The Indus Dispatch

November • Issue #4

IN OMNIA PARATUS
INDUS
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
HYDERABAD

Cover Art

BY MRIDANI KASHYAP

Regular Correspondents

AMY RACHAL CLEMENT - FICTION

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The Indus Dispatch

An • Academic • Existential • Update

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Picking up Where We Left Off

Lord Ram's done freshening up after the whole affair of and defeating Ravan.

Last month, we had Dussehra. For those of you who didn't read the October edition (just read it, it's free, for god's sake), we talked about the origins of Dussehra, what is symbolizes moth literally and metaphorically, and then we went into a bit of a discussion regarding the values that underlie the festival.

Well, it's been a while since then, and this month we celebrated Diwali, to mark Lord Ram's return from his crusade. Well, that's all good, you say, what about the symbolism? What of the deep-seated metaphysical concepts that are ingrained into even this simple celebration of joy? Well, we did "good and evil" last time, so that's off the cards, but there is the idea of New Beginnings.

However, before that, we might as well get to know the festival a bit better. To start off, you should know that Diwali is an official festival in 12 countries, including Mauritius, Singapore, Trinidad, and Fiji.

The festival is comprised of five distinct days. The first of these is Dhanteras, during which the Diyas are first lit, and homesteads are decorated. This is followed by Naraka Chaturdashi, the day on which some pray for the peace of their defiled ancestors, but mainly the day on which much of the purchasing of the sweet stuff is done. Some learned experts ask questions, such as "Just how sweet can a sweet be?", and from personal

Image Courtesy: Prachi Palwe on Unsplash

experience, I can definitely state that researches of the utmost vigor are instituted in this direction, on this day and the ones following, with the occasional side effects of children aged seven to sixteen expiring of diabetic disorders. The third day, of Lakshmi Pujan, is a day reserved for family. Shops close early, people visit relatives. New clothes are worn, pujas are conducted, and diyas are lit. The third day, is where all the action happens, so to speak. The fircrackers, the feasts, and the sweets all mark the third day, and are what is talked about when the subject of Diwali is broached. The fourth day is more popular among rural communities, with the celebration of cattle and crops. The fifth and final day known as Bhau-Beej, celebrates the sibling bond between brothers and sister - similar to Raksha bandhan, but with advances made by the opposite party. Having got that brief overview of the technicalities of the festival, we might go into what discussion of symbolism there is to find. One must keep in mind that the amount of lore in even a single day of any Indian festival is massive, with all the interconnectedness and interpretation and whatnot, so we might as well go with the most obvious of things; in this case, it happens to be the idea of new beginnings.

Image Courtesy: Udayaditya Barua on Unsplash

Ram's new beginning was the end of his exile, and his chance to take up his responsibility as king. He had quite literally conquered his demons, and his journey was over. Now, the one thing that mkes it hard for many to apply the story to their own lives, is the fact that Ram did nothing to deserve his exile, and so as far as making a real "new start" went, there were no reparations to be made, no mistakes he had to fix. Now, isn't quite how it often works in our mortal lives. People want new starts because their own actions have fallen short of being ideal. This can mean anything from simple, counterproductive habits, to an action that affected others. Two kinds of turnarounds then arise, one in which a man must reinvent himself, and the other in which a man must both accept, and take resposibility for himself. While the first is a discussion of willpower, and personal strength and such, often talked about in self-help books, the second is more often seen as a movie trope, the kind where a chap murders a bloke or two and then proceeds to save his

city, and perhaps a female, after attending three group circle meets in suspicious-looking old warehouses. Despite the cliche, it poses substantial questions. How much can one truly forgive oneself? How many times does a person have to make mistakes before acceptance and taking responsibility can no longer make up for what they have done? Is it inevitable that the rest of one's life be lived as a sort of compensation for his past? How much compensation is enough? We're not even going to start trying to answer those questions here, but just asking them, once again shows how little of what is truly human can be quantified, or calculated in any way.

New starts are admirable things, in the end, and if ever the notion arises that it's a bit too late for change, heed the words that follow:

The chief beauty about time is that you cannot waste it in advance. The next year, the next day, the next hour are lying ready for you, as perfect, as unspoiled, as if you had never wasted or misapplied a single moment in all your life. You can turn over a new leaf every hour if you choose.

