story had to be lengthy. This photo story is not sequential. It is telling a story but in no particular order. The story is of Dhaka and its people just like Arnob described in his song. Let us now look into it:



Image number 12: Samiha, Maisha. *I believe I can fly*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 13: Samiha, Maisha. *Their daily chores*. 2012. Dhaka.



Image number 14: Samiha, Maisha. *Curved dreams*. 2011. Dhaka.





Image number 15: Samiha, Maisha. *Weaving dreams*. 2017. Dhaka



Image number 16: Samiha, Maisha. *Jamming*. 2017. Dhaka.





Image number 17: Samiha, Maisha. *Stars of the street*. 2011. Dhaka.

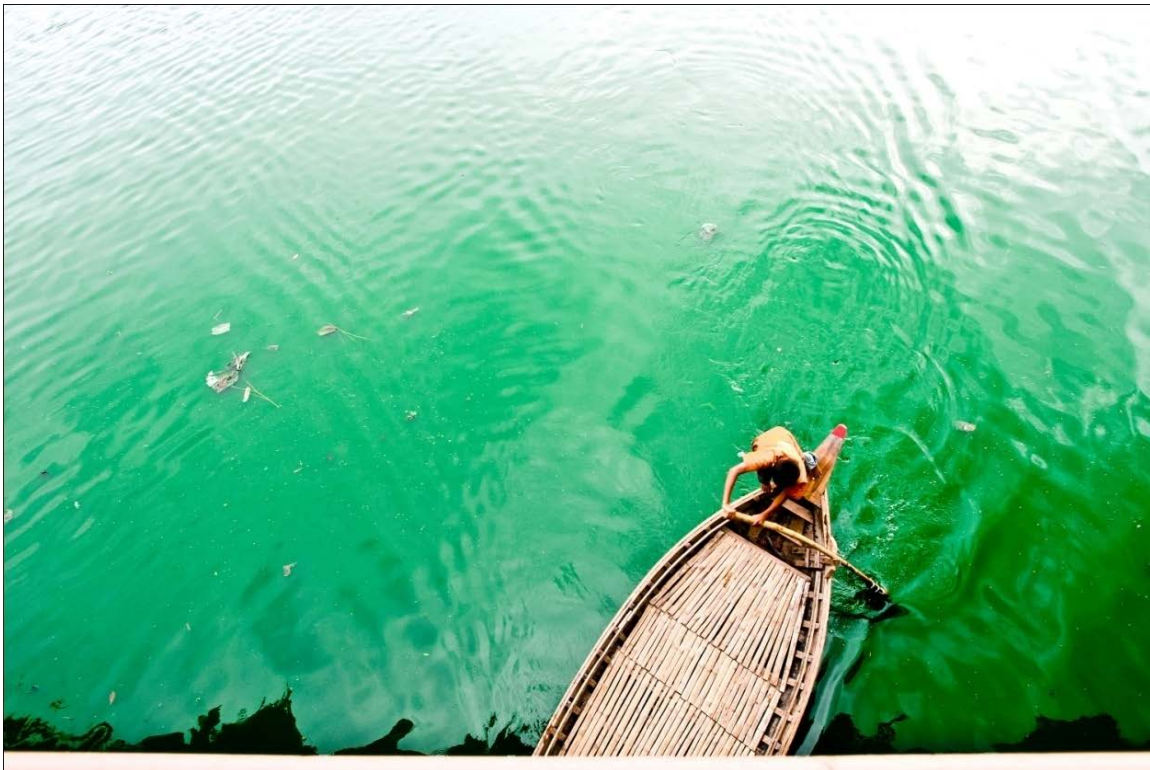


Image number 18: Samiha, Maisha. *The lonely paddler*. 2011. Dhaka.





Image number 19: Samiha, Maisha. *Everydayness*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 20: Samiha, Maisha. *Happiness is contagious*. 2011. Dhaka.



Image number 21: Samiha, Maisha. *They build, we live.* 2010. Dhaka.



Image number 22: Samiha, Maisha. *Tête-à-tête.* 2010. Dhaka.





Image number: 23. Samiha, Maisha. *Hanging on.* 2011. Dhaka.



Image number: 24. Samiha, Maisha. *Constructing our dreams.* 2017. Dhaka.



Image number: 25. Samiha, Maisha. *Floating explorers*. 2012. Dhaka.

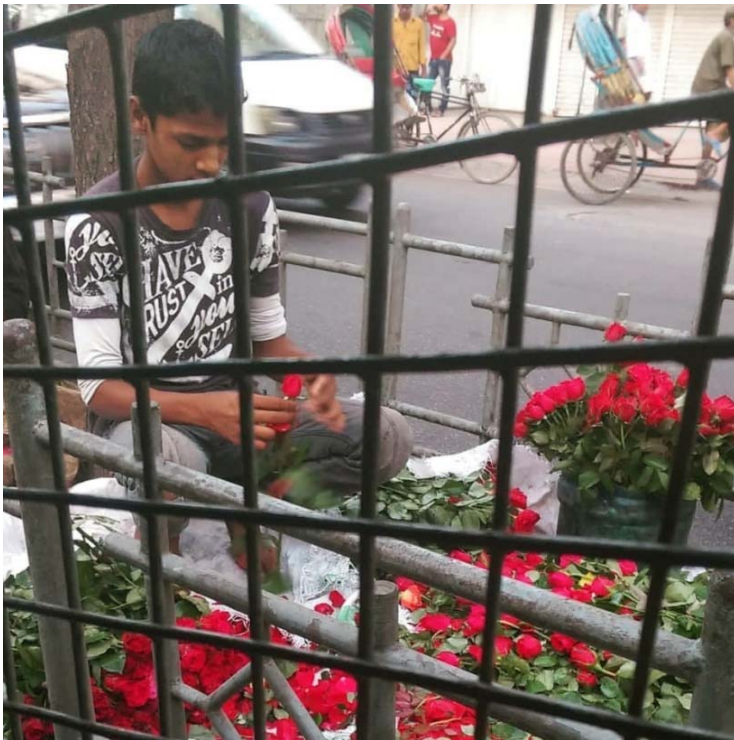


Image number: 26. Samiha, Maisha. *Bed of roses*. 2017. Dhaka.





Image number: 27. Samiha, Maisha. *Behind the bars*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number 28: Samiha, Maisha. *Of festives and colors*. 2012. Dhaka.



Image number: 29. Samiha, Maisha. *Afternoon play*. 2016. Dhaka.



Image number: 30. Samiha, Maisha. *Apex*. 2012. Dhaka.

### Chapter 3.1: My Adaptation experience

This adaptation was completely different for me. The characteristics of a story are such that includes detailed description of everything and I feel that sometimes it can block your imagination; it kind of gives a clear picture of the scene. One is still free to imagine, I am not claiming that you cannot imagine at all but it is difficult with so much description – the mind tends to picture what we read. However, in a song it is not too descriptive, there is only one line for one thought and the absence of detailed description allows more imagination I feel.

