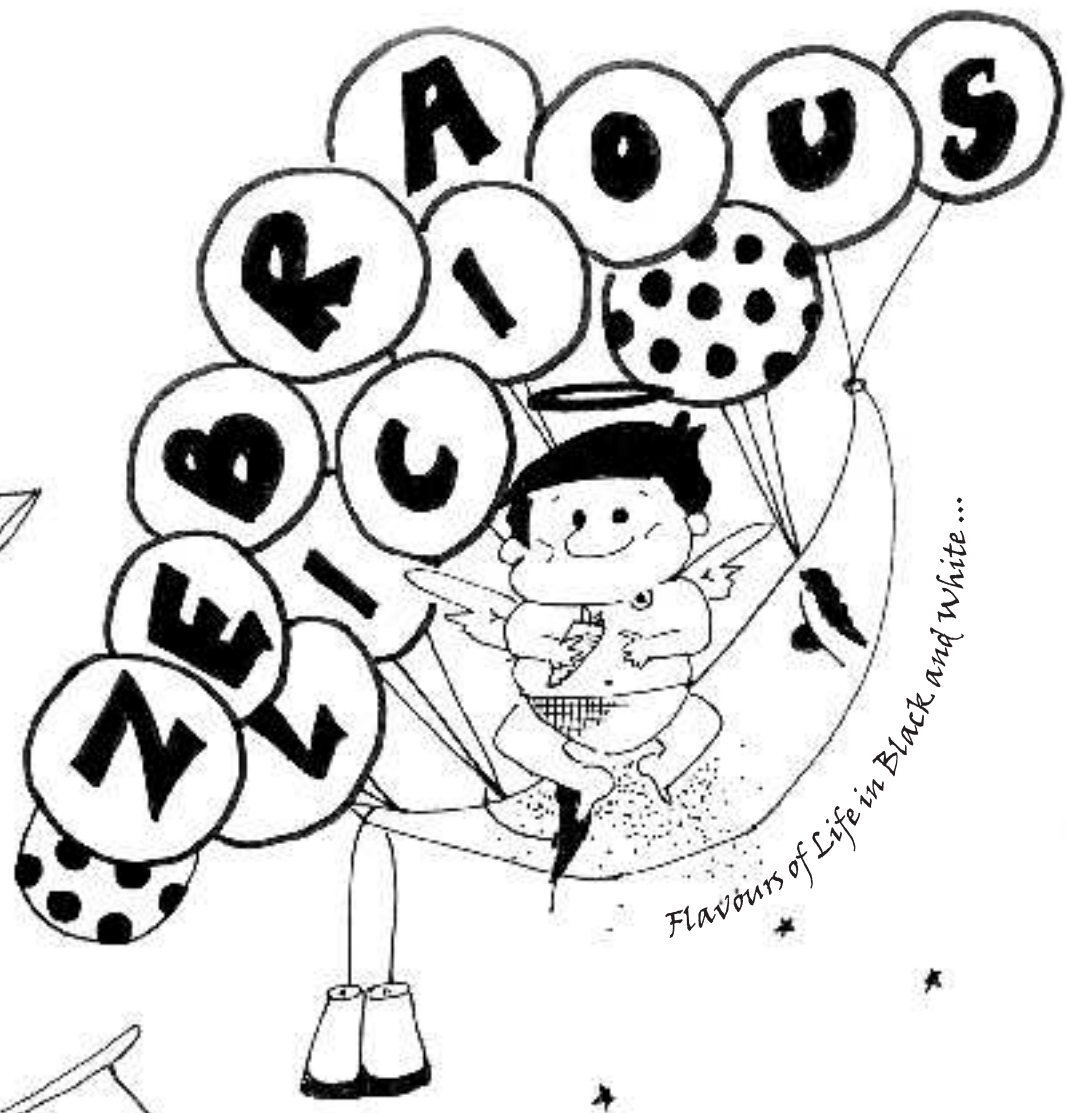


Delhi Public School
Surat

The Literary Magazine
2012-13



Flavours of Life in Black and White...



Mario de Miranda

Mario de Miranda (2 May 1926 – 11 December 2011) was an Indian cartoonist and painter based in Loutolim in Goa. At an early age when his mother saw him drawing on his home walls, she brought him a blank book, which he called his "Diary". Mario Miranda's early cartoons presented vignettes of Goan village life, a theme he is best known for even today.

He studied at St. Joseph's Boys' High School, Bangalore and then did a B.A. in History at St. Xavier's College, Mumbai.

His creations, such as Miss Nimbupani and Miss Fonseca, appeared on a regular basis in Femina, Economic Times, and The Illustrated Weekly of India. Miranda was offered the Fundacao Calouste Gulbenkian Scholarship, which enabled him to travel to and stay a year in Portugal and this time in Portugal, according to Miranda, helped him to broaden his horizons. After a year in Portugal, Miranda travelled to London, England and was to spend five years there, learning as well as doing jobs for newspapers.

Miranda's cartoons were featured in the Lilliput, Mad, and Punch magazines. This supplemented his finances, and enabled him to travel around Europe, interacting with other cartoonists, gaining considerable knowledge and exposure. This led to his meeting of Sir Ronald Searle, whom Miranda considered his mentor. Miranda's big break came in 1974, when, at the invitation of the United States Information Services, he travelled to America, which enabled him to promote his art and interact with other cartoonists in the United

States and also got a chance to work with Charles M. Schulz, the creator of Peanuts and met Herblock, the editorial cartoonist of the Washington Post.

He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1988, the Padma Bhushan in 2002 and All India Cartoonists's Association, Bangalore, honoured him with a lifetime achievement award. The King of Spain, Juan Carlos, conferred on Mario the highest civilian honour of "la Cruz de Isabel la Catolica". Portugal made him "Comendador da Ordem de Infante D. Henrique", a Portuguese National Order of Knighthood. Mario Miranda was posthumously awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award in the Republic of India, by the President on 4 April 2012.

He had held solo exhibitions in over 22 countries, including the United States, Japan, Brazil, Australia, Singapore, France, Yugoslavia, and Portugal.

Over the years, he published several books, including Laugh it Off, Goa with Love, and Germany in Wintertime. He also illustrated many children's books, including Dul-Dul, The Magic Clay Horse, The Adventures of Pilla the Pup, and Lumbdoo, The Long-Tailed Langoor.

Mario Miranda could capture the essence of Goa with his eloquent pen and brush strokes. And if the spirit of that land of sunny beaches and colourful carnivals epitomize Joy then the gourmets' delight Surat is truly her twin! Let's slightly change a popular adage, 'If death in Kashi offers liberation then flamboyant Goa and



foodicious Surat offer a toast to life!

Taking a cue from Miranda the students of Delhi Public School, Surat from Nursery to Higher Secondary went on a creative rampage to churn out stories and illustrations dedicated to the different flavours of life.

Come indulge your senses in this Banquet of Life created by our own little Master Chefs!!



A Loving Tribute



2 May, 1926 – 11 December 2011



Carte de Menu

Facing the sea with a **Book**

Saffronicious and rare

I see the rain outside

The silence of the moment reminds me of

A quarrel with my friend last night

Was it he or was it me

To be blamed?

It's like pondering; is a zebra black on white

Or white on black?

Lost in deep thought

I think all that I can

As the raindrops mingle with the sea

What exactly is the **essence of life?**

Zebralicious!!!

Life's banquet is delicious in **black and white**

The **flavours of life** consume me

Cake wouldn't be as sweet

If eaten day and night

Nor would so good be life

If each day brought the same light

Some sunny days

Some moonless nights

Are the flavours of life

Bitter, sweet, salty, sour

They're all here to make you smile

Maybe in ways

Not direct at times

So teach those buds in your minds

To savour the many flavours of life

For instance the books around

Just like this one

Often offer a hub of themes

And thus a flavour spectrum

Like the eyes of my dog

With **Imlicious** love to offer

A sweet sour tingle

As he cuddles on my lap

There is reminiscence of **Life experiences**

Chocolicious

For a crunchy sweet nudge

Happy and honeyed good

Escaping into dreams more often

In realms of **Mystery and Adventure**

Adding spicy thrills

Like an interesting **Peppericious** flavour

As we grow

And our interests develop differently

Spicy turns to tangy

And adventure to thrill and mystery

A man of high **Morals**

Is a man of character

We gain as we grow

Through experiences **Karelacious**

Like education makes us

Honest, good and kind

Service is the essence

The salt of life

And like all your hard work and
selflessness

Sums up to a **Career Fruiticious**

Combination of all these

Distinctive flavours

Make up a life platter

With realisation and thought

It occurred to me in time

That did it really matter

Was it his mistake or mine?

I picked up my phone

And quickly apologised

And then we became again

Close friends for life

For life is a banquet

For each to add a flavour

And we can make it sumptuous

Only if we believe we can...

Imlicious

For a sweet and sour tingle....

*The world is so full of life,
Of creatures great and small*

*The beauty of Nature lies in them
The little Birds, Animals and all*

*Like the essence of vinegar
Sometimes sour sometimes mild*

*Are the different creatures
Some passive and some wild.*

*They complete and beautify
Their life so raw so pure*

*Playing infinite little roles around
The Jungle Book of Rudyard Kipling
Or the profound Panchatantra series*

*The delight of little minds
Who cherish such Imlicious tales*





Pass It Up

By the big red barn, in the green field, there was a little pink Pig learning to squeal. He was all bored and tired so he thought of playing a game.

had something to tell him about the Pig,

“Oink a doodle moo”. She said this into his ears and asked him to keep it a secret.

neigh”. He said this into her ears and asked her to keep it a secret.

The Sheep went to her friend the Cat and told her that she had something to tell her about the Pig,

“Oink a doodle moo caw neigh baa”. She said this into her ears and asked her to keep it a secret.

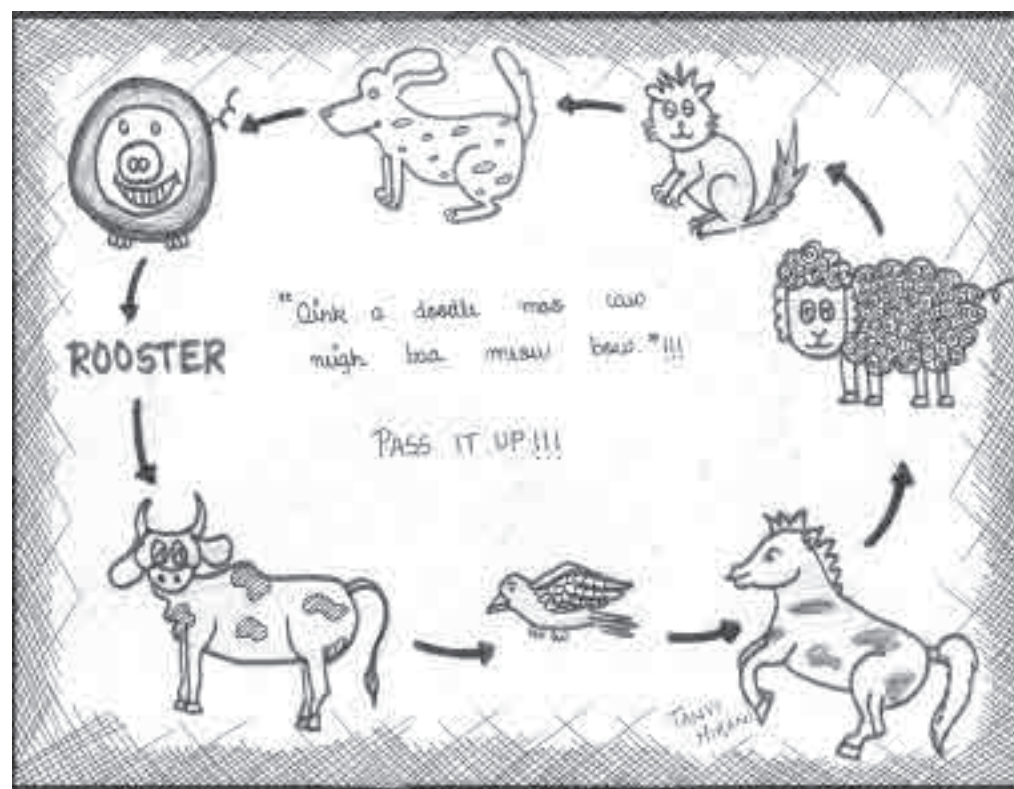
The Cat went to her friend the Dog and told him that he had something to tell him about the Pig,

“Oink a doodle moo caw neigh baa meow”. She said this into his ears and asked him to keep it a secret.

The Dog went to his friend the Pig and told him that he had heard a secret about him. The Pig asked him what had he heard .

The dog said, “Oink a doodle moo caw neigh baa meow bow”.

The Pig rolled on the floor laughing at how a silly thing started by him had turned into a big silly story.



He went to his friend the Rooster and said in his ears,

‘Oink’ and told him not to pass what he said to any other animal on the farm.

The Rooster went to his friend the Cow and whispered, “Oink a doodle” into her ears and asked her to keep it a secret.

The Cow went to her friend Crow and told him he

The Crow went to his friend the Horse and told him he had something to tell him about the Pig,

“Oink a doodle moo caw”. He said this into his ears and asked him to keep it a secret.

The Horse went to his friend Sheep and told her that he had something to tell her about the Pig,

“Oink a doodle moo caw

◆ **Students of Nursery - A**





Who Wins The Race?

The Cheetah was once well known for his speed. Every day the Cheetah would run and show his speed to all the animals in the jungle. When he did

All the animals agreed to have a race. However, they were worried to lose it. A fairy appeared and asked the snail to join the race and that to have the race on the hills. Soon the



that all the animals smiled at him. Soon the Cheetah became very proud of himself. He would not talk to any other animal. The animals did not like it. The next time the Cheetah ran and showed his speed, all the animals ran away.

So the Cheetah shouted saying, “You are jealous of my quality. Let us have a race.”

day of the race came. All the animals started running. As usual, the Cheetah was very fast. It was amazing to see the snail moving at a slow pace and then rolling over the hill like a wheel and reaching the winning line first. The Cheetah was no more proud and understood that everyone is great in ones own way.

◆ *Students of Nursery - B*



Say Thank You When Others Help You



It was a hot summer day. Two children named Poo and Penny were going to a park to play. Since it was hot there was no one playing there. Poo and Penny went on the slides and the merry-go-round. They were having a good time but they soon got tired. They looked around but saw only garbage everywhere. They felt very sad. There was a big dustbin in the park but still the people littered around not using it. They both decided to pick the litter and throw it in the dustbin. Due to

the heat they got extremely tired. They thought of taking some rest. There were a few trees in the park. Looking for some shelter from the hot sun, they saw a tree with big leaves and branches spread out like an umbrella. They placed their belongings on the ground and sat in the cool thick shade of the tree.

After taking some rest, Poo said to Penny, "What a useless tree it is! It has no fruits at all."

Hearing this, the tree felt

very sad and started crying. It said "You are so ungrateful, on one hand, you are taking shelter in my cool shade from the heat of the sun and on the other hand, you are calling me useless. Go away from here".

Poo and Penny felt sorry for what they had said. They accepted their mistake and said sorry to the tree. They even said thank you. Hearing it, the tree had a big smile on its face.

◆ **Students of Nursery - C**



THE LION AND THE ELEPHANT

Once upon a time in a jungle, a lion was in a very good mood. So, he went to different animals to hear his praises. First he went to a rabbit living in a burrow.

The Lion asked him, "Tell me who is the king of the jungle?"

asked, "Tell me who is the king of the jungle?" The Elephant turned his face away.

The Lion again went close to him and asked him, "Tell me who is the king of the jungle?" The elephant became very furious and picked up the Lion in his trunk and threw him on the ground. The Lion was badly



The Rabbit replied, "You, Mr. Lion, you are the king of the jungle."

The Lion became very happy. He gave carrots to the rabbit. Then he went to the Bear and asked him the same question. The Bear also gave the same reply. The Lion became happier. He gave fresh honey to the Bear. Then he went to the Elephant. The Elephant was not in a good mood that day because he had a toothache.

injured. The Lion got up and went limping to the elephant.

He said in a low voice "If you didn't know the answer, you should have asked me. It's Ok! You don't need to feel bad about it but why did you throw me?"

The Elephant started laughing hearing this and his toothache vanished. Thereafter, they became very good friends.

The Lion went in front of him and

◆ *Students of Nursery - D*



The Animal World

There was a jungle named Jumbroo . In it lived a huge lion named Jo-Jo. He was as big as two lions. So he ate many animals at a time. All the other animals of

started becoming thinner and thinner day by day. The people continued hunting and cutting the trees. They also started living in the jungle. Soon the jungle looked like a city



the jungle were very scared of him. One day lots of people came to the jungle to hunt. They caught many animals and birds to sell them. The jungle was very dense and so they also cut many trees . In a few days, they had killed and caught many animals and cut many trees. This made the jungle very scanty. Eventually, there were a very few animals left. Jo-Jo could not hunt many animals to eat. This made him starve and he

with people living around. Only Jo-Jo and a very few animals were left. Where would they go ? Circus? Zoo? No! No! That would be so cruel!

Shouldn't we take a vow to protect our environment and the animals on our planet?

◆ *Students of Nursery - E*



THE HELPFUL MONKEY



Once upon a time in a jungle there were two friends. One was a kind-hearted monkey and the other was a clever and wicked fox. The monkey always used to tell the fox to help others but the fox never listened to him. He liked to play pranks and disturb everyone. One day, the king announced a race amongst the animals of the jungle. During the race, the monkey and the fox heard a peacock crying in pain. They stopped and went to the peacock and saw that its feathers

were tangled in a bush and he was not able to free himself. The monkey told the fox to stop and help the peacock. The fox refused and ran ahead. However, the monkey helped the peacock. Meanwhile, in trying to run fast, the fox tumbled and fell off the cliff and hurt himself. On the other hand, the monkey helped the peacock and won the race also. Thereafter, the monkey and peacock became very good friends.

◆ *Students of Nursery - F*



Live and Let Live



Once in a village, a few villagers were sitting and discussing amongst themselves. The first villager said, “There are many families in our village and so we need some more place to build houses.”

The second villager said, “We will have to cut down the trees of the nearby forest, so that we can build houses.”

They all agreed to this. They started cutting down the forest. The animals were very sad seeing their home being destroyed. The animals were

talking amongst themselves.

The Deer said “If these villagers keep cutting our forest where will we live?”

The Monkey said “You’re right we will have to save our forest because this is our home, but how?”

The animals decided to go to the villagers and request them not to cut down the forest.

They went to the villagers and pleaded, “We are here to request you not to cut down

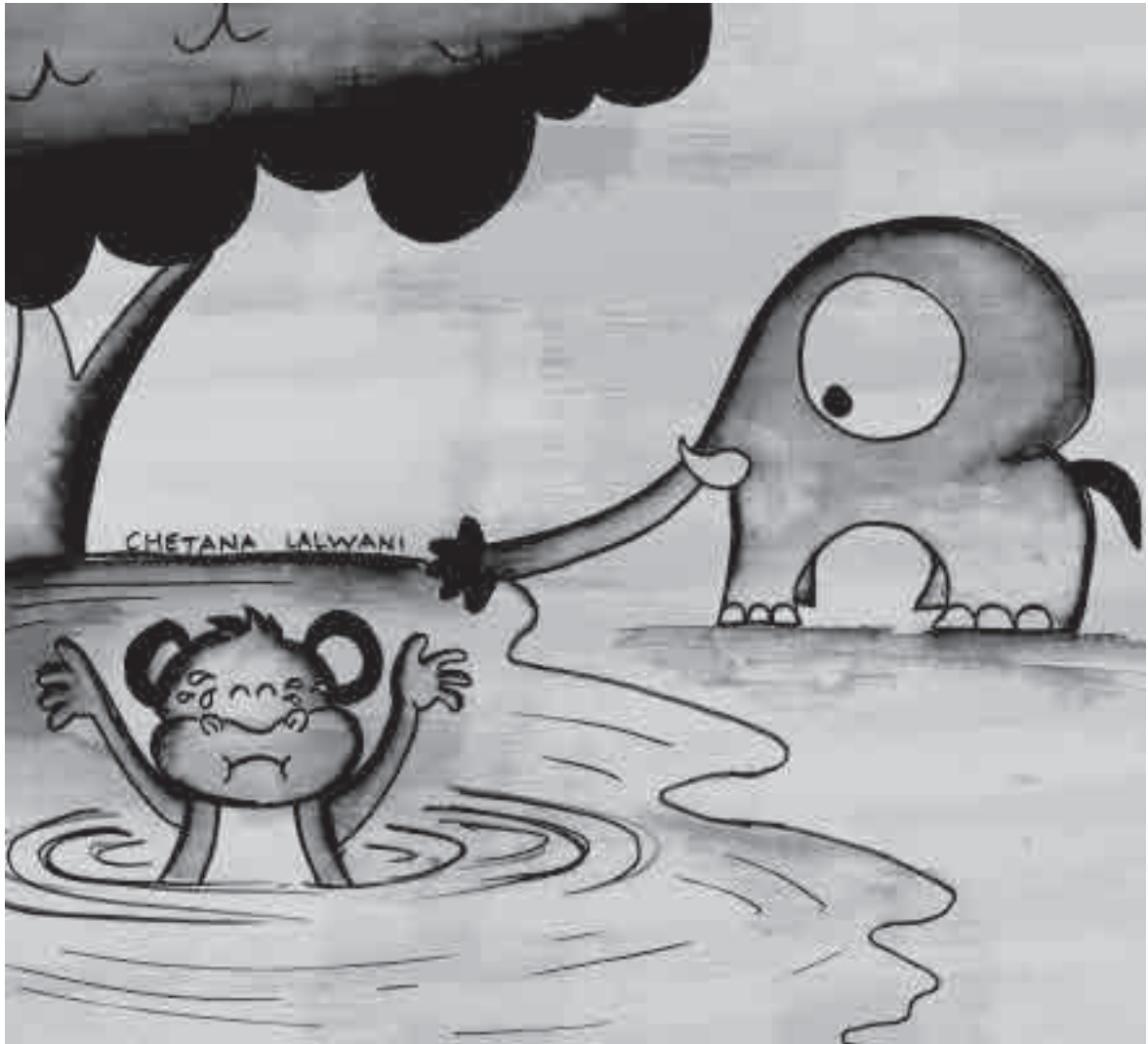
our forest because it’s the only place where we can live peacefully with our families. If you destroy the forest we will have no place to live and no food to eat, all of us will die one by one. Also, the trees are very important for you human beings too.”

Hearing this, the villagers said “We are sorry to destroy your forest, your homes. We shall not cut down the trees anymore. You and your families can live happily and peacefully in the forest”.

◆ **Students of Nursery - G**



The Elephant And The Monkey



Raga a cute baby elephant had no friends. Every day he played alone and used to get bored. He wanted someone to play with. One day he went to a lake for a swim, and he saw many monkeys playing cricket there.

Raga came out of the water and asked, “Can I play with you, please.”

All the monkeys made fun of the baby elephant, saying, “You have a very big nose. You cannot play with us. You look very funny.”

Raga was sad. He stood quietly and watched the monkeys at play.

Suddenly he heard, “Help, somebody help”.

Raga quickly rushed to help. He saw a monkey had fallen into the lake. Raga got an idea. He put his long nose in and the monkey caught hold of it. Raga then pulled the monkey out.

The monkey thanked Raga saying, “It’s your long nose that has saved me today.” All the monkeys were sorry for being rude to Raga. Thereafter, they all became friends.

◆ *Students of Nursery - H*



The Great Escape

Rahul was excited as the day of circus had arrived. Rahul loved circus. It was so much fun. In the evening he was at the huge red and white striped tent of Rambo Circus.

A man inside the tent dressed in

came six huge and ferocious lions with their trainer. Rahul was amazed to see the trainer put his head into the biggest lion's mouth holding its teeth with his hands. He also saw animals like the bear dancing on a ball, the monkeys swinging around in the air just like the acrobats and a few dogs riding on cute tricycles. Finally, the elephants

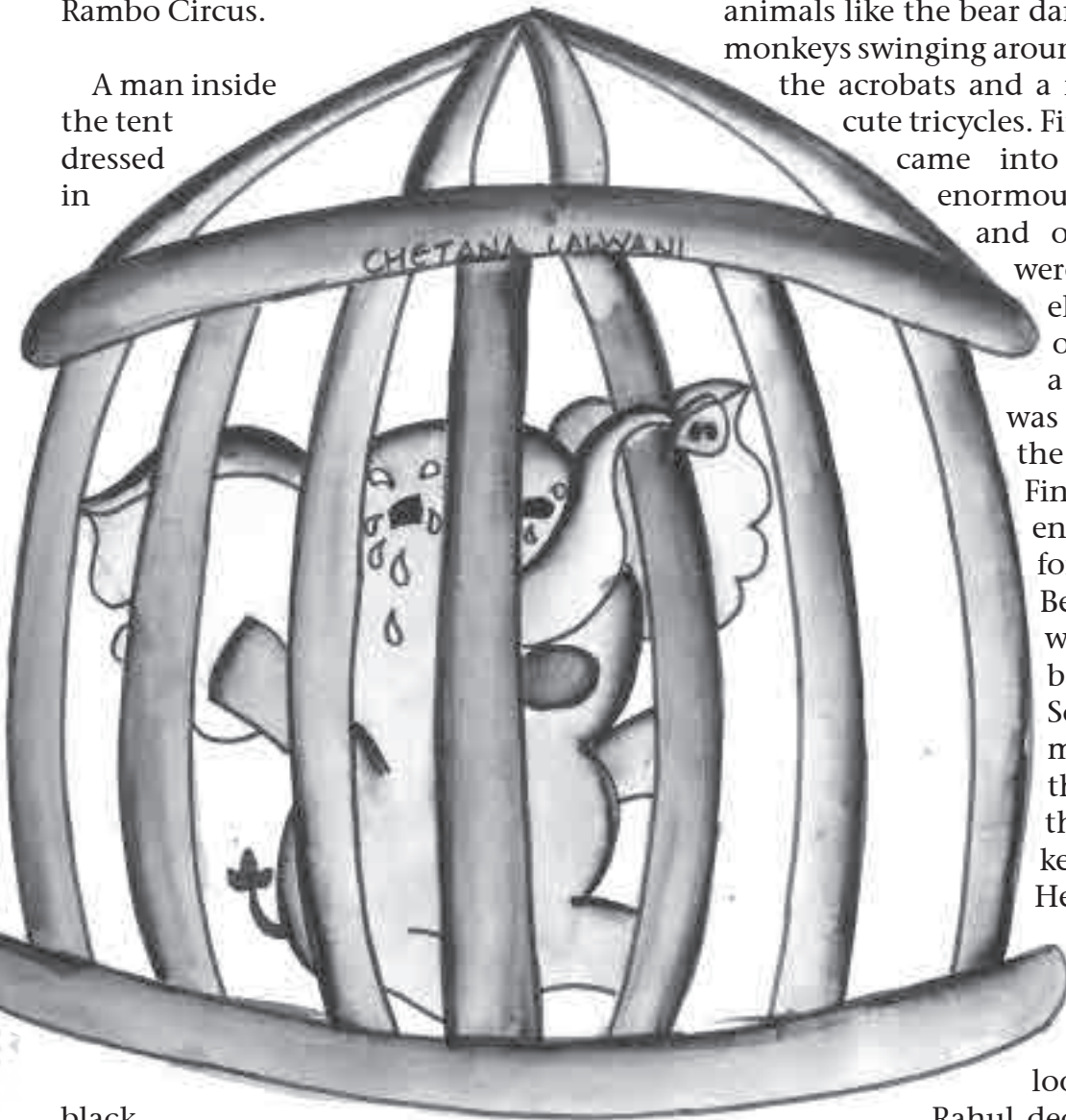
came into the ring. Three enormous grey elephants and one baby elephant were seen. The baby elephant balancing on one leg, played a lot of tricks. Rahul was enthralled seeing the animals perform.

Finally, the show ended and it was time for Rahul to leave. Before leaving Rahul wanted to see the baby elephant again. So, he somehow managed to reach the place where all the animals were kept in the cages. He was very shocked and surprised to see the animals chained up in the cages. The animals looked sad and tired.

Rahul decided to free them.

One after the other, Rahul opened the cages of all the animals. A complete chaos set in. The circus people ran after the animals to capture them but could not succeed. All the animals escaped into a jungle close by and were never to be seen again.

◆ *Students of Nursery - I*



black shouted, "Good evening ladies and gentlemen."

Mother told Rahul that he was the ringmaster. The lights grew brighter and the show began. Up in the air they saw a man and a woman acrobat balancing on a swing. Suddenly, a side door banged open and in



Kangaroo V/S Polybags ...Who Wins ?



“To market”, Babloo read on the signboard and went ahead trotting casually. As soon as he reached the market he saw bright red apples and his mouth started watering and his tongue lolled out. He asked the shopkeeper to give him a dozen apples. He collected them but didn't have a bag. He held the apples in his hand but it was in vain. One by one all the apples started rolling down. Babloo began to cry. He actually regretted not bringing a bag. If only, an animal friend of his could help him, was all he wanted. Luckily for him, Hoppy, the kangaroo, saw him crying and was rather puzzled to see the always happy Babloo crying.

Curiously Hoppy asked, “Why are you crying?”

“I don't have a bag. How will I carry my lovely apples home?” inquired Babloo sadly.

“Don't worry. I have an idea,” said Hoppy. He took the apples one by one and put them in his pouch. Babloo watched him in absolute amazement. Seeing his apples safely packed in Hoppy's pouch, he was very happy. He clapped his hands excitedly.

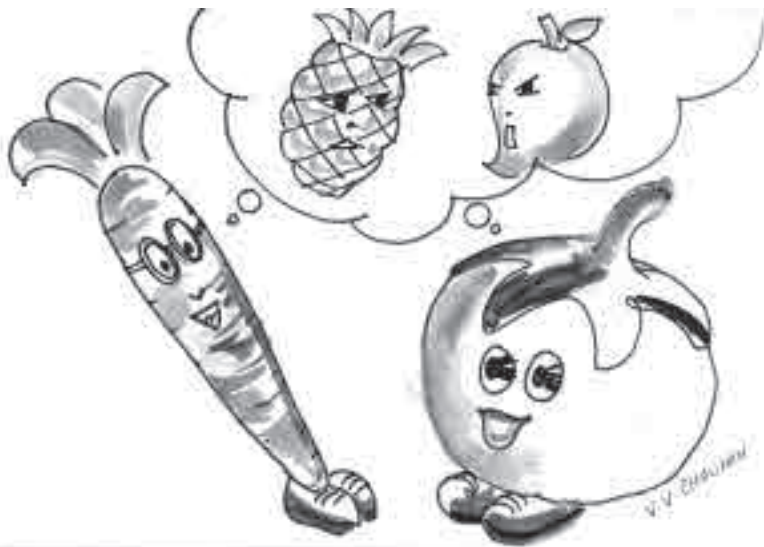
Suddenly he thought, “If we humans too were born with a pouch like that of a kangaroo, we wouldn't be using polybags. We would not have been polluting Nature.”

◆ *Students of Nursery - J*



Friends Forever

One day Rahul and Siya went to the fruit and vegetable market. There they saw that the fruits and vegetables were talking to one another. At one of the fruits and vegetables shop they overheard an interesting conversation between a Carrot and a Tomato.



The Carrot asked the Tomato, “Why didn’t you attend Pineapple’s Party?”

The Tomato replied, “I was ill since two days so I did not know about the party”.

The Tomato questioned, “Why did Pineapple give a party?”

The Carrot answered, “Oh! There is a story behind this. Listen carefully! Last Thursday early morning when we had all just settled down in the market, all of a sudden we saw that Pineapple and Mango were quarrelling.”

The Tomato asked, “Why were they quarrelling?”

The Carrot continued, “They were fighting because Pineapple used to tease

Mango everyday saying that Mango looked smaller than him.”

Just then a boy came there to buy strawberries.

The mango told the boy, “Please take this Pineapple as he harasses me a lot.”

The boy however took the strawberries and went away. Pineapple was very angry and gave Mango a punch on his face. Mango started crying and his forehead was also bleeding. When Pineapple saw this he felt very bad and brought the first aid box. He cleaned Mango’s forehead, applied medicine and put a bandage on it. Pineapple and Mango both realized their mistakes and said sorry to each other. Pineapple also planned for a surprise party and invited all the fruits and vegetables including

Mango. Pineapple and the potato decorated the house with balloons.

Everyone came to the party but Pineapple was waiting for Mango to come. They were all enjoying the party. Strawberry brought a chocolate cake for Pineapple and Mango. Pineapple thanked the strawberry for such a delicious cake. At last, Mango arrived at the party. Pineapple was very happy. Pineapple promised Mango that he would never ever fight with him and be his best friend forever. Mango also promised the same. Everyone enjoyed playing games, dancing and eating the different types of snacks in the party. Listening to the story of Pineapple and Mango, Tomato also promised that he would also not quarrel with anyone and be friendly with everyone.

◆ *Students of Prep-A*





The Rat went to see the World

Once there was a small rat who went out to see the world. As he was passing through the mountains he met a butterfly.

The rat asked the butterfly, "Will you come with me to see the world?"



The butterfly refused as she had some work. The rat started walking ahead through the meadows and there he met a honeybee.

He asked the honeybee, "Will you come with me to see the world?"

The honey bee replied, "I would love too, but I have to search for food."

So the rat went ahead where he came near a pond. There he met some frogs.

He asked them, "Will you come with me to see the world?"

The frogs also said, "No, we have to search for food."

The rat went further. He found some ants near the tree. They too were busy collecting food. The rat went ahead. He found a wall. There he met a spider.

He asked the spider, "Will you come with me to see the world?"

The spider replied, "No, I cannot as I have to spin my web."

Sadly the rat went ahead as no one was ready to go with him. Moving ahead he found a big orange cat.

He asked the cat, "Will you come with me to see the world?"

The cat replied, "Not now as I have found my food and I am not going to let you go."

Hearing this, the rat got frightened and ran away saying, "I have seen the whole world now and I need to go home soon."

Running through the bushes and the bridge, the meadows and mountains he safely reached home.

◆ *Students of Prep-B*





A Secret Task

This is a story of two brothers—Hunny and Bunny. They loved each other a lot. One day Hunny says to Mumma

Hunny - Mumma I want to give my birthday party.

Mumma - Dear Hunny you just gave a Christmas Party, so give your birthday party next year. You cannot party all the time.

Hunny - But Mumma, all my friends are very excited for my birthday. They all want to celebrate and enjoy themselves.

Mumma (agreed and answered) - Ok Hunny, as you just gave a Christmas party, we will celebrate Bunny's birthday and you can call your friends in the party.

Hunny (with excitement and enthusiasm) - Yeah, hurrah!! I love you mom.

Next day Hunny and Bunny were all set to go to school. They were happily going to school when suddenly Bunny fell off and was badly injured and he was hospitalized.



All friends were upset about the fact that their dear friend Bunny was hurt and the party had to be cancelled. Finally, Hunny and his friends decided to surprise Bunny by giving a surprise birthday party in the hospital. Oh! Wasn't that a secret task?

Students of Prep-C

A lady bug and a bee

A ladybug and a honeybee lived together in a house. They were very good friends. One day it so happened that the honeybee felt very thirsty. So she went in search of water. At last, she found a well with lot of water in it. As she went to drink she suddenly, fell and was about to be drowned in the water. The ladybug who had followed her saw this. She quickly, slipped into the water and saved her.



bug was moving around in the house a boy tried to hit her. The honey bee on seeing this immediately stung the hand of the boy. The boy screamed and the honey bee

took the lady bug and flew away. Thus, the ladybug was saved.

◆ Students of Prep-D.

One day when the lady



VISIT TO THE ZOO

One day the children of Prep-E went to the zoo. They were all talking amongst themselves and suddenly they thought it would be nice if they could talk and listen to what animals say.

Lo and behold!!!! their wish was granted.

As soon as they reached the monkey's cave and waved at him the monkey too said 'Hi'. They were very excited and offered him Chips.

Monkey: Don't you know children that we are supposed to eat the food which we get from the zoo? Please do not offer this junk food to me or to any other animal as it is not good for our health.

Child: Sorry monkey. I will remember this.

Monkey: Also you are standing so close to my cage. Stay away from the cage as it is dangerous for you. Especially that lion, he is very arrogant. Although, he is kept in the cage, he still thinks he is the king of the jungle.

Child: Ok, bye Mr. Monkey.



They moved to the next cage which was of the lion.

Lion: Why are you so afraid of me children?

Child: Because you are a very dangerous animal.

Lion: I will not harm you unless you harm me or tease me.

Child: Where are your cubs?

Lion: They are sleeping.

The children moved to the next cage which was of the cheetah.

Child: Hi! Cheetah. We have learnt in school that you are the fastest animal, but whenever we visit the zoo we see you sitting in your cage.'

Cheetah: How do you expect me to run in this small little cave? Set me free and leave me in the forest and see how fast I run.

The children went to the next section of the zoo where there were giraffes.

Child: Wow! Such a tall animal and look at its neck. It is so long. When we see a giraffe in a book we can't even imagine that it is actually so tall.

The giraffe who was a quiet animal did not say anything and was busy chewing leaves from the tree.

The children were finally tired after walking so much in the zoo and decided to go back home.

Students of Prep-E



TRIP TO THE MOON

Let's do something adventurous. Let's go on a trip to the MOON. Wow isn't it exciting!! So the spacecraft PREP- F is launched which would take us to the moon and our imagination would be a reality. Yes, all the preparations are done and finally the day has arrived for our departure to the moon. We girls, all

holes). Due to less pulling down force we jump to reach from one spot to another. We are really enjoying ourselves. But our enjoyment did not last long, one of us lose balance and is about to fall in a crater, but luckily she catches hold of her friend's hand who pulls her out and saves her life. We are happy that our friend is saved but

that is not enough. The moment we turn back, to our surprise we see a big army of Aliens. They are not very happy to see us. We try to be friendly with them but they do not understand our language and capture us and keep us in prison.



dressed as astronauts ready with oxygen cylinders set off with the countdown 10...9...8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1...into space. It is all very thrilling; it is like a dream come true. In space we come across Stars, Planets, and the Milky Way. We see Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto and to our surprise, the Earth looks so small like a sphere. Finally our spaceship lands on the Moon.

On the Earth the boys are worried because we do not return. They leave to look for us. They come to the Moon where they see the spacecraft P-F. They are sure that we girls are here on the Moon and something is wrong. As soon as they land they see the Aliens rushing towards them to attack them. So they also take out their weapons to fight. But Aliens are stronger than them. There is a tough fight between. Finally, our team wins the battle and we are rescued.

We put our first step on the Moon. It has a rough surface full of Craters (big big

◆ *Students of Prep-F*





UNITY

is strength

Once upon a time there was a big forest. In this forest there were four friends. A deer, a crow, a mouse and a turtle. They all were having a great time but all of a sudden the crow saw a hunter

free their friend, the turtle. They got an idea. The deer acted as if he was sleeping. The hunter saw him. He slowly went to get his net. Meanwhile the mouse ran to his friend, the turtle and started cutting the net with



coming towards them. The crow warned his friends to run. The deer quickly ran into the forest, the mouse went inside his hole, the crow flew away in the sky and the turtle started moving slowly towards the river. But unfortunately, he was caught in the hunter's net. The crow was watching all this. He immediately informed his other two friends. They met and discussed how to

his sharp teeth. With the help of the mouse the turtle was free now and he quickly went inside the river. The mouse again went to his hole and the crow flew away in the sky. The crow gave a signal to the deer who also ran away before the hunter could return. Thus, the hunter lost both the turtle and the deer.

◆ *Students of Prep-G*



NO TO ZOOS



A girl and boy named Meera and Shyam went to the zoo. They reached the first cage where they saw the monkeys sitting on a branch of a tree.

They heard the monkeys conversing with each other, “We love bananas but we get the same food everyday. We feel bad when nobody looks after us. People make fun of us, watch us and move ahead.”

Then they went to the second cage where they hear peacocks saying, “This cage is very small for us, we want to go back to our forest, so that we can move and dance whenever we feel like it.”

They went ahead and heard the lions saying, “Being the King of the forest why are we kept in such a small cage? We are not even getting sufficient food, place, good surrounding, or any other animal around us.”

Then they saw trees talking to each other. The big tree was very sad and it told the small one, “I don’t like being here as no animals are around me, I don’t have a good company, I feel lonely here. “

After hearing all that the children felt that those living creatures too had a right to live freely and they wanted to help them.

After the visit the kids had a wonderful idea.

They said, “Let’s create a park for them where there is more space and the best surrounding. Let us break the captivity of innocent animals and make them free by making a national park for them where they can be looked after properly as well as live with freedom.”

◆ **Students of Prep-H**



BEFRIEND NATURE

Sita a small girl stayed near a village named Gorakhpur. She used to stay with her parents in a small hut outside the village. She had no friends to play with. Every time when she saw children playing together she would be sad. One day she was sitting all alone under a tree. There were many small plants and trees around. The

caterpillars, insects, butterflies and birds were all moving and having fun. Flowers and plants were talking to one another. The trees were busy merry making.

All of a sudden a butterfly flew near Sita and asked her why she was sad. She replied with a heavy heart that she had no friends to talk to and play with. So all of them got together and decided that they should help the small girl. All of them came to her and asked her whether she would like being their friend and play with them.

Sita, on hearing this was very happy and immediately agreed to be friends with them and to play with them. That day she played with them and had fun. Now she had friends with whom she could play. That evening when she went back home she told her parents all that had happened and that she had found some new friends to play with. Since that day she has been going to play with them every day. Thereafter, she was never sad.



**Students
of Prep-I**



The Lion Cub



Once upon a time in a forest there lived a lion king with his cub named Raj.

One day Raj was planning for his birthday party. He decided to call every animal of the forest to his party.

A day before his birthday Raj started distributing the invitation cards to everyone. However, no one was happy as the invitation given to them was very rude.

The card said, 'It's the King's son's birthday so you have to be there on time and do bring gifts along with you, if any one misses the party they'll be punished by the king.'

The next day Raj made all the arrangements for the party. Everyone was there on time with the gifts but they were not enjoying themselves. They were there because they were afraid of the king. The party was a

complete flop. Raj was upset. He went to his Dad and told all that had happened in the party. The king told Raj that if he remains rude to his friends and scare them he would lose them forever and become lonely.

The next day Raj met all his friends and apologized to them for being rude. Things got normal and he got back his friends forever.

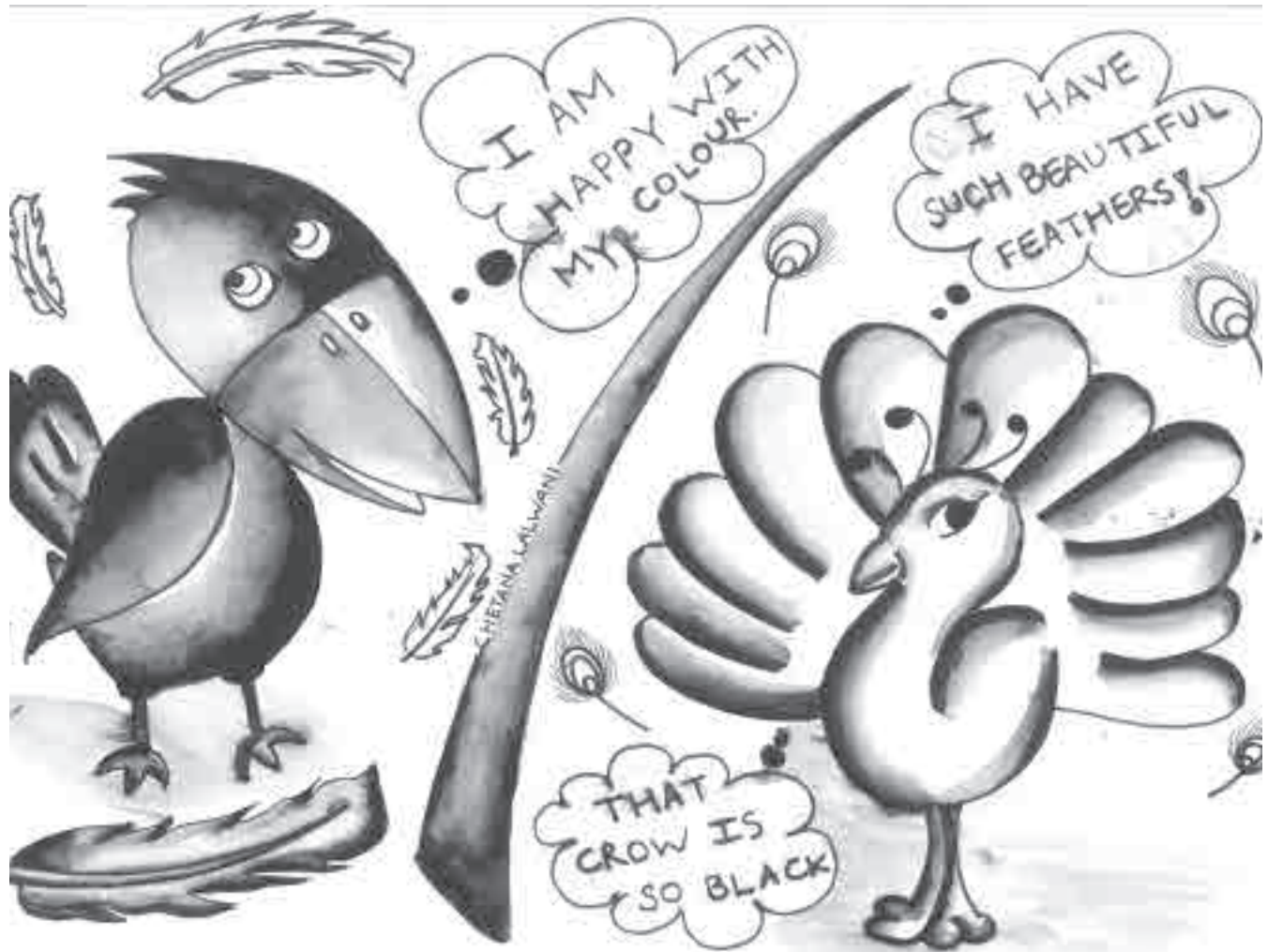
◆ *Students of Prep-J*



The Peacock and The Crow

Once upon a time there were two friends, a peacock and a crow. They enjoyed the rainy season very much. The peacock danced and the crow enjoyed watching him dance. One day the sun was shining brightly in the sky.

and black.” The crow was very sad to hear this but did not say anything. The next day both the friends were busy playing under the tree. Somebody was watching them. Do you know who he was? He was a hunter.



The peacock said, “Come my friend let’s play.” The crow replied, “But I am very thirsty. Let’s go to the river to drink water.”

They both went to the river to drink water. As the peacock was drinking water he saw the reflection of his beautiful feathers.

He said, “Look at my colourful feathers. They are so beautiful. Your feathers are dull

The hunter thought, “If I will catch this beautiful peacock and sell its feathers I will earn lots of money.”

The hunter caught the peacock and took him along. The crow was saved because of his dull and black feathers.

◆ *Students of I-A*



UNITY IN DIVERSITY



hunting the animals as it was easy for them to attack. This continued for some days. The animals were getting killed one after the other. So, one night all the animals decided to make a plan to get rid of those wicked Cheetahs. Next morning all of them sat together in one big group. As they all knew that the Cheetahs would come one after the other they made a plan to attack in a group. As soon as they saw the first one coming, all of them attacked together and killed him. They did the same thing with the other three of them and finally all the Cheetahs were dead. All of them were very happy as they all were once again free and safe. They all started dancing and singing and celebrated their victory. They really missed their friends who were killed by the Cheetahs. Finally they realized that unity has great strength. Thereafter, they lived happily together.

Once upon a time there were some animals living happily in a jungle. All these animals whether big or small, used to eat, sing and dance together. The Lion who was the King of the jungle was very good and kind to them. He always used to stay with them. Suddenly, one day a group of

four Cheetahs entered that jungle and started killing and eating the animals. As they were very strong they were not even afraid of the King. All the animals were very scared of them and they started hiding to save their lives. So the cheetahs divided themselves in four directions and started

◆ *Students of Class I-B*



BABY BEAR'S VISIT TO A JUNGLE

Once there was a baby bear. He lived with his parents. One day his parents were going to town.

So they told the baby bear, "Don't go into the jungle alone. There are tigers. They will eat you up."

The baby bear was very naughty. After some time he thought, "I will go into the jungle. I will go only for a short time. There is no tiger there. I will have some fun and look for some honey. Oh! honey is so tasty."

So the baby bear went out of his house. He went into the jungle. There he met a monkey. The monkey had a long tail. The monkey gave him some bananas. The bear was very happy. Then he met a bunny rabbit. The bunny rabbit had long ears. He gave him some carrots. Then the bear met colourful birds. The birds gave him some cherries. The baby bear met a turtle. The turtle took him for a river ride on his back and gave him water to drink. He had lots of fun. He played a lot of games.

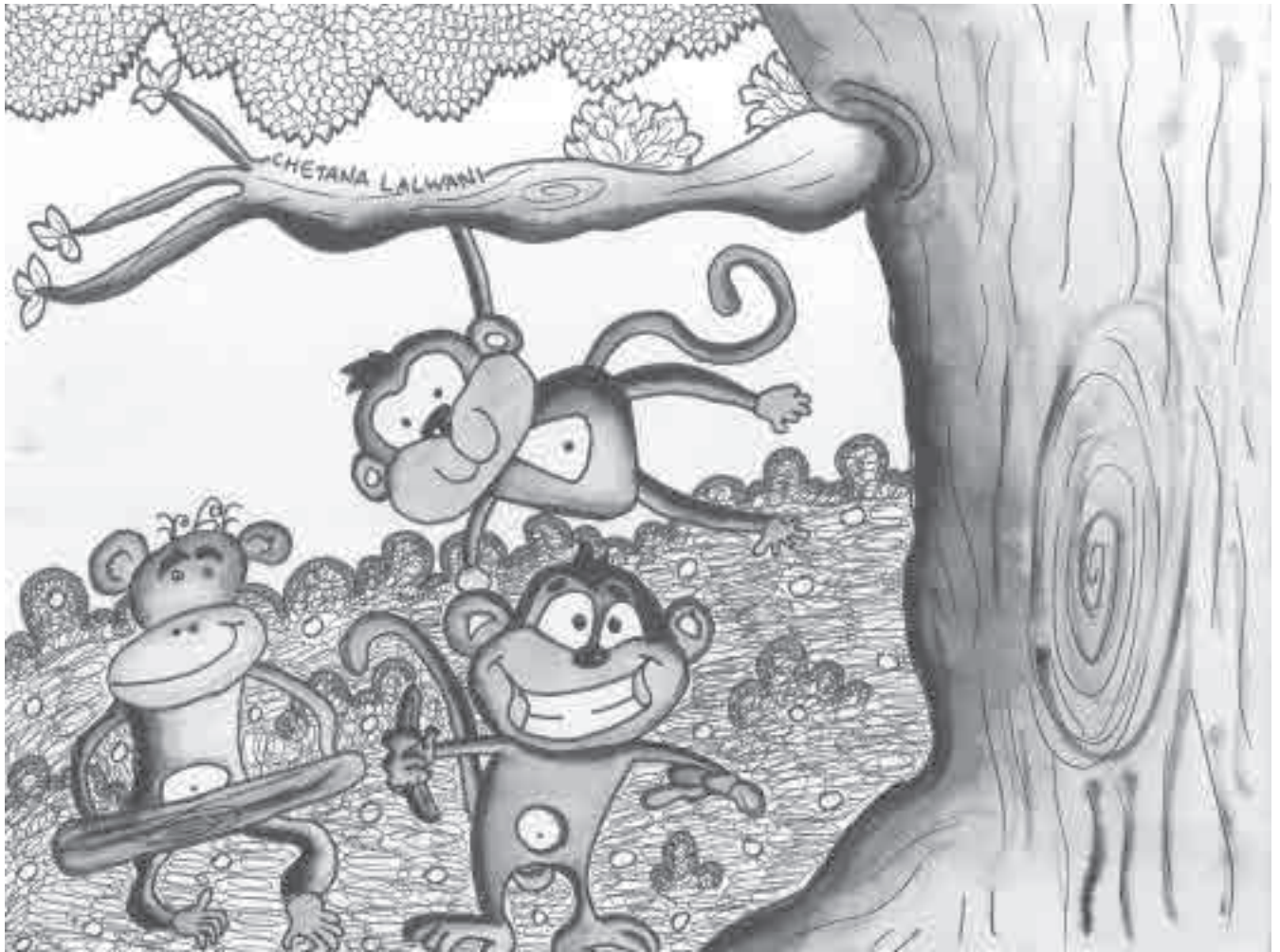
The bear thought that the jungle was so nice. He would go there every day. Suddenly, when all the animals were playing peek-a-boo, the baby bear saw a tiger. The tiger had yellow and black stripes. The tiger saw the baby bear. He growled. The baby bear was afraid and cried for help. The tiger was about to catch the baby bear. Just then a huge elephant

came, he picked and threw away the tiger with its long trunk. The elephant saved the bear's life. The bear was very happy. The baby bear sat on the elephant's back and reached home safely. He thought, "My parents were right. I didn't listen to them. I will not be naughty again. I will listen to my parents."