- ARNOLD BENNETT

Editorial Column

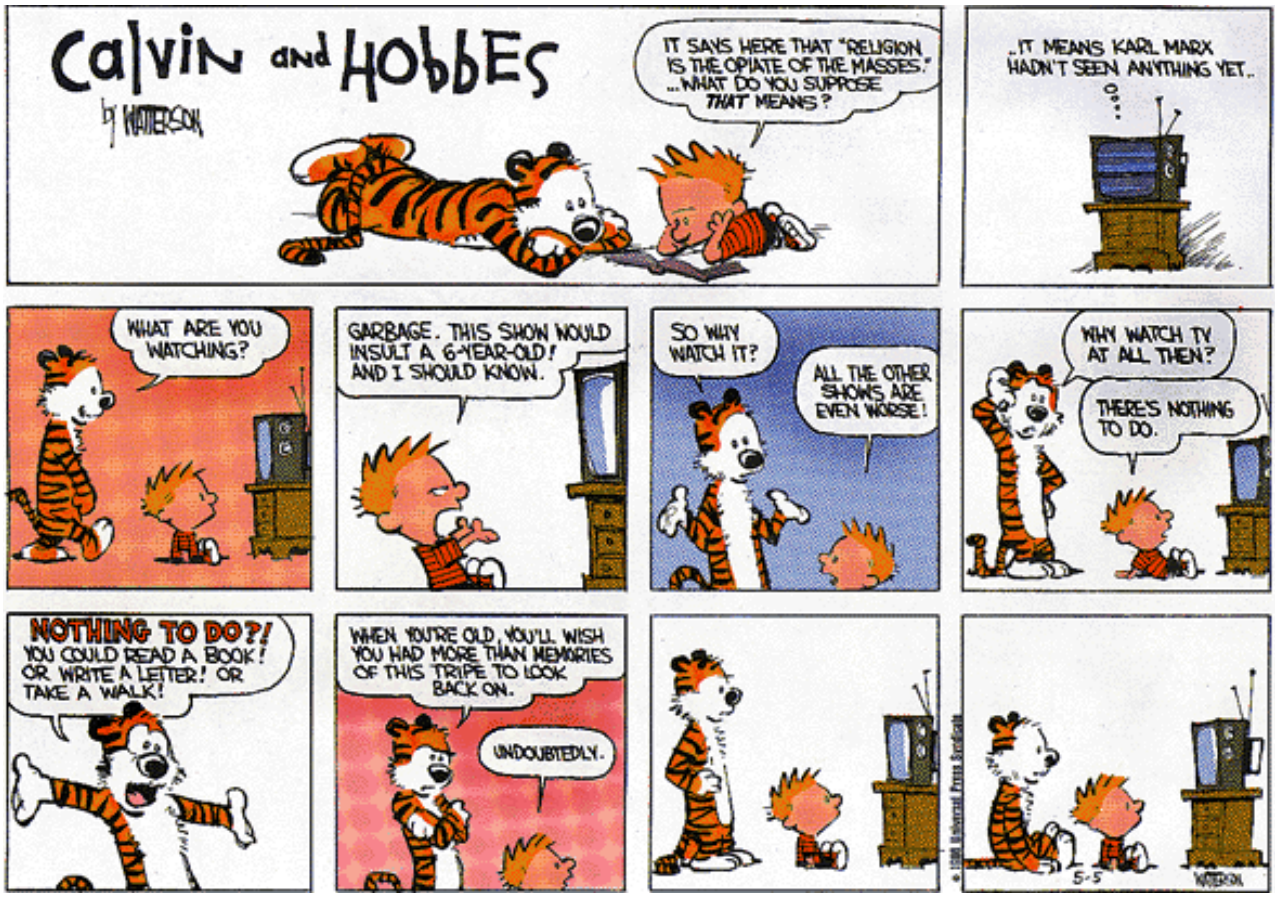
Still going strong.

Greetings.

