



# Ripples

An ACM Saahitya Publication

# ACM SAAHITYA SIG HEAD NOTE

Saahitya means literary work in Sanskrit. It can also be taken to mean musical compositions, and in general, we consider it as a notion for creative work. Creative ideas and pieces require effort and time; the latter we seem to have too much of these days. It has been a year since the pandemic started. Having completed a full cycle, the year started with a sense of fear. Then came some clarity and not long after, acceptance. Now the cycle seems to have started all over again.

For ACM Saahitya, it has been a similar kind of year. It started with confusion, with lack of clarity on how the online year will change the events we hold and the things we do. We also had to inculcate togetherness in our group, which is easy when we meet physically but challenging to attain online in front of screens.

Jojo (Dwaipayan Bhattacharya) and I (Avakash Bhat) realized that this online thing was a new frontier for us. We had options of doing something different this year. One of the first things that we decided to dive into was the Saahitya Magazine. It was something that we could internally organize and something that everyone in ACM Saahitya can easily contribute to. The magazine also allowed us to cater to the various interests in our group.

We were amazed by the number and variety of contributions ranging from literary pieces to recipes to hilarious song translations. The organizing team headed by Linu George, the enthusiastic 2nd years, and the experienced 3rd and 4th years did a fantastic job ensuring that this magazine always progressed.

Often, the best kind of work comes when we are confused and weary about what the future holds. People believe that grabbing the opportunity to create something new will maintain a semblance of control over what is to come. Everything we have in this magazine has a creative thought and conscious effort behind it. It is our first public issue, and hopefully, it becomes a staple to ACM Saahitya, much like Multiverse and Literati over the coming years.

As you read the issue, we hope that you are inspired to fearlessly approach your creative dreams. The pandemic has been a struggle in the world, and also the cause of unprecedented turmoil within individuals. But internal turmoil has always been the ashes from which the phoenix of creative potential rises. So, look around, read, listen, observe and enjoy. Create some work of your own.





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# The Art of Yearning

As I sit here, in the confines of my room, busy as a scribe, I write this article. It isn't an article, nay; in fact, this is a letter from me, to each one of you, who reads it.

A lot many things can be said about this year, I reckon. But saying that it has been an unusual one, sums it up!

With so much time on one's hands and with a worldwide lockdown, one cannot help but ponder over life's mysteries. I, for one, have devoted myself to learning more about the Language of the Soul—namely, Emotions. Emotions prove to be delightfully paradoxical; they amuse me.

I prefer to envision Emotions as the contents of a pot.

And just like any other pot:

1)It may be kept open for passersby to peep in.

2)It can be kept tightly sealed

3)It can be broken

4)It can be kept on the mantelpiece as an ornament

OR

It can also be buried deep down in the Earth, in an unmarked spot.

Now you see, each one of us comes with a pot. An empty pot.

Which we fill- with what we feel!

Some of us may prefer not to fill anything in the pot, while others may have an overflowing pot.

It's all relative, you see?

Now one may wonder, where does Nostalgia feature in all of this?

Nostalgia is indeed, a remarkable exponent of Emotions.

Allow me to explain.

Analogically speaking, Nostalgia is what you feel when:

1)You stumble upon the aforementioned buried pot, purely by chance.

2)You grab a shovel and frantically dig to find the pot.

3) You have a lot of time on your hands and nothing better to do than search for the pot.

The lockdown has afforded many of us a rare chance (and a shovel!) to dig deep and unearth our Emotions.

Most of us have escaped this tedious task by citing the paucity of time. But for some of us, we have been wearing our 'fast-paced lives' as a shield, an armour of sorts. To protect us against the swirling torrent of emotions- that is Nostalgia.

If you have ever felt a lump in your throat or have gotten dewy-eyed while reminiscing over a memory, or leafing through old photographs, you have had a bout of Nostalgia, Mon Ami!

And the best way to deal with Nostalgia?

Embrace it. Feel it. Cherish it.

Do not try to push it away.

By my reckoning, nostalgia is a wonderful melange of sentiments. Like a gourmet dish, sample each morsel thoroughly. Let each bite introduce you to a new flavour, a new sensation. And when you are done with your meal, when the sensation goes...you will feel satisfied, yet lighter. Yes, there are certain flavours that you may not like. Yet, you will feel fulfilled.

Let not nostalgia have free reign over your emotional constitution. It is only too easy to succumb to her wily charms and drown in the comfort of the past.

Nostalgia is neither something that can be induced, nor can it be avoided.

I know that many of us feel nostalgic with regards to our childhood, our college life and so on. We sit in the respite of our homes, fretting and worrying over nostalgia. But someday, when life returns back to normal, mark my words- we shall be feeling nostalgic for these days. We shall miss the time we spent with our families, the epoch that afforded us the ability to just relax and rewind!

-Neketra Trivedi



# PINK DRESS

And I sat in a corner wearing a pink dress and sports shoes.  
How else do I put it?

It's like,  
Eating cookies for dinner,  
Feet sprawled across the bed,  
And watching people eat lasagna at the table.

It's like,  
Listening to Jessie J in the shower  
At 2 am  
While your parents fight loudly to a tune of their own.

It's like,  
Hugging a hard old saggy pillow,  
Red blotchy face full of tears, sobbing  
And a couple cuddling to sleep right next to you.

Shit, I lost track.  
Where was I again?  
Yes.  
Pink dress. Sports shoes. Me. Family restaurant.

Did I tell you about the ruffles?  
Yeah yeah, it was a cheap dress alright.  
The only thing mom could afford,  
Not that I ever complained.

My shoes have started tearing up again.  
Don't tell anybody, alright?

He walked in,  
I could already see the disgust  
When he saw the dull yellow duck I was holding in my arms.  
Judgemental much? Cue eye rolls.





I knew he wasn't interested in me the moment he asked my name  
And didn't even bother waiting for an answer.  
'Order something please!' he said  
Impatience flickering in his eyes.

'I want a chocolate cake.  
Add extra choco chips at the top.  
And a butterscotch milkshake with extra caramel.  
And two chocolate filled donuts to go, please. Thank you!'

The waiter stared blankly at me  
Then at him  
And then at Mrs. Bose.

She sighed,  
'She will have a green salad.  
With apple juice.  
A chicken sandwich for me!'

I laughed at the man,  
'Yes, I can't eat all that.  
What happened, big boy,  
Wanna run away from the dinner already?'

Then for the first time,  
He smiled slightly.  
Disgust clearing away from his eyes,  
He saw me as a person.

Only for a jiff maybe,  
A random flashing moment,  
But he could see me as his daughter.  
The same charming sense of humour.

'Mr. Alvarez,  
The treatment is getting costlier and costlier.  
Jenny disappeared.  
I cannot take care of Amy on my own!'





There was silence at the table after that.  
I stuffed my face with lettuce,  
Picked at my seventy five year old hands  
And imagined being in any place other than this right here.

'I am actually Joker's wife,'  
I broke the awkwardness.  
'How so?' he looked at me,  
Trying to suppress a smile.

'My disease is also called Harlequin disease.  
So I'm Harlequin right?  
Better than mom calling me a butterfly, in my opinion.  
I look older than Mr. Desai from the psych ward!'

'Stop joking about your disease.'  
Mrs. Bose scolded again.  
'Your daughter is really hard to handle,  
I wish Jenny had taught her some manners!'

'Don't worry about it now,'  
He raised his hand and lightly patted my head.  
'I will take her home with me.'  
Home sounded fun at that moment.

Anyway, long story short,  
I live in a hospital on the other side of Kolkata now, rich people side.  
More disgusted looks towards my duck basically.  
At least Mr. Desai got shifted here, thank goodness.

I stayed 'home' for about five days  
Then his new wife couldn't keep kitty parties  
With the ugly loud thing living in the guest room.  
His apologetic face was funny, I took a picture.

I'll show you  
But only if you promise to keep this one little secret of mine,





I tried to kill myself yesterday.  
But failed.

Now I play chess with Mr. Desai everyday.  
He said he likes my pink dress.  
He fixed my shoes too.  
A pretty good liar I'd say, what do you think?

**-Vageesha Mishra**



# THE SUNDAY THAT LEFT THE SPORTING WORLD STOKED

July 14, 2019. Sports fans worldwide woke up in anticipation of all the action the Sunday was going to offer. Two major sporting events, the Cricket World Cup Final and the Wimbledon Gentlemen's Singles Final, scheduled to start in London within a few hours of each other. And boy, did the day live up to expectation!

The longer of the two, the Cricket World Cup Final, started half an hour before noon at the Home of Cricket, Lord's, with the previous edition's runner up New Zealand taking on the mighty hosts England. It would be a maiden World Cup win for one of them, which made it all the more enthralling. While England shared a similar position now, it hadn't been so four years ago, when they crashed out in the group stages. That humiliating end led to a total metamorphosis of English cricket, especially in the limited-overs formats, culminating in them reaching the final for the first time since 1992. For New Zealand, it was the final frontier once again, where they had been decimated by Australia the last time around. At the midway stage, New Zealand had scraped to a total of 241, modest by modern standards in a one-day game.

Around half an hour before the New Zealand innings ended, 10 miles south-west of Lord's, two men, dressed in pristine white, stepped onto the Wimbledon Centre Court, having already won there a combined 12 times. As Roger Federer took on Novak Djokovic, it was to be a battle of art, elegance and grace versus science, precision and efficiency. After

After an hour of absorbing tennis, Djokovic took the first set in a tie-breaker. Not one to take it lying down, Federer came storming back to win the second set 6-1. The third set would then again go into a tie-breaker, which Djokovic won, and with that, most fans' hopes of Federer's 21st Slam diminished. After all, Federer was almost six years older, and a longer game would most likely benefit Djoko.

Back at Lord's, New Zealand held the explosive English top order on a tight leash, using the favourable conditions to their advantage, and leaving them on the brink at 86/4 at the start of the 24th over. The tension in the air was palpable, with the match hanging in the balance. New Zealand-born Ben Stokes, now joined by Jos Buttler, put on a century stand to get within 50 runs of the target, but Buttler fell soon after.

Over at the Centre Court, Federer took the fourth set 6-4, courtesy of some exhilarating tennis, taking the final to a fifth and final set. The historically rigid-minded Championships had adopted a new rule at the start of 2019, stating that the fifth set would head into a tie-breaker once the score reaches 12 games each. If any match had looked like it would go the distance, this was the one. Both players wrested control at various points and looked like they were favourites, but the other would just come back stronger. At one point, the score was 8-7, Federer was serving with two Championship points. It looked like the Swiss maestro had it in his grasp, for he had to win only one point. But

Djokovic found a way to fight back and save them. This was followed by 8 game holds as the match headed to the 12-all tie-breaker for the first time. It was an exhibition of tennis of the highest class by two of the greatest players of all time.

