



St. Augustine's Day School
Barrackpore

Panache

VOLUME III

Flamboyance In Each Verse

PUBLISHED BY





St. Augustine's Day School
Barrackpore

Panache

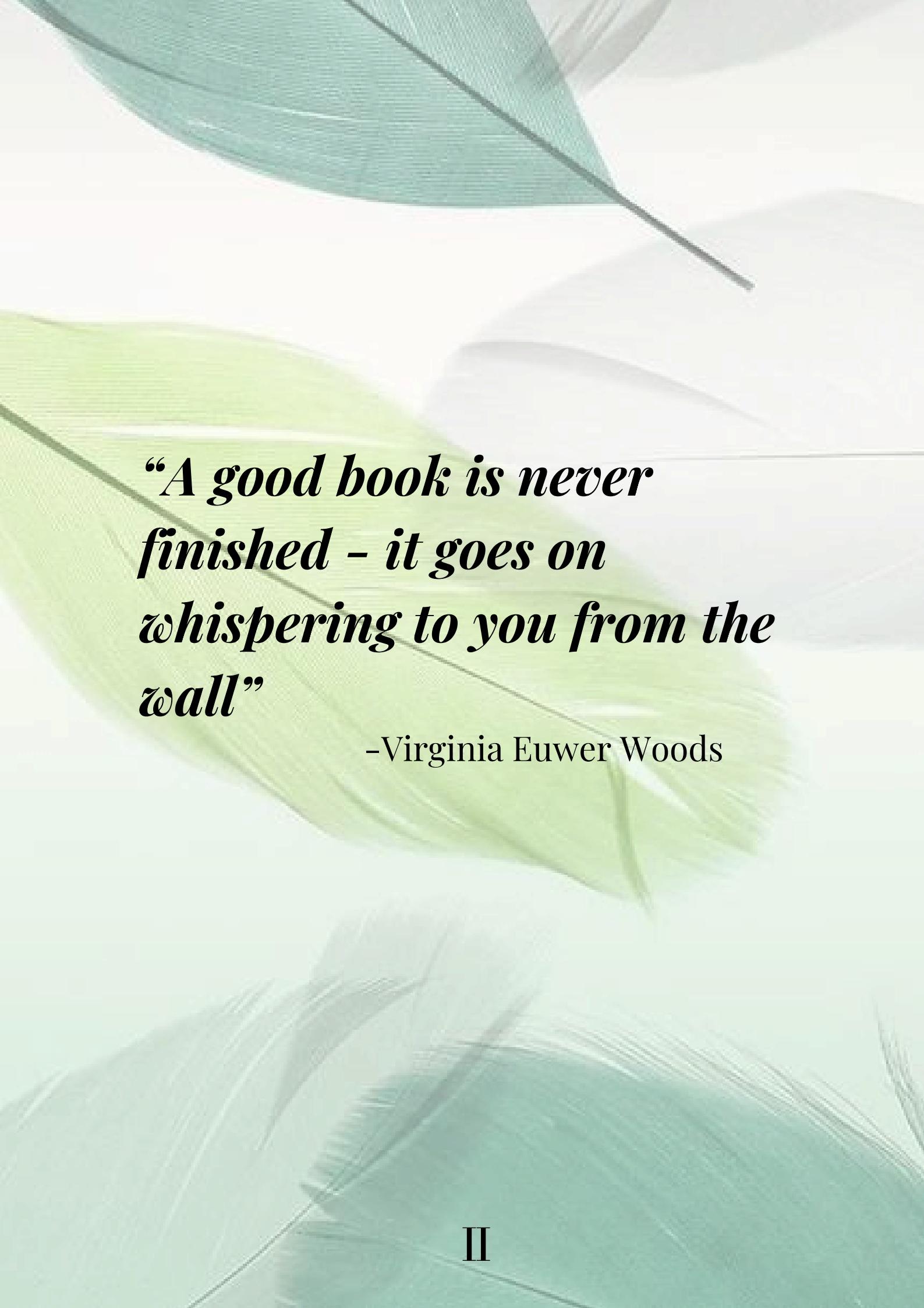
VOLUME III

FLAMBOYANCE IN EACH VERSE



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*“A good book is never
finished - it goes on
whispering to you from the
wall”*

-Virginia Euwer Woods

PREFACE

I spilled the ink on a white paper
Feeling the need to clean it, I walked away -
Lest I left the art undone.
I knew my mind dreams fantastical,
But I lacked the panache to start again -
Lest I left my art undone.
I couldn't feel at ease leaving the words
But I felt that words never talk -
Lest I left the verse undone;
But I ran back to my origin
And found the streams of ink
To have flowed to a greater place;
And the quill caught the flames
Of the shimmering light of the Sun
That travelled just a hair of what my ink had,
For my ink held their Panache
And my verse?
It was the flamboyant art.

Anuvab Dutta

CLASS : XI

From the

desk of



The Principal

I am thrilled to present "Panache: Flamboyance in Each Verse - Volume III", a captivating compilation of short stories crafted, edited, illustrated, and designed entirely by our talented students. This literary endeavor not only showcases their creativity but also exemplifies the spirit of collaboration within our school community. I commend the dedication and passion displayed by our young authors and artists. May these tales resonate with you, sparking imagination and celebrating the flamboyance found within each verse.

Shweta Ray
PRINCIPAL

From the

desk of



The Head Mistress

It gives me immense pride and joy to see "Panache: Flamboyance in Each Verse – Volume III", being published. It is an exquisite anthology of short stories meticulously crafted, edited, and adorned by our students. This literary venture not only reflects their literary prowess but also underscores the depth of creativity nurtured within our school. Each page of this anthology is a testament to the commitment and enthusiasm our students have poured into their work. Let us relish the brilliance of their storytelling and artistic expressions, savoring the vibrant hues of flamboyance in every verse.

Ari Mitte
HEAD MISTRESS

From the

desk of



The Editor-In-Chief

'Panache, Flamboyance In Each Verse' is more than just a collection of words and illustrations. It is a celebration of creativity, collaboration, and the power of expression. It is a testament to the belief that art knows no bounds and that every voice deserves to be heard. This project became a part of my life during my middle school years, and ever since, it has been a cherished gift — an environment, a safe space where we all learn and grow together. Now, getting to lead the teams is truly an honor that speaks volumes about the journey we have shared.

As the Editor-in-Chief, I have had the privilege of witnessing the boundless imagination, talent, and dedication of our young contributors. Each story shines brightly, inviting readers into a world of creativity and passion.

In Volume III, discover a kaleidoscope of voices, sharing unique perspectives on life, love, and dreams, alongside categorized stories for easy exploration, based on interests. Every page of this book is a testament to the ingenuity and passion of all the student creators.

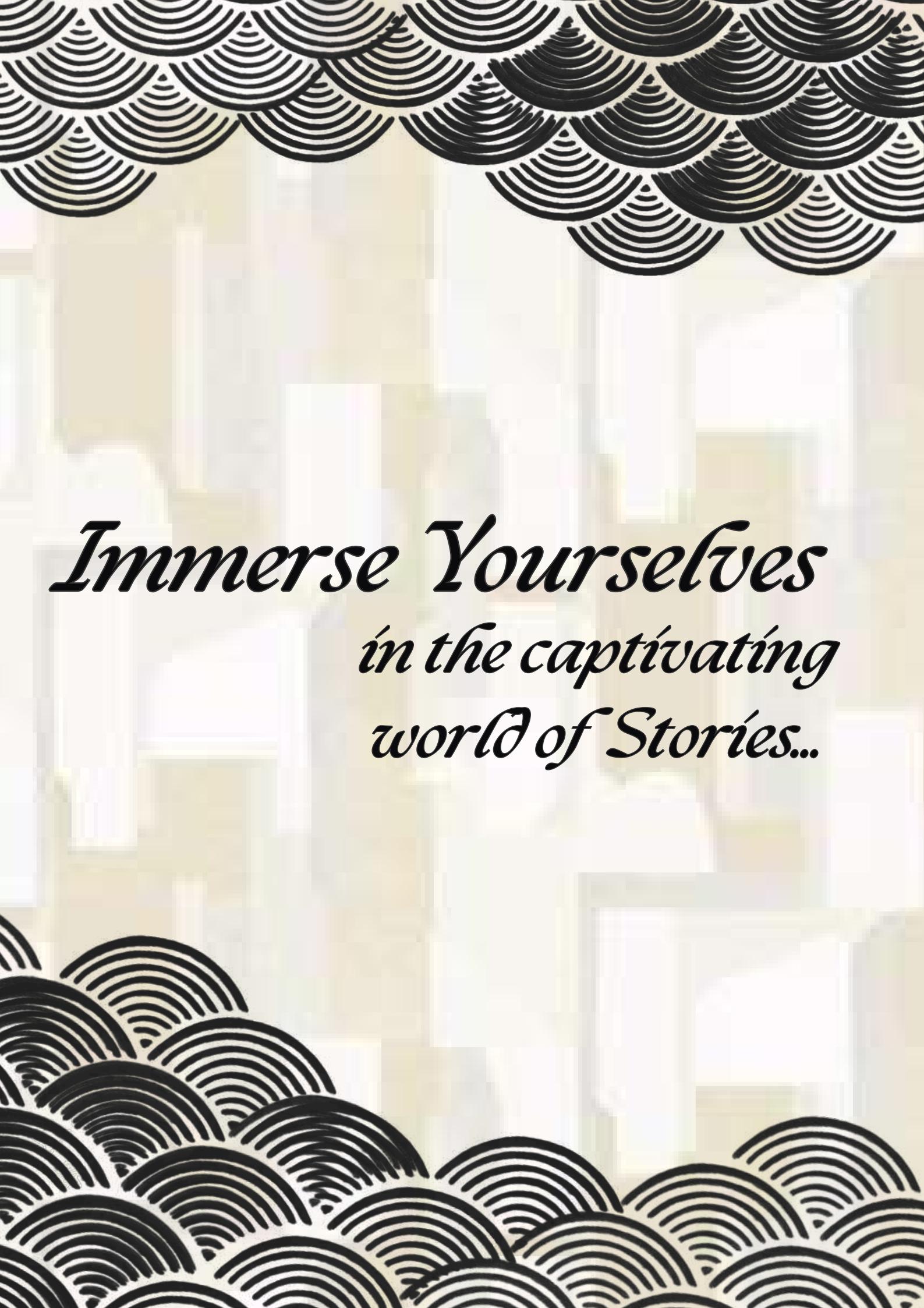
We are fortunate to have such a hardworking team where each member dedicates themselves tirelessly, day and night. Their dedication fosters seamless teamwork, ensuring we meet deadlines effortlessly. Extending my heartfelt thanks to all my teammates and teachers for their support throughout. To our readers, I invite you to immerse yourself in the colorful tapestry of this collection, to explore the depths of imagination and emotion that lie within its pages.

May this volume serve as a reminder that within each of us, lies the capacity to ignite change, to spark joy, and to illuminate the world with our unique gifts. Here's to embracing Panache and flamboyance in every verse of life.

Happy Reading!
With Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Smarshana Ghoshal".

Editor-in-Chief



*Immerse Yourselves
in the captivating
world of Stories...*

CONTENTS

◆ TRAIL OF CLASSICS

	Page no,
1. <i>Impede Time in Sweet Home</i> - Adrija Bagchi	1-5
2. <i>The Stolen Property</i> - Meghamitra Das	6-10
3. <i>Choto Pisi</i> - Ritoja Sen	11-15
4. <i>Seniorship To Sisterhood</i> - Anushka Saha	16-18
5. <i>Sunshine</i> - Debmalya Ghosh	19-22
6. <i>Maa ke Amar Porena Mone</i> - Arha Saha	23-26
7. <i>Borobudur: The Mischievous Monkey</i> - Rounak Roy Chowdhury	27-31

◆ THRILL OF SPINE

8. <i>Laser Slaughter</i> - Archisha Niyogi	32-35
9. <i>The Girl Over There</i> - Alivia Mondal	36-41
10. <i>Whispers in the Dark</i> - Tamopa Chakraborty	42-47
11. <i>One Glamorous Evening</i> - Shreeparna Ghosh	48-52
12. <i>Echoes of Insanity</i> - Koyel Debnath	53-55
13. <i>The Unsolved Mystery</i> - Arushi Sarkar	56-59

◆ SPOOKY AURA

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 14. <i>Two o' clock</i> - Drishti Ganguly | 60-64 |
| 15. <i>12:00</i> - Kirti Sharma | 65-68 |
| 16. <i>Moving to Newport: A Disaster</i> - Atrijo Roychoudhury | 69-73 |
| 17. <i>A Nightmare of a Nightmare</i> - Aakriti Baranwal | 74-77 |
| 18. <i>Love Beyond Grave</i> - Agnidipa Majumder | 78-83 |

◆ MOMENTUM LIFE

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 19. <i>Qafir</i> - Karan Tripathi | 84-87 |
| 20. <i>The Train to the Dark</i> - Swapnaneel Ghosh | 88-91 |
| 21. <i>A Silent Love</i> - Bristimita Maity | 92-96 |
| 22. <i>Rose</i> - Soham Mahajan | 97-98 |
| 23. <i>Lily</i> - Surmit Kumar Choudhary | 99-101 |
| 24. <i>The Forgotten Songbird</i> - Sheerja Ghosh | 102-103 |
| 25. <i>A Promise To Keep</i> - Puloma Maity | 104-107 |
| 26. <i>Love: The Elixir</i> - Sanjana Dey | 108-112 |
| 27. <i>Purview</i> - Anuvab Dutta | 113-115 |
| 28. <i>Inquilaab</i> - Baibabhi Majumder | 116-118 |
| 29. <i>Colours</i> - Adhiraj Ghosh Dastidar | 119-122 |
| 30. <i>Perfect Dinner</i> - Mohur Chatterjee | 123-128 |

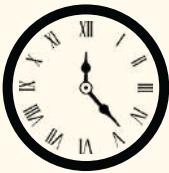


◆ TALES OF IMPULSE

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 31. <i>Aventura o algo parecido</i> - Agnijita Chakrabarty | 129-134 |
| 32. <i>Apocalypse - Infinity</i> - Abhinibesh Saha | 135-139 |
| 33. <i>The Uncharted Journal</i> - Gairik Ghosh | 140-141 |
| 34. <i>The Loop</i> - Dripta Ghosh | 142-144 |
| 35. <i>My First Camp</i> - Adhyayan Ghosh | 145-148 |
| 36. <i>Journey to The Palace</i> - Anurag Biswas | 149-151 |



***TRAIL
OF
CLASSICS***



Impede Time in Sweet Home

"Why! I made sure that all the rooms were locked. Children slept safe and sound and so did we." Sister Anne spoke with an unusual calmness. Sweet Home was an orphanage that can most likely be found in picture books. Hidden inside a garden rich with trees and flowers was Sweet Home. But what made Sister Anne speak that way was a wholly unexpected circumstance. All the clocks went missing one morning when the bell was supposed to go off and wake all the fast-asleep children from their enchanted dreams.

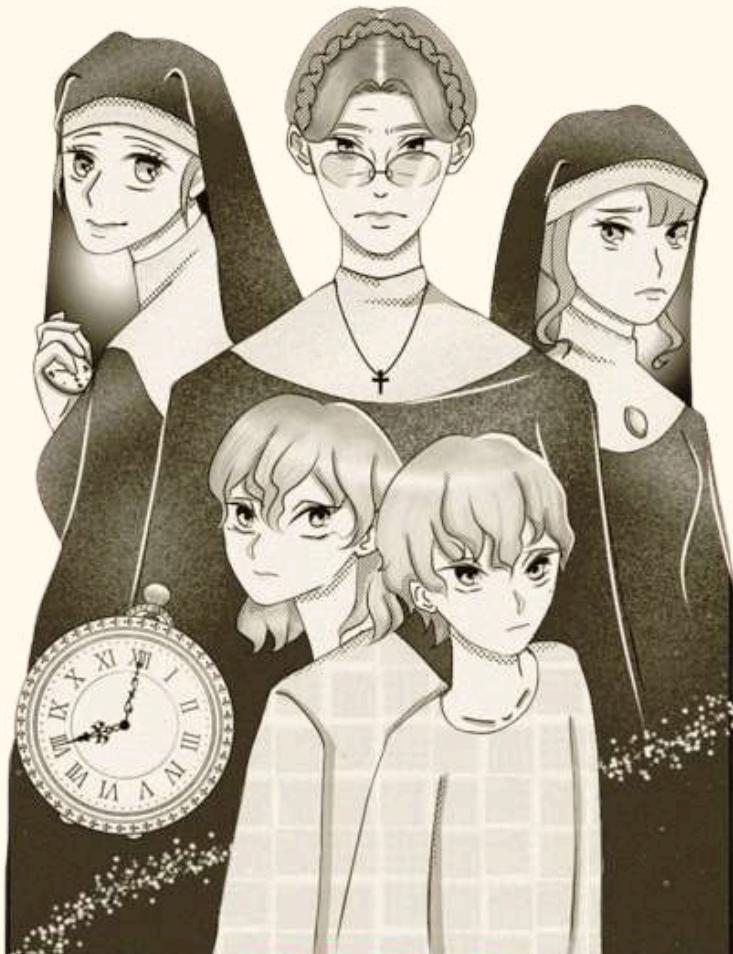
Sister Anne paced up and down the hall when she tried to explain Judith how she had kept everything proper over all those years and no such thing had ever happened.

If it weren't for Sweet Home, it could have been suspected that such incidents might be the doings of the naughty children. Here, it was very different and children thought thrice before going against the rules. Judith was the Head Sister. She managed everything that needed to be managed. "Let's keep these matters closed for now. We must call the children for breakfast after waking them up." Judith spoke, putting an end to the discussion and investigations. Judith hated being late among the list of a few more other things that she hated. Of all the things, she hated being put behind time.

This could have been a very positive notion if she did not make the children live like robots with her given prejudices.

"Hide." I whispered to my twin sister Julie as sister Anne approached us.

"James, get back to the dorm. I will head to mine." Julie spoke in a hurry and sprinted with light foot up the stairs. I headed to the boys' dormitory as fast as I could and pulled the blankets up to my chin. I laid there panting when I heard Sister Anne opening the door and waking us up. Few other boys groaned in despair at having to wake up, even though they slept in an extra hour.



Illustrated by Nayanika Porel

If I were to talk about Sweet Home, I would have to start with negative words because as orphans, we were already unhappy, but our situation made us even more miserable. The cause of such unhappiness was the written rules. Either you follow them or get transferred to another of those Sweet Homes in some distant hill.

We had to wake up at five thirty and do our daily morning chores by six. If we weren't done, we had to leave them as they were and move on with the next part of our routine. Then, we were led to the study where we were taught algebra, literature, history, and science. If anybody was found wasting their time, they had to bear severe punishments.

The very thought of unpleasant consequences made everyone tight-lipped and keep a blank face. After our studies, we had tennis or football lessons. This was followed by a piano lesson, supper and then sleep. We were machines operated by the driving force of time. "Time never waits for anyone and so you should not let even one second slip from your hands." That's what Sister Judith always said. We never played for fun or gave ourselves spare time for things we enjoyed doing. All we did was study and learn.

Sweet Home had clocks everywhere to keep us in sync with time. From kitchens to classrooms, everywhere hung a clock. The clock that made all other clocks work was the Grandfather Clock in Judith's office which every normal being would have hated.

We all lined up for classes after putting on our uniforms. Something felt eerie in the air that morning. We did our chores following the routine. It was a bright weather. The commotion began as soon as our lessons started. Due to absence

of clocks that day there was no way to track the time. Literature lesson seemed to go on forever until Sister Anne finally gave up and decided to grant us a generous leave.

"Today we have got no clocks to tell us our routines. Therefore I, on my decision, decide to give you children the only opportunity to play outdoors in the garden."

"How. Can. You. Do that?" Judith shook furiously. "I will not accept wastage of time at any cost. Even if clocks are missing, it does not mean we cannot buy some new ones and report such acts to the higher authorities."

"You are quite right. I must see what can be done. I'll ask Mary to get some new clocks." Sister Anne said silently. Just as Judith nodded and went back to flipping pages of her book, there was a knock on her door. "Yes?" Judith looked up from her reading glasses.

"Sister, I cannot get outside the garden. There must be something wrong! Everywhere, it's dense fog. Sweet Home's boundaries are enveloped in thick white fog."

Sister Mary continued. "I was supposed to get bread for the dinner in the market and I cannot get out of here. I'm afraid there's something SUPERNATURAL." She laid stress on the last word with wide eyes making Sister Anne chuckle. Judith got up. "I will look into this matter. Call all the children in and let them do anything they want. Mary, come with me." Just as Julie and I parted ways in the morning, we did the same now. We waited until Sister Anne, Sister Mary and Judith disappeared from our sight. "There must be something going on. Should we trail behind them?" Julie whispered. I nodded, considering for a moment.

"I give up."

Judith, the woman who was ready to do anything but give up and sigh, said

this after her ninth attempt to get out of the mysterious fog. Sister Mary was afraid to approach the gates. Julie and I peeked from the large corridor pillars to steal a good look at them. "Indeed, it had happened. Time had stopped in its tracks. Time is being controlled by some energy. We should not leave out the opportunity to have fun. We cannot waste time today because time itself seems to be paused." I grinned broadly. "Last night, I had seen Sister Anne fidgeting with a stopwatch. How could she possess..."

Before Julie could complete, I whispered to her that we had to join the rest. I regretted my impulsive decision, not knowing that Julie would forget everything after that day.

Julie and I ran to the great hall and joined the rest. One group had turned on the radio and sang songs I had never heard. One group of girls sat together and painted each other's faces. One group was munching apple pies, pastries and potato fries. Julie and I ran around with some other kids and Julie started playing with the toddlers. Suddenly, everybody stopped and turned their heads when the enormous hall doors were opened. Judith stood up, and a grave silence followed. "Dinner in five minutes." Judith left after the brief announcement. Everybody was expecting a row and were taken aback by the sudden change in act.

Sister Anne and Judith met in Judith's office after supper even though there was broad daylight.

"Anne, the children looked happy. I have never seen them smile this way." Judith spoke in her lowest voice.

"That's because you never let them." Sister Anne said with honesty.

"Was I being too harsh all these years?"

Sister Anne smiled. "If I were to tell the truth, yes you were. There is a fine line between being disciplined and being obsessed with it". "I will have to lighten up my rules. Children without a family must relive their family times here. Before I took the responsibilities of Sweet Home on my shoulders, I had taken the oath of being a family to the children. All these years, no child came to me with their worries and problems. It was difficult to manage things all these years alone, Anne."

Judith sighed.

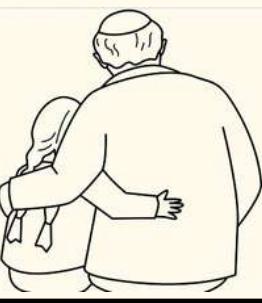
"I know Judith. You will do great. The children love you." Sister Anne wished goodnight to Judith and allowed themselves to rest.

The next day arrived, much to everyone's astonishment, as night had seemed to skip. When Sweet Home woke, everyone discovered the clocks back in their places and a running Sister Mary exclaiming how the fog disappeared. But what surprised everyone at Sweet Home the most was that Sister Anne could not be found anywhere.

Adrija Bagchi
Class XI



Adrija is an enthusiastic reader and a writer. Her love for Literature is profuse. She has been a part of the Literary Club of St. Augustine's Day School, Barrackpore for a long time. Her imagination brings out a new world in her writing.

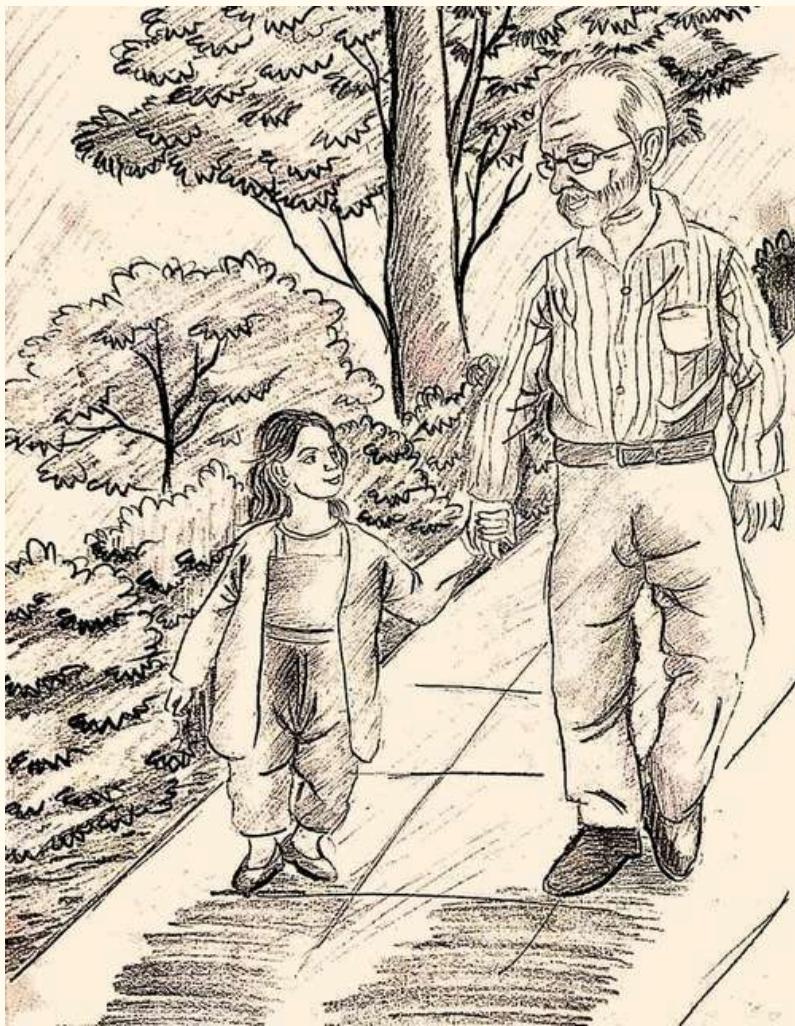


The Stolen Property

"There was a king who was known for his bravery and righteousness. He was famous for his fair and just rule, which ensured that his kingdom remained peaceful and prosperous. One day, a strange creature approached him and asked for his help, finding a valuable treasure that had been stolen from it - an effulgent gem." The grandfather started his story as the sun began to set. Completely engrossed in his narrative, he failed to notice that his granddaughter had wandered off. Pausing in the middle of his story, the grandfather swatted at the mosquitoes buzzing around him. "As soon as the sun disappeared below the horizon, the mosquitoes started to plague us. We should leave now," he said, turning towards his companion.

It was then that he realised that she was nowhere to be found. He started searching for her. He eventually found his granddaughter engrossed in a conversation with a butterfly as she stared at it intently. Surprisingly, the grandfather didn't scold her; instead, he breathed a sigh of relief and said to her pleadingly, "Child, let's go home before it gets too late." The young girl stared at him coldly, but the grandfather smiled and took her little hand, leading the way back home.

The retired government employee had a daily routine of sitting by the riverside during sunset. He preferred to sit in a place that was free from chaos and noise, as his grandchild did not like commotion. He always tried to adhere to her wishes, as she meant everything to him. The two of them lived like hermits, away from the hassles of the world, and enjoyed the peace and tranquility of nature. Although they were inseparable, they had different perspectives towards life. The girl was always very agitated and found it difficult to socialise. Her grandfather, on the other hand, was a free soul in his childhood and remained so in his old age. While the grandfather greeted



Illustrated by Soham Basak

people with either a handshake or a folded hand, the grandchild seemed perplexed and misbalanced and waved her hands whenever she tried to communicate.

The girl was not a paradigm of a perfect granddaughter either. She would cry out loudly whenever things did not go her way. Her greatest problem was that she refused to communicate with people. She liked being a stranger to others and mostly kept to herself. Her grandfather was tired of this behaviour of hers. He wanted her to socialize and adapt to the outside world. "What an ill-mannered child!"

It is all due to her grandfather's attachment," some people said. While others commented, "The parents must have known that this child would disgrace their family. That is why they left her for a better life." These talks greatly embarrassed the old man, and he felt helpless. People advised him to get rid of her, but he refused, saying, "I did not choose her. She chose me."

One day the elderly man lost his patience. He hated being pitied or judged and resolved not to give in to her demands that day. That evening, the girl demanded her grandfather to carry her to the park. However, he firmly refused her. Over time, the house became silent, and a peculiar atmosphere settled over it. The culprit who had caused the disturbance now regretted her actions. She turned to her grandfather. His eyes were filled with tears and his spirit was low. He isolated himself from her as he locked himself in a separate room. Feeling unusually lonely, the child began to yell out her

emotions. The screams were so loud that they could be heard from a distance, causing fear and unrest in all living beings. The neighbours were highly agitated, but they were reluctant to voice their protest, perhaps because they had become used to this frequent torment.

After half an hour, the screams gradually became faint and eventually stopped. The grandfather could no longer hold himself back and rushed out to meet his beloved. He prayed to God for forgiveness. As the grandfather searched for his granddaughter, he heard some faint scratching sounds that guided him towards the verandah. Upon arriving there, he found crayons scattered around the area. A sketch was lying on the floor. Although the words were difficult to decipher, the sketch had the words "I AM SORRY" engraved on it. The sketch's random strokes, contrasting colours, and imperfect alphabets resembled calcium-deprived bones. However, to the old man, it was more beautiful than any painting in a museum.

The next evening, the grandfather took his granddaughter to the park. On the way, he instructed her to socialize with other children and make new friends, emphasizing that socialization is important for civilization. However, upon arriving at the park, the girl felt frightened by the lively environment around her. It would be the first time in her life when she would come out of her shell, but for the sake of her grandfather, she was ready to try. Plucking up her courage, she went to befriend some children.

Meanwhile, her grandfather went to speak with his friends. They were surprised to see him there because, despite coming to the park regularly with his granddaughter, he rarely struck up a conversation with them. One of them asked, "Is that Mukherjee? After a long time, my friend. How are you doing?" To this, the old man responded, "I am somehow handling life for nowadays pension is not enough to support two lives. It is very difficult to make both ends meet. Even my health is deteriorating, but my prime concern is my grandchild. Without me, she has no one to look after her."

To this, Mr Ghosh asked him, "Where are her parents? Why do you not hand her over to them?" In a fit of anger, Mr Mukherjee replied, "I will not hand my child over to heartless people. At no cost shall she go to such parents who ditched their child only because... what is that fuss all about?"

Rushing to the scene of commotion, they heard that Mukherjee's granddaughter had shoved another child to the ground, severely injuring him. As a result, the guardians were reproaching her for her behaviour. The grandfather was about to follow suit when Mrs. Singh intervened saying, "Why blame only her? What about the boy who mocked her for how she looked and flung mud at her?