It's been a rather festive two months, with Dussehra the month before, and now, Diwali. It's been a busy time as well, what with innovation day, innovation camp, and last but certainly not least - midterms. "Working on a newsletter during midterms?" you might ask. "Risky proposition, what?" Assuredly it is, and we're not paid nearly enough for the work we do (come to think of it, we're not paid at all. We'll be taking this up with the union. but what can we say? We're a dedicated lot. Although, certainly, it would be a great help if you were to send in an article or two. Just one article per month, that's an average of 16words per day, or less than one word an hour. While this is obviously not the recommended method of composing an article (although, do be sure to write to us if anyone tries it out), it does show how easy it really is to contribute. All that aside, we've created a few new fixtures, so do let us know what you think of them.

Also - we now have an archive website. We'll be making it more useful soon, but for now, visit http://theindusdispatch.rf.gd/, and give it the once-over.

- The Editorial Board



A Talk that Transformed the Perspective of Failure

A presentation like few others - recollections of a startup school student.

Image Courtesy: Noah Silliman on Unsplash

It was on the 14th of October that an eye-opening session was scheduled for all the students of the startup school with a mundane name "Coping with Failure". This was one of the enlivening leadership - talks that startup school students hearken every week and yet it stands out very differently owing to its enlightening nature. The talk was delivered by Mrs. Sarojini Rao (Principal of Indus International School Bengaluru) - a true leader and an inspiring preacher.

The session began by a comprehensive comparison between failing and failure - terms that are often used in lieu of each other. But as time rolled out, we learnt that they were different and that it is as important to fail as it is to succeed. I wish I could reiterate the words spoken by Mrs. Sarojini, but I would not want to be the monotonously echoing

parrot. Hence, I would like to continue by articulating how fascinated I was by the illuminating talk. I was very captivated by Mrs. Rao's presentation. It was not a fancily bedecked stack of slides, but a clear elucidation of concepts, relevance, and insight. She was forthright in her speech, that helped us avoid confusion in learning about these concepts. We have had the opportunity to converse with her which also assisted us in clarifying our doubts.

It was then that we have had a pivotal variation in the session when the CEO General Ray has conferred about the fear of failure and the significance of reflection and introspection to broach new perspectives. It was indeed a roller coaster ride as students and teachers determined what failure was and how we should view it.

It was the incessant enthusiasm from all the participants of the session that made it so broadening and enriching. I would not hesitate a second to express that it was very fortunate for me to attend this talk. I look forward with a lot of eagerness to more of these sessions that are very helpful and constructive for all of us.

- Prabhat Puli

“THE ONLY REAL MISTAKE IS THE ONE FROM WHICH WE LEARN NOTHING.”

Henry Ford

Innovation Day

A student's reflection concerning the event held on the 13th of October.

The IISH Innovation Day was dated on the 13th of October, 2020 where students had the opportunity to learn from the speaker, General Arjun Ray, about the influence of a higher purpose on innovative thinking. The speaker had also discussed the role of empathy and creativity.

My Reflection about the session:

"When taking part in the session, I felt enlightened to know about the extent to which people could innovate and the true meaning of creativity.

I also learnt about the differentiating factors between a higher purpose, a passion, and an interest through witnessing an animated interaction with the General. While all these 3 have desire in common, a higher purpose was differentiated by being higher and helping a greater humanity.

There would be a positive feedback loop integrated through making people happy and receiving happiness in return. However, I became more involved in the session when the General spoke about a paucity in empathy, a driver for higher purpose. This was mainly due to the lack of awareness, the fear of sacrificing time, money, and effort, the difficulty in leaving a comfort zone, and avoiding failure.

I connected to this message since I have seen people who did not have a burning desire. Initially, I thought there could not be such power; however, when listening to the General, I realized that will power is superhuman in some people.

The session provided a sophisticated learning opportunity since I could understand Tikkun Olam and Design Thinking more clearly, which I did not initially.

I was surprised at the lengths at which one must reflect and introspect in order to find a greater calling which transcends beyond self-satisfaction and desires.