The staging of this photo story required an infinite performance space which is the entire Dhaka city. Honestly, I would not call it a performance space in this case as this photo story was more of documentation than staging a story with props and actors. This was more about seeing Dhaka city as it is through my lenses. It also gave me more freedom in terms of shooting, I did not have a fixed timeline because I did not have to set up props or shoot according to the time constraints of the actors. This made me more relaxed if not anything, and I was able to be more creative, I was really able to explore my potential as a photographer. The previous photo story was more conceptual as the stage was technically pre-determined. Even if I was completely faithful to the song meaning if I would have adapted line by line of the song it still would not have much constrain as the stage would still be Dhaka city.

For this adaptation, I kept my camera with me all time; I shot whenever I was stuck in traffic in my car, or when I was walking on the footpaths, sometimes even from the bars inside a auto rickshaw. I needed to express Dhaka city as it is, so it was an everyday task for a while. I

still feel the images are not enough to portray the real image of Dhaka city. However, few images have been taken from my archive. I thought they represent Dhaka well and just because they have been shot at an earlier date does not make those photos any less appropriate. No time frame can be set to represent your own city, you see images everyday while passing by and all of them show us the real Dhaka. Unfortunately not everything could be captured.

The song starts with the description of crows at dawn:

“তুমি যদি বল

ভোরের বেগার কাক”

(Tumi jodi bolo

Bhorer belar kaak) which I could not visualize. The song only made me imagine beautiful birds chirping and flying high above the sky and that is exactly what I ended up capturing (image number 11).

“রাত জাগা হাইওয়ে এ র,

ঘুমিয়ে পরা কোন এক ডাইভার□”

(Raat jaga highway-er

Ghumiye pora kono ek driver..) These lines talk about highway drivers who sleep out of tiredness have to drive till late at night. I feel Dhaka is better represented by rickshaws and traffic jam. I took multiple shots of rickshaws and of them in traffic (image number 16 and 17). I also took a photograph of two rickshaw pullers in conversation which is a usual site during the day, while they take breaks between their rides (image number 22).

The previous lines of the song follow with the chorus of the song :

“এই শহর আমার

এই মানুষ আমার’

(Ei shohor amar

Ei manush amar) is clearly the emphasis of this song. Even though I took a lot of liberty in adapting this song I kept my focus on the song did – city and the ordinary people. All the images of my photo story serves this purpose.

“তুমি শুনতে কি পাও

ভীরের মাঝে কেউ”

(Tumi shunte ki pao

bhirer majhe keu.)

These lines in fact pose a question to the listeners. The singer is asking if we can an individual’s voice amongst the crowded city. In image number 15 we see a photo of garments workers doing their daily chores – sewing fabrics. I pictured this scenario every time I heard these lines. A factory is always crowded with its workers, so much that it is very easy to overlook an individual’s voice or say. We can never focus on one person’s demand or voice; we hear them only when it is collective. It is very easy to miss an individual’s cry, we are reactionless till it is a loud collective cry.

“মতিঝিলের শাপলা ফুলে পানি ,

আর এক স্কুল বালিকা

সবুজ ড্রেস খানি□”

(Moti-jhiler shapla fule paani,

Ar ek school balika

Sobuj dress khani )

Our parliament is a place the ordinary people visit almost daily, many people spend time there. Couples go on dates there; many people even go to jog there. Therefore, instead of actually capturing the ‘shapla ful’ in Motijheel I captured something I felt holds more cultural value to the ordinary people of this city (image number 30). The latter lines of the paragraph talk about schools girl dressed in green uniform which is a beautiful imagery, but Arnob does not talk about the street children of this city. The children who play and sing on the roads of Dhaka city – something you can never miss if you are walking or even sitting in your car. Image number 20, 25 and 29 are a reflection of those children.

“ঘরস্থানের ফকির ,  
মাজারে মাজারে যে কি...□”  
(Goroshthane fokir  
majare majare je ki... )

These lines give an imagery of beggars in and around graveyards, but the reality is beggars are unfortunately not limited to graveyards, they are everywhere. And beggars are not the only helpless people in this city. There is more to this city than just the beggars. They are not the only ones struggling. Every day is a struggle for the ordinary people. The beggars struggle to beg under the scorching heat to feed their families. And the ordinary people struggle in other ways. Labors struggle running after locus buses to reach work on time and people on the streets are rushing to reach the mosque on time (image number 23). Both male and female construction workers struggle while they work day and night to eat three meals a day. People who sell fruits, flowers (image number 26) and many other daily necessities also struggle to meet their daily



sales target – a target set by themselves in order to provide for themselves and their families. Labors who fall asleep on the road while taking a break from work, because they have no other place to nap (image number 14). I took photos of the ordinary people who make Dhaka what it is

The song returns to its chorus again at the end and similarly I included more images of the ordinary people and children in their daily activities to put more emphasis on the chorus of the song, such as image number 28, 27, 18, 19 and a few others.

### **Chapter 3.2: Adaptation theory**

The song “এই শহর আমার” (Ei Shohor Amar) is a unique and beautiful song. And I left its uniqueness untouched. I adapted the essence of the song and not the song itself. This form of adaptation is also known as intersecting. The photo story is interesting on its own not because of its quality but because of how it appears. “This vast and airy mode of borrowing finds its opposite in that attitude toward adaptation I choose to call intersecting. Here the uniqueness of the original text is preserved to such an extent that it is intentionally left unassimilated in adaptation” (Andrew 30). This method of adaptation refuses to adapt and rather present the distinctiveness of the original work, allowing it its own life in the adaptation. As mentioned above, this adaptation was completely different from my previous one. And we cannot move past its relationship with culture. Culture is patterns of behavior and lifestyle and it also defines who we are and these are affected by media in the application of photo journalism, film, documentaries or photography. So these images are being produced in our minds and filtered by us.

Photography can capture the essence and characteristics of different cultures, it also helps us to see the elements which we may have missed, even though we may have been living there forever. Not only is it a communication tool between people of different cultures, it also creates an entry point between different cultures enabling us to experience a culture with depth. Cultural values and practices are reflected when one culture is documented. So photography becomes a means of understanding human nature and it then, helps to learn about different ways of life by capturing day to day activities.

Jim Kane, in an article, talks about photography and culture, which elaborates my aforementioned point. Kane says: "When I think of travel and photography it's difficult to separate the two. For me photography helps to capture and transmit the sense of place that makes the destination special. Through the personalities of its people, a country comes alive, both in person and in photography." (Kane 1)

Stuart Hall's theory of Encoding and Decoding communication model suggests that the audience attach their own meaning from texts. Therefore, suggesting that the audience plays a vital role in this communication because they actively read these media texts and do not just accept them passively. The audience interprets the media in accordance to their own experiences and cultural background, they are "both the 'source' and the 'receiver'" (92). Hall argues that there are three ways of going about this – dominant reading where the creator wants the audience to understand and respond accordingly, an oppositional reading where the audience completely



dismisses the message and a negotiated reading where the audience interprets the text in their own particular way and probably not how the creator intended it to be.

Stuart Hall has essentially stated that meaning is encoded by the creator and then decoded by the audience. These encoded messages may be decoded to mean something else by the audience. This basically means that the sender encodes meaning through their messages according to their views and experiences but the messages that are decoded by the audience according to their own views and experiences.