Meanwhile, in the company of the lower-order English batsmen, Stokes had reduced the equation to 15 required off the last over, not before suffering a scare when Trent Boult caught him, only to step on the boundary cushion. That would definitely have been curtains for England. However, it wasn't, and if anyone knew the target could still be chased down, it was him. He had been at the receiving end of the carnage when West Indies' Carlos Brathwaite smashed 4 consecutive sixes to take them to victory when 19 runs were required off the last over in the 2016 T20 WC final at Kolkata. This was going to be the moment of redemption for Stokes if he managed to pull it off. He hit a six off the third ball. Then on the fourth ball, he was diving to reach the crease attempting a second run, when the throw from the deep by Martin Guptill ricocheted off his bat and into the boundary fences, the Umpire Kumar Dharmasena awarding England a total of 6 runs (which he later admitted was a mistake) heaping misery on Kane Williamson's team. Stokes held up his hands as a token of apology, but the damage had been done. Guptill, whose runout of Dhoni in the semifinal against India had won them the match, couldn't believe what was happening, neither could his teammates nor the millions of people watching the game. This was turning out to be a thriller with never-ending twists and turns. With 3 required off the last 2, New Zealand effected 2 runouts to ensure the match ended in a tie and went to the Super over for the first time in a 50-over game. The

The commentary box went into delirium. This final was compensating for all the damp squibs previous finals had turned out to be.

While Trent Boult was getting ready to bowl one final over to Stokes and Buttler, back on the Wimbledon Centre Court, Djokovic had pulled ahead 4-1 in the tie break before Federer held 2 serves, but it was not to be.

Djokovic won the tie-break 7-3, the set 13-12, and the match 3 sets to 2. It was an extraordinary match between two players who would not give up, which lasted 4 hours and 57 minutes, the longest Wimbledon final of all time.

At Lord's, England scored 15 off the 6 balls. New Zealand had to score 16 to win, but they could only manage 14 off their first 5 balls, and Guptill was run out trying to get a second run. Despite managing to come level, New Zealand had been defeated by a farcical rule: the winner would be decided by the number of boundaries they had scored if the super over was tied. England had scored 26 to New Zealand's 17. England had won a match which neither team had lost. Lord's, used to the classy nature of high-quality Test cricket, wasn't accustomed to the madness that had descended. The crowd broke into a roar of ecstasy like never before, in stark contrast to the depths of despair that the New Zealanders had sunk to.

Both the games were decided by the barest of margins, those inches by which Federer's backhands had sailed wide, the few centimeters by which the ball could have missed Stokes' bat, or the umpiring decisions that went the other way. It definitely felt like neither of the teams who ended up losing deserved to lose. And it is people's reactions to these sorts of situations that set them apart. New Zealand captain Kane Williamson's

grace at the end of the game and his avoidance of the four-letter word that all of us like to blame things on: luck, all the while trying to make sense of how and why they weren't the winners, won the hearts of all the spectators at the ground and everywhere else.

It is said that sport mirrors life, and never was it more true than on that day. Sometimes, the best a person or a team gives may not be enough, however unfair that seems. How you react to these situations can make or break you, and we can all surely learn from Williamson and Federer how that can be done.

***-Dwijesh Athrey***

# CHILD IN YOU

"Everything seemed possible when I looked through the eyes of a child. And every once in a while; I remember, I still have the chance to be that wild." – Nikki Rowe.

I remember it so clearly. Almost as if it happened yesterday. A wave of nostalgia sweeps across my chest every time this memory crosses my mind.

Heavy showers and wind had made my tiny frock poof up against the unstoppable breeze. My mother ran outside with an umbrella to try and stop this childlike foolishness, but winded up dancing with me in the rain. My grandmother watched in concern and rushed to pull us inside and towel off our heads, but ended up joining our little rain party.

I was eight years old. My mother was 31, and my grandmother 53. It seems funny how we found joy and bliss in the same madness despite all that age difference. It makes me realise how there is a child within your soul, no matter how much you age.

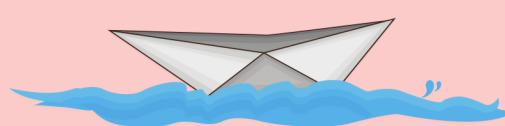
When did my 'child' label vanish though? It applied when I broke my mother's favourite dinner set with my new bouncy ball. I think it even worked at 16 years when I 'accidentally' broke open my dad's alcohol cabinet and tried a sip of something that I'm sure was some sort of chemical. Probably even last month, when I tried to show off my newly acquired driving skills to my dad and ended up hitting his car against the garage.

Aren't these people patient!

Aren't these people patient!

They often say that you always remain a child to your parents, no matter how old you grow. Maybe the reason being that they have seen us in our early stages of life and believe that our childhood innocence is still there within. The same way, aside from our parents eyes too, we remain a child in some way or another. Whether it is how you still hold your friend's hand while crossing the road, or how you like to scream at the top of your lungs when your favourite song comes on, there is a bit of childishness in almost everything we do. In psychology, this aspect is called 'inner child'. Considered to be a subpersonality which controls one's consciousness, the inner child is a personality trait which is present within all.

From making paper ships to building relationships, it is only natural to believe that one's blithe spirit gets lost somewhere in the process. It is often perceived that maturity and adulthood truly transforms a person. Still, we forget that one's childhood experiences and lessons shape one to become who they are today. And that essence of carefree youth is an eternal blessing.  
I remember my dad telling me the story of how he used to secretly eat candies after three tooth fillings and how my grandfather scolded him when caught. Last week, I witnessed my dad lecturing my grandfather for eating chocolates despite his diabetes. It's quite amusing how roles are inverted with the passage of time.



being a child ever vanished. Or anybody's ever does, for that matter. Deep within all our souls resides an inextinguishable light of childhood innocence, a flame of quirky wildness that refuses to be embarrassed by societal norms. There is nothing purer than the goodness of the early ages. God bless that child in all of us.

**-Nivedhya Girish**



# A TRAVELER'S TALE

High and low, just as the wave goes,  
She remembers the cuckoo flying with the flow,  
As its shadow crosses her path,  
She found yet another start.

Far and beyond lies the Wonderland,  
Perhaps a snow-capped mountain or a flock of penguins,  
Your imagination could be real,  
As long as you don't let go of the zeal.

From sassy talk to cheeky words,  
They laughed their hearts out,  
The destination was mere fiction,  
The journey was the bond that held them strong.

As they hopped from one station to another,  
Bidding goodbye to the warm smiles,  
And looking ahead to feel the wind against their faces,  
Every road felt like a traveler's place.

Estranged from the road now,  
The traveler feels nostalgic,  
She misses the hustle of the journey,  
And the kind hospitality.

But, the voyage is photographed,  
Moments are cherished,  
Hoping to start another trail,  
She contemplates the traveler's tale.

-Deepta Devkota

# DOWN THE MEMORY LANE

The scent of a place once visited. The everlasting taste of the delicacies we had as kids. A song heard again after many years. A faded black-and-white photograph. All of these things illicit a feeling so unique and powerful that it appears to transcend time and space. It brings about a state of being that cannot be described with anything other than just this one word – Nostalgia; the powerful sense of longing that befalls many of us when we think of times past. In fact, it is the closest that we have to time travel. It is strange how we hold on to the pieces of the past while we wait for our future, but that's how it is. It is a bittersweet moment, that makes us smile but at the same time hurts when we realize we cannot go back in time.

Writing this article takes me down memory lane. Once seemingly not long ago, for truly it was nearly a year ago, I reminisce how simplistic yet luxurious my life was. All those days when I could go out for a stroll in the cool night air, when I could hang out with my friends (all those trips to pizza hut and mystery junkies) and plan surprise birthday parties, when I could go on a shopping spree or peacefully enjoy death by chocolate in an ice cream parlor and most of all- college life. Pranking my roommates, the hostel food, rushing to classes at the eleventh hour, the fun of bunking classes, going for trips with friends, binge-watching shows together, the relentless rain, the smell of the moist earth, forgetting and losing umbrellas, all the fests events and DJ nights, and most of all the smell of the sea, the soothing sound of the waves and the beautiful sunsets,

along with the peace it brought. I yearn for those days when I could breathe freely and do those mundane things which when I look back now, seem like a luxury.

Things have now changed drastically, so much so that we don't have to look back at our childhood memories, the old faded black-and-white photos or a song heard again after many years to feel nostalgic. Not being able to do those little things which we had all taken for granted makes us feel nostalgic. It is ironic how all of us are yearning to get back to what was once regarded as a routine and mundane life.

We are always concerned with making the next moment perfect and worrying about what tomorrow may or may not bring. The one thing which we should all keep in mind is that no matter what life throws at us, we can sustain and continue to create meaningful positive moments. What may have been a stressful moment at the time can still carry a sense of great value and appreciation now. It is important to live in the moment and appreciate those little things in life that make us happy. Remember, tomorrow is always another day.

As Dr. Seuss once rightly said, "Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory" – a memory which makes you yearn for those good old times.

- Poorvi S.H.M

# THE LAST GREAT ROCK BAND

I was scrolling through my rock playlist, and nestled between two '60s rock classics was The Strokes' 'Is This It'. I authorize my headphones to break into a familiar melody and allow Julian Casablancas' vocals to put me at ease. By the time 'Is This It' comes to a sonic stop, it has already engulfed me in a trance, and I cannot help but let the album play out from front to back.

The title track is followed by 'The Modern Age'. The song starts with a metronomic drumline which melds with the melodies and Julian Casablancas' bewitching vocals. The soundscapes in subsequent tracks are familiar yet unpredictable. Every song sounds vintage, yet new. Their music offers a coat of armour to the distressed apathetic youth, the Holden Caulfields of the world. It instills in them a sense of transient tranquillity. The album reaches its peak with 'Hard to Explain' where he strays a little south of the connecting theme of the album. The songs are the right amount of deep without being too pretentious. Julian's jagged vocals and conversational lyricism manage to steal the spotlight from the rest of the quintet, bringing me back to this album year after year. There are moments in the album where the drummer Fabrizio Moretti is engaged in a battle against Casablancas overpowering roars on tracks like 'New York City Cops'. The album closes on an aggressive note with 'Take It Or Leave It', which leaves you wrapped up in a cloak of coolness. The band cultivates a sense of swagger with every passing guitar riff, drumline, and rhythm change that makes one feel dope just by listening to it.

To the delight of Rock revivalists, 'Is This It' helped create a new movement in Rock music. Their freshman album fueled what was becoming the Garage Rock Revival. The seemingly infallible Strokes displaced the Grunge scene and what was left of the Brit-Pop movement and allowed record labels to turn to Rock again, from the Libertines to the Arctic Monkeys and The Killers. At a time when NSYNC and Britney Spears reigned supreme, Rock had found their saviour in five New York City friends with unkempt hair and chic downtown attire. The success of their debut album set them onto the path of megastardom, something that has eluded them since. In their defence, it is difficult to replicate the success of an album that got named as the album of the decade by NME while the Rolling Stones decided to put them on number two of the same list behind Radiohead's Kid A. They have been touted to influence the magnitude similar to The Ramones or The Velvet Underground during their era. Although this might seem like a stretch to some, the Strokes' contributions are far too significant to be dismissed. Their 'anything goes' spirit inspired other rock oddballs to rise and find their feet.