◆ *Students of Class I C*



animals my friends



It was Christmas vacation. Abhi's family decided to go on a holiday. This was the first time he was going to travel by an airplane. He was very excited as he boarded the plane. Suddenly, the plane was caught in a thunder storm. The passengers started jumping off the plane with their parachutes but Abhi was scared of jumping from such a height. At last, he also jumped to save his life. Abhi landed with the crashed plane in the jungle all alone.

He was very scared of the wild animals. He hid himself behind the plane. Suddenly, some monkeys surrounded him. He was very frightened but to his surprise the monkeys gave him bananas to eat. The monkeys also helped him in arranging wood around him to hide and save himself from the wild animals. Abhi thought if they came, he would give them some fish to eat. So he caught some fish and put them in a suitcase after filling it with water. Then he

lit all the wood and sat there safely remembering his teacher's words. As he had expected, the wild animals came but he was able to save himself from them. With the sun's first rays he saw his parents coming looking for him. He was delighted and very relieved to see them. He ran and hugged his parents who were also very happy to see him alive and safe.

◆ *Students of Class I-D*



JUNGLE SAFARI

Once there was a big forest. All the animals of the forest lived happily together. One day they saw a few men coming to the forest and cutting down

Next morning the lion went there and said, "Like you, we also require a place to live. If you cut the trees there will be no forests. Where will we animals go? Soon we



the trees. The men were talking amongst themselves that after cutting the trees, they would build a big township. Immediately, all the animals gathered together and went to their king. The lion heard them and was worried but he decided to speak to the chief of the wood cutters.

animals will be extinct." The chief felt that the animals were right. He asked his men to stop. With the help of some of his friends who worked in the government offices he turned the forest into a wild life sanctuary.

◆ *Students of Class I-E*



My Animal Buddies



Jumbo and Rubo's friends and I became friends with me too. They had gathered to celebrate Jumbo's birthday. All his friends got gifts for him. The party began with Jumbo cutting the mixed fruit cake and we all enjoyed the mouth watering mango shake, apple pie, strawberry ice-cream, litchi jam, peanut butter,

A walk on the road, a step aside, and soon I realized that I was alone, lost in the forest. The sky was so empty and grey. As I was weeping and walking I met Jumbo, the elephant and Rubo, the rabbit who were best friends and God sent angels for me. To my surprise, they shared their love with me and took good care of me. Together we went for fishing to the nearby river. It was a fun

filled experience fishing with them. We grilled the fish and enjoyed eating it. Jumbo, plucked some fruits and we all sat together and enjoyed eating the juicy fruits. After a long, tiring and hectic day we made a bed of leaves and soon dozed off into a deep sleep. I woke up surrounded by Shera- the lion, Gorgi- the giraffe, Zylo- the zebra, Hippo- the hippopotamus, Daggu- the monkey, Baga- the bear. They were

banana chips, jackfruit dosa, pineapple puri and a lot and lot more served on large banana leaves. Then we all merrily danced to the tune of the jungle songs and had a great time. The adventurous night and all my animal buddies..... I felt as if all the happiness of the world had come to me!! Oh!! It was a moment so lovely but the truth is it was all a dream!!!

◆ *Students of Class I-F*



The Mighty Lion

Once upon a time there lived a mighty lion named Prithvi. He was covered with dark brown hair, had four large paws and deep hazel eyes.

crocodile and the bear. He did not invite Prithvi, the lion. Prithvi was very sad and wished he could go for the party. He thought of an idea. He decided to go and

sand castles and some were riding a boat. Suddenly, a hunter came on the beach and he scared all of them. All the animals started rushing here and there to save their



Prithvi spent most of the time in his cave, coming out only when he was hungry. He did not have any friends in the jungle as all the animals were afraid of him. So, he used to be very sad and upset. One day it was Timmy the rabbit's birthday. He decided to give a birthday party on the beach. He went and personally invited all the animals in the jungle like the elephant, monkey,

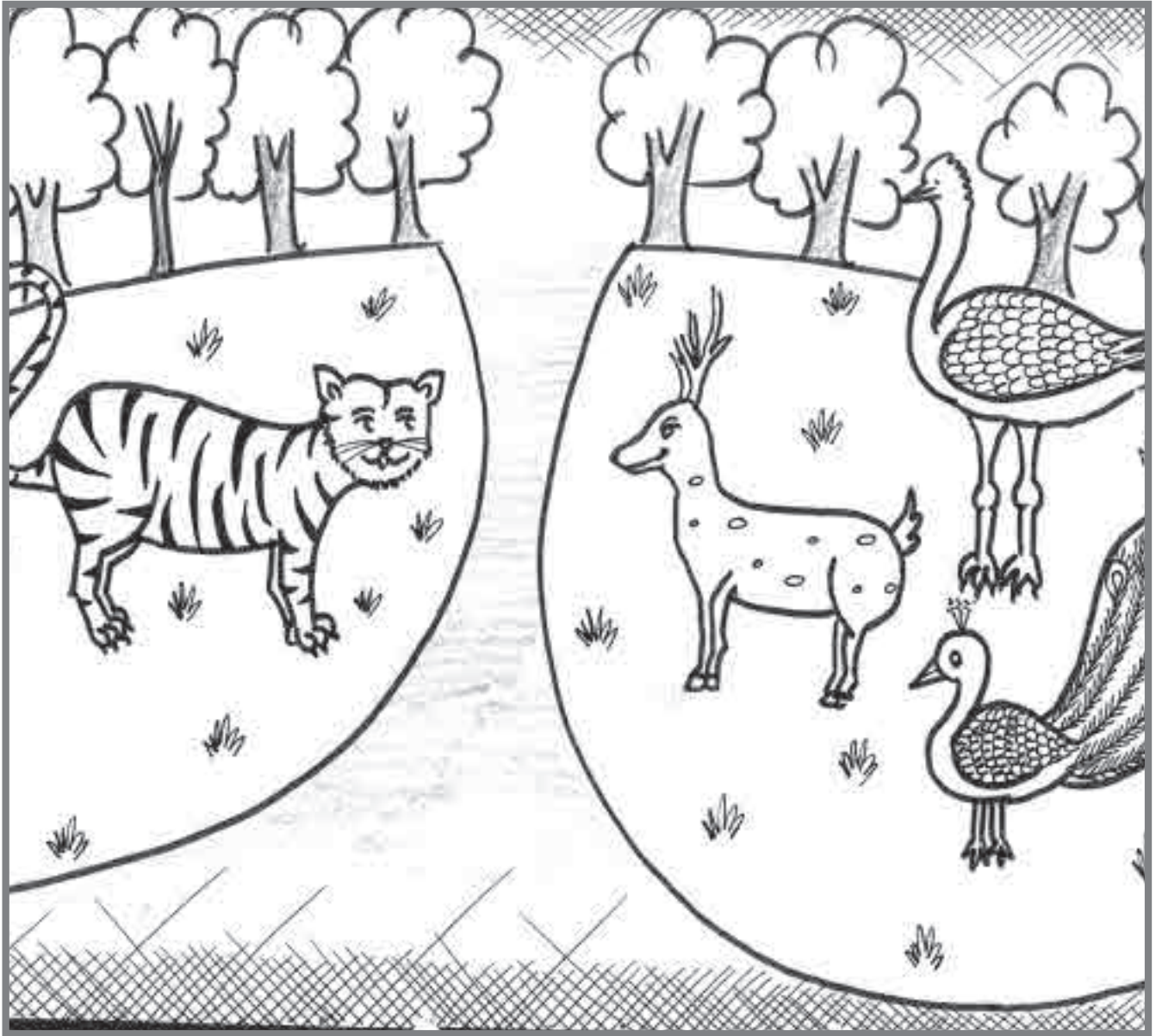
wish Timmy the rabbit and give him a gift. So he took a bunch of carrots and went for the party. Timmy was very selfish. He took the gift but he did not ask the lion to join the party. This made Prithvi very upset. He was sitting in a corner of the beach watching all the animals. All the animals were playing on the beach. Some were playing in the water, some were making

lives. Prithvi, the lion saw this and came to their rescue. He roared loudly and chased the hunter away. All the animals expressed a sigh of relief. They thanked Prithvi and extended a hand of friendship to him. Thereafter, they lived happily, helping each other in need.

◆ *Students of I-G*



Friends In Need Are Friends Indeed



Once upon a time in a dense forest, lived three friends, a peacock, an emu and a deer. They always used to play and eat together. One day a tiger saw the deer and wanted to catch it. The deer too saw the tiger running after it and started shouting for help. The peacock and the emu heard the deer cry. They made a plan to divert the attention of the tiger. The peacock flew behind the tiger and started pulling its tail and at the same time the emu

started tickling the tiger from the front. The tiger was left completely confused and did not know how to react and thus started to fumble. This gave deer the time to escape. The deer ran far away and hid in its den. Thereafter, the peacock flew away and the emu ran away. The tiger was not able to catch either of them. Thus, in this way they saved the deer.

◆ *Students of Class I-H*



A Tale of a Beautiful Forest



There was a beautiful forest. It was home to many different animals like the elephant, tiger, lion, rhinoceros, and the zebra.

It was a sunny day and a poacher entered the forest. He caught an elephant and removed its tusks. Just then a boy came there to collect his food. The boy saw the unhappy elephant and was really angry to hear the elephant's story.

He immediately went in search of the poacher. He had not gone too far when he saw the poacher resting under the shade of a big tree. Near him lay a bag with the

animal's tusk. The boy looked up and found a huge beehive on the tree. Immediately a plan struck him. He quietly removed the tusks from the poacher's bag and told his friends the bees to enter the bag. He closed the mouth of the bag and ran and hid himself nearby. After sometime the poacher woke up. He picked up his bag. He found the bag light. He opened the bag. All the bees flew out and attacked him. The poacher learnt a good lesson. The boy enjoyed the show and narrated it to the elephant bringing a smile back to the face of the sad animal.

◆ *Students of Class II-A*



The Giraffe and the Mouse

Once upon a time, there lived a giraffe in a forest. One day as he was eating leaves of a tree he saw a mouse walking by. The giraffe teased him saying that he was very small and couldn't even eat leaves and could be eaten by anyone. The mouse saw an elephant passing by.

He asked him, "You are so big. I want to eat leaves from that tree. May I stand on your back and eat the leaves?"

The elephant replied "Yes of course you may."

Thus he sat on the elephant's back and ate leaves and told the giraffe that by using ones brains and with the help of friends one can do anything. From that day the giraffe and the mouse became good friends.

One day the giraffe couldn't find the mouse. He became worried. He searched the mouse everywhere but wasn't able to find him. Suddenly, he heard the mouse shouting. The mouse was stuck in mud. The giraffe freed the mouse. From that day they both lived together happily and helped others in need.

◆ *Students of Class II-B*



Best friends for Life

Once upon a time there were two good friends, a monkey named Jaggu and a donkey named Daggu. Once they were playing near a lion's den. The lion was sleeping in his den. Daggu started singing; the lion got irritated and woke up. He got very

annoyed. He came out of his den. Jaggu quickly climbed a tree and saved itself but the lion caught hold of Daggu. Daggu was very frightened and started crying. Jaggu was sad for his friend. Suddenly an idea clicked in Jaggu's mind. He plucked a big coconut leaf and threw it on the lion. The lion could not see anything. Jaggu came down the tree and started tickling the lion. The lion started laughing loudly, lost his balance and fell down on the ground. Daggu was now free and he ran as fast as he could. Jaggu also ran. In this way Jaggu helped his friend.



◆ *Students of Class II-C*

The Three Friends

Once upon a time in a big forest there lived many animals. Of them, Chikoo Cheetah and Mickey Mouse were best friends. One day they both were playing in the forest and suddenly Mickey Mouse saw something beautiful from far away on the bush. They both ran towards the bushes and found a bright and colourful butterfly. Though beautiful it was just lying sadly on the bush. Mickey Mouse asked it, "Dear butterfly, you are so beautiful, why don't you fly around with your friends?"

The butterfly started crying and told Mickey Mouse that it had no wings and so it couldn't fly. Mickey made friends with the butterfly. Mickey mouse and Chickoo cheetah took the butterfly to their house. That night an angel came in Mickey Mouse's dream. She told Mickey that she would fulfill any one of his wish. Mickey thought for long and replied he had





The butterfly started crying and told Mickey Mouse that it had no wings and so it couldn't fly.

everything and did not need anything for himself.

He remembered about the sad butterfly and told the angel, "I do not want anything for myself but I want colourful wings for that butterfly."

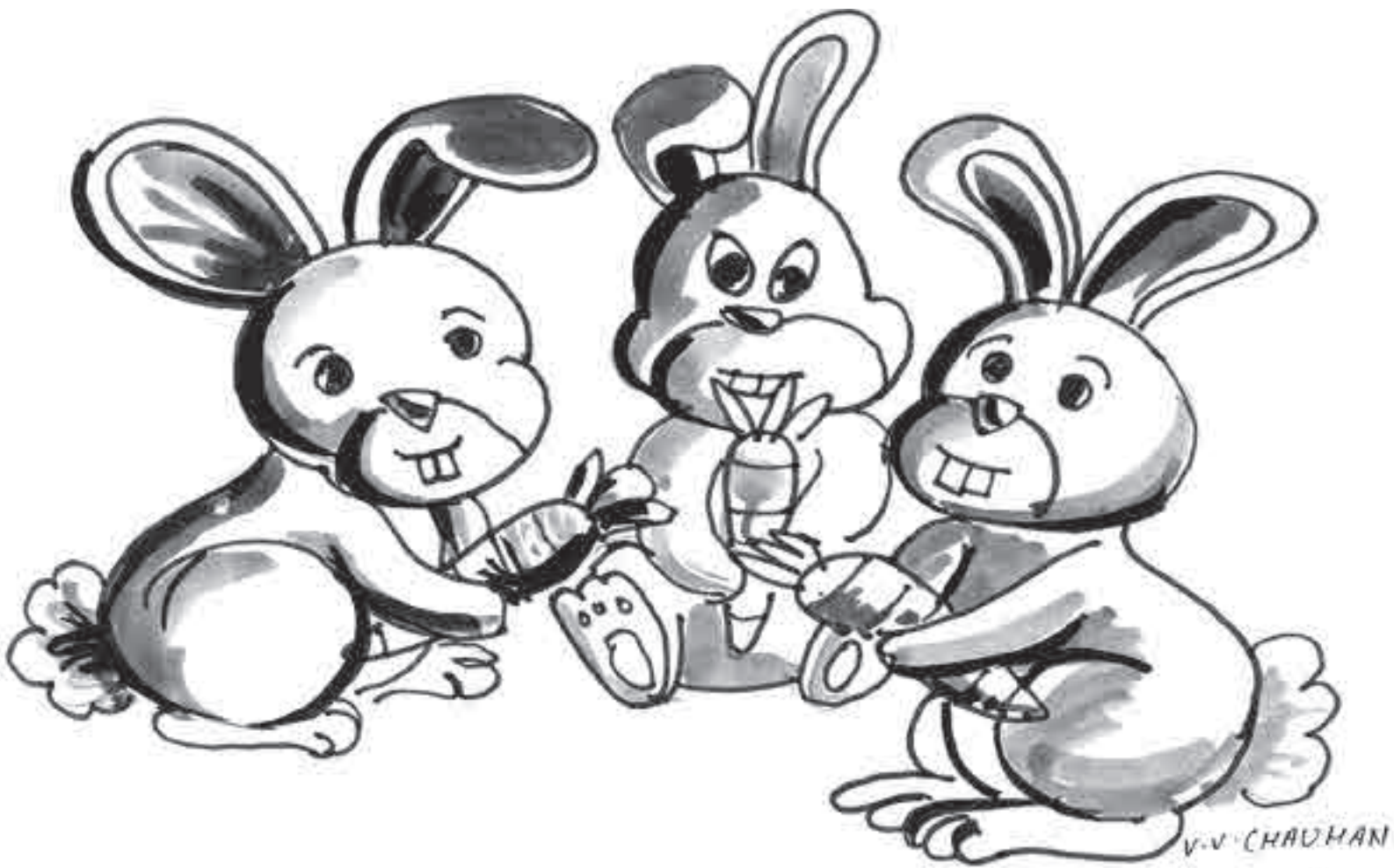
Next morning when Mickey awoke he was surprised to see that his wish

had come true. The butterfly had become more bright and colourful and now it had wings to fly. She was flying around the house happily. She thanked Mickey Mouse for helping her. Mickey Mouse told his friends about the angel. They all thanked God and were the best of friends forever.

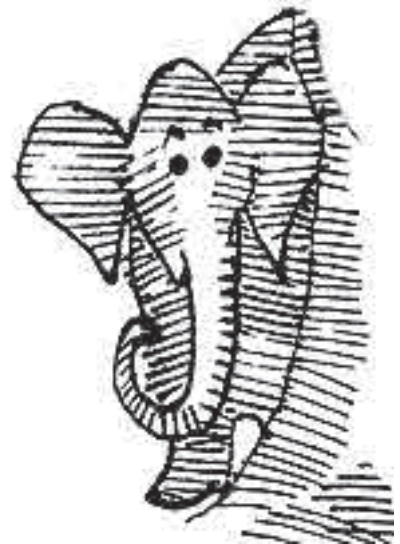
◆ **Students of Class II-D**



The Three Rabbits and the Elephant



On a cold winter morning, three rabbits were eating carrots in a farm near the forest. A tiger was roaming here and there in the forest in search of food. He saw the three rabbits and started moving towards them. The rabbits saw him coming and ran towards the river. They met an elephant there. The elephant helped them to move on to the other bank of the river. Then the elephant filled his trunk with water and splashed it on the tiger. The rabbits were saved.



◆ *Students of Class II-E*



The Elephant and his friends

Once upon a time there lived two friends, an elephant and a deer in a forest. They were best of friends and always came to each other's help.

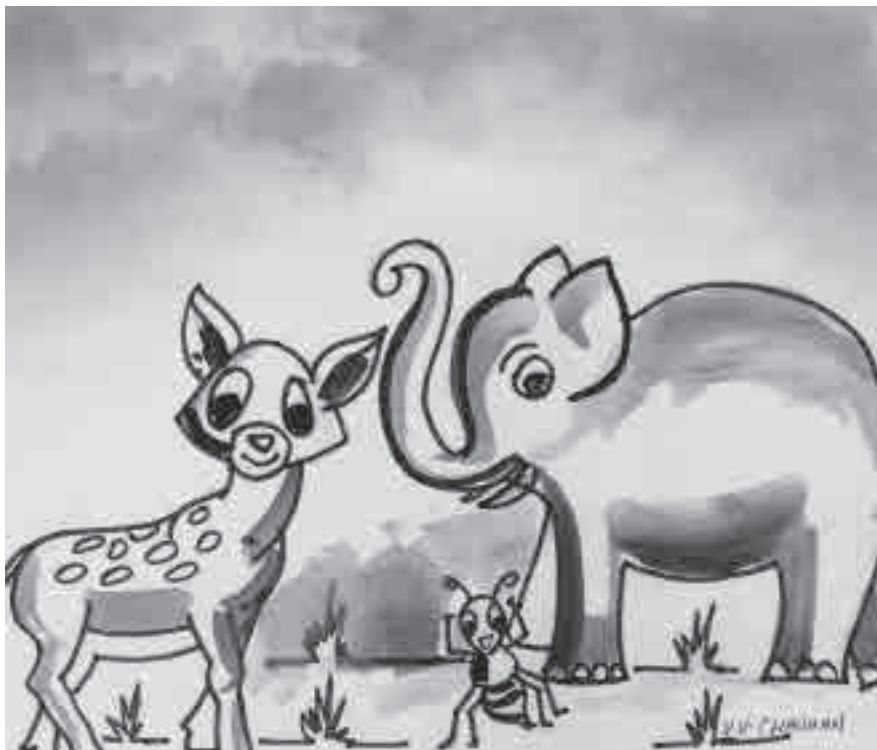
One day an ant came while the elephant and the deer were talking under a tree and bit the elephant's leg. The elephant got furious and was about to kill the ant by stepping on it.

The deer stopped the elephant saying, "He's a small thing he cannot harm you, don't kill him."

Hearing this the elephant let the ant go. The ant thanked the deer for saving his life and left saying that one day the elephant would love him the way he loved the deer.

One day the elephant went in search of food. Suddenly, he heard the birds chirping noisily, he said to himself "Ah! I am a huge animal I am not scared of anything. Nobody can harm me."

Just then he saw a cage where a bunch of bananas were kept. His mouth started watering. He thought that he must make haste and get the bananas as it appeared to be a hunter's trap. He being a huge animal couldn't be



trapped in that small cage.

The elephant entered the cage for the bunch of bananas but got stuck inside. He started shouting for help. The hunter came immediately and locked the cage from outside. He was happy to get an elephant in his trap.

Meanwhile the deer was drinking water near the pond while the ant was with his group near a tree. Both of them heard the elephant crying for help. The deer came fast and saw the elephant in the trap. The deer started looking for his friend the ant but couldn't find him. The deer started thinking of a plan to save the elephant.

Quickly the deer gathered all the other animals of the forest and instructed them to collect a lot of pebbles and give it to the elephant in the cage. As soon as it grew dark the hunter returned to the place to check on the elephant but to his shock he was greeted by the shower of pebbles from no where, the other animals of the forest screeched in weird sounds. He was scared out of his wits and ran away from the site dropping the key never to return again. All the animals celebrated their joint effort in saving their friend the elephant

◆ *Students of Class II-F*



THE CLEVER GOAT

One bright sunny day, a fox was walking in the forest. He was dreaming of what he would like to have for his dinner. Suddenly his paw slipped and he fell into a deep well. He was very upset and shouted for help. The well was very deep and nobody could hear him. He kept digging his claws into the sides of the well so that he could keep his head above the water. He kept splashing and was waiting for someone to come and help him. Many animals passed that way, but nobody stopped because they all were very scared of the fox. At last a goat came along. She heard someone splashing about in the well.

She peeped into the well. She saw the fox in the well. She thought that the fox had jumped into the well to drink water.

She asked, 'Mr. Fox, I am very thirsty. Is the water good enough to drink?'

The clever fox saw his chance to escape.

He replied, 'Dear friend, the water is delicious. It is cool too and there is enough for both of us to drink. Why don't you jump in the water?'

Listening to that she brought a bucket from a nearby village. She fetched some water for herself and was



very content after having the cool water. She smiled at the fox and said, "Thank you dear brother. You may continue with your swimming" and she walked away. The fox had met his match.

◆ *Students of Class II-G*

Rahul at the Zoo

Once Rahul went to the zoo along with his friends. Rahul didn't feel good when he saw the animals sad in the cage. He wanted to help them. A Fairy passing above the zoo read Rahul's thoughts. She came down and gave him a magic wand and told him that he could use it to help the animals.

Rahul swayed his magic wand and wished that the animals in the cage reached their homes, the forest. His wish was granted immediately. He then handed over the wand to the Fairy so that she could use it to help someone else.



◆ *Students of Class II-H*

Karelicious

for a bitter bite...

*Infinitely forked life
With difficult choices to make
You can often do the 'right' thing
If you have your principles straight
Since the early years of learning
Morals have their flavours intact
And they are also ultimately responsible
To shape one's life, in fact!
The Karelicious lessons
Comes through experience of life
And bear fruits of success and honour
Which through this discipline survive
Such stories are an interesting means
Of learning life's important ways
And after I read the Panchatantra or Jataka
How the lesson in my mind stays!!*





YOU! BE!
ONLY BLACK AND
WHITE. ARREST
HIM! SURRENDER
KILL HIM TO
HIM ^{YAMA} ARREST
O



Mistake Mistake

Last year, during Ganpati Utsav, everyone participated in song and dance performances, including my friend Nana. When it was time to practice she went down to play. She was busy with her drawing class, singing, shopping and didn't practice well.

Her parents told her that if she wanted to win and have everyone clap for her, she would have to work hard. They kept telling her to concentrate on her dance practice. She did not listen to them. She went for all the other activities but did not practice her dance regularly.

When it was time to perform, she could not dance well. Everyone got bored. No one clapped for her. She started crying. Then her parents told her "Don't cry over spilt milk. When we kept telling you to pay attention to your dance practice, you didn't listen to us."

She said sorry to her parents and hugged them.

Nana realized her mistake.

◆ **Anshita Gulati IV-A**





Taking A Loan

Once my parents decided to buy a new car, but they did not have enough money. They decided to take a huge loan and bought the car. As our vacation approached we planned for our holidays to Goa.

My parents forgot about the loan and we went for the trip. We stayed in a resort and enjoyed ourselves a lot. Truly we had the best time of our lives. The thought of the loan was just out of my parents' mind.

When we came back from Goa my Dad saw a letter from the bank on his desk. Seeing the letter it struck him that the due date for the loan was very near and he had to pay a lot of money to the bank.

He realised that the money, which he had kept aside for the loan, was spent on the trip to Goa. A day before the due date the bank manager called my father and said that he would have to go to the bank on the next day with the money and repay his dues.

My father was very worried. He sold the car and all the gold my mother had. Still some amount was needed to pay the debt. Later he sold off our house. The problem now was

that we did not have our own house to live in but had to rent a house.



From this incident my father learned a lesson that one should always do his work on time and should not delay it. This was a big lesson for my father and he vowed that he would never repeat this mistake again. After facing many difficulties for so many years now our family has settled and have also bought a new house and yes, a shiny red car too!

◆ **Arya K. Shah IV B**



A Man Who Changed His Life

Many years ago there lived a robber with his servants. The king had warned him that if he did not mend his ways he would be hanged. The

a small pond a messenger of Lord Indra came flying in magical sandals. As he went to bathe in the pond, the robber stole his jewellery and flew away in

This news spread far and wide and the king came to know about it. He disguised himself as a soldier and went to the forest. He went into a temple. Inside there was a man who was a devotee of God. He offered food to God every day.

The king asked him “Do you keep food here everyday?”

The devotee replied that he did and that the next day he would find that the food was eaten by God. The king became suspicious.

The next day when the devotee kept food in the temple the king hid behind the door. Sometime later, the robber came and ate the food. When he started to go back the king caught him. He somehow freed himself and started running.

As he ran, he saw a group of saints peacefully worshipping in the forest. He joined them. He started following their teachings and felt at peace. Years went by. He changed his ways and became a saint who was respected by all. Even the king became his disciple and found peace and joy.

◆ *Anjali Agarwal, IV-C*



robber lived in the forest and robbed temples and nearby villages. One day when he was sitting beside

his magical sandals. Now he started flying to different villages and carried out big robberies.



Pokiri The Parrot

Once upon a time there was a bird named Pokiri. Pokiri was a lazy bird. She was always idle and had no work.

One day she was roaming here and there, “Winter is near,” said her friend Paro who was in a hurry to make a nest for herself. Paro asked, “Why are you not in a hurry?” Pokiri replied, “I am the mightiest bird in the world, if I tell anybody to give me his nest he would be scared and give me the nest.” “Ha!Ha!Ha! Don’t joke please!” said Paro. “I am not joking!” said Pokiri.

Next day when Pokiri was sleeping in her nest she dreamt that she had snatched a hawk’s nest and flown away. The next morning when she was idle she thought of her dream and decided that she would go and search for a hawk’s nest.

Paro continued to build her nest. Pokiri finally found a hawk’s nest. She snatched the nest and flew away.

The hawk saw this. He followed swiftly, caught Pokiri and snatched his nest back from her. Defeated Pokiri realised that

she should have build her own nest and lived happily in it.

◆ **Vanshaj M. Shah, IV-D**



Practice is the Best Policy for Life



There was a boy named Linen. He was very kind to everyone but others used to tell him that he could not do anything. Linen was sad when he heard this. He used to go home and cry. At home he was perfect but was scared at school. The children in the class would always laugh at him. He got remarks and punishments in school. He thought his life was truly in a mess.

That year for the Annual Day, the teacher gave him the role of a sheep with no dialogues, but only movements. He was glad, so he practiced though he was not perfect.

One day the main character who was

going to play the role of a cock was absent as he had fallen ill. The teacher asked the students if anyone wanted to play the role of a cock. Linen was ready for this. He told that he knew the dialogues of each and every character but still he was not sure of his success. The teacher smiled and said, "Practice until you get success." He practiced day and night.

At last, the skit was amazing on the Annual Day. The teacher was very happy because of Linen's performance. Everyone in the class appreciated him.

◆ **Pearl R. Kunnethara, IVE**



The Blind And The Lame

Once upon a time in a village lived Ramesh, who was a cripple. Once the King called him to his palace for a special feast. He couldn't walk properly so it was getting late.

On the way he met a blind man named Raghu. He told Ramesh to help him.

Ramesh asked, "Where are you going friend?"

He answered "I am going to the palace". "Then let's make a team." said Raghu.

"You can't walk properly and I can't see, so sit on my shoulders and tell me the way and I will take you to the palace".

In this way they reached the palace safely



and on time and enjoyed the grand feast, and also their friendship.

◆ *Shantanu Motiani, IV-F*

The Foolish Housefly

Once there was a housefly. He was very hungry and was searching for some food. From a house he could smell jaggery. The housefly followed the smell and went inside the house.

He saw a whole lot of jaggery kept on the kitchen platform. He was very happy and jumped on the heap of jaggery. He ate and ate and ate.

When his stomach was full he tried to fly but could not. He tried again and again but his legs were stuck in the heap of jaggery. In the end the housefly gave up and waited for



the jiggery to melt in the summer heat. Oh! How cold and scared he was as he waited for summer.

◆ *Jaladhi H. Vankawala, IV-G*



The New Boy In Class



There he was, sitting in a Mercedes, wearing a suit, as it rolled into the school campus. He stepped out and everyone stared at him. He walked royally into our class.

“Class, this is Ronald. He’ll be studying with us now.” said our teacher.

I watched him closely as he sat down in his chair.

It was recess now and we were all on the playground. The boys were playing soccer and the girls were playing catch-me-if-you-can. And Ronald was scoring goal after goal! How impressed everyone was!, but I still had a doubt.

It had been two weeks since Ronald had been in our class and everyone was happy with him, even me. Yesterday our teacher

told us that we’ll have a substitute teacher today so we’d better be good. Actually, we were good till recess. That’s when Ronald told me that he was going to put a frog in the teacher’s desk. I was shocked! Why? Why would Ronald do such a thing? I thought he was joking because when the substitute teacher pulled the desk to remove worksheets, a frog jumped out!

“Who did this?” she shouted.

As no one had seen Ronald when he had put the frog in the desk, there was no answer.

As a punishment our teacher didn’t let us go out for recess for three weeks. That day everyone learned a lesson when Ronald showed his true colours.

◆ **Aaryan Shroff, IV H**



My Scooter

My mother is very religious by nature. She always believes in miracles. Whereas my father is very practical and full of worldly wisdom.

One day a lady called on my mother's mobile phone and informed, "Good morning Ma'am, this is to inform you that your phone number has been selected to win a special prize by our company. And you have won a Scooter!"

My mother was ecstatic. She was so excited that she called up all her friends and informed them about her winning the prize.

She rushed to the nearest temple to thank God for his favour. She offered a box of sweets, a garland of fresh flowers and many other things.

She told my sister that she would teach her how to drive the Scooter. She said that there was a speed button in the vehicle and that she could fly like a cautious bird on the busy roads. We were all very happy.

My mother also informed my father excitedly. He also congratulated her. Other relatives also started calling up and congratulating her.

After half an hour a call came which informed us that it was a joke. But of course it was the first of April. Somebody had fooled my gullible mother. All the dreams about the Scooter ended in howls of laughter from us.

Poor Mom she didn't know where to hide her face!



She also believes that someday luck will favour us and our family will be blessed by God.

One eye opening incident happened with her last month which made her more realistic towards worldly affairs.

◆ **Aryan Lakhani, V-A**



A Group Presentation

There was a group of students in my school. The group was famous in school because they led the school in different inter school competitions. They bagged many laurels for the school.

All the students of the group were well mannered and intelligent. They were also liked by all the teachers.

One day the teacher of English gave a project to the group. The project was to conduct a survey on knowledge one has of English literature.

The teacher added one more boy in the group. He was not sincere and hard working. He was rude to other members of the group. He always told the group, "I am in your group not to work. I want to enjoy with my friends."

The group members worked very hard for the project. But the new boy didn't help in the project. Instead he spoiled the project and the other members had to do it again.

As he did not help in the project, the group could not submit the project in time.

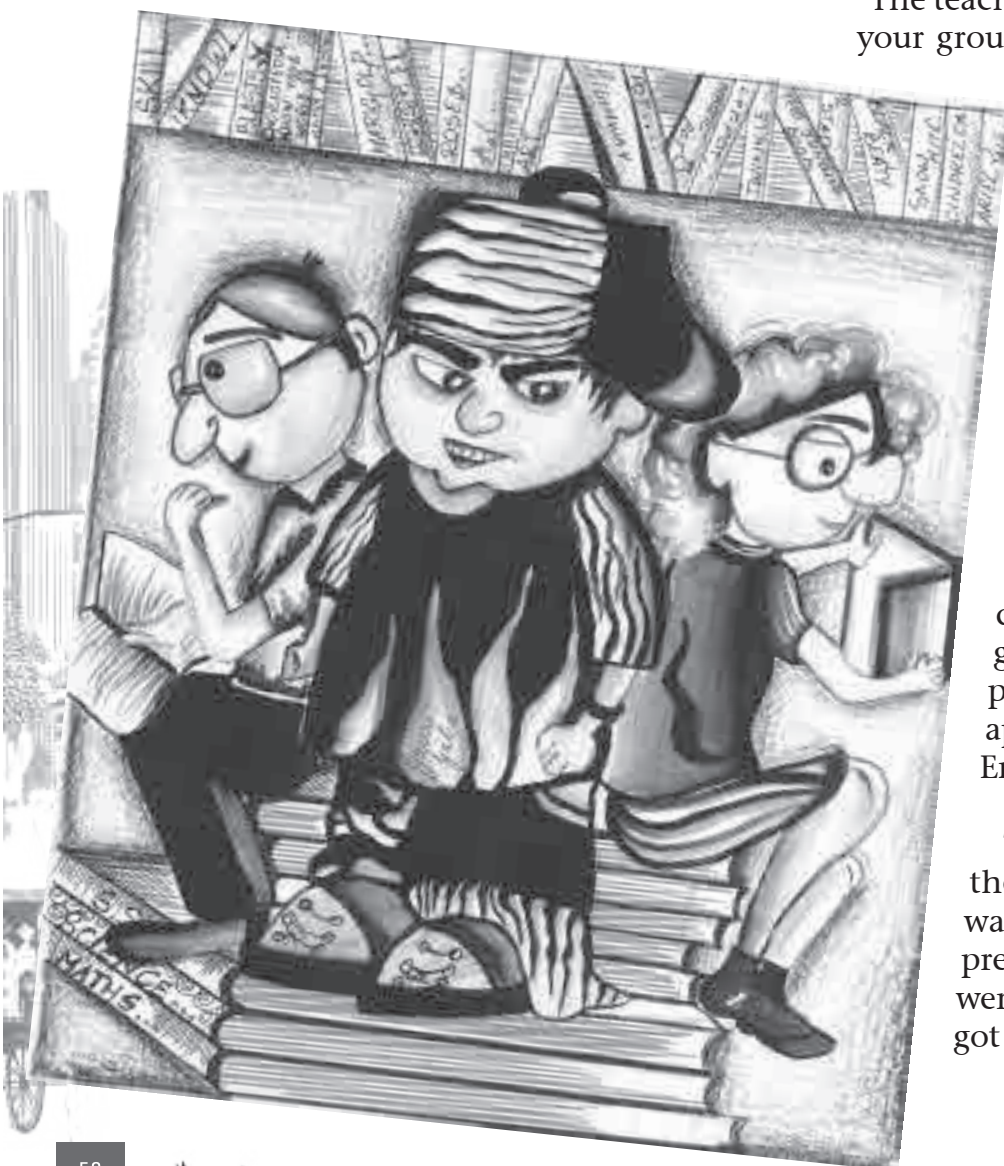
The teacher said, "I was very hopeful with your group. But your project is not up to the mark. I am sorry that your group gets low grades for the project."

The group became very unhappy. The new boy has spoiled their name. They felt very guilty. When the group members talked to the boy, he laughed loudly and said, "You all could not do well. I am not bothered for my grades."

In the next project the group did not take that boy in their group. They made a fantastic project. Their new project was appreciated by the teacher of English.

They were appreciated by all the teachers when the project was selected for a national level presentation. The group members were happy with the reward they got for the project.

◆ Meet Agarwal, V-B



A Wolf and a Tortoise



Once upon a time there lived a wolf and a tortoise. Both were the best of friends. One day a leopard came in search of food.

The tortoise and the wolf were happily playing. When they saw the hungry leopard coming towards them, they both started running.

The wolf ran fast and hid behind the trees but the tortoise was unable to hide as he was very slow. The wolf asked the tortoise to hide inside its own shell. The tortoise agreed and did the same.

The leopard tried to break the shell of the tortoise but

was not successful as it was very hard. On seeing this, the wolf came out and asked the leopard, "What are you doing?"

The leopard replied, "I am trying to break this shell but I am not able to do it."

The wolf said, "Brother Leopard, if you will put it in water, it will become soft and then you will be able to break it easily."

The foolish leopard did the same - he left the tortoise in the water.

Now the tortoise with a sigh of relief was saved. Poor leopard sat for a long time and got tired. He decided to

go back to his den and rest. The tortoise came out of the water and thanked the wolf.

Some days later, the wolf while playing slipped and his one leg went into the wet sand. He could feel himself getting pulled into the sand. He was so terrified he was unable to think.

At that time the tortoise reached there. The tortoise asked the wolf to hold his shell tightly and slowly the tortoise tried to come out.

The wolf thanked him. In this way they both helped each other and lived happily ever after.

◆ **Riya Chaudhari, V C**



Darrel Loses Her Temper

Once when Darrel Rivers, a student of Malory Towers was coming to her dormitory from the swimming pool, she heard wonderful news from her friend, Morenda. She learned that their parents would come to meet them at the end of the term.

Darrel was overjoyed to learn this. She called her parents to ask if this was true. Her parents confirmed the news and also told that she could ask one of her friends to join them as they will be going to a close-to-Nature place for lunch.

Darrel's parents came at sharp eight in the morning to pick her up. She took Morenda with her and both had a wonderful time. Both the girls discussed about Alicia, who was in the second form with Darrel and Morenda.

When they returned from their joyous trip, they were welcomed in the boarding school by girls with bowls of strawberry and cream. As Darrel sat on the table she saw an empty chair. She asked her house mistress about it. She said that it was Sally Hope's chair. Darrel was worried about Sally.

Darrel stood up and ran to find Sally in one of the practice rooms. She could hear the music. She opened the door and saw Sally practicing music with a furious face.

She became more furious when she saw

Darrel. She shouted in rage, "You double-crosser Darrel, you busybody. Why are you interfering in my life?"

Darrel was going red after hearing this out-pouring.

She went closer to Sally and pushed her down the floor. She picked up a flower vase and threw



it towards Sally. Then Darrel left the room.

She heard Sally screaming in pain, "My tummy is hurt. It's paining. Please someone help me." But Darrel didn't turn back and walked towards her dormitory.

On the way, a thought occurred in her mind, "What have I done? I could not control the red hot flame of temper. I used to always tell Gwendoline not to lose her temper. But today I myself did it. I hope Sally Hope is not hurt badly. Immediately she went back to Sally and apologized for her misbehaviour.

◆ **Jahnavi Bhuptani, V D**



Kind Joey

Once upon a time, there lived an army of ants on an anthill. One of them was called Joey. All the ants called

The Queen warned him never to be seen around. Joey felt sad on hearing it. Once when the queen's son was playing he slipped and got hurt on the leg.

Joey saw that the Prince was in pain and wanted to help. As Joey approached the Prince the Queen appeared and got furious on Joey and asked him to go away and live on his own.

Joey left the anthill and lived all alone, very lonely and sad.

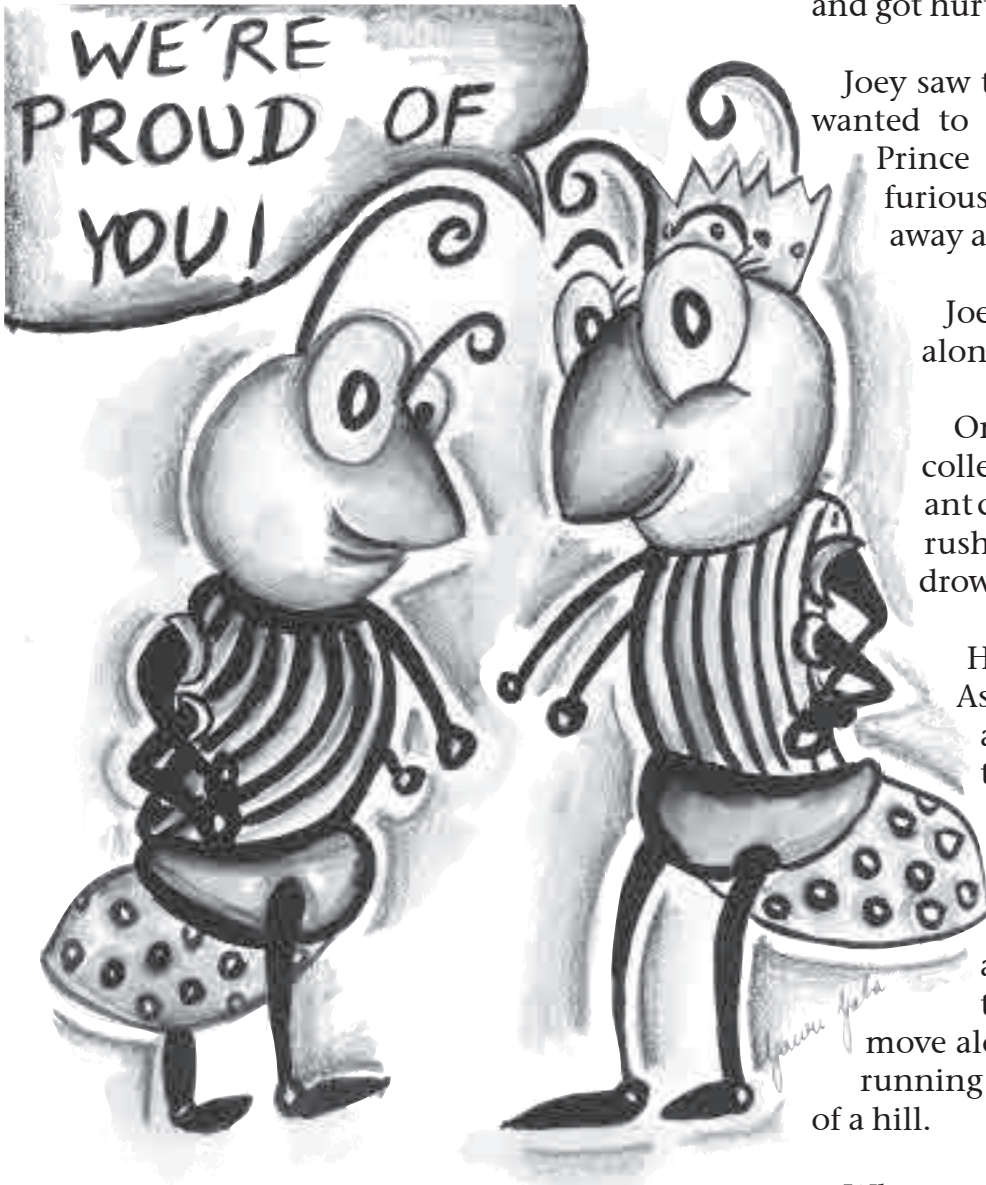
On a rainy day when Joey was collecting food for himself he saw an ant crying for help. Joey immediately rushed to help and saw that she was drowning.

He pulled her out and saved her. As it was becoming dark Joey asked her to stay in his anthill that night.

Suddenly Joey saw that the water level was rising. Joey immediately took the ant and called out for the ants on the way and asked everyone to move along with him. Everyone started running with Joey and reached the top of a hill.

When everyone looked down they realized that Joey had saved their lives. The ant whom Joey had saved was the queen's daughter, Litie. The Queen was ashamed of all that she had done to Joey. She repented for her deeds and asked Joey to be back with his friends on the anthill.

◆ **Harsh N. Patel, V G**



him unlucky as wherever he was seen he brought bad luck.

One fine day when all the ants were collecting food Joey appeared and all the food collected by the ants fell into the river. Everyone blamed him for this.



Wise Use of Money

Once there lived a very happy family. The head of the family was Mr. Rajiv Desai, a singer; he used to sing at grand shows and earned a lot of money. His wife's name was Mrs. Rakshita Desai and she liked to spend money on shopping.

One day after a show, Mr. Raj brought home ₹ 5 Lakhs and kept in the cupboard. Next morning Mrs. Desai saw it and decided to go for shopping.

As usual after she had completed her work she took ₹ 40,000 and left for shopping. She had a great day shopping and returned home late in the evening.

At night, when Mr. Desai checked the amount he found ₹ 40,000 missing. He got furious and started shouting. Mrs. Desai very politely informed him that she had taken the amount and had spent it.

Mr. Desai had kept this money for future use. Suddenly the phone started ringing and Mrs. Desai received the call. It was a call stating that her mother had been hospitalized and needed an immediate operation.

They rushed to the hospital and deposited the entire amount that was left and the mother was operated on immediately.



Thankfully the operation was a success as it was done on time.

Later Mr. Desai explained that if he would have thought of spending the money what would have happened. Mrs. Desai realized that money saved is money earned and decided never to waste money on unnecessary things.

◆ *Jhanvi Thakkar, VH*

A Great Competition

Abhimanyu and Rohan were best friends. Both were very friendly and helpful. Rohan, however always thought he knew almost every sport, as he went to coach himself for chess, carrom, football, table tennis and tennis. He wanted to excel in every sport.



Abhimnyu's parents were not as rich as Rohan's. So, he had joined only the table tennis class, which was his favourite sport.

He played the game perfectly and was a

good player. He didn't know how to play either carrom or chess .

One day Rohan organised a competition in sports and named it 'A Great Competition'.

Many children took part in it including Rohan and Abhimanyu. There were games like chess, carrom, tennis and table tennis.

Rohan took part in all the games as he knew them. Abhimanyu took part only in table tennis as he knew how to play it perfectly.

After the competition, Rohan was sad but Abhimanyu was happy.

Do you know why?

Rohan did not win in any of the games. Abhimnyu was a winner in table tennis.

Abhimanyu explained to Rohan that one cannot win all the games one knows. To be a winner one should know the game perfectly.

He was nothing but a 'Jack of all trades, master of none'.

From that day onwards Rohan happily attended only the table tennis class.

◆ **Aman Choraria, VIA**

A Want of Something can Change our Life!

Once upon a time, in a small town, lived a boy named Raj. He was a very impolite and rude child. He lost his temper very easily. But he had a speciality too.

He could concentrate well and was very particular in everything that he did.

Though he was unaware he had this great gift. If he wanted, he could study hard to make a mark for himself in life. But he didn't ever take interest in spending his time in reading books.

At school, he did not score well in his examinations.

He was unknown to the value of knowledge. Until he grew up, there was not a change in his behaviour.

Other people tried to explain to him the value of education but his behavior remained unchanged.

He left his school and went to stay in a nearby village. There, he made a small hut near a school.

One fine day, an old woman saw a man sitting near the footpath.

She asked him, "Who are you? I have never seen you before in this village."

The man replied, "I am Raj. I left my school and came here to live."

"Left your school?" the woman asked him surprised.

"Do you know, there are millions of children who want to go to school but cannot afford it, and on the other side, you



left your school?"

The man thought for a while and said, "What can happen now? I think it's too late. I have lost the chance to educate myself."

The lady replied, "It's never too late to learn."

The lady's words touched his heart. He thought about it for a while. Then, he decided that he would begin learning right from that moment.

"My hut is close to a school. I will try to listen to what is being taught in the school and prepare myself at home. This could be a wonderful way to learning."

He practiced day and night and in this way he kept learning and took some important exams.

He later went to college and cleared all the exams. Thus, the lady's words changed his life and he became a successful man and a well educated man.

◆ **Parthvi M. Patel, VIB**



MAGIC OF HEALTHY FOOD

Once there was a boy named Aditya. He loved to eat junk food. His parents did not allow him to eat unhealthy food but he disobeyed them.

Chocolates, cookies, cakes and cold drinks



were his meals. He used to have ice creams all seven days of the week, irrespective of any season.

His parents were very upset with his behaviour.

Months went by and day by day Aditya

became more and more unhealthy. At last he fell seriously ill. His parents took him to a doctor.

The doctor informed them that Aditya was suffering from food poisoning and jaundice. Instead of ice creams he had to take three bitter medicines a day.

A few days had passed and he had to keep on taking the medicines. He could not attend his school too. He was fed up with everything.

After his one week course, he visited the doctor again.

The doctor said that his health had been improving but still he had to continue the medicines for two more weeks. The doctor also advised him to have only nutritious food.

After a few days Aditya started eating healthy food and was surprised to find it quite tasty too. Gradually he left his habit of eating junk

food. He was very happy to regain his health.

This was the story of a boy who changed his life by eating healthy food. Think what would happen if we continue eating junk food???

◆ **Deshna A. Shah, VIC**



Experience is the Best Mentor

What are experiences? They are the events which have taken place in our life. Every day we experience new things.

Teachers are the people who teach us what is right and wrong. Our life experiences are also our teachers because we learn a lot from them.

For instance, our teachers and parents always give us wise advises. But we, children always find them as boring lectures.

We feel very much irritated listening to them.

But later in our life we realize that the advices that are given by them are very helpful. The unpleasant experiences teach us the importance of discipline and obedience in our life.

The knowledge that we get from books are not sufficient in leading a fulfilling life. Every day we learn new lessons and our observations also help us to become mature and responsible human beings.

I share with you the experience of one of my teacher's relative.

He was a student who rode his bike at great speed. Elders advised him to drive carefully but he never listened to them.

One day he met with an accident and fell into a manhole on the road. He was badly injured. Then he remembered the warnings given by the elders.



He understood his mistake and decided not to repeat this.

Our teacher shared this incident in class so that we would also learn from the mistakes of others. Eventually we remember the saying: Experiences teach us better than books.

◆ **Sindhuja M.Khaitan, VI D**



The Lady Who Changed His Life

There was a beggar. He lived in a big town with his old mother.

All he owned was a torn pair of shirt and trousers, a worn out pair of slippers, a small golden lamp which he inherited from his grandmother and an idol of Jesus Christ.

He stayed under a plastic sheet tied with poles fixed in the ground. He always remained upset and was never able to give his lovely mother what she wanted.

Every morning he used to pray in front of the idol, light a candle and say, "Lord, make me wealthy."

Then he used to set out to beg for food and money. He went roaming around the town all day. He used to hardly get what he wanted.

One day he came across a kind lady and begged for a coin.

She said, "I'll not give you anything. To earn you need to work hard. Go and come to me when you become wealthy."

This changed his life. He pondered on what he should do. He saw hawkers selling things made by them



in their homes and people who collect junk by going from door to door. He also saw barbers shaving people under trees and people who iron clothes for others.

Now he understood the real meaning of hard work.

He got the work of a servant in four neighbouring houses where he used to go to beg. He started his work early in the morning, went to all the four houses one after the other and returned home in the evening. He earned one thousand rupees a month. He spent two hundred rupees and saved the rest.

After a year, he had saved quite a lot of money and never looked sad again.