When Arnob composed the “এই শহর আমার ” (Ei Shohor Amar) he had something in mind, something I am not aware of. He experienced Dhaka very differently than I did. He encoded it accordingly to his experience of Dhaka or maybe even how he imagines Dhaka to be. I decoded the song according to my experiences of Dhaka. I presented the mundane Dhaka through my eyes as I have seen it every day. And this is exactly what Hall tried to say. He also added that this creates a miscommunication between the sender and the receiver as the receiver is clueless of the views that originated this media in the first place. The receiver only understands and attaches meaning through his or her experiences. As an audience to this song I have read it negotiated manner. I have understood what Arnob tried to encode, but I have attached my own meaning to it.

**Chapter 4: Photo story adaptation of the poems “Eleven Serious Warnings” and “On the Blink”**

Choosing a poem turned out to be the most difficult part of this entire thesis journey, but definitely not more difficult than adapting the poem. Poems are thoughts or ideas in fragments, they have their own structure and form – making it even more difficult to be expressed through still photos. The first poem I chose is “Eleven serious Warnings.” I adapted the first paragraph of the poem only. This paragraph is about love and how love entraps souls following marriage. Initially I thought love, being the universal language of human should be easy to express, but it was not because of the choice of the words in the poem. As a photographer, visualizing images in your head after reading anything is a common chore, but not everything is executable – by that I mean not everything can be shown through images. Also expressing an idea is not enough it has to make sense as well. The paragraph I have chosen from the poem “Eleven Serious Warnings” is only a few lines; therefore I have quoted it here directly:

“Don’t  
 fall in love  
 love is bottomless  
 you’ll fall right through  
 and out into hate despair frustration  
 or something worse  
 like marriage.”  
 (Haq 108)

The first paragraph is basically a warning to people that if you fall in love there is no way out, you end up in a serious commitment like marriage. Following is the series of photos I captured to adapt this poem, like the story this adaptation is sequential:



Image number: 31. Samiha, Maisha. *Infinite*. 2017. Dhaka.



Image number: 32. Samiha, Maisha. *The beginning or the end?* 2011. Dhaka.

Choosing the second poem was even more difficult, as I could not easily visualize most of the poems. Poems have certain structure, and finding its equivalent in a different medium or language is extremely difficult. I have managed to adapt the first few lines of the poem “On the Blink” and am quoting it here:

“My wall clock has stopped  
With hour hand at 8  
And minute hand at 36  
Or 37, depending  
On where you’re looking from.”  
(Haq 16)

These lines I felt create an illusion of the minute hand of the clock striking between 36<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> minute. The poem says that the clock stopped worked at that time, but Haq also says that the minute hand stopped at 36<sup>th</sup> minute or 37<sup>th</sup> minute adding that one can determine the accurate minute depending on where he or she is standing at. Haq is basically saying that the time will differ from people standing at different angles, some will see the minute hand to be stuck at 36 while others standing at a different point will see it at 37.

This adaptation consists of only one photograph and it has been digitally manipulated to some extent to present the visual illusion – the illusion between the 36<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> minute:



Image number: 33. Samiha, Maisha. *Every minute counts*. 2017. Dhaka.

### **Chapter 4.1: My Adaptation experiences**

The difference between adapting a story and poem is the story has so much straightforward description of an event it is not hard to understand and express it. Poems on the hand, first need to be decoded, understanding it takes a lot of time. As mentioned before adapting poems were the most difficult part of this thesis, and it took a lot of time in setting up the scene.

Let us first discuss Haq’s “Eleven Serious Warnings.” Love is the most universal and yet the most abstract emotion when it comes to describing it – making it more difficult to be shown through images. The first photo (image number 31) is a macro<sup>3</sup> and an abstract shot. Macros are captured from an extreme close-up distance. There is just a gap of a few fingers from the subject to the lenses. This distance enables the image on the sensor plane to be equivalent to life size if not greater. This is usually achieved with special photographic lenses known as macro lenses.

This paragraph is not a love story which could be shown; rather it is talking about love in general – love as an emotion. If the poem talked characters being in love it would have been easier to show.

In the first abstract image, we can see two colors prominently one being pink and the other being blue. The pink one represents a female and the blue one, a male. As the stereotypical as it might be, I had no other choice of colors but these two to make it obvious and show the presence of both the genders. We can also see how the image is like a maze and we cannot see where it ends in its frame. That is exactly what the poem suggests; Haq said that “love is bottomless.” ‘Bottomless’ was the keyword in that line, and I felt it was important to show the depth of the bottomlessness. I did not have a macro lens, so I tried something I did not do before – a reverse macro<sup>4</sup>. I used my canon prime lens<sup>5</sup> 50mm f/1.2 to achieve it. However, it did not

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<sup>3</sup> A form of photography in which the subject of the photograph is usually very small or is a very small detail of a larger object. The resultant Photograph is larger than life size. (<http://www.photokonnexion.com/definition-macro-photography-close-up-photography-photomacrography-macrography/>)

<sup>4</sup> The reverse lens technique involves turning the lens around so that the rear element points outwards, and the front element faces the camera body. (<https://digital-photography-school.com/reverse-lens-macro-close-up-photography-lesson-3/>)

<sup>5</sup> A prime lens is one that has just one focal length only. (<https://digital-photography-school.com/prime-lenses-an-introduction/>)

effect the results, the results surprised me pleasantly. I wanted an abstract image as such and it turned out to be better than my imagination.

This image is basically a shot of a pink and blue dupatta<sup>6</sup> in a plain white background. It is actually as simple as that but the shot was not. Getting used to this new technique was difficult, not only that this shot itself was more technically difficult than the previous ones in the previous chapters. Visually what a macro does is, it focuses on a very specific point of the subject and blurs everything else out, it does have a very similar effect like bokeh, but bokeh does not give larger than life illusions. Bokeh requires only shallow depth of field, it does not need the photographer to be at an extreme close distance to the subject. In the first image we can see the focus is on the pink part which is on the first plane of the image. Everything behind it is in blur.

In the second image (image number 32), we can see a photograph of flowers decorated on a wedding stage and a couple blurred in the background technically known as bokeh. Love is a beautiful emotion and often lovers express it by exchanging flowers. However, what love does in the background is trap one into commitment – a commitment as serious as marriage just as Haq said. This is why I used this photo because of its angle. I thought this is the best way to show it. Combining both the images we do get an idea of what Haq is saying – love is limitless and before you realize it, you are in it for a lifetime.

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<sup>6</sup> A long wide scarf often worn draped over the head or across the shoulders, chiefly by women in South Asia. (<https://www.thefreedictionary.com/dupattas>)



The adaptation of “On the Blink” although appears to be a single image, is actually two images superimposed<sup>7</sup>. The advantage of being a photographer of this era is the benefits of post production and mechanical reproduction. Following are the images I took originally for this adaptation:



Image number: 34. Samiha, Maisha. 8:36pm. 2017. Dhaka.

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<sup>7</sup> If one image is superimposed on another, it is put on top of it so that you can see the second image through it. (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/superimpose>)



Image number: 35. Samiha, Maisha. 8:37pm. 2017. Dhaka.

In image number 34 the photo shows the minute hand is at the 36<sup>th</sup> minute and in image number 35 the minute hand is at 37. I took two images separately and both in monochrome. I purposely chose to take them in monochrome to give the images a timeless feel. If we remember the poem said that the clock stopped working and the time was stuck at 8:36 or 37 – that is why I chose this hue to present this standstill moment.

