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The curious case of running



Editor's note: This column was written earlier this winter.

Long starchy roads. Aerobic signals. Zipping cars. Colored tracks. Fancy jackets. Dipping temperatures. Frowny pants. Winds of change. Sunny glow.

Smell of coffee. Buzzer alarm. And the tangling of the arms! That's the kind of image my husband makes up to every morning. Finish with an indelible zeal to run along parked water streets.

Since the last couple of months I have been nestled here in this quiet dormitory, I am frustrated by this compelling urge to him to shoot out of the bed like a bullet as if he has got a sudden business to launch a ground-breaking model, while I stare at him wide-eyed. Well . . . he is a certified scientist with all the elements of a madman's zeal!

As I see it, it's not a mindless trend that has my husband seized, rather it's a feature evident in every nook and corner of this quiet little quiet town. The harsh weather conditions are sometimes enough fuel for these maniacs to steam up the cold tracks. The snow makes sprawling landscape usually pose the shiver bugs going forward, as so I thought. My preoccupations were not wrong because these die-hard happy enthusiasts could not have missed the post-card look that the snow induced. And they did not, obviously.

Needless to say, my runner husband obliged his curious curiosity surpassing number of times without letting his gloves come in the way of the screen. He rarely lost his goal of

pain just on that snowy Sunday morning save for the white fluff in which the glove stuck out like a sore thumb! And the image was as one social networking site even before he was back from his morning ritual!

The other day, while I was exploring beads and curves, I happened to chance upon a similar looking black glove lying abandoned on the melting snow. The discovery doesn't mark any credit for inferring that it rightfully belonged to one of my husband's replicas!

Since it was my first brush with the snow, I felt like an excited teenager going gaga over her first crush! I was thrilled to twist the snow white expanses of fairy-tale adventures. What with the snow laden empty beach that I am so obsessed with? Why does the bicycle look so fetching in white? Could it be that the Dinky's deserted platform lend a haunting charm to the snowcough? How would it be to splash a dot of colors on the white canvas? Do they build snow castles in the air?

Just as I was slipping into their random ramblings, I got this opportune moment to browse the local Florence Griffith Joyner sporting arena, sporting an air of carefree immaturity. I smiled this amazingly spirited little woman adding an alternate glow to the snow, lit up my phone and zoomed in on her running shoes! The tilt of the lens might have gotten unnoticed to her unsuspecting eyes, but even if she had turned around for a moment, I bet, she would have happily got frozen!

Come rain, come shine, people here simply love running. Have it on the poles or those waist hugging jeans. The proprietors could be up, to hit the road. Or it might be a plain view of monthly subscription to health and fit-

ness magazines. Or daily online practice might be I could also mention this practice to your mammalian pleasure. The last goal for more exhilaration released during the course of running is drive enough to get the ball rolling. It gives one a sense of euphoria, more commonly known as the runner's high. Thank you, my husband does not have vertigo!

Once while walking back from the Dinky late into the night after an amazing NYC trip, I saw this school solitary runner sipping silently drinking his pace in the dark emptiness. I made no mistake in spotting yet another passionate road lover. If the spine cracking chill of the longwinded December night is no deterrent, how can the icy winds and the freezing sun be?

So just watch it, and we have all kinds of youngsters here in our own backyard at any time of the day: fervent runners dipping off the roads, students running to the campus, professionals running by the clock, couples running steadily, children running around parks and gyms, post running ahead of their masters, and a starer like me who is running all over the place to get into the race!

At the moment of my writing this, snowdrops are falling on our roof and the little flakes have already started to dolefully empty up to the ground and the breeze around. And a runner just passed by my window!

Neelanjana Gautam Ghosh recently moved to Princeton with her husband, Anubha Ghosh, a postdoctoral researcher in the Electrical Engineering Department at Princeton University. Prior to this, she delved in writing feature stories for English news dailies in India and also taught undergraduate students in Loyola College, Calcutta, India.

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