Glad that this serendipitous encounter led me to a thirty-five-minute musical treat, I take comfort in the fact that 'Is This It' will remain ageless. For me, The Strokes will forever be the Daedalus of catchy melodies and hooks. Don't take my word for it. It is time for you to add something new to your Spotify playlist.

-Pramit Majumdar

# THE GIFT

The soft clinking of silverware  
The scent of coffee diffusing to the room  
Your light touch on my forehead  
Awakened me as I emerged from my cocoon

Never one to fraternize  
The solace of solitude kept me company  
The bricks of cynicism were cemented around me  
And yet your altruism seeped through my reality

Your sheer love painted my wings  
Tempted me to test the sky  
A fledgling in romance, I flew  
And in those moments, you made my beliefs a lie

The wall I worked so hard to build  
Held up by muted wounds of the past  
Painted by unkonfronted memories and broken promises  
Cracked under the pressure of your unstinting contrast

Your eyes, a mesmerizing chocolate swirl  
Slowly flutter shut in the comfort of my arms  
In a moment of weakness, I realise  
The unfair truth that my love does no justice to yours

My feeble acts of amour and symbols of skewed love  
Will always be incongruent to your selfless affection  
You helped me transfigure and taste the wind  
But I must return to my sheath for your own protection

The scent of your brew tenderly rouses me no more  
Your gentle touch is now merely an illusion  
For all your love this is my gift to you,  
The gift of seclusion

- Linu George



# MINDING MEMORIES

I was lying on my bed, relentlessly scrolling through social media. Everyone was posting about some or the other skill they had acquired during the pandemic, while I just mastered my procrastinating skills. I was tired and wanted some sense of order in my life and that's when I decided to clean my room. Yup. That's how I bring order to my life.

I started with my bureau- my favorite spot in my room (of course, my bed doesn't count). It has a secret drawer that no one knows about and that's where I hide all my treasures. I noiselessly closed the door to my room and proceeded to dig into it. Only to realise that my Maa threw away everything. Everything....but my beyblades, a letter and a drawing I made as a child. I was, naturally, besides myself and rushed out to voice my discontent. She in turn gave me a smile and asked me to sit down (which also translates to chill out). She then said, "You know, all memories need not be held on to forever. Some of them need fresh air and you've to let go of them. At the same time, hold on to what matters. I'm not dictating which object holds the most memories for you but why don't we talk about it, hmm?"

That darkened my mood further. I argued about how it's always heartwarming to reminisce about old times. Like the times Roop and I became best friends from worst enemies, or the Chowk wali kulfi without the sewain (which is the best way to eat it and no one can say otherwise) whose sweet taste still lingers in my mouth, or how we celebrated every festival together back in Lucknow. Over the years, I felt I had to learn to move on

easily and not get too attached to anything. Primarily because we hardly stayed anywhere for more than three years, thanks to Papa's government job that came with all those transfers. But every time, there was this piece of my heart that I left with every single place. And maybe that's why I liked to hoard things- as an ode to every time I just held the heartachingly bittersweet memories, never really noting the place and person themselves had slipped by.

Maa held my hand, that's when I came back to the real world. She pointed towards the letter and asked me to read it. It read- "Dear Pappa,

You're the bestestestestestest father in the world. I love you.

- Nannalu"

She asked me if anything changed except for my handwriting. Then, pointing towards my PS4 she said, "Beyblade or PS4. Choose one. No questions asked." I chose the beyblades. She then made me take a selfie, and asked me which looked better, my drawing or the picture? No doubt, it was the photograph. But the memories the drawing held? Incomparable.

I picked my stuff up and went back to my room. I could see my Maa grin from the corner of my eye. I replaced the photo frame on my nightstand with the drawing and my PS4 with beyblades. As I was doing this, I realised memories are a part of us. An integral part. Often, there is this sudden wave of nostalgia that hits us. At the most random times, sometimes at 2am when we can't sleep, or on a busy day when we're just hanging out with our friends only



to realise how much things have changed. It is like that "garam garam pakode on a rainy day", like the emotion that chokes you when you give grandma a hug before leaving her place. A warm hug that brings a smile to your face, only to hit you like a sudden blow when you realise it's gone. But it's important for one to make space for new experiences while we cherish the old ones. After all, we never realise we're making memories. We assume we're just having fun in the moment. I still haven't made peace with this feeling but it is now much lighter and much more freeing.

- ***SS Rakshitha***

# THE RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Newly elected Mr Natiramas entered his office. The young man had fought an uphill battle against the incumbent and was enthusiastic about serving the community which had elected him to the position of their representative. However, his first day at the office went a bit ... differently. Undersecretary Mr Taphocys, a veteran civil servant of the country, greeted him with an eager smile.

Mr Taphocys: Good Morning Representative Natiramas, I see you're here before 9:00 AM. You must be eager to begin your re-election campaign.

Mr Natiramas: Re-election? Mr Undersecretary, the election isn't for the next five years.

Mr Tacophys: Yes, but you see, your opponent started three months ago.

Mr Natiramas: But the election was a month ago...

Mr Tacophys: It's called a backup plan sir, I'm sure you had one too.

Mr Natiramas: Well...I don't want to focus on that right now. I believe that our work is going to speak for itself.

Mr Tacophys: As you wish Sir, now tell me what would you want to begin with?

Mr Natiramas: I believe we should start with the easy things, then move on to the more complex tasks.

Mr Tacophys: Very well.

(grabs a dusty file from one of the drawers)  
Here are a few permissions which need to be signed, it's not much just a signature that you approve of the following changes.

Mr Natiramas: (After skimming through the documents) A 25% increase on overspeeding and signal jumping fines! Wasn't it just brought up by 25% last year?

Mr Tacophys: Yes.

Mr Natiramas: I don't get it? Overspeeding and signal jumping hasn't gone down at all. Police officers will just take a higher bribe from the lawbreakers now.

Mr Tacophys: Except Sir, you do get it. The state has slashed the city's budget, and we need to find a way to pay their salaries.

Mr Natiramas: By promoting bribes?

Mr Tacophys: Sir, don't see it as promoting bribes. Look at it as if we were cutting out the middle-man, instead the people paying fines and the fines then being used to pay the salaries of our hard-working constables they now pay directly. And besides, this could be a good thing for you, the voters love a representative who's tough on crime, and what better way would there be to fight crime than to raise the fines?

Mr Natiramas: Why not just allocate money from somewhere else?



Mr Tacophys: Sir, do you really want to get a department unhappy on your first day by slashing their budget? And besides, there is no place from which we can get money from. The budget is tight.

Mr Natiramas: I'm sure I will be able to find something, what other permissions need my approval?

Mr Tacophys: (Looking into the file)  
Well, this is interesting. The Public Pension Department wants more money for fraud investigation.

(Hands over the file)

Mr Natiramas: (Reads through)  
Why do they need more money? It clearly says here they spent about one crore in investigating pension fraud which amounted to a grand total of 19 lakhs. We could have saved the city money if they did not investigate at all! If anything we should slash their budget for inefficiency.

Mr Tacophys: Oh no, no no, Sir, that would be a TERRIBLE idea. Imagine what would happen if your opponent uses that against you, "Rep. Natiramas cuts fraud investigation spending" wouldn't be something your older voters would like to hear, keep in mind that they are the most likely to vote. Take my advice sir, give them all the money they want, make sure every single person above the age of 60 votes for you.

Mr Natiramas: I'm sure the voters aren't that stupid.

Mr Tacophys: I would have to disagree, sir. Human beings tend to focus on what happens rather than why it happens. Why do

you think our city has such good roads on the western side, but as you go towards the east they are filled with potholes?

Mr Natiramas: Why?

Mr Tacophys: The voters, sir! No one sees the improvement in something bad, but they are quick to make out the smallest flaw in something they expect to be perfect. Hence none of the representatives improved the roads in the east, and anyone who did was voted out next election.

Mr Natiramas: So, can I do anything that won't get me voted out?

Mr Tacophys: Well... there's always the re-election campaign you could work on.

**-Mihir M Ketkar**



# AN NITK DIARY

## “THERE IS A TIME AND PLACE FOR EVERYTHING. THAT’S COLLEGE.”

As we sit at homes, staring at our screens, living our lives inside four walls and rarely meeting our friends, it is difficult to not reminisce our days in college and how fun they were. Needless to say, we're all waiting for that one notification from our second home, calling us back. We can also most certainly say we are going to appreciate college life way more now - we won't skip on trips or opportunities to have fun and explore new activities that we shunned when we took our college lives for granted.

Some of the most beautiful things about life are the firsts we experience. College life, in many respects, is a completely new experience for most; be it living in a hostel, going to the beach for the first time, or even trying out something completely unexpected. We all have memories which we cherish and, if given a chance, would love to relive.

“I have some memorable firsts in NITK, memories I am sure I will cherish forever. The one which strikes me first is Incident. Incident was a really good first for me. I didn't know what to expect from my

my first college cultural fest, but Incident was nothing less than a blast. I modeled for the first time too and that was a great experience.

From a more routine point of view the newly obtained independence was something I really looked forward to, until the responsibilities associated with it like washing clothes came crashing down on me. I was always very particular about my diet even before I entered college and so figuring that out in the college setting where everyone just settled with maggi was a bit of a challenge.

Something I still laugh at when I think about it is that when I came for the admission process, my family and I stayed in this modest place called “Red Rock”. Only a month into college did I realize it was a much more happening place.”

- **Aditya Santhosh**

“One of my firsts which I still vividly remember is being selected for the cricket team in NITK. I was actually out with my friends for a movie when I got to know I was selected. It was quite the surprise, sadly I missed that day of practice, but right from the next day I began the routine of play from 4:45 - 7. The cricket team usually starts a lot earlier than

other sports due to the fact that visibility plays a much bigger role in the game. The cricket team was the first group I got into in NITK and it was the first time I got to interact with seniors that closely.

There's a great sense of camaraderie in the team and people really push you to improve and keep yourself fit. My cricket journey has been a little bittersweet though. Sports requires a lot of dedication and with my other club activities and my history of injuries I haven't really been able to contribute as much as I'd like, to the team. Regardless, they're a bunch of extremely talented folks and playing with them is always a great way to spend an evening. Even though I haven't been able to spend as much time with them, I've made some really good friendships there."