I took the batteries out and fixed the clock to the respective timings, once at the 36<sup>th</sup> minute and then at the 37<sup>th</sup> minute to capture these images. After transferring these images to the computer, I opened them in Adobe Photoshop, using different layers I imposed one photo on

another to achieve the final adapted photo (image number 33.) And that is how the image is actually a two-in-one. I used this technique to give the illusion Haq talks about – whether the minute hand is stuck at 36 or 37. Therefore, accordingly in the adaptation we can see, there are two minute hands one pointing at the 36<sup>th</sup> minute another at the 37<sup>th</sup>.

## **Chapter 4.2: Adaptation theories**

“Poetry is what gets lost in translation” (Frost, 1959) Robert Frost was right about one thing translating poetry is the most difficult task ever. It has been argued over and over again that it is quite impossible to replace textual signifiers by visual ones. On top of that adapting a poem is far more complicated because of the characteristics of a poem. A translation between these two genres has probably not been touched at all – poems and photography. When translating a poem into another language, or any text we always consider what is translatable and untranslatable. Similarly, we also have to consider the elements in the narrative that are adaptable and inadaptible.

In “Translation of Poetry” Bruno Osimo talks about the different approaches to translate poetry. In his fifth point he talks about translatability and untranslatability, he says one has to analyze the proto text to understand the prominent elements of the source text. He adds that these dominant elements are then projected into the targeted language and that one must foresee the understandable elements which are textually incomprehensible along with the partially understandable ones. If we bring all these issues into our context we can understand my adaptations of the poems better. The only difference is the translation is between mediums

instead of languages. This is exactly how I approached the poems when adapting them. “When drafting the translated text, absolute precedence is given to the main dominant; once rendered, the translator tries to make room for the other dominants too, according to the hierarchy set during analysis” (Osimo). The key words in the first poem were bottomless love and being trapped in commitment. These were the dominant elements in the source text. I tried to stay as close to the meaning as possible, but have used my artistic techniques to gracefully adapt the poem. While playing with translatable and untranslatable elements, the humor Haq has used in his poem when he talks about “you’ll fall right through,” is something that got lost. However, that is something every translator learns to accept during the process of translation.

The first few lines of the second poem “On the Blink” basically mean that what you see depends on the perspective. Similarly, the angle of the photograph is also the photographer’s perception. The previous poem and this poem were very different experiences in terms of translatability and untranslatability. The first one had more untranslatable elements as a result it took me a while to come up with ideas on how to adapt it. As mentioned earlier, showing abstract emotions through images are very difficult. On the other hand, this poem gave an image of more than one visual in one visual and it was a tangible imagery unlike the previous one.

Up until the latter half of twentieth century, translation theory simply was categorized by “word-for-word” and “sense-for-sense” (Munday 19). The difference between these two are one is literally translating word by word and the latter is translating the idea or the main sense of the source text. If one recalls that Hutcheon argued that adaptation is a form of translation, one can

connect the dots above. A poem,, I believe cannot translated word by word, it will not make sense in the targeted language, similarly it will not also make any sense in the targeted medium.

For my adaptations I have only chosen few lines of both the poems as opposed to the story or the song because of the untranslatability of poems making them the most difficult genre to adapt from. Unless a poem is very pictorial it is very difficult to bring it to life through images. Therefore, I did a “sense-for-sense” (Munday 19) translation in other words adaptation, on the above poems.

## Chapter 5: Adaptation an Art in itself

We know that in the recent times adaptation has been known to be a form of art itself. Can an adaptation be actually rated or evaluated? I feel an adapted work should be analyzed not in correspondence to its original work but to its own characteristics. For example, when I was adapting the above texts in this thesis I kept in mind that they have to make sense without the text and that one should not need to read the book to understand the adaptation. I also showed it to a few others to see if they could grasp what the story is, or what the gist is. The adaptation should be a story in itself, of course it is a borrowed one, but one should also be able to understand the story from the adaptation without prior reading the original texts. I feel if one cannot understand the key points of the story from the adaptation then the adaptation would have no meaning without its original text. And not everyone will read the story before watching the movie. The cinema has to be good on its own just as Hutcheon said "second without being secondary."

Edvin Vestergaard Kau in his article "Film, Adaptation, Photograph" talks about a movie adaptation from a photograph. The movie is called "The Wind" and is based on a photo called "Three Women." He says the fact that it was based on a photograph was mentioned at the end in the credits. And at the beginning there is only a text saying "Three Women." Kau suggests that maybe the film has taken the structure as a whole from the photo, the plot or both for inspiration. But the camera works show evidently how time and space has been used to give the adaptation its own life.

“In principle it is the same mechanism which is at work in any film, and specifically in any worthwhile cinematic adaptation of material from other arts. This is what an(y) adaptation does, or should do: bringing genuine interpretations (reflections, etc. ...) and original views on matters of interest to the screen - and not just illustrations of classical novels, drama, etc.” (Kau)

Therefore, what I am trying to say is that an adaptation is a work of art itself, it is not secondary because the idea was adapted from another piece of work. An adaptation is not necessarily brilliant because of its fidelity to the original text, it can be artistically brilliant regardless of its fidelity. Leanore Lieblein, a retired professor of McGill University, wrote a paper reflecting on Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation*. In her paper, she refers to Hutcheon and says “She refuses to prioritize an "original" and resists the hierarchizing of genres and media. In addition, the motives of adaptation are complex, and the pleasures of its reception many. Hutcheon therefore insists upon considering adaptations *as adaptations* (an italicized phrase that frequently recurs), even though those unfamiliar with or unable to recognize the adapted text in the adaptation can still appreciate the adaptation as an autonomous work. She also discusses adaptation as not only a product, but also a process of interaction and negotiation with the adapted text.” (Lieblein 2)

Fidelity is undoubtedly the most debated topic when it comes to adaptation. Finding stylistic equivalents while adapting is very difficult, one has to keep in mind the spirit, the tone, the imagery and the value of the original. One has to reproduce the feeling of the original work. It is like any other translation experience. What many critics and the viewers fail to understand

is that total fidelity is impossible - the reason being two different ways of narrating and the intertextuality between text and visuals.

Fidelity has been argued by many media critics. It is unfortunate that even now many believe “that adapters aim simply to reproduce the adapted text” (Linda Hutcheon.) The measure of a good adaptation should not depend upon the degree of fidelity. There are factors that are equally important. And this is why adapting not so widely known songs or stories was very important to me – to understand how does fidelity affects the artistic quality of an adaptation.

As I have mentioned earlier in my thesis, that photographs are a universal language that everyone understands. The value of a photo is such that people understand it, but photos are not just treated as photos, they are images which reflect or represent a society, and a culture. They represent cultural and individual values which might be missed out when someone from a different culture views it. That being said, my adaptations will provoke the audience of the Dhaka city more than the other parts of the world. They will hold more value culturally to the people of this city because they will be able to relate more and therefore. Someone living in Africa will probably not understand why an image of a tea stall has been added (image number 19). Only someone living in this city or in this country will value ‘tong er cha’<sup>8</sup> They will obviously understand what is happening in the photograph, but the cultural value that photograph holds is something very contextual and culturally specific. People from different cultures might understand the photo and still not understand the cultural connotation or emotional value attached to it.