The General had also mentioned how creativity and innovation were pivotal for problem solving in a dynamically shifting world. By this, I was perplexed when I realized that without re-skilling and developing competencies, a system would perish. Topics related to fixed and growth mindsets, self-centrism, and the need for self-knowledge were emphasized.

I was introduced to the concept of unlearning when the General mentioned about unlearning apathetic behavior to global issues and negative attitudes towards self. This took me by surprise since learning more was fundamental; however, I realized that unlearning could also be a form of learning.

Re-skilling and adapting to changing situations was another prevalent topic in the session where relearning core human values, such as empathy and curiosity, would re-enforce a collective mindset among people. Relearning how to approach global issues, with regards to enjoying the fulfillment of serving humanity, was also taught.

- Abhishikth Savarapu

Trifling Trivia

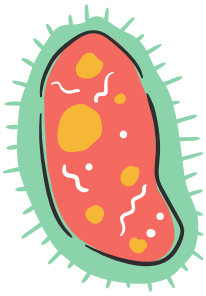
Information that you'll certainly need, one day or another.

Elliptical Orbits

The planets orbiting the Sun are not being pulled by the Sun - they are following the curved space-time deformation caused by the Sun. The reason the planets never fall into the Sun is because of the speed at which they are travelling.

Prussian Blue

Mixing Prussian blue with diluted sulphuric acid produces a gas is was colourless, water soluble and acidic. We know this gas as hydrogen cyanide.



M.R.S.A

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aurelius

An infection caused by a staph bacteria that's become resistant to antibiotics. Especially problematic in hospital settings.

Typography

People are more likely to agree with a statement written in Baskerville than any other font.

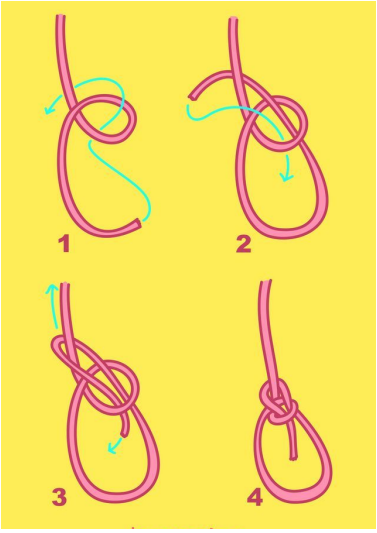
Artists

Pablo Picasso carried a revolver loaded with blanks, which he would fire at whoever asked him what his work “meant.” He would likely disapprove of modern art instructors.

Knots

The Bowline Knot

The one knot that everyone must know how to tie: the bowline knot. Easy to tie, and more importantly, easy to untie even after being subjected to stress. Does not unravel under load, but may come loose when not under load. The variant shown here is the easiest type of bowline to tie, and is sufficient for most anchorage. Forms a fixed loop at the end of a line.



Borrowing Words

Excerpts from the greatest writers of our time.

I think she must have been very strictly brought up, she's so desperately anxious to do the wrong thing correctly.

- Saki, Reginald

It isn't often that Aunt Dahlia lets her angry passions rise, but when she does, strong men climb up trees and pull them up after them.

- P.G Wodehouse, Right Ho Jeeves

Do you take pride in your hurt? Does it make you seem large and tragic? Well, think about it. Maybe you're playing a part on a great stage with only yourself as audience.

- John Steinbeck, East of Eden

If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about, he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water.

- Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon

Sometimes fate is like a small sandstorm that keeps changing directions. You change direction but the sandstorm chases you. You turn again, but the storm adjusts. Over and over you play this out, like some ominous dance with death just before dawn. Why? Because this storm isn't something that blew in from far away, something that has nothing to do with you. This storm is you. Something inside of you. So all you can do is give in to it, step right inside the storm, closing your eyes and plugging up your ears so the sand doesn't get in, and walk through it, step by step. There's no sun there, no moon, no direction, no sense of time. Just fine white sand swirling up into the sky like pulverized bones. That's the kind of sandstorm you need to imagine.

And you really will have to make it through that violent, metaphysical, symbolic storm. No matter how metaphysical or symbolic it might be, make no mistake about it: it will cut through flesh like a thousand razor blades. People will bleed there, and you will bleed too. Hot, red blood. You'll catch that blood in your hands, your own blood and the blood of others.