- **Souri SVS**

"A campus with a beach is really interesting and since I had experienced hostel life before it was not a "first" really. But yes, living inside such a huge campus was an amazing experience. I went to the beach on my first day with friends. It wasn't something new for me but having one so close such that you could go there at any time and any day is what I found more interesting. I am a huge fan of lighthouses, so it was super fun going to the top of the lighthouse with your friends and enjoying that amazing view with the cool breeze.

During my first year I spent a lot of time with my friends and seniors at the NITK ground . I also loved chilling in hostel rooms with all my friends and seniors. The beach is also a great place to chill with your friends. And obviously, I love chilling with my friends at RR or Sarath." - **Sanjo Sabu**

The most common first-time experience for nearly everyone coming to college, is hostel life. From washing clothes, maintaining cleanliness, enjoying with friends, having gossip sessions to working, debating and brainstorming ideas - hostels are possibly the most happening places on campus. Most of the memories of our college life are crafted and moulded in these buildings.

"Sharing a room with two people I'd never seen or met before was making me feel kind of apprehensive initially. But the very first night I spent in the hostel with my roommates, I knew I was in for a one-of-a-kind experience. A lesson I'd heard people saying all the time was "sharing is caring" and this was so important to realise if I had to live peacefully with my roommates.

Luckily, both of them were from Bangalore, so breaking the ice wasn't all that hard. We instantly hit it off talking about Bangalore's traffic jams, Game of Thrones and sharing memes and food. The three of us were also in the same class so we were mostly always together. We didn't realise how one year went by but we left behind so many memories over late night talks, TV shows and random jamming sessions." - **Shipica Uddagiri**

" Hostel life came as a bit of a shock with the conditions of the hostel and facilities. I really started to count my blessings and realized I took basic things like hot water, washing machines and western toilets for granted. The first day I spent in hostel I wondered how I'd ever get used to it, but oddly enough, in a couple days I was practically settled. I remember hanging out in another girls room,

who later became a close friend, and we were discussing how different life was here but it didn't really affect us, after doing it once you learn to live with it and it barely crosses your mind. Living in a hostel has definitely been a good experience for me. It lived up to the cliché of hanging out all night watching movies or chilling in the night canteen. Maybe just the infrastructure and the GB guards took some getting used to."

- **Shreya Namath**

Trips are quite easily the most memorable parts of our college experience. With innumerable locations in and around campus to visit ranging from Dandeli to Gokarna, from Coorg to Hampi and of course the dream destination everyone aspires to go to at least once in college - Goa. Extensive planning, booking tickets and hotels, visiting places and clicking pictures are quintessential and what makes the trips worth everything. But at the end of the day, it is those memories forged with friends which most people take away from these trips.

"Our first "trip" was literally us booking a car and going to Manipal for lunch because one of us had finally gotten a drivers license. We've come a long way from there, with half the group owning bikes now. The initial few were mostly road trips to places closeby out of the sheer thrill that we could drive by ourselves, but by our third year we pretty much finished all the places we could see in a days' time and began going on longer trips. One trip that really sticks out was the camping trip to Coorg at the end of my first year. We managed to find a place in the middle of an estate that was cut off from all human set-

tlements and had a waterfall close by. That was the first time most of us were camping let alone with friends, and some of us just stayed up throughout the trip just soaking it all in.

Making maggi at 5 am for 26 people is one thing I won't forget anytime soon. Over the years the group naturally grew closer, and we all knew our roles (me being the designated driver always), so we could plan the trips more easily and actually try to "convince" everyone to come. Right now we're just waiting to get back and go on some more trips before we graduate."

- **Souri SVS**

"Tripping with friends is really fun and in my opinion, that's one of the best things to do in these four years. There are so many places to visit in and outside of Karnataka. Sometimes it's not the tripping location that matters as much as the journey there. From waking up at odd times and begging the security guard to let you out, to stopping at restaurants on the way to eat and jamming to questionable songs with your friends.

Our first trips were to Mangalore and Manipal which have some really great places to eat, like the Laughing Buddha in Manipal and Pabbas in Mangalore. Even before coming to college, I was convinced that Manipal was the 'happening place' and so I already had that bias in my head. Manipal is a more student friendly place, with respect to the number of restaurants serving really good food at really affordable prices.

I think clubbing is decent, perhaps a bit hyped. But both Mangalore and Manipal will

in fact get boring and repetitive if you go there every weekend, so my friends and I started visiting other places in Karnataka, either by means of trains or by renting cars."

- **Aditya Santhosh**

We all have those certain places we enjoy being on campus - from the iconic beach which is the grand feature of our campus to the various places we go to eat and meet up. Needless to say, it's these places which will immediately pop into our minds when we look back and think about our college days.

"I suppose the beach is a no brainer. Apart from that I think it would have to be FnH. I met up with people there, and kept going there during class breaks and stuff. There's actually a real lack of places to sit and chill, so when it wasn't too crowded, we'd go there. Not a great place for more than about 5 people though." - **Shreya Namath**

"Inside campus, the place to chill has to be FnH. There are times where we had 3 cappuccinos and 'cold chocos' a day. And being a mech dude, that place quickly became the new chill spot for us all, not to exclude a certain gang of professors. But the real gem near NITK has got to be the Sasihithlu bridge. Having a bike makes this place within a minute's reach. This is one place that we always visit before trips just to see if everything's in order and also the place we all go at 12 am for all birthdays. The one aspect of this place that not many know of, is that it shows the same bioluminescence that the beach displays. And trust me, it's way better. As the bridge is in a secluded area, it gets pitch black and eerily quiet at night. And when you disturb

the water at such a time, the whole place lights up; really does give you the 'Life of Pi' vibes." - **Souri SVS**

Fests are possibly the highlight of college life - although it just spans 6 days in one whole year, our fondest and most exhilarating memories are forged here. From relaxed block timings, to great food, events and of course, the concerts

"I love the general atmosphere during fests. Everyone's just excited and there's nothing on anyone's mind other than just roaming around campus. The best part of fests, though, has to be just staying out at one of the shows at night. It's fun, it's with friends and you have no block timings to worry about. But, there's always a lot of misbehavior that comes with unruly crowds dancing in the dark. So, for a lot of us, it's something at the back of our mind even when we're having a great time." - **Prajna Hebbar**

"Overall Incident was three amazing days which were truly unforgettable. We spent those three days outside the hostel and were quite exhausted and ended up sitting in SJA for the AC. The nights were tons of fun. And I think I spoke to a lot of people and socialized more than usual. At the end of the day we'd all meet at the pavilion and practically sleep on the floor and chill till curfew. It was an amazing experience." - **Shreya Namath**

Clubs and events are quite easily the best places to interact with people, learn and grow your skill set and above all, work with like minded people to achieve a single goal. With the initial hype surrounding club

recruitments in second year to being a part of events like Incident and TEDx act as a good platform to both showcase and build your innate abilities. We also meet a ton of seniors who help us and guide our way.

“Being a part of one of the exclusive clubs is something everyone looked forward to, either because of the reputation the clubs created in our first year with the plethora of events each one of them hosted, or just really because of the fear of missing out on great projects, seniors and experiences. But the recruitment season came all too soon, and even before I could process any of it, I was already sitting for recruitment interviews of 2-3 clubs. Although literally every senior I talked to told me that it’ ll be chill, I was really nervous about the interviews because I often undermined my own skill set. But the interview itself was in fact really chill because of the relaxed atmosphere the interviewers had set up. The seniors I got to interact with on those days were mostly super nice.

I think joining a club has been really worthwhile, considering the KEPs that they conduct, the events you get to host, and the opportunity you get to work on different projects. But even if you don’ t make it into one of these clubs, it’ s not really the end of the world. The work that goes on in these clubs has to do with a lot of self study, and that’ s something anyone can do.”

**- Aditya Santhosh**

“I’ m very interested in organising events and activities and I love being part of a team and working in one. I love planning for an event

and successfully organising it. I really enjoyed working for INCIDENT 2020. Lots and lots of good memories and the team was super hardworking and passionate. I would say that would definitely be my best experience working in a team at college.” **- Sanjo Sabu**

“I think for as long as I remember, I have taken up more work than I can handle, and that continued onto college. Being passionate about art and eagerly joining Artists Forum, getting Into LSD through nutshell and Literary Sig, partaking in various other events, I lost track of the work that I was taking up, but no matter how hectic it got, I never regretted a single moment of it. All the work that I did take up, the friends and family I made through that work is what has made me who I am today and got me where I am today.” **- Liz George**

Internships and placements and possibly the most tense and anticipated part of the college experience while also being the most future defining. Although it is an extremely worrisome and tiring period for everyone, the relief after finally landing the company of your dreams is immeasurable. We learn a lot and the experience teaches us valuable life lessons- ones we’ ll cherish even after we leave college.

“My first internship via campus interviews was such a rewarding experience. I’l be honest, the internship season wasn’ t very stressful for me as I’ d gotten an internship early on itself. The actual ‘first’ that I experienced was when it started. I caught the first glimpse of the corporate world and it all felt quite legit. It was exciting because the

problems were all real world scenarios and not text book cases.

Attending my first important meeting and giving my first presentation in front of the company's leaders made me realise that this was the real deal. Did I feel unproductive or bored at times? Well, yes. Were there times when my mentor wasn't satisfied with my performance and was expecting more from me? Yes. But all these experiences only helped me grow.

A major takeaway from my internship was that I had spent a month and a half solving a real world problem and ended up learning way more than I had learnt through theory classes in college. Since I already had some experience of sitting for the internship season, I knew what to expect from placements. I'd made up my mind to sit only for core chemical companies but unfortunately very few visited this time. A lot of my friends were getting placed already & that affected me, but I was lucky enough to have a supportive bunch of people around me that didn't let me give up. After two to three months of the commencement of the season, I finally did get placed, and it was a huge relief. It was new for me in the sense that I'd never been in such a stressful situation before and it tested my patience immensely. But I realised it was worth the wait after I finally got placed in one of my dream companies."

- **Shipica Uddagiri**

While interviewing everyone, one aspect that was commonly shared was how much they all miss it. We can't wait to go back to college and continue to experience and add more memories which we will cherish forever. While we're still unsure of when the same is going to happen, from now on, we most certainly will not take college for granted and definitely value and enjoy our experiences to the fullest. In the end, what's college without unnecessary risks, late nights and friends to relive the tales with?

**-Meghna Kashyap**

# HOPE

The man was staring at the water. "Are you looking for the mermaids too?" I asked. I think I must have startled him. He made a funny little noise and whipped around to look at me. His eyes were puffy, and his hair was all ruffled and messy. There was something about the way he looked at me. A mixture of surprise and fear, and weirdly enough there seemed to be a tinge of...relief, maybe? I wasn't sure. I never was good at reading faces.

"What are you doing here, kiddo?", he asked after a whole twenty seconds of silence. I know because I counted.

"Looking for mermaids. Gran said you could see them in the water if you looked hard enough."