---

<sup>8</sup> Small tea stalls made out of tin sheds located on random streets



## 6. Conclusion

Cinematic adaptations of texts have been an important part of the history of cinema from its primitive days and have attracted researchers from various disciplines. A novel tells the story through written words, a film through images and sounds, and a photo story through images that is why changes from one medium to another are inevitable. A book describes in general terms, a film gives it a specific appearance, and on the other hand a photo story visually appeals you with its no-motion pictures. Sometimes an image is equivalent to pages of description in a story, sometimes multiple images cannot equal to one word, and such is the complexity of translation between mediums. Strong in his thesis argues “fidelity criticism, leads inexorably to the category of equivalence – the assessment of the cinematic text’s rendering of the properties of the original, properties that may appear particular to literary form and therefore either difficult or impossible to transpose” (5).

Stories rely on a reader’s mental picturing using words, while a cinema gives it all in one plate. What a photo story lacks is sound and animation, however it still gives a great deal of visual information and facts. A photo story makes one see visually through one’s eyes, and literature makes see mentally through the mind. The idea of ‘picturing’ is present in both these mediums, one mentally and the other visually. Undeniably they both have one thing in common which are narratives. In fact, the narrative element is probably the one translatable element between these two.

My adaptations were not limited to a story only; it included a song and poems too. Songs and poems do have a similar structure, yet are very different when it comes to adapting from

them. In a song, I believe there is repetition of the main message that it is trying to convey which is the chorus, so it is easier to translate if you focus on that. Poems are rather fragmented thoughts, and they jump from a thought to another making it very difficult to focus on one key point. Adaptation often means rewriting a story, rewriting does not mean writing the same thing over again, it should not be a copy paste of the source, if it was there is no point of seeing or reading the same thing over again. It is a subjective interpretation of the adaptor, inspired by a different form of art, and then crafting his adaptation differently. And this different way of adapting actually adds value to it. However, critics of film adaptation generally assumed two things – firstly that the written text or the original source is of higher value compared to its adaptation. And secondly, films are best when they are blindly faithful to their original source.

Adaptation has different names and comes in different forms it also brings out different results, which I have learnt journeying through this thesis. Hutcheon argues “adaptation is a form of repetition without replication, change is inevitable, even without any conscious updating or altering of setting” (XVI). Adaptation both as a process and a product, requires creative insight and technical ability and when done properly can stand as a piece of art in its own.

## Appendix A

## Model Release Form

PHOTOGRAPHER: Maisha Samiha

MODEL: Himaloysa Saha

MODEL'S EMAIL ADDRESS: himaloysa.saha@hotmail.com

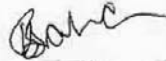
MODEL'S CONTACT NUMBER: 01747076872

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN ON (date): 23.09.2017

AT (location): Gulshan 2 park

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signed: \_\_\_\_\_



date: 23.09.2017

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MODEL: Aurin Khan

MODEL'S EMAIL ADDRESS: Khan.aurin.89@gmail.com

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MODEL: *Muqit Hasan*

MODEL'S EMAIL ADDRESS: *muqit101@gmail.com*

MODEL'S CONTACT NUMBER: *0167 0114353*

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signed: *Hasan* date: *23.09.17*

**Model Release Form**

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MODEL: SAGULB RAHMAN

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signed:  date: 29.11.2017



## Appendix B

### Photograph Copyright Release

**Photographer's Name:** Maisha Samiha.

**Address:** House 27, road 10, sector 4, Uttara, Dhaka 1230, Bangladesh.

**Contact number:** +8801731713323

**Email:** maisha.samiha@hotmail.com

Yours Sincerely,

.....

Maisha Samiha

Freelance Photographer

The above named Photographer hereby warrants being the legal copyright owner of all the photos provided in this entire thesis.

## Appendix C

# The Princess and the Father

Bipradash Barua

Translated by Mohammad Shafiqul Islam

A ROBIN WAS WHISTLING at dawn. From the kitchen, Bokul's mother called out, 'Khoka.'<sup>1</sup>

Bokul was already halfway down the street on his roller skates by then. She was still muttering, 'I told you to eat something before leaving. You're not strong—how will you manage?'

Tall and gangly, Bokul had just started college. It was the month of Poush,<sup>2</sup> cold and foggy. Bokul wore a hooded tracksuit, which made him look taller. These were meant for export, but he had bought it cheap at Bongobazar. A fine outfit in blue, white and black, it kept him quite warm. But his face was long and gaunt, and his sharp nose and jaw protruded like a famine victim's. The drawstring of his track pants hung down to his knees, and the hood strings dangled almost as low. Although he'd used them for two years now, the skates were still in good condition—imported, quality. The toes were pointed and sturdy. Bokul skated noisily down the street, slowing down where the surface was uneven. He wanted to get to North South Road, either through Bongshal or Alubazar. He chose the first option. The North South Road was fairly smooth, but it was shrouded in fog. It would be wonderful to get to Ramna Park, he told himself. Five or six other skaters were usually there. The two dream 'princesses' would also be there, he

## BIPRADASH BARUA

a knew, and right now would be making their way from the  
 a Siddheswari Apartments, where they lived. He'd often been  
 c tempted to snatch their scarves playfully as he skated past  
 them. He had a knack for giving pedestrians the slip<sup>1</sup> after  
 yanking their caps off their heads. At the Shishu Park rink,  
 he was adept at the game of whipping off other boys' caps  
 while protecting his own. But the children's park wouldn't  
 be open till the afternoon. If he hurried, he could still catch  
 the fair princesses of Siddheswari. They had exchanged  
 glances with him and, he felt, a certain understanding had  
 developed, but he didn't want to appear desperate. That said,  
 they were no less flirtatious than he was. They'd shown  
 Bokul where they lived and he'd given them his address.

The pitted surface was slowing him down. Pulling his  
 hood down against the cold, he could almost hear the  
 princesses' laughter echoing around him. But then a rickshaw  
 rattled past, shattering his reverie. The girls' caps were gone  
 from his vision. He could no longer see their blue sweaters and  
 jeans. They must have reached Bailey Road or Minto Road by  
 now. At that moment he noticed a thickly-bearded, overweight  
 man in a long, worn-out coat at the end of the street. Bokul  
 didn't pay much attention at first, but this man was the only  
 other person in the street. Who comes out when it's so cold and  
 early! He couldn't help looking at the slightly tottering figure.  
 A drunk, perhaps? He had no sympathy for drunkards, but the  
 man's strange appearance gripped his attention. He was  
 exceptionally tall, and his glasses, unusually thick. Bokul could  
 barely see the man in the fog, but clearly he was struggling to  
 walk. He drew closer, skating faster than the man was walking.  
 Moving to the side of the street, the man reached out towards  
 a shop door to stop himself from falling. Bokul realised this was  
 no drunk, maybe he was ill. He was next to him now. The man  
 was propping himself up against the shutters. Bokul stopped.  
 The man was trying to undo the top button of the shirt beneath  
 his coat with one hand, while balancing himself with the other.  
 Now that he was so close to the man, Bokul realised he

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## THE PRINCESS AND THE FATHER

should do something. But at that moment, the smiling  
 princesses on Minto Road appeared to him. Raising his  
 clouded eyes through his thick glasses, the man could now see  
 Bokul standing next to him. He was gasping for breath, the  
 pain visible on his face. Managing to unbutton the shirt, he  
 clutched his chest with his left hand, and quivered, 'Khoka!'