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Soham Basak

They are children, vulnerable to mistakes, let them shake hands and apologise to each other." The children reluctantly complied. At that moment, the elderly man realised how utterly wrong it was to expect an "abnormal" child to fit into the "normal" world easily. Was she an outcast only because she was different from the other children and couldn't do what others did so easily? Her parents had abandoned her seven years ago due to the possibility of her being "abnormal". Now she was ten years old, yet she could not eat, drink, speak, or understand words without external aid.

Despite this, she had her own emotions and sentiments. Should they not be respected like others? When the commotion subsided, the grandfather took his granddaughter home and put her to sleep. As he sat there humming her favourite lullaby, he asked himself, "Why is there not a place for differently abled people in this prejudiced society? Why do people constantly seem to be either sympathetic or repulsed by them? Why should they be denied love and respect?" However, he had no answers to these questions.

After a few years, the grandfather passed away because he was unable to handle the sorrow of being apart from his grandchild, who had perished from severe pain. As the word spread, the parents arrived crying like crocodiles, and suddenly, the neighbours gathered to offer their unwavering sympathy. The lonesome home was sold. However, the story the grandfather had started

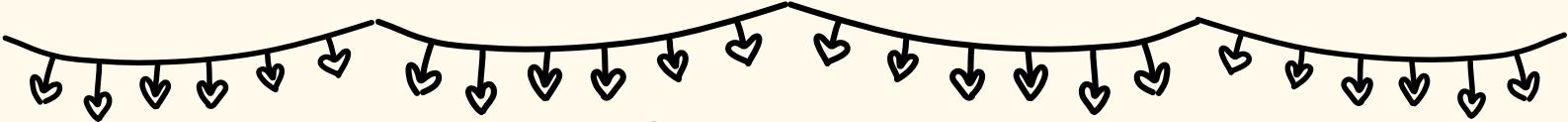
remained incomplete. Only the wind flipped through the pages of the old man's diary and completed the narrative, reading to itself, "The weird creature lost its treasure — The Gem of Humanity."

Meghamitra Das

Class XI

Meghamitra Das aspiration to enrich writing has been a centre of interest for her and she endeavours to encapsulate her experiences and perspectives, connecting them with the exquisite elements of nature. It has been her constant effort to give words to her thoughts.





Choto Pisi

It was the summer of 1965. The matchmaker would arrive anytime now with the potential groom's family to see my Choto Pisi. The entire house buzzed with activity to ensure that the visiting family wouldn't be dissatisfied. Rushing down the stairs in my floral cotton frock, I found my Choto Pisi having her waist-long hair braided by Boro Pisi.

My Choto Pisi, the epitome of beauty and talent, possessed big round eyes, a pointed nose, straight eyebrows, full pink lips, a round face, fair skin, and long, flowing hair. As beautiful as she sounds, she also had artistic prowess in all kinds of handwork like stitching, crocheting, weaving, painting, and crafting. She should have been the most confident woman of our times but her only source of insecurity stemmed from her right crippled leg.

Born with an inconvenient leg, she navigated her life with a thin, inward-bent leg from her ankle down and couldn't even wear her saree normally. All of her shoes were custom-made by a renowned cobbler in Shyambazar. It resembled a metal cage wrapped with leather belts to make the shoe comfortable for her. Adorned in her carefully crafted attire, she was ready to greet the guests.

After approximately twenty minutes, the potential groom, accompanied by his family — mother, father, and elder brother — arrived. The matchmaker took a seat on a chair placed in the center, with both families positioned on either side of him.

"The young man's name is Nilkamal Sarkar. This is his father, Shyama Prasad Sarkar, and his mother, Purnima Sarkar," the matchmaker announced, looking at my grandfather. Nilkamal Sarkar was a tall, fair young man. He possessed a commendable appearance with thick, properly

styled curly hair. He wore a plain blue shirt and black trousers with a belt, complemented by thin metal-framed spectacles.

To say the least, Grandfather and Grandmother were pleased to meet the potential groom and his family. The matchmaker continued, "The young man serves as a manager in the nearby Usha Company's office and boasts a substantial salary. He graduated from a prestigious college in Calcutta. Additionally, he is a skilled artist and has a passion for reading books." The additional information about Nilkamal further impressed our family.

Following the groom's introduction, my mother brought Choto Pisi out of her room and into the living room. Choto Pisi walked with a slight limp, noticeable to everyone present. I observed Nilkamal exchanging glances with his parents.

"So," the matchmaker addressed the groom's family and continued, "This is Sreemoyee Pal Majumder. Her father is Saradchandra Pal Majumder, and her mother is Charubala Pal Majumder. She is not only an art enthusiast

and a brilliant cook but also highly skilled in stitching, weaving, painting, and more. She is just like Saraswati—an all-rounder." Nilkamal once again exchanged glances with his mother.

"Accha, Biren Babu," Nilkamal's mother addressed the matchmaker. "Why does Sreemoyee walk with a limp? Was she injured by any chance?" Now, she looked directly at my Choto Pisi.



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

"Biren Babu," my grandfather called with a stern voice, "Didn't you already inform our guests about my daughter's condition?" Now, Biren Babu sat in the middle, sweating profusely, his nervousness, making his teeth clatter.

"No, I mean, yes. Oh no... Oh lord! It must have entirely slipped my mind, sir. Please forgive me for forgetting about this detail."

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty

Facing Nilkamal's family, Biren Babu now disclosed something that should have been mentioned in the very beginning. "Sreemoyee is a perfect girl, but the only imperfection she carries is her right leg. You see, she was born with a defective leg, and the doctors could not come up with a cure. Therefore, she walks with a slight limp."



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

Nilkamal was furious. How dare he come to see a potential bride? No, how could she be considered a potential bride with such a leg? It was blasphemous.

Nilkamal stood up and said, "I'm sorry, but I won't marry a girl with a disabled leg. She might be good at everything, but I can't accept someone with such a condition as my wife. She is not even capable of being a potential bride."

The room fell into stunned silence at his audacious statement. Choto Pisi slowly stood up, rage evident in her eyes, and retorted. "Nilkamal Babu, if my disability to walk perfectly makes you so uncomfortable that you dare to suggest I shouldn't be seen as a potential bride, then our doors are open right there. You can leave this moment." With that, she stormed off into her room.

Nilkamal's family felt ashamed of their son's behavior, but they thanked God for avoiding their boy's marriage in that household. Hastily, they left the place.

Grandfather, grandmother, and every adult in the family comforted Choto Pisi, assuring her that, sooner or later, there would be a groom who would love her for who she is.

As time passed, the matchmaker brought numerous potential grooms, but none of them met the family's approval. However, one day, Choto Pisi met Anirban Dutta.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Unlike the others, Anirban was an ordinary man, with an average appearance and a regular wage job in Tollygunge. He came to see Choto Pisi with his family, and the marriage was finalized that very day. I had never seen Choto Pisi so happy. The wedding was grandly celebrated with numerous guests in attendance, and Choto Pisi left with Pisemosai to live in Tollygunge.

Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

Almost seven to eight years later, during the winter, I observed Nilkamal on the street from my balcony. Initially, I couldn't recognize him, but it was his voice that brought familiarity. He walked towards the market with a young girl who resembled his daughter. I noticed that his daughter had a slight limp. Upon closer inspection, I was shocked to see that her left leg was disabled. At that moment, all the memories of the past played in a loop inside my mind – the refusal to marry my Choto Pisi and the insulting remarks about her leg.

When Choto Pisi came to visit, I shared what I had witnessed. She didn't respond immediately. After a while, she asked me, "Is it karma, Gouri? I don't know why, but I feel bad for him. He might have been extremely rude to me, but I still feel bad." I remained silent, but in my mind, the same question echoed repeatedly, "Was it really Karma?"

Ritoja Sen

Class XI



Ritoja Sen is a passionate artist, avid reader, and talented writer. Ritoja also actively participates in Model United Nations, showcasing her diplomatic skills. With all of her virtues and panicking Ritoja stays as an illustrator, writer and a friend you can always trust on deadlines.



Seniorship to Sisterhood

School is often termed as the 'second home' a child has, a place filled with memories to be cherished for a lifetime.

They say children on their first day at school cry out loud, not ready to face the world of unknowns, while when they leave school, they cry their heart out because the world outside is full of challenges. The world is a place where real life and challenges wait to haunt them with open arms. It is not just the school building that builds comfort for the children but it is the teachers, classmates, staff, seniors, and juniors who make school a second home for them. People often speak about the time every student has to leave behind their second home and walk on the path of life further with the hope of excelling in their chosen fields, but what we don't talk about is how it feels to let go of the person who played the biggest role in making school feel home to you.

Well, how does it feel when that one person you used to run up to, ranting whenever any difficulty at school would come up, leaves her alma mater? They say good things come to an end for the better things to begin, but what they don't say is who would I run up to ranting about the better-bitter-stuff going on in my life after she left and now there is no one to listen!

The day I entered school for the first time I remember having teary eyes because I felt terrified to get inside the huge building where I didn't know anyone. There was Aditi Di to rescue, the considerably tall girl who wore a neatly pressed school uniform. She was asked to help our teacher take us inside our classrooms and check if our uniforms were up to the mark. While I was out of the gate crying, I stamped on my feet and made my shoes dirty, as a result of which Aditi Di had to shout at me, making me more prone to crying. Who would have known the senior who scolded me so badly on my first day, making me feel more terrible about school, would be the one to make me feel at home? I was adamant about not visiting the school the next day but had no other options left.



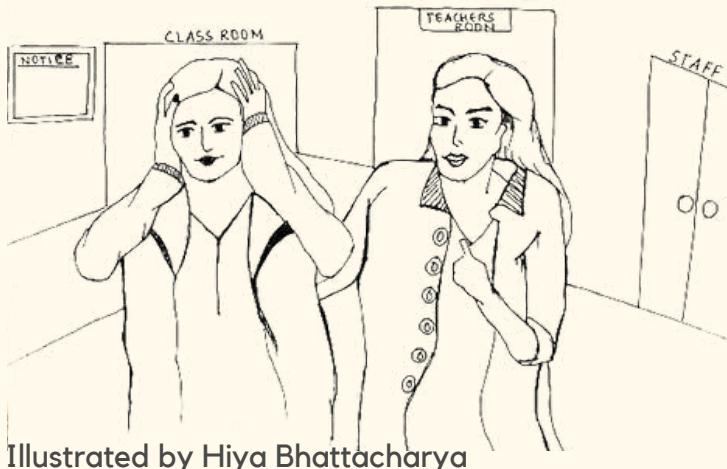
Illustrated by Hiya Bhattacharya

I don't remember what brought me and Aditi Di together so great, but all I remember is it was her all these years that helped me survive being in school! She has been a perfect student all through her school life and has been a part of the student council. I know it sounds amazing to be known as the sister of a student council member, but believe me it can be annoying at times. Being

known as her sister came with the responsibility of being the mini-Aditi Sen, which meant I could not get myself into notorious deeds my peers wanted me to do. Thanks to her, my parents never had to come to school to be called by my teachers to listen to their complaints against me. It is better that I tell you that she is 5 years older than me, and I guess you will believe me unless you listen to us talking with each other or see how we behave with each other because we are more of friends. All the years when she was there, I had to barely think about the mess I always created because she would always be there to rescue me, which did make me a bit careless though.

Things changed when she got promoted to class 12, her last year at school. I knew she would have to leave after a few months but what I focused more on was her being in the student council; at that moment, her position in school mattered the most to me. I had no time to think about how I would manage being in school without her.

17th November, 2022 was when she told me that their last working day was just a week later on 25th November. Being seen only as her sister was something I could not bear anymore; I wanted to be known as myself and not as her sister. I wanted to enjoy myself like my peers did without the fear of being scolded by Di, so I was excited about the day she left school; little did I know that it would be so hard without her by my side. She has been there always throughout, from gossiping about my classmates to making my classmates regret their act of bullying me. I didn't realize it would ache so bad when she left, but believe me, it did. Realizing that from the next day,



Illustrated by Hiya Bhattacharya

you won't see this familiar face around you anymore was terrifying. Throughout our friendship, I often wished she was not there, but the day she left? It felt like school was not home anymore. I was terrified to realize that she wouldn't be there further waiting for me to run and hug her whenever I felt low. It felt like all the comfort I was used to at school vanished in a moment.

I wish she could stay here a little longer because I miss being stared at the mention of her name and more than anything I miss being stopped from doing mischief.

It has been more than a year since she left school, and I did manage quite well through it without her, but I don't miss her any less. She is miles away but as she said while leaving school: "I am leaving my school, I am not leaving you." She is still there whenever I need her. Even after a year when she is back in her hometown and decides to visit school, when she passes through the corridors, it intrigues my mates to whisper: "That's Aditi Di, Anushka's sister. She is back." They don't realize the fact that Aditi Di is always there; she didn't leave school. She is still there in that corridor where she first scolded me, and in the vacant classroom where we used to gossip during tiffin breaks. She will not be erased from school until I leave school because even today when people see me they say, "That's Anushka, Aditi's sister" and I LOVE IT!

Anushka Jaha
Class VIII

Anushka is creative, sensible and empathetic. She loves reading and spending time with her people which tops the list of her hobbies. She takes great interest in writing and has good linguistic abilities.





Sunshine



Illustrated by Drishti Nandy

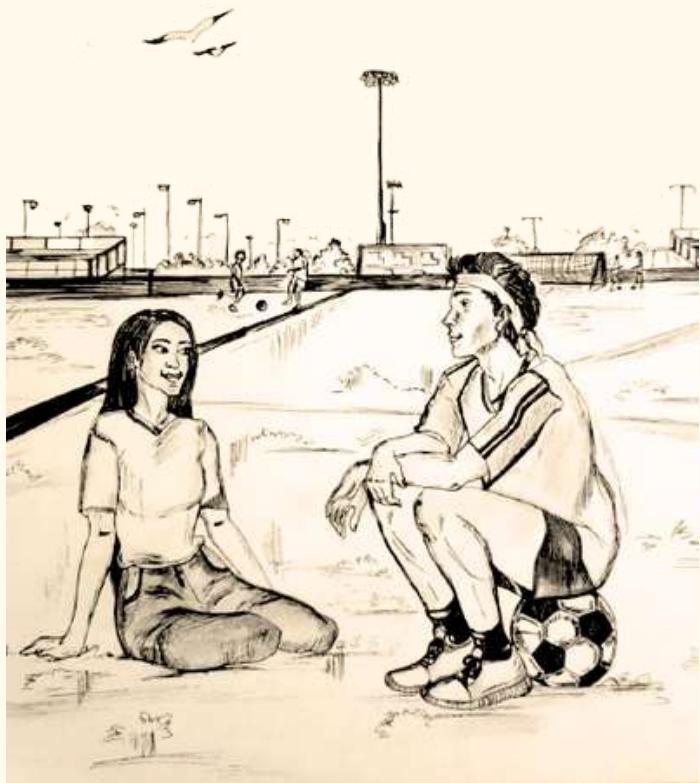


Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty

Hello, my name is Bevan. Do you all believe in shining gleamingly? If not, here is a story of how certain support and discipline completely changed my life. Before the dawn there is darkness like my shaded childhood. My childhood was marked by the simple joy of playing football in the dusty streets of our neighbourhood. Despite coming from a middle-class family with limited means, I found happiness and purpose in this beautiful game. However, my life at school was a stark contrast. Imagine often being the target of ridicule and bullying? Yes, that was me! My love for football always served as an ammunition for my tormentors. Thus, I refused to let their taunts extinguish

my passion, using their negativity as fuel to prove them wrong.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Drishti Nandy

During my gloomy days, I found a glimmer of hope in the form of Shinistha, my childhood friend. Shinistha was always there for me, not only was she a constant source of support and encouragement but also acted like an igniting flame who guided me out of my darkest thoughts. She saw the potential in me when I could not, just like the sun which makes the moon shine at night! Her unwavering faith gave me the strength to persevere, telling me that if I wanted, I could put a silver lining in the toughest of situations.

Determined to turn my life around, I threw myself into training with newfound zeal. Spending hours on the field, practicing tirelessly to improve my skills. I embraced myself in physical exercises, building strength, power and agility, transforming my body into a machine, which was capable of enduring the rigors of professional football. Every bead of sweat I shed, was a testament to my dedication, a step closer to my goal of becoming the star which she had always wanted me to be.

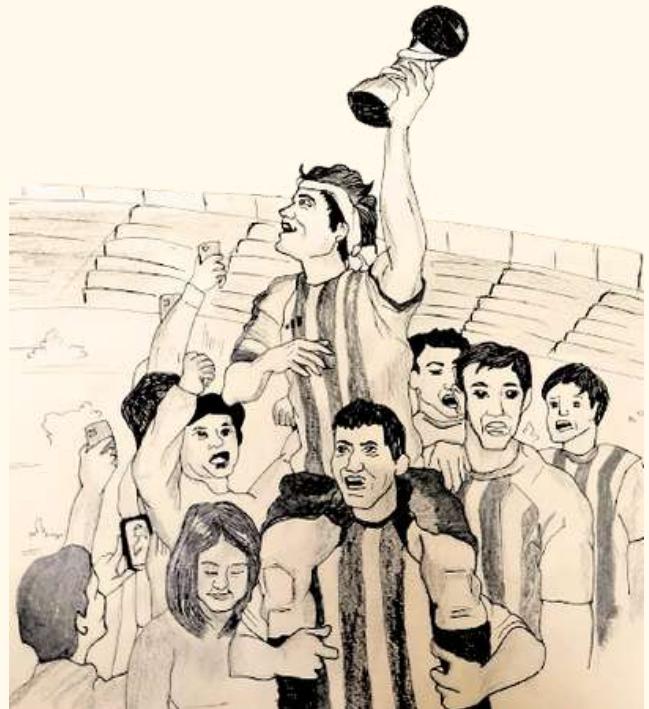
But the path to my success was like an eclipse. During one of the friendly matches my school hosted, I was severely injured, with the doctor's report of a sprained ankle which would last for almost a month. But in the course of these set-backs and obstacles that tested my discipline, patience and resolve at every turn, I remained focused. The road had a sign saying it is a one way path, with

no guarantee of success. Yet, refused to be moved, my determination was unwavering. With Shinistha by my side, cheering me on every step, I the once known bullied boy, fought tooth and nail to overcome every hurdle that stood in my path, refusing to let my past define the bright future I was planning for.

The pinnacle of my journey came in the form of the inter-school football tournament, the night I had fought for, the tournament I waited for in my entire school life! Scoring only two goals in the group stage, I was not considered a favourite to win the golden boot. The biggest reason was being inconsistent, like the moon changing its forms. But I was undeterred, knowing that the true test of a champion laid in rising up like a star at the biggest stage. In the semifinals, I scored three crucial goals, one in the first leg where we lost two-one and two in the second leg winning two-nil, propelling my team on a three-two victory on aggregate and securing the spot in the final.

The final match was a test of endurance and skill. With both teams giving it their all, it was faith and belief holding hands. I was quite shocked at how strong and fast the other team was! One of my teammate was knocked off and had to ask for substitution. I knew that this was my moment to shine and show the world what I was really capable of. With god's grace and the support of the stars, I scored a stunning hat-trick that not only secured me the golden boot but also led my team to victory, winning them

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Drishti Nandy

their first-ever cup. As I lifted the sparkling trophy, surrounded by my teammates and supporters, I saw a face which shone brighter than the trophy. It was of Shinistha, with whom I looked towards the starry night sky with renewed hope and determination, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

Today, I happen to be one of the best footballers in my state, at the age of twenty three playing in one of England's top club, Manchester United. My dream and hunger for success still strives me forward for further achievements. Shinistha and I both lead a beautiful life, with her being the pillar to my success. Thereby, in the end it was all nothing but sunshine! Was it my hard work or a support which always pushed me forward? Or did the stars already have a plan for me?

I guess we will never know.

Debmalya Ghosh

Class IX

Debmalya Ghosh, a versatile St. Augustine's student, loves writing, football, and inspiring others through *The Flames* and *Panache*. He frequently crafts captivating stories, poems, and dramas, showcasing his love for literature. He loves to actively participate in activities that enhances his writing, listening, and speaking skills.



MAR KE ANAR FORENA MONE

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

Tumi Shokti, Tumi Mukti



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

That day, it rained heavily. The drops of rain tickled down the window pane, attached themselves with resolute and seeped deep into the soil with a firm continuity. A lady in long trousers and a loose top wrapped me in a warm towel and placed me on the side of the bed, away from the edge. I was allowed to move partially, wiggle my legs and clench my fingers tight. When I opened my eyes, flashes of light hit them as if angels would appear out of thin air. Turning my head towards the right, I noticed similar bodies in a line, babbling

and crying. All at once, thunder sparks illuminated the sky and a loud bang resonated deep inside my ear drums. I saw a rising pair of eyes, gazing at me from the snowy blanket. They were veiled with emotions, enveloped with rapture and behind them, was a hidden nurturer, a hidden mother. She folded her delicate arms around me and concealed me in her cosy shoulders. I didn't know who she was or what she was, but I sensed familiarity.

There were several nature-inspired playgrounds adjoining the apartment I resided in. I was taken for a nature walk amidst the magnificent oleanders and palm trees, embracing the summer afternoons. I was really devoted to the children playing in the park. A mellow smile extending to their rosy cheeks had the potency to re-kindle an unlit candle as if a lily in bloom. I grasped her thumb, she pulled me up in posture and supported me under my arms. Initially, her steps were following mine. We were required to coordinate our movements, sharing a sense of rhythm. On reaching the finishing line, (the other side of the ground), I realized I was in a state of

solitude. I turned back to delve into her pleasant countenance. Tears ran down her cheeks like water droplets slipping off the translucent green arrowheads. Her eyes sparked with amusement and her chiseled face developed dimples on the other side of her cheeks. A flaming golden spear of happiness penetrated deep inside my feelings as I stood upright on foot without her support, surrounded by the remnants of nature.

By that time, I was seven when I had my first trip to Victoria Memorial. A sunlit morning covered with thick white clouds. An esteemed monument bathed in white paint, stuck in a dark green carpet of grass. Many of the clouds there, were still camouflaged because of the white appearance of the Makrana Marbles it was built with. The Statue of the Angel of Victory, placed on top of the dome, had a way of peering right into your spirit as if it were a book of illusion open in front of your eyes. Standing as an authentic idol of the city, the building hosts one of India's most vibrant light and sound

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

shows and is an embodiment of Kolkata's rich history and culture. As we traversed through the historic fields, she carried me in her arms throughout the day. Sweat dribbled down her face as if drops of blood on the ground. It was hard to accept that from next time, I would have to walk alone and that I had put on a lot of weight, but the comfort of her lap would always remain unique.

My first visit to the Indian Coffee House with her was yet another ecstasy filled with memories to cherish. Bengal's divine aura and heritage stands as a major source of attraction for all those tourists who want to taste and explore the cultural delights of Kolkata. Starting from the revered Bengali *adda* sessions over cups of hot *chai* to watching couples sharing moments of togetherness, this place serves as a hub for every writer or poet in the city. As you take your first step inside this loud space, you see high ceilings and square tables anchored to the huge walls. I cannot recollect what we had munched on, but I remember her narrating to me stories of her college days when she used to come along with her mates, looking for some sort of respite from her regular classes and how she met a handsome young lad from the Presidency who fortunately turned out to be my father. I remember dropping a cup of hot coffee on her lap which happened to blemish one of her favourite silk sarees that made her whole body look like heaven.

From the time I learned how to walk, I have always found myself standing in front of the gates of heaven, offering me a life of eternity and grace. Your presence conveys me a deep sense of confidence and safety and today, when the life form that once grew inside you is prospering within me, I just need your blessings to master this sphere of survival, beset with challenges and difficulties.

“মাকে আমার পড়ে না মনে।
শুধু যখন বসি গিয়ে
শোবার ঘরের কোণে;
জানলা থেকে তাকাই দূরে
নীল আকাশের দিকে

মনে হয়, মা আমার পানে
চাইছে অনিমিখে।
কোলের 'পরে ধরে কবে
দেখত আমায় চেয়ে,
সেই চাউনি রেখে গেছে
সারা আকাশ ছেয়ে,
মাকে আমার পড়ে না মনে /"



Arha Saha
Class X

Arha loves equations and patterns. She values literature for its magical ability to transcend reality and inspire creativity in childhood. She loves to discover connections between seemingly disparate concepts and savours every moment of her life with gratitude.



Borobudur: The Mischievious Monkey

On the morning of February 3, 2015, Amit found himself enveloped in an unexpected chaos. The sun had barely begun to cast its golden hues on the horizon when he got awake, only to realize with a sinking feeling that he was late for an important football match against a visiting team from Kolkata.

Despite his final exams, scheduled to commence from the 6th of February, Amit was determined to squeeze in a few football matches before immersing himself in the mundane world of physics formulas. A die-hard football fan, he held Sunil Chhetri as his idol, even though most of his schoolmates were fervently anticipating the Cricket World Cup that was set to begin that month. While cricket fever gripped many, Amit's heart beat to the rhythm of the football field, and he couldn't let the opportunity of an important match slip away, not even for the impending exams.

Amit quickly dressed up and rushed to the football field which was a couple of yards away from his house. On his path, he called his friends, Ravi and Varun who were just as careless as Amit. The football field was quite large but it held an unusual quirk – approximately a third of it, served as the residence of a monkey. Fondly named 'Borobudur', a nod to the famous place in Indonesia, this animal was quite amiable. However, when provoked, it had a penchant for hurling objects, ranging from pebbles to fruits, and even bricks at unsuspecting players. This unpredictable behavior led to the occasional rescheduling of crucial matches, including the one looming ahead.

Upon reaching the field, they noticed that the players from the visiting team, had already begun their practice sessions. Nearby, under the shade of a tree, the parents of the visiting, players were taking a break. They had brought a variety of treats, including samosas, jalebis, and the delectable masala muri, a popular dish hailing from Bengal.

Wasting no time, Amit approached their captain, Aniruddha, eager to get started. However, Aniruddha had some unexpected news to share – their

parents were also football enthusiasts (particularly for the teams of East Bengal and Mohun Bagan) and were slated to play on both teams. This revelation was both captivating and vexing for Amit as previous encounters had often resulted in crushing defeats. Yet, the lure of the delectable Bengali delicacies, made him reluctantly agree to Aniruddha's proposition.

The match kicked off, with Amit's team boasting three adults against the visiting team's four. While Varun had joined Amit earlier, Ravi arrived a bit late, automatically sidelining himself from the game. However, this unexpected turn of events, proved to be a delightful moment for Ravi as he found himself relishing the famous masala muri in the company of adults.

During the match, the monkey remained oblivious to the proceedings, undisturbed within his territory. As the match continued, the monkey, intrigued by the aroma of the snacks, slowly descended from his tree, eyeing Ravi who was savoring the masala muri. The mischievous animal had a long tail that resembled an extra arm for him as he would notoriously use it for pilfering items, from fruits to even heavy objects like an entire tiffin box. Ravi, engrossed in his munching, didn't notice the approaching monkey until it skillfully swiped a jalebi from his hand, leaving everyone in splits.

At this point, a player from the visiting team, Jyoti, successfully scored a goal, putting them in the lead, with a score of 0-1. Amit's frustration escalated, particularly directed towards the goalkeeper who happened to be Jyoti's father. In disbelief that the seemingly easy catch was missed, Amit voiced his displeasure. However, Jyoti's father remained undisturbed, proudly gazing at his son. Later, when confronted about the missed catch, he offered a rather unusual explanation, claiming that a mosquito had obstructed his path. However, to this day, no one had ever seen a mosquito in the field.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Aritra Chatterjee

In the midst of this uproar, Varun managed a spectacular breakthrough, skillfully navigating through Aniruddha's defense and scoring a remarkable goal. The cheers erupted, and the dynamics of the game, shifted dramatically, putting Amit's team in a much more favorable position.

The monkey, finding the jubilation contagious, couldn't resist joining the celebration. It swung from branch to branch, mimicking the joyous shouts of the players.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Aritra Chatterjee

He spotted an unattended water pipe near the sidelines which was used to water the nearby tress. Immediately, he seized that opportunity and skillfully opened the tap, causing an impromptu water fountain to shoot up into the air. The players were caught off guard, with some even mistaking it for a goal celebration stunt. All of the players got wet and the monkey even used it as a water gun to aim at them. It was hilarious as he shot water directly at the opposing team's goalkeeper who, in an attempt to shield him, slipped on the wet grass. The once serious match, had transformed into an uproarious water fight, with Borobudur leading the charge.

Amidst the laughter and playful chaos, Borobudur continued his antics. Spotting a discarded referee's whistle, the cunning monkey grabbed it with his tail and, much to everyone's surprise, blew it with impeccable timing. The field fell into momentary silence before erupting into fits of laughter. Borobudur, now the self-appointed referee, swung from the goalpost to the crossbar, blowing the whistle intermittently and adding a whimsical touch to the water-soaked post-match revelry.

Amit, with a mischievous glint in his eye, seized a handful of cutlets and aimed for Varun, who retaliated with a well-aimed samosa. The visiting team, initially taken back by the unexpected food fight, quickly embraced the playful spirit, returning fire with their arsenal of snacks. Jyoti, the goal-scoring star, found himself at the center of the masala muri storm, his triumphant celebration replaced with a good-natured food fight.

As the sun began to set, casting a warm glow over the football field, the players, now thoroughly drenched, couldn't help but join in the monkey-inspired festivities. They began to throw samosas, jalebis, etc. at each other, turning the football field into a battlefield of delectable snacks. Laughter echoed as the air was filled with the aroma of fried treats and spicy masala muri. Borobudur, the monkey, perched on a goalpost, seemed to revel in the chaos he had ignited, chattering animatedly as if giving orders for the next round of food fights.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty

As the snacks flew through the air, the football field transformed into a whimsical feast, with players ducking, dodging, and laughing amidst the delicious chaos. Even the parents, initially shocked by the water antics, joined in, tossing their share of treats into the playful fray. Borobudur, descending from his goalpost perch, skillfully caught flying samosas mid-air, adding his own flair to the food-filled spectacle.



Illustrated by Aritra Chatterjee

The unexpected food fight created an atmosphere of camaraderie, breaking down barriers between opposing teams and turning rivals into allies in this culinary battlefield. The sun dipped lower, casting long shadows across the field, but the warmth of laughter and the aroma of snacks lingered.

And so, as the food fight gradually subsided, leaving the football field strewn with remnants of a delicious battle, the players, now covered in a colorful array of snack debris, gathered together for a group photo. Borobudur, proudly perched on the shoulders of Ravi, became the quirky centerpiece of the snapshot, capturing a moment that would be shared, laughed about, and cherished for years to come. The sun bid adieu, leaving behind a field that had witnessed not only a football match but a symphony of joy, laughter, and unexpected friendship.