And once the storm is over you won't remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive. You won't even be sure, in fact, whether the storm is really over. But one thing is certain. When you come out of the storm you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what this storm's all about.

- Haruki Murakami, Kafka On The Shore

High Time ~~for~~ to Change

Starting by being the change you want to see in the world.

Its time, let us talk about the Environmental issues that we have created for ourselves… Have you ever wondered about how is it that every household has a television set but not a wastewater recycler? How every household has cellular phones but often do not have waste segregating bins? How every individual tends to celebrate birthdays by cutting a cake but have barely planted a single tree? And the list of questions I ask myself is long.

The very word "Environmental issues" will make most of the readers to flip the page to the next or to scroll down the page. Some of us might just sigh and say "well we cannot do much about it" why read through it too. But for few of us, it's a topic that brings a great deal of worry and concern as the only living planet, which is our home, is in grave danger as we face severe to worse environmental issues year after year. The impact of these issues is felt by one and all, though we may not realise it currently but one thing we need to understand is that our ecosystem is made up of closely interconnected abiotic and biotic components. Disturbance in any one element of the component will show its consequences in another.

I am sure if I were to ask you to list down the major environmental issues you would be able to name at least three of them; Pollution, Climate Change and Extinction of species, being part of the list. But these are not the only ones as we will be able to list these issues based on the alphabetical order. Categorising the environmental issues into local and global issues, depending on its impact, can help us work around actions that help mitigate or adapt to the issues better. Global warming for example would be a global issue whereas pollution of a particular lake or river on the other hand would be a local issue, both though caused due to inconsiderate anthropocentric activities.

Think about your daily routine from morning till you go to bed and pause every time you contribute positively towards being part of the solution or part of the environmental issue management strategies. Note down the number of times you paused and these pauses will be your contribution towards helping save our only planet. In cases where one had no reasons to pause then its time to consider to do something about it, to wait until someone else does something about it or to do nothing at all and watch the environmental systems reach its tipping points.

We all have heard the saying "Little drops make the mighty ocean", therefore on similar lines, every positive action from our end to reduce the environmental burden will matter. I remember my childhood days being more sustainable compared to my current lifestyle. Plastic bottles were reused as water bottles or for SUPW (Socially Useful Productive Work). Old newspapers were used for making envelopes for carrying groceries, unlike the online products which come in layers and layer of plastic coating, clothes too were handed down to our siblings or cousins or converted to foot mats, unlike the new fashion boom where today's fashion becomes obsolete tomorrow.

Our diet was mostly vegetarian and having meat used to be either twice a week or on special occasions, not allowing our food mile and carbon footprint to go up. Reminiscing will bring in many more such examples and I am sure each one of us can quite relate to it.

The numerous environmentalists, environmental protagonist, concerned individuals and I, we believe that each one of us can definitely make a difference to the environmental issues that we have created for ourselves. Each one of us can be part of the solution and the start point should be "By bringing about a series of lifestyle changes".

It might sound simple but it is one of the most challenging tasks as we are so rooted in a particular lifestyle and we look for convenience all the time. But if each one of us can start with one simple action such as reducing the amount of meat consumption or buying from the local market or any other lifestyle change that will yield positive benefits, then each

one of us will play the role of captain planet, the one who saves not just the day but the only living planet, we call home.

- Ms. Vishaka Labar

Image Courtesy: Ms. Vishaka Labar

Image Courtesy: Ms. Vishaka Labar

Our Man in Mumbai

Snippets of factually flexible news from abroad.

Courtesy Jim Carrier

The hearing of one Mr. Rushdie, of Jodhpur, Rajastan, was conducted early this week, on the charge of reckless driving. The Magistrate laid the facts of the case before him, including the charges of speeding, endangering pedestrians, and five counts of running a stop sign. When asked for a comment, Mr Rushdie said he saw very well that his actions were rather on the wild side, and but given the full story, one couldn't fail to excuse him. "I assure your honor I didn't do it on purpose - I was simply drunk at the time."