Bokul was shaken. This was how his mother addressed  
 him. Only his mother used that term of endearment. The  
 word belonged to her. He hunched down, removed his  
 skates, tucked them beneath his arm, and reached out to help.

Gathering a little strength, the man said, 'Take me  
 home, Khoka? It's not far...'

Bokul offered his shoulder without a word. The man  
 put his right arm on it, and they began to walk in silence.  
 The gigantic man's arm felt heavy on the skinny boy's  
 shoulders. His weight seemed to grow, as did his chest pain.  
 The Siddheswari girls on their skates flashed before Bokul's  
 eyes, their braids swaying. He was late already. He could  
 hear the music in the rhythm of the skates. The dark princess  
 was singing:

*In the shadow of your eyes, mine  
 Seek your heart's treasures.*

The boy found himself walking faster to the rhythm of the  
 song. The man had trouble keeping up. He didn't want to  
 fall behind, but lacked the strength. The boy fidgeted as the  
 man struggled. Noticing that he was panting, Bokul turned  
 to look at him and understood that he was in pain. Still, both  
 of them walked as fast as possible, perhaps trying to free  
 themselves of each other. It was strange how neither spoke  
 on that empty street. A dog passed by, some crows cawed,  
 the girl's song faded.

Eventually they stopped in front of an old house with a  
 tin gate, flanked by two peeling brick pillars. The gate  
 opened at a single push. A short walk led to a tiny wooden

## BIPRADASH BARUA

staircase going up to the first floor. The ground floor had nothing but refuse and a broken door. The stairs creaked as they climbed. At the door, the man managed to fish the key out of his pocket, and handed it to the boy. The door groaned as it opened. It was very dark inside. Fumbling for a moment, the man turned on the light, and, letting go of the boy, walked a few steps, trembling, to collapse on an old sofa. Its ancient springs protested under the owner's weight. Leaning back, the man closed his eyes. The expression of pain worsened. The boy looked at the sick man, then at the old furniture, and then back at the man. Only now did the man open his eyes and prepare to speak:

'The piece is moving. In my heart.'

The boy struggled to understand. Piece of what? Why was it moving?

Realising his difficulty, the man said, 'The war ended long ago, but a piece remains in my heart. There used to be four. They took three out, one's still there.'

It dawned on the boy that the man was talking about the Liberation War—so he was a freedom fighter! Bokul took a step forward at once. He didn't know the man's name, which sector he'd fought in, what his rank was, or what kind of soldier he'd been. But now that he knew he was a freedom fighter, Bokul couldn't help being curious. His father had been one too, but he had no memory of him. In his mind's eye, he'd seen his father, injured, as his mother had described him. Once, he'd been buried in a trench—his companions had dug him out. He'd escaped from the jaws of death that time and come home later, victorious.

The man said, 'I fell into their hands, and as soon as we were face to face, they threw it at me.'

'Threw what?' Bokul asked.

The man said, 'Do you know what jittering is?'

Bokul shook his head. 'No.'

The man said, 'It's the language of war. Jittering is a form of patrolling. A group of fighters from one side creeps

## THE PRINCESS AND THE FATHER

through the resistance line very carefully, trying to pinpoint the exact location of the enemy and its equipment.'

The man explained. The enemy had spotted a group of ten freedom fighters during jittering—he'd been one—and started firing from a distance. Five bullets had entered his chest. When he got to this point, he turned pale, his eyes clouding over, his face stiffening in pain. He groaned.

'Should I get a doctor?' Bokul asked.

The man said, 'The pain will go once I've rested a bit. Being on night duty aggravated it. I couldn't sleep for a minute last night.'

Bokul said, 'Then why don't you go to bed and...'

'Are you in a hurry, or do you have some time?' asked the man.

Bokul thought of skating. Park Road. Minto Road. Skating past the Siddheswari princesses with swaying braids. He hummed:

*With tragic eyes, he asks the silence*

*Where are those intimate words?*

*Helplessly, he wanders around*

*Soaked in a flood of tears.*

Bokul returned to the present. The man in this room. He said, 'No, I'm not in a hurry, I just finished skating.' He put the skates down.

'Look for my tablets. They must be in the room. On a tray in the drawer.' Trying to rise to his feet, the man crumpled.

Bokul ran up, crouching by his side and saying, 'I want to help you! Can you stand by yourself?'

The man looked at Bokul through half-open eyes. His piercing gaze shifted. Bokul said, 'Don't you have anyone of your own?'

The lost look returned to the man's eyes. He said in a voice full of pain, 'My wife is in Comilla for her holiday.' It was a lie—she had left him.

## BIPRADASH BARUA

'Should I send a telegram?'  
'No, not necessary. She only left yesterday.' The man wilted on the sofa.

Going into the next room, which was tiny, Bokul found only a desk and a cot. 'Happy Birthday Nayla' was written on the wall. Bokul shook his fist at the name. Was this any time to go on a holiday, leaving her sick husband alone! A cup and two books lay on the desk. It was all a mess. He went into the other room, parting the curtains. A small room with a large cot. A picture from the Liberation War on the wall. A bearded man in a trench, pointing his light machine gun at enemy soldiers. The caption said: Reza Ali at the Thakurgaon Operation. So the man's name was Reza Ali! Bokul went back and pulled the drawer of the desk open for the tablets. It was a worn-out desk of the kind used by secretaries. A soldier's helmet, just like the one in the picture on the wall, sat on a stool. He couldn't help touching it, and remembered his mother saying that his father also had a helmet, which he'd given to the Liberation War Museum. But he couldn't remember his father, who had died in 1980 when he was only four. A bullet had been lodged in his heart. It was detected far too late. Just a day before he died. In the hospital. Reza Ali had a bullet in his heart too. Surely he was in danger too?

In the last drawer was a tiny tray. He found three bullets, a heavy pipe, an old pocket-watch, and a brass bayonet. Searching some more, he found two tablets. Brufen, the pain killer. How would it help just taking the pain away? No, he must be taken to a doctor. He shouldn't depend on tablets alone. Imagine such a large man being so frail! Picking up the pipe, he sniffed at it and got the scent of old, burnt tobacco. Putting it in his mouth, he took a puff. A horrible smell! Yet, he felt very manly. With the helmet on, he now stood erect, then bowed his head out of respect in the direction of the old man, as though he were also paying homage to his dead father. Bokul quickly put everything

## THE PRINCESS AND THE FATHER

back in its place carefully. He was dying to see what was in the other two drawers, even reaching out to open the second one. But no, stealing a look at other people's things wasn't right. Wondering how the ailing man was, he ran to the kitchen. He needed some water. For the pills. Though some people could do without water too. The kitchen was on the other side, the plaster flaking off to expose the bricks. Everything was awry. He found a glass and a jug with water.

Going back with the tablets and the water, Bokul found Reza Ali slumped on the sofa, his eyes closed as if he were asleep. He wondered whether to call him. Sleep was good for the man. But was he asleep or unconscious? Putting the glass down on a small stool, Bokul shook the man gently by his shoulders. No response. He had no idea whether Reza Ali was asleep or unconscious.

