

# **Stunning Travel Journeys**



**Rosina S Khan**

## *Preface*

This ebook is special in that it contains real life travel journey experiences and how the author overcomes dreadful fear or weariness with new vigor and strength to seizing the real thrills and excitements of the travels both during childhood and adulthood. It always boils down to the fact that in case of journeys from source to destination it is always the journey that really matters and is actually an invigorating experience.

- Rosina S Khan

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**Contact: [promisingfuture73@gmail.com](mailto:promisingfuture73@gmail.com)**

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## **Visit to City Outskirts**

The most recent travel I made out of the city to another, as far as, I remember was to Sylhet for presenting a paper in a conference. The beauty of the whole travel was definitely in the journey. I had no idea bus journeys had become so modernized in our country. There were lots of tissue papers and free water bottles in the tray in front. My mother and brother were with me. The glass windows were dark and closed and we could hardly watch out of the windows. The air conditioner was on, and it was a pleasant environment along with other passengers. The bus driver's assistant said a simple short prayer and greeted us all using a microphone. Soon we were off. Whew!! We chose our seats at the rightmost front for easy breathing and movement of hands and legs in the wider space. It all felt great. We came to a standstill at about half the journey and had the liberty to enter a food and rest center where we had snacks and refreshed ourselves. In the meantime we were debating which hotel to book whether near the conference holding university or near the bus stop. We finally decided on the latter and that's where we

stayed overnight. All night I was kind of tensed about the presentation that I was to perform on my research. I knew all the materials in there and everything was in my finger tips but still.....The presentation day passed off smoothly with a few people around. We had boxes of lunch and drinks. When my part was over, I couldn't wait to travel back home sweet home. But once again it was the journey that was delightful and exciting and free from the monotony of mundane life. Although it was evening and we were going to reach home by late night, I felt blessed but said a silent prayer and remained relaxed.

I have been on trips outside the city as little as a child, especially the visit to Chittagong sea beach is a memorable one. We went to the city by first class compartment of railway train and then by bus to Cox Bazaar motel. It was so near the beach. I am so grateful for those special moments with my family. We had fun playing and wading through the sea water. We didn't know swimming and the first dip into the water was kind of scary. But gradually we dared to go a little more into the sea water and as I said we had loads of fun. Each one of us took the

cameraman lead and took the memorable photos of other members. I remember my dad standing beside my mom in sky blue sharee on the beach, and I can bet it was the best picture of my parents that I could ever come across. Both looked so darn happy!! Next as a gesture of a befitting stay near the beach we went for a bumpy jeep ride on the rocky hills nearby and simply, I have to say it was so purely adventurous and exhilarating.

Another small ride during my childhood on the outskirts of the city was with my own family, cousins and aunts on a simple boat journey. As we settled ourselves, balancing and sitting on the seats of the simple wooden boat, the boatman sang to his heart's content paddling us through the wavy waters of the river. Soon I switched from the boatman's song to the depth of the water in the river. This was even when I was a bit younger than the last travel and my heart beats went thumping because I was scared I might fall into the water and drown, still not knowing swimming (which I didn't learn until I was a teenager). But Almighty God spared all of us. We reached an island and excitedly

took photos of ourselves. It was like having conquered something. Yet it was only the fear we conquered and learnt to enjoy the journey by water. The way back was more comfortable and enjoyable: simply an indelible memory, and who knows moments like these may never come to pass again in my life.

## **Up/down Trips to USA**

I remember a few years back I was so joyous to have in hand the multiple US student visa from American Embassy here. I was in a state of euphoria and could not sleep for two whole weeks at a go from sheer excitement. Finally the day came when I was to make that trip. I went by British Airways to London and from there to Houston and finally to Dallas where my siblings who stay there gave me a warm welcome reception and treated me like a VIP person. All along the journey I had to walk such long distances at airports which made me weary and dog tired at the end but I grasped every moment beautifully and preserved it in my memory. Definitely the airports were large, wide-spaced, neat and sparkling with a huge number of exit gates to flights here and there. And on the airplanes, there were movies to watch with head phones, and I relished all the meals they served. At times I was not even hungry and skipped meals. It was my first trip to US and that also I was making by myself only.

My sisters, along with their close friends, helped me to reach my apartment that I had taken ownership of online back when I was in the country and my little sister got the keys to the apartment after I had given her authority to get them in the housing office. I couldn't wait to see my apartment. On the way to the university, my sister pointed out the great big companies in Dallas, including the places where her company shifted and above all, where "Dallas" film shooting took place, a great house in the midst of ever expanding green lawn. It was indeed awesome!!

Here I was at the apartment simply inspecting in my mind's eye in awe. How can it be so beautiful? There was a small kitchen, two closets, and living and bedroom with an attached bathroom. The living and bedrooms were all carpeted. With a fresh round of energy and vigor, I accepted my living place, ready to start my academic life.

Soon classes started and were all gone by the wind and fall break began. I took the opportunity to pay a visit to my home country. I had actually

gone for doctoral studies abroad and although I was not completely happy with all my grades, I was pleased I made it at the end of a year. Now I was flying back home on my second trip and as I mentioned when the destination arrives everything seems normal and yet it is the journey while you are making that you get all the thrill, elation and excitement.