"It's summer, isn't it? A lovely little girl like you should be playing with her friends, don't you think? "

"I don't play." Playing. Ugh. I could never bring myself to understand what all the fuss was about. I wondered what the other kids saw in lifeless dolls and what they managed to attain by fighting over one ball. It all seemed to be a futile exercise for the imaginatively bankrupt.

"Your Mum and Dad know you're here all alone? "

"No. They say that I should be playing with Ritchie and Pam. They don't like it when I go find-outing."

"Find-outing? Finding what? Mermaids?"

"And goblins and dragons and many more."

"So you like stories, eh?"

"Yes. But what are you doing here all alone?" I paused for a moment and asked, "Do you have a story?"

His face went pale. He coughed a couple of times and sniffled. 'Who gets a cold in the summer?', I thought.

"Yeah maybe there is a story I can tell you", he finally said.

"Once upon a time, there was a great and mighty prince. He had a lot of money, and he could do whatever he wanted to. One day, he went out of his castle to see his people, and he saw a beautiful girl. Her hair was the colour of sunshine, her eyes shone brighter than diamonds, and her face would have brought the envy of goddesses. He fell in love with her right away. They soon became friends. They talked and laughed together and finally, when he asked her to marry

him, she said yes. But as it turns out, she was only ever interested in his money. So she made an elaborate plan and cheated him of all his money. The great and mighty prince thus became a pauper. He worked very hard, but he could never make enough money. He fell in with the wrong company and then ended up with big debts. It took him many years and all of his savings to pay them off." The man suddenly stopped talking



and turned away.

"What happens then?"

"He decides that he is tired of it all. There is nothing to gain at the end of this struggle. He realises that the world has nothing to offer him but pain and misery. And so he gives up. The end."

"That's a stupid story."

"I know."

"That's not how it ends."

"Kid, I'm the one telling the story. I decide how it ends."

"But Gran says that stories always end well. If it's not well, then it's not the end." The man gave me a sad smile, but he did not say

anything. He gave me a look that adults give when they think they know better. "And I don't know why the prince wants to leave the world. I think it's beautiful. Look!" I took the man's hand and pointed to the sky. His gaze followed my finger, and he saw the sun kiss the horizon, turning the water orange. "Every time I think I know the world, I learn something new that changes everything."

The man stared for a long time. When he turned back, he looked as if he saw me for the first time all over again. He planted a kiss on my forehead and whispered, "I don't know if you'll find your mermaid in the sea, but I sure did find my angel in the sky. Goodbye, sweetheart."

And so, the man turned around and walked away, and I went back to looking for mermaids in the sea.

-Navyasree B



# CRIME SCENE

TRIGGER WARNING: VIOLENT CRIME, READER'S DISCRETION ADVISED

"The eyes, Chico. They never lie."

A distress call was made to the control room reporting domestic violence. The perpetrator was still at the crime scene and was armed to the teeth'.

The officers put on their fury coats and rushed to the scene. What they witnessed at the scene would be the perfect example of the phrase rarest of the rare crimes, something which shocks the collective conscience of the society.

We found the victim on the floor, her insides spilling all over the carpet, indicating that he had violated her severely, her face mutilated beyond recognition. We noticed pieces of the victim's body were missing, and flesh was bitten off all over the body, indicating possible cannibalism.

Catching these beasts is notoriously hard, simply because there is no method to the madness. However, these crimes do leave some sort of biological evidence, a little sliver of hope that we will catch them and the wheels of justice will slowly but definitely grind over them.

Well fuck that tiny sliver, we had the damn bastard right in front of us.

He was sitting calmly by the victim, carelessly licking her blood off his lips while staring at us with his big brown eyes.

His eyes lit up when he saw us, almost like getting caught was part of the plan. There was a disarming smile on his face which caused us to retreat in fear, ironic considering we were the police.

Officers are trained not to react emotionally and treat the suspect innocent until proven guilty. However, if there was ever an argument to be made for mob justice, this was it.

We moved ahead to arrest him, very well knowing this was going to be the most significant case of our lives, we've heard our fellow cops describe what it felt like to catch notorious criminal masterminds BUT  
PART 2

To capture the dreaded Mr Cushion Destroyer in all his glory was going to shine on us some much-deserved limelight.

We told him to stop wagging his tail and sit down flat on the ground, while we put the leash on him and proceeded to take him in custody.

The paw-lice had finally apprehended this beast and put him behind kennels for a long time.

We hope this brings an end to the series of violent crimes, and this ends a dark chapter in our history.

Remember, we're all good boys until we turn bad.

Sheriff of Treats-ville  
Detective Doge.

Picture of the crime scene.



Our brave detectives of the police department.

*- Harsh Jain*



# WHY THE DEPARTED DIDN'T DESERVE TO WIN THE OSCAR IN '07

Forever hailed as one of the best filmmakers of all time, Martin Scorsese has produced another brilliant film that has gone down in history as the best film of the year. But was it deserving? Don't get me wrong, I think it's a fantastic movie, but did every aspect of the film reach perfection? The Academy Award for Best Picture is a symbol of legendary and distinguished filmmaking, which we attribute to the Director and staff. Those factors that they have no control over, i.e., the acting and improvisation, have been a useful tool for many accomplished actors in forming their characters.

Martin Scorsese is one of the best when it comes to the Gangster genre. His filmography is seldom unknown. Goodfellas, Casino, Taxi Driver, and Raging Bull, to name a few, are some of his all-time greats. He's a natural when directing gangster-themed movies, and why wouldn't he be, having grown up in the tough streets of the Italian part of New York. That being accounted for, "The Departed," which is an enticing battle between two snitches, is something that seems to fit in perfectly in his filmography. However, upon viewing the film, I felt that certain aspects didn't live up to the already high standards he'd set with his previous works.

o be clear; The Departed was a fantastic movie, but it didn't seem like the one that should've won Scorsese an Oscar compared to its counterparts.

"The Departed," being the sole film which won Scorsese his Oscar, is widely regarded as one of his "weakest works" by many critics. The bar

had been set very high after the release of Goodfellas, Taxi Driver, and Casino, and frankly, it's almost impossible to one-up those films significantly since he based "The Departed" on the Hong Kong film "Infernal Affairs." One of the most significant issues with this was that Scorsese was bound to include scenes that otherwise would have been deemed unnecessary. Some scenes seemed to drag too long even after the point was made.

Secondly, the cast chosen for this movie had raised the expectations of the audience. Leonardo Di Caprio, Matt Damon, Jack Nicholson, Mark Wahlberg. Some might say it'd be a given that the acting would take care of itself. However, I felt this very assumption might have led to another drop in expectations. Moreso, Jack Nicholson's performance in particular, seemed a little too much. Don't get me wrong, some of his works are fantastic and make for terrific cinema. Moreover, being the head of a gang, his general flair for delivering dialogues would make him a suitable pick for this character. However, personally, I believe, the very things that offered him such a great start, didn't stick too well in developing his character. A gangster with a flair for art, speaking almost out of the blue every time, his dialogues didn't seem to have the weight one would expect it to have. Many critics have mentioned his overindulgence in improvisation might have been the reason why his character did not strike the same way his other roles did. He improvised heavily, but this made his character very inconsistent, and lacking for depth.

Although it may seem like just a mere two

two reasons, or rather, a singling out of particular aspects of the film, it was quite predominant in the movie, which isn't usually a problem in a typical Scorsese film. "The Departed" isn't a bad film; it's just overrated, there seems to be a lot of things we overlook, and even one mark away from perfection is a matter of debate in terms of winning Best Picture of the year.

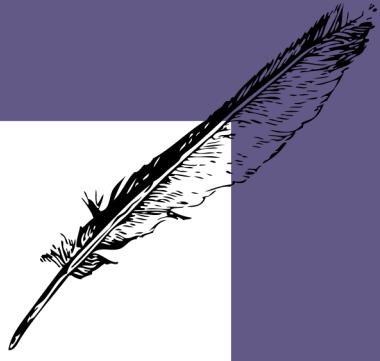
All this said, I thoroughly enjoyed the movie, and it's only fair that I add points to support this as well. Like any other typical Scorsese film, it had some of the best music involved that elegantly enhanced the scenes. "Nobody, but for me" is a prime example, correctly set up for a high-intensity fight in a store orchestrated to get Leo in jail. It feels both serious yet light, which overshadows the very theme of the movie. Scorsese has never shied away from licensing classic songs in his films and has stated that he keeps shelves filled with records from the 50s and 60s. Another powerful tool Scorsese so brilliantly makes use of, apart from natural sounds, is Silence, using it to increase the intensity of a scene. The scene where the 2 moles are on call, realising who's on the other end, but neither speaking a word to each other, as the scene remains dead silent, not only kept me at the edge of my sofa but even briefly made me stop munching my movie snacks. Lastly, Mark Wahlberg's loud and dirty-mouthed character was easily one of the movie's best parts. A Bostonian himself, his portrayal of

an angry middle-aged man seemed natural, and if I do watch the film again, it'll be hard not to be in awe of his performance for a second time. Leo's partnership with Scorsese has never failed to amaze people, too, has it?

The film "Children of Men," directed by the great Alfonso Cuaron, was one of, if not the best picture of that year. Yes, I understand it didn't get nominated, and this leads me to believe the Academy has its way of dealing with films; however, this one film did stand out. Based in a distant dystopian world riddled with infertility, children are absent throughout the film. A keen eye would observe the affection pets get in this situation. What stuck out for me wasn't just the performances of a star-studded cast, comprising of Chiwetell Ejiofor, Michael Caine, and Julianne Moore, it was the sheer energy that Cuaron portrayed in the film. You could feel the characters had been through a lot. Now they're trudging their way out until a spark of hope rekindles whatever energy is left inside, in the form of a pregnant woman. All hope doesn't seem to be lost. This movie hit home for me, and I believe it was underrated when it came out. However I'm not the Academy, and I have no clue of the real parameters that one observes while nominating and selecting a film for an award; however, as a mere viewer, these are my thoughts regarding why the film above should have or shouldn't have gotten the recognition.

-Ayush Saran

# SHENANIGANS



I first entered NITK amidst tremendous showers.  
Unaware of what was to come the next few hours.

Formalities complete, they took me to triple C.  
A tryst made official after paying the fee.

Next, I was led to a place I'd shortly call home.  
Back then, I was scared even to step out and roam.

A tad later, I made my first friend, a lad from Mysore.  
Soon, we met many others and built a strong rapport.

Between devouring pizzas and filming kiddish tunes.  
We learnt not to forget to ask NC bhaiya for spoons.

Memories growing fast and bonds getting stronger.  
We wrapped up our first semester wishing it was longer.

And then came the vacations, admittedly a bore.  
We longed to go back and unwind by the shore.

Before we knew it, we were back in college.  
Some of us keen to absorb more knowledge

And so it began again, albeit a bit different.  
Our first trip completed via a tiring ascent.

Then came the second which lasted a few days  
How it flew by so fast remains a haze.