His heart thumped. He remembered his father. His mother had said that he had collapsed one morning after returning from the market. He'd been taken to the hospital immediately in an ambulance. There they found out he had been bleeding in the chest. The doctors had tried very hard. They had operated on him at once to take the bullet out of his chest, but they hadn't been able to save him.

Bokul ran out and up the street. Surely he would find a telephone somewhere to call from. If only the stores would open. There were only small shops selling tea or paan. And houses.

He raced into Nawabpur Road. An ambulance was speeding past from the north, its siren blaring. Raising his arms, he jumped to the middle of the street, shouting, 'Stop, stop, stop!' The ambulance halted with a loud screech. A few rickshaws were passing, some passersby too. They gathered around him. One of them yelled, 'Do even ambulances cause accidents these days? Has the world turned upside down?' Another one said, 'Get the driver!'

Bokul said, 'It's not an accident. Someone is critically ill—he needs to be taken to the hospital.'

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The ambulance was empty—it was on its way back. There was even a doctor in the back, who agreed to the driver's request. Bokul sat in the ambulance. Two people went into the house with a stretcher. The man was unconscious. The doctor checked his pulse, examined his chest with a stethoscope, and gave him an injection. Then he was lifted on to the stretcher. The man was almost too heavy for the stretcher-bearers. The wooden house and the stairs creaked some more. Bokul and the doctor lent a hand on the staircase. Bokul put the keys in his pocket. He was the temporary owner of the keys to the house. Again he shook his fist mentally at the man's wife. He told the doctor, 'He took five bullets in the chest. During the Liberation War. At the front. One's still in there. That's the one causing the pain.' The man opened his eyes at that moment. He saw the boy who was in the house before he'd fallen unconscious, who had brought him in from the street. He closed his eyes without speaking. The doctor said, 'We're taking you to the hospital. We couldn't treat you in the house.'

Re-opening his eyes, the man told Bokul, 'Will you do me a favour, Khoka? My sister lives in Brahmanbaria. Can you send her a telegram?'

Bokul said, 'Don't worry. I'll take care of everything.'

The man reached for some money from his pocket and scribbled down an address. Looking at Bokul with distressed eyes, he said, 'Quickly. Many thanks.'

They carried him into the ambulance. The siren blared. The ambulance sped off.

Bokul went back to the house. He had left his skates behind. He unlocked the door to enter. Every house has a distinct smell. Now he smelt this one. He remembered his mother. At that moment, she would just have gone into the veranda from the kitchen. She would be watering the tubs. Roses had blossomed in them. Red, yellow, black, pink. The black rose was foreign. She went to Bokul's desk. The orchid they had found near the mango tree was next to it. She

## THE PRINCESS AND THE FATHER

sprinkled water on it, washing the dust off the leaves. A photograph of Bokul's father's hung on the wall. He had his helmet on. Crows were cawing outside. Larks were singing. The sun was yet to rise. The fog hadn't lifted.

Bokul skated to the telegram office crossing the North South Road. The song echoed in his ears. Sometimes he was singing, sometimes he could hear his father's voice, and sometimes the girl's.

*With blood I drew a lotus-seat by the door  
Does it say anything to you?  
Walking on the road to your garden  
I scatter my sorrows in the wind  
Does no one understand the hope  
The flute gives as it plays in the sky?*

Bokul had never sent a telegram before. There was only one woman in the post-office—perhaps at the end of the night shift. He told her, 'I have to send an urgent telegram.' The woman observed Bokul, who still had his skates on. Then she said, 'Can you write it, or do you need my help?'

Bokul was offended. 'I can do it,' he said. 'Please give me a sheet of paper.'

The woman handed over a form. Bokul didn't have a pen. He asked for one. He read the form. It was in English. He had some trouble with the address. The man had written it in a shaky hand. The paper was torn, too. Should he write his own name as the sender? She wouldn't recognise Bokul. He'd use Reza Ali's name, then. 'Seriously ill. Come sharp. Medical Hospital.' Making a mistake with the first word, he asked for another form. Instead of giving him one, the woman took the one he had. Bokul looked at her with a beating heart. Thankfully she didn't say anything. She took twenty taka. Reza Ali had given him the money along with the address. What kind of man was he? Not asking his own wife to correct!

Then Bokul rushed to the hospital. He enquired at the



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emergency section, and then went to Surgical Ward 7, where he met a doctor. Bokul said, 'A patient came a short while ago. In an ambulance. His name is Reza Ali. How is he?'

The doctor said, 'The one with the bullet in his chest?'

Bokul said, 'Yes. It didn't trouble him all these years. It's suddenly begun to move.'

The doctor said, 'We've done the x-rays. Can't say what happened suddenly. Difficult case. Wait outside. I'll let you know soon. I heard something about an operation. The operating theatre is right here. Wait.'

The doctor disappeared inside. Bokul remembered the smell of a hospital. An unknown world of patients, nurses and maids. The combined smell of human breath and medicine made it a different place. Bokul's mind was in turmoil. His father had been a freedom fighter, but he himself had never seen the War of course. Reza Ali was an honest freedom fighter. He worked in a factory. Day shifts, night shifts. He could hear aluminium being hammered. Smoke rising from chimneys. The first floor of the wooden house and the tiny darkened rooms flashed before Bokul's eyes. He couldn't stomach the indifference of the man's wife. Maybe she didn't care for him. He was back in the hospital. When would the surgery take place? Or had it begun already? Why wasn't the doctor here? Did that mean the operation was underway? He had once helped a man whose legs had been crushed under a bus. How strange the people in the city were! They gathered around in an instant, but no one came forward to help. What was more important—taking the victim to the hospital or wreaking vengeance on the bus because the driver had fled? As though his legs would be restored if the bus was damaged. He could see his own father in Reza Ali. The operating theatre floated up in front of his eyes. He remembered his mother. She must be worried. Although it was a holiday, he was supposed to have been back by now. But she would understand when he explained. It would please her to know he had helped a freedom fighter. And then she would weep in secret. She wept

## THE PRINCESS AND THE FATHER

sometimes. When she remembered his father. When she fretted about his future. One day she had been caught. He had once discovered her weeping at midnight. Eventually she had opened up to him. She had told him many things about his father's death. Bokul could picture his father firing a Sten gun. The battle to occupy Subhapur Bridge was underway. He could see Reza Ali in his father's place, and then his father in Reza Ali's. His feet suddenly nudged his skates, which rolled away. His hands and legs were shaking. Did an operation take so long? The freedom fighters and Pakistanis were face to face on the battlefield. Freedom fighters on one side, marauding Pakistani forces on the other. He was alone in no man's land, jittering. He didn't know when he had crawled into the enemy ranks. Silence everywhere. A dead moon in the sky, a winter night, thick fog. Not even an owl to hoot. Jackals and dogs probably fled from the war zone too. Only the sound of the fog, the silent conversation of the moon, the whispering of night on the battlefield and the breathing of the enemy. He'd read about violent attacks in the book, *From Guerrilla Battles to Open Warfare*. He'd heard the sound of silence too. He felt as though he were threatening the silence to go jittering, parting the fog with his hands while the moonlight dispelled the shadows from the bamboo grove to show him the way. The air still smelt of last night's battle. The smoke from the gunpowder was rising. It wasn't unlike the smell of Reza Ali's pipe. His heart was pounding. The light above the operating table had dimmed. It was as though he, and not the man, were lying on the table. Had a tank just run over his chest? Or was he now lying on his stomach, removing detonators from live mines. He struggled to breathe, his heart beat faster, tension and agitation made him perspire. One detonator out. There was the next one. Identical. Reza Ali was a giant. His father had been six feet tall too. One scene after another.