About a month's stay at home roaming about among relatives and friends, I also had the privilege of eating good homemade cooked meals everyday of my vacation which made my 128 lbs weight shoot up a little. I was making my trip back soon but somehow I could not control the tears that flooded my eyes at the airport here where my mom had accompanied me to see me off. The reason was simply that it had been a hard year abroad and I wasn't sure I will make it through, still having a minimum of three years more to go. I still made the trip and decided to be cheerful, ready to face the challenges. Alas, a few months later, I fell terribly ill and a cloud of homesickness overshadowed me. I could not

bear it anymore and called it quits and journeyed back home happily,  
joining my work from which I was on study leave

## **Travels to Germany**

While I was working on my career job, I had this burning desire of going abroad for an MSc degree. I had some close male friends in Germany who encouraged me to apply there. It was not long before I got admission in Ulm, and I was making my preparations when much to my mom's comfort, I found some acquainted male colleagues from work, who were also going to the same place for the same purpose. They helped me get tickets from their familiar travel agency, and we were on the brink of making a travel together, three to four of us. I haven't travelled abroad a long time and even during my childhood when I did, I just tagged along because my dad took care of all the formality steps during the journey. So I too felt relieved travelling to Germany along with some familiar people.

While we journeyed together, I sat by the window watching the green landscape segregated by pools of water, and it all seemed to fade away as I went higher and higher upwards, eventually only being able to see the white clouds. It was at this moment I recalled my dad helping me

with the essay in grade 4, “Journey by Air”. The first three sentences in it, as far as I remember were: *How freely the birds fly in the sky. Men wanted to fly like birds. Hence, the invention of airplanes.....*

Back to the flight to Germany, yeah we reached the airport at Munich. We had got all our luggages and I looked around to see the brightly lit up airport. It was good looking, spick and spawn and systematic, being in one of the prominent cities of Germany. A shuttle was waiting for us to take us to Ulm. On the way, I went sight-seeing around through the window. It was dark because evening had approached but I could decipher all the shapes and features of nice-looking objects, long roads, restaurants, houses, pathways and other cars and vehicles scantering by. Boy, it felt good to be abroad after a long, long time.

When I reached the destination dorm there along with my companions, some of their contacts there helped me lift my luggages to the dorm I was to be in. I soon realized I was to share bathroom and kitchen but had

the privilege to possess my own room. I didn't see my roommate in the other room instantly but in two days' time I got to see her.

Some good people living in that area treated us with food and drinks for the night and by the next day I was trying to settle down as much as I could. There were running buses every 10 minutes near the bus stop of our dorm and while I was in Ulm I enjoyed this service very much. But academically, I soon realized the field I had to take courses on deviated a lot from my familiar field of interest. A solution needed to be sought out as quickly as possible.

I talked with my family back home, and those familiar male friends living in Stuttgart, who had encouraged to me to go to the country. I also got an acceptance letter from a university in that city. Through discussions, I realized Software Technology would be in my familiar field of interest. So it was quits again for a better opportunity.

My good friends in Ulm helped me transfer with my baggages by train to Stuttgart. They helped me identify my university as well as my dorm. Unlike Ulm, Stuttgart had train services which were more popular than bus services. I soon got acquainted with the train charts and services. To nearby places you had to travel by U-Bahn (smaller version of trains) and bigger prominent places by S-Bahn (bigger version of trains).

I soon reached the dorm I was to be in, this time destined for a more positive future direction as you will see me mention later on. It was a small spaced dorm room with an attached bathroom with all the required furniture in, a bed with mattress, shelf and a big, wide table. Surprisingly the heater was on the floor unlike as it was in Ulm. But I had to share a moderately spaced dining and kitchen, which I got used to anyway and were all friends with other dormmates on the same floor soon.

While I settled down, I started catching up with classes and boy, it felt good this time. I felt aligned with the courses and in the right direction. Soon it was time for exams. Exams came and went. Now time for

holiday break!! Whew!! But a few days down the track, I started missing my family back home and felt immensely homesick. When it was time for classes again, we had a three-day course, Presentation Techniques which taught us tips on giving presentations. On the final day we had to give presentations on any topic of our choice for 3-5 minutes. And boy, I thought it was a perfect time to present a topic on *My Family*, our backgrounds, places we stayed, the schools we went to and finally my career life and my current status. Among these subtopics, I did not fail to mention my immense homesickness during the break but that I was happy to be back to classes. My professor had a grave look on her face. She said, “We all feel with you, Rosina”. Two days later she awarded me with a two-way ticket for coming home to see my family in the summer break. And was I happy!! I was over the moon, dancing in joy!!

Classes came and went and tweet, tweet and tweet: time for summer break!! It was time to make use of the award: the two way air-ticket. And accordingly I was on an airplane again journeying with flying colors to my home country. And it was an indelible vacation I spent with

my near and dear ones before I went back to work on a six-month long exciting and exhilarating master's thesis. Facing the challenges and coming up through, I was soon at the graduation ceremony and my angelic professor, who had awarded me before and inspired me all along, was there at the ceremony, congratulating and complimenting me. I was only blissful to take a photograph with her, and it stays pointing to me in my bedroom on the top of my desk till date in a cute photoframe.

A small study tour I remember that I actively participated from Stuttgart to a place called Bad Boll. The whole trip was free of cost, including lodgings and food. We made the trip initially by a train stronger, bigger and wider than S-Bahn and from near Bad Boll to the destination by bus. My companions were batchmates from the university in Stuttgart and one of its administrative staff members. It was an elegant, enriching trip by the big subway going past trees, houses, and landscapes and finally reaching the end of the journey in the evening, exhausted and hungry. As we were taken to our rooms, which exhibited neatly spread bedsheets with bed covers and pillows, widely spaced shelves and a mirror with a

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