Soon after, the long-awaited Incident arrived.  
And not a soul in college was energy deprived.

And you, dear reader, know what followed suit.  
The reason for this nostalgia, this poem's root.

- *Ankit Sandeep*

# ALGORITHMIC ART

When I say it out loud, 'algorithms' and 'art' in the same sentence does sound weird. I guess that is the innate Indianness in me, which has broadly split millions of people into three career streams but well, that's an article for another occasion.

Now, when you first hear an algorithm, and you think of bubble sort, I wouldn't blame you.

Algorithms for the uninitiated (and maybe unplaced?) are step by step methods of solving a problem. Computers, being dead inside, can perform repetitive tasks with high speeds and accuracies.

But how does that fit into art? Isn't art as such a medium to express humankind's creativity, either through visual aestheticism or raw emotional power? Wouldn't prefacing art with algorithms be some form of creative blasphemy then?

Well, to answer my own question, yes, art is a powerful medium of expression, but no, I wouldn't call it creative blasphemy.

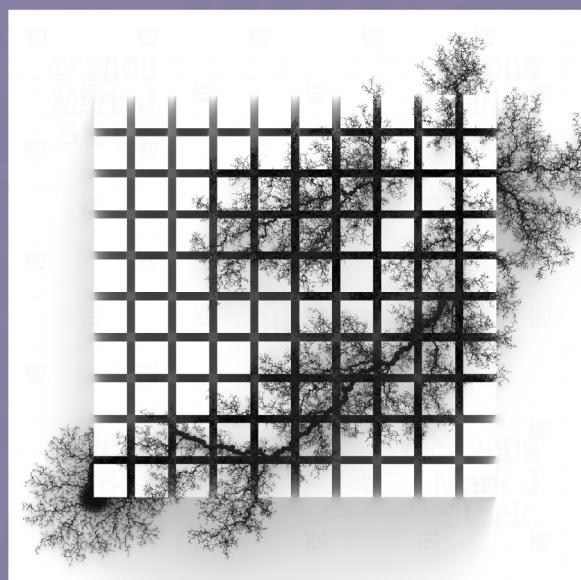
Science and algorithms in general may seem more analytical but I believe that sciences can be highly creative. You might not believe me but try disagreeing with this man.

"The greatest scientists are artists as well" - Albert Einstein.

Anyway, I might've "branched" off a bit but let's get back on track. Any algorithmic art

process starts off with creating rules that define the creation process and then a computer follows these rules to create new works.

A traditional artist might spend months exploring that idea but generative artists leverage modern processing power to create new aesthetics in a matter of seconds. Now, if you noticed the quotes on "branched", good for you.



Sprawl is a chaotic 'branch-like structure growing on and around a regular array of blocks. The dark growth is from a simulation of a local surface-growth phenomenon called diffusion-limited aggregation.

When I first heard of this, I thought this was straight out of a Marvel movie and they'd probably explain this as well with "quantum computing".

(Well, to think of it, I have made a couple of jokes, used some fancy words and also tried to please the audience. Throw in some of my shitty writing and the subpar intellectual

effort, and this could be the another Marvel movie; we never seem to have enough of them anyway.)

Diss apart, algorithmic art isn't really that new. In 1917, the Julia set was discovered; simply explained as a set which consists of values such that an arbitrarily small perturbation can cause drastic changes in the sequence of iterated function values.

Now, let's all do the nod we do in class to seem intelligent, as frankly, I have no clue what the above sentence means.

This is what the Julia Set looks like,

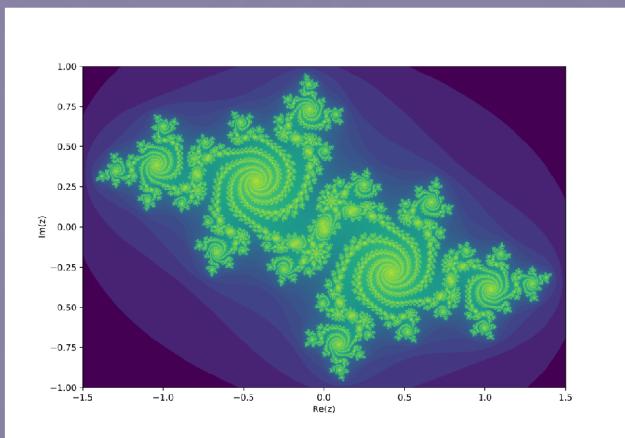


Fig 2 : An example of Fractal art or the Julia function being visualised

When the Julia Set was formulated in 1917, there weren't any resources to actually visualize this.

However, in 1980, when the Mandelbrot Set was discovered, we had powerful enough tools at our disposal to visualise them, and that formed the base of what's today called "Fractals".

Algorithmic Art is really picking up not due to the fact that we developed new algorithms, it's simply because we now have a

much larger access to computational power to actually implement these ideas.

One would've heard about AI wiping away millions of jobs in the future, will algorithmic art do the same to conventional artists?

I don't think all art would eventually shift to algorithmic artform in the future, there will be a paradigm shift to digital art considering the amount of social media we currently use and how COVID has ended up redefining "normal".

That being said, I frankly believe that different forms of art, be it a gifted dancer or your writer friend whose words you end up googling more often than not, or for that matter any of your friends who end up giving you an inferiority complex with their seemingly endless talents-they all seem to have one thing in common, creativity.

As long as we're still the creative species, it doesn't really matter if it's called algorithmic art or plain old stick figures, the essence of it lies in the creativity.

I remember this incident about Dhyan Chand, the greatest hockey player to have ever lived. The authorities in Netherlands broke his hockey stick to check for magnets inside. They almost believed his hockey genius lived in the stick he used to play with. Well, the stick was truly ordinary, however the art did live inside of him.

The Julia Set, which was discovered 50 years before the Mandelbrot Set, was not the basis of fractals, simply because in 1917, we did not have the tools at our disposal to truly comprehend it.

It makes me wonder about how much of scientific discovery we've missed out on or are currently missing because we simply do not have the tools to fully understand it just yet.

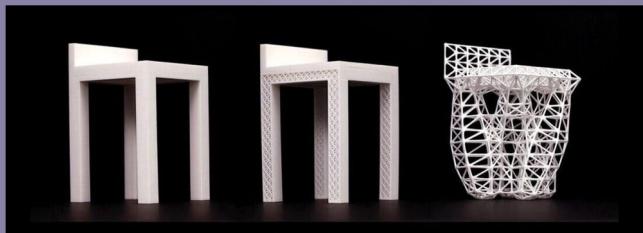


Fig 3 : Generating chairs with the AutoDesk Software



Fig 4 : Based on representations of currents and eddies in the ocean

#### Further Reading

This article is merely an introduction to the field. I'd recommend that you read this website if you're interested, as it has some resources about how to actually create some of your own art

<https://aiartists.org/generative-art-design>

**-Harsh Jain**

# A SIMPLE WOMAN

Constancy is a strange thing,  
often the only source  
of comfort,  
in times of distress.  
Amidst all the chaos,  
her soothing calmness,  
sailed through the gales.  
Yes, she was a simple woman.

Childhood whizzed by,  
like a noir movie reel,  
mundane moments I remember now,  
fed to the brim,  
tucked inside the quilt.  
She lived her days,  
content with our shenanigans.  
Yes, she was a simple woman.

A crass cacophony  
ever present in the household,  
where else to vent,  
from a daily dose of mediocrity?  
Never did she let it  
affect our ignorant Neverland,  
a dozen scars but tears there were none.  
Yes, she was a simple woman.

Our manhood at least threw away  
the vulture on the streets,  
now when the time had come to breathe,  
still an aroma awaited us on the table every night.  
No matter what transpired,  
a grave illness or a dying loved one,  
her eyes looked for ours.  
Yes, she was a simple woman.

The now naked table,  
haunting like a ghoul,  
that constancy disturbed,  
how she lived,  
through our eventful breaths,  
smile on her face and shimmer in her eyes,  
floating right above her long dead spirit.  
Yes, she was a simple woman.

-Atharv Dwivedi

# GAMES

Childhood, the good old days, before the technology took over, when the biggest concern was to choose what game to play today. And how simple was life? Playing in the mud and watching our favorite cartoon shows on TV, and running away from the homework. That pretty much summed up the best days of our life.

We all remember our cherished childhood games. Small games that gave us pure joy and helped us kill time and escape boring classes. While we are at it when was the last time you happened to play? Probably a long time... How about we get back in the time and remember the games we played and relive a part of our childhood.

A typical day started with discussing our previous day's exploits and planning for the coming day. The day goes on and then comes the first boring lecture of the day. Everyone's attention starts drifting in sometime and the next thing you know is that you're playing tic-tac-toe or bingo with your neighbour. Looking around, you find others playing hangman or chopsticks carefully staying out of the teacher's eye. Some students are just idly reflecting light with metal scales or wristwatches.

During recess, you gulp down food as fast as you can and rush to the ground to play. The ground is crowded with kids just running around playing chain or confusion. We have our reinvented versions of proper sports. Notebooks became our bats/racquets and aluminium foil balls serve as balls and we have our own version of badminton or cricket. In the corridors, a few people are playing corner-to-corner and others are solving Rubik's

cube or playing with fidget spinners.

The most ruckus is created when a teacher is late or goes out of class or worst (definitely best) when the teacher doesn't come at all. All hell breaks loose. Everyone is shouting and instantly out of their places. A part of the class is pen tapping or pen fighting. Some start playing hand cricket or rock paper scissors or Dragon Ball Z. Class wars start with rubber bands and paper pellets or throwing paper planes. Playing red hands even though it hurts too bad.

School finally ends but we still try to play one last game of hide and seek or ice-water and run to catch the bus. Bus journey is accompanied by 16 chits or Name Place Animal Thing. In Word building and Atlas we usually ended up convincing others to believe us.

The evenings followed a similar routine. Finishing the homework and rushing out to play. From cricket or badminton to seven stones and kho-kho, every game left us with happiness and satisfaction. When it grew too dark to follow the ball, we switched to playing chain or simply running and catching.

As we grew up these games themselves underwent transformation. Truth or Dare went from asking simple questions to digging up for secrets. We gravitated towards more mature games. We still cherish these games and play a select few of them like charades or Chinese whispers. We still use rock paper scissors for toss. We can't resist jumping if we see outlines for hopscotch. Most of us stopped indulging in these games after 10th but I don't think we ever outgrew them. We still play these games if we have company. They just remind us of a simpler, happier time.

-Kuhu Singh





# DISASTER RECIPES

This lockdown gave us the incentive to try out new things. The one that worked the best for me was, trying my knack at cooking, which, after a few weeks of hard work in the kitchen, made me a 'Not-so-professional chef'!

Now, all the foodies out there will relate with me when I ask this one simple question- Ever felt the dire need to have a dish that quenches your thirst for a plethora of flavours, dancing on your palette?