Slowly, Bokul grew exhausted. Perhaps thoughts got tired too. But they never became inert, never went to sleep.

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They only stopped bouncing around. He realised Reza Ali was being operated on. The surgeons were using scalpels and scissors. They were suturing him. Smiles were breaking through the masks covering their faces. Meaning, the operation had been successful. A saline drip ran into his arm. He was lifted on to the stretcher from the operating table. The doctors and nurses were bringing him out. Bokul's thoughts stopped.

A middle-aged nurse appeared to ask, 'Who's here with Reza Ali?'

Bokul leapt, as though he had been woken up. Startled, he answered, 'It's me.'

The nurse's voice was deep but sweet. She said, 'You? But you're a child. Isn't there anyone older? He'll regain consciousness soon. There's nothing to worry about—everything went well. It was a difficult operation, but he's out of danger. Your father will survive. He's a very brave man. How else could he have fought in the Liberation War? A real man!'

Bokul didn't object to Reza Ali's being referred to as his father. Quickly he asked, 'How long will he take to recover?'

The nurse said, 'Let's say as long as it takes for a bud to bloom, up to the last petal. Not very long. It will pass soon. Don't worry.'

'What's the number of his bed?' asked Bokul.

The nurse said, 'Bed 71, Ward 7. Now go and inform your mother. Tell her not to worry. And take this bullet. Keep this piece of iron as a memento. This is what had moved. You mustn't keep even a sign of the enemy in your body, but you must keep it in front of your eyes so that you do not forget. That's why so many things are preserved in the Liberation War Museum.'

Bokul reached out to take the rusted piece of iron. He was pleased with what the nurse had said.

The nurse continued, 'It was near his heart. Not even the doctors know why it moved after all this time. May have

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been the result of a psychological shock. But then best not to nurture even a sleeping enemy. The nuisance is gone. You'd better inform your mother. And tell me what to tell your father.'

What would Bokul say now? His father was a soldier who had come back alive from the war. He was dead now. Reza Ali was alive. Bokul couldn't remember what he'd told his father, or when. He didn't know what to tell Reza Ali now. He said, 'I send kisses, and Joy Bangla.'<sup>3</sup>

With a sweet smile, the nurse said, 'I'll tell him.'

Holding the piece of iron tightly in his clenched fist, Bokul added, 'And tell him to get well soon. I'll be back in the afternoon.'

Bokul began to walk with the skates beneath his arms. He must tell his mother. Besides, she would be worried. So many things had happened so quickly. He just had to tell her. Neither food nor skating was important. He only remembered the princess who had given him naughty and eager glances. Sometimes she had spoken to him too. He was reminded of the song whenever he saw her. It was her humming that had made it a favourite of his. He sang it as he walked, but what swam up before his eyes was the freedom fighter's face with its deep-set eyes. 'In the shadow of your eyes, mine / Seek your heart's treasures.' He was thinking of his father too. His mother's stories about his father had entrenched his memories of him. Tall and strong, with the helmet on his head. Just like the photograph in that house. And Bokul seemed to have grown up suddenly. Still, he wished his father were alive. He could have told him so much, heard stories about the war, listened to the history of how freedom was won. Living history. The value of hearing it all from his father, from someone who had witnessed everything, was much greater than reading about it in books. A unique thrill. He ran in the direction of his home. He jumped into a rickshaw. They had a new professor of Bangla in class. A writer and a freedom fighter. He recollected the first lesson. Some of the

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boys had been unhappy at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's name being mentioned,<sup>4</sup> at his being called the Bengali of the Century. His mother's voice echoed in his ears. He heard her say, 'Khoka.' He heard the man's voice too. He could give up everything for a father like him and spend all his time at the hospital.

Bokul banged on the door. His mother opened it. Anxiously she asked, 'Where were you, Khoka? Look who's been waiting for you. Come inside.'

Bokul heard her but paid no attention. First he had to tell her about Reza Ali, the freedom fighter. Wrapping his arms around her, he said, 'Ma, listen. An injured freedom fighter. I took him home first. This thing was in his chest. They operated on him to take it out. I've just come from the hospital. You must come with me...'

Before he could finish, he spotted, behind his mother, the dark-skinned princess from Siddheswari, accompanied by her friend. Bokul's words remained unsaid.

His mother said, 'Let them tell you why they're here. I'll listen to your story too.'

The princess said, 'There's a competition in Gulshan. We need to practice in the rink. Will you be my partner?'

Bokul could hear the song. 'In the shadow of your eyes, mine/Seek your heart's treasures.'

### Notes

1. Khoka: young male child, also a term of endearment.
2. Poush: the ninth month of the Bengali calendar, running from mid-December to mid-January.
3. Joy Bangla: 'Victory to Bengal.'
4. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: father of the nation, first president of Bangladesh, central figure in the liberation movement.

“এই শহর আমার ” by Shayan Chowdhury Arnob

তুমি যদি বল ভোরের বেলার কাক ,

ভীরের মাঝে কেউ ( ২ বার )

সত্য করা একলা স্টিমার

ফেরিওয়ালার হাক □

মতিঝিলের শাপলা ফুলে পানি ,

আর এক স্কুল বালিকা

নাটি হাতে ডাকাত সর্দার ,

সবুজ ড্রেস থানি □ ( ২ বার )

রাত জাগা হাইওয়ে এ র ,

ঘুমিয়ে পরা কোন এক ডাইভার □

ঘরস্থানের ফকির ,

মাজারে মাঝারে যে কি ...□

এই শহর আমার

এই মানুষ আমার ,

এই শহর আমার

এই শহর আমার

এই মানুষ আমার,

এই মানুষ আমার □

এই শহর আমার

এই মানুষ আমার □

তুমি শুনতে কি পাও

English Transliteration of “এই শহর আমার”

“Ei Shohor Amar”

Tumi jodi bolo

bhorer belar kaak

Sotto kora ekla stimar

feriwalar haak

Lathi haate dakat shordar

Raat jaga highway-er

ghumiye pora kono ek driver..

Ei shohor amar

Ei manush amar

Ei sohor amar

Ei manush amar

MUSIC

Tumi shunte ki pao

bhirer majhe keu

Tumi sunte ki pao

virer majhe keu

Moti-jhiler shapla fule paani

Ar ek school balika

sobuj dress khani (x2)

Goroshthane fokir

majare majare je ki...

Ei shahar amar

Ei manush amar (x3)

## Appendix D

### List of Camera and lenses used

Camera body:

1. Canon EOS 7D
2. Canon Eos 6D

Lenses:

1. Canon EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM Lens
2. Canon EF 70-200mm f/2.8L II USM Lens
3. Canon EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5 USM Lens
4. Canon EF 50mm f/1.2L USM Lens
5. Canon EF 135mm f/2L USM Lens

Mobile phone camera:

1. Huawei P9 Plus - Dual: 12 MP (f/2.2, 27 mm, 1/2.9", 1.25  $\mu$ m), Leica optics, phase detection & laser autofocus, dual-LED dual-tone flash

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