*

By Sally Dwight

Salim Malhotra, of well-known cinema fame completed his full course of rehabilitation for his alcohol addiction, this wednesday on the 20th of November. The party was said to have been extravagant even by celebrity standards, and was a grand success all through the course of the evening, until R.K Subhramanian, in honor of Malhotra's recovery, proposed a toast of the 1975 Chateau D'Yquem that he had brought with him for the occasion. He later admitted it may have been slightly tactless of him.

*

Provided by James Deen, Times Magazine

In recent news, J. Krishna, the man arrested a week ago following the spectacular conclusion of the HDFC cheque forgery case, was released this Monday after obtaining the necessary papers, to the great consternation of both the discerning public, and the law enforcement officials that had expended much effort in bringing about his detainment. The consternation was initially due to the extremely short nature of his stay in reformatory establishments, but later increased when it was found that he had forged the papers.

Saving Private Ryan

The beauty of the horrors of war.

Saving Private Ryan is a brilliant movie about the war and people in it; a true story of life, created by Steven Spielberg; a piece of art that awakes the kindest feelings and emotions.

The story begins in 6th june 1944, when a squad of solders under the command of Capt. John H. Miller (Tom Hanks) fights for their future and for the future of their families. People know that this war takes lots of lives, however, each loss is something personal and something terrible. Saving Private Ryan is the story of how John Miller gets an order to save young Ryan, the only alive son of a mother. The team of John Miller has to overcome numerous battles in order to find out this one young man and get him back to his mother.

Each meeting with the enemies takes the life of one of Miller's soldiers. These people die to save another person, whom they never know and never meet. It is too hard to lose people in the only one name – Private Ryan. Miller hates this boy, but has nothing to do – his aim is to save him and allow his mother see her son once again. When Miller finally finds Ryan, this young man does not want to leave his squad: "These guys deserve to go home as much as I do.

The end of the movie is tragic indeed: the team, who is sent to save Pr. Ryan, is killed. Capt. John Miller dies, but completes his task – he saves Ryan, a person, who will come to Miller's grave in order to introduce his family and salute his friends, who saved him one day.

War times always cause tears, grief, and pity. People fight in order to be free, to be heard, and to be understood. Of course, these people achieve their purposes, the wars are won, and the freedom is got. However, the lives of people, both young and old, cannot be returned. This is the most terrible thing about any war.

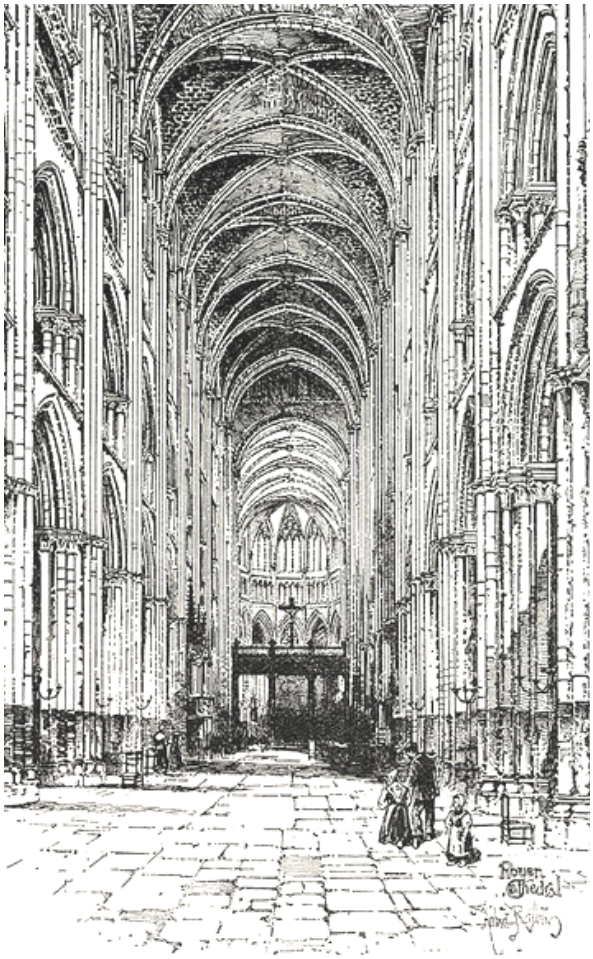
Steven Spielberg makes a wonderful attempt to represent several war issues and explain what people feel during the war. Soldiers face numerous battles day by day: some of them die, some of them get injuries, and some of them feel that they are not too brave to be soldiers and fight for someone's lives and future.

- Anish Verma Gottumukkala

Fountains and Wishes

The beginning.

...Continued from where we left off last time. The protagonist, in a time where the world has lost magic and the arts, follows a map that leads her to an old churchyard. (read the previous installment here.)



It took no more than ten minutes for her to be out the door and onto the path she knew led to the Church, pushing aside cobwebs from low hanging branches in her way. Another ten, and she found herself in front of a graveyard, chipped metal fences and rows of gravestones, long abandoned, overgrown into the forest. Past those, illuminated by the last few rays of the sun as it set, ruins of what she presumed used to be the Church.

Moving swiftly through the foliage surrounding the old building, she let out a grin at her success. She pulled out her flashlight in the waning sunlight, using it to scan the area. The building was not large, but not lacking in size either. Large windows lined the roof and small barred doors stood against the walls. What must have happened, she wondered, for the village folk to just abandon such a building. She turned her map to match the entryway of the building, holding her flashlight between her shoulder and neck, plopping her glasses onto her nose to magnify the route in the church.

The map led to a large circle in the middle of what seemed to be a room even larger than the building, where she knew she would find her answers.

She walked into the church, the warmth from the sun disappearing with a flash of cold wind. A few more steps into the building and the darkness became even more apparent. Every window that she had seen from the outside must've been covered, entirely, with vines, bushes, trees even. There seemed to exist a small ecosystem inside the Church through which she had to navigate.

Holding the map out in front of her, she walked through the trees, through one corridor into another hallway and two more until she was left standing at a staircase, hidden in the shadows. She walked down the stairs and after one, two, seven, what seemed like an

endless amount of walking, she reached a single doorway. A quick pass with her flashlight revealed a passage through which she saw a room larger than anything she had seen before. She folded up the piece of paper she had been following so diligently, marking the entrance with a piece of cloth, before turning her attention to the elephant in the room. The largest shadow, and what turned out to be a fountain.

She stood in front of the colossal fountain, mouth gaping. The circle in the middle of her map, this is what it had been all along. Not a table, like she'd initially suspected, but a fountain. She walked closer to the structure, running her hand over the polished marble in awe, and confusion. What could she possibly do with a fountain? There was no reasonable explanation for the decades of searching and deciphering that could warrant a fountain. Another pass of her torch through the middle of the fountain and she saw a flash. She froze the light, moving it back to where it had reflected. A coin. A single coin. She directed the torchlight further back into the fountain, and suddenly there were waves of light, a small explosion of reflections from tens and hundreds of tiny coins.

She grinned, she had heard of such things in her past. This was a wishing fountain. A wish, that may have been what her predecessors were looking for, spiritual people as they were. She shook her head at the irony, fishing a coin out of her pocket. She wasn't going to think about how much money might be in the well, she knew better than to mess with spirits. A small flick of her thumb on her index finger sent her dime rolling towards the fountain with the tiniest ding. It landed in the dry fountain with a tiny tick, rolling over and over and over and over itself before performing a final round and becoming still.

Then there was a brief moment of silence. A prolonged pause, anticipating and waiting. And then a BANG. A loud voice filled the room, echoing over itself. Speaking complete gibberish before settling on a comprehensible language.

"Good wake, my friend. What is it you wish for?" To be continued...

- Amy Rachal Clement

Indus Hyderabad Wishes you a

Happy Diwali

BILLBOARD

The Editorial Board Announces:

Know anything about anything? Of course you do. Think it's interesting enough for people to know about? Even better. For our new "information section", to be put into practice from the October edition, we invite you to send us any snippets of useful information you may have gathered over the course of your careers. from a handy way to make pasta sauce, to surviving an eel attack - we welcome everything. As always, reach out to us at: aarush.kumbhakern@indusschoolhyd.com

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