I had to experiment that day, for my craving was for something out of the box!

Here, I set out on my journey to the kitchen with absolute resolution to create the best dish ever. But, guess what happens in a realistic, non-MasterChef-like household? You fall short of fancy ingredients while setting out to cook something special out of the blue! So with a packet of Maggi and regular condiments in my hand, I was stimulating my grey cells for something out of the ordinary. Considering that all my previous experiences trying to cook something phenomenal with Maggi had always ended in extra spicy and tangy food, it was time to try something new.

I wanted to take this basic dish, a staple in every college student's life, to the next level. How could I make a plain spicy dish more exciting? I decided to do something I had never done, and added some sweet pomegranate arils to the spicy Maggi. I envisioned it to blow my mind with a remarkably flavourful Maggi, yet, pacify the blast with the fresh, juicy sweetness of the pomegranate arils. With hopes of this being the most ground-breaking dish in my cooking history, I set a proud and confident march towards the dining table, drooling

in anticipation. I took the first bite as soon as I could, regardless of how hot the dish still was, only to experience the weirdest taste of all time. It felt like I was eating the sweetest candy known to exist to all of humanity with the spiciest dip ever coated all over it! It was, nevertheless, a very adventurous thing to try, but at the same time, it taught me that too much contrast is also not good. After all, opposites do attract, but they also need something familiar to make the base!

A similar incident had occurred when I was a kid, and I wanted to apologize to my mom after getting scolded for some mischief. My innocent self thought of a sweet little yummy sandwich as an evening snack, to win my mother's heart. Again, the desire to make it special made me put fruits in it, which I then microwaved. You can imagine the tragedy that followed.

Hence, the golden tip from "masand\_ki\_pas-and" is to never mix hot, spicy food with fruits. It won't end well for you or your stomach.

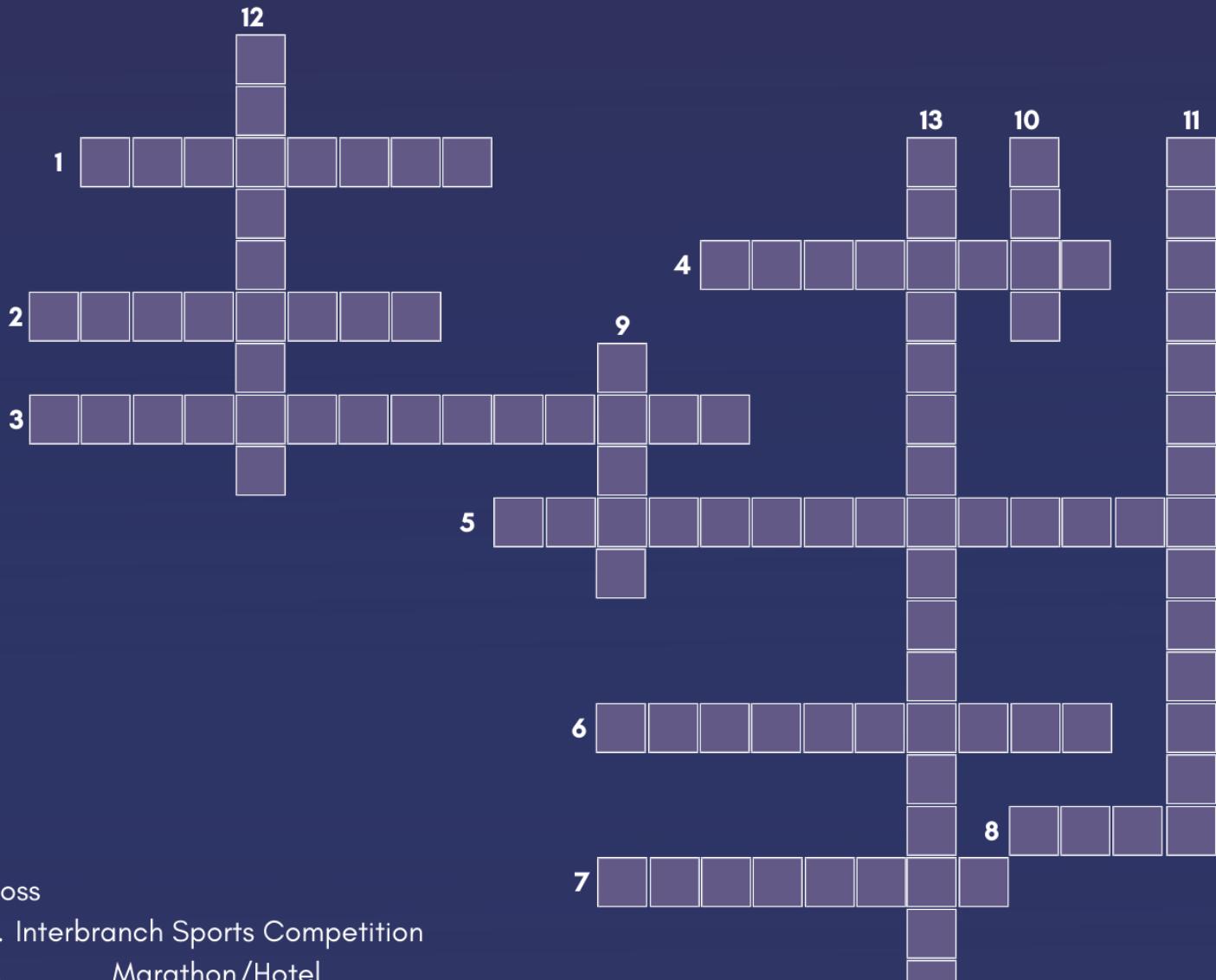


-Shruti Masand



# CROSSWORD

## NITK EDITION



### Across

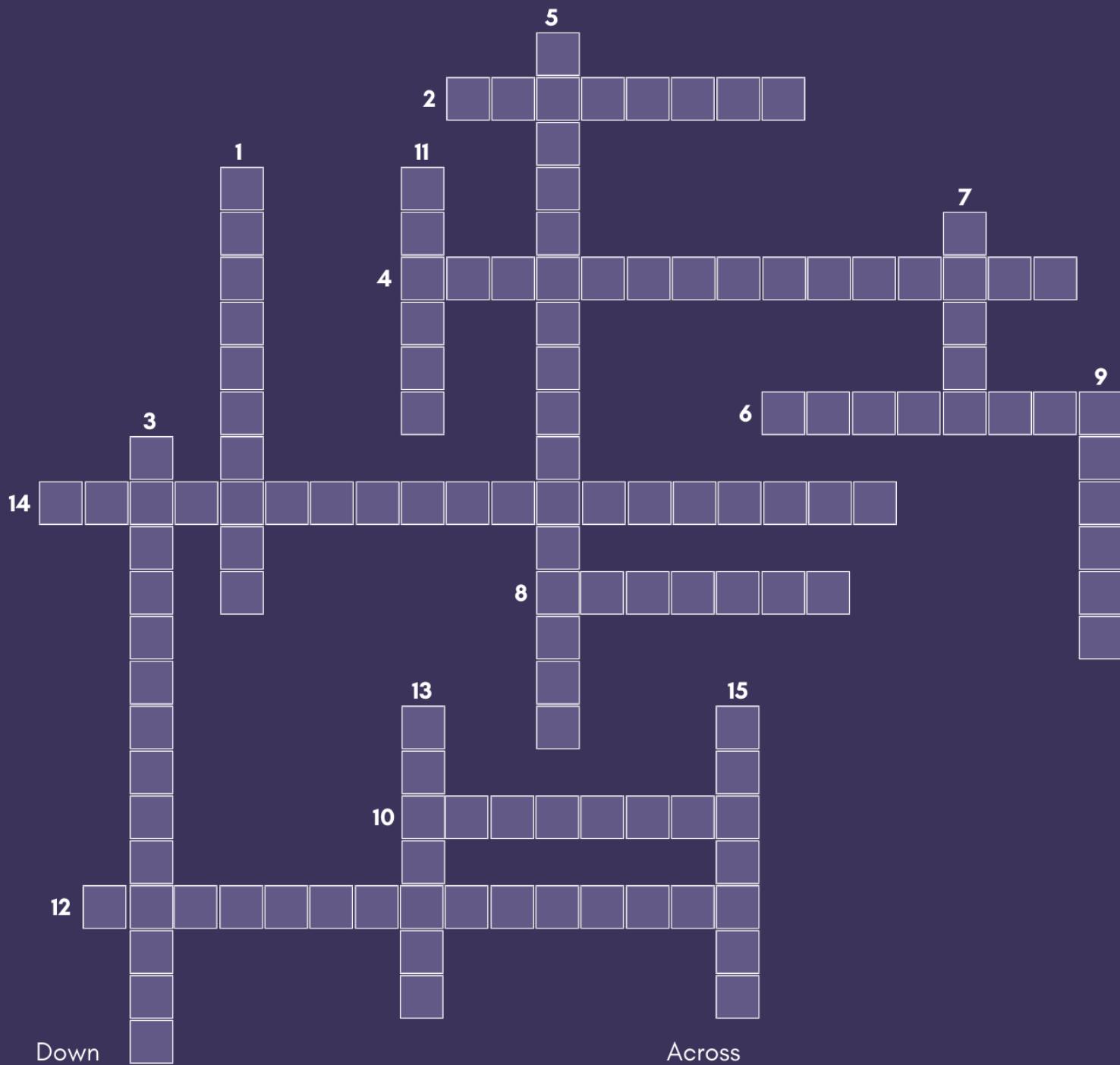
1. Interbranch Sports Competition
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Marathon/Hotel
3. Incident' 20
4. Think, Create, \_\_\_\_\_
5. Synonymous with Maths for first years
6. Used to be Ocean Pearl
7. National Highway \_\_\_\_\_
8. Additional Teaching Block

### Down

9. Most popular beverage on campus
10. Fund provider for funds
11. Founder of NITK
12. Medical College/Hospital
13. Endpoint for online shopping packages