One fine day he came across the same kind lady. He

was very grateful to her.

She replaced all his broken and worn out things with new ones and his little shed with a beautiful little cottage.

She congratulated him for his success. Then she vanished into the blue sky.

After this, he and his mother lived a happy and contented life.

He became a gentleman and never again prayed to God for wealth, instead thanked him for giving him the urge to work hard.

And the lady was none other than his fairy godmother!

◆ **Stuti S. Khandwala,**

◆ **VIE**



The Talkative Tortoise in a new avtaar

Once upon a time there lived a tortoise who was very talkative. He was very impatient and was not able to be quiet even for a moment.

tortoise who wants to touch the sky and feel the cool breeze. Can you help me?"

The swans replied, "Well Mr. Tortoise, Let us think.

talking and went on till half past eight.

The swans got ready and were waiting for the tortoise.

Suddenly, the tortoise saw the time. He started to panic, took the stick and reached there at nine o'clock. He felt very tired. The swans scolded him for not being punctual.

The swans told him to hold the stick in his mouth and asked him not to open his mouth. So he had to keep mum.

Each swan held the stick tightly from both the ends and started flying towards the great big clouds.

The tortoise could not believe his dream getting fulfilled. But as they were going up the tortoise opened his mouth and said, "Faster".

Splash!!! he fell into the pond below. But he was a clever tortoise. When he saw himself surrounded by a group of baffled frogs and fish, he announced, "Here I am sent by the Lord to be your King" All the creatures bowed in great reverence.

◆ **Bhumika J. Ahuja,**
VIF



He had a dream to fly high in the sky. He wanted to touch the clouds, feel the cool breeze and enjoy himself in the vast blue sky.

Once he met a pair of beautiful swans. They were swimming peacefully in the cold water. They were patient, loving and graceful.

Soon it got dark and the tortoise went back to his burrow. While he was going to sleep, an amazing idea stuck his mind.

Next day, he went to the swans for help. He said, "Dear swans! I am a small

Hmmmm.....Tomorrow you meet us at 8 o'clock in the morning and also bring a long stick with you."

The tortoise was very happy and thanked them. As he was very talkative, he kept on talking to the swans. The swans got bored and soon it became dark.

Next day, he got up at seven o'clock. He was very excited and was not able to control his feelings.

At around half past seven, he went to his neighbour, Mr. Rabbit and started showing off. He started



The Lottery Ticket

Once upon a time there was a girl named Rita. She lived in a small village called Rampur.

One day she bought a lucky ticket with a hope to win a big prize.

Luckily her ticket won the prize of a tour to Mumbai. She excitedly told to her family members, “Ma, Papa, I have won a great prize of a tour to Mumbai. We will go to Mumbai and visit many interesting places. We will have fun there.”

Her mother asked, “How did you get this prize?”

Rita said, “One day when I was returning from school, my friend advised me to buy a lottery ticket from the market.”

Rita’s father asked, “But dear, buying a lottery ticket is gambling.”

Rita agreed and said, “Ok, papa. I promise not to buy any lottery ticket in my life. But this time you will also come with us to the trip.”

Rita’s father agreed to her request.

All the members were overjoyed by the news of the trip. She went on the tour with her family members and had a great time.. They had a lot of fun. They visited many places like Nariman Point, Gate Way of India, Borivali National Park, and Essel World Fun Park.

She came back home with a thought to buy more tickets. Her friends warned her that she might not win every time. But she didn’t listen to anyone. She bought many tickets.

This time she lost all her money. She bought more and more but every time the result was disheartening. Her father came to know about this. He called her and asked, “Why did you buy lottery tickets? And if you remember, you had promised that you will never buy any lottery ticket after that.”



Rita said, “I am sorry papa.”

Rita’s father explained to her “You have wasted a lot of money in your greed which can’t be ever satisfied. You should be happy with what you have.”

Rita also realized her mistake and apologized to her family. She had understood what Gandhiji had rightly said that there is enough for everyone’s need but not for everyone’s greed.

◆ **Khushi R. Poddar, VI-G**



THE WITCH AND THE CLEVER BOY

Once there was a boy who was an orphan. He had lost his parents in a natural calamity. Unfortunately he did not have any other relatives.

He started working in a factory near his village. But the working conditions were unbearable. He fell very ill and the factory owner dismissed him from the job. So he wandered from place to place doing odd jobs for his living. Sometimes he had to beg for food also. At last he knocked at a door. An old lady opened the door and took him inside and gave some food.

The boy asked, “Why are there no children in the village?”

She replied sadly, “There is a witch who lives behind the mountain. She needs a hundred children to turn them into fish to become young again. She has taken ninety nine children till now.”

The boy decided to go to the witch and kill her. She told a plan to the old lady.

He took a mirror with him and went behind the mountain. He told the witch that nobody gave shelter and food to him so he had come there. The witch was happy. She gave him food.

Then she uttered some words and a dazzling light came from her magic wand. Immediately the boy took the mirror out and showed towards the light. The light reflected and fell on the witch. She turned into a fish



and died. The boy found the children in the cave.

The magic spell was over.

The boy took all the children back to the village. The villagers were very happy to get their children back. The villagers thanked the boy and told him to live in their village.

The old woman kept the boy with her. He helped the old woman in her work and lived happily ever after with her.

◆ **Ramit P. Monga,**
VI-H



भिखारी की नीयत



एक समय की बात है, एक शहर में श्यामलाल नाम का सेठ रहता था। वह बहुत ही दानवीर था। एक दिन उसके पास एक भिखारी मदद माँगने के लिए आया। श्यामलाल ने उसकी मदद की, लेकिन उस भिखारी की नज़र जब श्यामलाल के घर के वैभव पर पड़ी तो उसकी नीयत खराब हो गई। अब वह श्यामलाल के घर में चोरी करने की योजना बनाने लगा। एक दिन जब श्यामलाल अपने परिवार के साथ बाहर घूमने गया। भिखारी ने सोचा यह अच्छा मौका है चोरी करने का लेकिन भिखारी की पत्नी को जब उसकी नीयत का पता चला तो उसने भिखारी को डाँटते हुए कहा कि एक तो तुम कोई काम करने के बदले भीख माँगते हो और इस भले आदमी के घर में चोरी करना चाहते हो जिसने तुम्हारी मदद की। उसने भिखारी को समझाया कि चोरी करना पाप के समान है, तुमको भीख माँगना और चोरी का विचार छोड़कर मेहनत से काम करना चाहिए।

◆ अनिरुद्ध गर्ग, III-A



राजू का सबक

राजू नाम का एक लड़का था। वह बहुत झूठ बोलता था। एक दिन राजू को दस रुपए मिले। वह पैसे राजू की माँ के थे। जब उसकी माँ को पता चला कि उनके पैसे खो गए हैं तो उन्होंने राजू से पैसे के बारे में पूछा। राजू ने उनसे झूठ बोल दिया कि उसे पैसे नहीं मिले हैं। थोड़ी देर बाद राजू वह दस रुपए लेकर चुपके से घर के पास वाली दुकान पर गया और अपने लिए टॉफी ले आया। जब वह वापस आ रहा था तब उसे उसके पिताजी ने देख लिया। उन्होंने राजू से पूछा तो वह अपना झूठ छुपा न पाया और उसे बहुत डाँट पड़ी। उसने अपनी माँ और पिताजी से माफ़ी माँगी और फिर कभी भी झूठ ना बोलने का वचन दिया।

◆ मेघाश्री सोमानी, III-C



लालची सेठ

एक दिन एक सेठ संतरे लेने बाज़ार गया। उधर उसे एक फलों की दुकान दिखी। सेठ ने दुकानदार से पूछा, “एक दर्ज़न संतरे का दाम क्या है?” दुकानदार बोला, “चालीस रूपए।” “थोड़ा कम नहीं हो सकता?” सेठ ने पूछा। दुकानदार बोला, “अगर आपको कम में चाहिए तो आगे जाइए, वहाँ आपको दूसरी दुकान में कम दामों में मिल जाएँगे।” सेठ आगे बढ़ा और चलते-चलते उसे एक दूसरी फल की दुकान मिली। सेठ ने दुकानदार से पूछा, “एक दर्ज़न संतरे का दाम क्या है?” दुकानदार बोला, “तीस रूपए।” “थोड़ा



कम नहीं हो सकता?” सेठ ने पूछा। दुकानदार बोला, “अगर आपको कम में चाहिए तो आगे चलते जाइए वहाँ आपको संतरे का बगीचा मिलेगा वहाँ बहुत सारे संतरे के पेड़ हैं। पेड़ पर चढ़ कर जितने चाहो तोड़ लेना और वह भी मुफ्त में।” सेठ बहुत खुश हो गया और आगे बढ़ा। चलते-चलते वह थक गया। कुछ देर बाद उसे संतरे का बगीचा दिखा और वह एक पेड़ पर चढ़ गया। पर वह जैसे ही पेड़ पर चढ़ा धड़ाम से नीचे गिर गया और उसका पैर टूट गया। उसी समय बगीचे का मालिक भी वहाँ आ पहुँचा। उसे लगा कोई चोर संतरे चुराने आया है और वह सेठ की पिटाई करने लगा। सेठ को बोलने का मौका भी नहीं दिया। अब तो सेठ की बहुत बुरी हालत थी। सेठ को अहसास हुआ कि काश वह लालच नहीं करता।

◆ अभिषेक गाँधी, III-D

राजा की हिम्मत

यह एक राजा की कहानी है जो हमेशा जंग के मैदान में हार जाता था। राजा हमेशा दूसरी सेना से लड़ता था और हार जाता था। वह उदास रहने लगा। अपनी सेना को बार-बार खोकर उसे बहुत बुरा लगता था। वह हिम्मत हार चुका था। एक बार राजा अपने महल में बैठा था। उसने एक मकौड़े को देखा। वह पेड़ पर चढ़ने की कोशिश करता था पर गिर जाता था। वह



कोशिश करता गया, करता गया और आखिर अपनी मंजिल तक पहुँच गया। यह देखकर राजा को सीख मिल गई। उसने सोचा मैंने इतनी बार पराजित होकर, हार मान ली और मकौड़ा कैसे पेड़ पर चढ़ गया। फिर वह अपनी सेना के साथ लड़ने गया और जीतकर खुशी-खुशी लौटा।

आशी हिम्मतसिंगका, III-B



पौष्टिक आहार

एक गाँव में एक छोटा-सा लड़का रहता था। उसका नाम राम था। वह हर रोज़ तला हुआ खाना खाता था इसलिए उसका स्वास्थ्य भी ठीक नहीं रहता था।

एक दिन स्कूल में दौड़ की प्रतियोगिता थी। उसमें राम और उसके सभी दोस्तों ने भाग लिया। दौड़ते-दौड़ते राम गिर गया और सभी दोस्त दौड़ते रहे। उसके दोस्तों को इनाम मिला पर वह गिरने की वजह से हार गया। वह रोते-रोते घर गया और उसकी माँ ने उसके रोने की वजह पूछी। राम ने रोते हुए कहा कि वह दौड़ में प्रथम नहीं आ पाया। उसकी माँ ने उसे समझाया कि जब तक तुम तला हुआ खाना नहीं छोड़ोगे तब तक तुम में शक्ति नहीं आएगी। तभी राम ने वादा किया कि वह हर रोज़ पौष्टिक खाना खाएगा।

कुछ ही दिनों बाद वही प्रतियोगिता दोबारा हुई। इस बार राम ने प्रथम स्थान प्राप्त किया और वह बहुत खुश हुआ।



◆ विहा थुमर, III-G

राधा की कहानी

एक लड़की थी जिसका नाम राधा था। वह बहुत अच्छी थी पर उसकी एक बुरी आदत थी—सुबह देर से उठना। उसे उसकी माँ बहुत समझाती थी पर वह सुनती नहीं थी। एक दिन की बात है, राधा की परीक्षा थी और वह देर से उठी और बस छूट गई। उसके पापा उसे गाड़ी में स्कूल छोड़ने गए। वह भागती हुई कक्षा में पहुँची पर तब तक परीक्षा शुरू हो चुकी थी। अध्यापिका ने उसे कागज़ दिया पर राधा जल्दी-जल्दी में अपनी कलम भूल गई थी। अब वह डर गई। अध्यापिका ने भी उसे कहा कि समय से काम किया करो। फिर उन्होंने राधा को कलम दी। जब राधा ने प्रश्नपत्र देखा वह खुश हुई क्योंकि उसे सब आता था। पर अफ़सोस उसके पास समय बहुत कम था। वह एकदम डर गई और ठीक से जवाब नहीं लिख पाई। अब राधा को एहसास हुआ कि उसे देर से नहीं उठना चाहिए था। तब से वह रोज़ जल्दी उठती है और हर कार्य समय पर करती है।



◆ प्रिशा सी. पटेल, III-H



कैरी और तमन्ना को करो सलाम



किसी शहर में तीन बहनें रहती थीं इच्छा, कैरी और तमन्ना। इच्छा एक गंदी लड़की थी। वह अपना कक्षा कार्य विल्कुल ध्यान से नहीं करती थी। जब गुरुजी कक्षा से बाहर निकलते तब वह खूब सारी शरारतें करती। उसको देख कक्षा की दूसरी लड़कियाँ भी शरारतें करतीं और गुरुजी का अनादर करतीं सिवाए कैरी और तमन्ना के। वे दोनों अपना काम भी ठीक से करतीं और सब का आदर भी करतीं। कुछ दिनों तक तो यह चलता रहा फिर एक दिन कैरी और तमन्ना ने सारी बात गुरुजी को बताई। यह सुन कर गुरुजी ने समझाया कैसे एक मछली सारे तालाब को गंदा करती है। गुरुजी की बात का सब पर खूब असर हुआ। सब बच्चे सुधर गए और इच्छा को भी सुधार दिया।

◆ कैरावी उनर्कत, III-E

मूर्ख आदमी



बहुत समय पहले की बात है। मैं एक ऑफिस में काम करता था। मेरे बॉस ने मुझसे कहा कि तुम्हें किसी दूसरी जगह इस आदमी के साथ जाना है। दूसरे दिन हम उस जगह जाने के लिए रवाना हो गए। रास्ते में एक गाँव में हम रुक गए। दोपहर में जब मैं सो रहा था मेरे साथ वाले आदमी को शरारत सूझी। उसने सोचा, “क्यों न मैं इसका सिर छुपा दूँ फिर जब यह सोकर उठेगा और सिर को ढूँढेगा और रोएगा तब मैं उसे लौटा दूँगा।” उसके पास कुछ और तो था नहीं। इसलिए वह अपने हाथों से ही मेरे सिर को निकालने लगा। मैं उठा और जोर-जोर से चिल्लाने लगा। मुझे लगा जैसे वह मेरा गला दबा रहा था। तभी मूर्ख ने कहा, “नहीं, मैं इनका गला नहीं दबा रहा था” और फिर उसने सारी बात बताई। सब ने यह सुनकर कहा, “हे राम!” मैंने उस मूर्ख से फिर कोई दोस्ती नहीं रखी।

◆ अनंत बिसवास, III-F





राम की परीक्षा



एक लड़का था जिसका नाम राम था। वह परीक्षा में कामयाब नहीं हो पा रहा था। वह बहुत दुखी था। वह घर पर अकेला इधर-उधर टहल रहा था। तभी उसकी नज़र चींटियों पर पड़ी। उसने देखा कि चींटियाँ अपने घर तक खाना ले जाने के लिए बार-बार कोशिश कर रही थीं पर खाना अपने घर तक ले जाने में कामयाब नहीं हो पा रही थीं। राम उन्हें दो घंटे तक देखता ही रहा। अंत में उसने देखा कि चींटियाँ खाना ले जाने में कामयाब हो गईं। राम को इससे सबक मिला कि जब छोटी-सी चींटी बार-बार कोशिश कर कामयाब हो सकती है तो मैं क्यों नहीं। वह इन चींटियों से सबक ले कर ज़ोर-शोर से परीक्षा की तैयारी में लग गया। अगली परीक्षा में वह प्रथम आया।

◆ चाहना आहुजा, IV-B

हाथी की सोच

एक जंगल में दो दोस्त रहते थे। एक था शेर और दूसरा हाथी। दोनों में गहरी दोस्ती थी। एक दिन शेर ने कहा कि मुझे बहुत ज़ोर से भूख लगी है क्या तुम मेरे साथ शिकार पर चलोगे। हाथी हँसने लगा और बोला कि मैं तुम्हारे जैसे छोटे-मोटे काम नहीं करता। मैं तो बड़े-बड़े काम करता हूँ लेकिन तुम कहते हो तो मैं तुम्हारे साथ चलता हूँ। थोड़ी ही दूर चलने पर हाथी थक गया। उसने कहा कि मैं और नहीं चल सकता। शेर ने कहा, “क्यों दोस्त! तुम तो बड़े-बड़े काम करते हो फिर इतनी जल्दी थक कैसे गए?” हाथी को अपनी गलती का एहसास हो गया। उसने अपनी गलती मानते हुए कहा “सच है दोस्त कोई भी काम छोटा या बड़ा नहीं होता।”



◆ जैनम शाह, IV-A



सच्चाई का फल



एक गाँव में एक चोर रहता था। वह बहुत चतुर था। एक बार वह दूसरे चोर से मिला। उन दोनों चोरों ने मिल कर बहुत चोरियाँ कीं। एक दिन यह बात राजा तक पहुँच गई। राजा ने अपने सैनिकों को आदेश दिया कि उन दोनों चोरों को पकड़ कर मेरे सामने लाओ। सिपाहियों ने एक-एक कोना देखा पर उनको वे दोनों नहीं मिले।

अचानक एक दिन एक सिपाही ने उन दोनों को देख लिया। सिपाही ने उन दोनों से पूछा कि तुम दोनों यहाँ क्या कर रहे हो? दोनों चोरों ने गलती से कह दिया कि वे ही चोर हैं और चोरी करने आए हैं। वस फिर क्या था सिपाही उन दोनों चोरों को राजा के पास ले गया। राजा ने जब उनसे पूछा तो पहले चोर ने तो मना कर दिया जबकि दूसरे चोर ने सच बोला कि वह चोर है और वह यहाँ चोरी करने आया था। राजा बहुत खुश हुआ कि दूसरे चोर ने सच बोला। राजा ने सिपाहियों को आदेश दिया कि दूसरे चोर को छोड़ दिया जाए और पहले चोर को बंदी बना लिया जाए।

◆ नीतीश आर. दलाल, IV-C

लालची लकड़हारा

एक गाँव था ढोलकपुर। उस गाँव में एक लड़की रहती थी। वह बहुत गरीब थी। उसके पिताजी लकड़ी काटने जाया करते थे और उसी से सभी का भरण-पोषण होता था पर वह बहुत दुखी रहती थी। अपनी गरीबी से नहीं बल्कि अपने पिताजी के स्वभाव से। उसके पिताजी बहुत लालची थे। एक दिन उसके पिताजी नदी के किनारे लकड़ी काट रहे थे। तभी अचानक कुल्हाड़ी नदी में गिर गई। वह बहुत दुखी हो गए। तभी अचानक एक परी आई और उनके दुखी होने का कारण पूछा। उसके पिताजी ने कारण बताया। परी ने सोने की कुल्हाड़ी दिखाते हुए कहा— “क्या यही है तुम्हारी कुल्हाड़ी? लकड़हारे ने तुरंत कहा— “हाँ-हाँ! यह मेरी ही है।” अब लकड़हारे का लालच बढ़ गया।

वह दूसरे दिन वापस वहीं लकड़ी काटने गया। उसने जानबूझ कर अपनी कुल्हाड़ी नदी में गिरा दी और दुखी होने का नाटक करने लगा। वह परी फिर आई और दुखी होने का कारण पूछा। लकड़हारे ने बताया कि उसकी कुल्हाड़ी नदी में गिर गई है। परी ने कहा— “क्या यह है?” उसने तुरंत कहा— “हाँ, यह मेरी है।” परी समझ गई कि वह लालची है। परी ने तुरंत ही पहले वाली कुल्हाड़ी भी

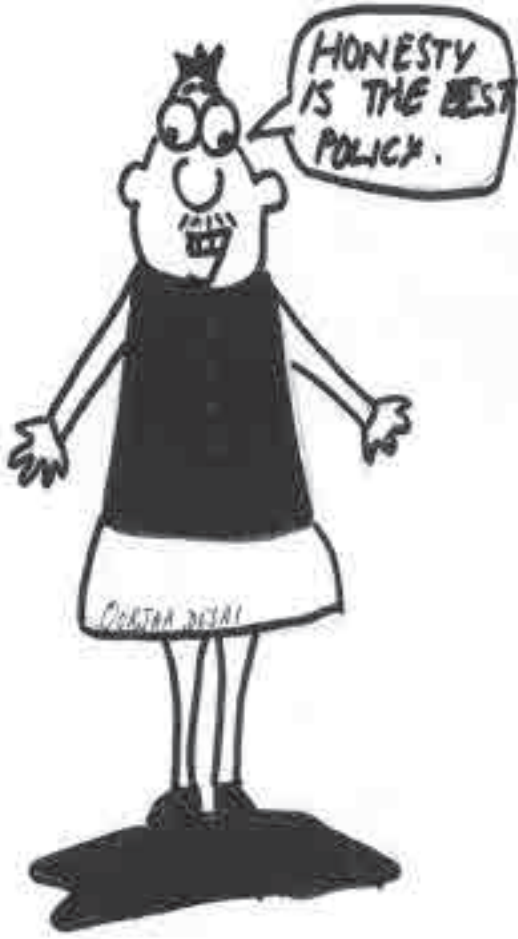


ले ली। लकड़हारा पछताने लगा कि उसकी लोहे की कुल्हाड़ी भी चली गई।

◆ ताशी साध, IV-D



ईमानदारी का फल



एक आदमी था। उसका नाम रामू था। उसकी ईमानदारी से गाँव के लोग बहुत प्रसन्न थे। एक दिन राजा ने रामू को दरबार में बुलाया। राजा ने कहा कि वे रामू की ईमानदारी से बहुत प्रसन्न हैं और उसे इनाम देना चाहते हैं। रामू ने यह बात सुनकर कहा कि उसे कुछ नहीं चाहिए। यदि वह ईमानदार है तो उसे अपनी ईमानदारी का फल अवश्य मिलेगा। एक दिन रामू को पैसे की ज़रूरत पड़ी। रामू राजा के पास गया। राजा ने कहा कि मैंने पहले ही कहा था, यह लो तुम्हारे पैसे। रामू ने राजा को चावल देकर कहा कि मेरे पास देने के लिए कुछ नहीं है पर आपको अपने खेत के चावल देना चाहता हूँ। राजा बहुत खुश हुआ और उसे गाँव का सरपंच बना दिया। उसे अपनी ईमानदारी का फल मिल गया।

◆ हुनर एच. शाह, IV-E

चतुर बच्चा



एक समय की बात है दो भाई थे मोहन और सोहन। मोहन हमेशा अपने बड़ों की सुनता और आदर करता था, हमेशा दूसरों की मदद करता था जबकि सोहन न ही बड़ों की सुनता और ना ही किसी की मदद करता था। एक दिन उनके माता-पिता उन दोनों से यह कह कर गए कि हम दोनों मंदिर जा रहे हैं। घर का और अपना ध्यान रखना हम जल्दी ही घर आ जाएँगे। दोनों भाई घर में बैठे-बैठे बोर हो रहे थे तभी मोहन को एक तरकीब सूझी। उसने सोहन से कहा कि मैं घर के बाहर जा कर कुछ ले कर आता हूँ लेकिन दुकान बहुत दूर है इसलिए तुम घर से बाहर मत निकलना, मुझे कुछ देर लग जाएगी। यह कह कर मोहन दुकान चला गया। लेकिन मोहन के मना करने के बावजूद सोहन घर से बाहर निकल गया क्योंकि उसे नारियल पानी पीना था और तभी दो चोर आए और उनका घर लूटने लगे। नारियल पानी पी कर जब वह घर पहुँचा तो उसने चोरों को चोरी करते देख लिया। परन्तु चोरों ने उसे ही रस्सी से बाँध दिया। इधर मोहन जब चॉकलेट लेकर लौटा तो वह घर का दृश्य देख कर हक्का-बक्का रह गया। मोहन ने सूझबूझ से काम लिया और अपने दोस्त के घर से पुलिस की गाड़ी वाला खिलौना ले आया और उसे बजाना शुरू कर दिया। पुलिस की गाड़ी की सायरन जैसी आवाज़ सुनकर चोर भाग खड़े हुए।

◆ आरजू जे. दोषी, IV-F

राम की सोच

एक लड़का था। उसका नाम राम था। वह सिर्फ जैन धर्म को मानता था। एक दिन राम ने मंदिर जाने का फैसला किया पर जब वह मंदिर पहुँचा तो उसने देखा कि मंदिर बंद है परंतु उसे याद आया कि वह घर नहीं जा सकता था क्योंकि उसने मंदिर जाने का फैसला किया था। वहीं पास में उसने एक मस्जिद देखी। वह थोड़ी देर तक सोचने लगा फिर एक अंकल उसके पास आए जो मुस्लिम थे। उन्होंने राम से पूछा कि तुम यहाँ जैन मंदिर के बाहर क्यों खड़े हो तो उसने कहा कि मैं जैन हूँ और मैं यहाँ दर्शन करने आया था परंतु मंदिर बंद है। फिर अंकल ने कहा कि कोई बात नहीं तुम मस्जिद में दर्शन कर लो। राम ने कहा कि मैं तो सिर्फ जैन धर्म को ही मानता हूँ। अंकल ने कहा कि सारे धर्म एक ही जैसे होते हैं। राम बोला कि मैं यह नहीं कर सकता। अंकल ने कहा कि कोई धर्म अच्छा या बुरा नहीं होता। राम ने कहा ठीक है। राम मंदिर में अपनी एक बहुत बड़ी इच्छा पूरी करने आया था। जब उसने अल्लाह से अपनी इच्छा माँगी तो उसकी इच्छा पूरी हो गई। उस दिन से राम हर एक धर्म को मानने लगा और उनका सम्मान करने लगा।



◆ परीनति जैन, IV-G

बातूनी कछुआ

एक समय की बात है तालाब किनारे एक बूढ़ा कछुआ रहता था जो बहुत बोलता था। कुछ समय बाद जब सर्दी आई तब वहाँ दो बगुले आकर बस गए। कछुए ने उन्हें अपना परिचय देकर उन्हें अपना मित्र बना लिया और वे तीनों बहुत अच्छे मित्र बन गए। कुछ समय बाद जब गर्मी पड़ी तब तालाब का पानी सूखने लगा। दोनों बगुलों ने वहाँ से जाने की योजना बनाई पर जब कछुए ने सुना तो उसे बहुत दुःख हुआ। कछुए ने कहा, “कृपा करके तुम लोग मत जाओ नहीं तो मैं अकेला रह जाऊँगा।” वे बोले, “नहीं हमें जाना ही होगा।” तभी बगुले को एक उपाय सूझा। उसने कहा, “ठीक है, तुम एक काम करना लकड़ी को बीच से मुँह में दबा लेना हम इसे दोनों ओर से चोंच में दबा लेंगे।” कछुए



को बगुले की तरकीब अच्छी लगी। बगुले कछुए को लेकर उड़ने लगे परंतु कछुआ अपनी आदत से मजबूर था। उसने कुछ कहने के लिए मुँह खोला और नीचे गिरने ही वाला था कि दोनों बगुलों ने गजब की फुर्ती

दिखाई और कछुए की जान बचा ली। इस घटना के बाद कछुए ने कसम खाई कि वह कभी भी अनावश्यक बातें नहीं करेगा।

◆ रिदधि मारू, IV-H



आलसी बंदर



जंगल में एक बंदर रहता था। वह बहुत आलसी था। वह कोई मेहनत का काम नहीं करता था। उसके पास एक पुरानी बाँसुरी थी, वह पेड़ पर बैठकर सारा दिन उसे बजाता रहता था। पेड़ पर लगे फल खाता था अपने भोजन के लिए भी ज्यादा मेहनत नहीं करता लेकिन बंदर के साथ रहने वाले उसके सभी दोस्त हाथी, खरगोश, हिरण, भालू, चींटी आदि सब बहुत मेहनती थे। जंगल में सर्दी के मौसम में सब पहले से ही भोजन इकट्ठा कर लेते थे। गरमी का मौसम आते ही सब खुश हो जाते थे क्योंकि गरमी में उनको भोजन की ज्यादा चिंता नहीं होती थी। रोज अपना भोजन ढूँढकर खा लेते थे। सर्दी का मौसम आया और सब ने पहले की तरह तैयारी शुरू कर दी लेकिन बंदर आलस के कारण पेड़ पर सोता रहा। सर्दी बढ़ने लगी पेड़ के फल खत्म हो गए। अब बंदर को भूख लगने लगी लेकिन खाने को उसने कुछ भी जमा नहीं किया था। सब दोस्तों ने भी इस बार उसको सबक सिखाने के लिए खाने के लिए कुछ नहीं देने का निश्चय किया। बंदर भूख से तड़पने लगा। तब अंत में उसके दोस्तों ने उसको थोड़ा भोजन दिया और उसको समझाया कि हमें मेहनत करनी चाहिए, आलस नहीं।

◆ आँचल लालवानी, V-A

मकड़ी की सीख

बहुत समय पहले की बात है एक राजा था, वह बहुत ही डरपोक था और इसी डर के कारण उसने बहुत समय से अस्त्र-शस्त्र से युद्ध का अभ्यास भी नहीं किया था। उसके पड़ोसी राजा यह बात जानते थे। वे बार-बार उसे युद्ध के लिए ललकारते पर वह हारने के डर से कभी युद्ध ना करता। एक दिन जब वह अपने दरबार में बैठा था कि एक दूत ने आकर उसे संदेश दिया जिस में लिखा था कि उसके राज्य पर हमला होने वाला है। राजा बहुत घबरा गया। चिंता के कारण उसे रात भर नींद भी नहीं आई। वह अपने महल के प्रांगण में टहलने लगा तभी उसकी नज़र एक छोटी-सी मकड़ी पर पड़ी। वह अपने जाल तक पहुँचने के लिए बार-बार दीवार पर चढ़ती और गिर जाती पर मकड़ी ने हार ना मानी और अथक प्रयासों के बाद आखिर वह अपने जाल तक पहुँच ही गई। यह देखकर राजा ने सोचा जब इतनी छोटी मकड़ी निरंतर अभ्यास से सफलता प्राप्त कर सकती है तो मैं भी अब से युद्ध का अभ्यास करूँगा और विजय प्राप्त करके रहूँगा। इस प्रकार राजा ने प्रतिदिन अभ्यास किया और अपने शत्रु को हराकर युद्ध में विजय प्राप्त की। किसी ने सही कहा है कि अभ्यास करते रहने से सफलता ज़रूर मिलती है।

◆ वत्सल एस. गाडिया, V-E



दो पड़ोसी



बहुत समय पहले की बात है, एक गाँव में दो पड़ोसी रहते थे। रामप्रसाद और श्यामप्रसाद। रामप्रसाद बहुत ईमानदार व मेहनती था। वह अपने घर में बच्चों को पढ़ाकर पैसे कमाता और अपने घर का गुज़ारा चलाता। श्यामप्रसाद चालाक व धोखेबाज़ अमीर व्यक्ति था। वह शहर के बाज़ार से सस्ते में सामान लाकर गाँव में महँगे दाम में बेचकर गरीब लोगों से पैसा ऐंठता था। उन दोनों के घर के पास एक पेड़ पर एक चिड़िया का घोंसला था। एक दिन चिड़िया का एक बच्चा घोंसले से नीचे गिर गया और उसको चोट लग गई। रामप्रसाद ने उसको उठाया और उसकी मरहम पट्टी की। चिड़िया ने रामप्रसाद की सेवा भावना से खुश होकर उसको पाँच मोती दिए। रामप्रसाद ने उन मोतियों को शहर में जाकर बेच दिया जिसके उसको अच्छे पैसे मिले और उसने उन पैसों से एक विद्यालय खोला। वह अमीर होता चला गया। एक बार उसने तीर्थ करने की सोची और अपना धन एक बक्से में रखकर अपने पड़ोसी श्यामप्रसाद को रखने को दिया और कहा कि आकर मैं आप से ले लूँगा और तीर्थ करने चला गया। जब वह वापस आया तो धोखेबाज़ श्यामप्रसाद ने उसका धन निकालकर बक्से में पत्थर भरकर रामप्रसाद को दे दिया। जब

रामप्रसाद ने पूछा कि मेरा धन कहाँ गया तो उसने कहा वह तो पत्थर था, धन कहाँ था। रामप्रसाद दुखी होकर चला गया। कुछ समय बाद श्यामप्रसाद को व्यापार के लिए दूर शहर में जाना पड़ा तो वह अपने बेटे को रामप्रसाद के घर छोड़कर गया। रामप्रसाद ने सोचा इस बार इसको सबक सिखाया जाए। रामप्रसाद ने एक तोता खरीदा और जब श्यामप्रसाद वापस आया तो रामप्रसाद ने श्यामप्रसाद को तोता देकर कहा, 'यह लो तुम्हारा बेटा।' उसने कहा, 'यह तो तोता है, मेरा बेटा कहाँ है?' रामप्रसाद ने कहा, 'यही तुम्हारा बेटा है।' 'तुम झूठ बोल रहे हो।' श्यामप्रसाद के बार-बार ऐसा कहने पर रामप्रसाद ने कहा, 'जब मेरा धन पत्थर बन सकता है तो तुम्हारा बेटा तोता क्यों नहीं हो सकता।' इतना सुनकर श्यामप्रसाद को अपनी चालाकी पर पछतावा हुआ और उसने रामप्रसाद का सारा धन वापस कर दिया। श्यामप्रसाद ने धोखेबाज़ी छोड़ दी क्योंकि उसको उसकी करनी से सबक मिल गया था।

◆ स्तुति जैन, V-B



राजा का बजा बाजा



एक राज्य के एक बड़े-से महल में एक राजा रहते थे। उन्होंने कई राज्यों को युद्ध में जीता था। इस कारण वे बहुत मशहूर थे। बलवान होने के कारण वे घमंडी हो गए थे। एक दिन एक बाबा आए जिन्हें सब धुनी बाबा के नाम से जानते थे। वे बहुत ज्ञानी थे। जब उनको राजा के अहंकार का पता चला तो वे जल्दी ही राज्य में आ गए। उनको राजा से मिलने की इच्छा थी क्योंकि मिलकर ही वे राजा के अहंकार को मिटा सकते थे तो निकल पड़े धुनी बाबा राजमहल की तरफ। जब वे महल के अंदर गए तो उन्हें महल बहुत आलीशान लगा लेकिन उनका लक्ष्य सिर्फ राजा के अहंकार को मिटाना था। आखिर में धुनी बाबा राजा से मिल गए। राजा को धुनी बाबा ज्ञानी लगे इसलिए राजा ने बाबा का अच्छे से स्वागत किया। फिर धुनी बाबा ने राजा से कहा, “राजा आपको मेरी दो बातें माननी होंगी, तभी मैं आपको पूरे भारत का राजा मानूँगा और अगर आप नहीं मान पाए तो आपको छीनी हुई ज़मीन वापस लौटानी होगी। राजा ने पहले थोड़ा सोचा लेकिन फिर धुनी बाबा की बात मान ली। धुनी बाबा राजा को खाई के पास लेकर गए और उन्होंने राजा से कहा, “अब आप मेरा रुमाल खाई की तरफ फेंक कर दिखाइए।” राजा ने कई बार कोशिश की लेकिन हवा के झोंके से रुमाल वापस ज़मीन पर गिर जाता। अब बाबा ने पत्थर उठाया और रुमाल से पत्थर को लपेट दिया और खाई की तरफ फेंक दिया।

◆ दीया जगानी, v-c

बिल्ली और बच्चे

एक गाँव में एक बिल्ली रहती थी। उसके दो बच्चे थे। गाँव में सभी लोग खुश थे और एक परिवार की तरह रहते थे। एक बार गाँव में अकाल आ गया। खेतों की सारी फसल सूख गई। लोग भूख से मरने लगे। पानी की कमी हो गई। बिल्ली के पास जो दूध बचा था वह भी खत्म हो गया। उसके बच्चे भूखे थे और वे सिर्फ दूध ही पीते थे। बिल्ली ने अपने दूसरे साथियों से पूछा पर उनके पास दूध नहीं था। वह दूसरी जगह जाने ही वाली थी कि कुछ कुत्ते उसके पीछे पड़ गए। बिल्ली दूसरे रास्ते से जाने लगी फिर उसे शिकारी ने दबोच लिया। तुरंत उसने अपने नाखून से शिकारी के ऊपर वार किया और वहाँ से भाग गई। रास्ते में उसे कई लोग मिले पर बिल्ली को दूध नहीं मिला। वह निराश नहीं हुई और ढूँढ़ती रही। अंत में उसे पेड़ के नीचे एक आदमी लेटा हुआ मिला जो दूध का पैकेट अपने सिराहने रखकर सो रहा था।



बिल्ली ने चुपके से उस पैकेट को अपने मुँह में दबाया और भाग गई। बिल्ली अपने बच्चों के पास पहुँच गई और उन्हें दूध पिला कर उनकी प्यास बुझाई।

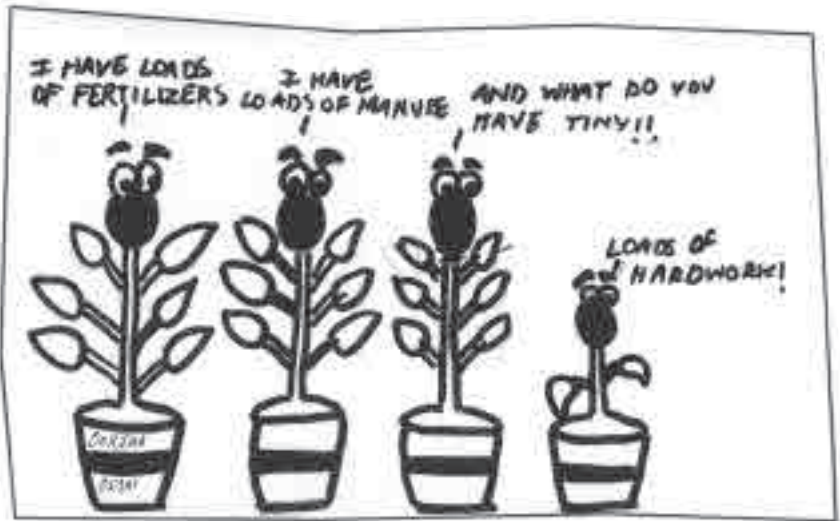
◆ आशीष रेखानी, v-H



ईमानदारी और मेहनत का फल

यह बात सन् 1789 की है। अनंतपुर के राजा ने गुस्से में अपने मंत्री को निकाल दिया। यह बात पूरे राज्य में फैल गई। आशीष, रोहन, रामू और संतोष मंत्री बनना चाहते थे तो वे राजा के पास गए। राजा ने कहा, “ठीक है, मैं तुम चारों में से किसी एक को अपना मंत्री चुनूंगा पर मैं अपने मंत्री में चार अच्छे गुण चाहता हूँ और वे हैं- ईमानदार, साफ़ दिल, मेहनती और एक सच्चा इंसान। ये चार गुण होना बहुत ज़रूरी है। इसके लिए मैं तुम्हें दो कार्य दूँगा और जो इन दोनों कार्यों को मन लगाकर अच्छे से करेगा वही बनेगा मेरा मंत्री।” फिर अगले दिन राजा ने चारों लोगों को बुलाया और उनका पहला कार्य बताया, “तुम्हें सबसे पहले इस पौधे को उगाना है। मुझे यह पौधा एक महीने के बाद चाहिए। एक महीने के बाद चारों लोग राजा के पास पौधा लेकर गए। सब के पौधे बढ़े हुए थे बस रामू का पौधा वैसा ही था जैसा राजा ने उन्हें शुरू में दिया था। तब राजा ने रामू से पूछा कि उसका पौधा बढ़ा क्यों नहीं? तब रामू ने कुछ नहीं कहा। फिर राजा ने कहा कि मैंने पहले कार्य का विजेता चुन लिया है। फिर राजा ने उन्हें दूसरा कार्य दिया। राजा ने कहा कि तुम्हारा दूसरा कार्य यह है कि तुम्हें मेरी प्रजा की मदद करनी होगी। जिसके काम से लोग ज़्यादा खुश होंगे वही मेरा मंत्री बनेगा।

इस बार आशीष, संतोष और रोहन ने ज़्यादा मेहनत नहीं की और बस थोड़ा ही काम किया पर रामू ने तो खून-पसीना एक कर



दिया। उसने ज़रूरत से ज़्यादा मेहनत की। अंत में नतीजे की बारी आई। राजा ने अपनी प्रजा के सामने विजेता घोषित किया और कहा कि मेरा मंत्री रामू है। रामू की आँखों से खुशी के आँसू टपक पड़े। राजा ने कहा कि आशीष, संतोष और रोहन बेईमान हैं। पहले कार्य में इन्होंने पौधे को बदल दिया और नया पौधा उगा लिया पर रामू ने उसी पौधे पर मेहनत की इसलिए रामू का पौधा नहीं उगा क्योंकि वह पौधा खराब था। रामू ने दूसरे कार्य में भी प्रजा की पूरी मदद की इसलिए रामू ही है मेरा मंत्री क्योंकि उसी ने सारे कार्य ईमानदारी से किए हैं।

◆ उत्कर्ष अग्रवाल, V-D

अनोखा तोता

बहुत समय पहले की बात है— जब ना ही बिजली थी, ना ही यातायात करने के साधन या वाहन थे। जब दिन को चिड़ियाँ गुनगुनातीं और पेड़ों से गुजरती ठंडी हवा आती। रात को आसमान में चमकते हुए तारे दिखते और सब के चेहरों पर खुशी दिखती थी। वहीं एक छोटा-सा राज्य हुआ करता था जहाँ के लोग बहुत ही सच्चे और नेकदिल थे। एक दिन जब कुछ मछुआरे नदी में मछली पकड़ रहे थे कि उन्होंने एक आदमी को डूबते हुए देखा। एक मछुआरे ने उसे बचा लिया और अपने घर ले गया। उस मछुआरे के पास एक बोलने वाला तोता था जो सारी बातें ज्यों की त्यों बोल लेता था। उस तोते की अनोखी कला देखकर अनजान आदमी के मन में उसे पाने का लालच आ गया। उसने राजा से शिकायत की कि इस मछुआरे ने मेरा तोता ले लिया है। मुझे मेरा तोता दिलवाइए। राजा ने मछुआरे को बुलवाया और दोनों की बातें सुनकर वह सोच में पड़ गए कि मेरे राज्य में तो सभी सच्चे लोग हैं पर यह मेहमान भी झूठ क्यों बोलेगा। बहुत सोच-समझकर राजा ने कहा कि तोते को कुछ समय के लिए

मेरे कक्ष में छोड़ दो। तोते ने राजा को सब सच बता दिया। राजा ने उस आदमी को कारागार में डाल दिया और मछुआरे को बहुत से पुरस्कार देकर विदा किया। सच ही कहा है दोस्तों कि सच्चाई की हमेशा जीत होती है।



◆ ध्रुव डी. तरसाडिया, V-F

सड़े हुए सेब



एक शहर में एक अमीर आदमी था। उसका बेटा बहुत सज्जन एवं अच्छे व्यवहार वाला था। उसे ज़रा भी घमंड नहीं था। वह अपनी कक्षा में प्रथम आता था। जब उसने वारहवीं की परीक्षा पास की तो उसे पता चला कि वह अपने शहर में पहले स्थान पर आया है। उसे आसानी से कॉलेज में दाखिला मिल गया। उसके पिता बहुत खुश थे। कॉलेज में उसके चार दोस्त बन गए। वे भी बड़े अमीर थे लेकिन घमंडी थे। वे पढ़ाई कम और घूमने-फिरने का काम ज़्यादा करते थे इसलिए फ़ेल होते थे। वह लड़का भी उनके साथ पढ़ाई छोड़कर मौज-मस्ती करने लगा। वह बेमतलब पैसे खर्च करने लगा तो उसके पिता को चिंता होने लगी। वे बहुत बीमार हो गए। एक दिन वह अपने पिता के पास बैठा था। उसके पिता ने एक टोकरी में पाँच सेब रखे। सारे सेब ताज़े थे पर एक सेब सड़ा हुआ था। लड़के ने अपने पिता से पूछा, 'पिताजी आपने ताज़े सेबों के साथ सड़ा सेब क्यों रखा है?' उन्होंने तब कुछ भी नहीं कहा। दो दिन बाद लड़के ने देखा कि सारे सेब सड़ गए। उसने अपने पिता से पूछा, 'पिताजी ये सेब दो दिन में कैसे सड़ गए?' उसके पिता ने कहा उस एक सड़े सेब ने सबको सड़ा दिया जैसे उन चार दोस्तों ने तुम्हें घमंडी और बुद्धू बना दिया है। यह कहकर उसके पिता की मौत हो गई। उस

लड़के को उनकी बात समझ में आ गई। उसने उनसे दोस्ती तोड़ दी और मेहनत करके बैंक का बड़ा अधिकारी बन गया।

◆ वैभव थपलियाल, V-G

व्यापारी की ज़िंदगी

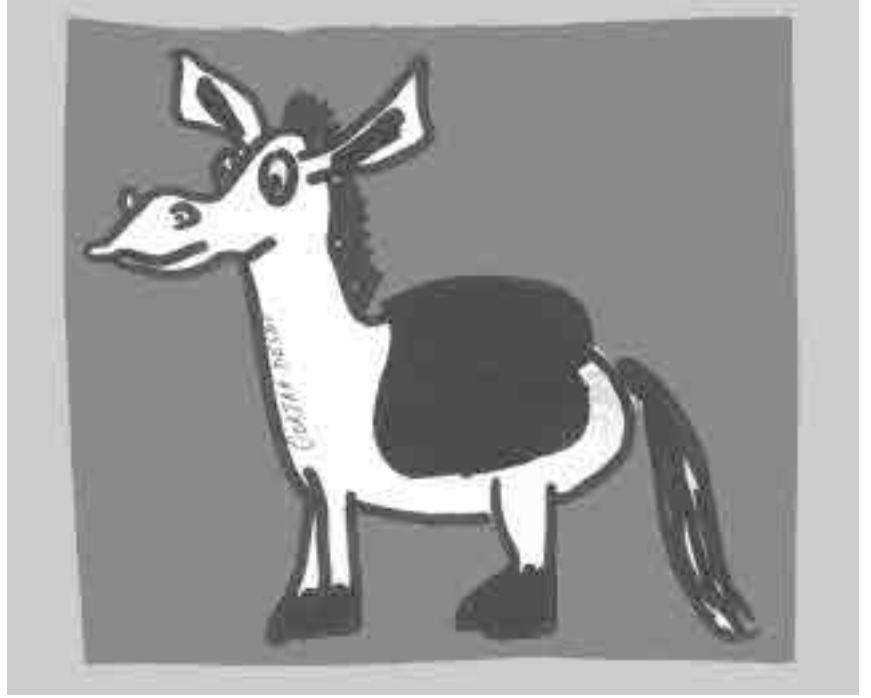
अवतार पटेल नाम का एक व्यापारी था जो बड़ा ही अमीर और दयालु था। वह अपना सारा काम खुद ही करता था। एक बार उन्हें बाज़ार नरम होने के कारण बड़ा नुकसान उठाना पड़ा। उन्होंने बड़ा कॉन्ट्रैक्ट ले लिया था और इसके लिए पैसा भी पहले ही ले लिया था। काम समय पर पूरा न होने के कारण व्यापारी को पैसे सूद समेत वापस लौटाने थे पर उसके पास इतने पैसे नहीं थे। अवतार ने बैंक से लोन लेकर पैसे चुका दिए लेकिन उसका काम मंदा होने के कारण बैंक को भी समय पर पैसे नहीं लौटा पाया। बैंक वालों ने उसका घर गिरवी रख लिया और अवतार अपने परिवार के साथ सड़क पर आ गया। फिर भी उसने हार न मानी। वह दिन-रात अपनी व्यवस्था में जुटा रहता। आखिरकार एक दिन जब बाज़ार में तेज़ी आई तो उसे एक बड़ा कॉन्ट्रैक्ट फिर से मिला। उसने बड़ी लगन से कॉन्ट्रैक्ट पूरा किया। उन्हें अपने काम के लिए अच्छी कीमत मिली। अवतार ने बैंक के सारे पैसे चुका दिए और अपने परिवार के साथ खुशी-खुशी रहने लगा।



◆ आशुतोष गुप्ता, VI-A

गधे को सबक

एक बार की बात है एक व्यापारी था। वह नमक का व्यापार करता था। उसके पास एक गधा था जिस पर नमक लादकर वह शहर बेचने जाता था। शहर के मार्ग में एक नदी आती थी। गधे को नदी पार करने में बड़ी तकलीफ़ होती, पर उसके पास इसका कोई उपाय नहीं था। एक दिन व्यापारी को नमक ले जाने में देर हो गई तो वह गधे को जल्दी-जल्दी नदी पार कराने लगा। अचानक गधे का पैर फिसल गया और वह नदी में गिर गया। जैसे ही वह खड़ा हुआ, वह अपना सारा दर्द भूल गया क्योंकि उसे बहुत हल्का महसूस हो रहा था। उसे समझ में आ गया कि नमक पानी में घुल जाता है। अब जब भी वह पानी में जाता झट से बैठ जाता और उसका बोझ हल्का हो जाता। व्यापारी ने उसकी चाल समझ ली। एक दिन शहर से लौटते समय उसने गधे पर रूई लाद दी। गधा अपनी आदत अनुसार नदी पार करते समय फिर से पानी में बैठ गया। उसे यह नहीं पता था कि रूई पानी पी लेती है। जब वह खड़ा हुआ तो उसका बोझ कम होने की बजाय और ज्यादा हो गया। उसकी समझ में आ गया कि मालिक ने उसे सबक सिखाने के लिए ऐसा किया है। सच ही कहा है—जो बोओगे सो काटोगे।



◆ मीनल अग्रवाल, VI-C

बंसीधर की सच्चाई

एक समय की बात है, सूर्यभान नामक राजा था। उसके पास बहुत सारी धन-दौलत थी। उनमें चार बेशकीमती सोने के सिक्के थे जिनकी सुरक्षा के उन्होंने खास इंतजाम कर रखे थे। उन्हें चुरा पाना असंभव था। उसी राज्य में बंसीधर नाम का एक शातिर चोर रहता था। वह छल, कपट, झूठ से ऐसे चोरी करता कि कभी पकड़ा नहीं जाता। एक दिन जब वह सिपाहियों से बचने के लिए भाग रहा था तो वह एक साधु की कुटिया में पहुँच गया। साधु ने कहा कि मैं तुम्हारी जान तो बचा सकता हूँ पर तुम्हें वचन देना होगा कि तुम कभी झूठ नहीं बोलोगे। बंसीधर मान गया। उस दिन से वह सच बोलने लगा। राजा के सिक्कों की खबर बंसीधर तक पहुँची। वह उन्हें चुराने की योजना बनाने लगा। राजा की एक आदत थी कि वह रात को भेष बदलकर नगर में घूमा करता था। एक रात वह बंसीधर से टकरा गए। बंसीधर ने उन्हें बताया कि जल्द ही वह महल में चोरी करने वाला है। राजा को बड़ा आश्चर्य हुआ। बड़ी कोशिश के बाद बंसीधर एक सिक्का चुराने में कामयाब हो गया पर उसे मंत्री ने रँग हाथ पकड़ लिया। लेकिन सिक्के देखकर मंत्री के मन में लालच आ गया। उसने सबकी नज़रें बचाकर सारे सिक्के चुरा लिए और सारा इल्जाम बंसीधर पर लगा दिया। बंसीधर को देखते ही राजा पहचान गए। बंसीधर ने एक सिक्के की चोरी करना कबूल लिया। राजा सोच में पड़ गए। उन्होंने मंत्री की तलाशी का आदेश दिया। मंत्री ने अपनी गलती मान ली। राजा ने मंत्री को कारागार में डाल दिया और बंसीधर की सच्चाई को देखकर उसे सिक्कों की रखवाली के लिए रख लिया। सच ही है 'साँच को आँच नहीं।'



◆ रानी के. जैन, VI-D



स्टेशन पहुँचने की तैयारी



आज से मेरी छुट्टियाँ शुरू हो रही हैं। मैं अपने मामा के घर जाने को बेताब हूँ। मुझे मेरे मामा के घर जाना बहुत पसंद है। धीरे-धीरे समय बीतता चला गया और शाम हो गई। माँ और मैंने सारा सामान कमरे से बाहर कर लिया। निकलने का समय हो रहा था लेकिन पापा अभी तक नहीं आए थे। जैसे ही पापा घर आए मैंने उन्हें तुरंत निकलने को कहा। वे तैयार हो रहे थे, उन्होंने मेरी बात नहीं मानी और थोड़ी देर के बाद वाहर आए। फटाफट हम लोगों ने गाड़ी में सामान रखा और निकल गए। रास्ते में भीड़ को देखकर लग रहा था कि आज ट्रैफिक जाम हो सकता है और ऐसा ही हुआ। आगे जाकर गाड़ी रुक गई। हम जैसे-तैसे स्टेशन पहुँच गए। जल्दी से सामान उठाकर हम लोग प्लेटफॉर्म पर जाने ही वाले थे कि पता चला हमारी ट्रेन तो पहले ही निकल चुकी है। मैंने पापा से कहा कि अगर हम तैयार होने में वक्त बर्बाद नहीं करते तो शायद ट्रेन मिल जाती लेकिन अब पछताए होत क्या जब चिड़िया चुग गई खेत।

◆ ऋषभ शाह, VI-B

एकता से जीवन बचा

‘एकता में बल होता है’ यह एक प्रख्यात कहावत है। इसका अर्थ है कि संगठन में इतनी शक्ति होती है कि पहाड़ों और समुद्रों जैसी बाधाओं को भी आसानी से पार कर लेते हैं। इसका असली मतलब हमारी दैनिक क्रियाओं से ही स्पष्ट हो सकता है।

से घेरने लगे और चिल्लाए, “अगर हिम्मत है तो मारकर दिखाओ हम सबको।” इनकी आवाज़ों और आत्मविश्वास को देखकर राजा भी डर

एक बार की बात है। पहाड़ों में एक सुंदर गाँव था, कुमाऊँ। इसमें वसे थे हर किस्म के लोग और पशु-पक्षी। हर सुबह चिड़ियों के चहचहाने की आवाज़ों से यह गाँव गूँज उठता था। यहाँ के लोगों का जीवन शांति से गुज़र रहा था। एक रात लोगों को अपने घर के बाहर गोलियों के चलने की आवाज़ सुनाई दी। अपने घरों से बाहर निकलने पर पता चला कि ये आवाज़ें लोगों के चिल्लाने की थीं। गाँव के बीचों-बीच एक बड़ा बरगद का वृक्ष था। उस पेड़ पर छोटे-छोटे पक्षी अपना घोंसला बनाकर रहते थे। उस पेड़ को राजा और उसके आदमी काटने जा रहे थे। हर जगह लोगों का जमघट लगा था। वह उनका बहुत प्रिय पेड़ था। पूरी रात उस पेड़ को बचाने की लड़ाई जारी रही। लोगों ने राजा को समझाया, “महाराज, आप इतने क्रूर, इतने निर्दय कैसे हो सकते हैं? इस पेड़ ने हमें कितना कुछ दिया है; पशु-पक्षियों को आश्रय, बच्चों को खेलने की जगह, हमें छाया और फल-फूल आदि। इसी को आप काटना चाहते हैं, क्यों?” इसपर राजा ने कहा, “यह महल बनाने की जगह है। क्यों ना काटूँ इसे?” थोड़ी बहस करने के बाद लोगों को लगा कि राजा ऐसे नहीं मानेंगे। वे सब वृक्ष को चारों ओर

गए। उन्हें लगा कि वे अपनी पूरी प्रजा को नहीं मार सकते। वे अपने महल में लौट गए। आखिर एकता की ही जीत हुई।

◆ स्तुति खंडवाला, VI-E



सपने ने किया सावधान



एक बार एक जानवर जंगल में घूम रहा था तब उसने देखा कि एक बच्चा तालाब में गिर गया और उसके पीछे एक मगर है। उसने उस बच्चे को बाहर निकाला तो मगर उसके पीछे पड़ गया। मगर से बचने के लिए वह जानवर पेड़ पर चढ़ गया। जब मगरमच्छ उस पेड़ के नीचे आया तो जानवर का पैर फिसला और वह सीधा मगरमच्छ के ऊपर गिरा। मगरमच्छ श्राप मुक्त हो गया और वह एक परी में बदल गया और कहा, “जानवर तुमने मुझे श्रापमुक्त किया है इसलिए मैं तुम्हारी तीन इच्छाएँ पूरी करूँगी।” वह जानवर बोलता है कि मुझे हाथी जैसी सूँड़ चाहिए। उस परी ने उसे हाथी जैसी सूँड़ दे दी। तब सूँड़ मिलने के बाद उसने पानी पिया। अब चलते हुए उसने जेब्रा देखा जिसके शरीर पर सफ़ेद और काली लकीरें थी। उसने परी से वैसा शरीर माँगा तो उसे वह भी मिल गया। अगले दिन उसने चीता देखा तो उसने परी से कहा कि उसे चीते की तरह पैर चाहिए और उसे वह भी मिल गया। एक दिन जंगल के जानवरों ने उसे चिढ़ाया तो उसे बहुत गुस्सा आया और वह वापस अपने साधारण रूप में आना चाहता था। उसने परी से अपनी इच्छा बताई तो परी ने कहा कि तुम्हारी तीनों इच्छाएँ पूरी हो गई हैं इसलिए मैं तुम्हारी कोई इच्छा पूरी

नहीं कर सकती। यह सुनकर वह नींद से जाग गया और उसे पता चला कि यह एक सपना था और वह समझ गया कि जितना उसके पास है उसी में खुश रहना चाहिए।

◆ प्रथम जलान, VI-F

हाथी और चींटी

सर, सर, सर एक जोर से तूफान आया जंगल में, सारा जंगल सुनसान हो गया। शेर, बाघ, चिता, बंदर, जिराफ़ आदि सब जानवर तूफान के कारण अपने-अपने घरों में चले गए थे लेकिन हाथी भाई तो बाहर ही घूमते रहे। तूफान जाने के बाद उसको लगा कि उसकी सूँड़ में कोई गड़बड़ है। वह अपने सूँड़ का इलाज़ करवाने शहर गए पर वहाँ के डॉक्टरों की किसी भी दवा से उनको कोई आराम न हुआ। दो-तीन दिन बाद वो जंगल वापस लौट आए। जंगल में जब चींटी ने हाथी भाई को उदास देखा तो उन्होंने कहा, “आप इतने उदास क्यों हैं?” हाथी ने कहा कि मेरी सूँड़ में पता नहीं क्या



खराबी आ गई है, शहर जाकर डॉक्टरों को भी दिखाया पर कोई आराम नहीं हो रहा है।

चींटी ने कहा, “क्या मैं आपकी सूँड़ के अंदर जाकर देखूँ हाथी भाई। चींटी उसके सूँड़ में घुस गई उसने वहाँ देखा कि उसकी सूँड़ में कचरा फँस गया है। उसने सूँड़ से बाहर निकलकर कहा कि आपकी सूँड़ में थोड़ा कचरा फँस गया है, आप जोर से सूँड़ से साँस बाहर फेंको जिससे आपकी तकलीफ़ दूर हो जाएगी। हाथी ने ऐसा ही किया। हाथी ने चींटी को धन्यवाद दिया। इससे हमें शिक्षा मिलती है कि समय पड़ने पर छोटे-से-छोटा व्यक्ति भी काम आ सकता है।

◆ आंगी देसाई, VI-G



ओस्कर पिस्टोरियस



जब हम सभी बाधाओं को पार करके विजेता बनते हैं तो उस खुशी का एहसास ही अलग होता है। अर्थात् मेहनत से किए गए कार्य में सफलता अवश्य प्राप्त होती है इसलिए जीवन में हमें सदैव परिश्रम करते रहना चाहिए ना कि बाधाओं से डरकर बैठ जाना चाहिए। यदि हम अपने लक्ष्य को पाने के लिए कठिन परिश्रम करेंगे तो विजय अवश्य पाएँगे। ओस्कर पिस्टोरियस को तो आप सभी जानते ही होंगे? जी हाँ, जो आज एक महान धावक है। वे मेहनत, परिश्रम का एक जीवंत उदाहरण हैं। वे बचपन से शारीरिक रूप से अक्षम थे किन्तु मेहनत करके कुछ कर दिखाने की लगन उनमें बचपन से ही थी। उनका जन्म फ्रांस के छोटे-से गाँव में हुआ था। सब बच्चों की तरह उनको भी खेलने-कूदने का शौक था। सोलह साल की उम्र में उनको कृत्रिम पैर लगाए गए। उनका बचपन से एक तेज धावक बनने का सपना था। जब उन्हें कृत्रिम पैर मिले तो उन्होंने दौड़ना शुरू किया। इसके लिए उन्होंने दिन-रात बहुत मेहनत की। उन्होंने बहुत-सी छोटी-बड़ी प्रतियोगिताएँ जीतीं। वर्ष 2012 के ओलंपिक में उनको चुना गया और उन्होंने 200 मीटर व 400 मीटर की दौड़ में शानदार प्रदर्शन करके सबको पीछे छोड़ दिया। हमें उनसे सीखना चाहिए कि उन्होंने अपने सपनों का सम्मान किया और उनको पूरा करने के लिए कठिन परिश्रम किया इसलिए हमें अपने लक्ष्य को पाने के लिए सदैव प्रयास करना चाहिए।

◆ आकांक्षा सोमानी, VI-H

लगातार प्रयास

एक बार की बात है, एक बच्चा एक नदी में गिर गया। उसे बचाना बहुत ही मुश्किल हो रहा था। तभी एक व्यक्ति उस नदी में उसे बचाने के लिए कूद पड़ा। वह उस गाँव का नहीं था और न ही वहाँ किसी को जानता था। फिर भी उसने उस बच्चे को बचाने का बहुत प्रयत्न किया। बहुत देर हो गई, न बच्चा पानी से बाहर आया और न ही वह आदमी। धारा का प्रवाह तेज़ होने के कारण वह बच्चे को न बचा सका और स्वयं भी न बच सका।



यह कहानी वैसे तो बहुत छोटी है लेकिन इस कहानी में हमने जाना कि एक अनजान व्यक्ति ने अपनी जान की भी परवाह न करते हुए बच्चे को बचाने का प्रयास किया और उसकी जान भी चली गई। लेकिन उसने उसे बचाने का लगातार प्रयास किया। “अनजान कभी अपनों से भी ज़्यादा हो सकता है बस समझने की देरी है।”

◆ इशिका गोयंका, VIII-B



परोपकार की भावना

आज की भ्रष्टाचारी दुनिया में परोपकार जाने कहाँ खो गया है। लोग इतने लालची हो गए हैं कि अगर कभी किसी का भला भी करने गए तो उसमें भी अपना फ़ायदा देखेंगे। इंसान तो जानवर से भी गए-गुज़रे हैं।



एक बार एक लकड़हारा लकड़ियाँ काटते-काटते घने जंगल में चला गया। जब उसका काम खत्म हो गया तो उसने लौटना चाहा लेकिन बहुत रात हो चुकी थी और वह रास्ता भी भूल गया था। उसने रात वहीं बिताने की सोची और एक पेड़ के नीचे विश्राम करने लगा। उसी पेड़ पर दो कबूतर रहते थे। उन्होंने उसे अपना अतिथि माना। थोड़ी देर बाद जब उन्होंने देखा कि उनका अतिथि ठंड से काँप रहा है तो इतनी रात को भी उन कबूतरों ने सूखी लकड़ी टूँटी और आग जलाकर उसे गरमाहट दी। वह लकड़हारा बहुत भूखा था और उसके पास खाने के लिए भी कुछ नहीं था। जब यह बात कबूतरों को पता चली तो उन्होंने उसके खाने की व्यवस्था करनी चाही, परंतु कुछ भी न मिला। अन्त में उन्होंने आग में कूद कर अपनी जान दे दी और उसके लिए खाना बन गए। मैं सोचती हूँ कि अगर कबूतर जैसे पक्षी भी परोपकार कर सकते हैं तो हम इंसान क्यों नहीं? हम किसी के लिए अपनी जान तो नहीं दे सकते हैं पर उसकी मदद तो कर ही सकते हैं।

हम इस देश का कल हैं। कहते हैं कि सब हमारे भाई-बहन हैं। फिर हम क्यों अपने भाई-बहन के बारे में नहीं सोचते? इसके लिए हमें पहले अपनी सोच को बदलना होगा। जागो...

◆ विपाशा चौहान, VIII-A

सहयोग की भावना

सभी में कोई न कोई बुरी आदत होती है लेकिन उनमें से सभी आदतें हमें नुकसान पहुँचाएँ ऐसा ज़रूरी नहीं है। कभी-कभी हमारी बुरी आदतों की वजह से हमारे जीवन की खुशहाली हमसे छिन जाती है; जैसे झूठ बोलना, सिगरेट पीना, जुआ खेलना



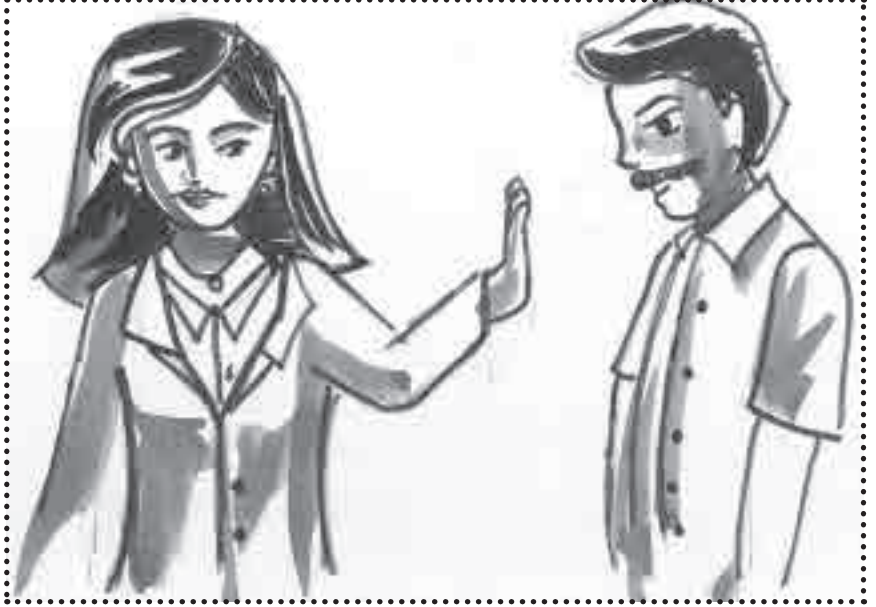
आदि। मैं एक उदाहरण देना चाहूँगी कि मैंने किस प्रकार अपनी एक सहेली का सहयोग करके उसे बुरी आदतों से बचाया। मेरी एक दोस्त अनुषा जो कि कक्षा बारहवीं में मेरे साथ पढ़ती थी अचानक ही अपने से उम्र में बड़े दोस्तों के साथ रहने लगी। परिणाम स्वरूप उसके न केवल व्यवहार में बदलाव आया बल्कि वह धीरे-धीरे बुरी आदतों का शिकार होने लगी। माता-पिता से झूठ बोलना, पैसे चुराना और सबसे बुरी आदत नशा करना। एक दिन जब मैंने यह सब अपनी आँखों से देखा तो मुझे बहुत दुःख हुआ। मैंने सोचा कि मुझे उसकी मदद करनी ही चाहिए न केवल उसकी दोस्त होने के कारण बल्कि इंसानियत के नाते भी। मैंने उसे प्यार से समझाया और इन बुरी आदतों के दुष्परिणामों से भी परिचित करवाया। उसके माता-पिता से भी सहयोग करने की विनती की। उचित सलाह, सहयोग एवं इलाज के द्वारा वह जल्दी ही ठीक होने लगी और जीवन की नई शुरुआत के लिए कोशिश करने लगी। इस प्रकार सही समय पर मिले सहयोग ने मेरी मित्र की जान बचा ली और उसके माता-पिता को अपनी बेटी को खोने के गम से बचा लिया।

◆ ऐश्वी पारेख, VIII-C



अहंकारी मित्र

हमारे माता-पिता हमेशा चाहते हैं कि हम अच्छी आदतें सीखें। बचपन से हमें बताया जाता है कि हमें सदैव परोपकार करना चाहिए। लेकिन आजकल स्वार्थ की भावना ने सभी को घेर लिया है। सभी के लिए धन-दौलत ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण हो गई है। आज से बीस साल पहले राधा और श्याम नामक परम मित्र थे। दोनों में आकाश-पाताल का अंतर होने पर भी वे सदैव साथ में ही रहा करते थे। श्याम बहुत अमीर था लेकिन वह पढ़ाई-लिखाई में बहुत कमजोर था। वहीं राधा गरीब होते हुए भी बहुत होशियार थी। लेकिन दोनों मित्रों में कभी पैसों को लेकर कोई भेद-भाव नहीं था। एक बार राधा के पिता हरिलाल जी को खेती में बहुत नुकसान हुआ। उनके पास राधा की फ़ीस भरने तक के पैसे नहीं थे। ये बात पता लगते ही श्याम के पिता रमेश जी ने राधा की मदद करते हुए उसकी फ़ीस जमा कर दी। राधा ने हमेशा उन्हें भगवान के रूप में देखा। उन्हीं की लगातार मदद की वजह से ही आज वह बहुत बड़ी कंपनी में काम कर रही है। लेकिन आज राधा के लिए पैसा, नौकरी, लाभ-हानि ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण हो गए हैं। आज श्याम अपनी लापरवाहियों के कारण जीवन में बहुत कष्ट उठा रहा था लेकिन अब वो काम को लेकर बहुत गंभीर भी हो गया था। राधा से मदद की आशा में वह जब उसके पास गया तो राधा ने उसे साफ़ इंकार कर दिया। श्याम को विश्वास ही नहीं हुआ कि यह वही राधा है जो उसे अपना परम मित्र और उसके पिता को अपना भगवान मानती थी। उस दिन श्याम का परोपकार एवं मित्रता पर से भरोसा ही उठ गया और वह उस शहर को छोड़कर कहीं दूर चला गया। राधा अपनी जिंदगी में व्यस्त तो हो गई लेकिन अपराध बोध से स्वयं को कभी मुक्त न कर सकी। अपने अहंकार एवं स्वार्थ के कारण उसने अपने परम मित्र को खो दिया था। वह यह भूल गई थी कि आज वह जिस मुकाम पर है उसमें श्याम का बहुत बड़ा हाथ है। सच ही है आज दोस्ती, भाईचारा, ईमानदारी व परोपकार ये सब कहने की ही बातें रह गई हैं। हमें सदैव इन बातों का सम्मान करना चाहिए तभी जीवन का सुंदरतम रूप सुरक्षित रह पाएगा।



◆ खुशाली तुलसीआन, VIII-D

मददगारी बच्चा

एक देश की बात है, एक छोटा-सा गाँव था। उस गाँव में कोई अस्पताल नहीं था। दूर एक अस्पताल था पर वहाँ जाने के लिए दो रास्ते थे— एक था नदी पार करना और दूसरा एक भयानक जंगल पार करना। एक दिन उस गाँव में रहने वाला मछुवारा रामू बीमार पड़ गया। उसे तुरंत अस्पताल ले जाने की ज़रूरत थी। परंतु बहुत बारिश हो रही थी और अस्पताल में फोन भी नहीं लग रहा था। उसकी गंभीर स्थिति को देखकर उसके पड़ोस के मकान में रहने वाला बच्चा—नचिकेत उसकी मदद के लिए आ गया। नचिकेत सिर्फ़ बारह वर्ष



का था उसने कहा कि 'मैं नदी पार करके डॉक्टर को बुलाकर लाता हूँ।' सब लोगों ने उसे जाने से मना किया क्योंकि नदी में तूफान आने वाला था पर वह नहीं माना और चला गया। जब वह जा रहा था तभी नदी के बीचों-बीच तूफान आ गया और दोनों पतवारों उसके हाथ से छूट गई। उसकी नाव डूबने लगी तभी दो बड़ी मछलियों ने आकर उसकी नाव को ऊपर किया और किनारे पर पहुँचा दिया।

नचिकेत ने उन्हें धन्यवाद किया तब उसने उन्हें पहचानकर कहा कि 'अरे! तुम तो वही हो जिन्हें मैंने मछुवारों से बचाया था। इसका अर्थ है कि तुमने मुझे पहचान लिया' फिर नचिकेत डॉक्टर को लेकर गाँव वापस गया और रामू काका का इलाज करवाया।

◆ हितांशी नायक, VIII-E

परोपकार या सहयोग

सुरत की दमकती सड़कों के किसी कोने में उद्यान की दीवारों के सहारे बैठा था एक बच्चा। न तो कोई उसकी ओर ध्यान दे रही था और न उसकी स्थिति को देखकर अचंभित हो रहा था। बच्चा लगभग दस-बारह वर्ष का था। वह एक फटी धोती पहने हुए था। वह बहुत भूखा था।

का द्वार बंद होने में केवल पाँच मिनट शेष थे।

उसी सड़क पर चलते हुए उन्हें वह गरीब बच्चा दिखाई दिया। उसकी बुरी अवस्था देख नन्दू का दिल पिघल गया। वह दौड़कर उस बच्चे के पास पहुँचा। उसके दोस्तों ने कहा 'अरे! नन्दू क्या कर रहा है? विद्यालय देर से पहुँचेंगे तो मास्टर जी से डाँट पड़ेगी' मगर नन्दू नहीं हिला। उसके दोस्तों ने एक और बार आवाज़ लगाई फिर वे आगे बढ़ गए।

नन्दू ने अपने बस्ते से माँ का दिया हुआ डब्बा निकाला और उस बच्चे को थमा दिया। नन्दू को अचानक स्मरण हुआ— 'आज तो माँ ने आलू के पराँठे दिये हैं जो मुझे अत्यंत पसंद हैं।' मगर नन्दू ने एक निवाला नहीं खाया बस बैठे-बैठे अपलक नेत्रों से उसकी ओर देखता रहा। उन्होंने खूब बातें कीं। समय कैसे निकल गया पता ही नहीं चला।

नन्दू उस दिन विद्यालय तो न जा सका इसलिए घर लौट आया। मास्टर जी ने माँ को उसके लापता होने की खबर दे दी थी और वे हाथों पर माथा टेककर रो रहीं थीं। नन्दू को देख माँ का चेहरा खिल गया मगर फिर उन्हें गुस्सा आ गया। उन्होंने अनेक सवाल पूछे, नन्दू ने उन्हें घटना के बारे में बताया। माँ हँस पड़ीं फिर उनकी आँखों

से आँसू निकल आए। इस प्रकार छोटे नन्दू ने सबको परोपकार की सीख दी।

से आँसू निकल आए। इस प्रकार छोटे नन्दू ने सबको परोपकार की सीख दी।

◆ अनुराग केडिया, VIII-F



नज़रिया

किताबों में और बड़ों के मुँह से अकसर सुना है कि सहयोग और परोपकार की भावना रखनी चाहिए, दूसरों की मदद करनी चाहिए। मैं मन ही मन सोचा करती थी कि यह मात्र कहने की बातें हैं इनका वास्तविक जीवन में कोई महत्त्व नहीं होता। पर एक दिन मैं सोच ही रही थी कि ऐसा करने से हमें क्या मिलेगा? आखिरकार मुझे इस प्रश्न का उत्तर मिल ही गया। एक दिन मैं कुछ सामान खरीदने बाहर गई, रास्ते में एक तालाब आता है। मैं उस तालाब से गुज़र रही



थी कि मैंने किसी के चीखने की आवाज़ सुनी। देखा तो पता चला कि एक छः साल का बच्चा खेलते-खेलते तालाब में गिर गया है। मैंने उसे देखा पर मुँह फेर लिया क्योंकि उधर बहुत से लोग थे। मैंने सोचा कोई-न-कोई बचा लेगा पर वे सभी लोग भी यही सोच रहे थे और कोई उसे बचाने नहीं गया। बड़ा दुःख हुआ। मेरे दिल से मुझे एक आवाज़ आई “अगर वह बच्चा तुम्हारा भाई होता तो क्या तुम ऐसे ही खड़ी रहतीं।” मैं बिना कुछ सोचे तालाब में कूद गई। पता नहीं मैंने ऐसा क्यों किया। वह बच्चा बच गया और बिना कुछ बोले चला गया। मुझे थोड़ी बहुत चोट लगी किंतु मुझे विलकुल भी बुरा नहीं लगा। क्यों? इसका जवाब आपको किसी की मदद करने के बाद ही मिल सकता है। आपको अंदर से अच्छा लगेगा और खुशी होगी। अपने आप पर गर्व होगा। अब मुझे ज्ञात हो गया था कि सहयोगी और परोपकारी क्यों होना चाहिए और इससे हमें क्या मिलेगा। उस दिन के बाद मेरा सोचने का नज़रिया बदल गया था। मैं आपसे वस यह गुज़ारिश करती हूँ कि किसी की मदद करो, बहुत अच्छा लगेगा।

◆ मुस्कान पोद्दार, VIII-G

इंसानियत

गर्मियों के ख़त्म हो जाने के बाद बारिश का मौसम आया। इस मौसम में मूसलाधार बारिश के साथ तेज़ हवा भी चल रही थी। एक दिन जब मैं अपनी ड्राईंग क्लास से आ रहा था, मैंने देखा कि एक अंधा आदमी बारिश में भीग रहा है। मेरे मन में कुछ ऐसा हुआ कि मैं उसे देखता रह गया। लोग उसे देख ज़रूर रहे थे लेकिन कोई मदद नहीं कर रहा था। यह देख मेरा दिल जैसे वैठ-सा गया। मैं सोचने लगा कि इंसानियत नामक चीज़



इस दुनिया से कहाँ चली गई है। मैं इंसानियत की दुहाई दे रहा था, दूसरों पर आरोप लगा रहा था कि किसी ने उसकी मदद नहीं की लेकिन मैंने यह सोचा ही नहीं कि लोग उसकी मदद नहीं कर रहे थे तो क्या मुझे उसकी मदद नहीं करनी चाहिए थी? तभी एक मददगार बच्चा जिसे सही गलत की कोई परख नहीं, जिसे स्वार्थ वृत्ति ने अभी तक अपने वश में नहीं किया, वह उस आदमी की मदद करने निकल गया। मैं वहीं खड़ा-खड़ा सोचता रहा कि आखिर मुझे क्या हो गया था। कोई उसकी मदद नहीं कर रहा था तो क्या मैंने उसकी मदद की? यह काम तो एक छोटे-से बच्चे ने किया। अगर लोगों में इंसानियत नहीं हैं तो क्या मुझ में इंसानियत है? मुझे तो कम-से-कम उस व्यक्ति की मदद करनी चाहिए थी। वहाँ खड़े-खड़े सोचने से कोई हल नहीं निकला। मुझे अपने आप पर धिन आने लगी। मुझे लगा कि मुझे चुल्लू भर पानी में डूब मरना चाहिए। एक बार यह सोचने के बाद मुझे अचानक लगा कि जो हो गया सो हो गया अब मुझे यहाँ से चलना चाहिए। अंततः मुझे यह एहसास हुआ कि यह एक सपना था। भले ही यह एक सपना था लेकिन इससे मुझे एक सीख ज़रूर मिली। वह सपना और उससे मिली सीख मुझे आज भी याद है।

◆ नमन सुलतानीया, VIII-H



Pepperecious

For Spicy Thrills....

*If life were that easy
Where would all the adventure be?*

*It's all about risks
And twists*

*It requires you to leap
Before you look, perhaps*

*Explore and discover
Ponder and wonder*

*Never meant to say
"I wish I could have"*

*Adrenaline rush is the essence of existence
For it's not variety
But adventure
That's the spice of life.*

*Each breathe a delightful bite to be
Cherished and savoured*

*For Adventures' the delicacy
Life's got best to offer!*

*Bored and sleepy
Tired and droopy*

*What do you really need?
With a mug of coffee*

*To charge you up
All you need is a thriller to read!*

*A tale of Mystery to interest
Or a detective story maybe*

*With all those twists and turns
Like a delight- delicious and tangy*

*Such was Sir Doyle's Holmes
And the Secret Seven of Enid Blyton*

*With stories of suspense and excitement
And a flavour so Pepperecious*





The Game

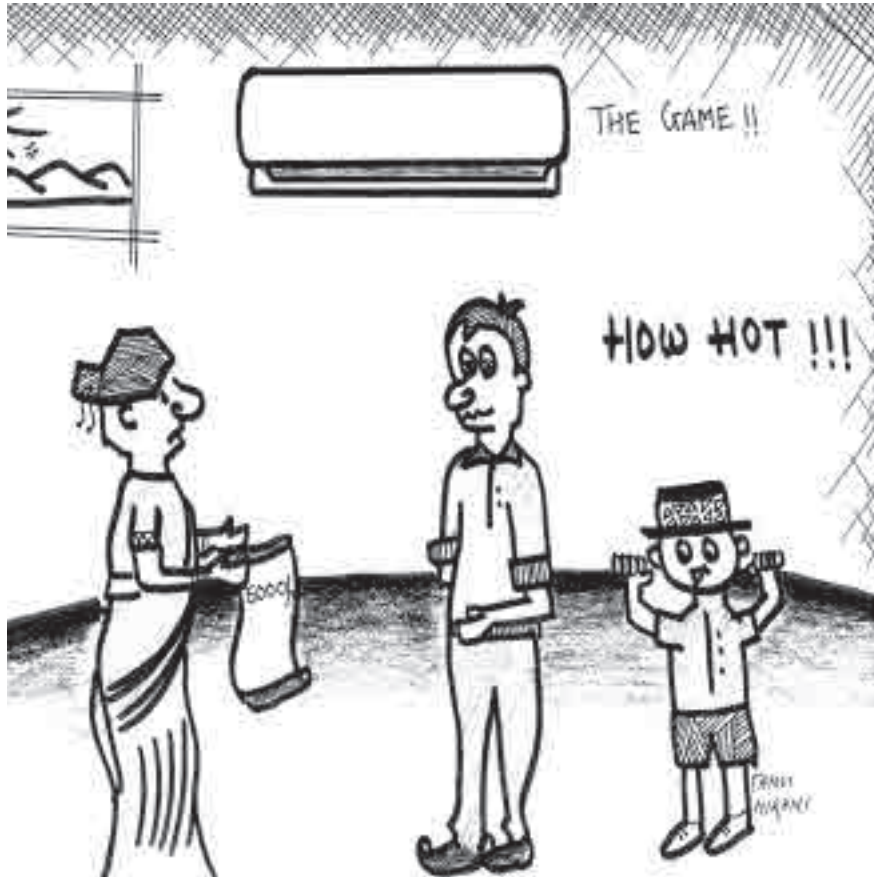
It was summer. Peter and his father, George were enjoying the cool breeze of the air-conditioner when suddenly it was turned off. When they could no more

can use the AC just for two hours a day.”

“I go to the office. You are the one sitting in the house all day long in the cool and

Whenever George said “Can I get something cool?” or “I’m burning”, it wasn’t considered as a foul, but when Emma said the same thing, a hand would get raised up and say, “A point goes to George. Emma pay him the money”.

This went on all day and Emma had to pay the decided amount to George every time. Tired of the partiality, Emma decided to get some money for herself in her own way. When George and Peter were waiting on the table for dinner, something caught their eyes when Emma came in with the tray. It had two big bowls of ice-cream in it, which looked very welcoming and tempting. But there was also one more bowl that gave away steams of heat as it came. It contained boiling noodles, specially cooked for George with care and affection by Emma.



feel the welcoming air, they turned around and saw Peter’s mother, Emma. She bend down and showed George the electricity bill. It had gone up by a huge amount.

She said “I know that all day long you sit in front of the AC, enjoying it. But just look at the bill! Just because of your carelessness, we will have a problem with the budget. So from now on, you

refreshing breeze of the AC”, pat came the reply.

So to sort out the problem that who is more addicted to being cool and refreshed, they decided to play a game. The only rule was that when any one of them ever speaks about how hot it is, the opponent will get points for this and also ₹ 100 from the other. Peter became the judge.

“Why this special treatment only for me?” Asked George in a depressing and low-pitched voice,

“Oh! Because you just love them. I still remember that day when you asked me for steaming noodles but I wasn’t able to serve you any as none was left in the house. So now I just tried to fulfil your wish.”





“But it was winter then and it was raining outside, cooling the atmosphere and arising a wish in my mind to eat noodles”.

“But food doesn’t change along with the weather, right dear?”

Not willing to argue any more, he ate up all the noodles and that too in a hurry so that he could go

and rinse his mouth with cold water and make himself feel better. After eating as he reached out for cold water, he found that instead it was hot. So now he had to go to bed in the same state with his burning mouth.

“Ah, it’s really very hot, “Oh! it is making me feel hot and sick” mumbled George as he was trying to sleep.

In return he got many replies as “Point 1 to Emma, point 2 to Emma, point 3 to Emma,..... .” Now Peter also couldn’t do anything because his father himself was speaking the very word that would make him pay the fine. In this way the points of Emma kept on increasing and at the end of the day Emma was declared the winner.

◆ *Sakshi Bagheria, VII-A*

Unique Mr. Sharma!

Once and only once (Thank God! We were lucky.) there was Mr. Sharma alone at home as Mrs. Sharma was out for shopping. It was afternoon and Mr. Sharma thought of taking a nap. When his neighbour saw him going to bed he took his loud speaker, went out of the house and started shouting,

“Everyone cover your ears”.

In a moment everyone in the place had covered their ears (no wonder news/ rumours/gossip spread so fast) because everyone knew that if anyone would hear him snoring while he slept, they’ll be deaf for the rest of their life and probably in the next one too! Even the glasses and windows of Mr. Sharma’s house would break



but he would never come to know the reason behind it.

When he woke up, he opened a trunk which was kept in the bedroom and took out some window glasses out of the thousands kept in it and replaced them with the broken ones in the house (part of his daily activity). After replacing the glasses he was hungry.

He thought to cook for himself. Mr. Sharma had great knowledge about fruits and vegetables but when it came to spices, it was the other way around. So while cooking, Mr. Sharma added washing powder instead of salt, baking powder instead of sugar and tea leaves instead of almonds for topping. Now he required oil. There were two bottles





of oil out of which one was sunflower oil and the other was castor oil. Unknowingly Mr. Sharma picked up castor oil and murmured,

“I don’t need Mrs. Sharma anymore.”

After some time the trash he was making was ready but he was really disappointed when he came to know that the result of his hard work was a few smoke releasing stones. He thought not to eat it and kept it aside.

Then came Mrs. Sharma and told Mr. Sharma that she

had brought some food for him. Mr. Sharma was really happy and told her,

“I’ll be back in a minute as I have to go to the washroom”.

In his absence she saw the condition of her kitchen and quickly hit upon a plan. She replaced what she had brought for him with what he had made. Mr. Sharma was very hungry, he didn’t notice what was in his plate and as he took his first bite he fainted. After two minutes when he woke up he asked Mrs. Sharma in an

angry mood,

“What have you given me?”

She replied “Don’t be angry, it was just a joke and to make you realise my worth I gave you what you had made for yourself but I did not know that you were such a bad cook.”

Mr. Sharma pledged he would never cook in his life again.

◆ **Pranav Agarwal,**
VII-F

A Tiny Piece Of Glass



Varun's mother's birthday was just around the corner. He had planned to give her a surprise. And to do this, he had asked his father to prepare a homemade cake and decorate the house while he would keep his mother out of the house.

The big day arrived. Varun 's father sneaked out of the house for the goodies and decorations. .

But it so happened that while he was keeping the supplies in the car, a can of soda fell down and when he picked it up, it opened unleashing a wild gush of soda on the poor man's face, breaking his glasses.

Around nine in the morning, Varun and his mother were wide awake.

Varun asked his mother, "Mother, can we go for a movie today, I'll buy the tickets."





His mother was extremely delighted and Varun assured his father that he would keep his mother away from the house till dinner. Varun's father started baking but instead of baking soda, he added flour and instead of water he added vinegar, all because of the tiny piece of glass that went wrong. He then thought he should soon invite people over for dinner.

He had dialled all the wrong numbers and convinced all the wrong people to come over for dinner all because of the tiny piece of glass.

Then he remembered about the decorations. Quickly he called some of Varun's friends.

"Children my glasses are damaged, and I don't have an extra pair, so if you help me I would be extremely thankful."

All the children showed signs of leaving in haste but one of them said "Yeah, sure" with the most evil and broad grin you and I would have ever seen. He instructed everyone to start working with the stickers kept near the television. The boy and his friend started decorating the hall in the most absurd manner. Seriously, there is no good will left in the world!

As for the gift he wrapped a table cloth and packed it instead of the dress which was to be given. As for him, he wore old clothes and as he was going to the hall to place

the cake, he slipped and half of the cake slipped down. In an attempt to save the cake, Dad fell straight on the floor and spoiled his clothes.

All that Varun's mother got when she returned was what tasted like the remnants of cookies from hell (that was the half that hadn't fallen); her husband turned beggar featuring a purple eye. Some people whom she didn't know; a wall that said 'Our Condolences' and her photo below it. But, she also received lots of greetings, new friends (mostly the ones who weren't angry) and lots of love. Though Dad sang 'For want of a pin the Kingdom was lost' instead of 'Happy Birthday'!

◆ *Aditya Rakesh, VII-D*

The Haunted House

We had moved into a beautiful bungalow. My family was a big one consisting of my grandparents, parents, uncle, aunt and cousin. In a few days, I made friends in the neighbourhood. I was happy there till I got to know from my friends that the bungalow in which we lived was haunted! I was scared to enter the house. My mother asked me what the matter was. I told her what I had got to know. She laughed and took me in. As

I was scared all the time, my mother went to my friends and asked them to avoid discussing such topics with me. They stopped doing so. I started feeling better but was still having that fear inside. One night, I was cozy in my bed, when something fell on me. I was frightened and shouted loudly. Later I found that it was nothing else but my kitten. My mother asked me to sleep with her that night.

Next day was a Sunday. It

was the day to oil our hair. But my cousin refused to do so. She never liked to oil her hair. The day passed well. We went out for dinner. That night my cousin slept with me. I couldn't sleep for a long time. After a while, I started feeling drowsy. Just then I heard the door open. Some figure was walking towards us in the dark. I was so scared that I covered my face with my blanket. Suddenly my cousin screamed. On hearing that I too screamed loudly. When our room lights were



switched on we discovered that it was my aunt who had come in to apply oil on my cousin's hair. She had been waiting till we fell asleep.

Everyone in the house had a good laugh when they got to

know about this.

A few days passed. Again my friends started narrating horror stories. I was terrified and decided to sleep in my parents' room. That

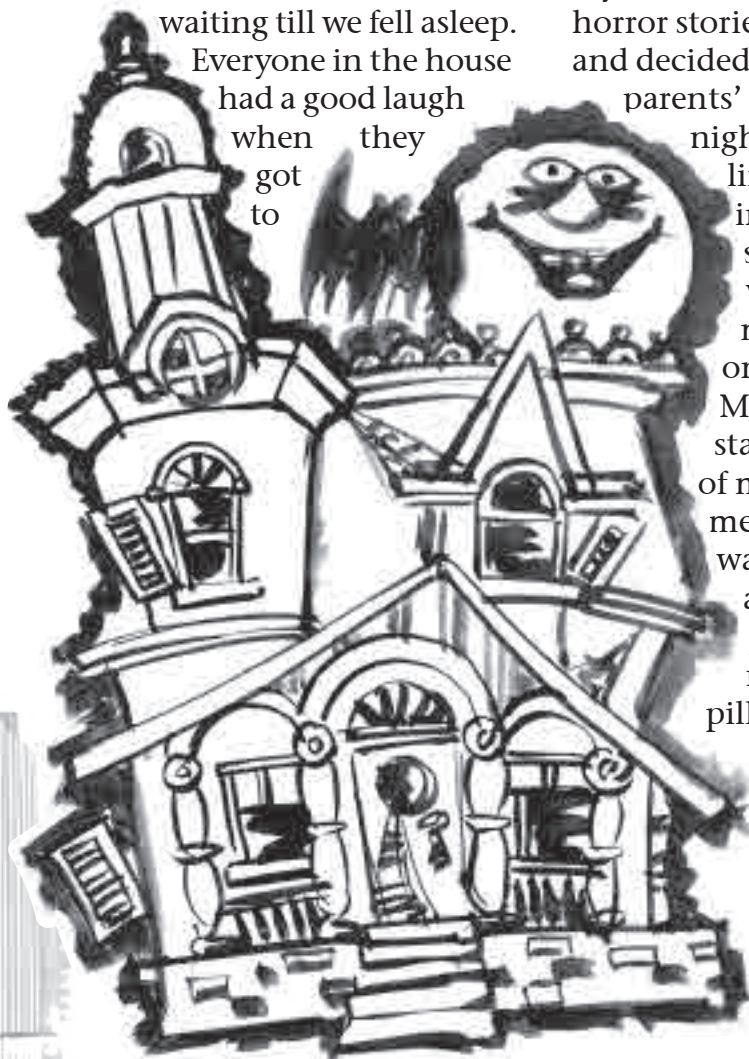
night I felt someone lifting my pillow in the dark. I screamed out very loud. My mother switched on the lights. My father was standing in front of me staring at me in shock. He was trying to keep a Christmas present for me under my pillow to give me a surprise. I felt very silly that moment.

For some days after that we were busy with our exams.

On the last day of the exam my cousin and I decided to have a late night party in her room. We danced, ate snacks and chatted. We fell asleep after some time. In the middle of the night I was woken up by the sound of the television. I saw that the TV was on and my cousin was nowhere to be seen. I looked around and called out for her but there was no reply. I shouted her name out loud only to find later that she was lying on the floor and had fallen asleep while watching TV. I felt like an idiot.

Day by day such incidences took place which made me realize that it was not the house which was haunted but my thoughts which scared me. I made up my mind that I will never ever believe in horror stories.

◆ **Chetana J. Lalwani, VII-G**



The Mystery of The Jade Tiger

Holly was off to her uncle's house in Bridport. She reached the airport and discovered that no one was there to receive her. She rang up at Mr. Gerry's house but no one answered. After waiting for long, Holly decided to leave the airport. She called the cab and left from there. She had come here to investigate

about the case of the Jade Tiger, a precious statue which had gone missing from the museum of Bridport.

In the car, she noticed the driver who was behaving in a very strange manner. She was confused. He was fair with spectacles hanging around his neck. He was driving with his hood on and had a

tattoo of the Jade Tiger on his hand. On seeing this Holly froze, she asked the driver to stop the car and jumped out. Somehow she managed to reach Gerry's house and rang the bell. She knocked at the door, which to her surprise flew open. She could see nothing but darkness. She called out for Gerry but could hear no reply in return. She





was really confused. She got out of the house when she saw that suddenly the bushes on her left were shaking violently, not because of the wind but because someone had just run away from the bushes in order to escape. She got a feeling of danger and called up the police.

The police investigated and tried to find Gerry when he did not return home the next day.

Holly now needed some rest. She could not concentrate on her case due to all this fuss. She was lying on the sofa when she

heard the doorbell ring. She opened it and within a fraction of a second someone covered her nose with a handkerchief and she fainted. Fortunately at the same time the police arrived to inform Holly about Gerry. They saw Holly lying on the floor and Gerry in the house. They arrested Gerry. The police sprinkled water on Holly's face. After she regained consciousness they asked Holly about whatever had happened in the house. On seeing Gerry and the tattoo on his hand she panicked again and pointed her finger towards Gerry. The cops understood what Holly was trying to say and they put him behind the bars.

Gerry accepted his crime that he stole the statue of the Jade Tiger which was worth a fortune. He also accepted that he had tried to threaten Holly by leaving the house empty and purposely drove the car showing the tattoo of the Jade Tiger because she was here to investigate about the same case and he wanted to threaten her so that she would leave the case and go back to London.

This was how Holly discovered the truth of her uncle Gerry and also the thief of the Jade Tiger.

◆ **Srishti Agarwal**
VIII-A





The Deathly Shadows of the Mountain

“Dadu tell me a bedtime story, it’s awfully hard to sleep without one”.

“What type of story do you want to listen to, honey?”

“An episode of your life that you can never forget which is as vicious and pernicious as anything on earth would be.”

“Ok then. This story harks back to some 30 years ago when I was in my agile youth - amidst the the mists and mellow magic of my beloved mountains,” sighed Dadu.

“It was 10:30. The night was pitch dark. The sky was banked with massive moisture laden malevolent clouds and thunder rolled down the valley engulfing the entire ravine. However, this seemed to be a strange night with evils lurking in the dark hungry for revenge as if to bring about an end to the human race. But I was certainly unruffled by the vagaries and concerns of the world, alienated for that moment from everything else in the world, nestled in my own abode of warmth and love, painting the canvas with vibrant hues of resplendent colours. After completing the last stroke and extremely tired by the day’s hard work, I had fallen asleep for a short nap. I guess just twenty to twenty

five minutes had passed when there was a scream- an extremely creepy and uncanny in nature. One which was eerie and spine chilling.

I got up to check out what had gone wrong. I looked here and there but didn’t know what the night had in fold for me. Thinking it to be a part of a dreadful dream, I went back to my room totally baffled at what had happened.

The next morning I was woken up by a knock at my door and there was Lakhan, the constable with the newly posted inspector of our town, S.R Rao, who urged me to come along with them. What I saw was hard to explain and extremely unbelievable. Some creature had very brutally killed a girl. Another perplexing thing that I saw was monster like footprints emerging from the valley and leading to the village.

“It is again that mahishasur that has done it. He has a shrill tucked-in sort of face. His eyes are the shade of dark velvet. His nose deformed, oozing out muck from the nostrils. His lips dangerously thin and open like a tunnel and his canines that stick out from his red lips as sharp as steel. He had asked us to leave and if not he had threatened to kill us”. A lady cried out

Some creature had very brutally killed a girl. Another perplexing thing that I saw was monster like footprints emerging from the valley and leading to the village





the details in great anguish.

“I know you educated people will not believe this but at the same time you can’t deny that if the smell of the Himalayas creeps into a man’s blood, he will return to the hills again and again, and will strive to live amongst them always.” An old man mumbled trembling in fear.

Then the inspector wanted to have a word with me.

“What were you doing the previous night?” The inspector questioned me.

“Well inspector, I was painting but I heard a scream. A very unusual one. But surprisingly when I went out to check what had happened, I didn’t see anyone and so I returned. If ever I had known that the dawn was going to reveal such a bitter truth, I would have called you last night itself. But on a serious note inspector, this case is becoming formidable day by day and in case some immediate step is not taken things could turn out to be hazardous, taking many lives. It’s said that the last policeman was also killed by the same monster.” I replied.

You’re right I had heard about it but we can’t be so judgmental about the incident unless we get the news from the report



about the footprints and impressions sent to the laboratory.”

The next morning another thing that I discovered while conversing with Hariram, the tea stall owner was that the previous night he had lost his most precious gold chain, a treasure that his forefathers had kept with them for ages.

But just then, Lakhan the constable broke the news that inspector wanted to talk to me. I rushed to him with the constable eager to know what truth would have been revealed by the reports. The results were not very impressive. Nothing could be scientifically proved by them. Also another surprising thing that I saw was a gold chain





that the inspector had found during the investigation. Shockingly, it was the same gold chain that Hariram had lost. I couldn't connect those two incidents. The investigation depicted a two sided picture, one that a supernatural power existed and second a human was present at the scene of the crime.

I requested the inspector to meet me in my cottage. At night, there was a knock at my door and it was the inspector. I got a warm drink for him to cheer him up as he sat around the fire seizing warmth from the glazing flames. Grabbing the right moment, I told the inspector that I suspected Hariram who had recently lost the same gold chain. Together we decided to visit Hariram the next morning. I was restless the entire night. It was very difficult for me to pass the night as I tossed and turned in bed waiting for the dawn which had in its fold the secret of this mystery.

The next morning we both were ready to visit Hariram. But we were shocked to see that his cottage and the shop that he used to run were closed down.. The inspector asked his constables to go and check in the nearby villages and find Hariram. After three days we could trace Hariram. The inspector took him into custody and interrogated him but he

was found to be innocent. It was revealed that the night before he left, a thief had crept into his house and had stolen the chain. Scared of the uncanny news that was spreading in the village, he had left home. And this was confirmed when the next morning the constable broke the news of the death of another girl even though Hariram was in the police custody. Maybe it was a real monster, a devil, an evil spirit that was on prowl.

"That's pretty spooky dadu. I'm going to have a lot many nightmares tonight. But did that monster really exist, DADU?"

"We all were seeking an answer to the same question but there was no solution. However from here the situation changed a bit when Lakhan the constable wanted to have a word with the inspector privately. I thought maybe there was something going on between them, something I was unaware about. So I secretly followed them and heard their talks and truly, I became really despondent after listening to them. The very instant I packed my bags, wrote a note that I was going for my sister's wedding and that I was never ever going to return as I was posted to a new town. Maybe I was a coward but I did this for the people of Krishnakunj in an

effort to unfold the mystery. I shouldn't have heard him but I had no option and left for my bus within an hour."

"But, what did you hear Dadu?"

"Lakhan said that I was the brain behind all this heinous crimes taking place in the village as all the crimes took place near my cottage. But Time heals what reason cannot. It is the wisest counsellor of all. I realized this fact when after two weeks a letter dropped in my post box at house and to my surprise it was from the inspector. It read:

Dear Pritam,

Hope you're fine and your sister is happily married. After you left, I felt really desperate and grew frantic day by day. But maybe its truly said that Time is nature's way of keeping everything from happening all at once. So one week after you left I along with my senior officers planned a conspiracy under which we had decided to burn a statue of Mahishasur and claim to the public that he was dead. I'm sure you would be awed at our stupidity for doing this. But the significant part is yet to come. This confederacy was known to only the seniors in our department as we were a bit doubtful about our juniors. Two days latter,





we decided to celebrate the death of Mahishasur. Now comes the most crucial part of it. We arranged this party because we were sure of the fact that on hearing the celebration of his death, Mahishasur would certainly show his appearance in the party. I know there was a great risk for the villagers but it was high time that we had to take some immediate steps like this. We all gathered at the place and just within two hours time there was a dark, gigantic and shadowy figure amongst us.. People fled at his approach. But I along with my crew stayed silent, anxiously anticipating his arrival to reach the point where we had planned to trap him. And bravo he was trapped! He was none another than a human who was behind these atrocious and inhumane acts. Believe

me Pritam, I had desperately wished that you were there, so that I could share that moment with you. It was the end of that Mahishasur and again the victory of good over evil. And the most surprising thing was that a business tycoon wished to make an amazing resort in Krishnakunj, a village known only to some and situated on the banks of river Beas in the lap of Nature, taking the benefits of its climate, well connected roads and away from the humdrum of the city. And for this they wanted the villagers to abandon their land. They all proposed this plan to the government and the people. But when the government refused the proposal, they were enraged and decided to hatch a conspiracy with the constable Lakhan who was bribed for this. Finally this

horrifying and inexplicable enigma has come to an end. The people of Krishnakunj were elated and I'm sure so must be you at this point of time. I really wish to meet you Pritam. Hope in future we get another chance to unfold a mystery but surely not hideous and ghastly like this one.

Yours truly

Inspector S.R.Rao

“So this is what the whole story was about. Time for you to go to bed. Sweet dreams, my darling”

“Sweet dreams, my brave Dadu.”

◆ *Kavya Phophalia*
VIII-C

Murder in a Room

Detective Beckett gets a phone call from her team of a murder at 5th Avenue. She rushes to get there and finds that the room is in good condition and with no signs of struggle between the victim and the killer. So that means that the victim might have known the killer. The other detectives identify the victim through his I.D, 'Mr. Jack Coonan'.

Detective Beckett notices two glasses of wine and

sends them to the lab for testing. She asks the other detectives to canvass the area and question neighbours for any unusual activities that might have happened in the past few days. But none of them report seeing anything related to the killer except a child who says that he saw a man coming out of the apartment around 10 p.m. the day before while he had entered the room around eight. According to the boy's description the

man was well built and was around the same age and height as Mr. Coonan. Detective Beckett thinks that the man who entered the room at eight might be the last person to see Jack Coonan or he might be the killer she was searching for.

The forensic reports came the next day stating that Jack's drink was fiddled with the other glass had fingerprints that matched with that of his brother Dick Coonan.



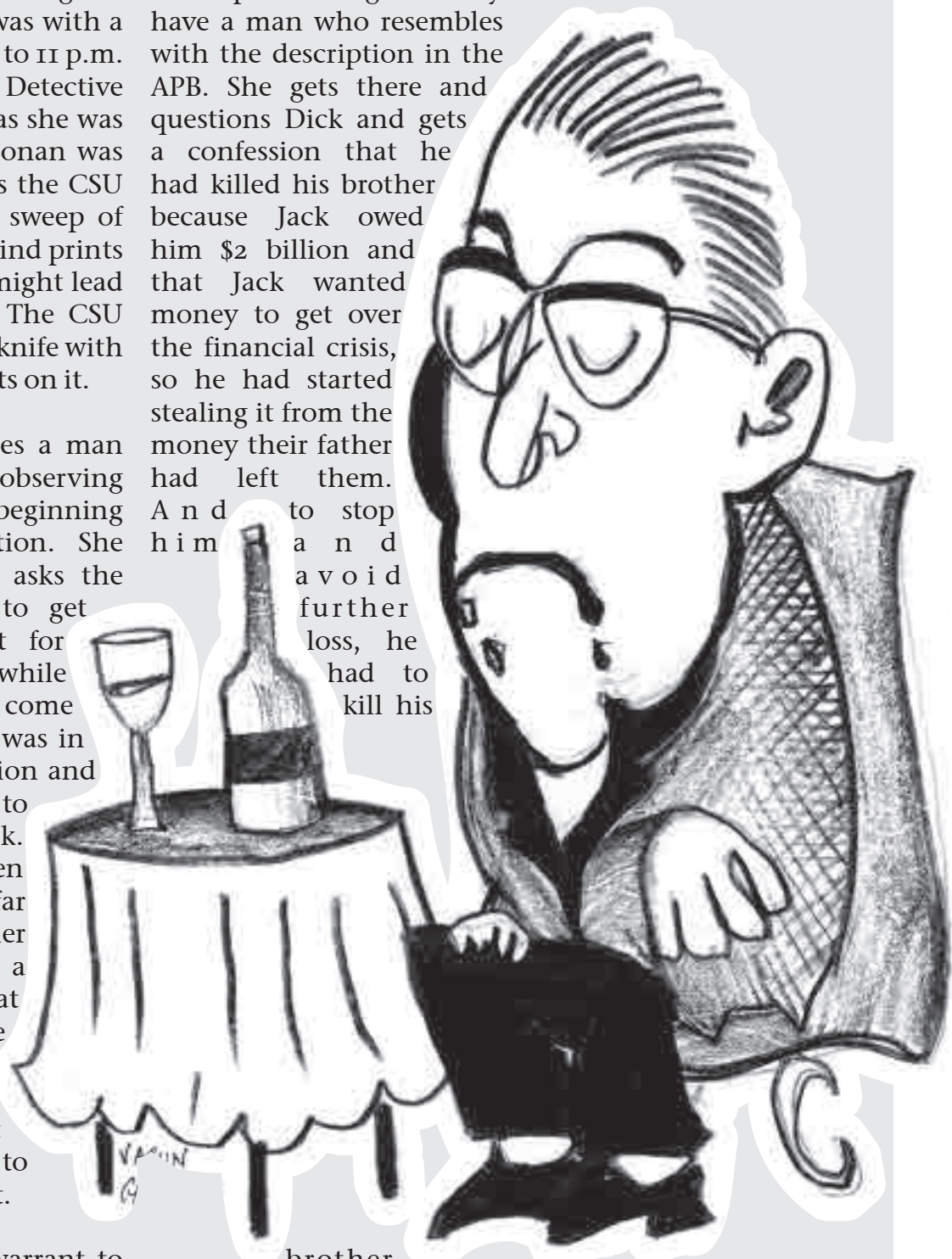


Beckett brings Dick in the precinct for questioning but he states that he was with a friend from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. and he alibis out. Detective Beckett is in a fix as she was sure that Dick Coonan was the killer. She asks the CSU to do a complete sweep of the apartment to find prints or anything that might lead her to the killer. The CSU manages to find a knife with blood and no prints on it.

Beckett then sees a man who had been observing them from the beginning of the investigation. She catches him and asks the other detectives to get a search warrant for his house. Meanwhile Jack's financiers come and state that he was in a debt of \$3.2 billion and owed \$2 billion to his brother Dick. Beckett had seen people kill for far less. The other detectives find a recording device at the man's house with the same man's voice who alibied Dick out but was nowhere to be found after that.

Beckett gets a warrant to break into Dick's house but he isn't there. She sends out an APB to bus stations, airports, railway stations and every news channel and newspaper.

She then gets a call from the airport stating that they have a man who resembles with the description in the APB. She gets there and questions Dick and gets a confession that he had killed his brother because Jack owed him \$2 billion and that Jack wanted money to get over the financial crisis, so he had started stealing it from the money their father had left them. And to stop him and avoid further loss, he had to kill his



brother. Detective Beckett arrests Dick Coonan and goes back to her house with another homicide case closed.

◆ **Ankur Apte, VIII D**





The Girl With The Star Tattoo

Sarah Hart was a commoner except for the fact that she was born on a planet named "SPARX" and had a star tattoo on her mid collar bone which almost appeared like a necklace. She had two eyes, one nose, two ears and all the normal features of a human face. She was a normal human being. She had a protector named Jane Doe. Now you must be wondering did she need a protector? The fact was that she was taken as a refugee on the planet Earth by Jane. She was her protector, foster mother, as well as her companion. Sarah was very fond of her.

Sarah was a magnificent girl with charming features, leadership qualities, and brilliant in academics. She never set her roots anywhere; she was always on the run and ran from Ohio to Japan to Philadelphia, USA to, London, England to, Perth, Australia. She was eighteen plus and completed college but she wanted to study more. So

she forged some documents and prepared a false identity and named herself as Ashley Penson and went to

ultimately Jane gave her consent. So, Sarah went to college where she got her locker number, her class



college. She did have schedule and her books. There was this other boy John altercations with Jane but





One day she heard the terrible news of her mother Jane's death. Ashley was very lonely but her friends never let her feel this

who was being taken to task by the Principal for playing football during class hours and fooling the teachers by saying he got the official permission. Sarah observed him and then turned away quickly. On the way back the Secretary asked John to show Sarah her locker. On the way there they had a small conversation.

John asked, "What's your name?"

Sarah replied, "Ashley Penson and what's yours?"

John said, "My name is a bit long, it's Johnny Daniel Rugby Buzzy Smith Jr. XII. So, just call me John."

"Okay, John, what was going on in the room with the Principal?"

John said, "I'm in the school's football team and I was just practicing shoots, you know, trying to improvise, by the way where do you live?"

Sarah replied, "Elizabeth Street, 45th lane, house no. 113. I actually don't live here. We just moved in recently."

John, "So, where did you

live earlier?"

Sarah, "I'm always on the move, sometimes here, sometimes in Philadelphia, Ohio, Perth, London and all. We just don't stay at one place."

John, "What does your Dad do?"

Sarah, "I don't have a Dad. It's just my Mom and me."

John, "Sorry, I shouldn't have asked."

"No, it's okay, it isn't your fault."

"Well, here's your locker."

He said this and turned away.

After a few days Ashley adjusted herself in the new environment and felt great. She had made some friends, Abigail, John, Sam, Lennon, Chole and Riley. She attended classes regularly, was on the top of everything and led a normal life. She was very happy. She shared secrets with John; they spent most of their time together.

One day she heard the terrible news of her mother

Jane's death. Ashley was very lonely but her friends never let her feel this. John started asking Ashley about the tattoo, she kept trying to avoid this but then one day the inevitable happened. He was persistent.

John asked Ashley "What's so special about this tattoo? Why don't you tell me about it? Are you hiding something from me?"

Ashley replied, "It is just that I can't tell you"

"But why not"

"Because, you aren't supposed to know about it, at least not now. It's a secret. I'm sorry but I can't tell you about it."

As time passed Sarah and John became very fond of each other. They led almost a perfect life but strange things did continue to happen. Many people got lost, some got kidnapped but there wasn't any sign of them. The police had no idea where they were or who kidnapped them.

Then came the final day of the college and the students organized a prom in which





Ashley was the prom princess and John was the prom prince. They both danced together and had a great time. They went up the stage for the last round of dance when suddenly there was a great tremor and chaos all over the auditorium. People were running like insane, banging into each other, into the walls, rushing out of the auditorium in this chaos Ashley and John somehow made their way out and helped their friends and then escaped in the forest. But they had the feeling that they were being continuously pursued. Ashley tried to stop John from coming with her but he was more than determined to protect her so he followed her.

They ran and ran until their legs felt like lead. They had run the whole night and were still being pursued. Finally, they were captured and taken prisoners. Ashley recognized their torturers at once but John kept on staring at them shell shocked. The creatures had three eyes, four hands, one leg, no ears and five noses. John asked Ashley who these people were.

“These are the Morganians. They killed my family; my parents, and my brothers and sisters and even Jane. They destroyed my kingdom and blasted my planet into billions of pieces. I’m so sorry

that you got into this mess with me,” stammered Ashley.

“No, it’s not your fault. It was my choice.”

Ashley smiled at him then became serious again. She was thinking of a way to get both of them out or at least John out of this thing. She then did the craziest thing that she could ever do. She didn’t know whether this would work or not but she did it anyway. She touched John, with her tattoo and he started fading. All those kids who had been kidnapped by the Morganians also disappeared from there as the beams fell on them. All that was left was Ashley and her enemies. She somehow managed to get out of her bonds and then charged for the Morgnians, she nearly killed them all but was almost strangled by the last living Morganian. It was Lempson the Chief Morganian and he was ready to strangle her. He had already disarmed her and that’s when she realized that, she could use her star tattoo to destroy him even if it meant killing herself. She summoned all her power and the tattoo started to glow brightly. It produced such an enormous power that Lempson was shocked to see it and was disintrigated the minute the light from the tattoo touched him. As for Ashley



she somehow managed to land safely on the ground and then collapsed.

When she regained consciousness she saw that she was in a hospital and her friends were kneeling by her side. John and the children who had faded were also there. There were also some police inspectors and a few members of the army. They were standing on guard outside her room. She gave the Police the details about what had happened, except about the Morganians. She then told her friends her real identity, who she was, what she was doing there, and why she was always on the move. But for her and John this was the most exciting adventure they had ever encountered.

◆ **Aarushi Saxena, VIII-E**



The Mystery of Courtney Mansion

Many a times I have heard about Courtney Mansion. Legend says that a wealthy merchant lived there. He had amassed a lot of wealth, but because of the fear of bandits, he hid his wealth in a secret place which was unknown, except to Anne, his only child. A good looking girl who went insane due to an unknown reason. I came across an article in the newspaper which read, 'Reward for the person who solves the Courtney Mansion mystery.'

You guessed it right, my friend Rose and I stood up for it. It was risky, a challenge and required a lot of brainwork but still we thought we could take a chance. I went to the Department of Detectives and requested them to give us the responsibility of solving the case. They hesitated but finally gave us the job.

We went to meet the merchant's daughter Anne. She sat alone in the corner. We came to know that someone had assaulted her due to which she had been in a state of shock. She babbled nothing but "ABC..,house..,library..." I took out my notepad and listed those words.

At around 8:00 pm I went to Rose's house and

over a cup of hot cocoa we discussed about those words.

She suggested, "Maybe we should go to the house, learn ABC from the library."

"Don't be silly, let's take this seriously."

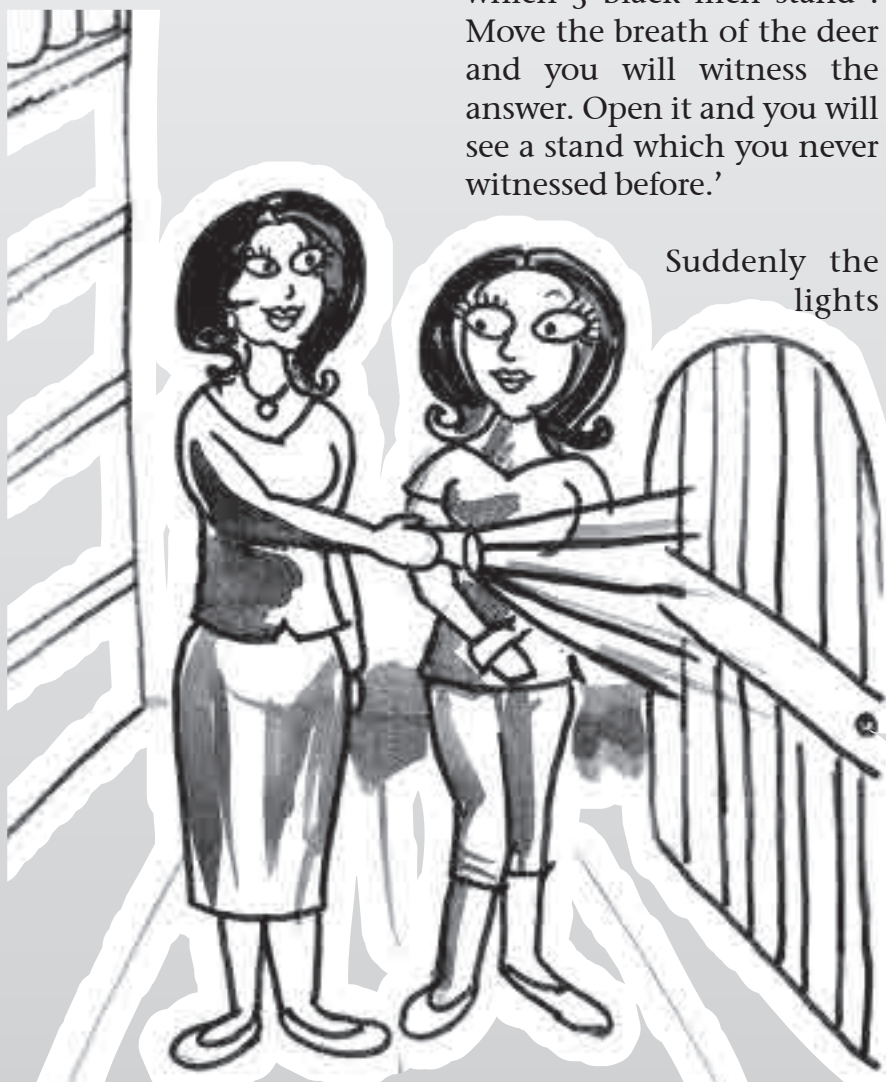
"Ok, ok."

Many hours passed, still we could not make head or tail of it. We went to the house

for further investigation. I tiptoed inside the house while Rose fixed the flashlights. Nervousness was steadily creeping in my mind. I suddenly had a brainwave! I immediately went to the library and read Anne's diary. It was blank but a note came out of it. I unfolded it and was astonished.

It read 'Behold those eyes that come across this note. At the valley of flowers near which 3 black men stand. Move the breath of the deer and you will witness the answer. Open it and you will see a stand which you never witnessed before.'

Suddenly the lights





flashed on. Rose had fixed them. I got scared out of my wits, but she giggled. I saw 3 statues of black men .A part of the mystery was solved! I immediately went near the statues. A bunch of flowers lay across the table. I kept wondering what the deer’s breath was.

Rose suddenly exclaimed, “Ah! deer breathes from the nose, may be the important part is ‘the nose’!

I slapped her high five! She immediately twisted the nose and a secret passage led us

in the darkness. We quickly switched on the flashlights. We were led to an old, chipped wooden door.

The lock read ‘Please enter the password’.

I was dumbfounded but Rose was an expert of deciphering codes.

She asked “Could you please repeat the 3 words?”

“Yeah, umm A-B-C, l-i-b-r-a-r-y, h-o-u-s-e.”

She kept muttering ABC, ABC....

She exclaimed, “If we compare the letters of the alphabet with numbers, we get 123!”

“Yoo-hoo! We have solved our mystery!!!!”

We went to Chief Brown and he announced that we would get a cash prize and a certificate!

We were (perhaps) the happiest persons on earth that day.

◆ **Ayushi Borvankar**
VIII-F

The Night Prowler

Rusty, dusty, musty were the only words entering my head when I entered the new house. "No wonder no one lives here!" said Frank, my friend from college. "Well, it's the only one in town. The rest were far too expensive." I said. We moved on and checked the other rooms which weren't any different. "We must settle here as soon as possible. Get used to the environment, and to that batty old man..." Frank muttered. Just moments before, a wild old man had been telling us ghost stories about the house. About some spirit who roams in the



rooms at night. A few days later, we were at the house. No college that day. Frank was getting the internet wires set and was getting

worked up over the guy from the net company. "Leave the poor man alone Frank. Let him work on it as he wants." "But ... But, I know





things that he doesn't about this!" The old worker looked wearily at me. I shook my head and went back to my room. I happened to glance at the mirror when I saw a flash of silver, and then, nothing.

The next day, I wondered whether the flash I had seen was my imagination at play, though it seemed real. I shunned the idea away. There aren't any such things as ghosts! Nor can that neighbour be right. As I kept repeating these thoughts, however, a tinge of doubt was hovering over my mind. Finally, I planned to meet with the man next door. It turned out that he was an occupant of the house at one time. "Ze ghozt, ze ghozt!! Yes, yes, you smart to come and azk! Yes, he iz ze spirit of ze owner of ze 'ouze. Always irritates peopul. First he will zee your acsions and pattornz. Zhen he will drive you crazy, az he has done to me!!" he cackled. Invaluable info...

The old man also told me that only mirrors were the ghost's weakness. You couldn't see him otherwise. Thus, I set out on my night prowl. I wanted answers. I wanted to dig. I wanted to know and meet "ze spirit of ze 'ouze". I took a torch and many mirrors to a room and hung the mirrors on the walls to see where he was. I

sat and waited. Frank had set up a mechanism to close the door of the room from where I was to trap the ghost inside... To catch a glimpse...

Beads of sweat formed on my brows and I was beginning to wonder whether the ghost stuff was just a cooked-up story after all. I had been flashing my torch on and off, but there was not a hint of movement. And then, suddenly, as I was switching my torch off again, I saw the same silvery flash. Instinctively, I shut the door and heard nothing but silence. Seconds later, there was a howl that sent a chill down my spine. I saw many flashes in the mirrors through the light from my torch, and then, a still figure in front of a mirror. It was like mist, only it had the very distinctive shape of a human. "You know where I falter." the ghost said in a distorted voice. The voice had a hint of admiration in it. "I know you, your weakness, and your tactics. Why do you wish to drive people mad?" I said in the bravest voice I could muster. He looked grimly at me and said, "I built this house and lived peacefully, till..." "Till what?" "Till an unscrupulous cheat took away my peace!" he screamed, trembling with rage. "He tricked me out of my house and left me with nothing." "And you?"

"Inquisitive, aren't you? I had no choice. No food, no home, no money, nothing! I left the cruel world as it was, and became this. Since then I've been after the people who live in this house and drive them out and sometimes, mad. "Well", I said. "My friend and I will not trouble you within these walls, so you can spare your practices on us." "Oh don't worry. I'm released from the curse which bound me here, thanks to your bravery. And I've actually got quite sick of this stuff. After all, I guess I can use my appearance for other good things..."

And he smiled and vanished into thin air. It was the next day, morning. I was explaining to Frank about the events of the previous night. "And how can you be so sure he won't return?" he asked suspiciously. "I don't think he'll come back. After all, his secret was discovered; he was released from the curse that bound him". Frank nodded his head, and then asked, "What good could he possibly do?" "Dunno, work for a charity, help people, or something?" Frank smirked and said, "Yeah sure, maybe he'll tell kids ghost stories." We laughed and left for college, as two normal people, leaving the house without any ghost.

◆ **Akhil Lasrado, VIII G**





The Time stone

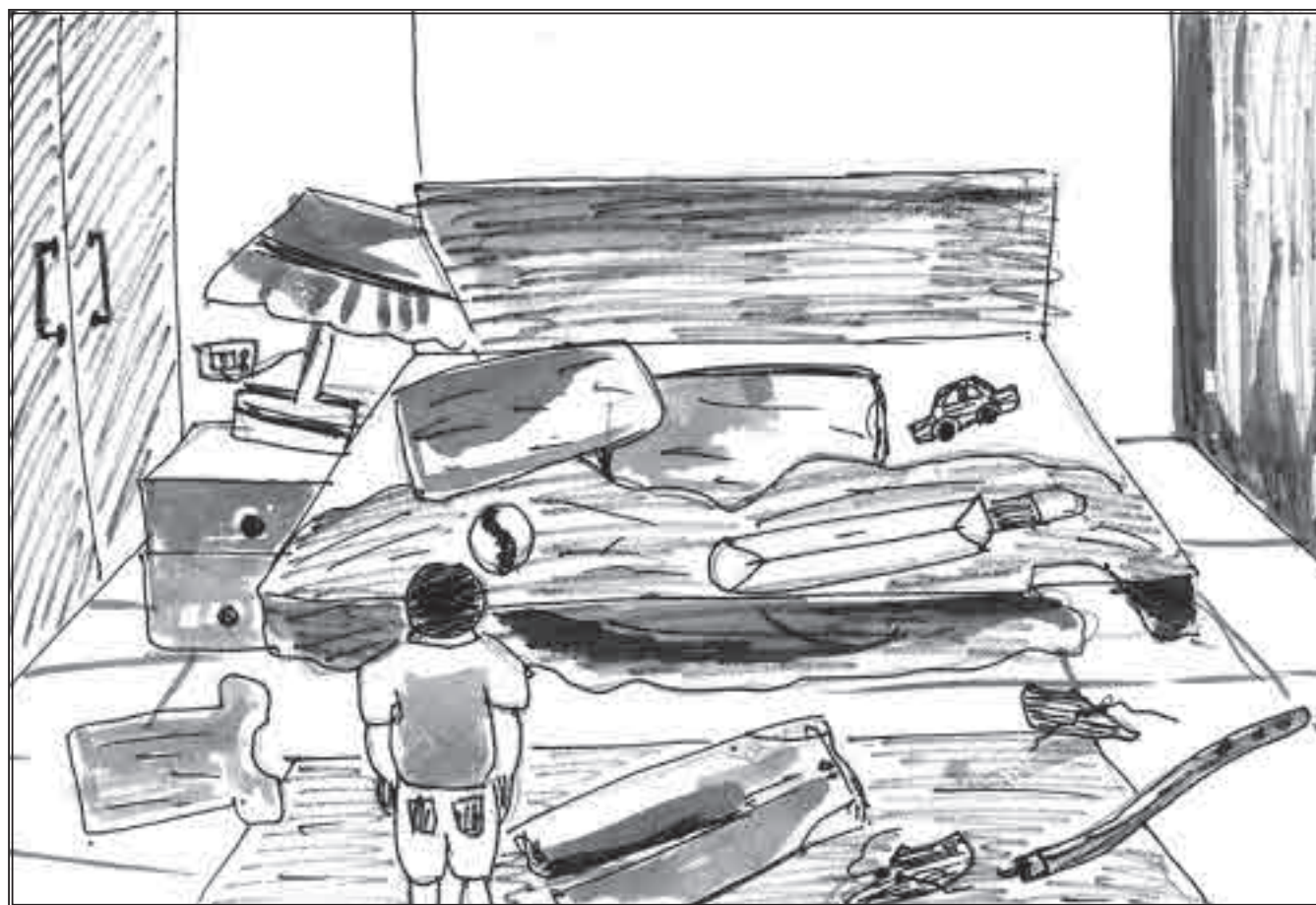
I am Fourteen now, and mature enough to do my own things properly, although the mess in my room can be counted off the list. I think this is why my parents left me here with my Uncle. While leaving,

Sea...!” and,

“All the people spoke the same language..!” and stuff which no one understood or even tried to believe in! He is hasty, and never listens to anybody but himself.

Uncle”, was what my father had said. I don’t know why it sounded so unconvincing now.

The house was still as a rock, absolutely silent. I thought the only sound



I still wasn’t concerned about tidying my room

I never understood my Uncle, a great lunatic at times. It was always a mystery to me how, half of the year, this man was nowhere to be found, and anonymously, he’ll return and boast things like.... “Egypt was once a

The moment I reached his old and creepy looking house, I for sure knew that this was the worst idea my parents had put up for me. He offered me a room on the first floor, I agreed, though not a whisker satisfied with its look.

“You’ll enjoy with your

heard, was my tummy rumbling, so I went for the fridge, but ended up in the gallery leading to the basement. Astonishment filled my face when I saw that picture of my ‘young’ uncle. There was a monument of prizes and trophies, mostly in archaeology. I never





thought of my uncle this way. The basement seemed to have shrunk, for it looked much smaller than it should have been. It was pretty dark, and I was about to sneeze with all the dust in that suffocating room. I huddled across the wall, searching for a switch, when.... "aachoo!!". At last I managed to find a switch, 'click', and I was even more astonished to find this....

In the dimmest of lights, I uncovered a way to an enclosed part of the basement. I was blinded by curiosity and tried to play with the amazing things there.... Fossils, historic coins and... what a giant rock! with a sun-like feature on its centre. Who could stop me now? Curiosity had already overpowered me. By this time I remembered coming across a coin with a similar kind of carving as on the stone. I reached for it, as I couldn't resist thinking about a link. I analysed the stone carefully, but no luck! I almost gave up to anxiety, when suddenly the sun at the centre started heating up! It became intense and the streaming rays set fire to my body. It felt as if I would explode! I couldn't hear my own thoughts....

Few minutes later, I woke up, with much uneasiness, as I was in a different place,

for there was no basement, no house, the only thing visible in a vast stretch of sand were the Pyramids of Giza!! I couldn't speak for a while, even my thoughts echoed twice, a total *deja-vu*! My senses started responding and I found myself wearing a loincloth I remembered my red T-shirt and Jeans perfectly, but... then I realized the great stone structure, still in construction I immediately realized that this must be a dream, but wasn't so, it was not a dream. I had to pinch myself hard.

From a distance, I heard a boy, of my age calling out to me. I seemed to be understand every word he said, though I had no idea what language this was supposed to be. He puzzled me with the knowledge of all my details for I was new there and not seen before. While I had this foreign language conversation, I could finally figure out that I was in a totally different time... makes sense....but rather I had to think about a way out of here! I asked the boy if he knew of a stone with a sun-like carving on it. He gave me a suspicious look as if I was never to utter those words. He explained that the stone was sacred to them. He kept on telling about their rules and customs but it faded out, as

all I had was relief of finding something to return to my time.... and place. I thought it was the only way left. I ran towards the large rock, ignoring him and the other's trying to stop me. Once again I touched the stone and similar reactions took place, just this time, my body was really twitching! To my relief, I was back home.....not exactly home, but to my own part of the timeline. And good gracious! It had only been an hour here. I was certain I spent at least half-a-day in this tour. I guess 'All's well that ends well!'

Time is a dangerous thing, I don't need to do that again.... For sure!!

Now there seemed to be this link, as to where my uncle disappeared all the time. He isn't a lunatic then.

"This mystery shouldn't be known to anyone else," a voice echoed.

Uncle! Oh I was so at ease then. Yes, he had his reasons to keep it all a secret. Though now, my respect for him has increased a million fold. But every day, I still wish to travel again, and unlock mysteries of time that has puzzled the best of minds through the centuries.

◆ **Soumik Paul, VIII - H**



Who's That Knocking At My Door????

It was half past eleven in the night. The raindrops were beating against the window panes, though unwelcomed, the sound of the raindrops seemed to be pleasant. Then the electricity went off and the whole house was dark and silent. TERRIFICALLY SILENT.....I wonder why it happens only when I am alone at house.

I was looking out from the windows at the garden when suddenly I heard someone knocking at my door.

“Who could it be at such late hours during the night?” I thought.

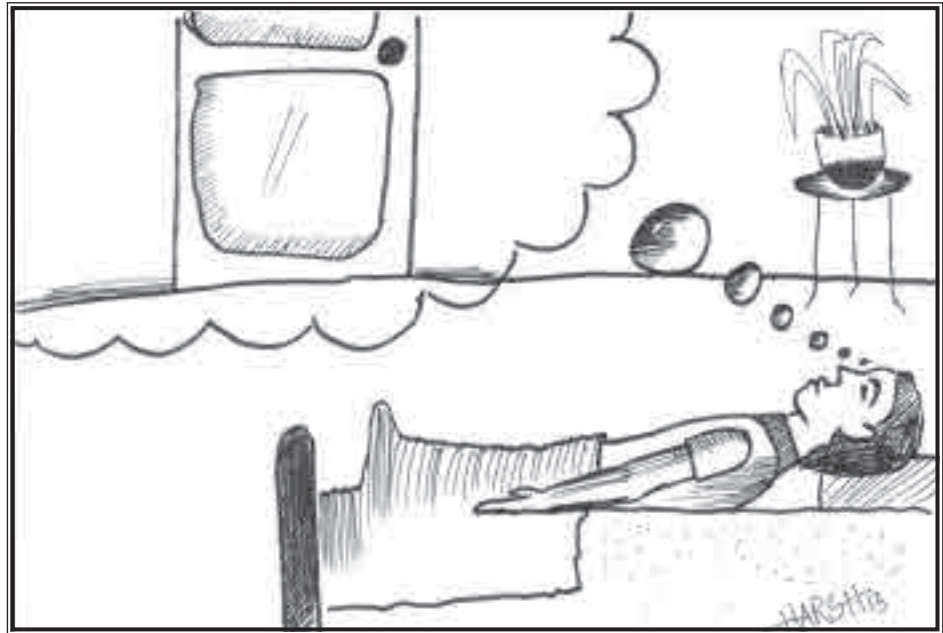
I was curious but frightened at the same time. I got off the bed, and walked towards the main entrance of my house. I did not put on my slippers so as to avoid the sound of my footsteps. I groped my way in the dark corridor for the main door. I heard the knocks once again, only that this time they were louder (I would rather call them ‘bangs’ instead of ‘knocks’). I must confess that I was terrified this time. Being alone in a house is really frightening, I admit.

“What if the person is a murderer, or a burglar, or a sinister clown?”

“Yes, I hate clowns, maybe I have nephophobia, a fear of clowns”. I murmured.

For the first time in the whole night, I acted sensibly – I went to the storehouse and

brought back a baseball bat with me for my defense. Amidst the ‘loud’ banging on the door, the ‘loud’ sound of raindrops outside and the ‘loud’ respirations of my terrified soul, everything was so very frightening!



I heard a voice inside my head urging me to muster up some courage. Finally, after coughing up some courage, I placed my hand on the doorknob and turned it..... Whoa! It was pitch dark. It seemed as if I had opened the door to a black hole in outer space, I did not know where I was. After some time, I regained consciousness. I found myself on my bed. It was half past twelve in the night. The raindrops on the window panes, the books, the garden, the..... Is that someone knocking at my door?! I better get my baseball bat! I felt dizzy.

My younger brother very lovingly patted on my shoulder to know what happened. Thank God it was just a dream!

◆ **Aayushmaan Mazoomdar, IX A**

A Recent Mystery



That day, as Mira refilled the jars of sugar, rice and flour on her kitchen shelves, she suspected her cook, Bina. The jars, as Bina had showed her, were nearly empty, although Mira had filled them herself only two days earlier. She watched Bina closely as she rushed about like a whirlwind, chopping vegetables, flinging spices into sizzling oil and stirring energetically, till the kitchen and the entire bungalow was filled with the aroma of dal and various curries.

Bina was a good cook, both efficient and quick. Mira hardly ever had to direct her, beyond a reminder now and then, to use less oil, or to clean the gas stove. Bina's rice was flaky and soft, her chapattis like soft warm rounds of silk and her vegetables soft or crunchy, as required. There were never any complaints from the family at the dining table. A good cook was a treasure to be cherished, not suspected and blamed. Besides, arriving punctually at four every evening, she

worked like a miniature cyclone in the kitchen, till all the covered casseroles were placed ready on the sideboard and the gas and counters wiped sparkling clean. Then, with a glance at the clock, exactly at seven thirty, she would zoom out gracefully, with a murmured word of farewell, wiping her heated forehead as she went. Speed and expertise, yes. Thievery? Not likely or possible. Then who...?

Mira frowned as she closed the door after Bina.





She tapped her lower lip and pulled at it, as she usually did when she was puzzled. She pushed the matter to the back of her mind and walked into her home studio to finish painting her latest poster. As she unscrewed the bottle of red paint, her eyebrows rose. The bottle was practically empty! She hurriedly unscrewed other bottles in the box, only to find them also nearly empty. What on earth was the matter? Who could be stealing her paints, and why? Pulling at her lip and frowning again, she put away her brushes and palette. The poster would have to wait until she could buy more paint, tomorrow. She frowned even more. An evening wasted, when she had promised the poster to her friend Shiraz tomorrow, in time to be printed to announce the new play by her theatre group next week. Everything would be delayed now!

The missing paint complicated a humble domestic puzzle into an exotic mystery. Rice, sugar, flour and now, paint! What could it mean? She decided to spend the rest of the evening tidying out her wardrobe, a chore long postponed. Opening the wardrobe, she got another shock. An entire bag full of outgrown clothes she had been collecting on the

bottom shelf was missing! How could this happen? No one touched her wardrobe, by her strict orders. She preferred to pull out clothes and stuff them back in, at random, before deciding what to wear, and tidied out only when she could no longer find anything at its right place.

When Mira was tired of a blouse or a pair of jeans or a skirt, she stuffed it into an old Nike travel bag on the bottom shelf. From time to time, she added to the bag, her husband's old shirts and discarded ties, or Shanay's outgrown shorts and T-shirts. She had vaguely planned to sort out the clothes, some day, and decide what to do with them, may be donate them - and now the bag itself had vanished! She was the epicenter of crime unfolding all around her!

When Abhay arrived home that evening, he faced an angry and perplexed wife, who overwhelmed him with tales of missing items everywhere. "Why blame me?" he said, when he could finally get a word in edgewise, "Do you think I'd take your groceries, paints and old clothes? What would I do with them?"

"Don't be silly!" fumed Mira. "This could turn out to be more serious. Check if

anything of yours is missing, first."

"Right now? Couldn't it wait?" objected Abhay. "I'm hungry and tired. Let's have dinner, first." He could see that Mira wasn't willing to be distracted from her problem. "Where's Shanay?" he asked, to divert his wife.

"In his room, doing homework, I hope. He hasn't come out all evening," grumbled Mira. Ever since you got him that iPad, he's constantly net-surfing, or updating his blog or Facebook page!"

Abhay went across the living room to open the door of his son's room, and peeped in. "Finished your homework, Shanu? Or are you busy e-gabbing with the thriving online community?" he joked. Mira followed him into Shanay's room and exclaimed in surprise. Shanay's room was even more messy than usual - and what was more - strewn across the floor, were an old Nike bag stuffed with clothes, brown paper bags filled with flour, sugar and rice, and four big posters painted with the words - Friends, let us help the survivors of the Cyclone Phailin. Thousands are destitute and devastated! What can YOU do to help?





Shanay, sprawled across his bedroom floor, was busy painting human figures being engulfed by huge waves around this message on a fifth poster. Here at last, was the answer to the riddle that had been puzzling Mira all evening! Too busy to do more than just look up, Shanay grinned at his parents. “No homework today, dad,” he said. Mrs. Sanigrahi said, that we were to make posters and put them up in the main landmarks all over Bhuvaneshwar. Then, we are to collect old clothes, money, food and anything we get, to hand over to the

Utkal Sahayata Samiti, who are helping the cyclone victims”.

“What will you do with my rice, flour and sugar? It’s hardly enough to feed your refugees!” exclaimed Mira.

“Mrs. Sanigrahi will show us how to boil them to make glue, to stick our posters, mom,” said Shanay, busy painting. “I was going to tell you all about it at dinner” he added.

“Well, son, you’ve solved the mystery of the missing household goods,

though your mother has been playing detective all evening,” said Abhay. “Come and eat your dinner, now. You can finish those posters afterwards”. Shanay looked up, surprised.

“What mystery?” he said.

“Don’t forget to wash your hands with soap,” added Mira, the detective back to being a mom again. “I’m so relieved to find that there is nothing to worry about. In fact, I feel proud to be your mother.

◆ **Akshaya Sivakumar**
IX - B

To Fulfil My Ambition

*But who knew
that her life will
be so short. She
was murdered and
she had screamed
in pain as the
knife pierced
through her body*

Neha was waiting for the police officials to arrive. Her boss Ms. Avantika Kulkarni had been murdered the previous night in her laboratory. Soon the police official arrived with his team.

“Where is the body?” asked inspector Lalit Kumar.

“Inside there.”

“How many of you were present at the time of the murder?” questioned the inspector.

“None of us”

“Then how did Neha come to know that there was a murder? How did she call me up then?”

“Sir it was around half past ten when everyone had left for their homes. We being her juniors had to stay here so that we could help her in her research. She was doing a research on how cancer cells could be destroyed. If she would have been able to research on all this she would receive a lot of cash



prizes, awards and of course a lot of fame. But who knew that her life will be so short. She was murdered and she had screamed in pain as the knife pierced through her body. The guards quickly came in to see the matter and then called me up and I called you up.”, Neha sobbed as she spoke.

Soon after Avantika was taken to the hospital for the post mortem. The Police were searching for clues. Inspector Kumar was inspecting the window.

“No grills and no glass”, he talked to himself.”

Suddenly the mud below caught his eye. He took a few other men with him down.

“See if you can find any footprints here. Due to heavy rains the garden was wet and muddy. It is quite possible that the murderer would have stepped in here while escaping because the way leads to the forest”, explained Inspector Kumar.

After about ten minutes an official came up to him and said that he found some footprints. Inspector Kumar followed him. There were many footprints there. He looked above and saw that the window was exactly on top of the footprints. He noticed something peculiar about it. The footprints were not heading to the window but towards the forest which meant that the killer had entered from somewhere else.

“Search for some more clues here quick!” ordered Kumar.

They followed the footprints and found that there were a pair of boots lying behind the bushes.

“Size 6”, murmured Kumar.

Now he knew what he had to do. He went



inside and asked everyone to remove their shoes. Kumar examined the reason to them and then spoke at last.

“Yes Neha, tell me why did you do such a crime and how?”

“No I didn’t do it!”

“Stop lying and tell me”

“Avantika was being helped by me in her research. She was just about to announce the discovery of her theory when I murdered her because I was overwhelmed by jealousy, the green eyed monster. So I killed her. At night when everyone left I remained here waiting for the right time. The time came and I snuffed out her life. But she put up a big struggle and screamed loud enough to wake the dead. I hurried my way down but heard the footsteps of the guard. So I thought of jumping through the window. It was easy. But as I came down I noticed the footprints but being in a hurry I just left them in the bushes. I returned after changing my blood stained clothes hence no one suspected me.

“You were clever, but not clever enough,” said inspector Lalit Kumar

◆ *Sheen Warikoo, IX D*

Future Demands Save Earth

To my horror the creature metamorphosed into a giant caterpillar that almost filled the entire room. I knew I was not dreaming as its hot breath hissed on to my face and a gigantic drop of perspiration was falling, as if in slow motion, on me. The

and instead metamorphosed into a bird. It scooped down and caught me before I could comprehend of the latest changes. The dark ugly bird took me and flew for days and then finally we reached a place which was nothing less than Heaven itself.



moment had brought great horror and also surprise. It was all so sudden that I couldn't even think of what to do next and I started panicking.

The caterpillar continued growing; his legs grew out of the room. His eyes opened with a cracking sound and were large enough for the room to be reflected in their pupils. I ran from the backdoor to the lobby and then on to the ground. I ran so hard that I almost tumbled off. The caterpillar shrank a little to manage its way out of the window and then it transformed into a long snake. A snake long enough to see both its ends together. It started crawling behind me at lightning speed. As I ran, I jumped into a big river on the way and swim like one possessed. Even before I had completed my first kick in the water, the snake transformed into a tortoise and started on its way to the river. I swam as fast as I could to cross the river. The tortoise however, didn't go into the water

Fountains of rainbow coloured water, boulevards of rare plants, a picture perfect place. The bird finally transformed into a girl, not exactly like one on earth but yes, there was a close resemblance. She said in a language that I could understand that I was in the 31st century. She warned me that things would take an ugly turn unless we humans use Nature wisely. We had to protect our Mother Earth. I understood the gravity of the situation and promised to look after Earth. But, still scared of my plight, I asked her the way back home. She showed me the way, a tunnel with multihued lights glowing and making the most dreadful sounds. At first, I was scared but then I gathered courage and walked through it.

Suddenly, I fell into a hole in the ground and landed on my bed. The next day, everyone anxious of what had happened to me asked me about my adventure. I just told them to save our Earth. They left promising to do so. I later started an organization that would take concrete steps to save our planet.

A few days later, the same girl appeared in my dream and said, "Thank you, Grandpa!"

◆ **Anurag Sundarka, X-B**



The Fourth Dimension

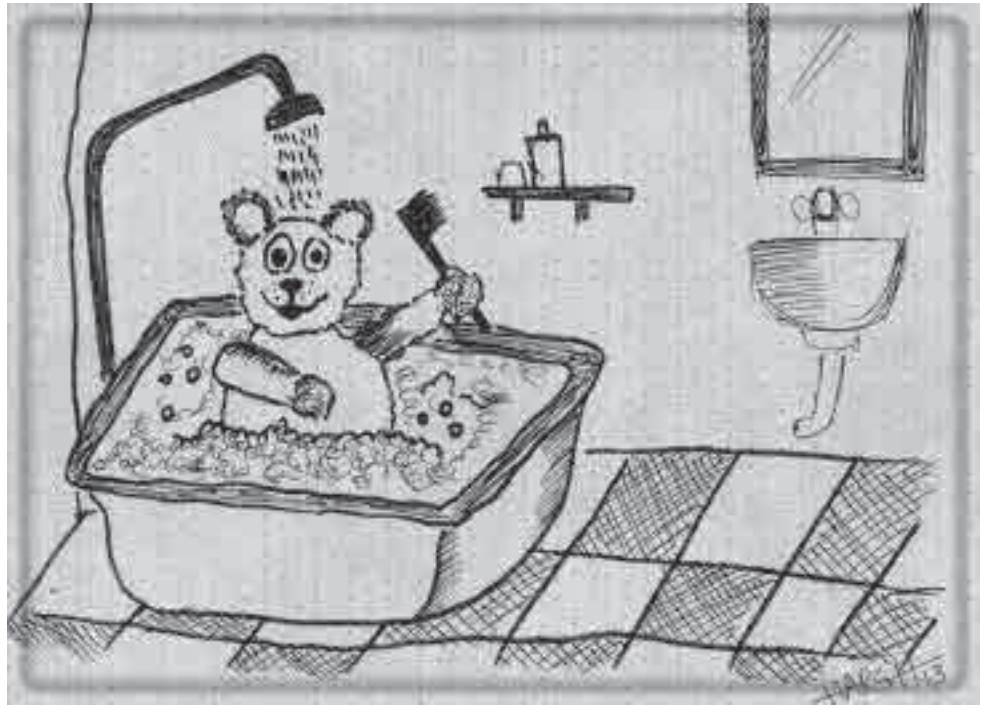
The drops were rolling down like raindrop volts on a mountain. I was lying down straight on my bed, eyes focused on every minute motion of the giant panda. For a moment, I could not hear the sound of the mammoth's movement from here and there. With a little bravery, overlooking all my Achilles' heel, I tried lifting myself from the bed. Gradually, in a tortoise speed, I removed the blanket and crossed my legs, took a deep breath and thought of another step to be taken. To my amazement, my legs were hanging down the bed when I tried jumping. I felt like something was carrying the directions. I always believed that Earth isn't a rotating object but everything around me started rotating. The circulation caused me to run out of the room. I - like a brave soldier- begin to throw pillows down from the bed, just as a soldier throws stones at his enemy. I turned my goofed up head down and what came into my notice was the most powerful and gigantic, panda - standing like an idle scamp in front of me.

BANGGGG!!!

My heart popped out of my mouth. My heartbeat stopped. Again, all I could sense was silence. Suddenly, the panda laid down, bounded with numerous toys of mine.

"Joseph - come out of the room, dinner is served."

I threw the popcorns from my hand. The soft drink was spilled on the ground and



I was back to my senses. The reality was that I was watching a movie. I wondered how I could be lost in such a movie. The hot breath was my own and my sweat was still rolling down my cheeks. Everything around me turned upside down. I got up, took a deep breath, opened my wardrobe and threw out my toy panda. Running towards the washroom to wash my face, I saw the panda having a bath in my bath tub with my little ducks.

It smiled and waved a 'Hi!' to me.

Goosebumps! I shut the door, literally banged it and hurriedly ran out of the room!!!

◆ **Priyal Bhatia, X-B**



God's Heavenly Creation

My stomach twisted and a shiver ran through my whole body as if punching a hole in my chest. Everything felt silent. The silence was not the usual silence I had experienced throughout my life. It was eerie. First time in

me! Or maybe this creature had called in for an alien invasion!

Oh my God! I froze. My legs were free to run, but I couldn't make a try for it because this giant creature would catch me in two

big leaps. The second guess was partially correct. They were the aliens. The bad ones, but this guy! This creature was the good one. The aliens were coming for me to grab their death ray machine as I thought and this sweet little actually big creature leaped in front of me and saved my life. Everything happened in a flash of a second.

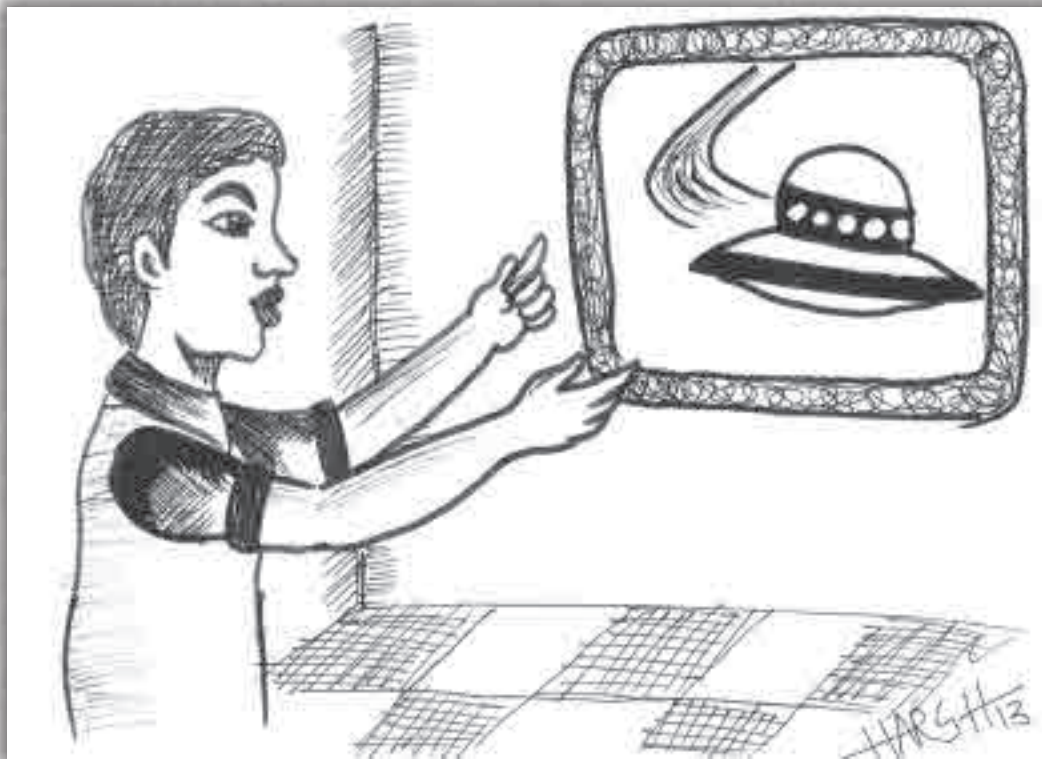
I could not see

the moves made by this heavenly creature, but it was the one who saved my life.

I was taken aback by this. I just wanted to hug it and it would have made my day. To my astonishment, the creature turned into a small boy who had etheric wings, whom God had sent as an answer to my plea for help. The boy with a wide grin and a mischievous wink flew away leaving behind a heavenly perfume and an iridescent feather.

"Thank you!" was all I could say, but I couldn't be sure whether he heard it.

◆ **Anushka Dhabuwala**
X-B



my life, had I been in death throes. I could feel the waterworks start to escalate down my cheeks. There was a tumult of noises and voices in my head. But, suddenly the creature which was facing me did something that was unusual, even for a pet dog to do. It spoke with its deep baritone. Gazing into its eyes, I felt the urge to scream for help. Searching for my cell phone I found out that it was lying on the sofa which was across the creature. Tears were oozing out from my eyes non-stop. I stared out through the window towards the sky as if praying to God to send someone through a miracle to help me. And suddenly, a spaceship coming towards my house with a quickened pace was all I could see. Probably, God had sent someone to help





The Promise

This is the story of Thomas Stewart. He was an ordinary guy with extraordinary dreams. He worked in the Research Department under a great scientist. He dreamt of being promoted as the Head of his department.

The company was since days researching about life on Mars. Thomas was really impeccable at his work. He had all the futuristic equipments. He was very smart at his work and was idolized by his juniors. He wanted to solve the enigma of life on Mars and wanted to be a part of this project. Fate was in his favour and so he was asked to join the project and contribute his researches. He was really happy to find this and started preparing putting all his efforts so that he could achieve his target. Then came the moment when his journey began to Mars. The countdown began





10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1....and the rocket was blasted off into space. They reached Mars and their journey was spectacular, but while landing the craft hit a crater and crashed. With God's grace they were saved and no one was injured. They hurried out of the spacecraft with all the necessary equipments. They tried to contact the research quarters but failed to do so. Then they went forward to complete their project even though their space craft had crashed. As they went Thomas found that all his companions who were following him had vanished. He began looking for them and went ahead. After searching for about an hour someone tapped him on his back.

"Whoever you are...stay still. If you move we shall kill your friends", said a very strange figure. This inhabitant looked like a clone of the humans but they had a very outlandish headgear which differentiated them from the normal humans.

"Don't worry I won't harm you. I am a human and I have come from Earth." I said.

"You Earth people won't let us live in peace? Why have you come here?"He asked in his harsh voice.

"I'm sorry. I have not come here to disturb your life. I promise I won't tell about your existence."

"That's good. We've erased the memory of your team mates and we will also repair your spaceship."

"I promise that I won't ever disclose your secret. Please let us go."

"Alright. Go but if ever our existence is endangered due to your existence then we won't let the people on earth live in peace and especially you."

"Please...I promise, I want reveal anything to anybody"

"Good. You are a very good human. We appreciate. Thank you. If our little secret is out then our existence will be threatened."

Then Thomas and all his mates returned to Earth. Everyone still asks Thomas what happened there but he smiles and says that they couldn't find anything and that it was a waste of fuel and time to go to Mars. He thinks it is better to keep this secret then to get promoted. He prefers to be a good citizen first and then a scientist. He resists that success which he would get by endangering someone's existence.

Truly success has to be measured by what you had to give up to get it. And Thomas was in no mood to give up the word that he had given to those gentlemen from Mars

◆ **Mishika Arora, X-E**



नागनगर का रहस्य

एक दिन मैं अपने घर के बाहर खड़ी थी। अचानक मैंने एक आदमी को एक बैग में कुछ डालते हुए देखा। मैंने सोचा यह आदमी चोर है। मैंने उसका पीछा किया। वह एक गाड़ी में बैठकर चला गया। एक हफ्ते बाद मैंने उसी आदमी को अपनी दादी से बात करते हुए देखा। उसी समय जब मैं अपनी दादी के पास गई तो मुझे आता देखकर वह उनके पास से चला गया। मैंने दादी से उसके बारे में पूछा कि वह आदमी कौन था? दादी ने बताया कि वह अनजान है और नागनगर के बारे में पूछ रहा था। मैंने दादी से इस नागनगर के बारे में पूछा।

दादी ने बताया कि नागनगर एक बहुत ही पुराना और डरावना नगर है। वहाँ काला जादू जानने वाले लोग बसते हैं। काला जादू सीखने के लिए लोग वहाँ जाते हैं। यह उस समय की बात है जब नागनगर सोनापुर कहलाता था। एक दिन एक बाबा ने श्राप दिया और यह नगर नागों से भर गया तब से इस नगर का नाम नागनगर पड़ गया।

वह दादी से इसके बारे में क्यों पूछ रहा था? मुझे नहीं मालूम। लेकिन कुछ बात तो जरूर थी। मन-ही-मन मैंने इसका पता लगाने की सोची और मैं उसका पीछा

करने लगी। उसका पीछा करते-करते मैं एक अनजान जगह पहुँच गई। वहाँ मैंने एक औरत को देखा और मैंने उससे पूछा कि यह कौन-सी जगह है। औरत ने कहा 'नागनगर'। मैं घबरा गई और मैंने उनसे अपने घर जाने का रास्ता पूछा। उन्होंने कहा—“जो एक बार इस नगर में प्रवेश कर लेता है वह वापस कभी नहीं जा सकता। हाँ, एक रास्ता है जिससे तुम वापस घर जा सकती हो और वह रास्ता है कि तुम्हें काला जादू सीखना होगा।” मैंने उनसे पूछा कि क्या आप मुझे काला जादू सिखाओगी और उस आदमी को पकड़ने में मेरी मदद करोगी? उन्होंने कहा जरूर और उसी दिन से मेरी शिक्षा प्रारंभ कर दी। लगभग तीन महीने में मैंने काला जादू सीख लिया। अब उस औरत ने मुझसे कहा कि तुम अब उस आदमी को पकड़ने में सक्षम हो। मैं अपने लक्ष्य की ओर बढ़ चली। तीन दिन की खोज के बाद मैंने उस आदमी को ढूँढ ही लिया और उससे मैंने पूछा कि उस दिन वह मुझे देखकर क्यों भाग गया था? उस आदमी ने कहा—“मैं डर गया था कि कहीं तुम मुझे मार न डालो।” मैंने उससे पूछा कि मैं तुम्हें क्यों मारूँगी? उस आदमी ने कहा—“मैं तुम्हारे माथे पर यह दाग देखकर डर गया था क्योंकि जिसके माथे पर यह दाग होता है वह काले जादू का विनाश कर सकता है।”

उस आदमी ने मुझसे कहा कि तुम ही उस बाबा को हराकर, इस नगर को श्राप मुक्त करा सकती हो। मैंने उसकी मदद करने का वादा किया। वह आदमी मुझे उस बाबा के घर ले गया और मैंने अपने काले जादू की मदद से उसे हरा दिया और इस शापित नगर को श्राप से मुक्त कराया। अब यह नागनगर फिर से सोनापुर बन गया। वह अनजान व्यक्ति भगवान का एक दूत था, जो इस कार्य के हेतु रूप मेरे पास आया था। मैंने उनको प्रणाम किया और अपने घर की तरफ निकल पड़ी।

◆ रिद्धि धमनवाला, VII-A



मंगल ग्रह के निवासी

एक दिन बारिश के मौसम में, तेज़ छनछनाती बारिश में मैं छाता लेकर अपनी दोस्त के घर जा रही थी। तभी मैंने एक जगह देखी। वहाँ पर बहुत अँधेरा था। मैं उस जगह से जाना चाहती थी, लेकिन मेरा मन नहीं माना और मैं अंदर चली गई। वह रास्ता एक सुनसान गली में जाता था। जहाँ आस-पास कोई नहीं था, बस चारों तरफ़ पेड़-ही-पेड़ दिखाई दे रहे थे। कुछ देर बाद मुझे वहाँ एक



बड़ा-सा घर दिखाई दिया और मेरे पास उस घर में जाने के अलावा कोई दूसरा रास्ता नहीं था। वहाँ जाकर मैं दरवाज़ा खटखटाने की कोशिश कर ही रही थी कि उससे पहले ही दरवाज़ा अपने आप खुल गया। अंदर जाकर मैंने देखा तो मेरी आँखें खुली-की-खुली रह गई। मैंने देखा कि वह तो मंगल ग्रह के लोगों के रहने की जगह है। उन्हें देखकर मैं इतना घबरा गई और मुझसे चला भी नहीं जा रहा था। लेकिन जितना मैं घबरा रही थी उससे ज़्यादा तो वो लोग मुझे देखकर घबरा रहे थे। मुझसे बचने के लिए इधर-उधर छुप रहे थे। उनके इस बरताव को देखकर मैं आश्चर्य चकित रह गई। मुझे उनके प्यारे और मासूम चेहरे देखकर ऐसा लगा कि वे

लोग खतरनाक नहीं हैं। जब मैंने उनसे पूछा कि वे लोग कौन हैं और यहाँ क्यों रह रहे हैं? उन्होंने मेरी बात सुनकर तुरंत मेरी भाषा समझ ली क्योंकि वह पूरे ब्रह्मांड की भाषा जानते हैं। मेरे प्रश्नों को सुनने के बाद उन्होंने कहा कि हम लोग मंगल ग्रह के निवासी हैं और वहाँ हर साल बढ़ते तापमान और उधर मची तबाही से बचने के लिए हमें यहाँ आना पड़ा। जब हमें पता चला कि यहाँ के लोग किसी भी

नए प्राणी को देखते हैं तो उनके बारे में जानकारी प्राप्त करने के लिए उन्हें कैद कर लेते हैं और उन पर तरह-तरह के प्रयोग करते हैं जिनसे उन्हें तकलीफ़ होती है। इन सब से बचने के लिए हमें यहाँ आकर छुपना पड़ा। कृपया आप हमें उन के पास मत ले जाना। उनकी यह बात सुनकर मुझे रोना आ गया और मैंने उनसे यह वादा किया कि उनके बारे में किसी को भी नहीं बताऊँगी। उन्होंने अपने और अपने रहन-सहन के बारे में मुझे बताया। अब हम अच्छे दोस्त बन चुके थे। मैंने उनसे हर रोज़ आकर मिलने का वादा किया और उनसे विदा ली। उनसे मिल कर मैं बहुत खुश थी।

◆ प्राची गोलेचा, VII-B

ईमानदारी

मोहन बहुत शरारती बालक था। उसकी एक बहुत बुरी आदत थी सबकी जासूसी करना। जैसे—कौन क्या लाया है? किसके पास क्या नया सामान आया है? कौन आ रहा है? कौन जा रहा है? उसका नाम सब बच्चों ने जासूस भाई रख दिया। जहाँ से भी गुजरता सभी उसे 'जासूस भाई' कहकर चिढ़ाते थे। परंतु उसे कोई फ़र्क नहीं पड़ता था। जासूसी के साथ ही उसे चोरी करने की बुरी आदत पड़ गई थी। किसी का भी सामान बिना पूछे ले लेना। छोटी-छोटी चोरियाँ करना आदि। जासूसी के बहाने वह आसानी से अपना काम कर लिया करता था और किसी को शक भी नहीं होता था। लेकिन जब ऐसी घटनाएँ बढ़ने लगीं तो सभी ने ध्यान रखना प्रारंभ कर दिया और मोहन के माता-पिता को भी बताया। उन्हें बहुत दुःख हुआ पर उन्होंने अपने बच्चे की आदतों को सुधारने का प्रयत्न आरंभ कर दिया। अब मोहन जहाँ भी जाता, जब भी जाता, वे उस पर पूरी नज़र रखने लगे। एक दिन उन्हें पता

चल ही गया कि मोहन पर आँखें मूँदकर भरोसा नहीं किया जा सकता। आखिरकार उसे चोरी करते हुए रंगे हाथों पकड़ लिया। उसे समझाया कि इन्हीं छोटी-छोटी चोरियों को करते-करते तुम कब बहुत बड़ी गलती कर बैठोगे तुम्हें पता भी नहीं चलेगा। ईमानदारी का पालन करना प्रत्येक मनुष्य का कर्तव्य है। इसी से तुम सही अर्थ में सफलता प्राप्त कर सकोगे। मोहन को अपनी गलती का एहसास हो गया था इसलिए उसने सभी से माफ़ी माँगते हुए वचन दिया कि वह अब कभी बेईमानी नहीं करेगा बल्कि सदैव सच्चाई एवं ईमानदारी का पालन करेगा।

◆ पूर्वी अग्रवाल, VII-C



हाथों पर चलने वाला चोर

आज राहुल का जन्मदिन था। राहुल और उसका भाई सोहम जन्मदिन मनाने की तैयारियों में जुटे हुए थे। वे निमंत्रण-पत्र बना रहे थे तभी माँ ने खाना खाने के लिए बुला लिया। राहुल ने उन निमंत्रणपत्रों को पेपरवेट से दबाकर वहीं छोड़ दिया। पिताजी बगीचे में नए पौधे लगा रहे थे। राहुल के पुकारने पर बाकी का काम माली गोपाल को सौंपकर वे भी खाने की मेज़ की ओर चल पड़े। सभी ने बहुत आनंद उठाते हुए खाना खाया और खाना खत्म करके जैसे ही दोनों भाई वापस आए तो चौंक गए। राहुल ने चिल्लाकर गोपाल को बुलाया। आवाज़ सुनकर उनका कुत्ता बोज़ो भी पीछे-पीछे आ गया। राहुल ने गोपाल से निमंत्रणपत्रों के बारे में पूछा तो गोपाल ने कहा कि वह तो बगीचे में पौधे लगा रहा था। तभी सोहम ने राहुल को ज़मीन पर लगे हाथों के कुछ निशान दिखाए। थोड़ी ही देर में पिताजी भी वहाँ आ गए। उन्हें देखकर बोज़ो अजीब-सा व्यवहार करने लगा। कभी भौंकता तो कभी काटने के लिए दौड़ता। सभी को आश्चर्य हो रहा था कि निमंत्रण-पत्र कौन चुरा सकता है। अगले दिन राहुल का दोस्त आदित्य आया तो उसे भी सारी बातें पता चली और वह जल्द ही सबकुछ समझ गया। उसने कहा कि असली अपराधी बोज़ो है क्योंकि तुम्हारे पिताजी की अँगूठी और पेपरवेट दोनों ही चमकदार वस्तुएँ हैं। अँगूठी के कारण बोज़ो तुम्हारे पिताजी पर भौंक रहा था और उसी चमक के कारण उसने पेपरवेट को गिरा दिया होगा जिसके कारण निमंत्रणपत्र उड़ गए होंगे और जो ग्लोब्स तुम्हारे पिताजी ने बगीचे में काम करते हुए पहन रखे थे वही बोज़ो के पैर में उलझ गए थे जिससे ज़मीन पर हाथ के निशान बन गए थे। इस तरह असली मुजरिम पकड़ा गया और सभी की समस्या सुलझ गई।



◆ आदित्य आर. चौधरी, VII-D

रहस्यमय खज़ाना

गर्मियों की छुट्टियाँ चल रही थीं। मैं एक रविवार अपने दादा जी के साथ समुद्र किनारे घूमने गई थी। वहाँ हमने मिट्टी का घर बनाया, पानी के खेलों का आनंद उठाया तभी अचानक एक बोतल मेरे पैर से टकराई। उसे उठाकर मैंने अपने दादाजी को दे दिया। उस बोतल को खोलने पर उसमें कागज़ का एक पुराना टुकड़ा मिला। उसमें लिखा था— “जिस किसी को यह बोतल मिली है वह मेरी संपत्ति का मालिक है। मैं किसी दूसरे आइलैंड में हूँ और अपनी आख़िरी साँसें ले रहा हूँ। तुम दिल्ली शहर में, बच्चों के लिए बने पार्क में W अक्षर ढूँढकर मेरा खज़ाना निकालना।” यह पढ़कर मैं और मेरे दादा जी आश्चर्यचकित हो गए। हमने सोचा कि यह हमारे लिए काफ़ी रोमांचक सफ़र होगा और इसलिए हम दिल्ली के लिए निकल



पड़े। वहाँ पहुँचने पर हमने कई लोगों से सन् 1999 में बने बच्चों के पार्क के बारे में पूछा। बहुत ढूँढने के बाद हम उस नेशनल पार्क में पहुँचे। वहाँ हमने ऊपर-नीचे, दाएँ-बाएँ हर जगह ढूँढा पर W अक्षर का कुछ भी पता न चला। तभी मेरी नज़र पेड़ों से बने उस अक्षर पर गई और हमने वहाँ खोदना शुरू कर दिया। सूर्यास्त होने वाला था और तभी वहाँ से एक बैग निकला। उसमें से बहुत सारे रूपए निकले। हमने वह रूपए वृद्धाश्रम में बाँटे और गरीब बच्चों की भी मदद की। बाकी बचे रूपयों से हम काफ़ी अमीर बन गए और खुशी-खुशी रहने लगे।

◆ स्पीहा केजरीवाल, VII-E

रहस्यमयी कहानी

मेरी गर्भियों की छुट्टियाँ चल रही थीं। मैं अपने बूढ़े नाना-नानी के पास एक पुराने शहर में गया था। वहाँ उस रात जब मैं सो रही था तब मैंने कुछ आवाजें सुनीं। एक पल के लिए तो मैं घबरा गया था परंतु फिर हिम्मत करके मैं रसोईघर में गया। वहाँ मैंने देखा कि वरतन हवा में अपने आप उड़ रहे हैं और उनके बीच एक नीली रोशनी-सी चमक रही थी। मैं घबरा गया और जैसे ही मैंने नाना-नानी को आवाज़ दी वे उठकर चले आए परंतु वह नीली रोशनी पता नहीं एकदम से गायब हो गई थी। तब मैंने नाना-नानी को पूरी घटना बताई तो वे जोर-जोर से हँसने लगे और इसे मेरा भ्रम समझ बैठे। हमारी एक पड़ोसन थी उसका नाम शैली था। वह जादुई कलाबाज़ियों में माहिर थी। मैं उसके पास गया और हमारी दोस्ती हुई मैंने उसे भी पूरी घटना सुनाई। उसने मेरा विश्वास किया और मेरे इस रहस्य को सुलझाने में मेरी मदद की। मेरे पास एक नक्शा था जो मुझे मेरे नानाजी की टैक्सी में से मिला था। एक रात मैं उस नक्शे को समझने की कोशिश कर ही रहा था कि ठक-ठक की आवाज़ आई, मैंने दरवाजा खोला तो शैली बाहर आई। फिर वह उस नक्शे को देखने लगी। वह नक्शा चमक उठा। फिर से कोई आवाज़ आई और वह नीली रोशनी दिखाई दी मैं और शैली उस रोशनी का पीछा करने लगे वह बहुत तेज़ी से भाग रही थी। हम उसके पीछे भाग रहे थे और भागते-भागते हम कारखाने में पहुँच गए। वहाँ किसी चीज़ से आर-पार होकर वह रोशनी गायब हो गई। हमने वहाँ मौजूद किताबों की अलमारी को हटाया तो वह वहाँ पर एक गोलाकार बना था। जिसमें कई चित्र थे। पहले तो हम कुछ समझ नहीं पाए और फिर मैंने नक्शे को देखकर कुछ कोशिश की तो वह दरवाज़ा खुल गया।

वहाँ बहुत अँधेरा था। हम नीचे उतर गए और फिर हमने देखा कि दीवारों में कई चाकू थे। उधर एक पैर रखते ही चाकू शरीर के आर-पार हो सकता था। फिर शैली ने कहा, 'फिर मत करो देखो मेरा कमाल।' वह जादू जानती थी इसलिए वह बहुत तेज़ी से भागी ताकि उसे चाकू न लगे। वह जा रही थी तब एक चाकू बच गया था जो उसे लगने ही वाला था परंतु मैंने उस पर पत्थर फेंक दिया और वह बच गई। उसने मेरा धन्यवाद किया और हम आगे चलते गए। थोड़ी देर बाद हम एक विशाल दरवाज़े के पास आए जहाँ तीन सिरों वाला, आग उगलने वाला विशाल कुत्ता सो रहा था। शैली के पास एक तोता था वह चुनौती लेने को तैयार था जैसे ही वह कुत्ते के



पास गया तो कुत्ता जाग गया और आग उगलने लगा परंतु तोता बच गया उसका स्पर्श पाते ही कुत्ता शांत हो गया। अचानक पानी की एक लहर आई और अब हम एक मंदिर के सामने खड़े थे। उस मंदिर में फिर से वह नीली रोशनी दिखाई दी और उसमें से जोर-जोर से हँसने की आवाज़ आ रही थी। जब वह रोशनी रुकी तो हमने देखा कि वह एक भूत था। वह भूत हमसे दोस्ती करना चाहता था। हमने उससे दोस्ती की और उसने मेरे नाना-नानी को अमीर बना दिया। इस प्रकार इस रहस्य का अंत हुआ।

◆ अनमोल सिंघानिया, VII-F



बंद दरवाज़ा

दो-तीन महीने पहले हमने अपना घर बदला था उस समय की यह बात है। मैं यह जानने के लिए बहुत उत्साहित थी कि हमारे नए पड़ोसी कौन हैं व कैसे हैं? आमतौर पर उनका दरवाज़ा बंद रहता था इसलिए शायद मेरे मन में उनके प्रति जिज्ञासा बढ़ती जा रही थी। दूसरे दिन जब मैं स्कूल से आई तो मैंने अपने पड़ोसियों के घर से चिल्लाने की आवाज़ सुनी। मैंने उनके घर की घंटी बजाई पर किसी ने दरवाज़ा नहीं खोला, हारकर मैं वहाँ से चली आई। मैंने जब माँ को यह सब बताया तब माँ ने मुझे सख्ती से कहा कि “वेवजह किसी की ज़िंदगी में दखलअंदाज़ी नहीं करनी चाहिए, यह कार्य दुबारा मत दोहराना।” परंतु मुझे यह जानना था कि वहाँ आखिर हो क्या रहा है? अगले दिन जब मैं स्कूल जाने के लिए निकली तो मैंने देखा कि दो बच्चे, एक छोटा लड़का और मेरे ही उम्र की लड़की दरवाज़ा खोलकर स्कूल के लिए निकले। बच्चे कुछ डरे-सहमे दिखाई दे रहे थे। उनके पीछे उनकी माँ की भी झलक दिखी। उनके शरीर पर कुछ चोट के निशान नज़र आ रहे थे। उन दोनों बच्चों ने स्कूल के कपड़े पहने हुए थे और दोनों के शरीर पर भी मारने-पीटने के निशान थे। मुझे शक हुआ कि कुछ गड़बड़ है। लेकिन फिर सोचा कि शायद परिवार में कुछ मनमुटाव चल रहा होगा यह सोचकर व माँ की चेतावनी को याद कर मैं अपने कार्य में व्यस्त हो गई। एक दिन जब उनके घर का दरवाज़ा खुला हुआ था तब मैंने उनके घर में झाँका तो मैंने देखा कि वहाँ पर दो लोग जिनके हाथों में बंदूक थी, वे उस परिवार के चारों सदस्यों को मार रहे थे। तब मैं फौरन दो और दो जोड़कर स्थिति को समझ गई। मैंने तुरंत यह किस्सा अपने पापा को बताया। उन्होंने सावधानी से पुलिस को संदेश भेज दिया व पुलिस की सही समय पर कार्यवाही से वे दो चोर पकड़े गए।



◆ रागिनी भुत्रा, VII-G

नैन्सी एक कुशल जामूस है, जो कई पहेलियाँ सुलझा चुकी है। एक बार वह अपने घर की ओर जा रही थी। वहाँ उसने देखा कि ऐलेन स्मिथ नामक एक संगीत शिक्षिका उससे मिलने आई हैं। नैन्सी ने उनसे आने की वजह पूछी तो उन्होंने बताया कि 'मेरे पिताजी



का नाम जैक टॉमलिन स्मिथ है, मेरे दादाजी और पिताजी नौकाओं में घूमा करते हैं। वह एक नौका चालक थे, एक दिन खज़ाने की खोज के दौरान समुद्री तूफ़ान आ गया, मेरे दादाजी के दो जुड़वाँ बेटे थे तो उन्होंने नक्शे को दोनों के बीच इस प्रकार बाँटा कि दोनों हिस्सों के

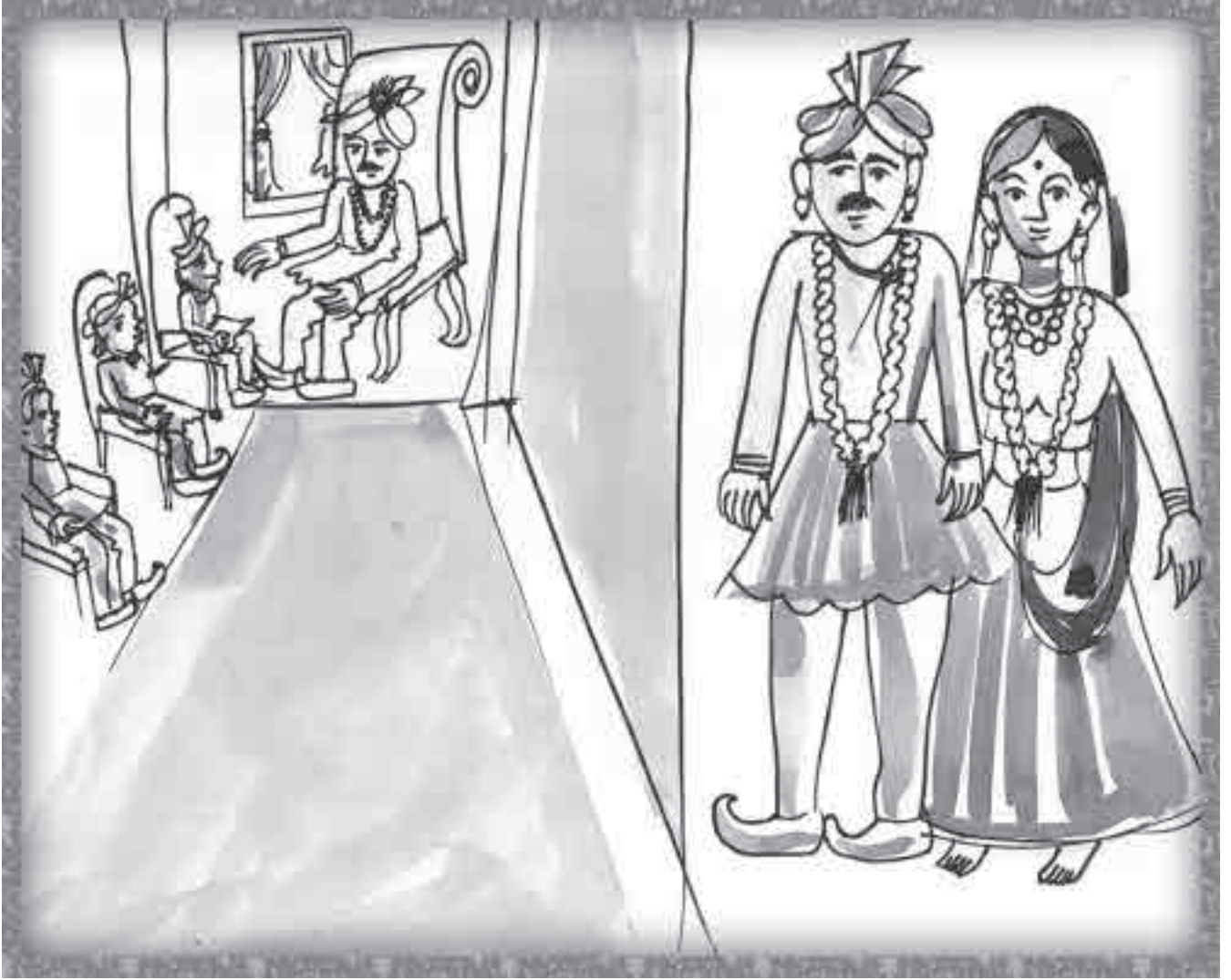
बिना खज़ाने तक पहुँचना

गुमशुदा नक्शे की दास्तां

नामुमकिन है। इस हादसे के बाद मेरे पिताजी और बाकी सब अलग हो गए और मेरे दादाजी की मृत्यु हो गई।' नैन्सी ने ऐलेन से पूछा— 'मैं आपकी क्या सहायता कर सकती हूँ?' ऐलेन ने रहस्यमय स्वर में कहा, 'मैं तुम्हारी मदद चाहती हूँ।' 'मेरी जानकारी के अनुसार नक्शे का आधा हिस्सा पाने के लिए मेरे चाचा ने मेरे पिताजी को कैद कर रखा है, उनको आज़ाद करवाने के लिए मैं तुम्हारी मदद चाहती हूँ।' ऐलेन ने नैन्सी को उसके चाचा तक पहुँचने के कई सुराग दिए। आखिरकार नैन्सी ने ऐलेन के चाचा का सुराग लगा लिया। इस तहकीकात के दौरान नैन्सी ने यह पता लगाया कि वह वास्तव में ऐलेन के चाचा नहीं थे परंतु उस आदमी के पास ही आधा नक्शा था जिसे ऐलेन हासिल करना चाहती थी। बहुत खोज-बीन के पश्चात उन्हें नक्शे का खोया हुआ हिस्सा मिला, दोनों नक्शों के टुकड़ों को जोड़कर यह पता चला कि वह जगह 'पॉम बीच' है। बहुत मुशकिलों के बाद वे वहाँ पहुँचे परंतु वहाँ उन्हें कोई सोना-चाँदी नहीं मिले। उन्हें जो मिला वह सोना-चाँदी से भी कीमती था, वह था टॉमलिन खानदान का पुश्तैनी सामान। नैन्सी की एक और कहानी सफलता तक पहुँच गई।

◆ श्रेया अग्रवाल, VII-H

रौनक की बहादुरी



ढोलकपुर नामक छोटे-से गाँव में रामधारी सिंह नाम का राजा राज करता था। राजा दयालु व शांतिप्रिय था। वह सदैव अपनी प्रजा की भलाई के कार्य करता। राजा का एक विश्वासपात्र सेवक था जिसका नाम था रौनक। वह अत्यधिक शक्तिशाली, बहादुर व जाँवाज़ था जो केवल राजा का ही नहीं पूरे गाँव का भी खयाल रखता था। एक दिन न जाने कौन भेष बदलकर आया तथा बाग में घूमती राजा की पुत्री जयनंदिनी का उसने अपहरण कर लिया। सैनिकों ने राजमहल व पूरा गाँव छान मारा पर उसका कहीं पता न चला। कुछ ही दिनों के बाद राजा के नाम से एक पत्र आया जिसमें लिखा था कि अगर अपनी पुत्री को सही-सलामत चाहते हो तो रौनक के हाथ काली पहाड़ी पर रहने वाली विशाल चिड़िया के तीन सुनहरे पंख सुल्तानपुर के खंडहर के पास वाले मंदिर पर तीन दिन बाद ठीक 12 बजे रात को भिजवाने होंगे। पंख लेने रौनक को अकेले ही जाना होगा। कोई चालाकी नहीं चलेगी वरना

...। राजा बहुत चिंतित हो गए। एक तो अपनी पुत्री के अपहरण का दुःख और दूसरी ओर रौनक को उस पहाड़ी पर भेजने का दुःख

क्योंकि जो भी उस पहाड़ी पर आज तक गया था वह वापस न आया। रौनक को जब यह ज्ञात हुआ, उसने सहर्ष स्वीकार कर लिया। दो दिन तक रौनक लगातार चलता रहा। जैसे-तैसे काली पहाड़ी पहुँचा। ढूँढ़ने पर वह विशालकाय चिड़िया नज़र आई। एक बार तो वह उसे देख भयभीत हो गया परंतु फिर साहस बटोरकर किसी तरह तीन पंख प्राप्त कर लिए और लेकर सीधा खंडहर की ओर चला। मंदिर में पंख रखकर छिपकर देखने लगा कि आखिर कौन है वह व्यक्ति जिसने इतना बड़ा दुस्साहस किया! उसकी नज़र भेष बदलकर आए मंत्रीजी पर पड़ी। वह उन्हें पकड़कर महल ले गया। मंत्री ने सारी बात बताई कि रौनक से जलन के कारण उसने इतना बड़ा कदम उठाया। मंत्री को कारावास में डाल दिया गया व राजा की पुत्री भी उन्हें मंत्री के घर से प्राप्त हो गई। रौनक की वफ़ादारी देखकर राजा ने उसके साथ अपनी पुत्री का विवाह करवा दिया तथा आधा राज्य भी दे दिया।

◆ सिमरन गुप्ता, X-A

सबसे प्रबल नारी-शक्ति



यह कहानी एक ऐसी लड़की की कहानी है जिसने जीवन की बड़ी-से-बड़ी हार को जीत में बदल दिया। आशा का जन्म एक पिछड़े गाँव में रूढ़िवादी परिवार में हुआ था जहाँ लड़कियों को बोझ समझा जाता था। माता-पिता की आर्थिक स्थिति भी ठीक नहीं थी। अतः उसे कई बार अपनी इच्छाओं को दबाकर अपने जीवन से संतुष्ट रहना पड़ता था। बाल्यावस्था तो जैसे-तैसे बीत गई लेकिन युवावस्था में उसकी तकलीफों ने भयानक रूप ले लिया। जहाँ जाती वहाँ ताने। लोगों की गलत टिप्पणियों से वह परेशान थी। परंतु अपने नामस्वरूप उसके मन में यह आशा थी कि एक दिन बदलाव अवश्य होगा। कभी-कभी परिस्थितियाँ भी मन में साहस जगा देती हैं। एक रात उसे खबर मिली कि एक लड़की जो मायके से पर्याप्त दहेज नहीं लाई थी, उसे बीच बाज़ार में ज़िंदा जला दिया गया है। आशा सहम गई। एक पल के लिए तो वह अत्यधिक विचलित हो गई। उसे लगने लगा— क्या लड़की होना पाप है? उसे किस अपराध की सज़ा मिली होगी! यह सब उसके लिए अकल्पनीय था। किसी स्त्री पर अत्याचार की खबर वह सहन न कर पाई। उसने सोचा— जो इस लड़की के साथ हुआ वह किसी के साथ भी

हो सकता है। स्त्रियों ने अत्याचार सहन करने के लिए ही जन्म नहीं लिया है। अगर इसका विरोध नहीं किया गया तो यह स्त्रीजाति की बहुत बड़ी हार होगी। आशा कुछ निर्णय ले पुलिस थाने की ओर बढ़ी व रिपोर्ट दर्ज कराई। पर इसके बाद तो सारा गाँव ही उसके विरुद्ध हो गया। उसका जीना दुष्कर हो गया। जान से मार डालने की धमकियाँ आए दिन मिलती रहतीं। लेकिन उसने तो स्त्रियों की दशा सुधारने का बीड़ा उठा लिया था। बिना हार माने आगे बढ़ने का निश्चय वह कर चुकी थी। मृत्यु का भय भी उसे न रहा। चंद दिनों में स्त्रियों को स्वावलंबी बना उन्हें अपने साथ कर लिया। अब वे भी इस प्रथा के खिलाफ़ कदम-से-कदम मिला उसके साथ बढ़ने लगीं। उसने समाज में फैली कुप्रथाओं के विरुद्ध शंखनाद कर दिया था। राह में कठिनाइयाँ तो अनेक आई परंतु अंत में अपराधियों को पकड़वाकर सज़ा दिलवाई गई। आज आशा के प्रयासों की गूँज चारों ओर सुनाई दे रही थी।

◆ साँची अग्रवाल,

X-B

सबक



यह कहानी उस समय की है जब भारत कृषि के क्षेत्र में तेज़ी से प्रगति कर रहा था। उस समय शहरों का इतना विकास नहीं हुआ था।

भारत के एक छोटे-से गाँव में पला-बढ़ा राम, अपनी उच्च शिक्षा हासिल करने लिए शहर चला गया। शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के बाद कई महीनों तक नौकरी के लिए भटकता रहा पर सफलता न मिली। अंत में उसने निश्चय किया कि इन बड़े शहरों में मेरा कोई काम नहीं, गाँव जाकर अपने चाचा के साथ ही खेती करूँगा और उनका हाथ बटाऊँगा। वह गाँव के लिए निकल पड़ा।

अरे राम! तुम कब आए? चाचाजी ने पूछा।

चाचाजी, बस अभी ही आया हूँ।

अच्छ बताओ, कैसे आना हुआ? तुम्हें कोई मदद चाहिए क्या? चाचाजी ने पूछा।

मुझे तो सिर्फ़ आपका आशीर्वाद चाहिए। मैंने निश्चय कर लिया है कि आज से मैं खेती में आपका हाथ बटाऊँगा।

लेकिन बेटा, मुझे किसी की सहायता की आवश्यकता नहीं है और तुम इतना पढ़-लिखकर खेती क्यों करना चाहते हो?

राम और चाचाजी के बीच बहुत बहस हुई। अंततः चाचाजी को राम की बात माननी पड़ी।

चाचाजी ने कहा, “हमारा खेत गाँव के पश्चिम की ओर है। यहाँ से सीधे जाना फिर पूर्व की ओर पहले दो खेतों के बीच से एक रास्ता जाता है, वहीं आगे गेहूँ का खेत है। राम खेत के लिए निकल पड़ता है। वह उन दो खेतों के पास पहुँचता है और वहाँ काम कर रहे मज़दूरों से पूछता है, “क्या आपने गेहूँ को देखा है? वह कहाँ रहता है?” आसपास के सारे मज़दूर उसका मज़ाक उड़ाते हैं। वह तो गेहूँ को व्यक्ति विशेष समझ बैठा था। तभी उनमें से एक मज़दूर बोला, “क्या तुम नहीं जानते गेहूँ पौधे का नाम है।”

अंत में बड़ी कठिनाई से वह अपने चाचाजी के खेत तक पहुँचा। मगर उसे खेती की कोई जानकारी नहीं थी सो उसे समझ ही न आया कि खेत में क्या काम करना है। वह उदास होकर अपने चाचाजी के घर लौट आया। राम का उतरा हुआ चेहरा देखकर चाचाजी को सब समझ में आ गया। उन्होंने कहा, “मुझे पता था तुम वहाँ नहीं टिक पाओगे क्योंकि तुमने कठिनाइयों का कभी सामना नहीं किया है। तुम इस काम से अनजान हो। यह तुम्हारे बस की बात नहीं।

राम को अपनी गलती का अहसास हो गया। वह चाचाजी से आशीर्वाद ले पुनः शहर की ओर चल पड़ा। अब वह अपनी कमज़ोरियों से परिचित हो चुका था। उसने निश्चय कर लिया था कि शहर में रहकर खेती के बारे में जानकारी हासिल करेगा। उपज कैसे बढ़ाई जाए, आधुनिक तकनीकों का प्रयोग कर किस प्रकार कृषि क्षेत्र को विकसित किया जाए, आदि। इस प्रकार उसने एक नए रास्ते पर अपने कदम बढ़ाए।

◆ रिद्धि पोद्दार, X-C



बात एक रात की

यूँ तो हम बहुत-सी कहानियाँ सुनते-सुनाते हैं परंतु अपने अनुभव से सुनाई गई कहानी का प्रभाव कुछ अलग ही होता है। मेरे साथ घटी इस घटना को मैं चाहकर भी नहीं भुला सकती। यह बात 3 साल पहले की है। हर साल की तरह इस बार भी मैं अपनी बहन के साथ नानी के घर गई थी। वहाँ दिन कैसे बीत जाता, पता ही नहीं चलता। हम पूरे दिन विभिन्न प्रकार के कार्यों में जुटे रहते और थक जाने के बावजूद रात को सोने की इच्छा नहीं होती थी। मैं और मेरी बहन प्रिया उन दिनों रात को 4 बजे से पहले कभी सोते नहीं थे। रोज़ रात को हम ढेर सारी बातें करते और कोई-न-कोई शरारत करते रहते। एक रात हम दोनों अपने कमरे की खिड़की के पास खड़ी होकर बातें कर रही थीं कि हमने देखा, सामने वाले घर के दरवाज़े पर एक व्यक्ति काली वेशभूषा में खड़ा हुआ था। इतने अँधेरे में उसका चेहरा देखना तो असंभव था। इतनी रात को किसी अजनबी का वहाँ खड़ा होना हमें कुछ अजीब-सा लगा। फिर हमने देखा वह व्यक्ति दरवाज़ा खोलकर अंदर चला गया। हमारी साँसें रुक गईं। हमें भय था कि कहीं वह हमारे पड़ोसियों को कोई हानि न पहुँचा दे। ऐसे में हमें जासूस बनने का खयाल तो आकर्षक लग रहा था परंतु यह भय भी था कि घर में किसी को पता न चल जाए। फिर भी हम निकल पड़ीं और सामने वाले घर में जा पहुँचीं। हम अपने साथ हथियार के रूप में एक डंडा भी लेकर गई थीं। घर का दरवाज़ा खुला था, हमने अंदर प्रवेश किया और हमें वही व्यक्ति दिखाई दिया। उसकी पीठ हमारी तरफ़ थी, हमने आव देखा न ताव डंडा उठाकर उसपर पूरी ताकत से दे मारा और 'चोर, चोर' चिल्लाने लगीं।

शोर सुनकर हमारे पड़ोसी जाग गए। उन्होंने आकर बत्ती जलाई और वहाँ का नज़ारा देखते ही चिल्ला पड़े। फिर उन्होंने हमें अहसास दिलाया कि जिसे हमने चोर समझकर मारा था वे तो वास्तव में अंकल ही



थे। हम तो शर्म के मारे पानी-पानी हो गए। किसी तरह खुद को संभाला और अंकल से क्षमा माँगी। हमारी नादानी देखकर सभी हँसने लगे। आंटी ने हमें कॉफ़ी पिलाई। हमने उनसे विनती की कि वे इस घटना का

ज़िक्र किसी से न करें। इस घटना के बाद हम रोज़ जल्दी सोने लगे लेकिन इस घटना को मैं आज तक भुला नहीं पाई।

◆ मनस्वी नारवानी, X-D



साहसी बालक

यह घटना कक्षा दस के छात्रों की मनाली यात्रा से जुड़ी हुई है। सभी छात्र जोश और उत्साह से फूले न समा रहे थे। बच्चों का मन रोमांचित था। बच्चे सर्दी की टंडी-टंडी हवा का मज़ा ले रहे थे। उड़न खटोले की सैर करने को उनका मन लालायित था। अध्यापकों ने छात्रों को अनुमति भी दे दी थी। उन छात्रों को अलग-अलग समूह में विभाजित कर दिया गया। उनमें से एक छात्र अमित भी था। वह भी अपने दोस्तों के साथ इन हसीन वादियों का नज़ारा देखने आया था। वह अपने दल का नेतृत्व कर रहा था। पहले दो दल ने सफलतापूर्वक उड़न खटोले की सैर कर ली थी। अब तीसरे दल की वारी थी। अमित ने सभी को सावधानी बरतने के लिए ज़रूरी सूचना दी। आदेशानुसार दल के सभी सदस्यों ने एक-दूसरे का हाथ पकड़ा और उड़न खटोले में बैठ गए। इतनी ऊँचाई से मनाली का दृश्य अत्यंत मनोहारी प्रतीत हो रहा था। विशालकाय पर्वत श्रृंखलाएँ और वहते झरने का निर्मल पानी अत्यंत सुंदर प्रतीत हो रहा था। इस अद्भुत यात्रा के दौरान अचानक हमारे उड़न खटोले की एक रस्सी टूट गई। सभी का कलेजा मानो मुँह को आ गया था। उस उड़न खटोले में बैठे सभी छात्रों को लगने लगा था कि अब उनका अंत निश्चित है। तभी अचानक से जोश भरी आवाज़ में सभी का हौंसला बढ़ाते हुए अमित बोला, “मैं कुछ करता हूँ।” उसने हिम्मत न हारी। साहस और समझदारी के साथ उसने आगे कदम बढ़ाया। वह खिड़की के रास्ते से उड़न खटोले की छत पर जा पहुँचा। उसने टूटी हुई रस्सी को बाँधने का प्रयत्न किया परंतु पहली कोशिश में वह नाकामयाब रहा। फिर भी उसने हार न मानी। आखिरकार



उसकी इस बार की कोशिश उसे सफलता तक पहुँचाने के लिए काफी थी। रस्सी बाँधकर वह निर्भयतापूर्वक उड़न खटोले में आकर बैठ गया। उसने सभी की जान बचाई। सही मायने में देखा जाए तो उसने

मौत से खेलकर अपने साहस का प्रमाण दिया था। उसके इस साहसी कार्य के लिए उसे वीरता पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया।

◆ आयुष सिंह, X-E



सत्य घटना पर आधारित साहसिक कहानी



साहसिकता वीर पुरुष का लक्षण होता है। सही मायने में इस दुनिया में वे लोग जीते हैं जो साहस के पथ पर चलते हैं। भीरु लोगों के लिए इस दुनिया में मानो कोई स्थान ही नहीं है। इस संसार में वे लोग अमर हो जाते हैं जो कथित अवस्था में भी हार नहीं मानते। ऐसी ही यह कहानी है एक बीस वर्षीय जाँवाज़ नौजवान की, जिसने अपनी जान खतरे में डालकर अनेक लोगों की सहायता के लिए कदम बढ़ाया। सन् 2006 में सूरत पर बाढ़ ने अपना कहर बरसाया। नदी का पानी अपनी सतह पार कर सारे शहर को डुबा रहा था। बारिश का पानी लोगों के घरों में भी भर गया था। रास्ते ही नहीं बल्कि उस पर चलती गाड़ियाँ भी पानी में डूब गई थीं। चारों तरफ़ मानो जल अपना तांडव दिखा रहा था। वाहन-व्यवहार ठप्प होने की वजह से लोगों के लिए जीवन की ज़रूरत की चीज़ें जुटाना मुश्किल हो गया था। एक-दो दिन तक किसी तरह गुज़ारा करने के बाद अब लोगों को खाने-पानी की कमी महसूस होने लगी थी। ऐसे समय में सरकार भी सब तक सहायता पहुँचाने में असमर्थ रही। कुछ लोग घर से खाने-पानी की व्यवस्था करने निकले पर लौटकर वापस न आए। ऐसे समय में इस लड़के ने हिम्मत दिखाई और बाढ़-पीड़ितों की मदद करने की मन में ठान ली। यह लड़का अपने गाँव में खिचड़ी बना कर बेचता था और अपने परिवार का पेट पालता था। उसके हाथ की बनी खिचड़ी उसके गाँव में ही नहीं बल्कि आसपास के इलाकों में भी मशहूर थी। सूरत में उसके कई मित्र रहते थे।

उनके सहयोग से वह इस कुदरती आफत से ग्रस्त लोगों की सहायता के लिए निकल पड़ा। वह स्वयं खिचड़ी बनाता था और खाने-पानी की व्यवस्था कर एक टेम्पो से सूरत शहर के कोने-कोने में लोगों तक खाना पहुँचाने जाता था। ऐसी जगह जहाँ टेम्पो का जाना असंभव होता वहाँ खुद पानी में चलकर भी लोगों की मदद करने पहुँच जाता। राह चलते उसे एक खोई हुई बच्ची मिली। जिसे उसने न्यूज़ चैनल वालों की मदद से अपने ठिकाने तक पहुँचाया। उस दिन कई दिनों बाद पानी कम होने की वजह से शहर में बिजली आई। लोगों के घरों में फैली रोशनी मानो उनके समक्ष प्रकृति के प्रकोप का डरावना दृश्य प्रस्तुत कर रही थी। घरों में कीचड़ ही कीचड़ फैला हुआ था। बहुत सारी चीज़ें खराब हो चुकी थीं। सभी का काफ़ी नुकसान हो चुका था। ऐसे समय में जब लोग पहले अपनी जान की परवाह करते हैं उसने स्वयं की जान खतरे में डालकर अनेक लोगों को भूख से तृप्ति दिलाई। इतना ही नहीं यह महान कार्य करने के बाद भी उसने बदले में कुछ न चाहा। शायद इसलिए उसने अपनी पहचान को गोपनीय बनाए रखा। अतः ऐसे व्यक्ति ही दुनिया में मिसाल कायम करते हैं। जब तक जीते हैं लोगों के लिए आदर्श बनकर जीते हैं और मृत्यु के बाद भी अपने कर्मों के बल पर लोगों के दिलों में, उनकी यादों में अमर हो जाते हैं।

◆ साक्षी देसाई, X-F

Chocolicious

for a crunchy sweet nudge...

Small tender souls

Eager to grow

Eager to learn

Eager to play

Euphoric energy filled

For mischief and pranks ever so many!

Stories that recollect such memories

Those with a distinct crunchy sweet nudge

Fun, laughter and naughty childhood

Remain in the heart forever

The crystal clear innocence

Honeyed cinnamon

Hot dark chocolate

On vanilla icecream

Such are Life Experiences

A melting pot

Of memory concoction

On a moonlit highway

JK Rowling and Charles Dickens

Or Kipling's Mowgli or Sher Khan

Roald Dahl or RK Narayan

All present such images Chocolicious





Childhood Memories Last Forever

Everyone loves his childhood. In fact, childhood is the best stage of one's life. It is a stage when we don't care about our clothes or our hairstyle; we just do what we want to. Some really funny, scary or serious incidents take place at this time which we cannot forget throughout our life.

One such scary incident happened with me when I was around six years old. I had many friends in my colony. One day, my parents dropped me at my friend Simran's house to spend some time with her. It was afternoon and her mother was enjoying her siesta. We were very excited playing with the new toys and forgot to close the main door of the house. While we were playing in the room, two strangers entered the house, locked the door from inside and started taking our belongings. When Simran and I came out of the room, we were shocked to see the robbers.

When they saw us, they sprang towards us. These men followed their chief's instructions and tied our hands together to our chairs so that we wouldn't move. Then Simran's gave a loud cry. I was too panicked to react. Simran's mother came out when she heard the noise. The moment she saw us in that condition, she screamed loudly to wake up the neighbours. The two people stuck a grey tape on her mouth and tied her along with us. Then the servant in the house was caught calling up the police secretly. They locked the four of us in the washroom. And then they continued their job in which they seemed pretty good. After an hour or so they opened the door and asked us to give whatever we had. Simran's mother gave away her jewellery and Simran and I were so innocent that we gave them our hair clips and bands because we didn't have anything else. The thieves shouted at both of us so



loudly that we broke into tears. They left the house and told us not to inform the police or else they would harm us. I went home and narrated the terrible ordeal to my parents. My father informed the police immediately. The police reached Simran's house with sirens blaring. They inspected the place and then took us to the police station to collect further details.

The cops did a commendable job as within a week the thieves were caught and we fortunately got back all the things..

◆ **Muskaan Sethi, VII-C**



My Childhood

‘There is a garden in every childhood, an enchanted place where colours are brighter, the air softer, and the morning more fragrant than ever again.’ This is well said by Elizabeth Lawrence and the same is true for my childhood. When I was younger I’d put my arms in my shirt and tale people I had lost my arms. Would restart the video game whenever I knew I was going to lose. Slept with all the stuffed animals as a child so none of them got offended. Faked being asleep so I could be carried to bed, used to think that the moon followed my car and used to sing in the shower which till date I do. Though I do remember this awful day in my childhood. I was six years old and it being Diwali everybody showed a lot of enthusiasm. People followed the tradition of wearing new dresses and preparing cakes and sweets at home.

Father bought some firecrackers from the nearby store and said, “These are used for our enjoyment and to enhance the beauty of the night”.

At first I thought that it was a terrible idea as it scared the hell out of me. I got goosebumps on my hands but then slowly and steadily I started liking it. I was jumping actually galloping on those chakras and enjoying the scenic beauty of the display of firecrackers. But then I got a glimpse of a box kept aloof from the others. I picked up that box and started opening it too curious to know what actually was there inside. Suddenly out of no where a big lizard crawled out. Its big yellow eyes looked into mine. I shrieked and dropped that box so forcefully that out came tiny balls which sounded like tiny bombs. I was shocked at that sound and started calling for help. My mother took notice of me and calmly



asked what the matter was. I told her my tale of woe and she started laughing at me. I was annoyed but thought it was wise to be quiet.

Just then she explained to me that this was no bomb but a small firecracker which though small makes a loud sound. I looked a total mess and so decided to eat the scrumptious dinner and go off to bed.

It was a very embarrassing moment for a six year old girl. But all’s well that ends well.

◆ *Spriha Kejriwal*
VII-E



If My Childhood Would Return...

Once a middle aged man stressed and tired of his work came home and as soon as he was about to open the door, a ball hit the window pane and broke the glass. He was angrily standing there when suddenly a child of around six years picked the ball and asked the man,

“Will you play with us?”

The child unaware, fearless wanted to play more. He could not see any loss in the breaking of the glass. A smile appeared on the angry man’s face because of the innocence. He did not scold him and went inside his house. He then sat on his chair and fell fast asleep. Then he dreamt...

He saw that he was playing with his friends and enjoying himself when his mother called out lovingly.

“Complete your homework child!”

But he, not being bothered, continued to play. During that period he felt no stress and no burden. His mother then said, “I will not talk to you! You don’t listen to me...”

When he saw his mother was upset, he came close to her but she ignored him to make him realise his mistake. He started crying and then said sorry as many times as he could.

Then his mother hugged him and said, “You’re the best child, mamma loves you a lot.”

His heart was filled with innocence and



sensitivity at that time. Then his mother started teaching him. Suddenly she remembered an important task and told him to continue his work till she came. But as soon as his mother went, he also went out quietly and began playing again. He was a very naughty child then.

Dhammmmm!!!!

Came a voice, the man woke up and saw another window pane broken. This time he took the ball and went to play with the children who had broken the window. Observing and enjoying the same innocence, naughtiness and sensitivity hidden in them, he wished his childhood would return.

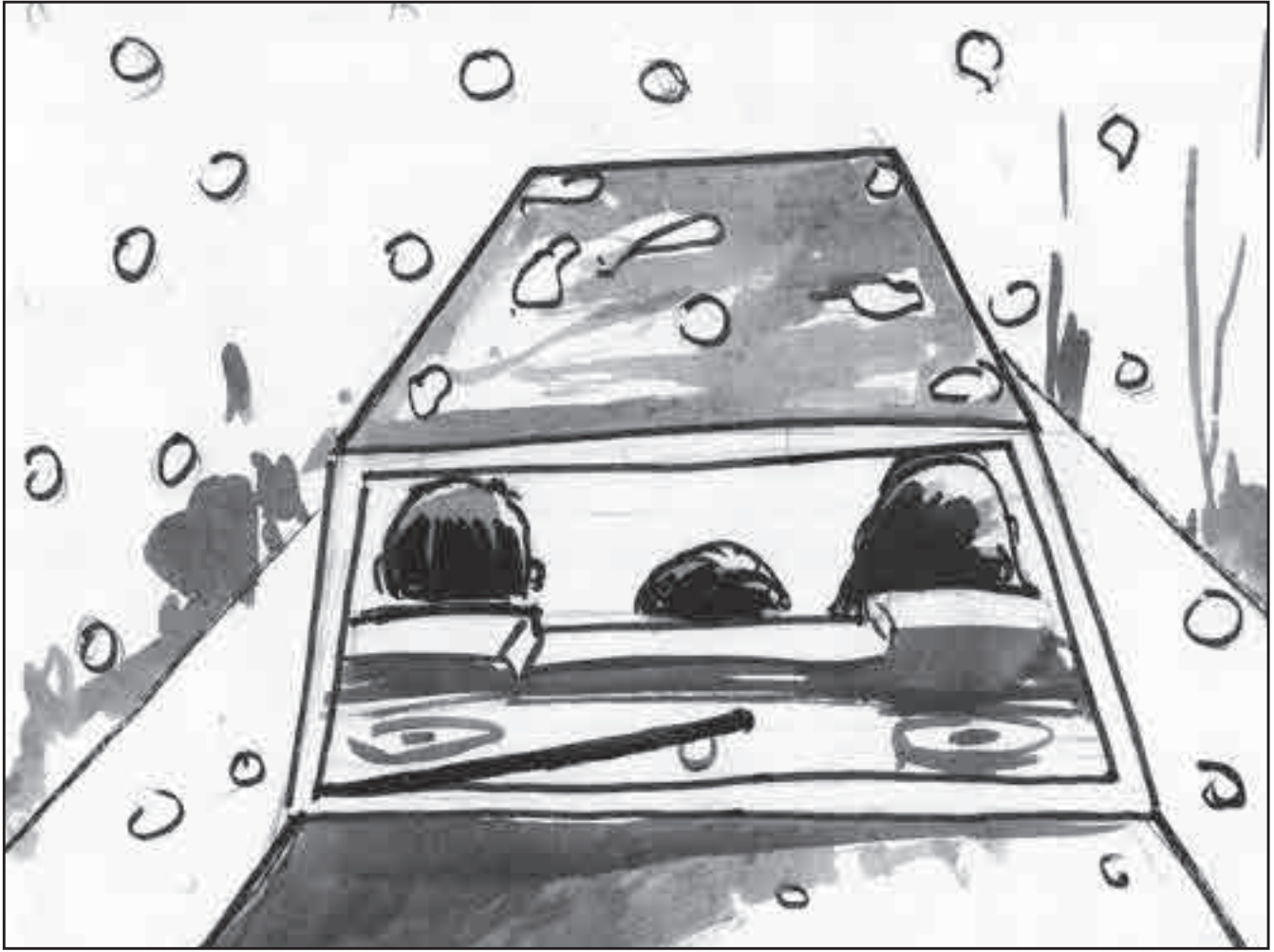
◆ **Gauri.P.Gaba**
VII - F



मेरा अनोखा अनुभव

हमारे साथ घटित कई अनुभव हमें अपनी ज़िंदगी और अच्छी तरह से जीने में सहायता करते हैं और कई अनोखी सीख भी दे जाते हैं। ऐसी एक घटना मेरे साथ भी घटित हुई। करीब तीन वर्ष पूर्व दीपावली के समय हमने नैनीताल जाने का विचार किया। सुनते ही मैं उल्लास से भर गया। हमने धीमी गति की रेलगाड़ी द्वारा यात्रा प्रारंभ की। पहाड़ों के सौंदर्य ने मेरा मन मोह लिया। प्रतिदिन घूमने का कार्यक्रम चलता रहा। किसी-न-किसी स्थल पर

गहरी खाई थी। हमारी गाड़ी में कोहरा हटाने वाला यंत्र भी नहीं था। ड्राइवर धीमी गति से गाड़ी चला रहा था परंतु फिर भी हमारा दिल किसी अज्ञात आशंका से जोर-जोर से धड़क रहा था क्योंकि सुना था कि दो दिन पूर्व ही वहाँ दुर्घटना में चार लोगों की मौत हो गई थी। हम सब डरे हुए थे और ईश्वर को याद कर रहे थे। हमारे आगे एक गाड़ी और चल रही थी जो दो बार खाई में गिरते-गिरते बची। हमारे होटल से वह स्थान दस किलोमीटर दूर था। सात



हम प्रतिदिन पिकनिक मनाते। वहाँ का सुहावना मौसम व सर्द हवाएँ हमें दुगुने उत्साह से भर देतीं। नित्य की तरह एक दिन हम पहाड़ की ऊँची चोटी पर घूमने गए। हमें बताया गया कि पाँच बजे से पहले वहाँ से लौट जाने में ही भलाई है क्योंकि बाद में कोहरा बहुत घना हो जाता है ऐसी स्थिति में कुछ भी नज़र नहीं आता। वहाँ से प्रकृति के अदभुत नज़ारों को देखने में समय का पता ही न चला। घड़ी सात बजा रही थी। हमारा ड्राइवर बहुत अनुभवी था अतः हम निश्चिंत होकर लौटने लगे। परंतु कोहरा इतना घना था कि कुछ भी दिखाई न देता था। मार्ग में एक ओर ऊँचे पहाड़ थे तो दूसरी ओर

किलोमीटर जैसे-तैसे पार किए। इतने में एक गाड़ी दिग्ब्री जिसमें कोहरा हटाने वाला यंत्र था। हमारे ड्राइवर ने उसी के पीछे-पीछे गाड़ी चलाई तथा हम सही सलामत होटल पहुँच गए। हमने ईश्वर को धन्यवाद दिया। इस अनुभव ने मुझे सिखाया कि यदि हम दूसरों की नसीहतों को भी ध्यान में रखें तो कई बार जीवन की कठिनाइयों से बच सकते हैं।

◆ सम्यक जैन,
IX-B



जीवन का अनुभव



यह कुछ साल पहले की बात है जब मैंने किशोरावस्था में कदम रखवा ही था और शाश्वत सत्य 'माता-पिता को भगवान से भी ऊँचा माना जाता है' का अपमान कर दिया था। मुझ पर 'कूल डूड' बनने का भूत सवार था। मेरे शरीर में हॉर्मोनल बदलाव हो रहे थे और इसी कारण परिवार के प्रति मेरे बर्ताव में बहुत बदलाव आया था। मेरे साथ बहुत कुछ एक साथ ही हो रहा था जिसे मैं झेल नहीं पा रही थी। इसके साथ-साथ मैं कुसंगति में भी रहने लगी। मेरे अग्रज मित्रों ने थकान दूर करने के लिए ड्रग्स, शराब आदि का इस्तेमाल करने का सुझाव दिया। मगर पता नहीं किस अंदरूनी शक्ति ने मुझे यह गलत कदम उठाने से रोक लिया। मैं छोटी-छोटी बातों पर चिढ़ने लगी और माता-पिता से अनावश्यक व अनचाही माँगें करने लगी। एक तो पहले ही मेरा बर्ताव बिगड़ चुका था, उस पर मोबाईल आदि की माँग और ऊपर से मेरे परीक्षा परिणाम भी बहुत बुरे आए। मेरे ऐसे बदले हुए व्यवहार को देख मेरा पूरा परिवार अर्चभित था। पड़ोसियों ने मेरे बारे में बुरा-भला कहना शुरू कर दिया। मेरे ऐसे व्यवहार से परेशान हो मेरे माता-पिता ने मुझे हॉस्टेल भेजने का विचार बना लिया। मेरे माता-

पिता का मुझ पर से विश्वास पूरी तरह हटने लगा था परंतु इसी दौरान मैंने अपने आप को सुधार लिया। मैंने बुरी संगति का त्याग किया, माता-पिता से माफ़ी माँगी और अपना पूरा ध्यान और समय अपनी पढ़ाई को समर्पित किया।

अपने जीवन की इस घटना से मैंने जीवन का सबक और उद्देश्य सीखा। सबक यह था कि जीवन में परिस्थितियाँ सदैव एक-सी नहीं रहतीं, वे अपना रूप बदल कर अवतरित होती हैं। मगर हमें किसी भी परिस्थिति में कभी अपने माता-पिता का अपमान नहीं करना चाहिए। जीवन में कभी ऐसा कोई कार्य नहीं करना चाहिए जिससे हमारे साथ-साथ दूसरों को भी दुःख पहुँचे। उद्देश्य यह था कि मैं कुछ ऐसा कार्य करूँ जिससे मेरे माता-पिता की छाती गज भर की हो जाए।

◆ खनक इच्छुड़ा, IX-C



प्रकृति के रंग



यह तकरीबन दो साल पुरानी बात है। जब हम अपनी दादी के घर गाड़ी से जा रहे थे। इतना लंबा सफ़र गाड़ी से तय करना, यह हमारा पहला अनुभव था। जब हम निकले तो मुझे पहली बार एहसास हुआ कि प्रकृति कितनी सुंदर है। चारों तरफ़ रंग-विरंगे पुष्प दिख्राई दे रहे थे। जो हवा के साथ इधर-उधर लहरा रहे थे। जहाँ तक नज़र जाती वस हरियाली ही हरियाली थी। हरे रंग से सनी धरती ऐसी प्रतीत हो रही थी मानो किसी ने आसमान से हरे रंग की वर्षा कर दी हो या फिर किसी ने हरी चादर आसमान से छोड़ दी हो जो हवा के साथ उड़ते-उड़ते नीचे आ गई हो। जब हम थोड़ा और दूर गए तो हमें चाय की पत्तियाँ हवा में लहराती हुई नज़र आईं। चाय के बगीचे के बीच कंधे पर टोकरी उठाए वे लोग जब उन पत्तियों को चुन रहे थे तब ऐसा लग रहा था मानो कोई धरती पर बिखरे हरे रंग को लूट रहा हो। प्रकृति का यह नज़ारा अत्यंत मनोहारी था। ऊपर नीले रंग

का आसमान साफ़ था। धरती पर बिखरा पानी मानो हम तक वर्षा ऋतु का संदेश पहुँचा रहा था। वहाँ से वादियाँ बहुत सुंदर दिख्राई दे रही थीं। चारों ओर फैले पहाड़ों के बीच बने रास्ते से गुज़रती हमारी गाड़ी ऐसी लग रही थी मानो प्रकृति ने हमें अपनी गोद में उठा लिया हो। इतने में एक सुंदर तितली हमारी गाड़ी में उड़कर आई। उसे देखकर ऐसा लग रहा था मानो ईश्वर ने सृष्टि के सारे रंग भरकर उसे सौंदर्य से भरपूर कर दिया हो। शहर की दूषित वायु से दूर शुद्ध हवा में साँस लेते हुए ऐसा लग रहा था मानो शरीर के सभी तरह के विकारों से आज हमें मुक्ति मिल गई हो। अतः इतना कहना काफ़ी न होगा। प्रकृति के अनुपम सौंदर्य का स्पर्श मानो ईश्वर के चमत्कार को नज़दीक से निहारने का अविस्मरणीय अनुभव बन गया।

◆ अक्षिता जैन, IX-F



जीवन का अधिकार

मैंने कई पुस्तकों में पढ़ा है, भारतीय संविधान के अनुसार “हर भारतीय नागरिक को जीवन जीने का अधिकार है।” उस वक्त मेरे मन में यह प्रश्न बार-बार उठता, नागरिक ही क्यों? पशु क्यों नहीं?

एक समय की बात है मैं अपनी माँ के साथ बाज़ार गया था। जब हम घर पहुँचे तो मैंने अपनी विल्डिंग में अचंभित कर देने वाला एक दृश्य देखा। विल्डिंग की पहली मंज़िल पर पक्षियों के दो नन्हे बच्चे एक कोने में सहमे हुए-से बैठे थे। आस-पास के लोगों से पूछताछ करने पर पता चला कि इमारत की सबसे ऊपरी मंज़िल पर उनका घोंसला था। सफ़ाई का काम चल रहा था इसलिए उन्हें वहाँ से हटा दिया गया था। घर पहुँचकर मैंने अपनी माँ से पूछा, “क्या हम उन नन्हे परिंदों को अपने घर में आश्रय दे सकते हैं?” उत्तर था “नहीं।”

मैंने अपनी माँ को मनाने का प्रयास करते हुए कहा कि इस असीम विश्व में उनका कोई नहीं है। रात को यदि वे विल्ली का भोजन बन गए तो क्या होगा? मैं मन-ही-मन सोच रहा था कि अगर वे दोनों मेरे घर आ गए तो मैं उनके साथ खूब खेला करूँगा, अपने दोस्तों को उनको बारे में बताऊँगा जिससे उन्हें ईर्ष्या होगी। आखिरकार मुझे उन दोनों बच्चों को घर लाने की आज्ञा मिल ही गई।

मेरे घर में उन दो नए मेहमानों का आगमन हुआ। मैं तो बस यह सोच कर ही मग्न था कि अब मेरे खुशियों के दिन आरंभ हो गए। मेरे मन में वसंत का आगमन हुआ था। आधे घंटे में मैंने उनके रहने का स्थान बनाया। तत्पश्चात उन्हें कुछ सूखे चावल देकर उनके भोजन का प्रबंध किया और कुछ हरी पत्तियाँ ऐसे लगा दीं जिससे उन्हें अपने घर में रहने का अहसास हो। उस वक्त मैं उनके माता-पिता की अनुपस्थिति के गम को न मिटा पाया। फिर मैं ट्यूशन पढ़ने चला गया और रात को 8:30 बजे लौटा। अत्यधिक थकान होने के कारण उस रोज़ मैं 9 बजे ही सो गया।

घर के बाकी सदस्य भी जल्दी ही सो गए थे। उस रात बहुत ठंडी हवाएँ चल रही थीं परंतु जाने क्यों मेरा ध्यान उन पक्षियों की ओर गया ही नहीं। प्रातःकाल जब मैं उन्हें देखने गया तो मैंने पाया कि उनका दुखांत हो चुका था। मैं उन्हें कड़कती ठंड से बचाने में असफल रहा। उनमें से एक बच्चा जिंदा था तो उसे हमने ‘नेचर क्लब’ भेज दिया। उस दिन से मैं उस नन्हे-से जीव की मृत्यु का कारण बनकर जी रहा हूँ। उसकी पीड़ा मैं आज भी महसूस करता हूँ कि मैंने एक जीव से उसके जीने का हक छीन लिया था। इस घटना के बाद मैं सदा याद रखूँगा कि प्राण कोई खेलने की चीज़ नहीं है। यह संसार में सबसे कोमल वस्तु है जिसका सदैव ध्यान रखना चाहिए। आखिर, सभी को जीने का हक है!

सीमांत मिश्रा,

IX-D



मेरे जीवन की अविस्मरणीय घटना



मैंने अपनी ज़िंदगी में बहुत सारी सत्य घटनाओं के बारे में सुना है। कई घटनाओं का अनुभव भी किया है। हर घटना मुझे ज़िंदगी जीने का नया पाठ सिखाती है। इन घटनाओं की वजह से मेरे जीवन में कई बदलाव आए हैं। मेरी ज़िंदगी की यह घटना एक छोटे-से गाँव से जुड़ी हुई है। मैं छुट्टियों में अपने गाँव गई थी। जो हरियाणा में बसा हुआ है। मैंने वहाँ जाकर देखा कि गाँव और शहर की ज़िंदगी दो अलग रास्तों की तरह है। दोनों जगह का अपना एक अलग ही अनुभव होता है। मैं शहर का अनुभव कर चुकी थी परंतु गाँव का अनुभव मेरे लिए नया था। शहर की भीड़ भरी ज़िंदगी को देखने के बाद गाँव का शांत वातावरण अत्यंत रमणीय नज़र आ रहा था। वहाँ के लोगों के मन में न तो किसी के लिए घृणा थी और ना ही आपस में बैर की भावना। वहाँ का वातावरण भी बहुत शुद्ध था। यह सब देखने के बाद मुझे लग रहा था मानो हम एक पल के लिए स्वर्ग में आ गए हों। जब मैं उस गाँव के बच्चों से मिली तब मुझे लगा मानो वे कुछ कहना चाहते थे। फिर मैंने उनके साथ समय बिताया और उन्हें जानने की कोशिश की। मुझे यह पता चला कि ये मासूम, नन्हे बच्चे पढ़-लिखकर अपने माता-पिता का नाम रोशन करना चाहते थे। मैंने मन में ठान लिया था कि मैं उनकी मदद

ज़रूर करूँगी। मैंने उन्हें इकट्ठा किया और पढ़ाना शुरू किया। उनके साथ थोड़ी बहुत शरारत भी की। छुट्टियों के दौरान पढ़ाने का यह सिलसिला चलता रहा। फिर एक दिन मैंने सोचा कि कुछ दिनों बाद जब मैं चली जाऊँगी तो इन्हें कौन पढ़ाएगा। मैंने गाँव के सरपंच से इस विषय में बात की। उन्होंने मुझे विश्वास दिलाया कि वे अपने गाँव में एक छोटा-सा विद्यालय ज़रूर खोलेंगे और इन बच्चों के भविष्य को सुधारने का हर वह प्रयास करेंगे। यह सुनकर वे बच्चे और उनके माता-पिता बहुत खुश हुए। उन्हें जीवन में एक नई दिशा मिली और मुझे शांति और सुकून का एहसास हुआ। यह मेरे जीवन का एक अविस्मरणीय अनुभव था। इस घटना से मैंने जीवन में यह सीखा कि अगर कोई किसी के लिए सच्चे दिल से कुछ करना चाहता है तो समग्र संसार की एक अदृश्य शक्ति उसकी ताकत बन जाती है। अतः हमें हमेशा दूसरों की मदद करनी चाहिए और असंभव को संभव बनाने के लिए आख़री साँस तक प्रयास करते रहना चाहिए।

◆ कैथी गर्ग,
IX-E



Fruiticious

for a juicy punch...

Life is a feast

With myriad flavours to serve

Just sit back

Breathe in

Silently observe

Surprises galore

Some pleasant

A few unpleasant

Choose the right

On life's forked path

Make each day a masterpiece

Roar out that little voice

For different flavours of life

Each Profession's got to offer

Unravelling mysteries

Flavours appeasing

You have brains brilliant

You have a heart colossal

You have feet firm in your shoes

You can steer yourself in any direction

Depending on the Career you choose

Enjoy every bite

Be it a little sweet or not so nice

Each moment finds you

A little more able

A lot more wise

For life's flavour aplenty

Life's flavour Fruiticious.





NURSE
CLOWN
OFFICER
POLITICIAN
CHEF
ROCKSTAR
DOCTOR
TEACHER

SALARY

- ~~HAPPINESS~~
- ~~PEACE~~
- ~~SWEAT~~
- ~~HMMM...~~
- ~~THANKS~~
- ~~APPRECIATION~~
- ~~BLESSINGS~~
- ~~LOVE ♡~~



What did you go for??





Pride Pays Its Price

I had never imagined in my wildest dreams that the hunger for success would bring me on the verge of destroying myself. Dr. Franklin, who had just completed his internship and had joined Care Nursing Home, was a passionate and determined psychologist. His intelligence could not be challenged and he was well aware of this fact. He was so impressive that all the patients trusted his medications and that made him the most recommended doctor. There was nothing to stop his success and within a few years of practice he was the dean of a medical college. He became the power drunken ruler of his castle and this marked his first step towards his downfall and also the end of his life too.

He had treated many patients with psychological problems but in the short period of his career, this was his first case of multiple personality disorder. Samantha, a girl in her twenties was accused of four murders and her defence lawyer claimed that she had not committed them even when





all the evidences clearly pin pointed her. Now it was Dr. Franklin's duty to give concreteness to this case. He hypnotised Samantha to bring out the truth but in this process she met her alter Allete. Samantha was simple and humble unlike Allete who was annoying and aggressive. Multiple Personality disorder was not a recognized disease then because it had no standardized tests. It was clear Allete had committed those murders and not Samantha, but proving her innocence on this basis was difficult.

The press, and the paparazzi linked Dr. Franklin in the case and now it had become a 'gain or lose everything' situation for the power drunken doctor. He urged to save Samantha, not because he knew that she was innocent but because he knew that people would lose faith in him if he lost this case. In the next hearing in court, he tried to bring out Allete in front of the judge but it did not happen. He shouted at her and tried his utmost to bring out Samantha's alter but he repeatedly failed and the judge announced the next hearing of the case. Dr. Franklin could see himself losing and the people laughing at him. He couldn't take it. This was the first and probably the last

time this ruler could see his powerful castle crumbling.

He immediately called up a session with Samantha. He again tried to talk to Allete, but she wouldn't answer. He shouted and screamed but Allete wouldn't appear. Dr. Franklin's fear and anger brought out his frustration. He couldn't think how he could talk to Allete until he saw a knife in the fruit basket. He picked up the knife and showed it to Samantha. She was scared but still Allete didn't appear in her defence. He brought the knife closer, nothing happened, more closer, still nothing. He was very frustrated and angry and shouted aloud at her. Unknowingly he had stabbed Samantha to death. He didn't mean to kill her but his ego; fear of failure killed her. It appeared to be a bad dream but it wasn't. He couldn't think or feel how did it happen. He had turned numb.

In the court he declared that Samantha had committed suicide and her alter made her do this during the session. Dr. Franklin was saved. Even though he proved himself innocent, something within him died.

He understood that life is not a king's kingdom where power speaks. Certain

things are beyond the capacity of human beings and taking too much pride in oneself is not worth the trouble in the end.

He woke up the next morning with a new passion for his patients and

Dr. Franklin's fear and anger brought out his frustration. He couldn't think how he could talk to Allete until he saw a knife in the fruit basket. He picked up the knife and showed it to Samantha. She was scared but still Allete didn't appear in her defence

not power- the passion to save their lives. Samantha's death taught this power drunken ruler to rebuild his castle with love and compassion instead of ego and pride.

◆ **Sanchaita Mitra XI - A**





INK HEART: A FAN FICTION



Richard Castle was an amateur author whose talent was yet to be fully appreciated. Like any other man, he got up and did his chores every morning before leaving for the garden which always gave him ideas and new plots for his books. Today was no different. It's not a cliché that extraordinary things always happen on 'very ordinary' days.

Unaware of all the other forces which were at play just to make sure that he fulfilled his destiny, Castle idly did his work humming some tune to himself. After all how much can a man expect from life when two years of his hard work on a manuscript went to waste as it was rejected by all the publishers of the city. But no, he hadn't given up. He knew that there was something in store for him, something



different from others but didn't know what it was.

Castle slowly trudged along the walk way to meet up with the only person who understood him, his best friend Nico Di'Angelo. Yes, Nico was someone who was always there for him, right from their playschool days to their freshman year in college and to the present. On hearing about Castle's recent rejections, Nico immediately guessed how devastated Richard would be and had suggested a meet up. These meet ups were always a source of joy for Richard – invariably there was one or the other surprise in store. Although feeling low, Castle was curious as to what new surprise Nico had in store for him and hence agreed to meet. Soon he reached the garden and found his way to their secret workshop. By now the two of them had been to the workshop on countless previous occasions, but the anticipation was fresh each time!

Castle walked in to find his friend deep in thoughts as if he was debating over something. It was some time before Nico could realize that he had company. He was quite troubled to see Castle's fallen face... Nico had always felt protective towards Richard but now he was all the more worried as he recalled the prophecy made by the strange man regarding Richards's destiny. His mind was still reeling from coming to terms with the fact that his naïve buddy, Richard Castle was the prophesized One. Moreover, Castle's destined task and ability were even more startling. Now as he looked at his friend's face, he knew that it would be best for him to act as he had been told. After a long discussion, details unknown to laymen like us, a frustrated Richard came out. He never felt so betrayed in his life. Nico told him that he was a "Silver Tongue", a person who had the ability to read characters out of a book.

Castle's day had just turned on its heels! No matter how hard he tried to imagine, he couldn't get how any of it could ever be true. But there was no way he could completely ignore what he had just been told either. After an extended period of contemplation, Castle finally decided to give it a try. He opened the book 'Wizard of Oz' lying beside him and started reading it out aloud. The passage was about Dorothy and her dog walking through Grassland. As he read, he could see flashes of the scene around him and suddenly Dorothy's dog, Toto appeared on his bed, barking at him. Castle was dumbfounded.

"No, this can't be actually happening!" he remarked aloud.

He was so sure that all of this was just a weird coincidence or illusion that he picked up various books and read out some excerpts from them. To his utter disbelief, many characters from the book came to life - be it pixies and fairies, dwarfs and wizards, or gold and other precious jewels, you name it and he had them all!

Castle had no option but to finally accept that there was substance to what Nico had said.

"Yes, Nico had been correct all the way long".

As soon as the gravity of the situation dawned upon him, a thousand miles away in a world well hidden from mortal eyes, the clock started ticking, and the people realized that the Chosen One had arrived. Little did Richard know of this awakening in the distant land, and even lesser that his life would never be the same again.

◆ **Trishita Bhattacharya**
XI - B



Girls have an Equal Right

Respect your elders and neighbours, love and care for everyone, treat every person equally etc. These are some of the values we are taught in schools from the very beginning. I always wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to be a role model for someone. I wanted to help the next generation develop. So here I was standing in front of a village school in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh. I always feel that actual intelligence and the will to do something lies with the village people and so developing a village is the first step to develop a nation.

I entered the school and saw hundreds of students around. But I also noticed that they were mostly boys. I went straight to the Principal's office. It was a small room with a ceiling fan making screeching noise, two cupboards with lots of files. The Principal was a 60 year old man with round glasses. He wore a simple dress suit with a brown tie.

"May I come in, sir?" I asked, surprised to see myself asking like a student. "Yes, sure" he politely replied, "I guess you are the new maths teacher, Jiya Joshi, for class 11th". "Yes, sir" I replied. "Good-good", as if talking to himself. Then he handed

me over my schedule and wished me well.

was tall, thin, wore two plaits and must say she was



My first class in second period. "XI-C" the board read. I peeped inside. Boys and boys running and playing around, teasing their friends, laughing, smiling and reminding me of my school days. And there at the corner I saw a girl sitting alone. She

indeed beautiful. I went inside and to my surprise no one took any notice of me, all children were busy with their work, or to be more precise, their play. I said "Good Morning" and guess what? Well, I was still unnoticed. "GOODDDDD MORNINGGG!!" I shouted,





a shock for me too. But thankfully this worked and they got to their places. I introduced myself to them and taught them geometry for the next period.

The bell rang and before I could wind up everyone already started to run outside as if I was a monster who had caught them and now they had to run for their lives. So even I started packing up. “Thanks ma’am”, a pleasant voice came from behind. I turned and saw that same girl. “You’re welcome”, I replied.

“Hope you like it here” she wished and started to leave.

“Thanks. Hey wait, what is your name?” I asked.

“Suman” she said and left.

Why did she leave? I wanted to ask her so many things.

Second day. The class did notice me. I continued the previous day’s chapter. Bell rang and as usual they were already out. I went to Suman and asked, “You’re the only girl in this class?”

“Yes, I am the only child so my parents wanted me to go in for higher studies,” she replied.

“The other girls? Did they drop out?”

“Yes, their parents needed them to be at home more than in school, that is what they say.”

With India developing so fast there still exists an unequal treatment among girls and boys. Why can’t girls complete their education?

That same evening I went to the school



office and asked the watchman to open the store-room. Then I began to search the previous years' files and saw that a total of ten girls had left their schooling. I took their addresses and left.

I went to my first decided place. It was a small kutchra house. I asked the people about their daughter but they didn’t bother to reply and instead asked me to leave. Second home, they at least welcomed me in. I asked them the reason for letting their daughter drop out and they simply replied that they didn’t have enough money and resources. So I told them about the scholarship that the Government was offering. They asked for few days to think about it. Well it was the same story for the next five families. The rest of the three families had migrated to other village.

After a month I saw those six girls in my class. They were weak in maths so I started taking extra classes for them, after school hours. They studied hard and practised harder. And out of seven, five of them topped in maths test.

My Principal was really pleased with me and gave me lots of good wishes for my future.

◆ **Manya John, XI C**



A Home-Maker To Be A Food Writer

Rising sun, twittering of birds, cool winds blowing, an atmosphere of calmness and peace spread all through making up a pleasant morning. Today's a pleasant day in the city

and the Sharma family is busy with their routine, living in a 3-BHK flat in a new developing area of the city.

Rekha Sharma, 5'2", a tall lady with a fair complexion, sweet face, straight hair and black eyes, is the 'manager of the family' and gets up early to prepare food and children ready for school...

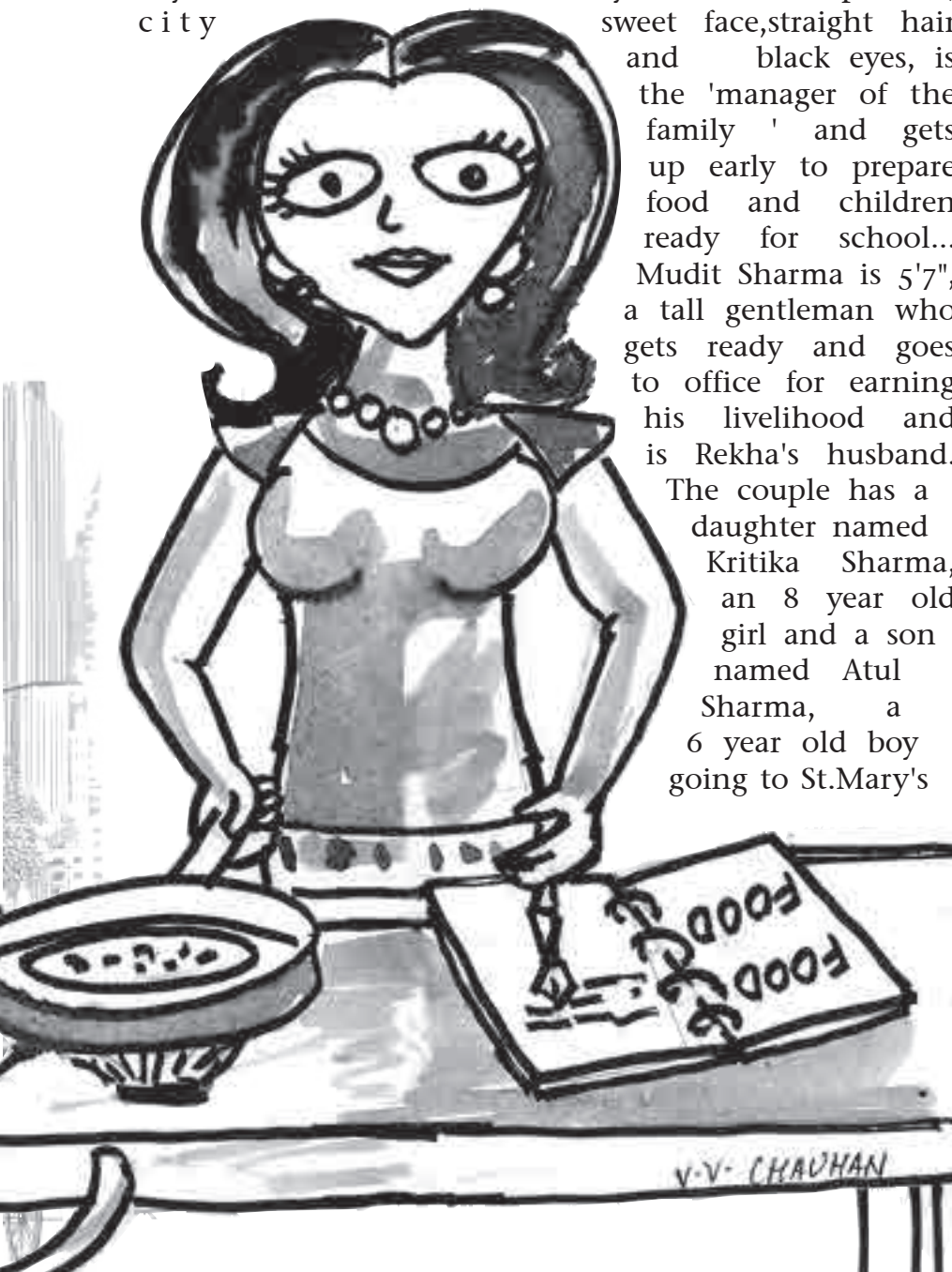
Mudit Sharma is 5'7", a tall gentleman who gets ready and goes to office for earning his livelihood and is Rekha's husband.

The couple has a daughter named Kritika Sharma, an 8 year old girl and a son named Atul Sharma, a 6 year old boy going to St.Mary's

School. Rekha, after sending the children to school and helping her husband get ready for office, gets busy with the maids to get the house work done. When the children return, at around 10'clock in the afternoon, she gets them their food and tired with the morning routine, she and her children have a siesta. She wakes up an hour later and gets busy in managing the house and getting ready for a 'get together' organized for the colony women.

While going to Mrs. Dorling's flat '502' for the 'get together', she wakes her children and asks them to do their homework. She reaches the flat and gets busy with the group of ladies chit-chatting and spends a joyous time with them. The discussion is related to their routine lives. All the ladies were discussing about their lives and how they managed their profession with their daily life. Rekha found it a bit troublesome and interesting, but at the end of the discussion, she was happy being a 'home-maker' as she could keep her husband and her children smiling.

When she returned home, Atul and Kritika showed





her their homework. Atul told Rekha about his day at school and also about his friend Shrey.

Atul said, "Mom, Shrey told me that his mom is opening a boutique and is nowadays busy with his mom for the inauguration preparations. He said that he was proud of his mom.

What are you doing mom???" Rekha was speechless. Kritika changed the topic by saying, 'My homework next.' Rekha thought about it all evening. When Mudit returned from the office, he handed over his briefcase and tiffin-box to her and said, 'Today was a tiring day'.

So, Rekha thought it better not to discuss about her matter with him then. After dinner, she asked Mudit, "Dear, can you please help me out with the internet? There seems to be some problem.' But Mudit engrossed in the tensions of the office, irritatingly replied, "Can't you do this little thing on your own?? Every time you see a problem, you just jump and never try to solve it on your own." Rekha was hurt but mindful of his problems, preferred to be quiet.

All night, thoughts of doing nothing and not being a good mother, good

wife and a good homemaker clouded her mind.

The next afternoon, Rekha was reading the newspaper and came across the profession 'Food Writer', a person who experiments with food and comes up with good recipes and writes a column in newspaper and magazine. Rekha being a good cook and having a passion for food, found this profession to be perfect for her. The thought this would make her children proud of her and also keep her occupied.

She decided to share this with her husband. At night, when Mudit returned, he was in high spirits and said,

"Today my day went well." After dinner, Rekha broached the topic with Mudit. Mudit apologised saying, "Dear, it was only because of stress that I lost my temper yesterday and children do talk silly, please don't take them seriously."

Rekha replied, "That's okay dear, but I want to take up this profession and it's perfect for me. Are you happy with it? I mean I thought that this profession can be carried on sitting at home and it perfectly suits me. So, do you have any problem if I opt for it?" Mudit said, 'Dear, I will support you in all your

decisions. If you like it, go for it."

Next day, Rekha took a fresh paper and decided to pen down a recipe of canapés she had tried a week ago. She felt nervous as she was doing this for the first time, but with her husband's moral support, she wrote it down neatly. Later in the evening, she visited the nearby newspaper office and gave the written recipe to the person sitting at the counter.

The receptionist said, 'Our editorial team will surely look into this and if found suitable, will surely publish it'.

Hearing this, Rekha went back home on winged feet. she told Mudit about her visit to the newspaper office. Mudit was happy to see her happiness. The whole night, Rekha was busy praying that her recipe would be published as she would later see a smile on her children's and husband's faces.

And so did it happen. The next day, in the cookery column of the newspaper her recipe was published. What a pleasant surprise it was for the whole family! And Rekha treated the whole family to her special strawberry ice-cream with hot chocolate sauce.

◆ **Yashi Agarwal, XID**



The Case of Internet Kidnapping

The world has become increasingly competitive and challenging for all professions and earning a living is no really the most difficult one, but a trigger off to several such incidents thanks to the internet technology.



It was the morning of December 26, 2002, and I was out for a walk. Work those days was not very overwhelming; thanks to the diligent police commissioner and more to the warning that had recently been given to maintain the so-called 'decorum' of the city. It was a pleasant morning until I received a call from my assistant about a client waiting at the office. As I spoke to him, I hurried across the park to the bus stop and took the immediate next bus to the older part of Delhi where my office was. Talking to the client I found that the case was of kidnapping of a teenage girl from her house on the night of December 24, when her father and brother were out to visit a relative on the occasion of Christmas Eve. A visit to the girl's house revealed that there were no sign of physical struggle since everything was in its place and nothing broken. Furthermore, the door lock was proper and two meals waited at the kitchen counter with Alice's (victim's) finger prints on both.

child's play. The profession of investigation is known for its seemingly unreal, unbelievable, unacceptable and complicated events but which are yet a routine. Rampant curiosity arising out of a wide horizon of possibilities and impossibly tricky evidences make it difficult and exhausting to solve such mysteries. I am often recall one of the numerous cases that I encountered. It wasn't

The door was reported to be open by the father and brother when they reached home. Also, Alice's email account lay open on the desktop, her last chat being with some 'Charlie D' ending in inviting him for supper and his agreement to come right away.

Later investigation showed that the details





of the ID of this Charlie D were all fake (as expected) and this gave us some direction to work on. We could have been wrong, but the open door showed that Alice had been expecting someone, or rather that someone had probably arrived, which made me a bit confident about the lines we were thinking along. A brief conversation ensued with Mr. Paul (Alice's father) at my first visit to her bungalow at Raj Nagar, a fairly pleasant place with a colorful ambience and a well-maintained garden, which seemed to be watered daily due to the prolific burst of flowers everywhere.

Me: So, at what time did you return from your relative's house and what did you see?

Mr. Paul: We had left at 9 pm and were back by 10.30 pm in the night. When we returned, we saw that the watchman was lying unconscious in his room. First we thought that he was asleep, but later we realized that something was fishy. Worried, we rushed to the bungalow to find that the front door was already open. As we went in shocked, we found everything in its place. The lights were all on and the only strange thing was that the kitchen counter had two plates (uncovered) waiting, but we assumed that she would have made supper for us.

Me: And what about Alice? I am sure you didn't see her..?!

Mr. Paul: Oh, I am coming to that....As we went to Alice's room, we found it empty. The washroom was also vacant and there was no sign of Alice- no notes, no messages. The only strange thing was that her email account lay logged in! She generally forgets to log out when in a hurry and so we assumed that as mentioned in the morning she would have gone for a movie with friends and would be returning home anytime.

Me: So after realizing that it had been long

and she should have returned, what did you do?

Mr. Paul: When she did not return even after an hour and a half, I sent her brother, Michael, to search and check in all the surrounding areas. When we still couldn't find her, we called up all her friends, but, she was NOWHERE! (Sob... sob...). The next day, i.e. yesterday, we searched the entire town, all her favorite places, and talked to all her acquaintances, but there was no sign of any help so we came to you.

Me: Why not the police?

Mr. Paul: Because sir we didn't want to take any risk.

Me: Did you talk to the watchman?

Mr. Paul: No, actually he was not in a condition to talk; only this morning he gained proper consciousness while we were at your office, after which we came here.

It suddenly struck me and I rushed to the watchman's quarter. As a matter of coincidence, someone had probably seen us enter the main gate in the morning and had told the culprit about it. So, I caught him red-handed. As I reached the small room, I saw a middle aged man running out with a blood stained shirt. The watchman was lying dead with a knife stabbed into his stomach. I rushed behind the culprit as he entered one of the shops in the nearby market.

I entered the shop to see that the man had exited from the back door, and escaped on a bike with another man (probably his ally). As I walked back disappointed and with over a million questions in my mind, something shocking caught my eye. The man sitting at the counter was checking his mail. The strange part was that he was busy deleting some junk mails and chats from the account





of 'CHARLIE D'... How did he know the password..?!

Now the case was crystal clear. I immediately called the cops, explaining them the case, and got the person arrested. As the later investigation revealed, the other two people, along with one more person, were his allies, and it turned out that these people had created a series of fake IDs and were involved in serious cases of child abuse and exploitation through the internet. All of

them were later tracked down and a charge sheet was filed. Alice was rescued by the police. A promising young woman she has recovered from the trauma quite well. Seems like life is back to normal again! This also makes me reflect upon how technology has been a boon and a bane even in a detective's life.

◆ **Kirtishree Somani, XI - E**

The Last Assignment

Target : 1250 yards
Elevation : 50 feet downhill
Wind : 5mph from Northwest
Collateral Damage : None
Taking Aim.

Next day he saw the letter at 8:15 hours. It said:

The Hawk.
26 Opera House.
Brussels.

Target: Senator Bishop. Time: 929 hours
Date: 21 May 2004 Payment: \$200,000.

Meet Mr. Church at the Louvre at 1700 hours today."

He thought "I am going to stop now. I have enough money to retire in The Bahamas. This is the last hit for me".

At the Louvre, he met Mr. Church, a man who meant business.

"A heartless killer probably, but he can't be involved", thought the Hawk.

Mr. Church said, "You probably got the

idea about the job. Success is essential. If you miss, we certainly won't. Think of it this way: your life is on the line. If the Bishop is seen alive on the 22nd you won't be".

The hawk said," I am the best in the business. Don't worry." He was trying to look worried but failed miserably.

Church said, "Just keep things in perspective. Here, this is a folder on the Bishop-what he eats, where he eats, his interests etc. Learn it, your life depends on it. Literally I hope we do not meet again. If we do your death is a foregone conclusion. Good Luck".

He walked to his apartment in 15 minutes. He opened the lock and went into the living room. His entire house was ransacked.

He swore loudly, "What do these guys want?"

He made himself a cup of hot cocoa and sat down on his table with the contents of the 'Bishop' file emptied on it. He went through the routine of the senator from Florida. He learnt about his likes and dislikes, passions and prejudices.





“This block has some great security. Unreachable from anywhere within 200 yards” he thought. With a schedule such as his, chances were slim and he would need considerable luck and a cool head.

It was certainly the toughest job of his life and if he would pull it off, he was going to cement his place as the greatest hit man of the generation. He decided that the best time to kill him would be on Sunday at the Brussels Golf club when he would be teeing off with the head of Interpol. The Hawk thought, "That would be the crowning glory, killing him under the nose of the Interpol chief."

The logistics of the operation were a problem. He would get only one shot from the car park when the senator would be playing 18th.

“It would be fitting”, thought the hawk, "That he would die on the golf course. He is crazy about golf”.

After a week, the hawk had everything in place. A tee time at Brussels GC at 600 hours. He would finish his round, be in the car park packing up when he would take the shot.

A golf club camouflage for the rifle was clever on his part. Nobody would search for a rifle in a golf bag. Escape was not an issue. Take the highway and reach Amsterdam in 3 hours. Everything was perfect, except the shot. It was the toughest shot of his life and his life depended on it.

He drove down to Brussels on Saturday, 20th May, had dinner at the Marriott and slept soundly. He woke up at 500 hours and felt quite confident about the hit. But something bothered him. He thought, "Killing isn't so easy when your life hangs in the balance." He collected his golf clubs and reached the golf club at 545 Hours.

He teed off at 600 hours, finished up at 900 hours and waited in the car park for the target. He looked at his scorecard. A 71.



He thought,” At least I broke par in what may turn out to be my last round”.

Then he waited.

Target: 1250 yards
Elevation: 50 feet downhill
Wind: 5mph from northwest

Collateral: None

Taking aim.....

The senator stood at the 18th tee. He addressed the ball, took the club back, and swung it forward, hitting the ball perfectly.

At that moment he heard a car backfire in the parking lot. The ball flew high into the sky and dropped near the green, rolling towards the hole.

He hears a whizzing sound behind him; the ball falls into the hole and he slumps forward with his last shot.

TARGET ELIMINATED

◆ **Anurag Limbdi, XII - A**



The Golden Bird

The bird was unlike any other I had seen in my career as a vet treating birds at the sanctuary. It was so large and so beautiful that I wondered how any of us had missed seeing her before. When we had cleaned the blood from the wound, the golden feathers shone in the light. Sharp talons ensured that it did not attract predators, while the long, straight beak suggested that it was not a bird of prey. In fact, it resembled a peacock, without the heavy train and with powerful wings adapted for flight.

I had joined the forest officials during the annual census, hoping to watch the birds in their natural environment, especially some that had just recovered from broken wings, feathers that had to be carefully replaced. We heard a loud cry of pain nearby, and found the golden bird fluttering uselessly on the ground. It appeared to have been shot; the wings as well as its body were grazed by the bullet.

“Poachers” I exclaimed, shocked and angry at the thought that someone would harm such a magnificent bird. It tried to shuffle away from us.





“We won’t hurt you, we’re here to help you.” I coaxed it gently.

Then she—it was a female bird—raised her head and looked at us. For a moment it looked into my eyes, and I felt that it understood somehow. Now, birds are fairly intelligent, but the level of intelligence and comprehension I saw surprised me. Then she lay down quietly, and we brought her back.

We named the bird Jyoti, for the red-gold feathers that resembled flames. She healed, surprisingly quickly and began attempting to fly almost immediately.

“What is she?” my colleagues wondered to each

other, not for the first time.

A team of scientists came to look at Jyoti.

“And there are no others of this species that you have seen?” They asked us every five minutes between excitedly chattering to each other.

“We must keep it under observation,” one told us. “We are taking it”

“Her” I corrected.

The scientist continued.

“Away from here, to a larger conservatory to study”

I barely stopped myself from asking “What if Jyoti doesn’t want to be studied?” and instead asked, “When?”

During those weeks of observation and care, I noticed that Jyoti was different. There was an almost human intelligence in those eyes. I felt that she only tolerated being treated like a bird because we helped her.

So, a few months after Jyoti was taken away, I was not surprised to find her perched on the gate of our sanctuary. She trilled a melodious song, which made every forest worker and even the other birds stop what they were doing and listen. Then without warning, there was a burst of flame and she disappeared, leaving behind only a single, golden feather in the dust.

◆ *Shailee Dixit, XII - B*

A Rainbow Promise

“This one is supposed to be a masterpiece” said Aradhana. “I have put six weeks of hard work into this painting” said Abhimanyu Rai, a well known artist of the 1990’s.

“I guess this creativity will bring you millions. You do have a way with colours” Aradhana mused. But all Abhimanyu ‘The Artist’ could do was just laugh. In reality his life was not as rosy as his paintings were. He had a dull, monotonous life. He had no real friends or family, all were merely flatterers, sycophants. His only friend was Aradhana, an editor in a daily newspaper. On their way

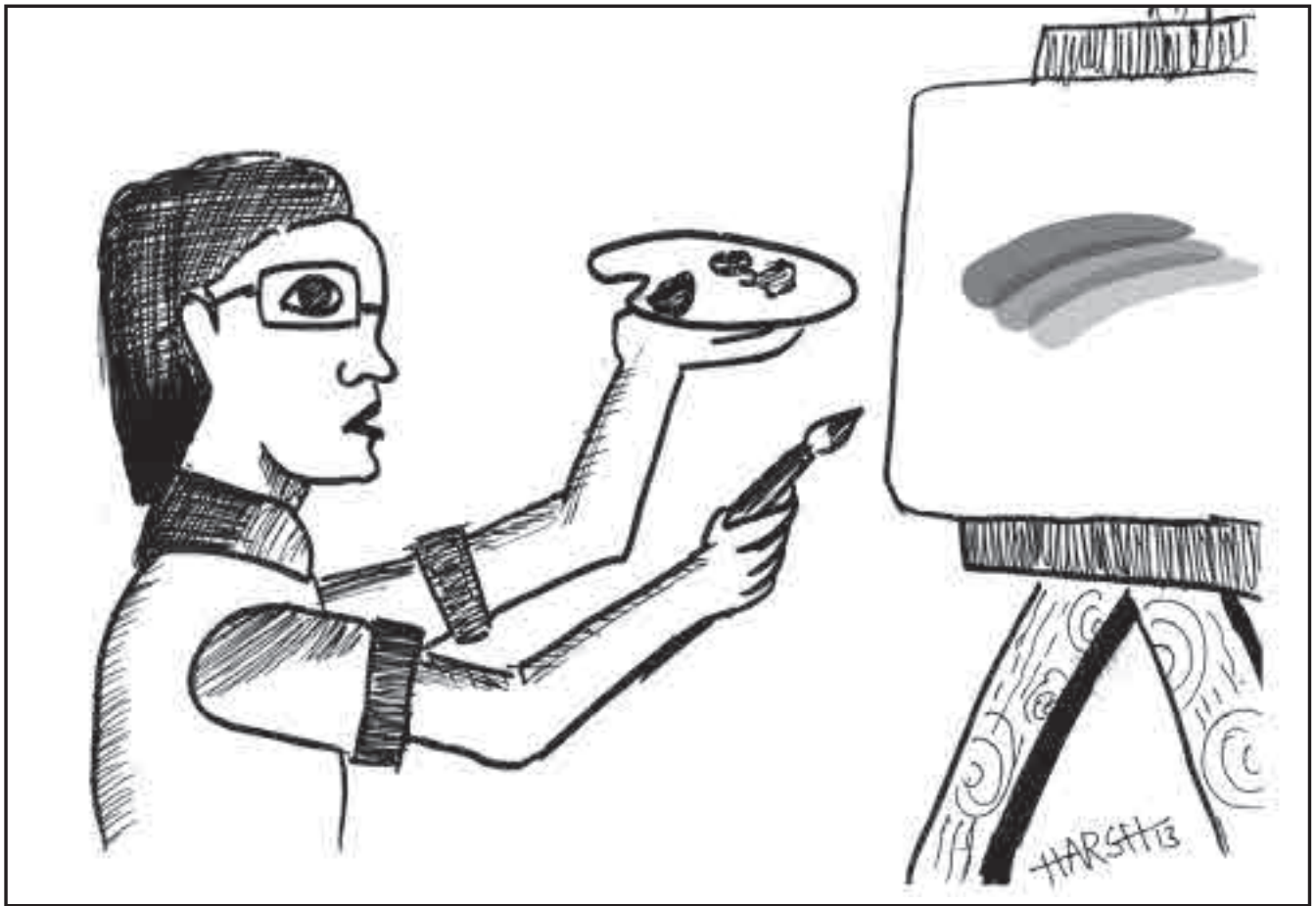
home, Abhimanyu asked “Do you think this will bring in more flatterers or real friends?”

“Well, I think this time this beautiful painting is going to get you a real friend”. Said the ever optimistic Aradhana with a huge grin. “Let’s hope for the best”.

The painting which was supposed to be a masterpiece was merely a mix of all the colours which showcased his turbulent emotions and unfathomable feelings.

On the auction day, thousands came to bid on the piece of trash which would have





no value if the name Abhimanyu was not attached to it. Keeping his fingers crossed, he and Aradhana walked to the hall with the unlikely hope of winning a friend. The cream of the town was there. Also a beggar who had no money to buy a square meal, let alone a painting. He stood out like a sore thumb in the august gathering.

As the auction began, the bid started with a million!! Only a fool would pay a million for a canvas full of different colours and no real drawing. The bid reached as high as 51 million.

An upset Abhimanyu sighed, “Why am I cursed with the misfortune of loneliness?”

Just then, the beggar stood up and said “I bid love, friendship and care for the man who shows his loneliness through such bold strokes of colour.”

This lightened up the artist’s face, he exclaimed, “I am grateful to you that out of such shallow people with so much in their life, you and only you, my friend, could understand and see through the paint.”

And in great jubilation he declared, “My canvas is sold to this man for his friendship.”

He went to the beggar, hugged him and murmured in gratitude to the powers above, “Thank you.”

For years to come, the beggar and Abhimanyu Rai remained friends, a support and powerhouse for each other.

Truly they say, ‘Friendship is a promise to stay together forever.’

◆ **Devanshi Mandalaywala, XII-B**



Lost Spark - A Saga

Success bears no price tag. If it does then it's heaps of hard work. Having survived three major heart attacks, a heart transplant and a threat of lung cancer Amy still stands tall. A young charming women of twenty four, singing was her passion, singing was her profession. At the age of seven, her father left her side. Having no keen interest in studies and not a single penny in her pocket this little girl volunteered in the world of glamour and glitz. Being launched by just a local kid's band gave no meteoric rise to fame and fortune. But she was determined and hence undeterred.

She followed her dreams, her passion and sang.

Sang to the masses and was admired and recognized.

She got her due bread and butter at a tender age. Circumstances made her kneel down and she had to support her family.

Growing up, she was wise and seventeen gave her a recognition explosion. She became the heartthrob of millions, an idol to another hundred.

God didn't give her enough strength to handle fame and family. So she leaned on drugs for sanity. They were her key to survival. A concerned mother rebelled and she retorted, as devastated as she was. Amy rebuked and threatened to leave home. Fortune was on her side for the time being hence she left home in search of shelter. Album after album, her fame and fan following grew manifold and so did her addiction. Series of a major and five minor heart attacks didn't change anything in



her life. She was one of the blessed.

Suddenly one fine morning at nine when she was supposed to be in the recording studio, she didn't show up, nor an hour later. Hours kept on passing and no sign of her coming. Troubled as the people were, they broke into her residence and found her intoxicated and in the grip of another heart attack. Her battered heart gave way, but she was lucky to receive a heart transplant.

This was the turning point in her life and she was keen on resurrection. She didn't get any breaks. Her source of income was absolutely nothing. She redeemed her ways, reconciled with her mother. The prodigal daughter was accepted.

She took charge of her life and made sure everything was on track.

True eh? Who said Fame is easy.

◆ **Aditi Dhawan, XII - B**



The Unsung Hero

Doctor Emmer Brown was an unsuccessful physicist working in a small firm – Oscorp. He earned his PhD from the NYU. He previously worked at the multinational corporation of Stark Industries – the largest producer of iron works in the world - as a subordinate technological development manager. His boss, Mr. Samuel Jackson, fired him saying that his ‘So-called’ inventions were crude and useless. Samuel said that his invention of a flexible iron polymer was absurd since it was of no practical use to the world.

After being fired, he was depressed. He had no confidence in himself. It was three months and he hadn’t found a job. Then one of his friends suggested that he could work as a technological innovator and researcher at the small firm of Oscorp. Unlike, Stark Industries, Oscorp was not a multinational corporation but had almost all the technological devices and amenities required for research and development purposes.

As soon as he joined Oscorp, he started working on the development of a carbon based chemical which can be used as a hardening agent required by many industries. After three months he successfully produced it. He named it Carbon Emulator. The next day he went to his new boss. Just like Samuel, he disapproved of it dubbing it as a piece of trash. Though he was not fired, he was very depressed since he could lose even this job. He put the Carbon Emulator back in his backpack which contained all his previous inventions – a self-sustaining generator, a small arc reactor and of course his flexible iron polymer.

He went home, sad and depressed and threw his backpack on the table and



went to sleep. But when he was asleep, he was unaware that his life was going to be changed forever. When he threw his bag, the test-tube containing the Carbon Emulator broke and all of it fell on the flexible iron polymer. An unnatural chemical reaction took place. This reaction was such that it could produce tons of energy for hundreds of years. The next morning he observed this and was utterly fascinated. He made various calculations and found that the energy released from the reaction could be used to make a Flux Capacitor which in turn could be used to make a time machine!!!

He then spent days building the time machine. He was going to become a time traveler!!! He then decided to time travel the next day but then it struck him that his invention could be used for destructive purposes and if it reached wrong hands then it could mean the end of the world. He decided to destroy the time machine. It was truly a small step for a man but a huge leap for mankind. He didn’t see his own good but the good of the entire human race.

◆ *Pratham D.Ghael, XII B*



A JOURNEY HOME

She barged into the office with a Louis Vitton on her arm and Steve Madden on her feet, yelling at Julia, her assistant, for her daily dose of Starbucks. People assumed Julia to be really desperate to work for a devil like her. This devil, Rachel Victoria Berry, the editor of a prominent fashion magazine, in New York was a terror. The work place fell silent when she was around. She liked to go by the name Victoria, it felt powerful and she was driven by this power. Rachel was just a weak, pathetic fragment of her past.

Julia came in with an invitation from Ohio Public School; it was the reunion for the batch 1999-2000. That wretched place! Where she was bullied, thrown around, made fun of because she was always buried in her green book with colourful pages, which was her personal diary. That girl was beautiful, she didn't go by the status quo, and she wanted to make a difference. She swore she would never bully or hurt anyone. She was another Person.

Victoria decided to go, if only to brag. She was successful and big. She wanted to show those "Popular kids" that she was not stupid, she wasn't a loser and she was definitely not a fool!

As she drove into the driveway in her shiny black Benz, an air of memories consumed her and as she was walking towards the gymnasium of Ohio Public School where the big reunion was to be held, She saw a small office where she spent most of her high school, it was Mrs. Grey's office. She was the only person who she missed at this school-- her friend, her mentor and her guide. As she was about to step in, a little boy

of seven ran to her and said in a shrill scared voice, "Grey sent this for you, she couldn't come. She is visiting her daughter in Detroit". Victoria saw it then, the green book; she had given to Mrs. Grey hoping to never see it again, to bury her past in Ohio, it had a post on it which read, "Dear Rachel, if your 10 year old self met you now would she be proud? Love, Mrs. Grey".

Victoria went in the office, sat there crying her eyes out, reading her own words, reading Rachel's words! She hadn't made a difference,





she hadn't fought bullying, and she hadn't been who she wanted to be! Rachel wouldn't be proud of Victoria. She had broken all ties with her parents. She had forgotten herself. She had lost herself. She had become a self absorbed little witch.

Not anymore.

She had to become who she wanted to be. She wasn't alone; she had just lost all those who cared for her. She never went to the reunion. She went back in time.

She called her mom and apologized. She went back to office next morning, but this time she wasn't Victoria, She was Rachel.

The office, New York didn't seem like hell anymore.

The next issue of her magazine theme was "Inspire", it didn't figure size zero Victoria's secret angels, it featured real women, mothers, daughters, sisters, Michelle Obama, Mother Teresa, Julia, Mrs. Grey, it featured happiness and being the real you. It was a reminder that everyone is born beautiful.

This is not a story of a Fashion Designer, it is the story of a real woman, it is the story of finding one's TRUE SELF.

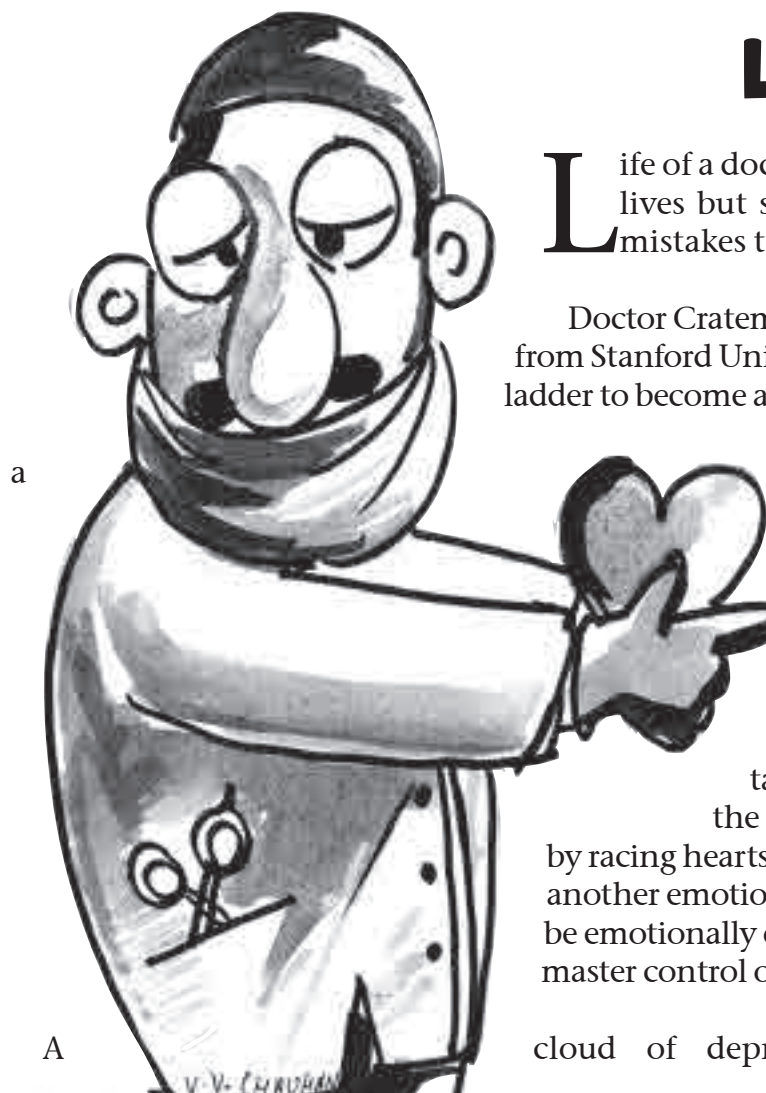
◆ *Shikha Shah, XII C*

Life of A Doctor

Life of a doctor is both harsh and blissful. They save lives but sometimes even the best doctors make mistakes that may claim a precious life.

Doctor Crateman qualified with a glorious degree from Stanford University was working his way up the ladder to become a renowned heart surgeon. Being an intern was definitely turning out to be gruelling part of his career. Working 14 hours a day, 7 days a week, being on call most of the time, standing ram rod straight in long surgical procedures, observing and making careful attempts for hours without enough sleep was routine, swaying while walking and dozing off while talking was nothing unusual. Apart from the ever so frequent 'code blue' responded by racing hearts, pressure and grief of death were just another emotional hurdle. Being a doctor, one has to be emotionally detached; this human instinct is hard to master control over.

cloud of depression, nostalgia and sleeplessness



a

A





hovered in Dr. Crateman's brain cells which were tired of over use. Having stayed up for the past 48 hours, he was exhausted, and the potency of his body's dire need to sleep was very hard to fight. Gathering his residual strength drifting in and out of consciousness, he somehow made it to the his first heart surgery that he was allowed to scrub in. Never had he thought that his exhausted self might almost jeopardize his career.

On the surgery table, he carefully held a human heart the size of his fist, waiting to be placed back where it belonged or rather did his best to be alert . He almost dozed off once and was awakened with a sharp snap from his attendant, too tired to be embarrassed he managed to use every ounce of consciousness left to keep his eyes open and his brain from slipping into the much needed sleep. Things went smoothly and the surgery was over without any codes. He saw his nail had punctured through his latex gloves; worry flooded his veins as he calculated the possibilities of it puncturing the tender heart tissue. But his brain was too jumbled to make any sense of all that had happened in the last hour leave alone remember the details too minutely. Praying everything goes well, he left with a pale dead look and dark shadows under his half open eyes.

Later in the day the same patient whose vitals seemed just fine all day seemed to have a halted heart due to excessive bleeding which was seeping through the sutures. Panicked he managed to explain to the chief surgeon in a breathless manner as to what may have caused it and that he was very sorry for not having mentioned during surgery. An angry chief left giving him a scathing look. And doctor Crateman realized with an over whelming sense of disbelief that this might possibly be the end of his career at the beginning itself.



The patient survived. The law body called a meeting for his dismissal but the attendant intervened and saved Dr. Crateman's career. He spoke of his own experience of such a type of carelessness which could have claimed his career, but with the second chance he'd managed to find by keeping quiet, he had saved a lot of lives and had the lowest mortality rate. He praised Crateman for being honest. Doctor Crateman was granted his second chance after much deliberation to once more attempt a climb to the summit.

◆ **Srishti Mohan**
XII-D





Superhero

“The only superman I know is you daddy” said little Noorie to her father, indeed he was her superman. What could be more heroic than fighting for one’s own country and saving it from ever growing rodents commonly known as terrorists? Noorie was talking to Pratap Singh Adhikar once known as Major Pratap, one of the bravest men in the Indian army; he had won every possible medal that the army could confer, and now was going to be awarded the Magsaysay Peace Prize for his invaluable contribution for war afflicted children from India and Pakistan.

“Daddy, please tell me about Kar-Kargil, what happened when you went there to fight? Did you kill the bad guys? Did you hit them? What happened then?”

Pratap Singh smiled. Known to be a hardcore military man, he melted like butter in front of his daughter; Noorie aka Nora was the apple of his eye.

“Okay listen carefully Noo, here it goes. It was the year 1999, July 4, we were in Kargil, a town some 200 km from Srinagar. It was midday, yet biting cold. We were fighting for more than six hours now to capture Tiger Hill. All around was dust and blood. Gunshots had no effect on my ears, they were already numb. I was already hit in the knee. Bullets whizzed past from all directions; I felt dizzy, I tried to walk but the bullet in my knee wouldn’t let me. All I could do was lie down and pray. I was nauseous; one minute of waiting felt like a hundred thousand years, my body ached, my throat was parched. I tried to seek refuge behind a boulder only to find myself at gunpoint of an enemy soldier. He was a

Pakistani. My end is near I concluded. My entire life flashed in front of me. I closed my eyes. Could I pretend I was dead?

“I haven’t even killed you yet,” said the Pakistani.

This was not going to work, I knew there was no way out. I summoned the warrior within me.

“If you are going to kill me, then please kill me fast. I have never liked waiting”, I said feeling relieved.

“You are the first man I have ever met who wants to die quick, won’t you plead for mercy?” He said with a surprised tone.

“Look, I don’t have any weapon neither can I run; I am defenseless, I can just wait for you to kill me and if you think I will drop myself to you, you are dreaming.” I said in a sneering tone.

I was never going to ask him for mercy, you see for a military man country is the supreme religion.

I told the young man: “If I am going to die please let me be the hero, my daughter will atleast not be shattered”

Suddenly the enemy’s expression changed.

“I have a son who idolizes me, I know how you feel. I won’t harm you, the guilt of killing a father would always hover around me”.

The man paused and his eyes became watery.



“I know you think that I am betraying my country, but for me I am taking a step towards humanity”.

I couldn't believe my ears! For a moment I couldn't utter a word, my voice choked.

Finally I said, “I...I cannot thank you enough.”

The man interrupted “Please don't. I will leave right now, hope you have a good life ahead.”

Off he went. Tears of joy rolled down my cheeks, I realized that war is a mess, a mess of dead bodies as well as of lives.

I never saw that man again. But I owe this life to him. He taught me what peace is, what true joy is. It is to see your daughter smiling and calling you a superhero.

July 4 will always be a memorable day in India's military annals. We had captured Tiger Hill after an 11 hour long bloody battle. The Kargil war ended on July 26 with India's victory. For me it was a new beginning. I left the army and took up the rehabilitation of children who had lost their families in the war. This is how we found Veer and Chandni and Zara and all your other friends dear Noorie. There is no victory in war, no one wins; instead lives are lost,



families broken, children abandoned, wives shattered and homes devastated! If that is winning, who wants to win? The real winning is

winning hearts not lands, my Princess!

◆ **Himanshi Saboo, XII E**



Saffroniacious

For a royal garnish

*With wisdom at its best
Widening thought horizon
Books teach us everything
Which otherwise cannot be taught
With different subjects and genres
An entire world to offer
Books are combinations incredible
Of the different cuisines and their flavours
It's a blend of different cultures
And that of flavours and spices
Its joy, its sorrow, its love, its hope
Its mystery and its surmise
From classics to pulp
Fiction to autobiography
Does life imitate art
Or art mirrors it?
Pondered and revealed
By enlightened hearts
Valmiki's Ramayana*

*Sage Vyasa's Mahabharata
Kalidasa's Shakuntala or
Homer's Odyssey
Shakespeare's Cleopatra or
Bronte's Wuthering Heights
Immortal treasures
Saffroniacious garnishing
On Life's enigmatic platter*







A Tryst with a Book

Divine Mercy often descends like an avalanche tearing down deep rooted ignorance and negativity, directing the muddy waters of one's life towards the Ocean of Infinity. For me the blessing came in the form of a book; Autobiography of a Yogi by Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda. It brought about a complete metamorphosis in my life, as it has done and continues to do to millions of others around the globe. Translated into more than twenty-one languages and used as a text and reference work in universities throughout the world, it is no surprise that the book has been voted as one of the hundred most influential spiritual books of the last century. Interestingly this was the only book which Steve Jobs had downloaded on his iPad. And he made it a point to reread it every year. Jobs had first read the book as a teenager and had travelled to India in quest of a master. After his heroic battle with cancer he had left instructions that copies of this life changing book will be gifted to all who would attend his funeral.





During my college years I had read the first few pages of the book with skepticism bordering on ridicule that is typical of extreme youth. But slowly the contents possessed me and I devoured it hungrily quenching the turbulations of my young soul.

At the end of it I was exhilarated and exhausted as after a long and arduous pilgrimage to some mountain top shrine.

The journey made me ponder, weep, chuckle and gasp with emotions completely new to my nature as layer upon layer of truth was unfolded to reveal the pristine wisdom written with rock like conviction of a true man of God.

In a colossal sweep the work embraces knowledge in its capacious range; from the working of a crescograph revealing the subtle inner life of plants and metals to an insight into cosmic consciousness. High philosophy and science rub shoulders with the

author's experience with reincarnation, resurrection, the law of miracles,

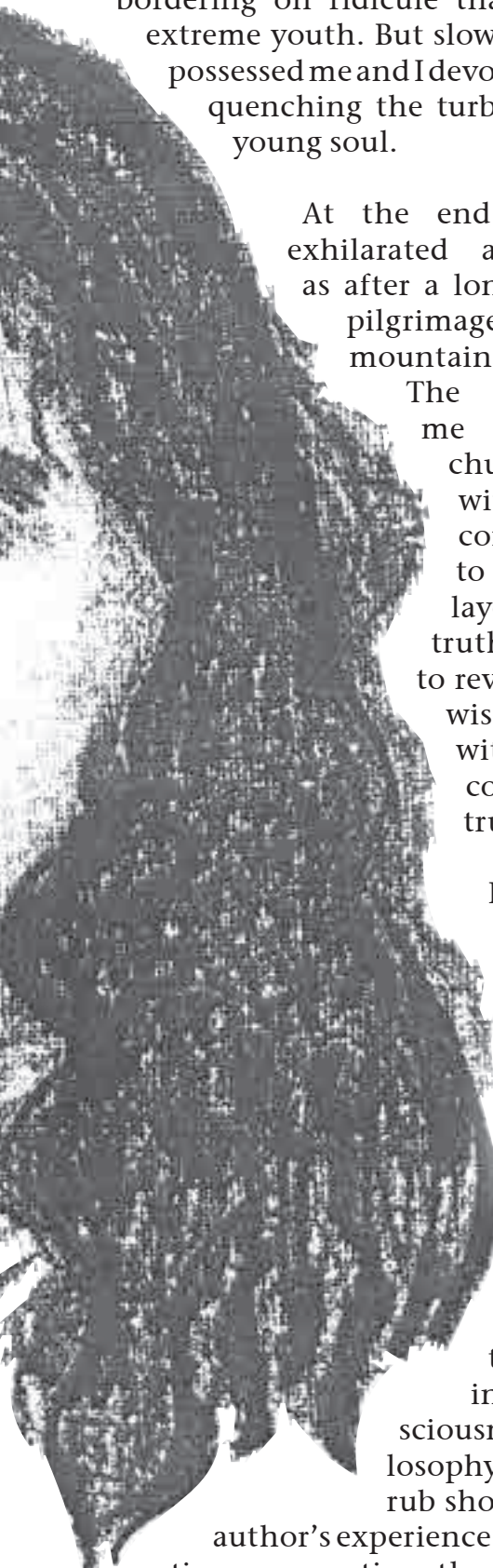
outwitting the stars, the soul's journey after death, just to name a few. With deep candour and subtle wit the sage describes his meetings with Jagdish Chandra Bose, Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Luther Burbank and many more savants in their field.

A look into the lives of modern saints of the world from Sri Ramana Maharshi to the Catholic stigmatist Terese Neuman are given in vivid and interesting detail.

Everything is included and intermingled with the author's personal quest for self-realization. Devoid of spiritual chauvinism he makes us realize that God is not the monopoly of any one particular religion. The devotee with the ardour of his pure love compels the Divine to appear in the form dearest to him. The book also gives a brief look into ancient India's greatest gift to mankind - Yoga - or 'union' with the Infinite through a certain action or rite.

In the Autobiography there is a chapter devoted to a holy cave in the very womb of the Himalayas. I had an ardent desire to go there, but knew it to be a preposterous idea "may be in some other birth," I sighed. Years later, miraculously my defence personnel husband was posted to the region. In an equally marvelous manner we became acquainted with a pious little group of the sage's devotees there. They took us to the holy cave and after a few weeks we were posted back to the plains! Surely the officials would have never suspected a Divine hand behind the shuffling! Each day I awake with the divine presence of the Master whose celestial promise rings through eternity: 'I give you my unconditional love' a vow which offers a deep solace in the midst of a strife torn world.

◆ **Sandhya S. Nayar**



ଠଠ ଶଠିଠ ରିଠଠଠଠ

William Buck has retold the story of Prince Rama with all its nobility of spirit, courtly intrigue, heroic

different hues, although Buck has made utmost efforts to maintain the originality.

Ramayana



Ramayana is not only the greatest epic, but it makes up the framework of Hindu religious culture and social imagination. Valmiki not only tells the story but transmits moral and ethical values, speaks of the true identity of the individual's real significance of family and balancing of life. Buck has succeeded better than anyone in conveying the spirit of the original. The retelling also remains remarkably succinct and the epic is reduced to mere 430 pages without losing any section of the story. It is a pity that Buck died at the young age of 37 before he could translate more of Indian classics into English.

I strongly believe that legacy is more than financial inheritance. Legacy and values are more powerfully conveyed by telling stories to children than through legal documents. Long before the written word people told stories. Stories are a part of the life fabric of the whole community, the glue that holds a society together. They are as essential as food and shelter. Story telling speaks to the human heart. We all should tell the stories of Indian epics to our children.

renunciation, fierce battles and triumph of good over evil in a length and manner that will make the great Indian epic accessible to the contemporary readers. To this end William Buck spent many years in studying Sanskrit, planning and writing. *Ramayana* was originally composed by Aadi Kavi (the first poet) Valmiki of Sanskrit literature. Many Indian writers have retold the story of *Ramayana* in vernacular versions but Buck's English version of the *Ramayana* remains so true to the lyrical verse and every line is a riveting and conjures up images as any classic epic fantasy should. The tale almost takes

The story of Prince Rama helped me in knowing values, managing fears and being neutral and accepting different values.

The basic function of this Indian Epic is identity maintenance. When a person or a community is more interested in fortune seeking than in identity maintenance stories are left behind and storytelling dies....

◆ **Bagampriyal**





Wisdom Shared

Sudha Murthy's 'Wise And Otherwise', I call it 'Life in Words' as it has real incidents of life beautifully woven into words. It represents talks about and celebrates life the way it is. It is a collection of many stories and every story brings out a facet of human nature to life and has something to say. The passion with which all the stories take birth is remarkable. Some are reflective, some require understanding and some need comparisons to feel them. But all make you think to be more humane which is often forgotten.

When you take a look at the cover page you come across a dove and a lady with innocence exactly like that of the dove, both staring at the world in front of them as if asking you to stop for a while and take a look around to measure the fathom of your life and the happenings, they tell you not to be judgemental but reflect and analyse your growth and development as humans, want us to relate it to the surroundings and the present time, inspect and retrospect.

Sudha Murthy, the author is another name for simplicity which is

deeply felt in her treatment given to the book. The language, the characters, the description of various people and places almost everything in the book and about the book makes you feel at home and connected in no time. The way she speaks about traditions and customs clearly states that she holds them in high esteem. In her stories she has covered and captured Indianness. There is a story in which She talks about her teacher who said that, "the greatest joy to a teacher is to produce students better than him". That story in particular, is very close to my heart because it keeps me motivated and encourages me to move ahead without losing my focus, to be honest and sincere in my efforts and to give my best in whatever I do. It pushes me towards self- improvement and in turn places a higher goal to achieve in front of me. It helps me keep myself grounded and reminds me of constant hard work. All her stories knowingly or unknowingly makes you ponder and deepens your understanding about life. Anyone who reads this book likes it instantly. The book has evergreen appeal and does not have any age bar.

The author has crafted



her experiences without any pretensions and leaves it on the readers to decide on the moral grounds. The author has written it with honesty and wants it to be treated with honesty.

The book is like a world in itself where you meet people from various background and class, and of different upbringing and personalities whom you may like or dislike, appreciate or disapprove of, but surely can't disconnect with because it is part of you, part of your world.

Rightly said, ' A Salute To Life.'

◆ **Dhvani K. Patel**



सूखा बरगद — मंजूर एहतेशाम

उपन्यास गद्य साहित्य की सर्वाधिक पूर्ण एवं विशाल विधा है। उपन्यास में जीवन का सर्वांगीण चित्रण होता है, इसीलिए उपन्यासकार को विस्तृत कथानक के माध्यम से अपनी कलाप्रदर्शन का पूर्ण अवसर मिलता है।

मंजूर एहतेशाम द्वारा रचित 'सूखा बरगद' एक सरल कथानक वाला उपन्यास है। लेखक ने इस उपन्यास में केवल दो बातों पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया है स्वतंत्रता के बाद भारत के शिक्षित मध्यमवर्गीय मुसलमानों के पारिवारिक जीवन व पारिवारिक समस्याओं का चित्रण तथा सांप्रदायिक विद्वेष के कारण उनके मन में गहराई से पैठी असुरक्षा की भावना। अतः दो परिवारों की कहानी कही गई है— अब्बू, सुहैल और रशीदा के परिवार की तथा फफू, रजिया और परवेज़ से संबद्ध कहानी। हालाँकि दोनों परिवारों में रक्त का संबंध है— फफू सुहैल और रशीदा की बुआ है तथा अब्बू रजिया के मामा, फिर भी इस उपन्यास की मुख्य कथा अब्बू के परिवार की है।

उपन्यासकार का उद्देश्य मध्यमवर्गीय शिक्षित मुसलमान परिवार का जीवन प्रस्तुत करना या शिक्षित युवक-युवतियों के मन के द्वंद्व का चित्रण करना है। यह सब अब्बू के परिवार में घटित घटनाओं द्वारा किया गया है। सुहैल-रशीदा की शिक्षा, उनके प्रणय प्रसंग (गीता-सुहैल तथा रशीदा-विजय), सुहैल का गीता द्वारा टुकराया जाना तथा कट्टरपंथी, स्वार्थी मुसलमान नेताओं द्वारा उत्तेजित किया जाना तथा सांप्रदायिक दंगों, विद्वेष के कारण संतुलन बिगड़ जाना, निराश होना तथा सर्वधर्म समभाव का मार्ग छोड़कर सांप्रदायिक बन जाना। इस प्रकार कथानक सुगठित है और सीधी रेखा में अंत की ओर बढ़ता है।

उपन्यास का केंद्रबिंदु अब्बू का परिवार सामाजिक दबाववश शनैः शनैः अपनी जीवनी शक्ति खोता हुआ नज़र आता है। मानवीय संवेदना का रस बड़ी तेज़ी से सूखता जा रहा है। यह प्रक्रिया परिवार के सभी सदस्यों के जीवन में अलग-अलग स्तरों पर घटित होती है। एक ओर अल्पसंख्यक जाति के मन में रहने वाला एक खास तरह का असुरक्षा का भाव है, दूसरी ओर निम्न मध्यमवर्ग की आर्थिक सीमाओं का दबाव है। इसके साथ ही अब्बू, अम्मी, रशीदा और सुहैल की अपनी निजी अस्मिता को तलाश करने की कोशिश है जो उन्हें एक छत के नीचे रहते हुए भी एक-दूसरे से दूर बनाए रखती है। घर की इस अराजकतापूर्ण स्थिति को बरगद के रूपक के माध्यम से चित्रित किया गया है। अपने तमाम वैचारिक अंतर्विरोधों के बावजूद सुहैल के भीतर एक दिन यह अहसास जागता है कि यह बरगद विलकुल सूखा है। वह अपनी डायरी में भी लिखता है— 'अपनी जड़ों पर खड़ा-का-खड़ा बरगद सूख कैसे सकता है?' यह एक अत्यंत ही महत्त्वपूर्ण



सवाल है जिसे लेखक हमारे सामने छोड़ जाता है।

भारतीय परंपरा में 'बरगद' संस्कृति का प्रतीक है। भारतीय संस्कृति के मूल तत्त्व हैं— समन्वय, सहिष्णुता, उदारता, मानव की मानव के रूप में पहचान, भाईचारा, अहिंसा। एक धर्म निरपेक्ष प्रजातंत्र होने के कारण भारतवर्ष में सबको विकास तथा उन्नति के समान अवसर उपलब्ध हैं, शासनतंत्र पक्षपात रहित है और प्रत्येक नागरिक अपनी इच्छा, आस्था, अपने धार्मिक विश्वास के अनुसार पूजा-अर्चना-इबादत कर सकता है। इस प्रकार एक ओर भारतीय संस्कृति के तत्त्व तथा दूसरी ओर धर्मनिरपेक्ष प्रजातांत्रिक पद्धति के जीवनमूल्य मिलकर एक हो गए हैं। उपन्यास में 'बरगद' इन्हीं जीवनमूल्यों का प्रतीक है। लेखक अपने उपन्यास के माध्यम से यही सिद्ध करना चाहते हैं कि हमारे उदात्त, मानवीय जीवनमूल्यों के वृक्ष में कीड़े लग गए हैं और वह सूख गया है या सूख रहा है।

इस प्रकार यह उपन्यास वैचारिक संघर्ष की प्रक्रिया को एक खास बिंदु तक ले जाता है और इस प्रक्रिया को सही दिशा में आगे बढ़ाने के लिए हमारी मानसिकता को तैयार करता है। बुद्धिजीवियों को मानवीय मूल्यों के पतन को रोकने हेतु कटिबद्ध करता है।

◆ डॉ. कादंबरी अग्रवाल



A Magical Journey

The novel 'The Alchemist' written by the Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho, tells the tale of Santiago, a Spanish shepherd boy who has a dream and decides to follow it. The boy ventures in his personal journey of exploration and self discovery, symbolically searching for a hidden treasure located near the pyramids in Egypt. During his journey he sees the greatness of the world, its diversities, the forces driving the life on earth, and the materialistic realities which are really immaterial. By the end of the novel, he discovers that the treasure was the journey itself, the discoveries he made, and the wisdom he acquired. The book has a hue of religion, but the message conveyed is more important, that success is for those who chase their dreams, their ambitions, and rightly guided by the omens, success is obvious.

should keep moving forward leaving aside our monotonous life, find new avenues, hone our skills for reaching our destination.

According to the dictionary the word 'Alchemy' means any magical power or process of transmuting a common substance, into a substance of great value. I believe we all have that magical power within us. Each and every person can be an Alchemist. As the alchemist himself says, when he appears to Santiago in the form of an old king, "When you really want something to happen, the whole universe conspires so that your wish comes true." This book helps us to coruscate our inner self. It touches your heart as the story comes to an end. It teaches that every treasure lies in our own heart and there is no need to search for it in the outside world. Search yourself and you get the world.....

So in order to achieve your dreams we

◆ **Lizzie Jackson**

લેખ વળી શું હોય? લેખનો ઉલ્લેખ કદી શબ્દોની માળમાં પરોવાતા જોયો છે? કવિની કલમથી નીકળેલ, શબ્દોની હૃદયસ્પર્શી પરિભાષા એ જ લેખ. લેખનું મૂળ કેવળ વિચાર જ છે. લેખન એ લેખની જનની છે. લેખ માનવ વિચારોનું જતન તેમજ સિંચન કરે છે.



લેખ હેતુલક્ષી તેમજ વિચારલક્ષી હોઈ શકે છે. મારા મતે લેખ એ આત્મમંથન અને સ્પંદનની અભિવ્યક્તિ છે. લેખન કાર્ય કલ્પનીય હોઈ શકે. પરંતુ લેખ એ વાસ્તવિકતાનો નિચોડ છે. લેખનું સ્વરૂપ કવિની કલમ અર્થાત સ્વરોના સંયોજન પર નિર્ભર હોય છે.

લેખ એ શબ્દોરૂપી સ્વરોનું ઉપવન છે. લેખની રચના જટિલ તેમજ તરલ હોઈ શકે છે. લેખ પરિવર્તનીય તેમજ ઉદ્દેશનીય હોય છે. લેખની સમજ કેળવવી એ હૃદય

તેમજ પારદર્શકતાનો વિષય છે. લેખ એ અભિવ્યક્તિનું માધ્યમ છે. લેખ એ કવિની આંતરિક સંવેદના તેમજ મુળભુત વિચારોનું પ્રત્યક્ષીકરણ છે. સુલેખનું જતન અને ચિંતન કવિની કલમ પર આધારિત હોય છે.

લેખ એ જગતમાં છુપાયેલ કુસંસ્કારોને નાથવાનું સમુદ્મંથન છે. લેખનો ભાવાર્થ જાગરુકતા કેળવવાનો કે સારા નરસાની પરખને સુષુપ્ત અવસ્થામાંથી જન્માવવાનો છે.

લેખ લેખ સૌ કોઈ લખે
સાચા લખે ન કોઈ
સાચા લેખ જો કોઈ લખે
ભુસ્ત્યાં ન ભુંસાય છેક

લી. મેહુલ મારુ

A Metamorphosis In India

It maybe, uncertainty, at the first sight. The book with its 900-something-pages loftiness, maybe enough to waver you from your choice. But once you begin, the book turns out to be addictive and simply leaves you wanting for more and it's then you realise that this is no ordinary novel. 'Shantaram' is one of those rare books, which can make one rethink life from an entirely different perspective. It is almost a meditative experience. A semi-autobiographical debut novel of Australian writer, Gregory David Roberts, it tells the story of a prisoner who escapes to India where he spends 10 years before being caught and extradited back to his native land. The book vividly describes the beauty of incredible India, Mumbai in particular. But at the same time, the author does not refrain from pointing out the hypocrisies of the human nature. The fluid, descriptive language is the USP of the book. But it's the plot and the characterization of Shantaram, which appeal the most to me and makes the book my all-time favourite read.

◆ **Manashni Bawa**





The Call From The Beyond

The book I have read recently is 'The Laws of the Spirit World' by Khorshed Bhavnagri. In 1949, Khorshed married Rumi Bhavnagri and had two sons, Vispi and Ratoo.

On February 22, 1980 she lost her sons, Vispi and Ratoo in a tragic car accident. The couple felt that they would not survive for long because of the trauma. They had lost faith in God until a miraculous incident



happened in their lives. The spirits of Vispi and Ratoo tried to reach their parents through a chain of people. It gave them hope and helped them to continue the journey of life. Khorshed and Rumi developed powers of concentration and started communicating to their sons through a process called 'Automatic Writing'. Vispi and Ratoo unraveled the secrets of the spirit world and thought that it would be of considerable benefit to human beings on earth to know the true laws of God and the spirit world.

According to the author, spirituality is a 'light' subject. It is not about running away into the mountains. It is about living your life right here amongst people, facing your problems and fulfilling your duties and responsibilities. It is all about completing your spiritual mission on earth.

I got this book from a friend and I believe that I was destined to read it. It changed me immensely in my personal and professional life. I became more aware of the intentions behind each and every thought pattern and action. Analyzing the thought gave me an opportunity of purification and I try to do it on a daily basis only because of its influence. The book gives an elaborate view of karma and how to lead a life devoid of wrong doings. We realize the purpose of our life and are unaffected by the actions of others.

The book came to me when I had doubts on the concept of life after death. Death is not an end of life but a continuation of it. The book says that we have to definitely pay for each and every action, even the feelings that we had gone through in this life. It throws light on many things that we usually neglect in our life.

It was truly a life changing experience for me and it helped me to modify and approach life in a more responsible way. I believe, realizing the true purpose of this life is the most important thing which is possible if you explore it. I suggest this book to everyone as it enlightens one's consciousness.

◆ **Nancy Chandran**



The Wisdom of Faith

'The secret' by Rhonda Byrne reaffirms our faith and reassures us that we are meant to have an amazing life. It makes us understand that each and every moment of our life should be full of excitement and we should enthuse it

tion of this universe which is most powerful and we individually have the power that the universe shares with us. This book shows us the way to an amazing life. We discover something incredible about ourselves, our life and the universe. It shares that life is so much easier than we think it is, and as we understand the way life works, and the power that we have inside us, we experience the magic of life in its fullness and then our life is full of magical moments.



This book shares that everything that we want to be or do comes from Love and we have a choice, whether to love or harness the positive force or not. It tells that we are a magnet and we attract everything in life. The law of attraction is unfailingly giving us every single thing in our life based on what we are giving out. We magnetize positive and negative circumstances on the basis of what we give out to the universe in the form of our thoughts. It also focuses our attention towards the feeling of gratitude towards everything that we receive from the universe.

with positive energy. It also shares that we are born for a purpose and acceptance of life as it comes and being grateful for each and everything that we receive, is the key to happiness and success. We are meant to have everything that we love and desire. It tells that life is very simple and full of magical moments. The only thing we need to do, is realize and discover that we are meant to appreciate and enjoy that magic within. We are nothing, but the most beautiful crea-

The book also talks about discovering joy in relationships and the presence of the heaven within.

The book ends on a very positive note and it was a great learning experience for me. I have only one thing to say after reading it....Become one with the Universe and let the Magic of your life begin.....!!!!

◆ **Preeti Luthra**



A Promise Kept

Fail not our Feast - Vincent Godfrey is a play with a true and genuine storyline that reflects the meaning of friendship. The play is notable for its thought provoking and insightful analysis of human nature.

The play revolves around three women characters. It depicts the struggle of Nora Blake, the protagonist to maintain friendship despite all upheavals. Strangely, the friendship is carried on to the next level when after her death, Nora's spirit returns to fulfill the promise that she had made to her friends.

Nora, Joan and Matilda are three friends who make a promise in school to have a yearly reunion. They grow up and end up in different professions. Nora, the one down on her luck, becomes a thief wherein the other two seem to be in noble professions. Joan Conway is a M.P and Matilda Walters expects to become the Principal of a prestigious school. At their usual gathering, they meet but without Nora who is imprisoned for stealing furs from a shop. However, Nora turns up in time to attend the gathering and keeps her promise. Matilda however sees it against her social status to be with a shoplifter and rebukes her and decides to leave. Nora



realising that she was an unwelcomed guest decides to leave. Though Joan, requests her to stay, the cold and callous attitude of Matilda forces her to leave the place. Right then, Joan receives a call and to her shock, it's revealed that Nora committed suicide in order to keep her promise and it was the ghost of Nora that had turned up for their yearly gathering.

The play turns to be a tragic one arousing the feeling of pity for the protagonist. The readers or the audience are left with varied questions in mind; was it right on her part to commit suicide or why does the social barrier in friendship affect to such an extent that it makes one friend go against other or have we forgotten the age old thought a friend in need is a friend indeed?

To me, a divine touch or gesture can cure many a agony of life. A patient ear can bring peace to a troubled mind. Had Nora's friend been kind to her, they could do something to change her ways.

Friendship is not always to laugh and enjoy but a deeper meaning imparted to stay together in all situations. Friendship in its right meaning is to encourage each other and stay calm and bonded in all situations that life has to offer. Sadly the situation that prevails today is this missing thread of trust.

It is a play that can touch one's heart and at the same time make you realize the divine friendship that can cross all barriers for its fulfillment.

◆ **Reshmi Nair**



भारतस्य द्वे महाकाव्ये ।

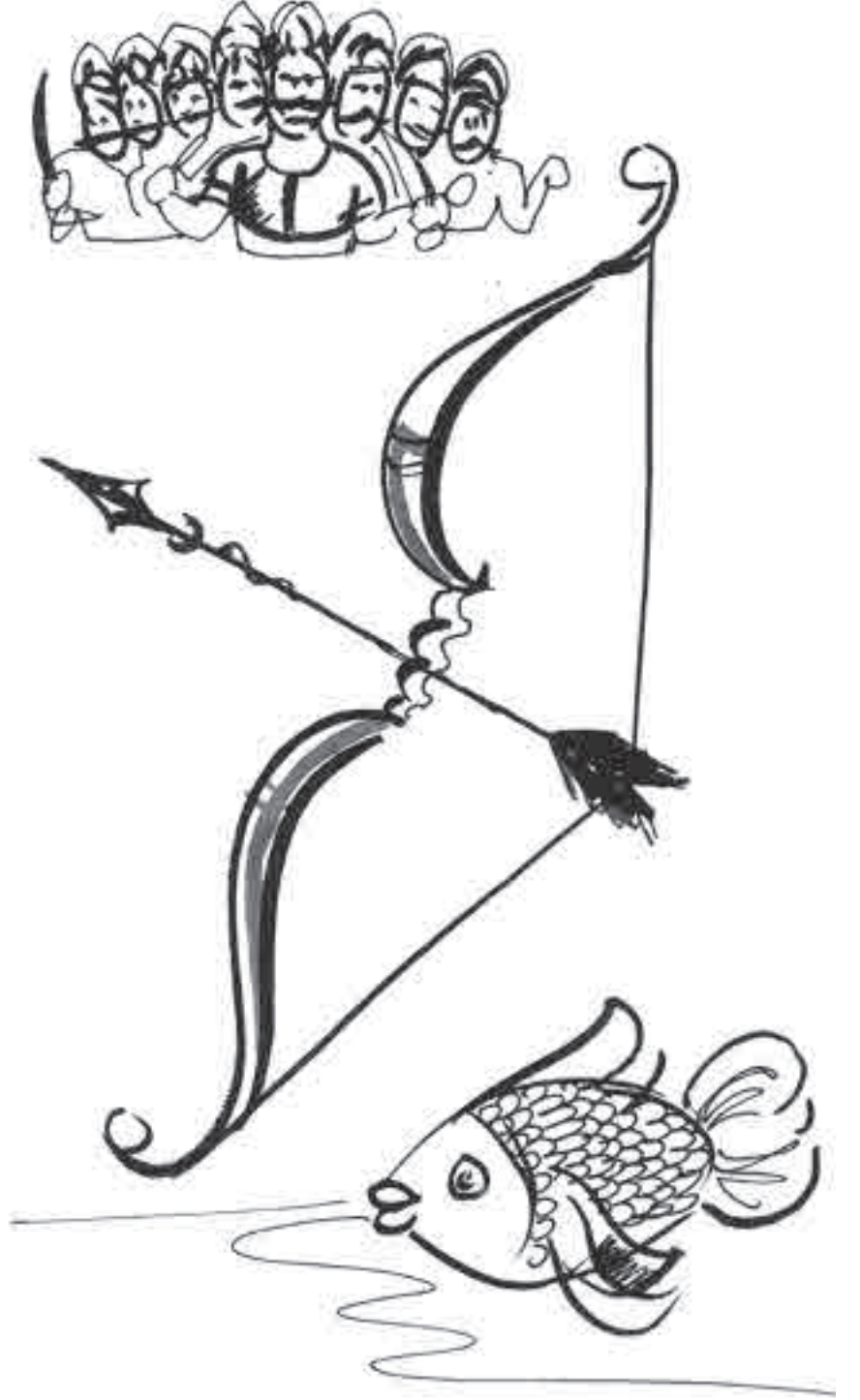
रामायणमहाभारतौ अस्माकं भारतवर्षस्य द्वे महाकाव्ये ह्यएपच्छि स्तः । एते ऋषिणा विरचिते इत्यतः 'आर्षकाव्ये' इति नाम्ना अपि प्रकीर्तिते स्तः । परवर्ति-भारतीयसाहित्यपरंपरायाम् एतत्ग्रन्थयोः महत्प्रभावः द्रष्टुम् शक्यते । एतयोः महाभारतम् महर्षिणा वेदव्यासेन विरचितः बहुप्रसिद्धः इतिहासः विद्यते । अस्मिन् ग्रन्थे कौरवपाण्डवानां महायुद्धं मुख्यविषयरूपेण वर्णितमस्ति ।

धर्मे अर्थे च कामे च मोक्षे च भरतर्षभ ।
यदीहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति
न तद् क्वचित् । ।

मानवजीवनस्य धर्मार्थ-काम-मोक्ष-रूपाः समस्त पुरुषार्थाः अत्र विशालग्रन्थे सन्निवेशिताः । अस्य ग्रन्थस्य विषयविस्तारं दृष्ट्वा 'व्यासोच्छिष्टं जगत् सर्वं' इत्येतत् यदुच्यते तत् समीचीनमेव । मानवजीवनस्य विविधविषयाः अत्र मार्मिकतया प्रतिपादितास्सन्ति । इयं कृति कालजयिनी चिरन्तनी एव ।

रामस्य अयनं (चरितं) रामायणं । नीतिदृष्ट्या, काव्यात्मकदृष्ट्या लोकोपकारकदृष्ट्या च रामायणस्य आदिकाव्यकाव्यस्य महत्त्वं अधिकं वर्तते । यत्र महाभारतम् 'इदम् जगत् कीदृशं (निर्दयि)' वर्तते एतत् वास्तविकतां अधिकृत्य मुल्यनिरपेक्षरूपेण (value-neutral) वर्णयति तत्र रामायणं तु कान्तावत् वाचकान् 'रामादिवत् वर्तितव्यं न रावणादिवत्' इति मुल्यसापेक्षतया बोधयति । पुत्रधर्मस्य, पतिपत्नीधर्मस्य, भ्रातृधर्मस्य तथा कतिपय अन्य मानवीयसम्बधानां अपि आदर्शभूतः अयं ग्रन्थः । अस्माभिः सर्वैः अवश्यं पठनीयं ग्रन्थद्वयं एतत् ।

◆ सचिन वरवंटकर (संस्कृत विभाग)



अँजुरी अँजुरी धूप: चंद्रसेन विराट



आकर्षक शीर्षक 'अँजुरी अँजुरी धूप' के साथ सुप्रसिद्ध गजलकार चंद्रसेन विराट के दोहा संग्रह ने साहित्य जगत में एक नई उम्मीद जगाई है। उनके द्वारा रचित सरल दोहों में कई गहरे भाव छुपे हैं वहीं दूसरी ओर गहरी पंक्तियों में अनेक उत्कृष्ट विचार अँगड़ाई ले रहे हैं। एक अद्भुत संगम के साथ काव्य की तमाम वारीकियों का पालन करते हुए ये दोहे असीम रचनात्मक सुख देने में पूर्णतः समर्थ हैं।

निश्चित सूर्योदय यहाँ निश्चित उसका अस्त,
निश्चितता के नियम से जन्म-मरण भी ग्रस्त।

ठीक ही कहा गया है कि दोहा लेखन एक ऐसी विधा है जिसमें कवि सरलता से सागर में सागर भर देते हैं। चंद्रसेन विराट जी की इस पुस्तक में बहुत सूक्ष्म लेकिन महत्वपूर्ण अवसरों पर उपयुक्त अनुभव होने वाले वेजोड़ मोती भी हैं और मृत्यु का अवश्यंभावी सच उगलते कठोर हथौड़े भी। इस अतुलनीय पुस्तक में जहाँ जीवन के गूढ़ रहस्यों को उदघाटित किया है वहीं प्रकृति की कोमल सुंदरता को सरल शब्दों में अभिव्यक्त भी किया है।

हरे-हरे लहरा रहे भरे धान के खेत,
ठंडक पाती देखकर आँखें हृदय समेत।

इन दोहों में हमारे आसपास विखरा जटिलताओं भरा जीवन है साथ ही जीवन के सौंदर्य और सच्चाई का भी बखूबी वर्णन किया गया है। इनमें अनुभूतियों, चुनौतियों, दर्शन और यथार्थ का अनूठा संगम है। विराट जी आज के नवोदित कवि हृदय पाठक को आवश्यक संदेश, सीख एवं अहम उपाय भी सुझाते हैं।

भाषा, शैली, कथ्य का विशिष्ट अवदान,
इनका सम्यक मेल ही है कवि की पहचान।

निश्चित रूप से विराट जी अपनी इस रचना के माध्यम से हमारे हृदय पर अपनी अमिट छाप छोड़ते हैं। वे अपने दोहों से जीवन के प्रत्येक पहलू को स्पर्श करते हुए हमारा उचित मार्गदर्शन करने में सफल हुए हैं। आज की पीढ़ी के लिए अपने सटीक, गूढ़, सुबोध व सरल दोहों के साथ पुस्तक न केवल पठनीय बन पड़ी है अपितु जीवन के कई रोचक पहलुओं पर टिप्पणी करने के लिए संग्रहणीय भी है।

भाषा वरसों में सधे शैली दशकों बाद,
नाम बिना रचना पढ़े कवि आए खुद याद।

◆ संगीता जोशी



धरती धन न अपना

‘धरती धन न अपना’ में उपन्यासकार जगदीशचन्द्र ने पंजाब के दोआबा क्षेत्र के दलितों के उत्पीड़न, शोषण, अपमान व वेदना को चित्रित किया है। उनकी दयनीय व हीन स्थिति के लिए जिम्मेदार भारतीय जाति व्यवस्था, हिंदू धर्म व्यवस्था और जन्म-कर्म सिद्धांत के आधारभूत तथ्यों को भी उजागर किया है। जन्म के आधार पर अछूत करार दी गई जातियों के सामाजिक, आर्थिक और सांस्कृतिक सरोकारों को इस उपन्यास के द्वारा एक विस्तृत पटल पर चित्रित करके भारतीय हिंदू धर्म मूल्य व नीति मूल्यों की आलोचना की गई है।

‘धरती धन न अपना’ का घटना-स्थल, परिवेश, रहन-सहन, रीति-रिवाज, पर्व-उत्सव पंजाब के दोआबा के ग्रामीण अंचल के होशियारपुर जिले का एक गाँव घोड़ेवाह का चमादडी मुहल्ला है। यह गाँव काल्पनिक नहीं, वास्तविक है यह उनका पैतृक गाँव है। अतः लेखक को इसके जीवन की, वहाँ के रहने वालों की दीन-हीन अवस्था, उनके शोषण-उत्पीड़न की पूरी जानकारी है। उन्होंने इस दयनीय जीवन का बड़ी सहजता एवं सहानुभूति से चित्रण किया है। गाँव का सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक परिदृश्य पूरी जीवंतता के साथ चित्रित किया गया है। उपन्यास की भाषा हिन्दी है, पर उसमें अंचल की भाषा की रंगत भी सहज ही दिखाई देती है।

यह उपन्यास परिवेश प्रधान है। इसके सामाजिक परिवेश को प्रस्तुत करते हैं गाँव के विभिन्न पात्र— चाची, प्रतापी, जीतु, मंगु, प्रीतो, चौधरी हरनाम सिंह, लालू पहलवान, छजू शाह, डॉ विशनदास, पादरी अचिंतराम, पंडित संतराम आदि। इनके व्यवहार एवं प्रतिघात से ही कथानक का ताना-बाना बुना गया है। ये सभी पात्र अपने-अपने वर्ग का प्रतिनिधित्व करते हैं काली उपन्यास का केन्द्रीय पात्र है। उसे उपन्यास का नायक भी कहा जा सकता है। काली भी अपने व्यक्तिगत गुणों के कारण अपने वर्ग का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है।

काली के चरित्र की सबसे बड़ी शक्ति है जिजीविषा, आत्मसम्मान के साथ जीने की ललक। उसे ‘चमार’ कहलाना, छुआछूत का



व्यवहार सहन नहीं। इसीलिए वह संघर्ष का आह्वान करता है। काली सामाजिक अत्याचार के प्रतिरोध का प्रतीक बनकर प्रस्तुत होता है और इसी प्रतिरोध में इसके चरित्र की महानता है।

इस उपन्यास में मेरा सबसे प्रिय पात्र काली है क्योंकि वह आज की युवा पीढ़ी के लिए प्रेरणास्वरूप है। हमारे देश को आज़ाद हुए 66 साल हो गए हैं किंतु आज भी हमारे देश में छुआछूत की वीमारी समाप्त नहीं हुई है। युवा वर्ग ही है जो इसके विरुद्ध आवाज़ उठाकर हमारे समाज को मुक्ति दिला सकता है।

◆ संगीता सिंह





A Lyrical odyssey –The Ramayana

Some stories are epics. They are written by a class of people with unmatched depth, intelligence and emotions. A reader can only desire to lay hands on the original text of such literature, and comprehending them is a luxury which only few can earn and afford. India is unapologetically rich in such spell binding and life changing literature. Yes, life changing because that is undoubtedly the principal aim of the divine poets and authors who wrote them. Among the myriad of Indian literature, The Ramayana, is a classic which people of all ages find irresistible. The Ramayana is said to be the world's first poem. It is an oceanic collection of 24,000 verses which sings about King Rama and incarnation of Vishnu – the Supreme God who came down to earth as the perfect man to fulfil a divine destiny.

The Ramayana – A Modern Translation by Ramesh Menon is a smooth journey for someone reading this dramatic tale of intense philosophy for the first time. It is a beautiful compilation of all the Kands (sections), mythological facts and enthralling short stories related to the main characters. Some fragments in the book seem nostalgically similar while some shockingly novel; some imbibe purest of joys while others leave the face tear stained; the narration being strong and dramatic guarantees a whirlpool of emotions in its readers. There exists a passionate feminine grace in the subtle rhythm which flows graciously through the book. The descriptions of characters, their personalities and the events relating to them inspire mental visuals of brightest and dullest hues. All in all, Ramesh Menon's poetic translation is brilliant for a novice to Indian philosophy such as young students.

It gives first hand factual knowledge required regarding the plot and characters. The book however does not analyse or interpret the events into philosophical doctrines; it simply kindles the fire of excitement towards Hindu philosophy and leaves the reader with a choice to pulp out the knowledge it offers indirectly. One should dedicate a considerable time reading and understanding the rich meaning of the Ramayana through other pieces of literature also.

This exceptional story of Vishnu and Lakshmi born as Rama and Sita is a heroic yet ironic tragedy in which Rama restores the balance of goodness and evil by demolishing Ravana – The greatest Rakshasa of Treta yug because his wife is kidnapped by the demon, but eventually is separated from his beloved anyway. Unlike the usual fairy tales adorned with “Happily ever after” tags; the Ramayana talks about the inescapable Karma which even the Gods live by. The moral of the story lies in the realization of duty towards universal goodness and compassion, even if one does not achieve a perfect end while achieving it. The Karma one attains by extending compassion to all is of the highest rank and shall be carried forward to the next life while you presently balance out the karma of the previous one. Power of choice precedes our behaviour which results into Karma. We choose between good and evil, ignorance and knowledge, compassion and anger; we hence write our destinies. The Ramayana guides us through the choices we face in life, hence leading us towards the divine. Read it and feel peace at heart and soul.

◆ **Swati Kokra**





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TO BE A HUMAN
IS TO BE A CANINE...