Rounak Roy Chowdhury

Class XI



Diving into the literary realm, Rounak Roy Chowdhury emerges as an avid reader, writer, and active participant in literary activities. His voracious appetite for stories, fuels creative endeavors, while praise from teachers, validates his talent. Exploring various genres, enriches his writing journey, with a commitment to learning one new word daily.

THRILL OF SPINE





LASER SLAUGHTER ?



Emmy Martin was the daughter of a wealthy family who ran one of the most successful and richest automotive industries in France. She was being sent to tutoring classes as soon as she turned five. As she became eight years old, her father enrolled her in a special academy for children where she was strictly taught about business studies, linguistics, fashion designing, culinary and was also introduced to automotive aerodynamics. She was living a luxurious life. Many citizens admired her balanced lifestyle while some envied her. An envious encounter brought an end to the life of young Emmy Martin.

Edward Martin who was popularly known and respected as Seigneur Martin, the owner of Industries Automobile De Martin (Martin's Automotive Industry) and father of Emmy Martin, took his ten year old daughter for a visit to his company to show her how an automotive industry works. She was surrounded by her bodyguard as her parents wanted her to be safe since she could easily be injured by the powerful laser beams used in laser cutting and heavy metal parts being carried from one corner of the room to another. While her father was explaining her the machinery of an automobile, she was gazing at the laser beams being used by the worker for laser cutting.

The bright red gleam of the lasers attracted her and her eyes widened. She was so fascinated that she forgot about what was happening around her and was about to touch the laser beam. One of the workers noticed the young Martin and pushed her away from the beam. Her father gasped and her bodyguard came back to his senses. Lord Martin told his workers to take Emmy, who was terrified at that time, to the car and fired her bodyguard for not protecting his daughter from the accident that was about to take place. Madeline Martin or Lady Martin, who was the co-owner of the industry, was shocked by such news and immediately ordered her servants to find candidates who were capable of taking the place of Emmy's bodyguard.

Within an hour, the servant welcomed ten bodyguards at the Martins' mansion. Each one of them was considered few of the strongest men of Bordeaux but every single man lacked an important skill. Lord and Lady Martin interviewed them but didn't find them skilled enough to be capable of being their daughter's bodyguard, but the tenth one was still waiting

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Anuvab Dutta

Arthur always used to keep a close eye on Emmy and having such a mysterious man like Arthur around all the time made the young Martin feel uncomfortable sometimes.

One evening Lord and Lady were leaving Emmy alone at home for attending a meeting with the President at the Palais Bourbon. Since the servants as well as Arthur was on leave, they placed Emmy under the guidance of the Martins' Doberman, whose name was Mignon, to ensure security in the mansion. Few hours passed and as the clock struck ten, Lord and Lady Martin returned home. Lord Martin opened the door and his soul left his body. Lady Martin also entered the room and was shocked by seeing the scene. Their daughter was lying on the marble floor with her eyes widened, mouth opened and a thin cut on her forehead. She wasn't moving and was definitely not breathing. Lady Martin burst out into tears by seeing the situation while Lord Martin called the police.

The detectives also arrived and as soon as they saw the ten year old's paralyzed body, announced her dead. The policemen took Lord and Lady Martin out of the mansion to let the detectives investigate the scene. The head detective, Beau Michel and his assistant Charles Fontaine were unable to find any evidence related to the murder scene or the murderer so they told the policemen to take away this body to the forensic department. Michel told his assistant to stay back at the mansion to carry on with the search for evidence in the room where the murder took place while he took his car and went to the forensic department where he was welcomed by

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Anuvab Dutta

Thierry Roux or Dr. Roux who was an expert criminalist, investigator and a forensic medical examiner. He was the head of the team of forensic criminalists who were chosen to examine the body of the ten year old daughter of the Martins, Emmy Martin. He was also the elder brother of late Emmy Martin's bodyguard, Arthur Roux, who was out of station for an unknown reason and didn't know about Emmy's death. Michel was given a pair of gloves, a mask and clear glasses to wear as he was required to witness the examination of the body.

The examination didn't take too long as Dr. Roux had already noticed an unusual mark on the child's forehead. It was a 'T' shaped scar

carved on middle portion of the forehead. This area was such a place that, if injured deeply, would kill the person and they also revealed that it was a pre-planned and cold-blooded murder. This news was included in the daily newspaper in which it was mentioned that the Doberman that was present with Emmy Martin when she was alone in the mansion, did not react or make any noise when Emmy was killed in front of his eyes because the murderer was a person who was well-known to him. The detectives informed this to the policemen and they continued to collect suspects. Weeks passed and every possible man or woman, having relationship with the Martins, was thoroughly interviewed but no one found anything suspicious. So, despite how much Dr. Roux trusted his brother, he ordered

the policemen to search his own brother , Arthur Roux's house for evidence and all they found were different sorts of laser guns, out of which the powerful blue laser or UV laser gun had 'DANGER' written over it. Dr. Roux noticed this and immediately called his brother but his phone seemed to be switched off. Even the e-mails and text messages were blocked. When he looked into his files, Arthur Roux was considered dead in all of them and the date was same as the date on which he was given the leave from the Martins. Dr. Roux was shocked as well as heartbroken when he realized that his only brother, whom he trusted so much, could be the murderer of Emmy Martin, but how? No one knew.

Two months had already passed and Arthur Roux was still a no-show. Lord and Lady Martin and the rest of the family were desperate for finding the murderer of Emmy Martin. Lord Martin blamed himself for choosing to trust a mysterious man like Arthur. The detectives, Michel and Fontaine, attended a press conference where they revealed that the ten year old daughter of Edward Martin and his wife Madeline Martin, Emmy Martin was most probably murdered by Arthur Roux.

A powerful laser beam was pointed at the centre position of the child's forehead in a 'T' manner which directly affected the brain of the child and killed her immediately. She was killed from a high altitude as no proof of any weapon or person was found, neither on the child's body nor somewhere in the room where the scene took place. Some of the interviewers said that Arthur could be a con man or a criminal who had been lurking in the shadows and planning the murder, they could be right about it. Arthur Roux was indeed the one who murdered young Emmy Martin but he could not be considered the official murderer of the child due to the lack of sufficient evidence. He had been planning to murder the principle members of the family to capture the wealth, belongings and property possessed by them but failed to do so because right after killing Emmy, expert detectives, criminalists and even spies were after him and policemen were searching the entire country to find him. Therefore, he put on a disguise and ran off to another country and swore that he would never return to France. Until and unless Arthur Roux was found, the case of Emmy Martin's Laser Slaughter was closed.

Archisha Niyogi

Class VII

Archisha Niyogi, a young author at St. Augustine's Litbuzz club, is admired for her short stories and poetry. Determined to excel, she seeks to learn from experienced seniors and promises to actively contribute to the field of literature.

THE GIRL OVER THERE

It was a Saturday, and Bloom had been suffering from high fever and vomiting for four hours. Mr. Corrigan and I called the doctor. Doctor asked us to admit her to the hospital. We took Bloom and drove to the best hospital in town. We reached there by 5 o'clock in the morning.

Illustrated by Samadrita Maity



It was a Sunday; our anniversary, but little did we remember about it. We took Bloom to the most reputed hospital in town and got her admitted. Bloom was declared to show Covid symptoms and was in critical condition. I lost no strength. She was improving but woke up on Monday night with breathing complications. I called the nurse. She went to the doctor's room but the prescribed doctor did not come. It was Tuesday. I asked, "Where's Mr. Akali?" On hearing that he is no

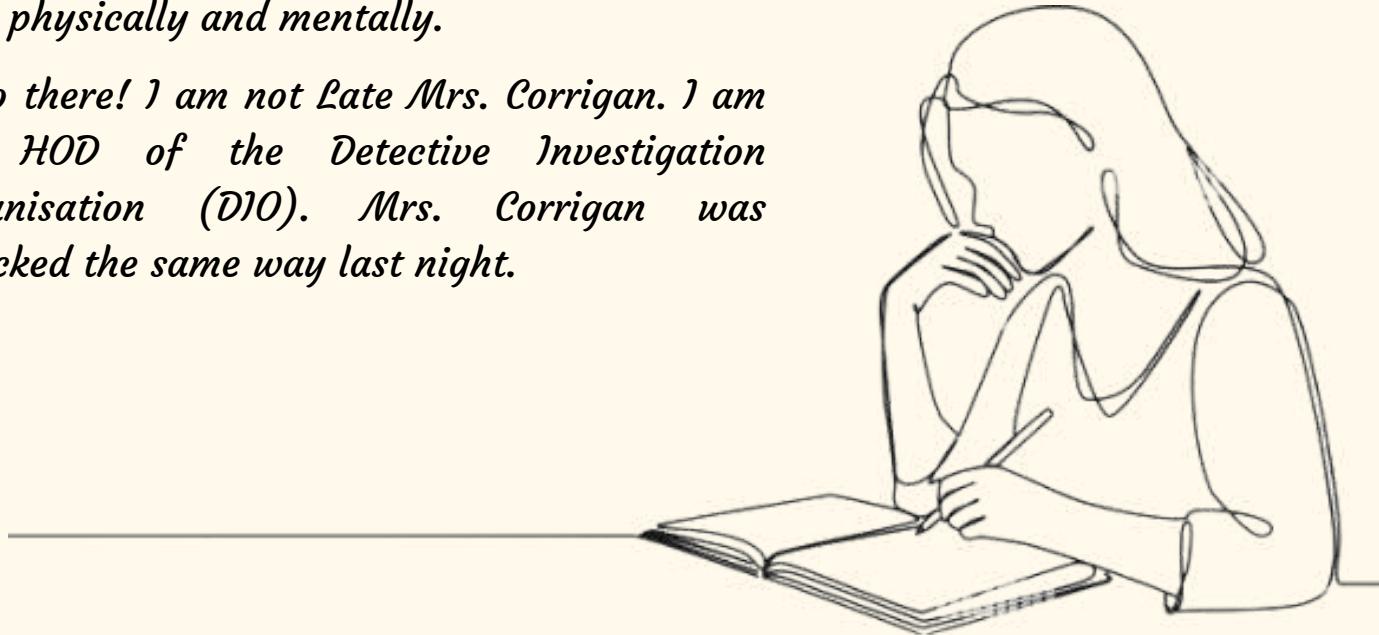
more, I was taken aback. Mr. Akali was stabbed at around three in the morning the previous day. Investigation was on. Bloom was given oxygen support and the doctor left without completing...

I am Mrs. Corrigan. I like to write every detail of my life in this diary because when I'm no more, someone else might continue my journal. Back then, I rushed outside to check the details. It was an emotional disturbance to accept the death of someone as humble and kind as Mr. Akali.

Mr. Corrigan arrived and got infuriated on seeing me writing. He gently explained Bloom how to have the food. My mother shouted at me on the phone to bring her granddaughter back.

ANOTHER MURDER! It happened around one at night. While everyone suggested transfer, I was determined to keep Bloom, for she was improving both physically and mentally.

Hello there! I am not Late Mrs. Corrigan. I am the HOD of the Detective Investigation Organisation (DIO). Mrs. Corrigan was attacked the same way last night.



I'm continuing her diary. The most shocking part of the murders are that the first two victims were doctors while the third was a patient's guardian. Shocking! What if the patient had any clue? I went to cabin P-14, where Mrs. Corrigan's daughter was admitted.

I: HI BLOOM! I AM MR. HARDY CURP, THE HOD OF DIO. I WANT TO ASK A FEW QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR MUM'S DEATH. I'M SURE THAT YOU MUST BE DEVASTATED BY THE INCIDENTS.

BLOOM: YES, PROCEED.

I: WHEN DID YOU LAST TALK TO YOUR MUM?

BLOOM: YESTERDAY, BEFORE I SLEPT.

I: WAS SHE HAPPY WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO SLEEP?

BLOOM: WELL MAYBE, DEPENDS ON HER.

I: FINE, THANKS! WE'LL LEAVE.

I find everything strange about her behaviour. She didn't seem to feel a thing about her mother...

"Good morning, Honey!" said someone.

Oh! It's my wife Peony Curp, another mad investigator like me. I hope we find it out soon. We went to check for the evidence. We found something very surprising - the murders follow the same pattern but the pattern of victims is different. The way of murder makes me laugh and worried at the same time, thinking that the serial killer is an animal.

"Don't laugh honey, it's not funny anymore. Stabbed on the head! Hairs chopped!" said Peony. She is right, everything is associated with the destruction of hair. This suggests that the person might have an unusual rage about hair. Then the suspect should be Mr. Hedrick, the cabin attendant, he is bald as well. I went down to check on him. He was fine. Now Peony went on for a check on the nurses, they are highly suspicious. She returned and told a nurse named Neomi was uncomfortable answering the questions.

The killer is inside the hospital because we have checked all the CCTV footage and everything. Even the steel gates were closed so it suggests the entry of no bodied creature. I have seen these types of killers. Their arrival is never seen. These types of killers are fearless and can embark on anything if their innerselves blast out, but they do leave a specific clue to challenge the officers. The last hope is waiting for tonight.

It was 9 pm then. Peony was feeding Bloom. Neomi arrived looking terrified. I followed her when she left the cabin and caught up on her.

*"Neomi what are you hiding from us? Tell us if you really know something."
"SHE's coming sir! Chop your hair off! Sir, chop it off!"
"What are you even saying Neomi?"*

AAAAA

Suddenly the lights went off. I quickly turned on my phone's torchlight. Neomi was not there. I searched for her.

"Neomi can you hear me out?"

There was no response. I quickly went to the CCTV control room, I checked it up - it was a blur. Neomi was found dead a second later. But she left a lot of clues, for sure. We sent her body for autopsy to know the exact time of death. The lights went off at 11:52 p.m. If she had died by 12 p.m., then the killer should be on that floor itself. And the killer is a girl! A LADY!

I went back to the cabin.

Bloom was asleep, Peony was tensed. I had never seen Peony so tensed before in any case.

"Why aren't you the Peony flower today?"

"When the lights came back, I noticed a wig lying under the bed. Does Bloom wear a wig? And does that mean she...?"

"We'll have a talk with her when she wakes up."

We found her asleep till the afternoon, so we called the doctor. Doctor told she has to sleep till the night to get her medications done. At night, she was not on the bed anymore. We went to eat in the hotel inside the hospital thinking that she would be asleep. Bloom was no more! She was murdered the same way. It confused us all. We checked her luggage - she had mysterious things! A hairless doll, a wig, a furrowed sweater, the sweater from which dog furs were spread on the victims and a smile ball. We called the nurses and asked them if Bloom had real hair. One of the nurses came up with something strange. She said that Bloom did not have a beautiful hair. There was a fight between her and her mum the day before her mum's death. As she mentioned, Mrs. Corrigan asked her to not show off her wig as her real hair to gain compliments which might have enraged her. That's a significant cause. But then why fur? And why stabbing on the head? And moreover, why would she kill the doctors and herself? We wanted to have a talk with her father. Her father mentioned that she had a furrowed dog but it died all of a sudden.

I: CAN YOU TELL IF BLOOM WAS BALD FROM BIRTH OR...?

MR. CORRIGAN: YES SHE WAS BALD FROM BIRTH.

I: DID SHE LIKE THE DOG HAVING HAIR?

MR. CORRIGAN: SHE LOVED THE DOG MORE THAN HERSELF BUT SHE WANTED IT TO PORTRAY HER, SO SHE REMOVED ALL THE DOG'S HAIR WHICH MADE THE DOG HAVE COMPLICATIONS AS BACTERIA STARTED GROWING.

I: OKAY, THANKS!

Everything came to a point - FUR, HAIR CHOPPED OFF, THE VICTIMS EVERYTHING SEEMED TO WORK OUT EXCEPT ONE, WHY SHE STABBED THE HEAD TWICE...

Peony suggested a search about autism, a motor neuron disability. The symptoms when, read by her father, were found relatable. When autistic children, have extreme mood swings, they engage in such activities like stabbing the head. Somewhere, Bloom knew that two of her most beloved things - her dog and herself will die soon, hence, stabbing twice. And most importantly, she knew she would have herself killed, because inside the hairless doll, a note was found which left me tear-stricken about the condition of this 'friendly earth' — "When you find me dead, tell my story to the world! I was bullied at school and made fun of for my wig. I wanted myself to be killed but before that I wanted to grow strong and it made my rage grow. Sorry! Let the world know I'm not a sin."

That smile ball represented the smile on her face while being dead.

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL FOR ALL, IT MATTERS ON HOW YOU TAKE IT. Yes, it was an incident where the killer was herself the victim. But was it her fault? Could the parents not be more tolerable and cautious? When every parent is bothered about their child's physical health, they forget their inner soul. Autism can be treated by the age of two if proper treatment and coordination is done, but what if it's not? What if irresponsibility, bullying and teasing of the child for being herself takes over? Then every parent

should be ready to face this. Bloom lies as the epitome of self-conflict and alter ego for the ones whose insides were unheard of even by their parents.

So stop the conflict. You never know when it strikes back.

Alivia Mondal

Class VIII



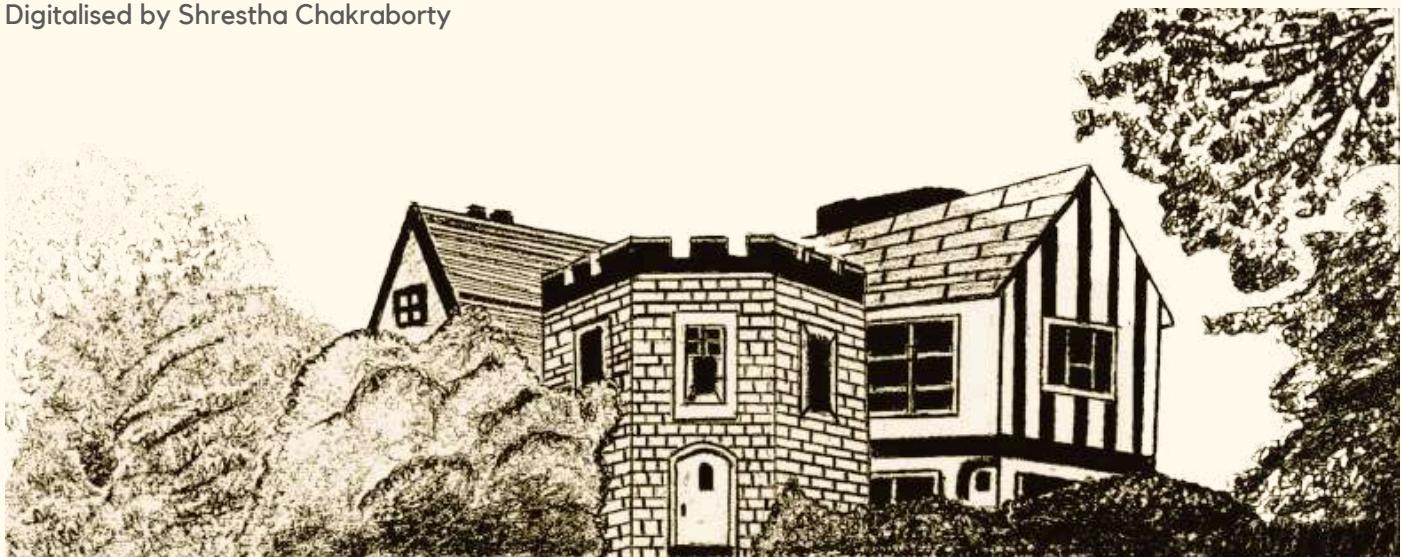
Alivia Mondal loves writing poems and has developed a habit of crafting philosophical tales in 2023-2024. She enjoys reading detective books about psychiatric serial killers and aspires to write about them. She always wanted to write about it but she never knew it was so soon.

WHISPERS IN THE DARK

Dwelling amidst the mist-kissed valley, Elite Enclave stood as a château of tranquillity by the dense forests. Shafts of sunlight pierced through the thick foliage, casting dancing patterns upon the forest floor, where silence reigned and mysteries whispered in the rustle of leaves; a dumb witness to many events over the decades.

Inspector Arthur Levoy was sitting in his drawing room; the soft glow of the lamplight casting long shadows across the walls.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Abhirup Dutta

The scent of lit cigar persisted in the air. As he poured over the case files scattered across the mahogany coffee table, a knock at the door reverberated through the room. It was none other than Monty Hargroves, the messenger of Elite Enclave. He was there to invite him to a grand masquerade ball organised by Mrs Victoria Sinclair, the owner. As he received the ornate invitation to the ball, a surge of anticipation mingled with a sense of trepidation washed over him. The weight of the invitation in his hand hinted at the gravity of the occasion, its delicate parchment whispering secrets unspoken. It was merely by chance that he found himself at the Elite Enclave masquerade ball later that evening. Dressed in a sleek black suit and a mask to match, he mingled with the guests, never suspecting that fate had drawn him into a web of intrigue and mystery.

As Arthur Levoy stepped through the grand entrance, he was immediately enveloped by the opulence and grandeur of the surroundings.

The ballroom, adorned with crystal chandeliers and gilded mirrors, dazzled under the soft glow of candlelight, casting an ethereal glow over the masked revellers who filled the space. Taking a moment to soak in the spectacle, Arthur adjusted his mask - its intricate design adding an air of mystery to his appearance. He seamlessly blended into the crowd. Amidst the swirl of elegant costumes and masked faces, Arthur spotted the host of the evening, the enigmatic owner, holding court at the centre of the room with effortless grace and poise.

Among the guests were eclectic mixes of individuals from various walks of life.

Josephine Aubert, a femme fatale with a mysterious allure, captivated the attention of everyone with her striking beauty. Dr. Charles Allard, an eccentric inventor, stood out with his elaborate costume and oversized top hat, regaling guests with tales of his latest inventions. Louis Bernard, a charming businessman, exuded confidence and sophistication while effortlessly commanding the attention of the crowd. Gabriella Petit, a mysterious newcomer, moved through the crowd with quiet grace, her piercing gaze taking in every detail. Nathaniel Baker, a loyal employee of Elite Enclave, silently observed the proceedings, ever watchful and attentive to the needs of the guests.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Abhirup Dutta

As the night unfolded, the air crackled with anticipation as the hostess, Victoria Sinclair, took to the stage. Bathed in the soft glow of candlelight, her presence commanded the attention of every guest. With a regal grace and a smile, she raised the microphone to her lips, her words poised to set the stage for the evening.

But before she could utter a single syllable, a sudden pall of silence descended upon the room as she faltered, her hand clutching her chest in sudden distress.

The collective gasp of shock echoed through the hall as Victoria's guests watched in horror, their masked faces reflecting a mixture of concern and disbelief, merriment shattered by the sudden and unexpected turn of events.

Detective Levoy's heart pounded in his chest as he surged through the crowd, his mind focused solely on reaching Sinclair's side.

Ignoring the crowd, he moved with determined speed and urgency. He knelt beside her, his hands reaching out to gently support her trembling form. Time seemed to stand still as he assessed her condition, his senses sharpened to a razor's edge as he searched for any signs of what had brought her to this sudden and distressing state. As he glanced around, Levoy motioned to nearby guests, directing them to clear a path for medical assistance while he continued to offer what aid he could to Victoria, his gaze never wavering from her pale, anguished face. Within moments, medical help arrived and whisked Victoria away in an ambulance. With her care secured, Levoy swiftly turned his attention to questioning witnesses and scanning for clues amidst the murmurs swirling around him.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Abhirup Dutta

Levoy, purposeful, sought cooperation to unravel Victoria's collapse. Each conversation unveiled insights and discrepancies, exposing hidden motives. Some guests squirmed, revealing cracks in their facades. Levoy's persistence uncovered valuable clues, heightening tension as he neared the truth, the room thick with suspicion.

In the midst of this turmoil, the family physician burst into the room, his expression grave and his words tumbling out in a rush of urgency. He was there to provide first aid to Sinclair and had accompanied her to the hospital. He delivered the news that the forensic analysis had unveiled a shocking revelation—Sinclair was attempted to murder by poison. The poison that had afflicted Victoria Sinclair was not only deadly but possessed dangerous long-term effects that threatened her very survival. With this new development weighing heavily on his mind, Levoy redoubled his efforts, determined to uncover the truth before it was too late.

After much investigation, Levoy narrowed down his list of suspects by meticulously analysing the evidence and scrutinizing the alibis and motivations of each individual. Through careful observation and deductive reasoning, he eliminated those who lacked the opportunity, means, or motive to carry out the poisoning.

As Detective Levoy combed through the evidence, a pattern began to emerge, guiding his focus onto Nathaniel.

With each piece of the puzzle carefully scrutinized, Levoy uncovered damning clues pointing to Nathaniel's involvement in the poisoning. Moreover, subtle inconsistencies in Nathaniel's behaviour hinted at the hidden motives simmering beneath his loyal façade. Just as Levoy pondered his next move, a sudden spark of inspiration struck—why not conduct a fingerprint test? With unwavering resolve, Levoy seized upon the idea, recognizing it as a potential breakthrough in the case.

Levoy swiftly arranged fingerprint tests on key items linked to the poisoning. Tension mounted as results came in, confirming Nathaniel's guilt. Armed with irrefutable evidence, Levoy confronted him, determined to bring justice to Victoria's poisoning.

A tense silence hung heavy in the air, as Levoy's gaze bore into Nathaniel's, unwavering and resolute, as he presented the irrefutable proof of his guilt—the matched fingerprints on the glass.

Nathaniel's façade crumbled under Levoy's scrutiny, his hands trembling ever so slightly as he struggled to maintain his composure. With each piece of evidence laid before him, Nathaniel's resolve wavered; his mask of innocence slipping away to reveal the desperation and fear lurking beneath the surface. Sensing that the moment of truth had arrived, Levoy urged him to reveal the motivations and circumstances that led him to commit such a heinous act. Then, slowly but surely, the floodgates opened, and the story spilled forth.

In a voice thick with emotion, Nathaniel recounted the tragic events that had shaped his descent into darkness—the loss of his only son, a bright and promising young boy whose life was cut short by a senseless accident. The memory of that fateful day haunted Nathaniel, his son's laughter echoing in his ears as he recalled the crisp autumn air and the vibrant hues of the leaves.

With tears streaming down his face, Nathaniel described how the accident had been caused by the negligence of the Sinclair family, who had callously evaded accountability for their actions. Despite his pleas for justice, Nathaniel had been met with silence and indifference, fuelling a burning desire for revenge that consumed him from within. As Nathaniel's confession continued, the weight of his words hung heavy in the air, casting a shadow over the room as Levoy grappled with the enormity of his revelation. In that moment, the lines between victim and perpetrator blurred, and Levoy realized that the true tragedy lay not only in Nathaniel's actions, but in the chain of events that had led him to this point—a chain forged by grief, anger of justice.

As Nathaniel confessed, guests gasped in shock, struggling to reconcile his betrayal with the loyal servant they knew. Some recoiled, others whispered in pity and contempt. Detective Levoy stood unwavering amidst chaos, bearing witness to Elite Enclave's secrets unravelled. He knew truth, no matter how painful, was the path to justice.

Levoy ensured justice prevailed by apprehending Nathaniel, who faced consequences for his actions. Elite Enclave grappled with the shocking revelation, while Levoy reflected on human complexities and the power of grief. Amidst turmoil, closure descended on the estate as truth emerged

"In the shadows, secrets murmur their truths."

Tamopa Chakraborty
Class XI



Tamopa Chakraborty immerses herself in literature. She finds inspiration in classic novels, modern poetry, and diverse narratives, appreciating literature's power to shape perspectives and provoke thought. Whether lost in the realms of fiction or exploring the depths of non-fiction, Tamopa finds solace and enlightenment in the power of literature to shape perspectives and provoke thought.

One Glamorous Evening

It was a glamorous evening. I went to an evening party with my parents. The host of the party was Aunt Sen. Ms. Sneha Sen is a new resident in our neighborhood who moved just a couple of months ago. She is quite wealthy and kind towards Children. We children also like her.

Some well-known personalities were also invited to the party. Of course, she had her friends come over too. She was talking about their school days. All her friends seemed well off. One was wearing a leather shoe and a gold wristwatch. Someone else had a Gucci bag and an iPhone 14.

Oh! Let me introduce myself. I am Shreeparna, a 14-year-old girl who is a book worm for detective series and a fan of Feluda. Recently, I also got interested in Eken Babu, the witty detective of a recent web series. After reading so many detective books, I always study my surroundings and try to understand it. So, I was keenly observing everyone.

While enjoying the party, I suddenly heard people screaming to call for an ambulance. I rushed and made my way to that place. I found Aunt Sen's friend, Ms. Bagchi, lying unconscious on the ground. A doctor, invited to the party, checked Ms. Bagchi and declared that she is no more.

Illustrated by Samadrita Maity



Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

Everyone stood there in shock. The environment became heavy. Police was called as the death seemed unnatural, as Ms. Bagchi was alright before the incident. The forensic team took several samples for testing. The deceased's family told the police inspector that Ms. Bagchi was totally healthy and there was no cause for such to happen.

The police asked all of us to stay back for further instructions. I was feeling very uncomfortable even though it was not my first time seeing a dead body. I felt as if there was something hidden behind this death.

After routine interrogation, we were set free. After reaching home, I was still thinking about the situation. My father noticed this and asked, if something was wrong. I told him everything I was curious about. He told me that he would help me get a proper explanation from the investigating inspector Mr. Paul, as he is a relative of one of his colleagues.

Next evening, my father informed me that police didn't find any traces of poison and PM report was clear. The body was released for cremation. It was a cardiac arrest. This hit me hard. How could a healthy person pass out just like that? I looked at my father and told him that there was something wrong and I would try to find it.

I went to Ms. Sen's house to take a quick look around. I told her that I came to get my pen and notebook, which I left yesterday, in a hurry to go home. I pretended to search my notebook and watched her. I noticed her being very calm and not at all disturbed by last evening's incident. She seemed a little out of character. Then after, I went home and saw Inspector Paul waiting for me. My father had already told him about my nature, and he assured us to let me be a part of this case. He told me that he was about to go to Ms. Bagchi's house and asked me if I would like to join. I agreed and we hit the sack.

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Illustrated by Samadrita Maity

Ms. Bagchi's family members seemed to be bothered by seeing me. Mr. Paul, made an excuse and let me stay. I always kept a notebook and pen with me, wherever I went and this time it actually came handy.

After a bunch of questions by inspector Paul, I couldn't keep my curiosity restricted and asked Ms. Bagchi's family, "Did you notice anything strange in her behavior

during these few days"? They thought for some time and then spoke. "Recently, Ms. Sen used to visit her. They had a gala time together. She was laughing and smiling a lot after she came. Whenever, we asked her, who was this person, she used to say that she is an old classmate.

After leaving, Mr. Paul asked me if I could figure something out. I answered him, while being in a deep thought, that first we need to look into Ms. Bagchi's school days as well as of Ms. Sen's. I strongly believed that if we look into each of them, we can extract some information. However, It's just a guess.

A few days passed by investigating this case. The funeral also took place. But we were still clueless about the cause of death. All the information we gathered did not have anything suspicious. Ms. Bagchi was a businesswoman and Ms. Sen was an advocate. We went to talk with Ms. Bagchi's friends and colleagues just to get all the obvious things about her. Then we went to talk with Ms. Sen's friends. They told us about her and how all of them including Ms. Bagchi went to the same school. As we were about to leave, I noticed someone was following me so I said, "who is it?". It was one of Ms. Sen's friends, Naina. Next day, I woke up to my father's scream.

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Illustrated by Samadrita Maity

He told inspector Paul found out that Ms. Bagchi used to bully others during her school days. However, she was from an influential family and because of that, no one was able to hold a lawsuit against her. Mr. Paul got this information while talking to some old teachers of their school. I asked Mr. Paul if I could meet Ms. Naina today. He was shocked to hear me speak about Ms. Naina and not about Ms. Bagchi.

So, we went to see Ms. Naina. She seemed really terrified after seeing inspector Paul. We assured her that nothing will happen as long as she answers my questions. I asked, if she and her friends were ever humiliated by Ms. Bagchi before. She was stunned by the question and said that they

were abused mercilessly. Sometimes she even went as far as dipping our face in the toilet seats. Many of them had suffered greatly and some had to leave school.

Then we went to Ms. Bagchi's house and asked her family members, if Ms. Bagchi had ever bullied others. They hesitated a little before nervously denying it. I asked them if they had anything else to say about her.

They told me something which I never would have guessed. They told me that these days, when she used to laugh, she suffered from shortage of breath. That is when I shouted "Eureka!" I dashed out of there and told inspector Paul to rush to Ms. Naina's house again. I asked her whether Ms. Bagchi suffered from shortage of breath after laughing too hard. She said it was true, she used to suffer shortage of breath while laughing. I told Mr. Paul that the case is solved, now let's go straight to Ms. Sen's house.

I entered her house and greeted her. She told us to sit down. She asked what was the matter. I told her, it was time to reveal the mystery of this case. She looked at me blankly, so did everyone else. I explained to them that Ms. Sen was the one who killed Ms. Bagchi. Everyone was confused and Ms. Sen looked at me with a grim. I said that Ms. Naina told me the

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Illustrated by Samadrita Maity

other day, that due to Ms. Bagchi's bullying, Ms. Sen had to face lots of challenges and later for some unknown reason she was expelled from school. Due to this, Ms. Sen's father had committed suicide. Then I got to know, Ms. Bagchi suffered from shortage of breath while laughing at others getting bullied. Ms. Sen knew this fact very well and after so many years of a properly made plan, she entered into Ms. Bagchi's life as a friend to bring her down. We got to know from Ms. Bagchi's family that recently,

Ms. Bagchi has been laughing a lot with Ms. Sen. I believe, this is the cause of Ms. Bagchi's death. Asphyxiation, a condition where the victim dies due

to lack of oxygen during strong emotions like laughing. The fun part is that most of the time, an autopsy report cannot identify it. Everyone present there also recollects the fact that before the incident Ms. Bagchi was laughing like anything due to a hard joke cracked by Ms. Sen.

Ms. Sen started clapping. She told me that I might really end up being a detective one day. She confessed everything. She told that, at last she was able to take revenge for her father's death. However, nobody could prove her guilty as there was no evidence.

Oh! That seems like a nice plot to me. I think this would be a pretty good one to start my own detective series. Let's write it down quickly.....

Shreeparna Ghosh

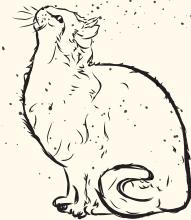
Class VII



Shreeparna Ghosh, a creative and cheerful student, excels in model-making, writing, public speaking, and more. She values the Literary Club for fostering her imagination and actively participates in its activities. As a person she is cheerful, supportive and responsible.



Echoes of Insanity



Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Dipangshu Sarkar

I woke up from my delirious dream, completely breathless. I was in a mental hospital. The sterile walls of the mental hospital enclosed me like a prison, their blankness mirroring the emptiness that had consumed my soul. My mind was foggy and my memories shrouded in shadows. The scars into my skin bore witness to the torment that had led me here.

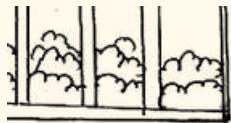
I am here because I tried to end it all. The weight of my own existence had become unbearable, suffocating me beneath a blanket of despair. Addiction was my crutch and self-harm was my release. I had no escape from my agony except the cold embrace of death. In the end, the situation that I feared the most had occurred. I survived and got admitted into a mental hospital.

I sat up on the narrow cot. The air of my surroundings was heavy with the antiseptic, mingling with distant voices and shuffling footsteps. The sounds of pain and despair was common to us all. A haunting symphony of broken souls seeking solace in the darkness. I walked through labyrinthine corridors of the hospital. Faces passed by me - their eyes empty and their spirits broken by the weight of their own demons. Some mutter to themselves, lost in their own fractured minds, while the others stared blankly into the void.

As I was walking through the corridors, I overheard the nurses talking about me. Their expressions, which I cannot describe in words, hit me with a realization. I was not a criminal in this place but a 'madman'.

In the common room, the patients would gather like lost souls harrowing in madness. Group therapy session was probably my most hated part of the day. The sessions were not only futile but were also driving me to insanity. I despised talking about my trauma more than anything, so did the other patients I assume. I felt like a stranger in this strange land, a solitary figure lost in human suffering. I do not have a belief in salvation. Even if I did attain salvation, society would still see the 'madman' tag in my forehead. I had completely lost sense of myself.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Dipangshu Sarkar

Two weeks after I was admitted, the psychiatrists assigned me with a 'therapy pet'. It was a tabby cat with beautiful green eyes. I named her 'Bonnie'. I had always admired cats. They seem like wise creatures that have seen the world. Nevertheless, I would say that playing with Bonnie

made my days pass really fast. I talked to her more than I did with the hospital staff. At least she did not look at me with hatred and pity like humans do. I was getting better or at least I thought so. I tried to find solace in the company of my fellow patients, seeking refuge in shared understanding of our collective trauma. I thought about my ex-wife and how much trouble I must have caused her. I had made up my mind, I was going back to Emily after getting out of this place.

One morning, I woke up to the most horrific news ever. Bonnie was dead. Apparently, some plastic material was somehow mixed up in her food and she suffocated to death. I wanted to cry but I could not, not even a single drop of tear. It seems like I had lost human emotions long back. Anyone that associates with me always ends up in ruin. It is almost as if I am a plague. It's alright, I knew this would happen from the beginning.

I wondered that if I did not turn to substance abuse, things would have turned out differently. I wondered that if I had shown more affection towards Emily, she would not have left me and if I had been a better son, my father would have been proud of me. Alas, those are just possibilities that cannot be fulfilled in this hectic life. In the darkness, I find myself confronted with my own ghosts - they tell me that I am unworthy, unlovable, totally broken and a 'human scum'.

I am a lump of human flesh and limbs bound together, which has no sense of human emotions. Madness engulfed me as the days turned into nights. I vanished into the void, my spirit a silent lament echoing in the depths of human heart.

I find myself standing on the edge of the oblivion. The abyss gaping wide before me. The pills lie in my hand, their promise of releasing a tantalizing temptation. I swallowed them down and felt the weight of my own morality pressing upon me. A plea for salvation in a world vacant of mercy. As the last vestiges of consciousness slipped away, I welcomed the sweet embrace of death. I will finally now, find the 'salvation' that evaded me in this life.



Koyel Debnath

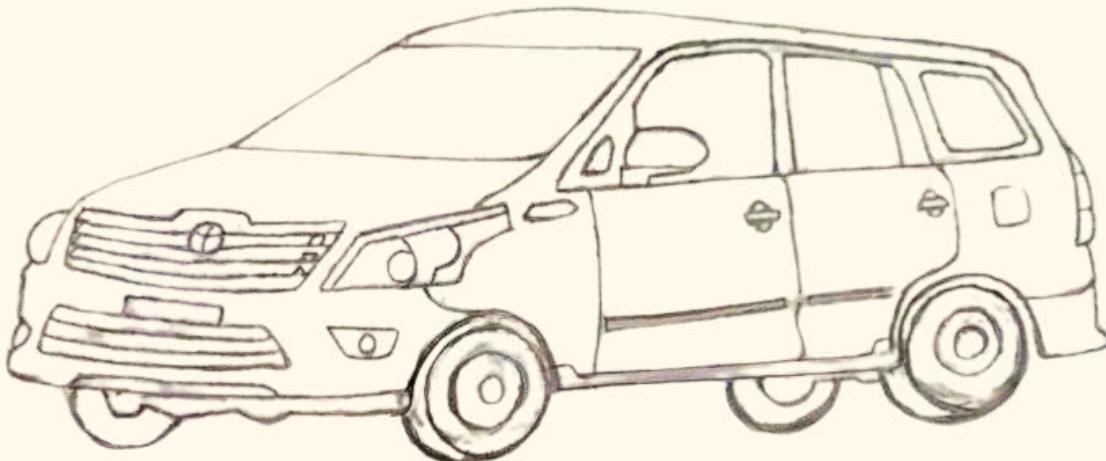
Class IX

Koyel Debnath, a bibliophile inspired by Russian, American, and Japanese authors, explores dark psychology and human psyche themes. She participates in St. Augustine's Literary Club events to share her stories. She draws inspiration from several Russian, American and Japanese authors.



The Unsolved Mystery

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Swapnaneel Das

It was raining hard that night. In my hurry to get into the house, I didn't notice the black car parked across the road. I realized something was wrong when I was standing in the balcony after dinner.

It was a Friday and like usual, I had excessive work in the office. At nine o' clock when I got down from the car, I had to rush into my one-roomed apartment. I was drenched to the skin. I took a shower and ate the dinner. Though I was tired, I decided to stand in the balcony and catch some breezy air to freshen up myself. That's when I noticed a black INNOVA car parked across the road in front of the Shiva Apartment. The third floor flat facing my room had been empty since I came here, but today the lights were on. I had met the owner of that flat, a middle-aged lady, only once and that too many years ago. I don't know why but though everything seemed alright, my sixth sense was telling me something wrong was going to happen. I went to bed with a disturbed state of mind.

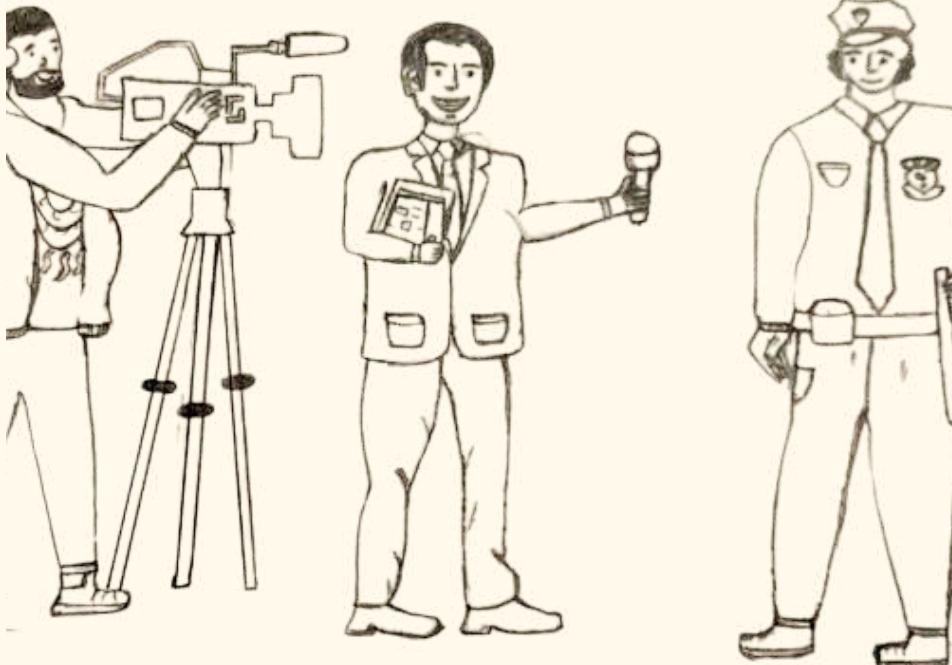
It was around three o' clock. My sleep was suddenly disrupted due to some unknown cause. I got up and went to the balcony. I stood there silently. The continuous blinking of the street light in the dark, rainy night created an eerie atmosphere. Suddenly a scene caught my sight which almost made me faint.

Two men, wearing black raincoats came out from the Shiva Apartment and they were dragging the dead body of a middle-aged woman whose face seemed familiar. They pulled the body and put it in the trunk of that black INOVA. I was speechless. I stood silently in the balcony and saw the car rushing out towards the main road.

I didn't know how much time had passed. I went into my room and sat down on my bed. I was completely clueless about what was going on. Taking out my phone I called 911. A police picked up the call. I said in my whimpering voice, "I think a murder has taken place in St. Paul's Colony. Please come asap." Disconnecting the call and gathering up all the courage I had, I went to the Shiva Apartment at four thirty. I rang the bell of the Secretary's apartment. Apologising about the sudden disturbance, I explained him everything.

"What?!", he replied in shock. He informed me that Mrs. Jones, the owner of the flat opposite to mine, had just returned to US from Paris this evening for selling her apartment. She was supposed to return back to Paris just after two days. We immediately went to her flat and rang the bell. No one opened the door. The police had come by then. They broke the door and entered only to find a few blood stains and Mrs. Jones' luggage. I explained the entire incident even to the police and also said, "I don't remember Mrs. Jones much as we had met only once but I think that dead woman whom I saw was none other than her." The police took down my statement and a search for the black INOVA started.

The next day I went to Shiva Apartment once again. The sight of that night was stuck in my brain. I took a leave for three days from my boss and went to Mrs. Jones' flat. I didn't have to get into much trouble as the police cooperated with me after knowing I am a journalist. The officer in charge also allowed me to check the room. I searched every nook and corner but the only things I found from her luggage were a brown notebook and a letter to someone called Mr. Patterson. The investigator in charge also allowed me to go through the forensic report of the blood samples found from her room. The blood was none other than that of Mrs. Jones'.



Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

The amount of blood lost in the room and the clear trace of dragging a body down the stairs helped the police conclude that Mrs. Jones is dead. The room's grim scene, marked by Mrs. Jones's blood and clear signs of a struggle and body being dragged downstairs, firmly

solidified her tragic end in the eyes of the investigators. However, the mystery of her body's whereabouts persisted. With the authorities' aid, we scrutinized the CCTV footage from the main road, swiftly homing in on the crucial vehicle. The police traced the black INOVA to a rental agency. After meticulously examining rental records and CCTV footage from various locations, law enforcement pinpointed the perpetrators of the crime as Jacob and Russell, infamous hired hitmen. Subsequently, both individuals were swiftly apprehended.

After admitting during interrogation that they were contracted by a high-ranking member of a criminal organization, Jacob and Russell explained that they were unaware of their client's identity, as the transaction was facilitated through intermediaries to preserve anonymity. With ample evidence linking them to the crime, law enforcement decided not to pursue further investigation and filed charges against the two men.

The two men were charged with murder and conspiracy and underwent a trial. With overwhelming evidence against them, they were found guilty and sentenced to lifetime prison. The mastermind behind the crime remained elusive.

As for Mrs. Jones, her body was never found, leaving her ultimate fate a mystery. However, her death was avenged and the neighbourhood could finally rest easy knowing her murderers were behind the bars. I was given a special reward by the government for extreme cooperation throughout the case. My boss after learning about the reason of my leave of three days, was overwhelmed and I received a promotion.

While the arrest of the hired hitmen provides a semblance of closure, the unanswered questions surrounding Mrs. Jones's murder persist. The identity of the mastermind behind the crime remains elusive, leaving a lingering sense of unease. As memories of that fateful night endure, the quest for truth and justice continues, fuelled by the need for closure and resolution.

Arushi Sarkar
Class VIII



Arushi Sarkar, a dedicated startup story writer and ardent reader, actively edits the short story book Panache. Despite no publications yet, she has been crafting tales for a considerable time.

SPOOKY AURA



two o' clock

Darkness prevailed all around. The howl of a fox could be heard often. The crickets chirped silently as if they were sobbing for something that they had lost. The clock suddenly struck two. As usual, the mischievous cry began again.

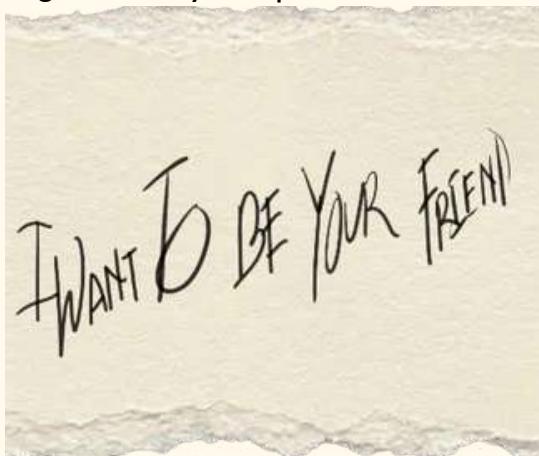
A lady asked me one day, while I was on a train to Kolkata for a cultural program of my music school, "Do you know me?" I answered in the negative. Though I said "No", the face seemed quite familiar to me. Laughing, she addressed my father and said, "That's usual! How are you, sir?" My father too could not recognise her, and even my mother could not. That day my performance went really well. Everyone appreciated my voice. That day, at night I dreamt of that incident and that lady but with a different appearance. In the dream she had a pale look with her hair white.

Suddenly, I woke up! It was two o'clock by the watch. I could hear a continuous voice of a lady. It seemed to be the voice of that mendicant who often visits us for help. The voice grew louder and louder. Then, I could hear what she was saying. She shouted, "The girl had died! No one believes me! The girl..." She stopped suddenly. The girl had died? Which girl? Many questions came to my mind. I couldn't sleep. Though I tried to ignore her words as she was mentally disturbed and that everyday she talked random things, which everyone understood, were the bad memories of her past. No one listened to her or pay any heed but that sentence of hers disturbed me the whole night. I tried to ignore it but couldn't. My sixth sense concerned me that someone had kept a strict watch on me.

The next day began. It was a dark and cloudy Sunday. Winds blew with great speed. It made a whirring sound which was quite spooky. I had my breakfast, and while I was going to my study room, I saw a little girl from the window of the corridor standing alone and she had a paper in her hand

with something written on it. She looked very cute, with her cheeks red and she wore a beautiful pink dress. After some time, she went away. She looked very similar to that lady whom we met in the train. Was that her child?

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Illustrated by Anuvab Dutta

Ignoring it, I went to my study room and took my literature book to study. Time went by rapidly. At nine o' clock, the siren of the jute mill near our house rang. With that siren, a soft tune of a lady seemed to whisper in my ear, "Look down through the window!" My whole body became cold and still. I somehow controlled my fear and looked down through the window. That girl! She

looked at me with anger in her eyes. She folded a paper and threw it towards me and went away. My hands were shaking. I unfolded the paper. On it, was written in caps: "I WANT TO BE YOUR FRIEND".

I went back to my bed. I stared at the window. I couldn't tell anything to my parents as they would worry. The time came again, two o' clock at night. The cry began again. That time, the voice changed. It became more hoarse. "No! The girl... the girl had died! No one believes me!" I called my mother and asked her if she knew anything about the mendicant. She told that she knows no such pasts of her and she could hear no shout. She shouted at me for being so stupid and told me to sleep.

I couldn't sleep. Again a whisper, but this time the voice of a child, saying, "Come to me. We will talk. We are friends." Something attracted me to go outside, as if I was hypnotized. Everything around me seemed to be peaceful. I went towards the door and opened it. Everywhere was dark except the base of the mango tree beside the lane. That girl was standing below. I stepped towards her. She was very happy to see me. She again handed over a paper to me, written, "I can't talk. My name is Adina. Can we go to the park and play?" I was about to say "yes" but then suddenly that mendicant appeared again. "No ! You can't do that!" - addressing Adina she shouted. Adina gestured me to ignore her. We then stepped towards the park located by the side of the river Ganga and opposite to the jute mill.



Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

Illustrated by Anuvab Dutta

We swung on the swing. I asked her, "Where do you stay? I didn't see you here any day before." She just put her head downwards and didn't answer.

The alarm rang. It was seven o' clock in the morning. When did I return yesterday? I was in the park. I remembered till when we were swinging but I couldn't recall what happened after that. I got ready for my school. That day I couldn't concentrate at all in the school. I kept on staring outside the window and kept on thinking of when I would meet Adina again. Time seemed to be very slow that time. Finally, it was the departure time. I somehow went straight home without talking to my friends. I waited for two o' clock again.

But at one o' clock, I heard a soft whistle.

I looked down the window. Adina was standing, but with her, that lady too whom I met in the train. I stepped down quickly without making noise. I asked her, "Is she your mother?" She nodded her head up and down. They both then went towards the jute mill. I too followed them. They suddenly stopped after sometime and Adina pointed out her finger towards a window of an old house which was almost broken down. I asked her, "What? Do you know anything about that house?" She smiled and again moved forward without answering.

After sometime, I noticed that her mother was not with us. I said to her shouting, "What's happening? Where are we going? Where is aunty?" She didn't answer me anything but kept on moving silently with her head down. I tried to go back home but I couldn't. Some force was acting around me for which, I was unable to move back. After a few more minutes, she led me to the park. She stood by the corner and again gave me a paper. She wrote: "We will stay forever. Don't worry!" My legs were shaking with fear. There was only one street light which somehow lighted a small portion of the whole road. I said, "Of course we will stay forever. I am feeling sleepy now. Can I go home please?" She nodded her head and said, "When I was ten, I used to come here often. This was the only place where I used to come whenever I wanted and whenever I felt sad."

"Adina! You can speak?"

"Everyone of my friends teased me as I swung and played with the children." She continued. "At times, I felt depressed and cried to my mother. One such day, while I was swinging, the chain broke along with the rod to which the swing was hanging. It was two o' clock at night then. You know, this place had deceived me!"

I was still. I couldn't move a bit. I said with a cracking voice, "That means you.."! She smiled a mischievous smile and said, "look back!"

I had goosebumps. A cold air blew over me. It was me lying down on the ground. I was dead! When I turned forward, I couldn't find Adina! All I could see was an empty, dark road and my dead self. Then, I saw that mendicant, moving forward and shouting, "The girl had died! No one believes me! The girl..."

Drishti Ganguly
Class IX



Drishti Ganguly, besides being a story writer, is also a poet, a painter and a member of the "International Art of Photography" as a photographer. Inspired from her mother who is a well known poet and a reciter, she began writing at the age of eight which later, became her hobby.



In the mild light of a menacing evening as the sun sinks below the horizon with an unnerving beauty, a cold wind drifted through the air, carrying with it an imperceptible unearthly chord that sent shivers down anyone's spine. It was the winter of 2015. Arshad, a lad in his mid-twenties, found himself navigating the flawed roads of Shimla Hills as the evening unfolded itself into a sickening shade of an eerie ambience. He had the radio turned off so the only sound was the dull hum of the engine accompanied by the low moan of the wind. He stole a fleeting glance at the rear view mirror but was met with seemingly infinite darkness of the night, leaving his imaginations to fill the blank which was definitely at its best.

The car came to a screeching halt, an abrupt hiss sliced through this never-ending night reverberating like the paranormal whisper through the darkness.

"How cliché!", mumbled Arshad.

Despite his newfound confidence, adrenaline surged through his nerves as his mind races to reason the peculiarity of the situation. Arshad stepped out of his now punctured car and acknowledged his helplessness (he did not carry an extra tyre). Not even ten seconds had passed, two cars drove past him making him lose his footing. One of it disappeared into the silence of the night and the other came to a halt after covering a short distance. With slow and conscious movement, Arshad neared the car and observed a figure in the driver's seat.

The now-cautious man bent down and began, "Excuse me, sir. I appear to be in a bit of dilemma. My car has a flat tyre and I would be glad if you help me proceed with it." The stranger stepped out of his car attired in old-fashioned cloths which seemed out of place in this modern world. It seemed as if he belonged to a different time or realm altogether.

"A flat tyre, you say? I might have just the thing to help you out", the stranger answered gruffly. As he rummaged through the back of his truck, Arshad couldn't help but notice a black silhouette in the back seat of this

stranger's truck. His features were obscured leaving only the outline visible. As the tyre was finally replaced, Arshad inquired his saviour, "Do you live nearby?"

"I reside where the wind drifts and the shadow sways."

Arshad was taken aback by his murky response.

The stranger continued, "The hills have a way of testing us, don't they? Be aware- the prize maybe more than what you could ever imagine."

"...I believe so. I just need to fix my car and be on my way", uncertainty was coating the young man's voice.

Arshad thanked the stranger and hastily moved towards his car, keen on leaving him behind. As he drove away, he couldn't help but question as to whether the stranger's assistance was a blessing or a curse. A sense of unease washed over him as he sensed an oppressing feeling within the confines of his car that clung onto him like a firm shadow.

Comfort flooded him when Arshad approached his dimly lit cottage like a warm embrace from an old friend but banished as soon as it appeared when he fumbled for the door handle, desperate to escape the atmosphere that hung in his vehicle.

Just as Arshad lay at his cottage in Shimla Hills, he replayed the strange conversation. Despite the familiarity of the place, restlessness gnawed at him.

"Hills have a way of testing us...."

"The prize maybe more..."

A chill ran down his spine as he contemplated the strange man's words; the weight of the warnings sinking in, clawing his insides. Arshad shook his head to relieve any trace of these unsettling thoughts, clouding his judgements but couldn't shake the feeling that the hills nurtured secrets not ready to be revealed.



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

Arshad tossed and turned beneath the burden of his own unease. He longed for sleep to embrace him, relieving him from his tangled thoughts. With an abrupt jerk, he became conscious of a presence by his bedside, a dark silhouette hovering in the faint moonlight that escaped through the blinds. Realization dawned about Arshad; it was the same one which he had earlier noticed in the stranger's car.

The now-fear ridden man lay rooted to his spot; he could do nothing but gape as the murky figure remained immobile. The longer he stared, the closer it appeared until the mattress sunk down under the unseen weight. A cold sweat broke out across Arshad's skin as a sensation of trepidation pierced his very soul; his heart hammering against his ribcage at an unhealthy pace like a drumbeat in the stillness of the dark. Quivering with fear, Arshad mustered every bit of courage and with every fibre in his being cried out in the dark, "W...who's there?" - his voice barely audible above the beating of his heart.

One second, two seconds, three seconds...

"The price!" - the sinister whispered echoing in every corner of the room.

The last thing the young man saw was the clock flashing 12:00 before an unusual pressure plummeted upon his chest, squeezing the air from his lungs and leaving him panting for oxygen.

Arshad sat bolt upright, pleased it was only a dream but as his eyes shifted to the bright red 11:59 on the clock, he heard his closet door creak open with a slow, sinister groan.

Kirti Sharma
Class XI



Kirti Sharma, a budding debater, channels her passion for expression through words. She also finds creative outlets in painting and exploring dance forms. The release of "Panache" marked a turning point in her literary journey, sparking a newfound interest and appreciation for the written word.



Moving To Newport: A Disaster



On Monday, January 19, 1956, Josef awoke to find himself on the floor, lying on a worn-down carpet, with his bed mysteriously absent. Confused and disoriented, he realized that they were in the midst of moving that day. His clock was also missing so he went to ask his mother, Miranda, about their departing time. After a thorough search throughout the house, he returned to his room to find his mother searching for him there.

His mother screamed at him at the top of her voice. It turned out they were late and had to leave immediately. With no time to change clothes, they rushed to the train station, narrowly avoiding missing their train. As he bid farewell to his hometown of Norwich, Josef looked forward to their new home in the town of Newport, reminiscing about the moments he cherished in Norwich and the town he would miss dearly.

In the evening of that day, Josef and his mother arrived at Newport. Coming from a relatively affluent background, his father, Jonathan, who had already arrived in Newport the day before, picked them up in their car. They rode to their new home, which was situated in a suburban area surrounded with plentiful forests. The house was chosen by Jonathon so Josef and his mother saw the house for the first time that day. Upon witnessing the house in its full glory, Josef felt ecstatic about their new residence and wanted to enter right away. His father was nearly as excited as Josef because he heard there were lots of animals in the forest and being a hunting enthusiast, he could not hold back his happiness to finally live there.

On the contrary, his mother, Miranda, was less enthusiastic, expressing her concerns that the house looked haunted and voicing her reluctance to enter. Despite her concerns, Josef and his father blew over this comment and headed into the house. Miranda also hesitantly followed them in.

Upon entering, the first thing that caught their eyes was a vast central room connecting to all other parts of the house. There was a worn down red carpet in the middle of the room and a pair of winding stairs leading to the first floor. The room boasted various decorations, including unsettling animal heads on the walls, aged and distorted paintings featuring peculiar-looking individuals and a larger candle chandelier in the middle which could be lowered to light the candles. While Miranda found herself gripped by terror at this sight, both the son and father were already moving up to the first floor. Suddenly, Miranda noticed a blood stain on the carpet. This convinced her that the house was haunted but her pleas fell on deaf ears as the others disregarded her concerns.

Josef explored the entire house, discovering the fact that all the rooms were decorated just like the central room. By the time they were done looking around the house, it was already quite late. As they had forgotten to bring food, they just went to bed hungry.

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Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

Throughout the night, Miranda remained awake, troubled by an array of unsettling sounds. Josef too heard noises, like metal sliding against metal, creaking wood boards and more. Oddly, Jonathan remained oblivious to any sounds until midnight. At the stroke of midnight, all three of them were jolted by a muffled scream that pierced the silence.

The next morning, when they woke up, Miranda persisted in telling Jonathan that the house was haunted. However, he kept telling her that they could never find such a spacious and beautifully located house at an affordable price. Jonathan then went to the market to fetch food, using it as an opportunity to momentarily escape the house.

During Jonathan's absence, Miranda and Josef decided to explore the town of Newport. When they arrived yesterday, they had not noticed that most trees in the town were black, twisted and leafless. The houses there were also small and creepy. While Josef remained oblivious to all these unsettling details, Miranda became increasingly disturbed by the gloomy atmosphere.

For the next few days, their life was like it used to be at Norwich but everything went downhill exactly one week after their arrival. While Jonathan visited the town's doctor, Josef remained in his room. Suddenly, he heard a loud crash which resonated throughout the town. Nearby residents rushed into the house while Josef hurried downstairs to see what had happened.

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Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

To their astonishment, they discovered the central room's carpet engulfed in flames, the chandelier shattered on the ground and Miranda on all fours beside it. Concerned neighbors dashed out to fetch water while Josef rescued his mother. Following this incident, Miranda's behavior took a peculiar turn.

Over the next few days, the house was renovated in the morning while there was a heavy downpour in the evening, making it impossible to work during those hours. During these daily rains, Miranda would keep ranting about supernatural powers, ghosts, spirits which she read about in a book. She contended that not only the house but the entire town was haunted by the resentful and spirits of those who had been murdered. She also kept babbling funny words which kept on making Josef crack up with laughter whenever he heard them.

Josef's laughter started driving Jonathan crazy and he made a rule that Josef would not be allowed to go out in the morning if he continued to laugh

at his mother's comical expressions. Though Josef adhered to the rule, he still found moments to laugh quietly, realizing it didn't disturb his father that much.

Throughout the nights, only Miranda and Josef were privy to unsettling sounds — muffled screams growing louder with each passing night, the ominous tear of rope and the eerie resonance of metal scratching against metal, among other creepy noises. Jonathan adamantly denied hearing any sounds during the night. Miranda like usual, was quite unsettled but Josef opted to remain silent about his own auditory experiences.

Days started flying by in this manner, but not for long. One night, amidst a storm, Miranda was jarred awake by a loud scream piercing the dead of the night. Both Josef and Jonathan remained oblivious, deeply asleep. Despite her attempts to wake up Jonathan, her efforts proved futile.

She gathered up her courage and stepped out of the room. The middle room's chandelier was lit even though she herself had blown it out before going to bed. The burned carpet which was still there, was back to how it was before the fire. Disregarding these eerie occurrences, Miranda silently stepped back into her room and went back to sleep.

The following morning, the renovators refrained from coming due to the rain. Miranda stood by the window, asserting that spirits were moving with the wind. Suddenly, she spat out blood and collapsed to the floor. Hastily, she was taken to the town doctor, who stated her dead. Upon performing an autopsy, it was found that her insides were burnt but she was perfectly fine from outside.

A few days later, Jonathan also died under mysterious circumstances. Josef also disappeared, who was actually hiding in the house. With each resident meeting a tragic end, the townspeople collectively decided to take drastic action and burn down the ominous house. In the flames, Josef too, met his fate.

The house, in which Josef and his family lived had a long history of residents seeing black, twisted, leafless trees instead of the lush greenery present there. They also experienced peculiar “storms” throughout the year, strangely occurring even when there was no actual rainfall. Astonishingly, Josef's family managed to survive for a month, marking the longest duration any family had endured in that ominous house.

Atrijo Roychoudhury
Class VIII



Atrijo Roychoudhury, a budding writer and artist, is deeply interested in 20th-century literature. He creates small paintings depicting scenes from the books he reads, allowing viewers to grasp the entire story through one picture. His dual passion for writing and art enriches his creative endeavors.



It was my twelfth birthday. I was getting ready to go to school and was looking forward to the gifts that I was expecting from my friends at school. It was a heavenly morning. After a hurried breakfast, I started to walk to my school. I was extremely overjoyed because it was my birthday. After about ten minutes, I reached my school and entered through the gate.

At first glance, I knew something was wrong. There was not a soul apart from me in the school and no noise could be heard. I tried to find someone or rather anyone whom I could ask about the sudden disappearance of the teachers and students but there was no one. Every classroom and even the staffroom was empty. I was trying my best not to panic, but with each passing second, I became more and more tense. Suddenly, I started hearing quite a few weird noises. It sounded as if thousands of birds and animals were being tortured. Then, out of a classroom, I saw zombies and vampires coming!

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Ambika Panja

This was too much for me. I screamed and fainted beside a gorse bush. The noise did not stop. On the contrary, it became louder and started ringing all around me. This made me come back to my senses.

As soon as I woke up, I saw hundreds of zombies and vampires advancing towards me. I was too dumbfounded to move. I did not know what to do. The zombies and vampires came towards me and got ready to strike. Both the zombies and vampires attacked me at

the same time and transformed me into a 'Vombie' - half zombie and half vampire. All this time, I kept on screaming but there was no one to help me so I was helpless. I transformed into a Vombie and lost all human senses. I was immortal because vampires are immortal and also dead for zombies are living corpses. Thus, I was neither alive nor dead. I was in the intermediate state.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Ambika Panja

I started roaming around with the rest of the vampires and zombies all around the school to find another innocent victim. I found a small boy on the third floor's last classroom. He was crouching behind the teacher's desk and was pleading me to spare him. As the human brain remains active for about seven minutes after the death of a person, so was mine. My human brain was shouting to me to spare the boy, but my heart was shattered and had turned to that of a stone. I thought of nothing

else but to attack the boy and transform him as well.

I wanted to save him from the suffering, but I was feeling as if I was being forced by some external force to attack him. I tried to fight off the force, but I was very weak compared to it. I went in for the attack. The little boy was screaming at the top of his voice, but there was no one to hear him or help him. His scream seemed to do something magical.

I fell and fell, again and again, which suddenly made me wake up in my bed at home.

I was scared out of my wits. There were beads of sweat on my face. I glanced in my mirror to see if I was still a human or not. Thankfully, I was a human, although a very weird-looking one, because of the sweat. I was alone at home for the day as my parents were out camping and my sister was at her friend's house. I checked the calendar and saw that it was the third of May, Two Thousand and Twenty-Three. I realised that it was my twelfth birthday. I was scared because of the nightmare but I had to go to school at any cost. I got dressed and went to school. When I entered my school campus, I realised that there was no one there. The same eerie quietness was spread everywhere. I instantly recalled my dream of the morning and understood that the same events were happening as well.

I tried to leave the school grounds, but I found that the gate was shut from the outside. By now, I was starting to have a panic attack, and my hands and legs were shaking horribly and continuously. I was having asthmatic symptoms and was finding it hard to breathe properly.

Suddenly, I noticed that the sky had changed from pale blue to black, and storm clouds were hanging low in the sky. Thunder and lightning also began in a couple of seconds, and I lost control over my brain. I was feeling sure that soon I would see the zombies and vampires coming out of a classroom to attack me and transform me into a vombie. By this time, I was feeling so scared and shaken that my feet were not able to hold me up anymore, and I fell on the ground, which was now getting wet due to heavy rainfall.

As I had predicted, I saw zombies and vampires coming out of a classroom towards me. The only exception this time was that these creatures were not unknown and mysterious to me. This time the zombies and vampires were my own family, friends, teachers and the little boy from my dream! My neighbors were also there. I was flabbergasted and did not realise when tears filled my eyes and mingled with the rain.

I knew what they must be feeling like at that time because of my dream. Strangely, I was not afraid of them, and I did not even scream when they attacked me. The only feeling I had was pity and love for the people I saw. I did not protest when they transformed me into one of them. All I thought was how hard it must be for them to be stuck in that position and to attack a person whom they loved. Then, I wondered if they ever loved me or was it just for a show.

Amid my thoughts, a sudden jolt of pain on the left side of my chest made me scream out loud. I turned just in time to see the little boy, who was a vampire, taking my heart out of my body. I was so scared that I screamed very loudly such that my scream kept on ringing in my ears, and I struggled so hard that the zombies and vampires stopped abruptly in surprise.



Illustrated by Ambika Panja

Suddenly, I woke up beside two of my friends on my desk at school. I saw that the entire class along with the teacher, was staring at me. I looked at my friends and they whispered to me that I had fallen asleep during class and has started screaming while sleeping. I figured out that both of my experiences with the vampires and zombies were nightmares, or rather, a nightmare of a nightmare. I apologized to the teacher, who scolded me for almost fifteen minutes, after that, I talked to my friends about the nightmares. After

talking to them, I realised that the nightmares were very funny after all.

That day after school, when I went home, I told my family about the nightmares. They also admitted that, although it was quite scary, it was funny. When I went to sleep that night, I did not dream about anything! I guess my subconscious mind finally understood that the nightmares were enough for one day. Can you believe that when I woke up the next day, I did not remember the nightmares at all? Still, those nightmares were scary for a person like me.

Aakriti Baranwal

Class VII



Aakriti Baranwal, a diligent student and voracious reader, excels in storytelling and creative writing. Active in Litbuzz, she inspires peers and proudly represents her school in interschool literary events. Aakriti continues to embrace her love for literature, serving as a source of inspiration to her peers. She proudly represents her school in various interschool literary events, consistently making them proud.



Love Beyond Grave

"P.S., one of us dearly departed"

The cryptic postscript, hauntingly etched at the end of Ms. Ericka Van Helsing's wedding invitation, sparked a wind of nervous curiosity throughout the quiet streets of Little Hangleton, which prompted in huddled conversations around the corners. On the occasion of the marriage of Ms. Ericka Van Helsing, a rich divorcee, all the people of Hangleton had been invited. She was a woman, widely recognised for her generous contributions thus, named the White Widow, who, despite her generosity was considered bit lunatic and sarcastic, owing to the mysterious smile that never faded from her face and the replies that she carefully designed before answering.

Whoever approached her with the intention of asking her about the erratic postscript in her letter, was advised, with a mystical smile to wear thermal glasses with a tinge of annoyance.

As the highly anticipated day approached, the village was filled with speculation and excitement. The church for the marriage was magnificently decorated; flowers draped the cold stone steps aesthetically. The air filled with the delicate scent of fresh flowers. Floral arrangements in soft whites and deep blacks lined up to the aisle and the altar radiantly and sophisticated chandeliers hung from the ceiling, while the warm light from the candles flickered in the background, adding serenity.

With bated breath, guests congregated at the ancient church.

As the music began, the air seemed to shimmer with anticipation, making the decorated church not just a venue, but a sanctuary of love, commitment, and beauty. The guests wrinkled their noses at the sight of the black flowers, trying their best to avoid it.

"Curiosity is a lantern that illuminates the path less travelled, but beware, not all are brave enough to see where it leads."

A voice laced with a kindness floated in the ears of a skeptical guest who debated if he really would enter the church. He leapt to his feet when he saw Ericka standing behind, Ericka flashed a smile and motioned him in. However, a pair of levitating jeans, an unnaturally red suit, and pinstriped socks that were hanging mid-air on the altar soon caught the guest's attention. Several chairs looked unoccupied or perhaps were occupied by floating clothes. Trying to shake it off as possible hallucination, the guests shook their head and got up to gift the newlyweds.

However, every time someone tried to take a photo, a mischievous ghost never failed to photobomb them, either appearing as white mist in front of their faces or by passing through them and sending a chill through their spines, just the moment the photo was to be taken.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Nayanika Porel

Amidst the supernatural chaos, the couple received several bizarre and supernatural wedding gifts from their otherworldly acquaintances, like a cursed painting that changes expression and a haunted music box that plays eerie music. As the ceremony progressed, the peculiarities intensified. As the priest entered, it wasn't quite difficult to notice him. In huge coats of white, he looked like an undersized troll. The bridesmaids, with cobwebs in hair and a white cape walked down the aisle, unsteadily, looking apprehensive and

checking their hair for spiders. They accompanied ghostly pale groomsmen, dressed in black, showing off their long canines as they passed by. The maid of honour, ring bearer and flower girl walked shakily up to the aisle. The flower girl stumbled and nearly lost her composure, stumbled backwards and fell, when the groom, Mr. James Brookwood, unleashed a thunderous sneeze that shattered nearby glass panes. "Apologies," he said unbothered, looking down lazily, "I'm allergic to lilies scattered on my deathbed."

Several guests were skeptical by now and were pointedly looking at the altar with their eyes.

Their eyes were turned when Ericka, stunning as ever, proceeded down the aisle, surrounded by glowing confetti along with her father. She glided down, ever so slowly, with her head held high and back as straight as a ruler. "Ghost food," the groom explained laughing airily: "to make me visible."

Concern etched on his face, Mr. Helsing, the bride's father, voiced his apprehensions. "Ericka," he began, his tone filled with concern, "are you certain about this union?"

"Don't make a scence, father" interjected Ericka looking around with the same mysterious smile of hers.

"Preposterous" was the reply

The eccentric priest, seemingly possessed by otherworldly spirits, hopped about with boundless energy, greeting guests with enthusiasm. Murmurs of concern rippled through the crowd, only to be abruptly silenced as the priest commenced the opening prayer.

Later that day, as the priest proceeded with reading the Bible, some guests found themselves suspended upside down, screaming in terror.

Tension filled the church.

Hearts drummed in their cages.

Never. Tell. A. Word. Against. My. Wife.

Thundered a voice, echoing through the church. This ran a cold trickle of fear down everyone's spines, everyone watched with horrified eyes. The priest ran hysterically towards the suspended people, trying to pull them down. Ericka shook her head and walked towards the James, whispering gently to him, "Honey, you know they all are jerks".

This was enough.

All the suspended ones got back to their seat and the priest back to the altar, floating magically. James jerked his head horribly and spat at the guest's feet. The priest's eyes were widened in horror. Still in disbelief, he bent to pick up the Bible, only to get kicked twice by the groom. "I am not used to standing for so long, I get knee jerks," the groom said coolly, excusing himself.

The priest frowned and continued to read the Bible. Finally, the couples faced each other and declared their vows. Ericka, looking fiercely into James's eyes, said, "I chose you not for your capabilities but because of chaos. You're my storm, as much as my calm." James responds, "And I chose you, Ericka, for your fire and ice, for your kindness that's fierce, and your heart that's vast." As the priest asked the groom, if he would take Ericka as his wife, he said yes so loudly that chairs wobbled and window panes shook. Ericka didn't seem flustered, not even a bit, instead kept on gazing at him.

Meanwhile, as the priest called for wine, chaos ensued. As wine had flowed down the altar steps, the guests got splashed. When a guest finally gathered courage and stood up to protest about the injustice done to them, he was smeared with black ink, quicker than blink of an eye. This made him shut up.

The priest taking no notice, announced the rings would be exchanged and so it was, with the ring landing with a thud, after Ericka exchanged hers with James.

"Ah!" the priest exclaimed loudly, "A union of two hearts is always matter of progress."

The kiss was majorly a problem by now. The guests were all ears. The priest devised a magical incantation for Ericka to kiss him, transferring the kiss to James. However, as Ericka leaned in, the priest's face jerked, suspended mid-air as if slapped.

Much drama followed and the ceremony was over to everyone's relief.

The opening dance was spectacular with Ericka dancing gracefully with levitating clothes. The guests felt warm and soon joined the dance floor.

People were now dancing with an arm and leg or with ghostly pale vampires. As the music took on a mournful tune, some people started behaving in an utterly strange manner. One was waltzing with arms above head while the other squirming like a caterpillar on the dance floor. They had to be enthusiastically slapped by the priest to bring them back to the normal form.

"My apologies, my love. I forget my own strength sometimes. But for you, I'd learn to hold the world gently," said James lovingly to Ericka who had been watching it with keen interest.

Later, as cake-cutting ceremony took place, the cake came to life and started squealing with all its might. It jumped off the table and was soon brought back by a group of zombies who unexpectedly crashed the reception and started dancing to the music. People ran in all directions and the priest hit a zombie with a piece of cake.

To divert attention, Ericka quickly declared she was going to toss her bouquet. However, it floated in the air, evading the eager hands of the single ladies and landed in the hand of Mrs. Lydia Brookwood, the married sister of late Mr. James Brookwood. Ericka flashed a grin towards her and she returned her an awkward smile.

As speeches and toasts were to be made, Ericka stood, gesturing she wanted to 'say a few words'. She climbed up the stage smirking in a strange way all the time with made all of them shudder. "Now all of you," she began, high

pitched, “are possibly wondering, why does a rich, young divorcee even want to marry a supernatural being?” She carried on with a mystic smile, “Men are prats. They are disloyal, disowning and selfish. James has struggled enough with his supernatural abilities to be able to marry me. My ex-husband was the biggest moron I’ve ever seen, so I married someone who would even knock over vases to prove it.” Unusual silence followed; all eyes were on Ericka. “Black,” Ericka began again, in an even nastier smile, “doesn’t always symbolise death and despair; it indicates what you have to do for the greater good and what lesson you have left to learn.”

James added, “Ericka has taught me that love isn’t about changing who you are, but embracing it, together. I promise to always embrace our journey, wherever it leads us. We are not a mystery but an answer.”

Agnidipa Majumder
Class VIII

Agnidipa Majumder explores fictional realms, delving into characters during her cherished reading moments. With a fervent passion for fiction, she embarks on a journey to unravel language’s nuances and its ability to animate narratives, enriching her understanding of storytelling.





Momentum Life



Qabir

Kavish was already late for his office when his driver informed him that the usual route he took for his office would have heavy traffic that day. Rushing into the car, he told his driver to take the other road and try to reach by 11. The car took a right turn before the signal and entered a new route.

“Why is there a traffic on the main route?”, enquired Kavish, his eyes on his phone’s screen.

His driver replied, “The people of the nearby Tanvhiya village have a festival today. It happens every 3 years and today is the day so a huge crowd of people is marching through the road.”

Kavish remained quiet, he has been really frustrated not lately but ever since he joined the office, or honestly ever since he had decided to pursue MBA and get a job or maybe even before when he left his football camp in class 11.

Kavish was getting ready for the client’s presentation, his boss specifically asked Kavish to carry out this client’s work because it was a great opportunity to market their brand whilst working with a German client.

He began the presentation and within 37 to 38 mins, he was done with all the proposals, management issues, marketing campaigns. He explained it all.

His boss admired Kavish’s intellect and talent and remembered how he had recognized Kavish’s potential during his last year at college and hired him as an intern.

Kavish did his job successfully. Later in the office everyone was in all praise of him, celebrating the company's profits. But Kavish was feeling different. He felt suffocated when his boss and others were hugging him and telling how wonderful of a job he had done. He felt dizzy hearing the claps of every office member. All of a sudden, Kavish left the area and reached for the lift. He loosened his tie and was looking for his breath. He reached the ground floor, moved out of the building and faced Bangalore's always pleasant sun. He took out his phone, the one whose EMIs still gets debited from his account, and smashed it on the road.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

Kavish started running across the street, he dashed through the signal, not looking for the cars coming by. He kept running, crossing his favourite pastry shop and the newly opened shopping mall. No one around him knew where he was going and neither did he. He stopped when his stamina gave up, his clothes completely wet and his breath heavy. He saw a bus stop in front of him. He could see from a distance a bus approaching and it arrived at the bus stop within a few seconds.

Without thinking twice, he jumped on it. He got a seat beside the window and sat with half his arm out.

"Yes sir, till where?", asked the ticket conductor.

"I don't know, what is the last stop?"

“Weird guy! the last stop is Tanviya village; are you going sightseeing there?”, the conductor said jokingly.

“Is there any place there where I can go sightseeing possibly?”

“No, there is nothing worth seeing there.”

“...Except a huge lake. It was formed years ago. People say a mysterious rock struck from space and formed the crater which developed into a lake.”

“Okay, a ticket till there please.”

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

“Well, it is not a tourist bus so you have to get down at the bus stop and then a short walk to the west of the lamp post will take you there. Look for the big banyan tree, from there it is close by.”

While the bus moved, Kavish was listening to the song, the passengers-the local people of the village were singing. He weakly understood the language but the song had a rhythm which he enjoyed.

He was unaware of what time it was but the sun was vertically above him. He was walking down a broad road. The conductor had told him that a 100m walk from the big banyan tree would take him to the lake and soon after, he crossed the banyan tree, Kavish reached the lake in 5-7 mins. It was a huge lake with no vegetations around it, the red soil of the region and greenish water of the lake were a sight he saw for the first time.

Kavish stood there for some time, staring blankly towards the lake. He started to open his shirt buttons, loosened his belt, slid down his pants and jumped into the lake, letting the water wash away everything his body carried. He swam till the other end of the lake, stayed in the water for what felt like an eternity and remembered the song the locals were singing.

'If you gain control on other's wealth'

'Everything will come under your control'

'The body is going to stay here'

'But the soul will take a stroll'

'Dreams are nothing.....

Karan Tripathi
Class XI



Karan Tripathi is a multifaceted individual with a passion for literature, music, and global affairs. As an avid reader and writer, he delves into various genres, showcasing a diverse range of interests and insights. His love for Indian rap reflects his appreciation for unique and expressive forms of music. Karan hones his public speaking and engages in global discussions through Model United Nations, blending artistic pursuits with global engagement.

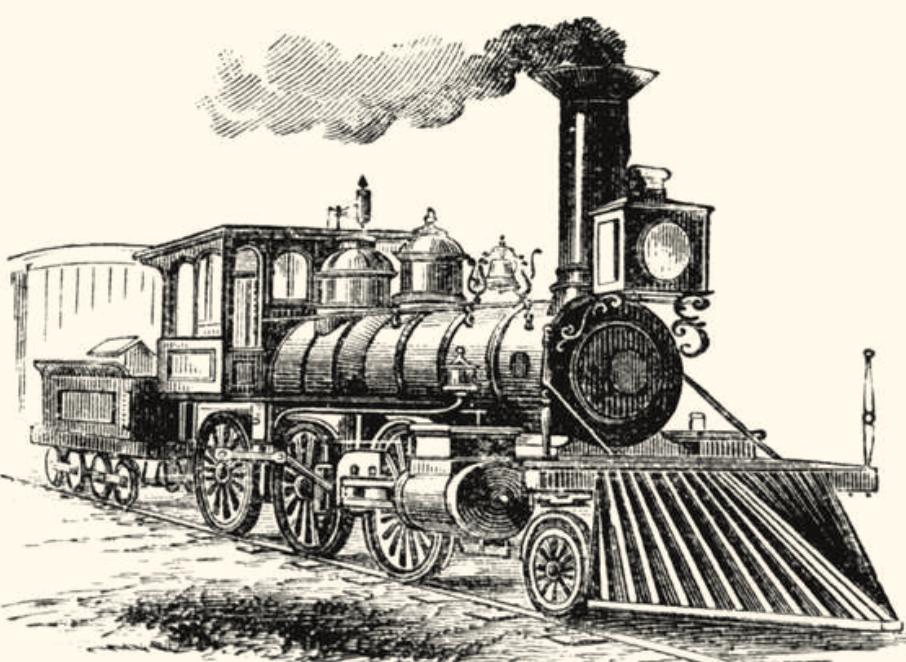
The Train to the Dark

Beep Beep *Beep Beep*

What's that sound? I open my eyes slowly. It is hurting a little just beside my left eye. I see a place which I don't recognise. Something has tightly held my neck so I can't move it, to properly check where I am. My head feels like twenty elephants combined. The place smells like disinfectants all over. I try to open my mouth, but it tastes awful.

"Are you feeling better now?" I hear a female voice asking me. She came in front and by her dress, I could tell that she is a nurse and I am in the hospital at this very moment. I nod, even though I ain't. "You have opened your eyes after 2 days" she says while handling some papers in a clipboard.

Right after that there is a knock on the door and I hear my mom arrive by her footsteps as they are always very familiar to me. She rushes towards my bed smiling and crying simultaneously. She kisses my forehead and asks how I am. She sounded terribly worried. I am doubly tensed now.



Elemental by Sudarshana Ghoshal

"What is happening to me? Why is it happening?"

A thousand questions strike my already heavy head at the same time.

Yet, I try to console my distressed and broken mom saying: "I am fine."

*"What has happened to me?" I ask her.
"Don't you remember anything, son?"*

She pauses, exhaling a deep breath. “You underwent a dreadful accident.” Her throat shakes while uttering these words.

I try hard to remember about the said accident but my mind is a blank canvas. Seeing my expressions, she rightly has assumed that it all sounds new to me.

“You and your friends were travelling home from tuition via train. Just as the train was nearing Barrackpore, you leaned your head out.”

Now that she is narrating this to me, I am starting to get flashbacks of those sights. Not just sights, rather, a reel of memory is circling in the cloudy sky of my head, returning in a loop.

I remember me and four of my friends standing beside the door, inside the train. The cool breeze which blew my hair, felt pleasing. I slowly remember that the chewing gum in my mouth had started to taste bitter. So I leaned out my head to spit it out. After I did that, I turned my head and almost instantly, I could see a tall and blackish thing nearing me which sped like an unstoppable meteor. In less than a micro-second, the meteor hit me, and I flew off the coach. It felt so dark around me, as if I was in space – swallowed by the Black Hole. I heard nothing but the ringing of my ear which was louder than millions of school bells together. My head felt no pain but a feeling of lightness as if there was no gravity at all.

Then I remember nothing – not a thing...

Illustrated by Somedatta Ghosh



Mom asks me, “Why did you lean out your head when I have told you multiple times not to do so?” I do not reply as I am questioning myself the same thing. She continues, “Right when you leant out your head, a post hit your head, throwing you out of the coach. Fortunately, the incident took place very near to the platform so your friends along with the locals around, could reach you as soon as the train stopped.

Your father and I were called up by the police to report to this hospital as you were already brought here. There was tremendous blood loss and..."

Her voice stiffens and she says "...and we thought we couldn't save you." She flushes into tears on saying that. Tears are rolling down my cheek as well.

"The doctor made us sign a bond to make a last try to save your life. He said that the operation could result in permanent paralysis or even memory loss."

She sighs in a great relief and I feel as if she considers my new life as the most precious blessing from the Almighty to her.

I really feel guilty and would blame myself for this incident as long as I would live.

"I must go now. Is there anything you need right now?" she asks.

I am too disturbed to give a reply and unknowingly, my lips answered for me, "No, thank you."

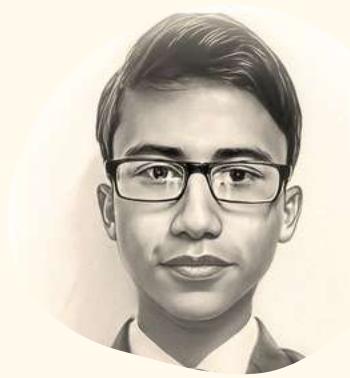
She walks out, shutting the door behind her. The nurse comes with a smile on her face and says, "The doctor says that you need rest and proper care to heal up. No need to worry, my dear. It's only a matter of few days before you are fit and fine."

I try to smile back but cannot as my jaws are paining as if they are held by a hundred crabs. The wall, just opposite my bed, had a digital calendar which declared, in red numerals, September to have wasted 9 days. The machine above my head is constantly making an irritating sound.

Beep Beep* *Beep Beep

The lines appearing on the machine, look like scribblings by a toddler. My life is totally dependent on these stupid scribblings. I am a part of the world as long as they scribble. When they become flat and calm, I sign off.

Swapnaneel Ghosh
Class IX



Swapnaneel Ghosh, an avid reader and dedicated Litbuzz designer, immerses himself in literary activities with remarkable enthusiasm and creativity. As a proactive club member, he adds imaginative flair to initiatives, contributing significantly to its dynamic and thriving literary culture.



A Silent Love

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Drishti Nandy

I have a friend who lives in a silent world.

We are always together. Inseparable, like peas in a pod. That's how it is and that's how it will remain.

Like any other person with disabilities, people are unkind to her. They make faces as she passes. They call her by different names behind her back. Her elders shake their heads, and whisper, "How unfortunate! Even her parents have no love for her."

But I take comfort in the fact that she is deaf. This way, she doesn't have to hear the cruelty of the world. But then, is it really a comfort to know that she will be treated differently wherever she goes? That when she meets new people, they will not see her, but see her disability? That they will grimace and shake their heads, trying to say that they do not know sign language and leave even when she has her notebook in her hands, holding it out for them to write to her?

I have seen her in those moments, how she comes to terms with the fact that she was rejected again just because of her disability. How her smile falls, and the little spark in her eyes vanishes. How she turns to me, her face stuck in the poor imitation of a smile, and signs, "Let's go."

I hate myself in those moments. I could never do anything to help her. But I return her smile - she does not need more worries, and I hold her hand to take us somewhere else.

Perhaps, these little moments are why I turned dark. Perhaps, it was something else. I do not know anymore. All that I know now, is that I have to protect my friend at all costs. In this world, there are two kinds of people - those who live in the present, and look forward to the future; and those who live in the present, but all that made them human, has been left in the past.

The world is not kind to those who are latter, and is crueler still, to those who bear a scar of the past.

I was the former. I never let my past bear me down. But my friend? She was the latter. She always spoke of the times past - when her parents were with her, when we were children and the only looks she got, were those of pity.

Now, the times have changed. Now, when people see her, they do not see a child to be pitied. They see a physical manifestation of a disability, and a burden to those around her. But she is still stuck in the past. She still thinks that the world is all sunshine and rainbows; that every cloud has a silver lining. Maybe, in her silent world, this is true - after all, she does not hear people talking behind her back. But I can hear all of it. All the snide comments, all the irritation. And I try to shield her from it - the ugliness of the world. Sometimes I succeed, sometimes I do not. I did not know how that would protect her from the evils turning darker - but it did.

And now, I act like a connection between her and the rest of the world, continuously trying to keep up the illusion of the past even though the present is unrecognizable. I am the only constant in her turbulent life. That's how it was and that's how it would remain.

Every pot has its tipping point, and this event has made me reach mine.

It was a normal school day. I had left her sitting at a table in the cafeteria while I brought us water. When I returned, I saw that she was crying. I kept an eye on her the whole time. I knew no one had approached our table. I scrambled to comfort her, asking her what had happened in sign. She

gestured towards the table in front of us. I knew those kids. They made a point to bully every quiet person on the campus. They were talking, rather loudly, about how disabled people were burdens and should be killed at birth. It took me a moment, but I realised with a start that she had learnt to lip-read. I looked towards her, and she gave me a resigned look. She signed, "I learnt to lip read a while ago. I am sorry for being a burden. You must be tired of me." I never saw her sign this shakily. Her fingers were trembling as if each movement caused her

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Drishti Nandy

great pain. I tried to comfort her, making little doodles in her notepad, but I knew she wasn't convinced. I knew that this world had finally managed to make her believe that her existence was cumbersome. That she was better off dead. The little spark in her eyes was crushed forever, and the spirit of her soul, broken.

And I could feel nothing but white, hot rage.

I committed my first murder a week later. After all, I was the only one she had who could protect her from the world.

After Patroclus died, Achilles went mad with his grief. In the days that followed his death, Achilles had known nothing but anger and vengeance.

He was a hero - a tragic hero, and his story is one of great honour, love and fame.

Yet I am a coward. I had killed so many people on her behalf but I knew, I could never tell her that. I was a tragic coward - I can never reveal that I loved her, I can never reveal all the murders I had committed.

But, I do not regret my actions. I do not regret killing the boy because of whom she cried that day at the cafeteria. In fact, I enjoyed seeing the fear in his eyes as the last of his life drained out. I do not regret causing the mysterious disappearance of our linguistics professor who always made snide comments about deaf people, learning languages.

And I do not regret adding peanuts to her father's cookies, and hiding all the EpiPens in the house. After all, he should have known better than to kick her out the moment she turned eighteen, claiming that she should have started living independently by then.

I do not regret any of these murders - however cold-blooded they may seem. My only regret is that I cannot tell her of these murders, and that I cannot make her believe that there are people who care about her. That I cannot make her believe that my love for her has no limits, and I will stop at nothing to protect her.

My will for vengeance had somehow turned into an obsession. Before, I used to only kill those who seriously hurt her. Nowadays, I kill all those who dare to breathe wrong around her. A little bit of allergen here, a push down the stairs there - nothing could be traced back to me. I was just an inconspicuous lady, always wearing oversized t-shirts and skirts. My entire world revolved around my friend - I cooked for her, dropped her off at work, picked her up with coffee, and killed her offenders. But I should have known better than trust this idyllic period, should have known better than allowing her to work and mingle with others.

A few days ago, she confronted me, asking me about how everyone around her seemed to pass prematurely. I shrugged, trying to change the topic. But she was insistent. She told me about how she knew all about my murderous hobbies, and how this cannot continue. I tried to explain - I really did! But she wouldn't listen. In the end, I agreed to her terms. I would not kill anymore. But this meant that I could not allow her leave my sights ever again.

Nowadays, I have become even more protective of my friend. She still looks at the world through rose-coloured glasses. She even wanted to go to work alone! Imagine the horror! She cannot be independent. I would not allow it.

I go with her everywhere - and she remains happy. But recently she has been having some troubles with her eyes. I am supposed to take her to the ophthalmologist the next day.



She doesn't need to know that I have been putting small amounts of calcium hydroxide in her bathwater for the past few days. She will eventually become completely blind. This way, neither will she see the evils of the world, nor will she try to go out alone. And, what she doesn't know, won't hurt her. She does

Not need to know that I have maintained this hobby. And she doesn't need to know that she can never get rid of me.

I will be with her forever. Even in death. Like we were meant to be. Destined to be together - like peas in a pod.

Bristimita Maity

Class IX

Bristimita Maity is a literature enthusiast who enjoys the nuances of life – reading books and petting cats. With the aim of reading as many books as humanly possible, she takes a liking to stories which offer an insight to human psychology and emotion.





ROSE



Illustrated by Ambika Panja



Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

It was a cold autumn morning. Wind blew through my hair. Nature was changing her colour, green leaves, turning brown and red, falling down to earth. Life was drying out and the coldness, crept to the very soul. In the bleak rays, amidst a bouquet of grey flowers, stood a rose. A dark red rose with its intricate petals, full of vitality, life and hope.

Life is a mystery. It always has been one. Many tried to explain it; some said, "It is like a river which flows through its ups and downs." Some thought that it was like a swinging vine.

Personally, I did not know what it was; throughout my life, my quest for the purpose of my being, bore no fruit. All of us, wandering in this mysterious plain, try to find out the reason for our existence. Every day brought a new challenge, a new lesson, a new question but what is the answer? But did it matter? It's all about the journey, not the destination. And life paints itself in a different colour for each distinct individual. No singular definition can define life. The struggles, the joy, the sadness are the friends, the true friends that last with us from the day when we smell life for the first time, till the time we give ourselves, away to the flames. Rest comes and fades away. But still we spend our entire time trying to please others, trying to gain their approval. We forget about our individual being, our happiness, our peace, our solace. We drown ourselves in the dark waters of every day life. We become incapable of breaking the shackles, sometimes we do not want to break them. We constrain ourselves in the walls which we build to distance ourselves from others. We take refuge in our imaginations. We forget who we are – these thoughts have always intrigued my mind. Being an escapist, thoughts were always happy place. I used to delve in my imaginations and block off the entire world. I used to try to find the answers of reality in my alternate world.

Sometimes I felt it to be a desolate landscape filled with corpses of my emotions, sometimes I would find it so vivid, so vast, so fresh, so red ... like a rose. This flower has always fascinated me. There are so many beautiful flowers, blooming on the face of Earth. But this red beauty, has an unmatched elegance; a proper depiction of world – blissful yet has thorns that hurt. I watched it for a long time. An intense desire rose up and feel the soft petals, raised within me, but my wasted body, covered in wrinkles and aged hairs, refused to hear my heart's plea. I sighed. The flower, waved in the air, imparting life in the withered life around it. How it stood against the cruel atrocities of the world where beauty is constantly fading!

Illustrated by Ambika Panja



Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

The air around me suddenly became cold and shivers ran down my spine. My vision started getting blur and my lungs struggled to breath. The world was blacking out around me. Then I first saw him. He was neither wearing a black cloak nor had a scythe in his hand. Rather he was dressed in all white and gold and had a lyre in his hand. A glowing aura radiated from him which filled the darkness and kindled a newfound hope within

me. I recognized him. "It is time to go," he whispered as he spread out his arms. I felt like an infant after birth – after all death is like a rebirth. I was ready to start my travel to the unknown; into eternal bliss. "I have something for you". I looked up at him as he presented me a remembrance of life, a token of love – a red rose.



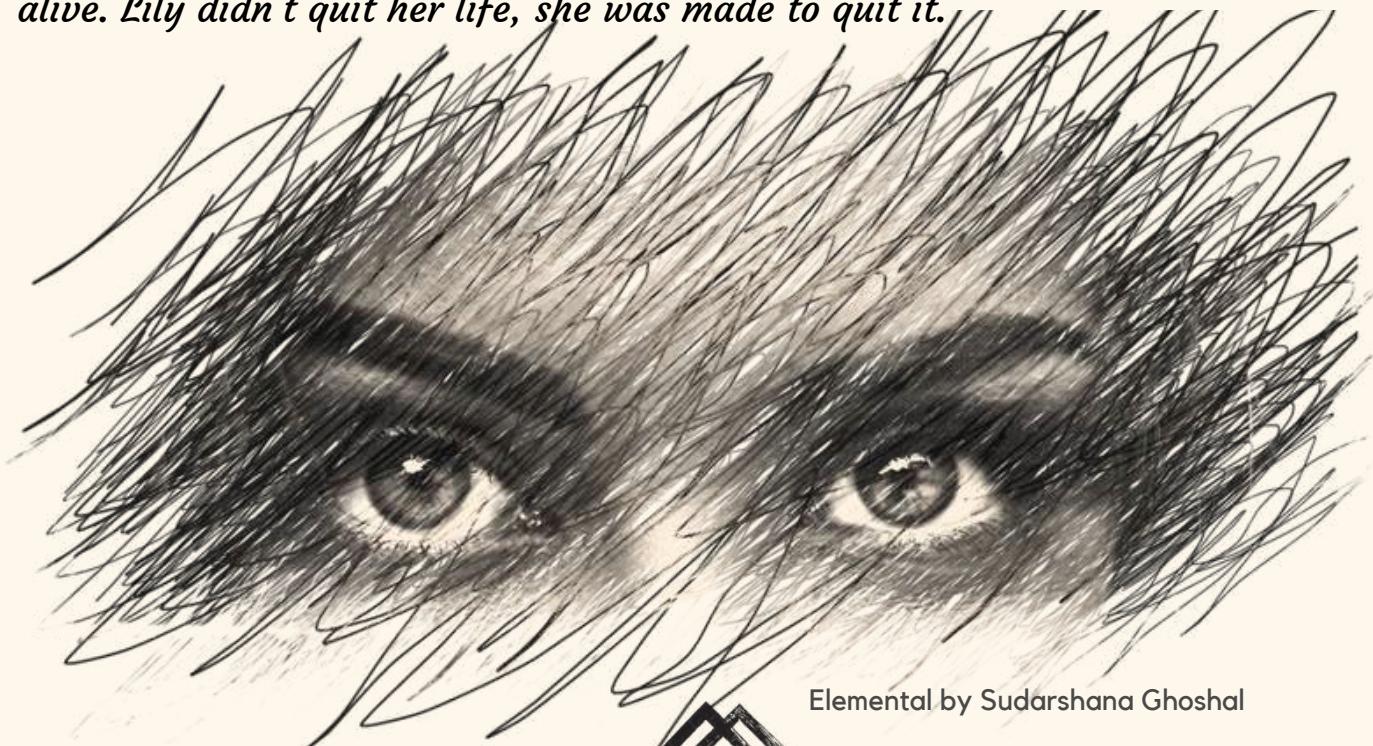
Class XII

Soham Mahajan is a vivid thinker and an active member of The English Literary Club. Always inspired by the vibrant world of imagination, he aims to paint the colours of this world in his writing. He participates in various literary activities of the school and contributes towards the dying appreciation and respect for art in the modern world.

As I was driving down the South Avenue of Industrial Housing Complex, I stopped at a park. It was no ordinary park. It was the Wonderland Park — the place where Lily and I confessed our love for each other, five years ago. This place seems to have lost its aura not only because it has changed a lot but also because Lily decided to stop existing.

The cemented seats, reminds me of the evening we spent together, sitting and gossiping about worldly affairs. Lily, unironically, was what the name meant, beautiful and simple, just like a bouquet of lilies that you would gift someone, wishing for their success and happiness. That evening, she wore a pink gown with a white woollen jacket. She had minimalistic makeup put on because her natural beauty was enough for anyone to fall in love with her. But what lay inside, was even more charming. She was a sensible and intellectual person who had a perfect balance of emotions and logic. Only if her countenance wasn't enough to make my heart skip a beat, she decided to keep her wavey hair open and mercilessly assassinate me with her cuteness. For the first time in my life, I fell in love with the right person at the right time. Or maybe not.

The evening when I first found my love was the evening when I last saw her alive. Lily didn't quit her life, she was made to quit it.



Elemental by Sudarshana Ghoshal

Or else, why would a girl who just spent a serendipitous evening with her best friend-turned-lover who had tons of dreams to be fulfilled, who was the epitome of positive energy, decide to end her life?

It wasn't just a suicide.

I took a deep breath as I sat on one of the cemented seats and took out the letter that I found inside Lily's diary that night. It was a letter addressed to me. Exactly five years ago, I was sitting at this very spot, recollecting the moments I had just spent with her, without having even the slightest idea that Lily might be going through something as terrific as this.

Dear Cuckoo,

Things have not been fine at my end. Thank God I have you who makes my life a little more tolerable. The evening we spent today was probably the best evening of my entire life. I have never felt so lively ever since my dad passed away. You've fulfilled the voidness that grew inside me. But I need to tell my support system everything that has been going wrong here. After I returned home from the park, I could feel reality hitting me as hard as my step-dad hit my mum.

The worst that a human can possibly go through, is being **hurt** by their dear one. It takes a lot of courage for a person like me to trust someone with their heart and soul, and for me, that someone is you. Today you made me feel how amazing it is to be loved, to be cared and to be trusted upon. I wish my mum could say the same.

My world would've **collapsed** by now if I didn't have you. You've healed **wounds** you didn't give. It is as if the **forces** of nature have come together to make sure that this girl falls into the **right hands**. My life has been like pieces of **broken glass**, scattered all around.

I believe in you for only you can **numb** down my **pain** and help me get out of my state of **unconsciousness** in life. It takes years to build trust, but only seconds to **break** it down. I'll keep the **blood-red** rose that you've given in this diary. Every time I see this, a sense of euphoria will **flow** through my **veins**.

I write letters carefully because they cost me words. Right now, I'm in a terrible state of anxiety. I wish you were here. Oh dear Cuckoo, always remember that no matter what, your Lily will always **love you**, and beyond all, **miss you**. I gotta come back in five minutes and then I'll tell you the story of a man who abused his wife and tortured his daughter.

I turned over the page and saw something minute written on it.

Cuckoo, I hope you're able to decipher what I meant to say. Help me.

That, was the end of the letter, and of Lily.

Surmit Kumar Choudhary
Class XII



Surmit Kumar Choudhary, the School Captain (2023-2024), is a versatile leader with talents in art, public speaking, and music as a rapper-songwriter. His passion for literature is evident in his skills as a reader and writer. As Deputy Secretary General of the school's Model United Nations club, he shows his commitment to global affairs and diplomacy. Furthermore, his debut in the Panache project adds another dimension to his talents, showcasing his creativity and innovation.



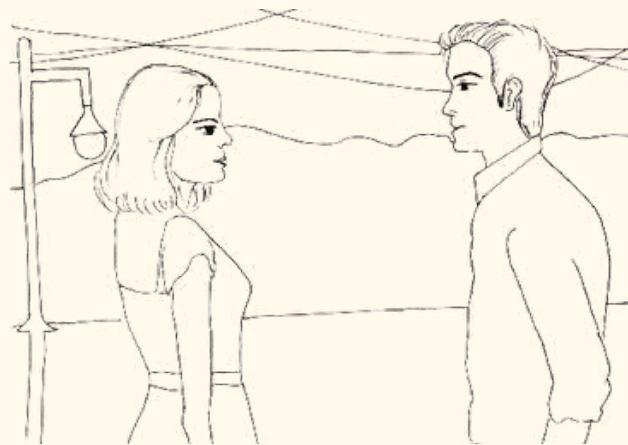
The Forgotten Songbird

In the heart of a vibrant city where skyscrapers towered like giants and the streets scrambled with the rhythm of life and modified nature of man, there lived a juvenile girl, named Lily. She was a shy soul who had a timid nature, with her voice as soundful and charming like the cool breeze. Her heart was filled with a zeal towards music that burned brighter than the glowing stars in the night sky.

Every day, she would sit on the steps of an antique cathedral, her fingers dancing across the strings of her beloved violin. As the sun descended below the horizon and the city in silence, her melodies would draft through the air, weaving a tapestry of sound that touched the souls of all who listened. Despite having such a wonderful talent, Lily remained overlooked in the sea of noise that surrounded her amidst millions. Bystanders would hurry past her, their minds, preoccupied with worries and concerns of their own, their ears, deaf to the beauty that remained in the air.

One evening, as Lily played beneath the flickering streetlights, a stranger approached, his eyes shining with curiosity. He introduced himself as Lucas, a composer, in search of inspiration for his latest triumph. Intrigued by Lily's music, he asked her to accompany him to his studio where they could work together on a new composition.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Hiya Bhattacharya

Though hesitant at first, Lily felt a spark of anticipation, igniting within her. With a diffident smile, she agreed, and together, they set off into the night, their hearts, filled with the potential of unveiling their true spark. For weeks, Lily and Lucas worked tirelessly on their composition, each a note of the reflection of passion and

the creativity they shared. And as the final strains of music filled the air, they knew that they had created something truly exceptional, a melody that would echo through the ages.

As they prepared to share their masterpiece with the world, a tragedy hit them with the force of a thunderbolt. Lucas fell sick, his body, weakened by an illness, threatening to steal him away before his time. Heartbroken and desperate, Lily poured her soul into her music, playing for Lucas every day in the hopes that her melodies would reach him wherever he lay. Though his body grew weaker and fragile with each passing day, his spirit remained strong, buoyed by the love and assistance of the girl who had brought music back into his life. One evening, as Lily played beside Lucas's bedside, a supernatural phenomenon occurred.



With tears in his eyes, Lucas whispered that he could hear the melody once more, its beauty, submerging him in a gentle wave of music, soothing in his ears. And as he closed his eyes for the final time, a smile covered his dry lips, his soul at peace, knowing that he had found his muse, in the forgotten songbird of a busy city.

Though Lily's heart was heavy with torment, she found solace in the knowledge that their music would live on forever; a testament to the power of love and the beauty that lies within all of us, something which has always provided harmony betwixt man and nature.

Illustrated by Hiya Bhattacharya

Sheerja Ghosh
Class VIII



Each word she penned, was infused with her passion for storytelling, a love, nurtured by the countless tales she had devoured over the years. From the pages of books to the rhythm of poetry, Sheerja found inspiration in every form of expression, shaping her own stories with a touch of Panache.



A Promise to Keep

Sometimes we are too modern, like the gadgets we use, and sometimes, we are too old, like the antiques and dusty bookshelf in one nook of the room. Such a kind of person I am. As a girl belonging to the so-called "Gen-Z generation", I still love having my own adventurous life, filled with mystery and journeys. I love visiting old monuments and locations which have that aroma of vintage items that behold the old memories of our elders. For instance, back in 1969, my grandfather bought a big farmhouse near the hills of Darjeeling, amidst the great Kanchenjunga hills. I loved visiting that place. It gave me the solitude and serenity that I wanted to have after those tiring school days. I have been visiting it almost every year since I was five years old.

Although my parents took me to many places, that farmhouse had my heart. The quietness of the mountains, the sumptuous dumplings made by Tenzu uncle, the decades-old tribal dance of the locality and most importantly, the beautiful scenery of that place, attracted me every year. In this metropolis, we cannot live without our phones because they have become a crucial part of our lives but for once, if someone goes to that place, you just need a diary, a notebook for drawing and a pencil, nothing else. The artistic side of a person will come out automatically.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Somedatta Ghosh

In 2015, just after my exams were over, I immediately asked my parents, "When are we going to visit the farmhouse? Have you booked the train tickets? Does Tenzu uncle know...?" My parents burst into laughter on hearing the rocket flow of my questions. They assured me, "Don't worry, we have already done everything. No need to be so tensed." I had a sigh of relief.

Well, like every year, my whole family decided to go. Even few of my friends agreed to accompany us in this trip. I was totally on cloud nine. There was a total hustle and bustle in the train as we were discussing all the possible activities of what we could do there. Out of which, Riya said, "We should plan a bonfire and have a musical evening."

We reached there the next day. Tenzu uncle was ready with the breakfast and trust me, Vicky was the first to jump in and gobble up half of every dish made. Then we decided to explore the garden of our farmhouse. It had varieties of flowers like orchids, carnation, roses and many more. Tenzu uncle, on seeing our curiosity about the garden, showed us how he took care of all the plants. It also had many orange trees with bright coloured oranges, fully developed. We even had a small poultry farm of our own. He said to us, "Tomorrow, I will take you guys for trekking." We were overwhelmed and excited on hearing this. In the evening, we had the famous Darjeeling tea, with the view of the great Kanchenjunga hills and Rabindra Sangeet being played in the background. Rahul was so happy that he said, "I am not going back anymore. I love it here."

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Somedatta Ghosh

The next day, my whole family sat together for breakfast. They discussed something really important because all of them had stern faces after having breakfast. Just before lunch, my parents called me. I got fresh as soon as I came back from trekking. With a sad face, they said, "We are planning to sell this house." I was so shocked on hearing this news that I could not speak anything. It felt like my jaws got blocked on hearing this.

That night, something unexpected happened. There was a heavy storm. The outside was pitch-black, nothing could be seen. It seemed like even nature

understood my feelings. I was completely underwhelmed. My friends tried to cheer me up but their efforts were in vain until the doorbell rang. We were not expecting anyone at that time and got confused for a bit. Tenzu uncle opened the door. There was a strangely attired man, almost of the age of my Grandfather, completely drenched. He handed an envelope to Tenzu uncle, pointed towards me and left without saying anything. "This is for you", said Tenzu uncle. The envelope had my name on top of it. I took the envelope and opened it. To my surprise, it was the property paper of the farmhouse. I handed it to my parents. They said, "This property now belongs to you." I was completely shocked. It was a jaw-dropping news for me. At that moment, my Grandpa came to me, hugged me and said, "Everything happens for a reason." After that incident, no one took up the fact of selling this house because I was totally against the decision. Instead, my parents promised me that they will take care of it until I am financially stable to do so. Even my friends promised me, "We will uphold the heritage of this farmhouse." My eyes got teary on hearing this. Whenever I asked my Grandpa about the man, he would divert from the question and change the topic. Never was I able to convince him to reveal the identity of that man. That man's identity was still unknown to me until recently.

Recently, my tenth-standard boards finished and my friends immediately requested for a trip to that farmhouse. We did not get the chance to visit the farmhouse since my Grandpa's demise. So, this year, as a refresh, my friends and I decided to travel solo. We boarded the trains just after our exams got over and reached there, the very next morning. As always, Tenzu uncle was ready with his handmade, lip-smacking, steaming breakfast. As usual, like the last time, Vicky gobbled up half of the breakfast before even we could start to settle down. As we were preparing ourselves to eat, the doorbell rang. Tenzu uncle opened the door and to our surprise, it was the same man from that night of the heavy storm. This time, he did not hesitate to come in. So, we offered him some tea. Taking a sip of which, he stated, "I heard the news

of your Grandpa's demise and put forward his condolences for the same." Then he stated gradually, "I am your Grandpa's old school friend. I am a lawyer and on your Grandpa's request, I came that night, years back, with the property's papers." I was keenly observing every one of the words he was uttering. He said, "Your Grandpa knew that you would never allow for the selling of this house. So, he decided to give this property to you." I was completely stunned on hearing this. On connecting all the activities of that day, I realized that the quarrel might have been regarding this matter. He assured me that he would be by my side always, in these house matters. My friends took an oath that day and said, "Not only will we protect this farmhouse but also all those houses which have disputes like this even if it is impossible for us." This helped me in accepting this reality optimistically.

Puloma Maity
Class X

Puloma Maity, an obsessive reader and imaginative enthusiast, uses her skills to inspire others. As an active English Literary Club member, she contributes significantly to literary activities and encourages reading. She uses her imaginative skills to understand and retain the qualities portrayed.





Love - The Elixir



Love is a tapestry woven from the threads of connection, binding hearts in an intricate dance of emotion. Like the dawn breaking upon the horizon, love illuminates the darkness, casting its radiant glow upon all it touches. Love is a multifaceted concept, perceived differently by each individual based on their unique experiences, beliefs, and emotions. And for those who take it for granted, love may seem insignificant, but for someone like Susam, it's a magical elixir that enchanted and empowered and drew him out of the labyrinth of atrocities he was in.

Susam was a boy of thirteen years. Puberty had not yet taken its toll on him, rendering him shorter than boys his age. His complexion bore a resemblance to hue of rich and authentic coffee; and due to his rapid metabolism, no matter how much he ate, he always maintained a somewhat malnourished appearance. He was a typical potter head with round glasses, similar to those of the character - Harry Potter.

Before he reached the age of thirteen, his parents had already arranged for him to attend the boarding school where they had spent five years together. The family made it a mission to continue its legacy to gain several principles by going to a boarding and ensured that each of the successors did so.

The boarding school, Godwin Public School, was situated on the outskirts of Darjeeling, a remote distance from Susam's home. His parents wanted him to be a well-disciplined, independent young man, loaded with principles and values, so he was sent there without demur.

During his first week at the boarding school, Susam experienced a complete turnaround from the familiarity of his home environment. The second week proved to be equally challenging, compounding Susam's efforts to settle into his new environment. Homesickness, adjusting to new routines, and academic

pressure - all of these made him enervated. Despite the odds, he discovered solace in sharing a living space with Saksham, his roommate, whose similar routine alleviated the sense of oppression.

His classmates, however, nursed resentment towards him due to the constant praise he received from teachers for his outstanding academic performances. Swiftly, he outshone nearly every other student in the class with his immaculate record and numerous abilities. The girls in the class were often caught up in animated discussions about him. Some of his male classmates were insanely infuriated and envious of him. Susam was quite intellectual but he barely possessed the trait of judging people wisely and efficiently. One fine day, those diabolical and notorious guys from his class, decided to teach him a “lesson” merely due to his innate prowesses.

As Susam sat in the cafeteria with a simple plate of boiled rice and a few other meal options, one of his classmates intentionally bumped into him. He was none other than Saksham, his roommate. In the initial weeks, Susam tried to establish a strong bond with Saksham, but unfortunately, their attempts were in vain. Envy devoured the rationale of the boys. Susam felt genuinely dejected and taken aback upon seeing his lunch scattered all over the unswept floor. ‘Dejected’, as he was starving since morning and now his meal was contaminated with the dust and filth of the floor and was ‘taken aback’ because he witnessed Saksham prodding away with his peers, sniggering. Neither did he care to apologize nor compensate for the loss. Susam could not do much about his insatiable appetite other than to sit and stare at the food in utter dismay.

Susam and Saksham lived in room 402. One night, at one o’ clock, almost all the students dwelling in the fourth floor, was awoken up by a huge chaos. They all congregated in room 402 and found the scene bloody. Saksham deliberately provoked Susam’s anger by mocking his late grandparents and hurling a plethora of profanities at his parents. His intentional goal was to incite Susam into instigating a physical altercation himself, and his scheme unfolded exactly as planned. In the blink of an eye, they were entangled in a chaotic frenzy, using anything within reach to strike and thrust at each other.

Both were profusely bleeding while others found the entire sight quite intriguing. Naturally, the majority of the seniors rallied behind Saksham's cause.

The next morning, both the aggressors were summoned to the Headmaster's office. Since Saksham had the support of the popular seniors, they conspired to frame Susam, ultimately ensuring Saksham's exoneration from any accusations. The Headmaster was thoroughly brainwashed and he deduced that Susam would have to sweep the floors of all the corridors every morning for a month. Susam had no other choice but to condone his misfortune.

Within a month or two, Susam was a regular victim of bullying and the butt of ridicule among his classmates and seniors. The girls who praised him before, now evaded him. He was elbowed, taunted, hissed, hit, kicked and made to strip too. He was thoroughly ridiculed and jeered by his seniors. They persistently deprived him of his possessions, snacks, and pocket money. Susam was compelled to clean their dishes, wash their outfits and do other chores for them. His life became further despondent day by day. His academic grades, sanguine personality and mental health, all went downhill, yet he never said a word about this to his parents or his teachers because he did not want to cope with other menacing consequences and be a burden to his parents or anyone, so he simply accepted his fate.

But now arose a situation that was utterly intolerable. He knew things pretty much got out of hands when his seniors gave him cigarette burns on his thighs and thrashed him when he refused to smoke or indulge in other mean habits with them. But he knew his principles just right. One day, he dashed out of the washroom at a great pace, sobbing. He was tired of it and was determined to finish himself by jumping off from the terrace. As he was scurrying and wiping his tears using his hands, just then he bumped into Smriti, the new comer who joined the school mid-session. Smriti beamed at him and asked him if he was alright. He nodded and swiftly departed, but the notion of ending his own life gradually faded away.

As the finals loomed closer, the bullying diminished, paving the way for Susam to befriend Smriti, and soon enough, they became inseparable. Susam learned that Smriti had lost her father weeks earlier and was also grappling with suicidal thoughts. As they approached each other, Susam found solace in

Smriti's unwavering support, filling a void that had persisted for months.

As the Annual Sports event approached, Smriti was destined to be one of the cheerleaders. She passionately urged Susam to participate in the upcoming events too. It was unbeknown to her how much of a gamesome dude Susam really was. He readily agreed to her pleas. It was a turning point for Susam

He swept the first prize in swimming, the 500m sprint, and shooting. His renewed vigor caught everyone's attention, leading to a surge of interest from various teams eager to recruit him for their football squad. To win over his bullies, Susam decided to play for their team, contributing to their success as they won the match by three goals. It was an exhilarating experience for everyone involved. Smriti was mesmerized and that was when Susam became a hero from minnow in the eyes of others.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Abhirup Dutta

Things got uphill right after. In the following two years, Susam experienced an incredible glow-up. With Smriti's skincare tips, he transformed, becoming more muscular, taller, and radiating confidence. Additionally, his academic achievements reached new heights, reflecting his dedication and growth. He was often sent out on Inter-school events and he never let his school down. All credits to Smriti, the love of his life.

In six months' time, their junior college journey was about to start, signifying the inevitable parting of their ways. Smriti was about to pursue medical science in Gwalior and Susam was going to opt for pure science in Delhi. The enduring love between the two, nurtured over three years, was cemented by their promise to marry after achieving career success. The sparkle in their eyes reflected the steadfastness of their commitment.

At the farewell, they dressed in matching outfits, their choice of attire mirroring their unity. Although their conversation was sparse, the silent exchange of glances spoke volumes, expressing the profound bond they shared.

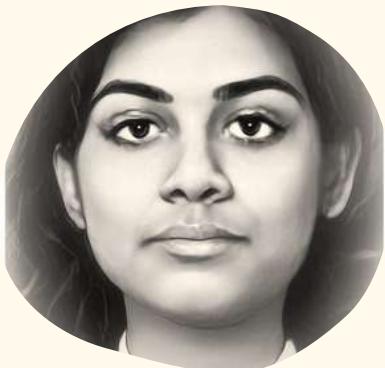


Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

"And that's how I met your mother, son. You see, everything happens for a reason, so never abdicate in life," narrated Susan to his five-years-old.

"Mommy is so encouraging, daddy," blurted out the child. In the dimly lit room, the smiles and tears of Susam and Smriti were shrouded by darkness, echoing the bittersweet essence of a classic love story found within the pages of books.

Sanjana Dey
Class IX



Sanjana Dey, from age four, cultivated a love for literature through nightly bedtime stories and early gifts of fables and a journal. This sparked her passion for reading, poetry, and storytelling, shaping her lifelong affinity for literature.



Purview

Cough...cough...

I sit at my desk by the fireplace while I cough from smoke and old age. My typewriter speaks granite of valour during my days of boiling blood and foolishness.

That day, I coughed in the same manner.

Cough...cough...

I was a veteran soldier of an Indian Regiment. I opened my eyes to see dust and streaks of moonlight, falling from high above to make it noticeable that I was lying somewhere below the ground level.

My leg was stuck under a heap of stones and metals, but my body felt so numb back then that my unwavering urge wouldn't contribute much to my escaping. Yet, I hustled and got up.

I looked around but couldn't find any testament to my whereabouts. My head felt heavy yet blank. My inside hurt so much that I could literally feel my blood vessels rupture yet something greater made me not realise those pains. My left arm was missing and when I tried to verify it, my right hand got covered in blood.

I looked up. It felt as if I was standing at the bottom of a vertical catacomb. I searched for ways when I found stairs climbing up. I moved on. After few a steps, the floor above became visible. I took a look around. A boy and a girl were lying dead with their mother still covering them in cold. The boy was covered in ashes, the girl's face was distorted but the mother laid with no visible signs of wound yet she wasn't breathing. Perhaps, the failure to protect her led to her injury on the inside. Beside her, was a torn piece of paper. It read: "The World is an ashtray".

I didn't stand much longer for I was in a hurry to find my arm.

I was led to a long corridor where the moonlights didn't reach. It frustrated me. The long dark phase pushed my blind senses to insanity and I shouted, "Arm!"; suddenly, my right leg hit something.

It felt like the nozzle of a gun and on gaining back my sight, the streaks of light enlightened a new floor. The floor of gun powder.

That floor had three rooms. Each room had different proportions of fire and blood splotches, and four different people. However, each room had equal arms loaded and by my instinctive focus towards firearms, I was confirmed that I was a human and remembered what had happened.

The world was at war and I received the Medal of Honour for my deceptive plans that had earned victory over the northwest frontier. However, we were being curbed down at our vanguard and my medal left the responsibility upon me and four other comrades. We dropped in as bombardments against our enemies but the land was so chaotic that we were getting cornered with every advancing step.

We disguised ourselves at the Town Hall and learnt that they had built a deep underground passage with rooms to creep into if the circumstances worsen.

Illustrated by Anuvab Dutta



Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh

I was planning to launch an indispensable attack when my comrades decided to surrender with my life. My Medal of Honour was said to be at fault and a brawl started. They pointed guns at me and I pointed one back and we fell hard on each other. The Hall was thrown into chaos and I was getting beaten up badly. I returned a few blows as well but their coordinated and envious moves made me feel sick since they were after my glory and sunshine.

I took the blows but kept my pride high and honour protected when from somewhere far, a cannon was lighted and everything faded away.

Maybe, it was then that I lost my arm.

I advanced forward and the last steps of stairs took me to the Hall where we last faced each other. Right then, I was standing and the four frenemies were sleeping soundly. I stood before them and asked if my quietness led them to such actions.

I turned back and saw an arm lying. It had my medal and I lunged onto it like an animal to take my honour back but the arm was persistent.

I took the hatchet from the floor and swung it on the fingers until they plucked off and the medal stranded on the floor. I took it and walked away.

I didn't do any wrong, did I? My purview of glory brought the honour upon me but it was the medal that carried it and caused the series of back fights with my men and it wasn't justified to see my medal in some isolated arm. However, now that I think about it, that arm was probably mine.



Class XI



Anuvab Dutta began writing simple, rhythmic poems before experimenting with orthodox classics. However, real-world experiences led to a shift in his writing style, marking a significant change in his approach to prose.



INQUILAAB

"Inquilaab", rose a baritone voice loud in the air, its distinct nature naturally distinguishing itself from the noises around. For the split second that followed, all went quiet as dead, as if the attention of each individual of the crowd had been tied together with one single thread. And then thousands of voices rose together, joining the proclamation, "Zindabaad!", the call for revolution reverberating through their voice.

Illustrated by Samadrita Maity



Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty

"Amit da, they have agreed for negotiations." A young lad came running towards the man in a bright white kurta, pointing at the office where a group was awaiting his audience.

Amit folded his sleeves down and trailed behind.

Folding his hands together to greet the visitors, Amit entered the room and gestured at his companion to leave. There were three men seated in the room who ignored Amit's gesture and were unbothered to return the same. Nevertheless, Amit took a seat opposite theirs.

"Aren't you a teacher here?" one of them asked.

"I'm a professor here, yes, not a teacher." Amit replied with a polite smile

"Yes, whatever. Tell us, why your students are not studying?"

"There's no food for them to eat. How will they study? Their fathers have lost their farming fields now; those who worked at the jute mill are unemployed too due to the new development project. The women of the family who had set up businesses are now impaired to do so, now that their lives and dignity are threatened by the henchmen, the police won't take an action against them due to their loyalty to the designated persons sitting atop cushioned chairs. Tell me how these children shall receive education when the funds assigned to pay the salary of teachers and professors have long been lost to somebody sitting on a cushioned chair? How shall they continue to learn, when there is no food, no secure place to live in, barely any teacher to teach them?"

"Look professor," said the one who had been quiet for so long, "We are not here to listen to you preach us about how we should do our work. The Big Brother has a vision for us all, so he has made his policies accordingly. Tell these kids to go back to their houses. Otherwise I will do everything in my power to stop this gathering."

"You can do everything in your power. Let us do everything that is in our power. People whose lives have been dragged to the streets of dust and blood do not fear anything. Thank you." Amit said, folding his hands once again, and stood up.

The three men stood up too. "Remember that we had warned you," said one of them as they were leaving.

"The food pots at home were always empty. After my father killed himself, my mother couldn't continue with her small business. There was never enough to eat. My brother and I decided we had to do something to solve the problem, so we started working for the Mahajan, loading bags of rice on trucks, which were sent to the city to be sold. I realised why we never had enough to eat" a boy of barely nineteen years narrated his story.

One night, Lala, my brother, overheard something he shouldn't have while we were returning from work. Soon he had fallen to the ground. I was a little behind, so when I caught up, I saw him lying on the dust trail. Little as I was, I first called him by his name, then shook him, then saw the blood. I begged Lala to stand up, I begged him to run with me to our house. I begged him to wake up for I was hungry and tired from the day's work. I eventually started crying, embracing his cold body with my arms, but Lala didn't hear me.

"Mother was worried because we were getting late, so she had come to look for us. When she saw both of us lying there on the path, I believe she received a shock that she never recovered from. She passed away last year, leaving me alone in this world." The boy finished his story, tears glistening in his eyes.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty

It was quarter to midnight. Folding up his sleeves, Amit asked the students who had made a bonfire in the middle of the college ground to escape the cold blows of the night, to retire for the day. Once everyone had left, he slowly navigated through the dark and empty staff quarters to his room.



Illustrated by Samadrita Maity

"Why are the clay pots empty today, Ratan?" asked an old man to the chaiwallah.

"I don't know sahib, my usual first customer of the day didn't come today, nor did his friends come." The tea seller had a worrisome look on his face.

One street away, in front of the big peepal tree in the village square, a crowd had gathered.

A body, hard and cold like a stone, clad in a white kurta was laying there; its sleeves rolled up. Written on the back of the kurta with the colour of blood were the words - "Save your own backs. Inquilaab doesn't live forever."

Baibhabi Majumdar

Class XI



Baibhabi Majumdar is an avid reader who runs a book blog, is a skilled writer, and takes interest in amateur theatrics, often taking part in auditory dramatics in the Bengali language.

Colours

Isn't it tempting, to be privileged enough to witness the end of creation?

Acknowledge it or not, all the pair of living eyes wants to witness what it would look like when the one above all takes away everything he blessed the two-legged sapiens with. Will it be hurricanes and earthquakes - snapping away all the infrastructure and architecture we ever built, wiping out the existence of an entire civilization or will it be an extraterrestrial explosion, marking the end of nothing more than a dot, rather a blue dot to the vast ocean of cosmos out there?

That blue dot is what we call home, Earth.

Our quarrels, our disagreements, our prosperity and politics, war for glory, vengeance for the wicked, any and everything which ever existed or will exist, wiped away never to be retrieved again. Then why do we suffer? Why do we spend sleepless nights overthinking the possibilities of a certain moment when it all got to end one day, and no one will ever bear our tales to the other end of the sky? Whom are we bound to answer for our deeds? Is it the fear of karma; too many questions boggling in and out of the mind right? Don't be tough on yourself pal. We suffer because we matter. That's it. Our dreams matter, our desires matter, and what we leave behind matters. We can't live our lives in the dogma of meaninglessness and ignorance. All these thoughts bother you at least once in a lifetime. As it did to me when at a tender age of four, I figured out that the world through my eyes will always remain a black and white portrait.



Elemental by Sudarshana Ghoshal

I was born color-blind, into a family of artists. What an irony! The Moat family carries its legacy to be two-century old and noble bloodline in Ireland, starting off as mere carpenters which grew over the years to several professions from wood carvings to canvassing to painters. Sir Hugo Moat, the famous Irish painter who depicted the Irish civil war through his pallet of colours was my own great grandfather himself.

Later as the years passed by, we took a step forward as my father established another feather to the crown of the moats, becoming the biggest auctioning house for exquisite paintings all over Europe.

Sometimes it seems a heavy load of burden upon my shoulders to carry the title of the Moats. Some privileges are too heavy to bear lifelong, judging me under the criteria of greatness of what the Moats before me established in this world for both the society and government. I lost my mother during my birth due to heavy blood loss and later my father took another mistress to secure the bloodline of the Moats with few more ‘ordinarily-abled’ Moats i.e. who doesn’t need to smell up the canvas to determine the quality of colours, and more preciously which is it.

Yes, the one above all snatches something from you only to give you another hidden potential, great if put to any use, lost if you die without realizing what it was. To me the bitter one is red, orange tastes somewhat the blend of tangy and sweet and, blue seems to be sour.

Green is somewhat salty and violet is a layer spicy to the tongue, and what if it's bland with no taste like a glass of water? Yeah guessed it right pal it is white, the crayon we use the least. My father, Ser Lancel Moat, finds it to be a shame I am his son.

But the principals made by the first men are not to be questioned, and the blood I share compels him to call me son, be it an abled son or a specially-abled one. It's the reason I am away most of the time from business conferences of the Moat enterprises, and seldom one could find me with my butler Harry by the river bank.

Elemental by Sudarshana Ghoshal



It's what rich kids do, right? When they are sad and feel the same question, every homo-sapiens out there be it on the streets or the office table thinks, why me? Why only me? Yes, I get meals on time, the kid on the road doesn't.

But he, in his life, got nothing to loose, just as the first Moat started somewhere out there with desperation in his eyes and a penny in his pocket. I feel like to look up at the sky, and ask aloud to, I don't know, just the clouds that why me? Why to take away my mother from me and let me

live with the notion all my life that it was me who killed her before even coming to this world.

*Why to make me a Moat, why the eldest son of a billion-dollar enterprise,
and why to make the skies white and the grasslands black for me? Nobody
answers me, apart from some days, it starts to rain. Who knows? It might
be that mother could see her small Edward of the Moats from the skies.
Someday when like rest of us are destined, my grave is dug, I might be
sitting with my mom again taking a seat to view the end of the time. But
then, if I look at her, will she be black and white to me?*

Adhiraj Ghosh Dastidar

Class XI



Adhiraj Ghosh Dastidar, a very talented actor and dramatist, with a notable fondness for exploring old classics, is an avid music enthusiast, often demonstrating his love for poetry through memorization and eloquent oratory.



PERFECT DINNER



I glanced over at my sister's face. She was listening intently to the man speaking, his lips moving as he talked. I admired her calm expression as she quietly nodded in response to the doctor's words.

Elemental by Shrestha Chakraborty



Since I was a little girl, I always imagined myself as the main character in every superhero story. Me and my loved ones, invincible, like in the movies. But that day, I realized I wasn't a superhero or the main character.

Hardships come to everyone, and I was no exception.

My sister was diagnosed with thyroid cancer in June. Being a strong woman in both mind and body, she didn't shed a tear (like most people would, according to the doctors). Instead, she continued to work around the house as she always had, chopping onions and tomatoes into salad, doing the laundry, mopping around the house. She was completely indifferent to her disease, or so it seemed.

She was different, not because she tried to be, but because she just was. She lived life on her own terms. She never harmed anyone, but she also didn't go out of her way for others. She was naturally introverted but could be the life of the party if she wanted. She seemed indifferent towards most people, but many believed she was the most empathetic person they knew. She had the potential to be anything she wanted; she was brilliant from a young age. Yet, she chose to volunteer at a puppy center in the end.

Despite the ten-year age gap between us, we were just like any other siblings.

The day she was diagnosed felt like a nightmare, and I kept waiting for the alarm clock to wake me up. But the alarm never rang.

She took the news in stride, or at least she pretended to. She wore a smile and tried to endure the painful procedures she had to undergo.

She was like an angel.

Why did this have to happen to her? I used to wonder.

As her health started to worsen, I began to see her as a regular person, which she truly was. A person without the power of a superhero or the wit of a Shakespearean character. Seeing her like that, hurt me deeply. Her hair was tangled, her eyes were swollen, and she spoke slowly and simply.

But her radiant smile never faded. She smiled through the pain.

Despite undergoing extensive treatments like chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and clinical trials, she seemed to be getting worse with each passing day.

Have you ever seen flowers wither? Like in autumn, when the once vibrant petals fade to muted tones of brown and gray. I witnessed my sister, whom I idolized since I was young, wither away.

It felt like I was losing my sister; she was losing herself. All that remained was the shell of her body. The doctors, our parents, her husband, and I all lost hope.

I never thought miracles were real until I saw one happen right in front of me. One ordinary Tuesday, she just woke up feeling full of energy. Finally her worst nightmare was over.

The doctors were surprised by her sudden recovery. We all thought she was going to die, but she lived.

At that time, I couldn't help but believe that God had spared one of his angels.

It was two months later after she had been discharged from the hospital. She was finally settling back down into her new apartment. She would return to her job the following week.

My brother-in-law and I were planning a surprise for her that day. It was their 1st anniversary, and we wanted to celebrate her survival from cancer and have some fun after such a long time.

The whole thing was supposed to be set up in my house. Her apartment was only 20 minutes away from mine.

He would be cooking her favorite food, and I would do the decorations and plan how to surprise her.



Elemental by Shrestha Chakraborty

She protested by calling me 'stupid' for finding it funny. Then she told me that she would be out to buy some new clothes.

Finally I found my perfect opportunity.

I told her to stop by my house so we could go to the mall together. She was happy at the idea and told me to wait; she would be at my house within an hour after she got done with all her chores. She hung up the call. My brother-in-law and I were patiently waiting for her with the poppers and all. Her favourite scented candles were lit.

It was all going so perfect.

I would have loved to write about our lovely dinner that day, or how goofy she would look with the green tinted sunglasses on, but this is not how this story goes.

It was taking a lot of time for her to come by. We were slowly getting worried. Just at that moment, a phone rang.

It was her.

She was just stuck in lame traffic. She said it would take just five minutes more to reach my house. I told her that there was no need to hurry; she could take all her sweet time. Then we moved over to talking about random mundane stuff.

She made a comment about how there was a kindergarten nearby where she was stuck, and how cute those little children were. She was narrating how cutely they were crossing the road, waddling like little penguins.

Then she stopped. She was still on the line. She muttered something I couldn't make out.

I said, "Hello? Are you still there?"

I felt the engine starting.

"Hello??"

Her car was moving, but the utter silence on the other side of the phone was eating me up.

In a desperate attempt, I muttered through the phone one last time, before I lost the connection.



Illustrated by Swapnoneel Das

"Hello?"

And the candle went off.

Some of the children went out of their line and were walking on the wrong side of the road. An unusually fast truck was speeding towards those unaware children.

I don't know what went through my sister's mind, but she started her engine despite the red light. Her heart was probably beating fast. She probably thought, "Am I going crazy?" as she slowly positioned herself in the middle of the crossroad.

Behind her were the honking of the cars.

On one side were the carefree children, and on the other was a raging truck.

Why was she not moving out of there?

She still had time; she could move herself out of the way, but she didn't. She could see the truck moving towards her, squashing everything that came before it.

I wonder, did she realize the consequences of her choice the moment when it was too late to move the car?

Did she look at the reflection of herself in the rear view mirror one last time?

And suddenly the honking of the cars behind were drowned out by the screeching tires and the deafening crash of metal against metal.

That day, no children were harmed.

I am writing this while sitting at the park beside my house. I could see a few children swinging on the swings, and some were sliding on the slides. I wonder if any one of the children were present on the road that day?

What if I didn't call her that day?

Would she still be alive today? Would we be gathering by the table for dinner at my house? Would she be singing, with her husband playing the guitar in the background while I was busy recording it for her Instagram?

If the things, that happened that day, didn't happen, to this day, she would still be calling me 'stupid'.

She died a hero's death and I would always be proud of her, but I can't help but think she is so selfish.

She left us behind.

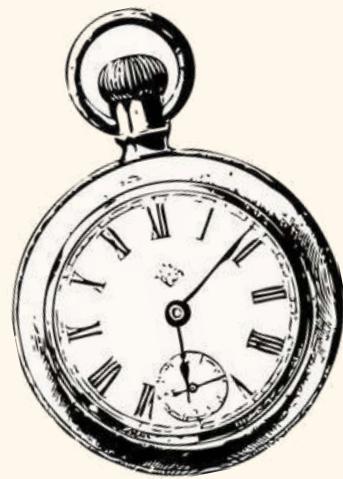
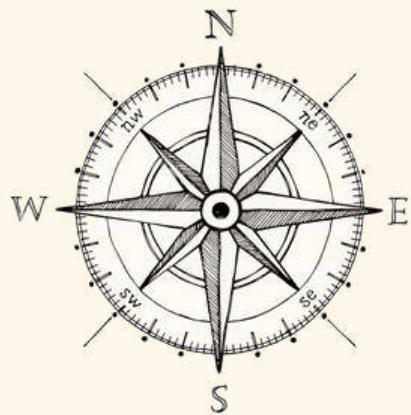
She left me behind.

Mohur Chatterjee

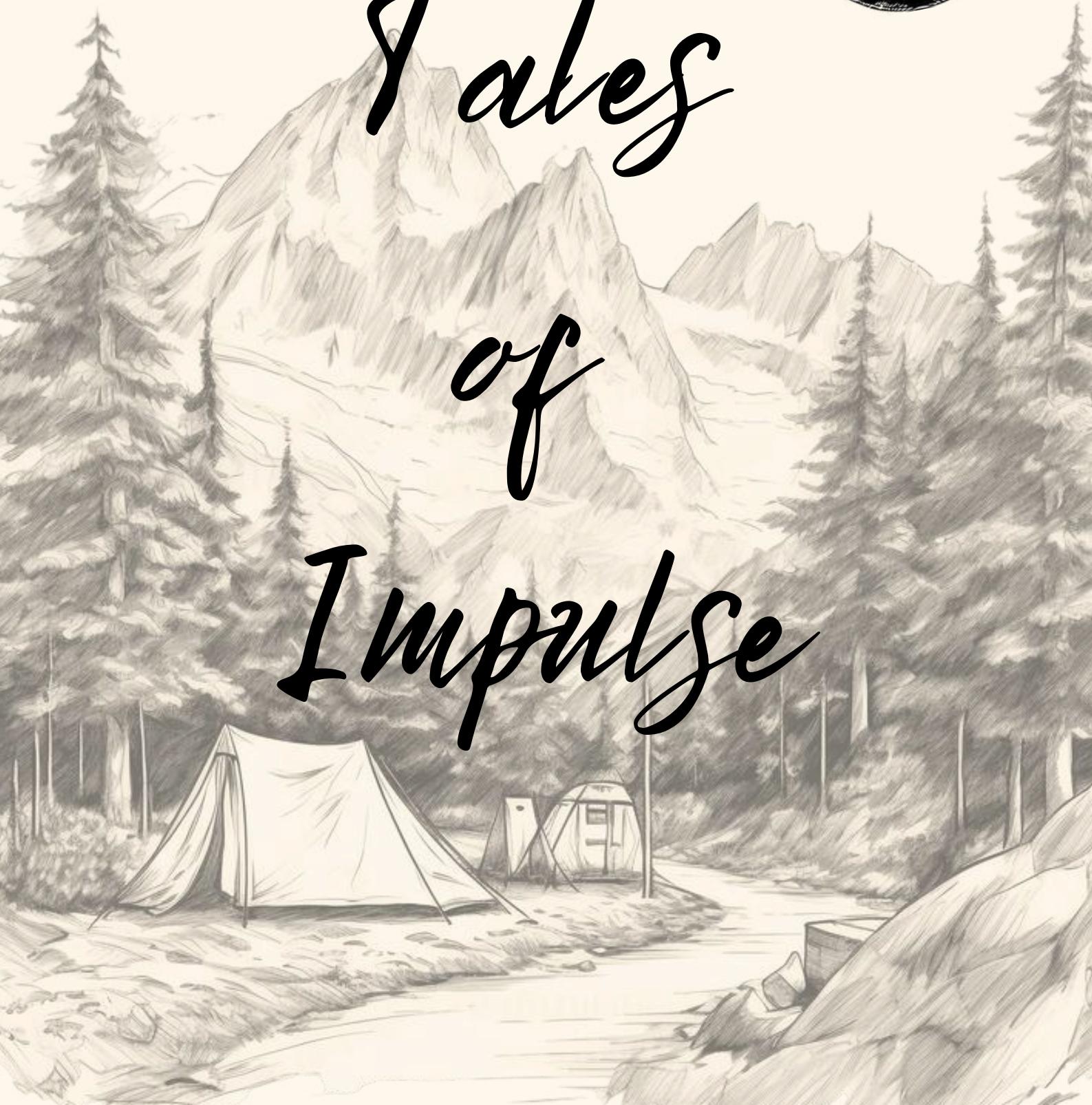
Class X



Mohur Chatterjee is a budding 15-year-old with a passion for creativity. Mohur has developed a profound love for drawing, finding solace and expression in the strokes of her pencil and the colors of her palette.



Tales
of
Impulse





Aventura o algo parecido...

Bored of the mundane loop, Nat decided she needed adventure. She needed spice. Mostly, she needed a big - fat break from her tedious life.

A little information about our protagonist, Nat or Natalie Brown, is a girl of high spirits. She's bubbly, joyful, and most importantly, a social butterfly. She craves adventure, romance and love in her life. She is so much into adventure that it's rare to see her, chilling around at home on a random Thursday afternoon.

Recently though, she felt like something was missing in her life. As we know, she craved adventure, she wanted to travel. But, she was in the midst of a break right now. Her company gave her a break because they thought she was exhausted from travelling so far and wide for almost a whole year. Who would tell them that she waited for each assignment so she could have a brand-new adventure?

Being in her late twenties, living in the heart of the city, she often found it difficult to gasp freedom, to stretch her arms and shout till her throat was sore. Nat wanted a life where she could travel all the time, have the freedom to go wherever she wanted, without the corporate demons hanging, over her head, giving her all sorts of work even when she is away. This is why she worked as hard as she could, studying late at night to crack all her competitive exams, by virtue of which, she was now having the job, she always desired. She chose Travel Journalism as her career of choice. She was a senior travel journalist, travelling all around the world and getting paid for it, living the life of her dreams. She was pretty content with the career she chose and never saw herself regretting the choice.

Even though she was born with a silver spoon, she never took it for granted and her parents were proud as ever. Her family ran a successful business. Her parents had the obvious thought that she would be joining the family business, the mighty "Brown Enterprises" that has been ruling the markets for over three decades but they were wrong. Their daughter never had interest in business. Her parents tried to convince her multiple times to take care of their company. Moreover, Nat thought her sister was much more capable of handling the business.

Coming back, she got stuck in this weird loop for the next few weeks. She woke up in the morning, brushed while seeing grown adults fight on Twitter, made herself a cup of coffee, worked on editing the reports of her previous travelogue, had lunch, went back to editing, had a shower, had dinner and went to bed, and the whole cycle would repeat itself all over again. For most of us, this is a pretty normal routine. But for her, it felt like a torture chamber where she was tortured daily. She hated the monotony of life. She wanted excitement, a reason to wake up in the morning. According to her, it was what gave life, 'life'.

She could not bear at all, so she packed her bag and left for Spain. She went to Seville which was a very special place for her. She had visited Spain, way back when she was a kid. She loved Seville so much that she cried profusely while sitting in the aeroplane and watching the flight, take off from Spain. She felt like she left a part of her heart at Seville after she came back. Knowingly or unknowingly, Seville became her comfort place. Whenever things started going wrong in her life, she imagined herself, drifting into the wonder city, full of the Andalusian sun. But what was about to happen in Seville, could not be even thought of. It could not be called an 'adventure' to be exact, but it surely was to Nat, who had no clue.

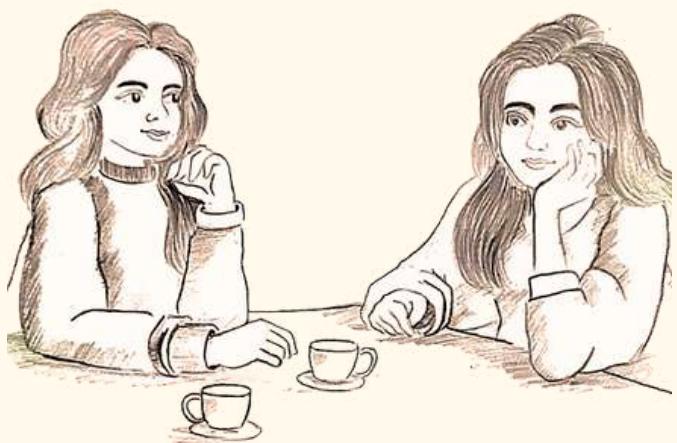
Walking through the airport, she felt weirdly anxious. She kept overthinking as thoughts raced into her mind, faster than Lewis Hamilton's lap, in F1 racing. She kept thinking of all the possibilities, running them through her head, but nothing made sense. She has been to this place more than ten times. She even had a small apartment there.

She forced herself to breathe-in and breathe-out, a couple of times and put on a beautiful smile. Many a, times she heard that her smile ‘could light up a town’, and maybe they were right. She had soft features, with beautiful brown hair, and pretty green eyes. Nat had the perfect British accent, but could speak almost all the languages, majorly spoken in the world.

Walking out of the airport, fresh breeze gently brushed past her as she walked to the taxi stand. Taking a taxi, she proceeded towards her apartment. She arranged her luggage in her small 2BHK apartment and picked out a pretty outfit to wear tonight. She was about to go to a carnival arranged in Calle Sierpes which she would visit with one of her Spanish friends who also turns out to be the daughter of one of the local councillors of Seville. She dolled herself up in a pretty floral dress with knee-high boots. She waited for her friend, Lily, to pick her up. While waiting, she again had that weird feeling creeping up. She felt like something was seriously wrong. Again, she shrugged it off. Soon enough, Lily arrived and they set off. When Nat got into the car, Lily asked her a random question, out of nowhere. Lily asked, “Nat, do you remember what tomorrow is? I mean do you remember the date?” Nat looked as confused as ever. She looked up from her phone and shook her head, being completely oblivious that the next day would be 21st of October, her birthday. Lily shook her head in disbelief and focused back on driving. Nat kept pestering Lily, asking her about the suddenness of the question, and the reason behind her asking this. Lily shrugged the question off and drove towards their destination.

Soon after, the pair reached the famous street of Calle Sierpes, the famous ‘market street’ of Seville. They reached quite early, the carnival was still being set up, with the jostling crowds and the hustle-bustle of the people. They moved into one of the cafes and settled down, talking about all types of stuff, from work to life to even their love-lives. The latter topic really threw off Nat’s mood

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Soham Basak

as her fiancé, Richard Black, was suddenly posted to Nice, in the southern-coast of France. Even when travelling for work, she always travelled with her fiancé whenever his schedule allowed him. This time, she wanted to connect with him, on a deeper level. Even if they were together for over five years and being engaged for a year and a half, she always looked for ways to bond and have an emotional connection. She wanted to bring Richard to Seville, to introduce him to the place that had always been her 'No.1 Comfort Place'.

As they kept on gossiping, they really lost track of time. Countless sips of coffee had been taken and their throats, sore from laughing, they did not realise that the carnival had begun. They could hear the loud music blaring, from the loudspeakers. Nat paid the bill and they moved out of the cafe. They blended into the crowd as they swayed to the beats, having cheap drinks, buying weird apparels and having the time of their lives. While going towards a shop, a sudden collision with a man, wearing a trench coat and a hat, caused the pair to split up. Before Nat could see the man, he and surprisingly enough, Lily, both had vanished. She tried a lot to look for Lily, it was of no avail, almost as if she vanished in thin air. She checked the time on her phone. It was 10:47 p.m. She looked around, desperately trying to locate the red-haired girl. Out of nowhere, she was pulled into an alleyway, her mouth sealed by the hand of someone. She wiggled around, trying to free herself, but fell unconscious.

Waking up quite a bit later, she found herself in a warehouse, tied up to a chair. She saw a red-haired woman in front of her, wearing a mask. She saw herself, helplessly staring at the figure. IT WAS LILY! The first thought that came to her mind was "WHY?"

Lily removed her mask and slightly smirked. She walked around and spoke, "Hi there, Ms. Brown! Surprised. You shouldn't be. Yes, I kidnapped you. You truly, are a fool to trust me. I'm the daughter of the councillor. Why do you think, I would be friends with YOU? You know, you are dumb, not even that smart, and definitely an amnesia patient." Tears were rolling down Nat's eyes. She never expected to hear these from such a close friend, let



Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty

alone expect these weird actions. For the past six years, she and Lily were friends, keeping in touch with each other during every hard time. Just before she could say anything, she saw a bunch of people gather into the room. The room was pitch black, except for a shaft of light hitting from somewhere. She silently let her tears out. Lily moved closer to her, and wiped off her tears. In a much softer voice, Lily said, "You know

Nat, I never wanted to do this. But this was the only way to make you realise that it is your birthday, you fool!" The lights suddenly turned on and Nat saw her parents, Richard's parents, Richard and a few of her friends. A loud bang was heard as Lily appeared with a cake, exactly at the stroke of midnight. Nat was freed long ago. She moved towards Lily, looking furious. As she raised her hands, Lily got scared. Soon, she felt Nat's arms around her, embracing her softly and she looked at Lily, with a soft smile and asked, "Well... You want to explain what happened right now?" Lily informed that it was Richard's plan to surprise her. Nat went to Richard and demandingly, looked at him, as if asking for an explanation. Richard said, "You know N, how busy I've been the past couple of days. I just wanted to celebrate your birthday as an apology for not being able to go with you to the Maldives when you went for your last assignment." Nat adoringly looked at him and softly smiled.

Soon after, she laughed and joked about how this thing, scared the living daylights out of her. She truly felt as if she was about to die. Like a fool, she had forgotten her own birthday. She was so grateful to have such wonderful people around her. Still, she was actually angry with Richard for

this horrible plan. Like, getting her kidnapped? Although she pretended to remain angry, she finally melted, hearing the constant heartfelt apologies of Richard. She did actually get her dose of adventure which she craved for all these days. But, all's well that ends well.

Nat returned home after a few days, having celebrated one of the grandest birthdays ever in her comfort city. Whenever she spoke of the night of 20th October, she laughed and joked about how she was 'kidnapped and trapped' by her own best friend and fiancé. Still that trip remains as one of the most 'adventurous trips' of her entire life.

Agnijita Chakrabarty
Class IX



Agnijita Chakrabarty, an avid reader, and an imaginative writer, she loves to sit and read through an entire novel in a day whenever she feels like it.

APOCALYPSE - iNFINITY



"Ranger 001, do you copy? I repeat, do you copy?"

No Reply... ...

"RANGER 001, DO YOU COPY?" I screamed at the microphone, the very next moment I saw a warning light. Ranger 001 was hit. It had been shot.

I was shocked to see it, and for a split second, refused to believe that such an event could take place. Ranger 001 was our best fighter pilot. This was just unimaginable that we would lose him to the enemy. The war was at its peak. Humanity was losing to the Enemy. All events around me became a blissful moment. My fellow commander was trying to establish a contact to 001, disbelieving the truth that he was down.

The very next moment, the danger alarm went off and before I could even get to know why, it happened. The explosion took place and I found myself in a terrible state. It was a dream, a by-product of my obsession with space and aliens and during it, I had suddenly wakened up.

It was Monday morning on 4th March 4024.

Wait...WHAT!

I had just woken up from my sleep in the sleeping pod hotel in CST Station, 2000 years later! I was not there, my location had changed!

I was thunderstruck. What was going on? Was I still asleep? Was I dead? With millions of thoughts going on in my mind, I realized and recollected the events which happened with me before I was asleep. I was on my way back home after a weeklong time spent in Mumbai. It was 3rd March 2024; a Sunday and my train was on the next day. I decided to spend my night in the sleeping pod hotel, which had been newly introduced to the Station Premises. I was assigned pod number T. It was strange. All pods were numbered as 1, 2,

3... But the last one was numbered "T". I wondered why it was so. To my curiosity, I asked one of the housekeeping staffs about it. All replied to me with a disappointing tone: "I do not know, sir." I thought to myself that it was just a funny wish of the owner to do it so and just then an old man approached me. He had been there for a while. He introduced himself as the Hotel Owner but wished to keep his name anonymous.

Digitalised by Shrestha Chakraborty



Illustrated by Dristi Nandy

"This pod is named T because it is the one which takes you ahead in time and teaches you a lesson, which is very important for both you and humanity. You are lucky to have got this pod, not many people get such a nice opportunity," said the old man.

I replied with a smiling gesture, not knowing what to answer and slept off, not paying any heed to what he said. That is all I remember before I was off.

It turns out he was right! Sleeping in that pod did make me travel in the 5th Quantum Dimension – Time. The next thing in my questionnaire was my location. It turned out, from a sleeping pod, I was transferred to a luxury bed, in a large bedroom. Right in front of me was lying a switch. It had a glowing green substance around it. Upon seeing it clearly, I made out that it was a switch from the pod! It was looking as if it was hanging between two dimensions. Not thinking much, I touched it. That was it. I felt as if my mind was being torn apart for a flash and then I was back to normal. The switch was gone. Everything was looking familiar suddenly.

Touching that switch planted some sort of memory in my mind. It gave me the background of a whole new person, just it had started abruptly.

According to the memory, I was a fighter pilot of "X - ARMY" and that Earth had connections with other planets. No countries existed; the wars fought were no more among countries but planets. I suddenly knew how to fly a jet – an ultra-modern jet capable of combat in space. I knew that Earth was at

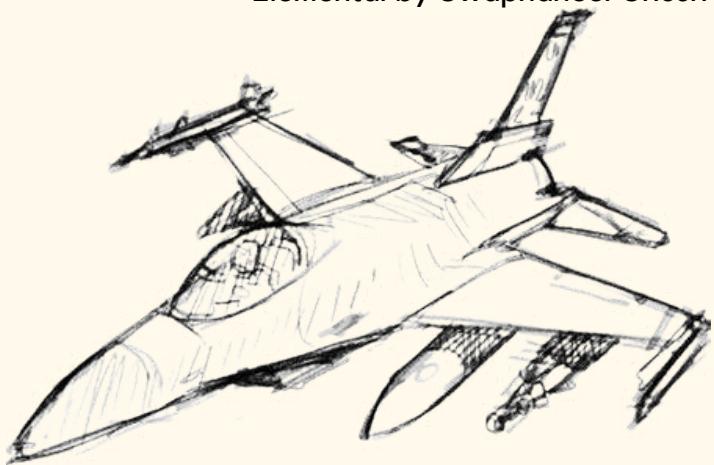
war with some Planet Z. Interplanetary wars had now been going on for centuries. Planets were destroyed. The only two planets which remained were Earth and Planet Z.

The next moment, all alarms went off. There was a call on the phone.

"EMERGENCY. CODE RED. REPORT TO OPERATIONS ROOM IMMEDIATELY. MESSAGE TO RANGER 001."

So, I was this Ranger 001. Besides being fascinated by this prospect, I cuddled up a fear in myself as well. I thought to myself: "Am I going to die?"

Elemental by Swapnaneel Ghosh



With such speculations, I went to the Operations room. I was commanded to do the last operation against the enemy. All other pilots were down. It was the beginning of the Apocalypse. As I followed my orders and took off with my warcraft, even though I did not know how I was doing it, I got a view of the rest of the Planet.

Extreme misuse and overuse of Modern Destructive Technology had taken place, in virtue of which Earth was in an "Apocalyptic" stage. All volcanoes had erupted, earthquakes were all over, people were dying, life was going towards extinction, Earth was in destruction. All this seemed mind melding as I was unable to process what this was. Suddenly, there was an explosion. The world was ending. I could hear the lines which I was speaking earlier, being spoken to me: "Ranger 001, do you copy? I repeat, do you copy?" However, I could not reply.

All the place was then filled with white light. It felt very peaceful. Then, the next moment, a sudden transition took me to an empty classroom. Here was the place I liked being the most, a classroom at my tuition centre because here was the place I ever got to talk to my best friend for the longest period. The place was nice but empty.

On the table lay a piece of a nice paper. It read:

DEAR READER OF THIS NOBLE PAGE,

WE ARE WRITING THIS NOTE TO YOU. WE ARE YOU, FROM FUTURE. WE ARE THE FAR MORE ADVANCED HUMANITY. WE HAVE USED TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE AS PER OUR OWN WILL. WE HAVE CREATED WORLDS; WE HAVE DESTROYED WORLDS. WE HAVE CONQUERED AND BECOME THE KING.

ONE DAY OUR OWN INVENTION TURNED AGAINST US; WE WILL NOT DISCLOSE WHAT IT IS. THIS EVENT BROUGHT OUR WORLD TO THE VERGE OF "APOCALYPSE". NOT GOING INTO MUCH DETAIL - IF YOU DO NOT WANT THE HUMANS IN YOUR TIME-FRAME TO END UP LIKE US, MAKE SURE YOU ARE THE ONE WHO PREVENTS THE RASH USE OF "TECH". SCIENCE IS NOT SOMETHING YOU PLAY WITH. HANDLE SCIENCE WITH CARE OR HUMANITY WILL BE DAMAGED.

BEFORE YOU GO BACK TO YOUR OWN WORLD, YOU SHOULD KNOW MY NAME, MY NAME IS INFINITY, AND I AM YOUR FRIEND.

The moment I completed reading the note, I was back at the pod hotel. I switched on the lights and with a flash I was on my bed, in my house. My mother was shouting, "Get up! You will be late for school." I did as she said but... wait, I had a note in my hand!

IF YOU EVER FEEL THAT YOU WANT TO KNOW
MORE ABOUT THE APOCALYPSE OF THE
FUTURE, YOU MAY VISIT -

CST RAILWAY STATION POD HOTEL - POD
NUMBER T

IT WILL GIVE YOU MORE ENERGY TO DO WHAT
I TOLD YOU - SAVE HUMANITY.

FROM
INFINITY

Abhinibesh Saha

Class VIII

Abhinibesh Saha is a passionate individual with interests in designing and music. He contributes as a keyboardist in the Music Club, and is part of the design team for Panache Volume III, showcasing his enthusiasm and talent in both fields.





The Uncharted Journal



That night, Anil went to bed early. The cold temperatures forced him to cover himself in the special blanket that was gifted by his uncle. His uncle had informed him that the blanket could provide him the utmost comfort in winter. More than that, it felt like he was seeking refuge from the outside world. To be clear, it was his realm of imagination, where anything was possible. As he tucked himself in, he closed his eyes, and his mind began to wonder.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

Zap! In an instant, he found himself transported to a magical forest of vibrant colours and enchanting creatures. Trees stretched towards the sky, their branches swaying in an unheard symphony. Flowers bloomed in a melody of hues and filled the air with their sweet fragrance. He felt the softness of moss beneath his feet and the cool zephyr brushing against his face. His mind was too amazed to process everything he was seeing. Curiosity propelled him forward as Anil ventured deeper into the forest.

Suddenly, a winged creature appeared before him out of the blue.

It was a pixie! Her delicate wings were shimmering in the sunlight. She had a mischievous smile and a sparkle in her emerald-hued eyes.

"Welcome Anil!" She chimed; her voice melodic like the tinkling of bells. "You have stumbled upon the realm of dreams, where imagination comes alive."

The pixie led him through the forest, introducing him to various magical beings along the way.

Anil met talking animals who shared their wisdom, fairies who granted wishes, and mystical creatures who revealed the secrets of the universe. As they entered deeper into the woods,

they arrived near a breathtaking waterfall, flowing down a majestic cliff. The pixie said that its waters had the power to bring dreams to life. The pixie encouraged Anil to touch and submerge his hand in the shimmering waters below.

With a sense of wonder, Anil immersed his hand in the water. As he withdrew his hand, he discovered a golden orb nestled in his palm.



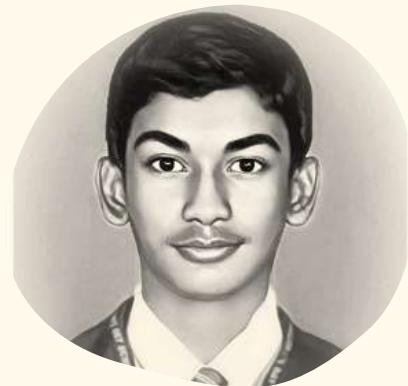
Illustrated by Ritoja Sen

The pixie said that it was the Dreamstone, a conduit to the realm of dreams. In that moment, Anil realised the true power of imagination and the magic that lies within each of us. The Dreamstone became his gateway to boundless creativity, a tool to bring his wildest dreams to life, and the blanket became his portal to the world of imagination.

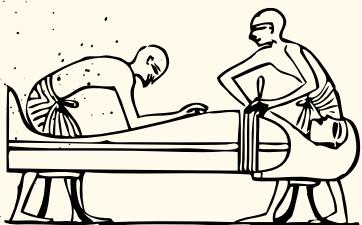
Armed with the Dreamstone, Anil returned to the real world, carrying with him the spirit of the forest. From that day onward, Anil embarked on countless adventures both in his mind and in the world around him, and the blanket became his trusted place for adventures, whispering softly - "Dive deep and discover."

Gairik Ghosh

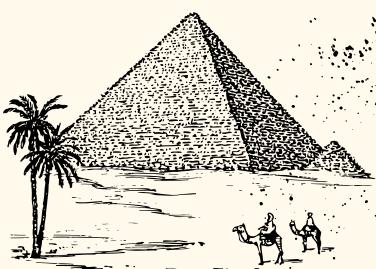
Class VIII



Gairik Ghosh, an avid reader with a fervent passion for literature, actively engages in various literary events. His vibrant participation extends to the school's literary club, LitBuzz as well, showcasing his enthusiasm and literary prowess.



The Loop



I have always cherished the exploration of different historical museums. Last month, my alter ego, Harry, and I set off for our trip to a fascinating museum.

The museum overflowed with historical bliss. I felt as if I had travelled through time. Mummies, fossils, and all these intriguing artefacts, fascinated, me to a great extent. As we strolled through different Egyptian galleries, one particular exhibit, left a profound impact on me, changing my entire perspective on 'MUMMIES'.

Although the gallery was devoid of visitors, we heard a mysterious creaking sound near the historical vases. Despite the prohibition on touching the exhibits, the enigmatic noise beckoned me. Intrigued, Harry and I followed the sound, unveiling a small manhole, leading to a dark basement. Our curiosity prevailed, propelling us into the depths below.

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Illustrated by Nayanika Porel

Finally, when we reached there, we came across ancient walls, engraved with hieroglyphics and some pieces of furniture with, Egyptian masks of different animals. As we proceeded further, the torches illuminated the space as if a supernatural force guided us. Eventually, we observed another dimly lit room, but as we stepped inside, the torches lit up and revealed a tomb ,which was richly embellished with golden masks, ornaments, and different symbols.

As the clock neared 5, signaling the museum's closure, our excitement overshadowed the passing time. So, the museum closed, leaving us stranded in the mysterious, dark basement.

We cautiously approached the tomb, and suddenly, we were struck upon the stupid idea of unveiling its contents - an irresistible temptation for me. So, we proceeded to open it. We pushed the tomb's lid with all our might, and it yielded effortlessly. Our excitement turned to profound disappointment as the tomb revealed emptiness, leaving us disheartened. However, a tiny shimmer at its right corner, caught my attention. As Harry tried to touch it, the tomb unexpectedly expanded to reveal a circular wormhole. It seemed like a portal through which we could 'TIME TRAVEL'!

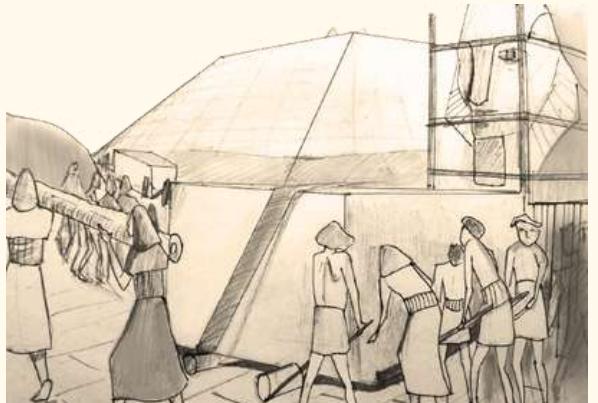
We were so inquisitive that we entered it and were enveloped by a warm gush of breeze. As I opened my eyes, I could not believe that I had travelled to Egypt, and it was not even the modern world; it was ancient Egypt!

I saw innumerable workers, working under the blazing sun, building a huge pyramid, but as we were the intruders into the ancient world, we sought refuge in a nearby hideout. Exploring our surroundings, we marveled at the beauty of the vicinity. The people were in weird clothes, but we did not have time to observe all of them. Soon, we realized that it was already too late for us to go home. Desperate to locate the portal, we scoured the surroundings, but it was nowhere to be found.

Soon, the pharaoh's guards caught us, and then we were brought before him. He inquired about the sudden appearance of strangers in his vicinity. Before we could make up any story, he ordered his men to imprison us. We were so terrified that we tried to escape, but it was too late, and we were locked up in the prison for some time after which we were released. Confusion lingered among us regarding, the pharaoh's true intentions, but to our dismay, we were appointed as slaves to the king. Despite our pleas, the pharaoh remained indifferent to our excuses.

Our days were now consumed by rigorous labor, under the scoring sun and even I could not believe the surreal sequence that included time travel, our

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Illustrated by Nayanika Porel

cursed fate, and the mysterious tomb. All of this became overwhelming for me.

Days passed, and one day, while we were working, we stumbled upon the same tomb that had cursed our fate. Hoping it might serve as a portal back to the museum, we opened it, only to find a chilling sight — a mummified corpse lay within, its torn bandages, exposing a gruesome human skull. The tomb was also quite shiny, and it was adorned with golden ornaments and hieroglyphics, engraved on its walls. We thought that we would return to the museum in presence of the tomb, and once again, we stumbled upon the stupid idea of taking the mummy out and finding the portal. However, as soon as we tried to touch it, a swirling vortex engulfed us — the desert, the pyramid — and left us blinded by a sudden flash of light. And, when I opened my eyes, I was shocked.

I was standing in the Egyptian gallery of the museum! Harry was also in the same state of fright, and we both were completely unnerved by the sudden course of events. When we went closer to the vases, we heard the same creaking noise.

Dripta Ghosh
Class VIII



Dripta Ghosh, a student of St. Augustine's Day School Barrackpore, has a remarkable quest for literature. With his sense of deep imagination, the poet introduces, 'The Loop'.



My First Camp



One bright morning, a boy named Laddu, heard an announcement in the class about an "ANNUAL SCHOOL CAMP", being held at his school.

He studied at St. Augustine's Day School, Barrackpore, in standard one. As a rookie, he discussed it with his friends - "Hey man! Want to join this camp? I recently joined Scouts, and it will be my first camp too, just like yours." His friends agreed to join him. However, he had only two friends.

Nevertheless, they started preparing for the camp, according to the list provided by the school, and it was written, "DO NOT CARRY UNNECESSARY ITEMS AND LUGGAGE, YOU ARE UNABLE TO CARRY." After all, it was his childhood ignorance; his friends and he packed all sorts of fashionable attire and all kinds of items, used in normal households, but his sister packed his luggage, and when she asked, "LADDU!! Come here and see where I'm putting all your things. If you're not attentive, don't ask me afterwards. I'm telling you." He was preoccupied with the world of adventures, he would try in the camp.

His camp at the school would last two nights and three days. Laddu had only one week left before attending his first camp. Shubham and Atharv, his only companions, were also ready with all their belongings and were equally excited. At least, they knew that a life-changing experience, awaited them in the camp.

On the other hand, Rumours circulated about spirits, haunting the school's science lab, confirmed by some staff sightings. However, the students were unaware of these.

The day finally arrived, and all the guardians gathered in front of the school with their wards. "Be careful, darling... Mummy will miss you." "Be brave, daughter, just like your father." These voices loomed over the school for an hour straight. In between those, the three lads, hoping for the best, entered

the school with their belongings and smiled brightly, whereas others were crying their souls out.

The day started with flag hoisting and the inauguration of the camp, with the Principal and the Headmistress, giving their speeches. Then, the patrols or teams were divided. Each team received their room allotments and shifted accordingly. The three were divided into three different teams, and the only time they could meet, was in the evening. After setting up the luggage, all were called down to the assembly ground with their uniforms. As Laddu relied on his parents, he needed their help with his uniform and shoelaces. Here, everyone refused to help him and instead, scolded him for his inability to perform these minor tasks. He suppressed a sob and went on to his mentor, a head for every patrol who was assigned to help them whenever they called on him. When Laddu asked for help, the mentor giggled and taught him the basic knowledge of how to wear a uniform without someone's help.

Soon after, the scouts along with their mentors were called down by their patrols, to start the next task. They had to take help from their partners in here, and as every patrol had even members, the pairs were fair and no one was left alone. The task was followed by breakfast, and then everyone had an hour to respite.

Digitalised by Swapnaneel Ghosh



Illustrated by Anuvab Dutta

The children did everything they were asked to till their lunch, and after that, they were sought to prepare for the 'SING SONG', which had the theme of patriotism. Now, all the patrols, had a leader, an assistant, and a specific name of their choice based on any animal, but it had to be different from others. Now Laddu suggested, "Let's name our Patrol RED PANDA." Astonishingly, the members loved it!

The program in the evening went well, but all the kids were allowed to go home, and both Atharv and Shubham, left with their parents. Laddu's parents refused to take him. He then broke out into tears and complained about all the difficulties, he had faced on the first day. However, his parents denied and acknowledged his successes in difficulties, and then his mentor, played a great part in his mental development and persuaded him to stay back. That one person changed Laddu's way of approaching things and trained him to cross any hurdles with perseverance and hard work.

It was the second day of the camp. All the participants who had returned home had arrived, and Laddu narrated his first experience of spending a night at school to his fellow mates. They went to the Ganges river bank for a physical jerk. It was exhausting, but they regained energy having raw black peas and peanuts, drizzled with salt before breakfast...

It was the second last day of the camp, and they had a 'GRAND CAMPFIRE' in the evening, so all were set to do something unique and showcase a social message, in the item they presented. Something seemed off as the campfire went smoothly. The organizers had a different plan. This time, Laddu's friends, under his influence, stayed back, and they all had "BIRYANI" as their dinner, a grand celebration.

Suddenly, everyone was awakened by a whistle. They went to the spot and were instructed, "The teachers have hidden some objects all around the school, and each patrol will be shown the picture of any two such subjects, and they will have to find it out." Laddu went up to the science lab alone. Coincidentally, Atharv and Shubham also went there. It was throwing some good old negative vibes, and the surroundings were also gloomy. Only a single bulb was lit.

Suddenly, when they went inside the lab, they saw a shadow outside the lab, facing towards them. They got petrified, but only Laddu held his courage and went outside to check if anyone was there. "Is anybody there ?" Nobody

answered, and then, in the blink of an eye, the skeleton, kept in the lab, vanished. Despite their fear of immobilizing them, they managed to descend from the second floor to the first, sustaining only minor injuries. However, upon looking up, they all spotted a woman in white clothes and shouted, "LOOK! IT'S A WOMAN IN WHITE CLOTHES...RUN RUN!!"

Upon hearing this, the teachers came over and asked what had happened, and when the lads explained the situation, they laughed off, saying that they were daydreaming.

Still, it was a spine-chilling experience. Then the last day arrived, and everyone was ready to leave with their packed luggage. They had the FLAG LOWERING CEREMONY and everyone congratulated themselves for attending the camp successfully.

Now, will you believe that little Laddu has grown up and is going to appear for the GOVERNOR'S AWARD exam, under scouting? After all, my first camp is based on a true story...



Illustrated by Anuvab Dutta

Adhyayan Ghosh
Class VIII



Adhyayan Ghosh is a young enthusiast known for his love of reading and active involvement in school activities. With a keen interest in scouting, he explores the outdoors and diligently documents his experiences in a personal diary.

Journey To The Palace

A loud noise woke me up from my sleep. I could still hear the whistle of the wind blowing next to my ears and the soft rustling of the banana leaves. I was sleeping on. Ivy was still fast asleep in the hammock below mine.

"Hmm, that noise, I almost forgot." In the world of dragons, you should always be careful where and on what you step. A simple rock, seeming like the least threatening object in the world, might be one of those dangerous dirt dragons, lying awake in the wait for



Illustrated by Aritra Chatterjee

an idiot prey to walk past their side; or those mysterious white dragons, rarely to be seen, might attack you out of nowhere, grabbing you and eating you in a heartbeat. "It felt like something sneezed, I should be more careful," I mumbled to myself. In the camp, we had planned to stay and rest that night. There had been a village previously burnt to ashes by the most feared monster of the mountainous region, the 'Diamond Dragon'. They are the world's most shiny and attractive monsters and the ones you should never cross. These dragons are studded with diamonds all over their back, originating from their neck and ending on the edge of their whip-thin tails, standing out to all enemies in the form of sparkly spikes. These monsters are smaller in size than most other dragons but way more stronger and durable due to their diamond-hard skin, unfair, and harder to kill! I was wondering about these mighty

monsters, which kept me from noticing how hard it was raining. I started looking here and there for signs of something unusual. I was walking casually over the dirty path, studded with rocks here and there and that is when I made the mistake. I stepped on something shiny that I hadn't noticed, and now I knew what was about to come. "Well, I guess I am done now," I muttered to myself, trying not to panic. I had stepped on a sleeping dragon which lifted its head and turned towards me, glaring with its beady black obsidian eyes. "OH NO!" I turned as quickly as I could and dashed for the abandoned building, ahead of me. I heard snapping of jaws at the exact place where I was but didn't dare to look back. I entered the building through a gap where a door should have been. This building was the

worst structure I had ever seen with one side of it, fully collapsed, and the other looked weak and vulnerable to any force exerted on it. However, the set of dirty, old stairs, looked supportable and rigid to climb on, but alas! The first step I took, broke nearly one-fourth of the staircase which crumbled into pieces. I heard the thrashing behind me and I looked back to see the horrific image of the monster's head, poked inside the building which was drawing breath. I jumped with all my strength and almost reached the low-lying first floor and felt the

and felt the heat of the narrowly missed blast of fire my in heels which blasted the rest of the staircase as well. The first floor of the building was even worse. It had no roof and only one wall, out of the four sides, was standing, which too was nearly destroyed but it had a gap in it.....a gap for a window.



Illustrated by Aritra Chatterjee

For a while, I felt numbness in my whole body and half-expected to open my eyes and see myself as a soul, floating in mid-air, looking at my own body lying down, lifeless. Instead, what I saw was a miracle. I was flying high in the air, mountains and the lands, falling away far from me. Even in the night sky, I could see vast stretches of landscape, or rather, gorgeous lands below me, even a river flowing somewhere far away. But this joy quickly turned into a nightmare as I looked up. The Diamond Dragon, it had got me, got me before I fell, got me before I died, and saved me. But what good did that saving do to me? I was on the path to dying a horrible death, far away from my sister, far away from my home, far away from my ambition. The fear in me made me go sick and nearly collapse. Finally, I closed my eyes, wondering if I would ever open them or not.

Anurag Biswas

Class VII



Anurag Biswas is not just a keen reader, with a great love for books, papers, pens, and literature, he wishes to be able to help Litbuzz significantly in the future with its dynamic and thriving literary culture.



THE FACES BEHIND

*“Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much”*

-Helen Keller





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Raving Reviews

RAVING REVIEWS

The annual release of "Panache", a splendid collection of English stories crafted by the talented students of our school, embodies a blend of literary excellence and creative skill...Each tale, a beautiful blend of expressive language and imaginative storytelling, takes readers on a delightful journey through various human experiences. This impressive collection highlights the remarkable talents nurtured within our school, underscoring our commitment to cultivating the next generation of literary talent. Heartfelt congratulations to all my dear students for their outstanding contributions to the world of literature...

Banindra Banerjee Chowdhury



When you finally put down the third volume of Panache, you end up getting wowed. Such are the layers in writing that it feels as if the Manto's of my world have been handheld by accomplished writers!

One is left in awe of the writing, the tone is set with the pièce de résistance in the first few pages and the standard never wavers after that. The inherent spirit of living life, the heartbreaks, the love for the mundane terraces and balconies, wishing to break free- everything is served to the reader. The regret of saying fateful last words to someone we love is so us, so contemporary. The young minds going through this transitional phase of their own, bring forth with them their memories, vivid imagery, and creativeness with neat strokes in Panache III.

Bhavana Sharma Kumar



RAVING REVIEWS

Panache has now become the signature of the Literary Club. The volume exemplifies the versatility of the budding authors . The stories depict the enriched creativity of our students at the same time taking imagination to the heights.

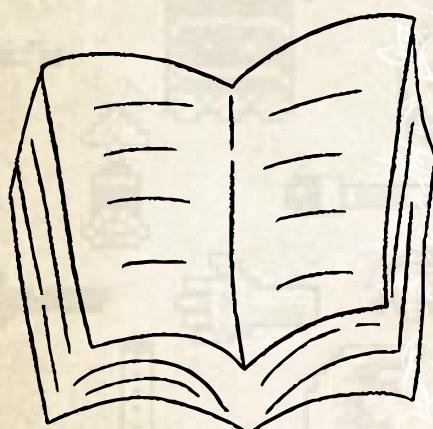
Wish success to the infinity to Panache and the team.

Meghali Pat



Panache stands for creation. The creation of new minds, thoughts that arise from the minds of the future. It is a complete student-creation, and by virtue of that itself, it is a celebration of the future. As we read, let us celebrate what is to come, and ensure that it's a loving, healthy future that we can create.

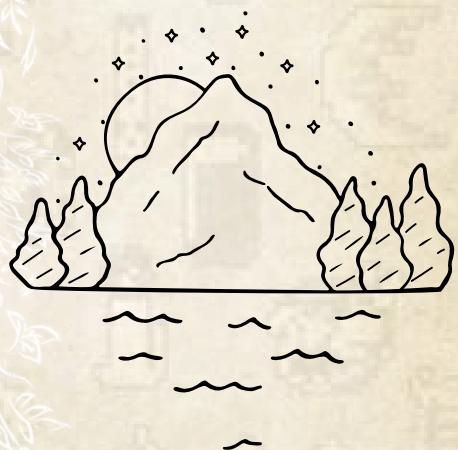
Mon Banerjee



RAVING REVIEWS

Indeed, after going through the stories in the compilation 'Panache' the readers will have an impression that the exploring minds of our children certainly possess the potential to conjure up a lovely and vivid picture before the readers by their flowery language which is wide-ranging. I wish all the best for their future endeavours.

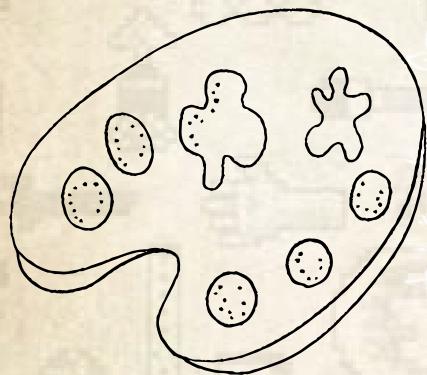
Jaymalya Day



A plethora of emotions surged through me as I went through a spectrum of creativity, talent and profundity etched on each page of this volume. Cataloguing the stories in interesting nomenclatures demonstrates the profound thought process and impeccable detailing of the whole team of Panache.

The stories are exquisite pearls radiating the love and passion of our story tellers towards the craft of writing. They transport one to worlds of nostalgia, of dreams, of experiencing sheer joy and intense sorrow, and leave a whiff of wistfulness. Tears of pride and joy well up as I am reminded of an absolute truth: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty". Panache is a work of beauty and of truth.

Bhattacharya



RAVING REVIEWS

The plethora of literary arts has beautifully enunciated the imaginations of the budding young talents. The eutony of each word and the rhapsodising attempts of the young talents have touched my heart and soul. The illustrations have unveiled the picturesque beauty of the content. I hope that these twinkling stars will glisten gracefully in all their endeavours...

Jayeta Dutta Mondal



Now, this is called an excellent piece of craftsmanship with a beautiful blend of artistic as well as creative skills. The way these young minds have unleashed their skills in the form of these wonderful stories makes it a perfect treat for the readers. It is not only the words that make it attractive, but the emotions combined with it show how talented these young minds are, thus making Panache a masterpiece indeed!

Debangana Sarkar



RAVING REVIEWS

A Panache, truly encapsulates the writing genius of our young wordsmiths. Every story brings out the singular writing skills of the writers. The stories keep one enthralled at all times and the attention to detail is what keeps the readers engaged throughout. A wonderful anthology that seeks to showcase the writing prowess of these gifted writers.

Shayeri Bhadra.

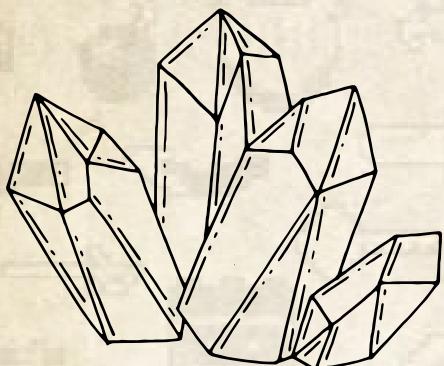


Any creative venture is a very tedious and painstaking task. The book encompasses almost all the genres of short stories. Considering the variety of the contents, overall design of the book, illustrations and quality of writing, I feel extremely proud of the students who had accomplished this task so wonderfully. Kudos to the entire team of 'Panache'!

Swarinatra Mukherjee

Well-woven and beautifully penned: a terrific, tantalizing, thrilling and timeless presentation by our talented scholars.

Paromita Ghosh



Raving Reviews

The elan of the budding writers make a world of enthusiastic readers..who all eagerly wait to unfurl the pages of Panache....the stories create an aura of mesmerizing bliss,it is something angelic and the citation of pride is what we receive as their mentors,wishing everyone good reading.

Sutapa Karnakar

Panache is the hard work of our students. It gives flight to their imagination...

Wings to their ideas and colours to paint their thoughts.

It not only teaches them various skills that will inevitably help them in their future but also values such as teamwork, patience and compassion.

Congratulations to the entire team of Panache for Panache Volume III, Flamboyance in Each Verse!

Anwesha Sen



Explore your creativity