# CROSSWORD

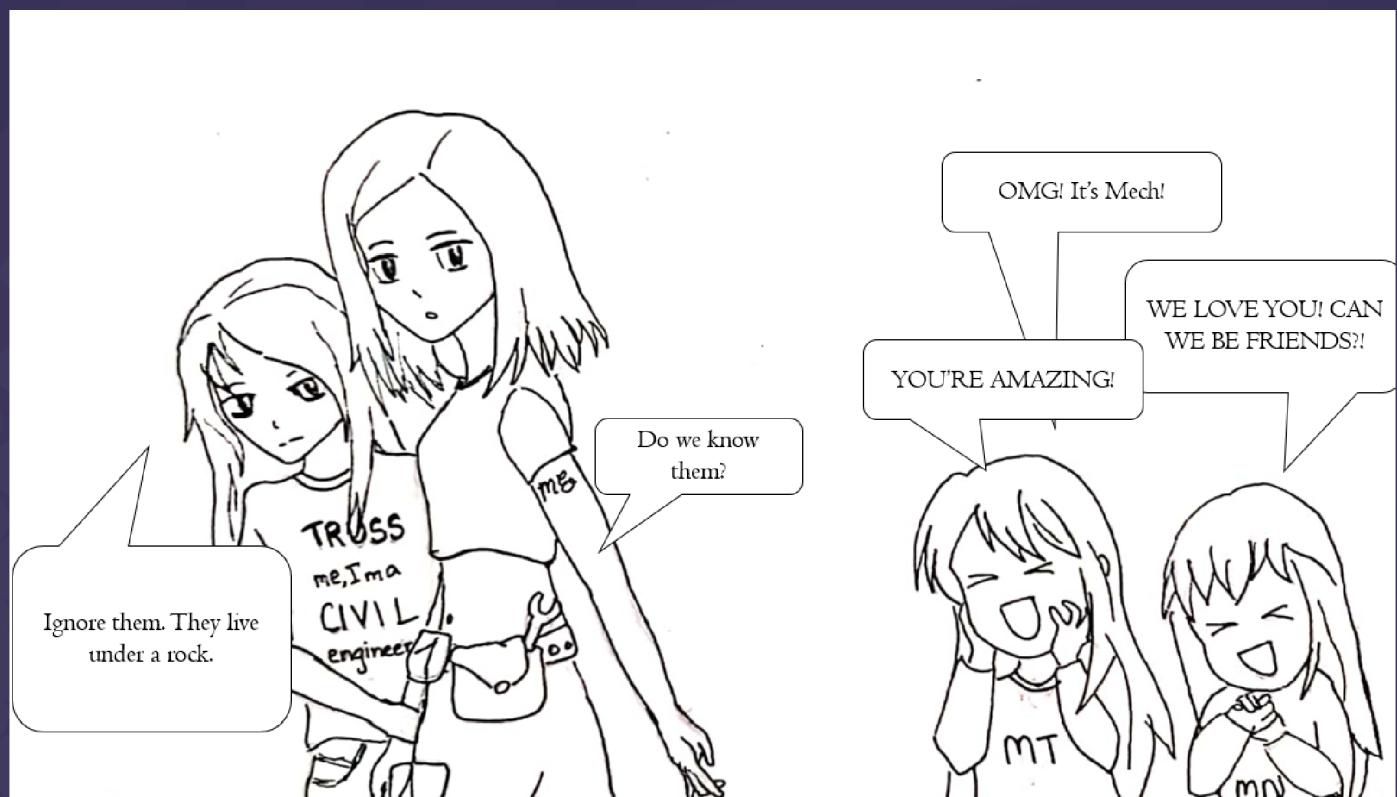
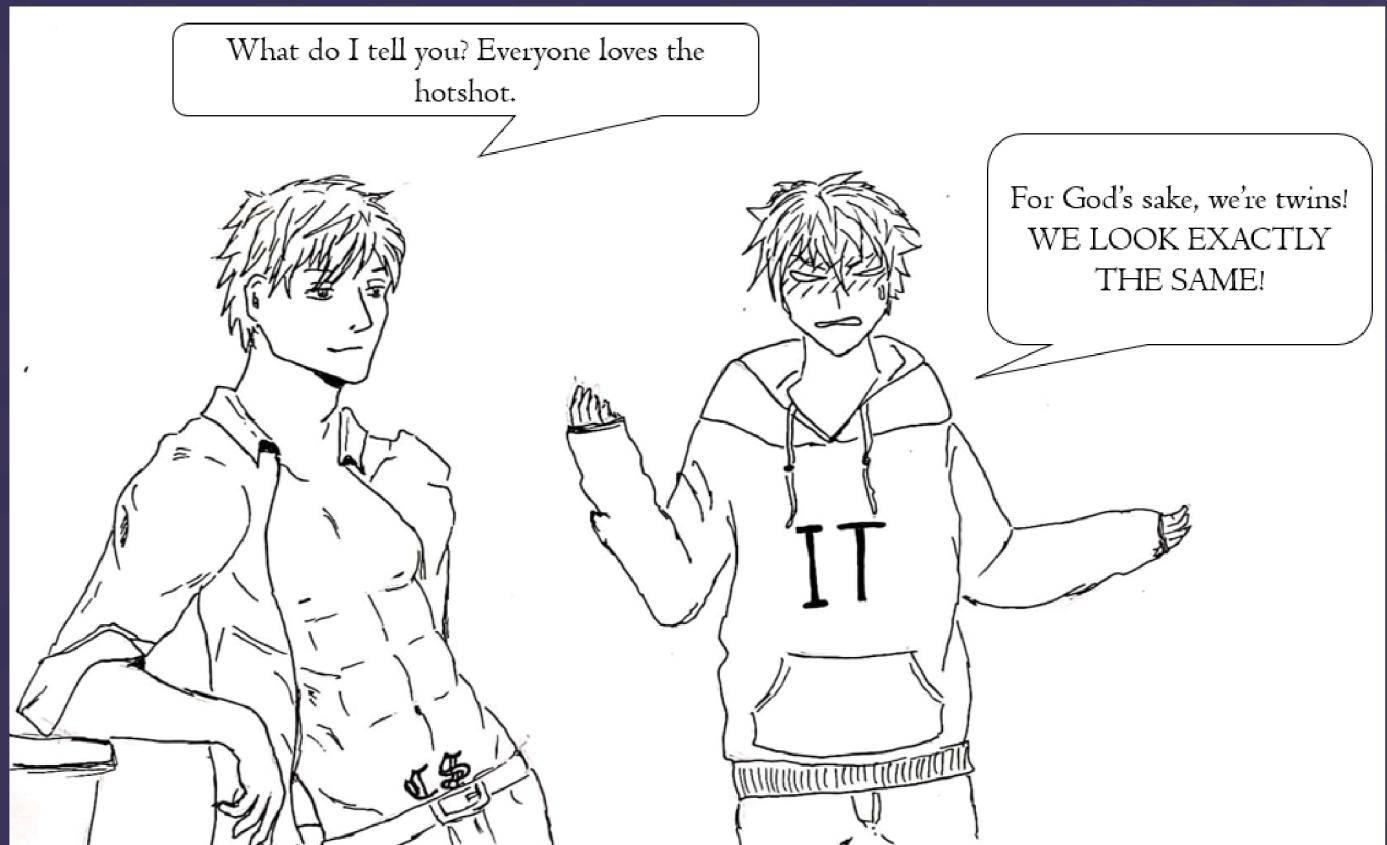
## NOSTALGIA EDITION



1. "Is this a classroom or a \_\_\_\_?"
3. A teacher's favorite phrase
5. Inky Pinky Ponky, \_\_\_\_\_
7. A college student's staple dish
9. Our favorite childhood magazine
11. Foolproof relationship forecaster
13. That one movie on engineers that everyone has watched
15. Power \_\_\_\_

2. Michael Jordan meets bibliophile
4. Graphic novels based on religious legends, biographies, folktales
6. Draw ye makeshift swords, and battle!
8. The iconic pencil brand
10. Our favourite robot
12. Hum honge kamyab
14. "Dhoni finishes off in style"

# IF BRANCHES WERE PEOPLE



# GUESS THE SONG FROM THE SYNONYMS

- 1    THE FLAVOR IS THAT OF A STRAWBERRY  
AFTER SUNDOWN IN SUNNY SEASON  
AND ITS VOICE IS LIKE THAT OF MUSIC  
I DESIRE MORE OF THESE BERRIES  
AND THAT SUNNY SEASON EMOTION  
IT IS VERY AMAZING AND TEMPERATE
  
- 2    I HAVE DISCOVERED AN ENDEARMENT... FOR MYSELF  
OH HONEY, SIMPLY JUMP INSIDE AND COME AFTER ME  
WELL I HAVE DISCOVERED A WOMAN, PRETTY AND KIND  
NEVER DID I REALIZE YOU WERE THE PERSON EXPECTING ME
  
- 3    YOU HAVE BEEN SPRINTING AROUND, SPRINTING AROUND, SPRINT-  
ING AROUND, HEAVING THAT MUD ALL ON MY TITLE  
AS YOU WERE AWARE THAT I, AWARE THAT I, AWARE THAT I'D CON-  
TACT YOU  
YOU'VE BEEN MOVING ABOUT, MOVING ABOUT, MOVING ABOUT  
EVERY SOIREE IN L.A.  
AS YOU WERE AWARE THAT I, AWARE THAT I, AWARE THAT I WOULD  
BE PRESENT AT ONE

# GUESS THE SONG FROM THE SYNONYMS

- 4 I FIND IT TO MY LIKING WHEN YOU REFER TO ME BY THE SPANISH TERM FOR WOMAN  
I HOPE I COULD ACT AS IF I DON'T REQUIRE YOU  
THOUGH EVERY CONTACT IS OOH LA LA LA  
IT'S A POSITIVE FACT, LA LA LA  
OOH, I MUST BE SPRINTING  
OOH, YOU ENSURE THAT I CONTINUE TO PURSUE YOU
- 5 A SINGLE OBJECT, I AM NOT AWARE OF  
THE LEVEL OF YOUR ATTEMPT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE  
REMEMBER THAT, I CREATED THIS SONG  
TO ELUCIDATE LATER ON  
EVERYTHING THAT I AM AWARE OF

WATERMELON SUGAR  
PERFECT  
ATTENTION  
SEÑORITA  
IN THE END

ANS:

# TRIVIA

- 1 Particularly during a turbulent warm summery night, dinoflagellates undergo a chemical reaction to emit light. It is meant to scare off enemies. Often it is high temperature and high quantity of organic material such as sewage that causes this. ID this phenomenon.
- 2 Antonio Banderas is an extremely skilled dancer from his time on Broadway and often plays an archetypal Latin lover. While filming the Mask of Zorro, Antonio picked up the skill of sword fighting- all of which led him to be the perfect choice to voice a very similar lovable character. ID the character.
- 3 The notion of this game stems from a racist idea in the 1800s that a certain group of people spoke in a way that was deliberately unintelligible. It associates their language with "confusion" and "incomprehensibility". ID the game.
- 4 Michael J Fox gives Lil Nas X some advice in his new time-traveling video teaser for his upcoming song Holiday. The Canadian actor closes out the video, dressed as a cowboy and warning the singer, "Whatever you do, Nas, don't go to 2020." What role is he known for?
- 5 The Forbes Fictional 15 ranked this American cartoon show character as the fourth richest fictional character in 2006. In an ironic turn of events in the adapted movie, the richest kid in the world played the character. ID the character and actor.



-Stafan Santhosh

Richie Rich and Macaulay Culkin  
Marty McFly from Back to the Future  
Chinese Whisper  
Puss in Boots.  
Sea sparkle phenomenon, (bioluminescence on the beach)  
Answer: