IISER PUNE

KALPA

2018

KALPA 2018



Indian Institute of Science Education and Research
Dr Homi Bhabha Road, Pashan, Pune - 411008
Maharashtra, India

MANAGEMENT

Kaneenika Sinha
Faculty Coordinator
Jiffin Benjamin
Vruta Gupte
Chief Editors
Gopika M
New Faculty Section
Sagnik Ghosh
Report Section
Jiffin Benjamin
Design Team
Shubhalaxmi
Illustrations
Praful Shirsath
Photographs
Janani Ananthanarayanan
Farewell Section

DESIGNERS

Adithyan P
Abdul Raafik
Arya Samanta
Hasna H
Ishwari Mulkalwar
Jiffin Benjamin
Nazia V
Sankalp Choudhuri
Vikhyath Premugh
Wridhdhisom Karar

ILLUSTRATORS

Amruta Swaminathan
Anasuya Karmakar
Deepshikha Sen
Kasturi Lele
Sanjana Nair
Shubhalaxmi
Soubhadra Maiti
Swastik Mishra

EDITORS

Adarsh S
Divya S
Himani Khurana
Janani Ananthanarayanan
Koustav Halder
Meghamala Sarkar
Murali Krishna
Onkar Sadekar
Sagnik Ghosh
Sahana N
Saismit Naik
Sankalp Choudhuri
Satavisha De
Vaishnavi Patil
Varsha Jaisimha
Vasudha Aher

SPECIAL THANKS

Prof Jayant B. Udgaonkar, Director, IISER Pune
Administrative Staff, IISER Pune

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Contact us at kalpa@sac.iiserpune.ac.in

Photo on the right: The Kalpa team with couple of missing members | Photo credits: Praful Shirsath
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"Creativity takes courage."
- Henri Matisse

The term Kalpa was coined as a hybrid of the words Kala (time) and Kalpana (imagination). In the four months that we have worked to bring out the 12th edition of Kalpa, we have come to believe that although the kala which one can utilize in the pursuit of any endeavour, is in essence, finite, kalpana itself is, by-and-large, an impossibly infinite quantity: one that we have tried to rein in and draw from to the best of our abilities in all aspects of the magazine, both creative and informative.

Last year, on a rainy day in December, the Kalpa '18 team began the journey of chronicling the past year at IISER. Duties were delegated and missions manned. Coffee became a well-regarded, widely loved friend and a shoulder to lean on, even for those of us who hadn't found it particularly endearing before.

Some of us looked over articles we received with narrowed eyes for a single grammatical mistake, some spent hours redrawing an illustration until it was perfect, yet others worked through the night, poring over endless drawings, templates, and photos to figure out which ones went best with the writings.

All good journeys, however, eventually come to an end. The travellers that traverse steep cliffs and winding paths will remember this journey for a long time, as will we.

We hope you enjoy reading this year's edition of Kalpa as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Jiffin Benjamin and Vruta Gupte
Chief Editors

A New Beginning

I had spent over twenty-five wonderful years at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, before deciding it would be good for me to move on. I had wonderful colleagues and students there, and, very importantly, my research work had been going well, but it had become clear to me, by then, that NCBS had taken on a life of its own. More importantly, I was sure that a new environment and new colleagues would invigorate me, and infuse my science with new ideas.

I was happy to be given the choice to move to IISER Pune. To an outsider, it was clear that this was an institute that had started well. It was clearly amongst the best of the many new institutes that had been started in the country, at about the same time. Of course, I was aware that the institute would soon be entering its teenage years, but the challenge of guiding it through this potentially difficult period seemed exciting.

So, what were my first impressions of IISER Pune? The first impression was very good. The campus appeared to be well made: a very good sign, because I knew that if attention had been given to how the campus looked, even greater attention must have been paid to how it performed in education and research. The second impression was that of a vibrant campus. Coming from an institute that had only PhD students, I had forgotten how lively a campus can be when there are undergraduates around. This was brought home to me in the first few weeks itself, when the cultural festival Karavaan was held. The third impression was the most favourable. Here was a place where exciting research was being

undertaken in all the sciences. Coming from a Biology-only institute, I had forgotten how useful, and how much fun, it was to attend talks in many diverse fields, and to interact with people doing so many different things.

So, what did I not quite like? Well, it seemed to me that everyone was a bit too respectful, to the extent of appearing subservient. So much so, that I joked that the name IISER might be appropriate because there almost seemed to be an "Aye-Aye, Sir" culture. I had come from an institute without much hierarchy, and where informality prevailed at all levels, an institute where many people, from staff members to students, called me Jayant. At IISER, I found that even some faculty members would call me 'Sir', until I told them that I had a first name, and that my students called me by it. To me, such informality is important, because then, others do not hesitate to approach you with their problems, and with suggestions for improvement.

On a more serious note, I was struck by the enthusiasm of the faculty members here, and their willingness and eagerness to take up responsibilities, and help run the institute in a manner that is transparent and open. The culture of an institute derives much from the camaraderie amongst faculty members, ideally resulting in the institute functioning in a manner that maximally facilitates their research and teaching work, rather than in a manner that maximizes the stature of one, or a few, individuals. One of the issues confronting the Institute, when I joined, was the very difficult financial situation it was in. Once this was explained to the faculty, I was struck by their willingness to work through the crisis, and to accept the cuts in expenditure that the crisis demanded we make. I have no doubt that, with the active participation of its faculty, IISER Pune will realize its potential to be one of the top research institutes in the country.

Jayant Udgaonkar
Director, IISER Pune



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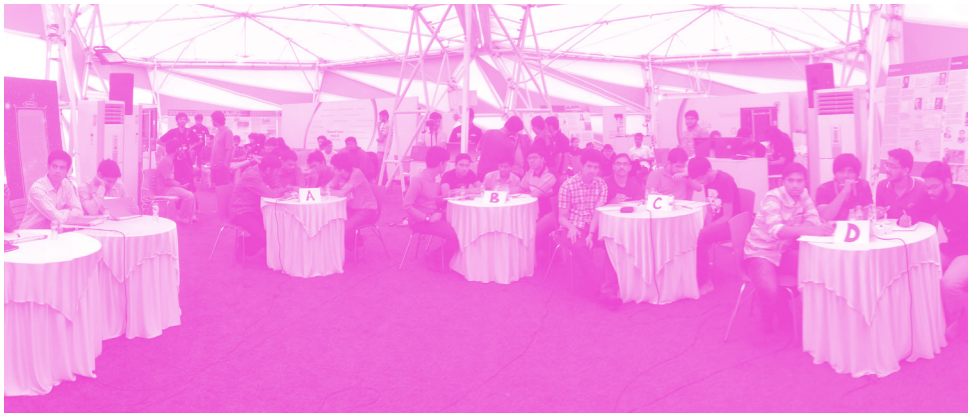
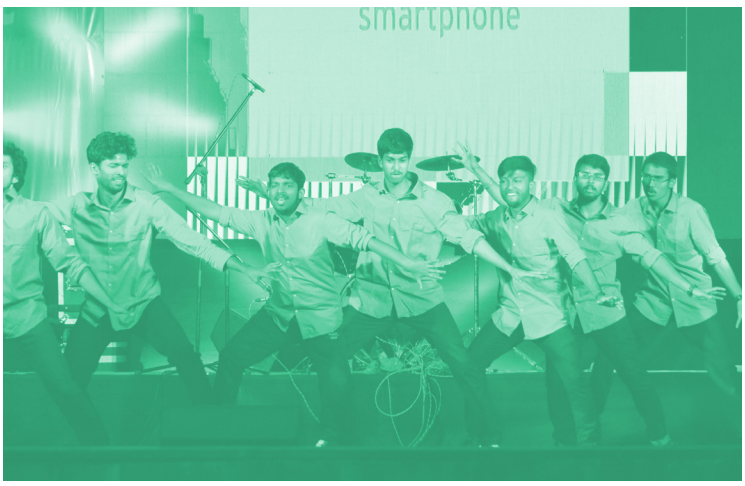




the ALMANAC

a memoir of the occassions
and events of 2017-18
at IISER Pune.



DISHA 2017-18

..taking Disha forward

In the second week of May, Saurabh Kadam, the previous general coordinator, sat the three of us down for the official handing over of Disha's leadership. While taking over, we didn't completely understand the scope and the scale of the responsibility of running Disha. At the time, Disha was eight years old with a strength of 48 volunteers and five programmes that were running with varying levels of success. The very first thing we did was to review and re-evaluate the goals of each programme. We wanted to know how to move closer to these goals faster this year and also steer things in a different direction if the experience from last year suggested it. Each of us had been a part of Disha for three years and also coordinated separate programmes. We knew we had to integrate that knowledge to move Disha forward. Disha's programmes were not new, but every time a fresh batch of volunteers joined, Disha had struggled to not lose the progress already made. Knowing this, we decided that our focus will be to build a sustainable structure for Disha, both for the programmes themselves and for the management of the ever growing number of volunteers. And this is exactly what we strived for throughout the year.

To increase the efficiency of our programmes we pushed for consistent feedback on the children's response to the efforts of our volunteers. Feedback, in terms of raw data and otherwise, has strengthened Disha's initiatives like never before and we hope this practise will continue. There are three tiers of people in Disha: volunteers, program coordinators (department heads) and general coordinators (70, 16 and 3 respectively in 2017-18). Given the distribution of people and their relative experience, we set up a system of check-ins for effective communication.

Apart from this, we saw Disha grow in many ways this year. A whole new programme called Prerana has started, solely by the effort of graduate students. We pride ourselves in finally having the PhD students of IISER well represented in our volunteer pool. We have had great conversations in the campus with 'Talk for Twenty'. We have started looking at the challenges that come our way when we teach our children, in the larger context of their socio-economical background. We no longer shy away from digging deep into the child's life and finding out the factors that shape their life. And often very serious factors have come up like child marriage, bootlegging, abuse and child labour. We have taken steps to empower our volunteers such that they are no longer just 18 – 20 year old Didis and Bhaiyyas to the children but conscious change makers who understand how important their duty is and how nuanced the challenge of aiding the education of underprivileged children from the underbelly of India's cities and surrounding villages can be.

On our webpage, you will find Disha defined as "an ever expanding platform for an IISERite to set and work towards goals of socioeconomic equity". There is a straightforward reason why even when the word "socioeconomic equity" opens the

door to a wide variety of issues, we have restricted our initiatives to aiding education. This is because the largest chunk of our volunteers are IISER undergrads who are skilled in basic sciences and their principal experience is that of the Indian school system they just walked out of. The challenge of school education in India is no small task and can often seem too complicated to see measurable progress in a short time. And this can be particularly frustrating to young people who often wish to see change as soon as they put in effort. But their spirit is crucial in shaping a better future. So where else do we channel this spirit? This is a question that Disha wishes to explore in the future.

This year we focused on establishing a sustainable structure for Disha and have achieved considerable progress on the whole so that Disha can stand tall in our society and know for sure what its identity as an organisation is. This meant that we couldn't venture much into other areas, even when we knew that issues like feminism and mental health have not had a structured response from the IISER community over the years. But we know that there is potential because here is what Disha is not: Disha is *not* just the composite sum of its programmes. Disha is everything anyone in IISER from a first year undergrad to the director could do to bridge the gap between communities. A community like ours, with a high amount of resources, infrastructure, technology and the best minds of the country brought together by taxpayers' investment can do a lot for the millions outside our gates who lack these privileges. Disha can be the platform to help you answer the question of how. After four years at Disha, we can assure you that we are leaving behind a resilient batch of Disha volunteers who will take up the challenge with you. We sign off here with that promise; whenever you want to grow to become an active force in fuelling social change, Disha will grow with you.

- Mitali, Reema and Vaibhav,
General coordinators, Disha



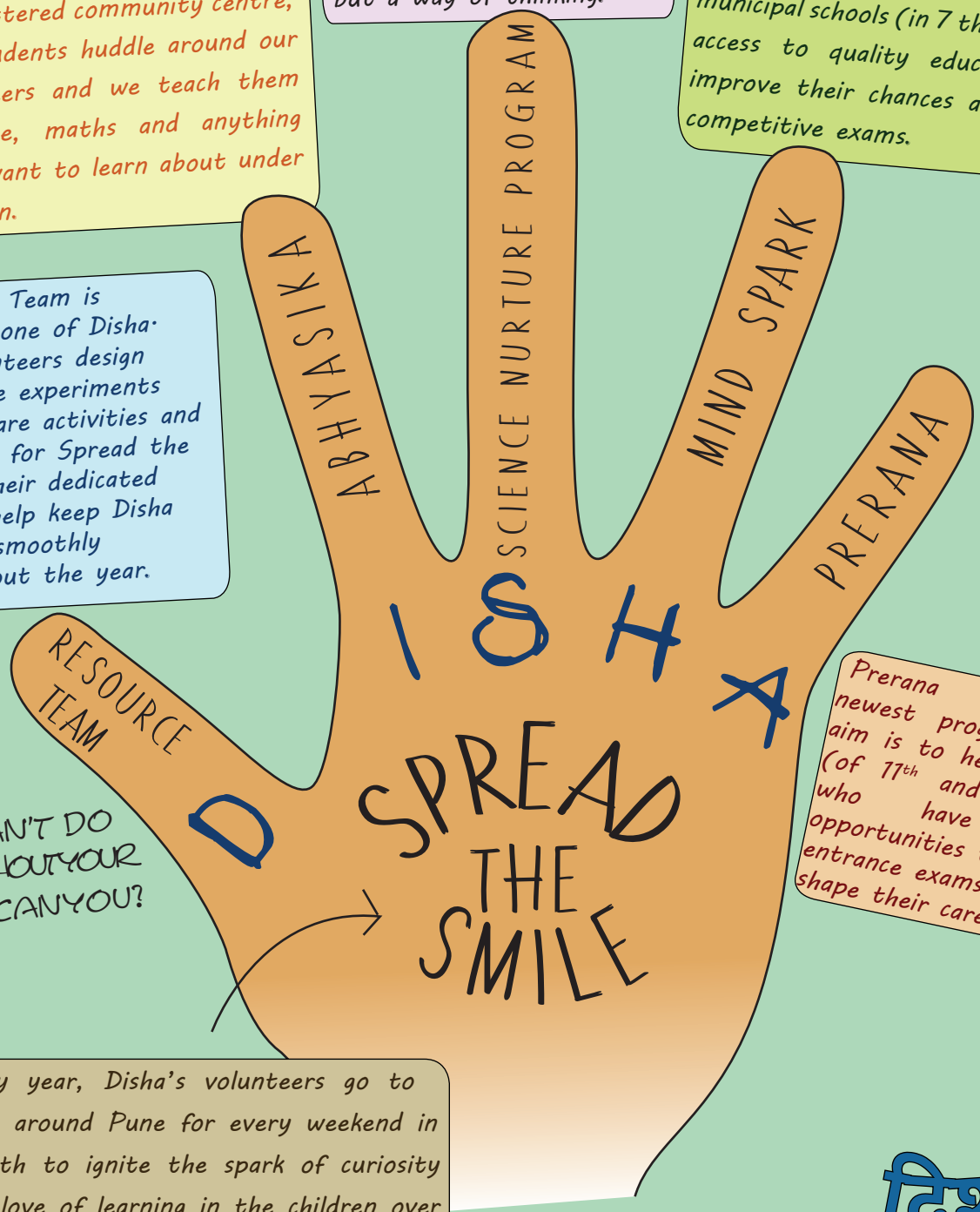
Photo by Disha Club

Every day Abhyasika volunteers try to bridge the gap between the children of Lamanvasti and the world outside. On the floor of a battered community centre, the students huddle around our volunteers and we teach them language, maths and anything they want to learn about under the sun.

The aim of SNP is to spread the excitement and fun of science among secondary school students. With the help of well designed sessions and hands on activities, our volunteers help students realize that science is not just a subject but a way of thinking.

Not every child gets a fair shot at tackling the hurdles presented by competitive exams. Mindspark volunteers aim to give students of municipal schools (in 7 th standard) access to quality education and improve their chances at cracking competitive exams.

Resource Team is the backbone of Disha. Our volunteers design attractive experiments and prepare activities and resources for Spread the Smile. Their dedicated efforts help keep Disha running smoothly throughout the year.



Prerana is Disha's newest programme. Its aim is to help students (of 11th and 12th std) who have limited opportunities to ace the entrance exams that will shape their careers.

YOU CAN'T DO STUFF WITHOUT YOUR THUMB, CAN YOU?

Every year, Disha's volunteers go to villages around Pune for every weekend in a month to ignite the spark of curiosity and a love of learning in the children over there. Our volunteers get a taste of village life and the students get to interact with and learn from our volunteers.

दिशा

Design by Ankur Panchal

TALK FOR TWENTY

WHAT IS SCIENTIFIC TEMPER? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

-SATYAJIT RATH 07-08-17

Scientific temper is not a special tool wielded by experts to solve complex problems, but is the way humans make day to day predictions and make sense of their environment. Prof. Rath explained how scientific temper can empower the people and how the vested interests of the political elite have served to subvert this tool of empowerment for their own benefit.

THE CRISIS OF INDIA'S DYING RIVERS

-VARUN PRASAD 01-09-17

Our rivers are dying. A water crisis is literally staring us in the face and we are not taking notice. If we do not act immediately, the next couple of decades will be marred by civil strife and water wars. In this talk, Varun conveyed to us the gravity of the situation and explained the campaign called 'Rally for Rivers' which aims to address this crisis.

PRIVACY AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

-PROF. SUNIL MUKHI 08-09-17

In this talk, Prof. Mukhi spoke about the context behind why privacy can be considered to be a basic human right, together with the broader question of why there are human rights at all. He highlighted the perspectives taken by the 9-judge bench of the Supreme Court in the recent ruling on this issue.

MENSTRUAL CUPS-THE WHAT, WHY AND HOW

-NANDINI HAZRA 24-01-18

The urban women of India mostly use sanitary napkins for maintaining menstrual hygiene. But is it viable, comfortable, safe or affordable? What are the alternatives that are accessible to urban as well as rural women? In this talk, Nandini gave us information about some alternative products, focusing on menstrual cups and her experience with the product. She answered many relevant questions regarding menstrual hygiene raised by the audience.

INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

-Mr. RAJENDRA TYAGI 12-02-18

Mr. Tyagi, former Indian ambassador to Norway, had an interactive session with the audience on India's engagement with foreign countries and the role played by India on the stage of world politics. He also explained the responsibilities of a diplomat and how these duties have evolved over the years.

IISER Pune celebrated its annual Math Day - a perfect amalgamation of mathematics and fun, on the 11th of March, 2017, the Saturday closest to Pi (3.14) Day.

As a prelude to the event, a symposium titled 'An App called Math' was organized on the 4th of March. It consisted of a series of thought-provoking talks by eminent researchers, all elucidating the application of mathematics across disciplines. Ranging from Dr. Chaitanya Athale's talk titled 'Why we have five fingers on each hand and self organized morphogenetics', Dr. Anirban Hazra explaining the mathematics underlying a chemical reaction', Dr. Neena Joseph Mani unraveling 'Mathematical methods involved in numerical weather prediction', Dr. Venketeswara Pai revealing interesting uses of mathematics in astronomy in ancient India, and Dr. Sunil Mukhi speaking on 'When numbers get serious', it was a perfect line up of enthralling and engaging talks. In the following week the movie 'The Man Who Knew Infinity' was screened. Two competitions were also held in the run-up to Math Day; these included the Math Convocation Flag Design Competition and the Logo and Caption Design for the e-clock competition.

With an atmosphere of high excitement and elation, the long-awaited day finally unfolded. The inaugural ceremony was held on the Mathematics floor of IISER's Main Building. It began with the release of the Math profile booklet by Prof. A. Raghuram, Chair of Mathematics at IISER Pune, and the inauguration of the Math profile display board and the e-clock by Prof. Gadadhar Misra of IISc Bangalore. On the occasion of Math day, the IISER Pune Library was renamed as Srinivasa Ramanujan Library by Prof. K.N. Ganesh. An installation of a portrait of Ramanujan, painted by Prof. G. Ambika, was unveiled in the library. This was followed by the traditional pie-cutting ceremony and high tea.

After this began a spectrum of activities - called Math Clubhouse - wherein one and all embarked on a journey that revealed the fun side of Mathematics. The Lecture Hall Complex bustled with activity as everyone put up their best show to win cash prizes and chocolates. The harmonograph, designed by students, made fascinating figures along with elucidating the mathematics behind it. This was a great opportunity to unleash one's creative side. A perfect example of Math in action - the Zome tool, with its tiny struts having the power to transform into magnificent structures, was a sight to behold. From anti-prisms to 4-D cubes, you could see and put your geometry to test.

Math-Pictionary saw professors and students alike trying desperately to draw mathematics, in a bid to make their team win, turning it into an awfully beautiful battle of wits and art. The all time favorite Rubik-mania was back with cubers testing their speed and efficiency with various platonic solid shaped Rubik puzzles. If "butter fingers" is what describes one best, here was the chance to prove oneself. With the 'cut and fold' theorem at its heart, this event demonstrated how plane figures of varying complexity could be made with folds and just a single cut. For all the coding enthusiasts there was the Pi-thon contest. In the midst of all these, the mind-boggling 30-minute puzzles kept people on their toes.

The morning session drew to a close with the challenging Quiz Prelim. This saw a huge

participation of over hundred teams from all over Pune, all competing to make it to the top four.

The post lunch session began with a colloquium by Prof. Gadadhar Misra of IISc Bangalore. The talk was tilted 'The Grothendieck Inequality'. This was followed by an extraordinary showcase of talent by Pranav Kappal, aged 9, a student of class IV in Sanskriti School, Bukum who can solve the 2x2, 3x3, Pyraminx, Megaminx and mirror Rubik's cubes. He competes at competitions organized by World Cubing Association across India. He was a finalist at East India Open in January this year which was held at Kolkata under the Pyraminx Category.

Next up was the very first 'Integration Bee' hosted at IISER: a perfect opportunity to rush around LHC integrating one's way through to attractive cash prizes! With one hundred hidden integrals and a time limit of just half an hour, this event put both math and detective skills to test. Vishal Ranjith, a 1st year BS-MS student, won this contest.

Afterwards began the most-awaited Erdós Quiz. The top four teams that made it to the finals included one from Fergusson College and three from IISER Pune. After three rounds of intense quizzing, the team consisting of Aanjaneya Kumar, Raagini Patki and Vishnu N of IISER emerged as winners. This was followed by the Prize Distribution for the various events that Math Day encompassed.

The highlight of the evening was the Math Day Play 'The Square Root of a Sonnet' written by Nilanjan P. Chowdhury and directed by Prakash Belawadi, based on the life of Dr. Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, the brilliant Indian-American astrophysicist who won the Nobel Prize in 1983 - a heart-touching story of ambition, friendship and betrayal.

And last but not the least, was the Math Treasure Hunt for mystery-lovers which began at midnight and went on till the wee hours of the morning - a frantic hunt for the treasure hidden away tactfully in a path strewn with mathematical clues.

Math Day 2017 drew to a close with a smile on every face, memories worth cherishing, and (not to forget) the numerous chocolates. The success and smooth running of the several events was only due to the immense effort put in by various students and professors who spent hours making sure everything was as perfect as possible. Kudos to everyone whose participation made Math Day a huge success! The entire IISER community anticipates an even bigger celebration in the coming years.

- Sayantika Mondal

MATH DAY 2017



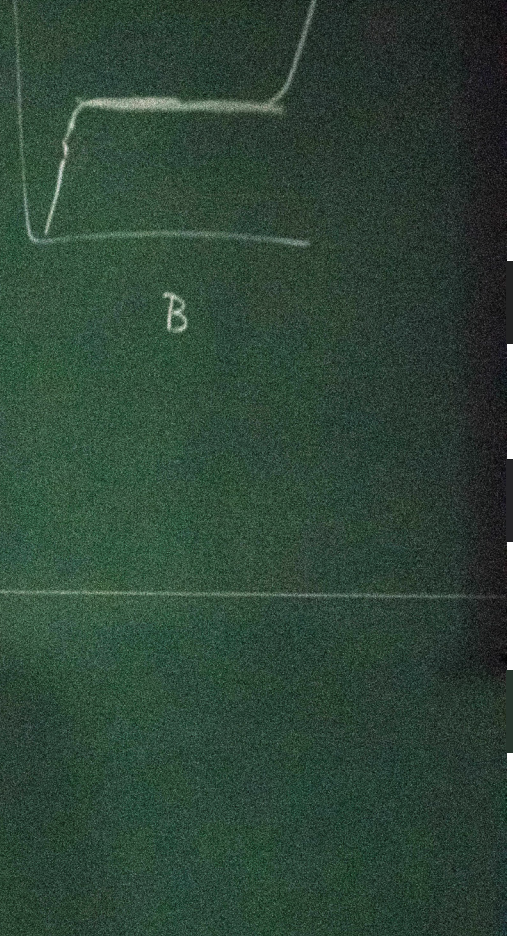
To mark the occasion of Science Day, we arranged a series of public lectures and an informal event on the 28th of February, 2018. The philosophy behind the talks was to provide the audience with an introduction to topics that aren't usually covered in courses, and yet are helpful in daily life. We decided to have one talk giving an introduction to a subject that is not limited to any one discipline, aimed at undergraduates, and two talks on topics that anyone may find helpful.

The first talk was by Prof. Ramachandran Shankar from the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai on 'Emergent Properties in Condensed Matter Physics.' He gave a broad introduction to the field by describing various examples of emergence in Condensed Matter Physics, starting from questions that physicists asked in the 20th century. He went on to outline emergence in the context of waves in condensed matter and electrons in solids. From the classical Hall Effect, he explained the concept of a hole, and then the ideas of Quasi-Holes and Quasi-particles. The Quantum Hall Effect, Fermi Liquids, High-Temperature Superconductivity, Integer and Fractional Quantum Hall Effects, and experiments observing the same were described. Finally, he talked about some of the current work on emergence.

We then had a talk by Prof. Milind Watve. The title of his talk was 'The Reverse Flow - What Science can learn from Illiterate People.' He talked about how illiterate people, often unknowingly, apply scientific methodologies not explicitly described by scientists, and what scientists can learn by studying their behaviour. To do science and take scientific decisions, formal education in science is not essential. In fact, he argued that it often has a detrimental effect. He illustrated examples of the scientific community not strictly sticking to the scientific method, and putting personal biases ahead of scientific integrity. He also spoke about the importance of instinct in taking scientific decisions, something which is not stressed too much upon, even discouraged in formal scientific education. Instinct has arisen from millions of generations of natural selection, and hence, decisions taken instinctively are often very rational and should be taken seriously.



Photos by Jishnu CV



SCIENCE DAY 2018

The next talk - an interactive session - was by Prof. K P Mohanan (or Mo, as he prefers to call himself), on ‘Constructing Theories.’ He started by discussing what a theory is, and gave several examples, explaining the challenges of constructing theories from available evidence and facts. As an example, he constructed a theory on the nature of light, and encouraged audience participation inviting questions and arguments to challenge it, elucidating the process and difficulties of theory construction. The discussion was thought-provoking, and useful not just for scientists but also for the general public, as theory construction is a part of daily life. Representing phenomena and explaining them is something everyone does, and this talk provided an insight into the nuances of the same.

The events of the day were concluded by ‘Thou shalt not see!’, an informal event which involved the blindfolded participant guessing the muted video playing behind them on the basis of punny clues by the judges. Thus ensued an exchange of witty statements which grappled the audience and invoked their participation in suggesting hints to the judges. All in all, things went well, and we hope to replicate this success in the coming years.

- Aagam Shah, Shriya Hirve, Adarsh Srinivasan



Convocation 2017



















PRUTHA

THE GREEN CLUB OF IISER PUNE

As the environment club of IISER Pune, Prutha organises a variety of activities over the year to involve the IISER community to proactively work towards sustainable living and appreciating the beauty of nature. Here are some of the experiences the first year BS-MS students had from their time in such activities.



I have been doing birdwatching since 2013. At IISER, I used to lead the birdwatching group along with Sarthak. Before this, I used to do most of my birding in Bangalore and other occasional birding tours. Birding while being a part of Prutha was really a great experience as it helped me to analyse the type of birds I could expect to see in and around Pune as well as expand my knowledge on birds by learning new bird behaviour patterns. I got to learn many new things from Sarthak and Prof. Anand Krishnan. Also, I got really good clicks each time I went for birdwatching and I could contribute those to various magazines and the photography club of IISER Pune which I'm a part of. I felt really happy to see students of IISER showing immense interest in birds, birdwatching and bird behaviour. I would thank Prutha for giving me such an opportunity!
- Nikhil Phaniraj, 1st year BS-MS



One of the most fun and engaging activities this semester was the morning bird-watching session led by Dr. Anand Krishnan. Our group of eight people walked around the campus and observed a myriad of species via sight and sound. There was a bright azure kingfisher, iridescent sunbirds, greytits, parakeets, to name a few. I could hear the distinct birdsongs of various birds, some of them which we could not even see owing to their inconspicuous nature. It was then I learnt that birdwatching is an art of

hearing more than saying.
- Anisha Karnail, 1st year BS-MS

I had my first-hand bird watching experience in Panchavati Hills with a team lead by Dr. Anand Krishnan and assisted by Sarthak. There were a large number of species of birds across the spectrum, with a variety of sizes and shapes from small sunbirds to large peacocks. Often we had to have an eagle's vision to spot them or exploit our sense of hearing to to find their location. We also got the opportunity to see a few migratory birds. I could hear and observe various calls of the birds, how they structure their nests and appreciate how diverse the ecosystem is. I thoroughly enjoyed it and wish to continue to bird watch.
- Nandhini, 1st year BS-MS





It was a great session where we learnt about a lot of colourful birds found in Panchavati hill. We got to see spotted munias, babblers and many more. Basically many of these birds came from different parts of the world during winter. With the help of Dr. Anand Krishnan and Sarthak we got to know about different bird species, their distinctive features and also how to distinguish males and females. It was a wonderful experience to learn about birds.
- Pavithirah, 1st year BS-MS

The bird-watching session organised by Prutha was a really wonderful experience for me. I had attempted to do some bird-watching earlier near my house, but this was really the first time I got some exposure into how to look at and identify different birds. I was not aware of most of the bird species which we observed during the session, and I was amazed at the variety of birds which are present in our campus and in the neighbouring Panchavati hill. We saw many birds like sunbirds, prinias, minivets, parakeets, drongo, egret, coucals, kingfishers etc. Trying to familiarise ourselves with their appearance, the way they fly and their calls, was a lot of fun. The colourful plumage of many birds was really breathtaking to observe in the morning sunshine. This session increased my fascination for birds, and I started to go more frequently for bird-watching with my friends, attempting to gradually learn more about the subject and become familiar with the diversity of birds which we are able to see around us.
- Pratyush, 1st year BS-MS

Halfway through the first semester, Prutha conducted an envelope making session.

A simple enough task, but impactful. The envelopes were made using old newspapers. These envelopes were to be used by the medical department to distribute, well, medicines, for the indigent. And indeed they were (and not to mention, they avoided the costs of having to buy more envelopes). The activity was fun, and, with a horde of dedicated volunteers, didn't take long to finish up. Prutha conducts activities such as this one throughout the semester. I strongly urge everyone to participate in one whenever they find the time to do so.
- Rishabh Wanjari, 1st year BS-MS

On Paper Sorting Session

Prutha has had three paper sorting sessions in the 2017-18 year till now - two in the fall semester and one in the spring semester. Each session is held with a gap of two months so that optimum amount of paper from all over the campus can be collected. With help from volunteers, papers of all kinds, magazines, notebooks and posters are sorted based on their reusability. Blank - either completely or partially - are really useful and are free to be used by other students or club (for instance, our Quiz Club). Magazines and posters can be used for their quality in other art projects. Volunteers often find treasure - papers or books that may be valuable for them and they use it as well. In this way, the paper waste from all over the campus is managed efficiently and waste production is reduced. Paper baskets have also been set up on the hostel floors, to facilitate collection of paper waste.
- Abhinav Masih, 1st year BS-MS

On a misty August morning adorned by the gleeful chirping of the birds, around 40 of us went on a trek to Panchavati, organised by Prutha, the Green club of IISER Pune. We were divided into groups of around 10 and were guided by our seniors to the hill as well as throughout the trek. Trekking was really exciting as the hill offers some rough terrain to adventure seekers, especially so during monsoon. The greenery around us, fresh raindrops clinging to leaf tips, mimicking



Photos by Prutha Club



pearls as they reflected the sunrays making their way through the cloud cover, were indeed breath-taking. This was added to by the morning songs of a variety of birds. Occasional peacock calls echoed through the valleys. On reaching the top, we undertook a cleanliness drive, and sadly enough, we got a considerable amount of plastic waste lying around. We collected it in the bags we had brought and disposed it as we returned. Not to forget, we had a group photograph and then a selfie session, everyone wanting to capture the stunning views of the valley.

So, after making lots of amazing memories, mesmerised by the beauty of mother nature and a desire to work actively to preserve it, we returned to the campus.
- Advait Ashirwad Thatte, 1st year BS-MS

On Waste Collection Drive



Prutha conducted a waste collection drive during late 2017. The drive lasted for about a month with crates kept in various places all around the campus. The target categories of waste objects to be collected included aluminum cans, tetra-paks and paper cups, all of which were received in good amounts. The crates were emptied on various occasions by the volunteers when the crates became full. In collaboration with the Art Club, a Karavaan event was organised which utilized all the collected waste to make objects and structures. This drive encouraged proper segregation of waste and its utilisation through art.
- Aditya Khanna, 1st year BS-MS

Hakuna Matata



Our first month at IISER was coming to a slow close. Wallowing in lonely nostalgic tears and joys of freedom, Hakuna Matata found us, picked us up, divided us into 13 groups and before we knew, we were singing its tune too. Seven days to pick a topic from the list and put up a show. Chaos broke out and huddled swarms of murmuring first years became omnipresent.

D-day came knocking on 20th August. The CV Raman Auditorium witnessed a deluge of emotions, from silent stage fright to uproarious applause, from tragedy to comedy and even a bit of rap. Though in the end the seniors stole the show, with violins and whistling to stand-ups and short films. A sight to behold.

After the memorable morning, the second half of Hakuna Matata was the DJ night. The reluctant, empty dance floor was soon brimming with elated first years still revelling in the happy memories of the morning. Though the music stopped at 10, all of us carried a tune back to our rooms leaving behind broken ice and cracked shells.


Instagram
freshers_2k17




YOU
KNOW
NOTHING
OMG!










Instagram
freshers_2k17





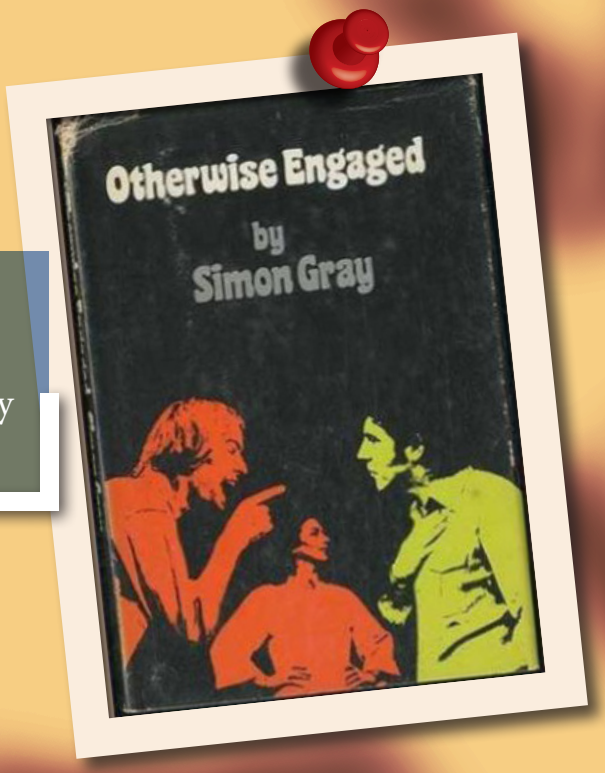
Drama Club

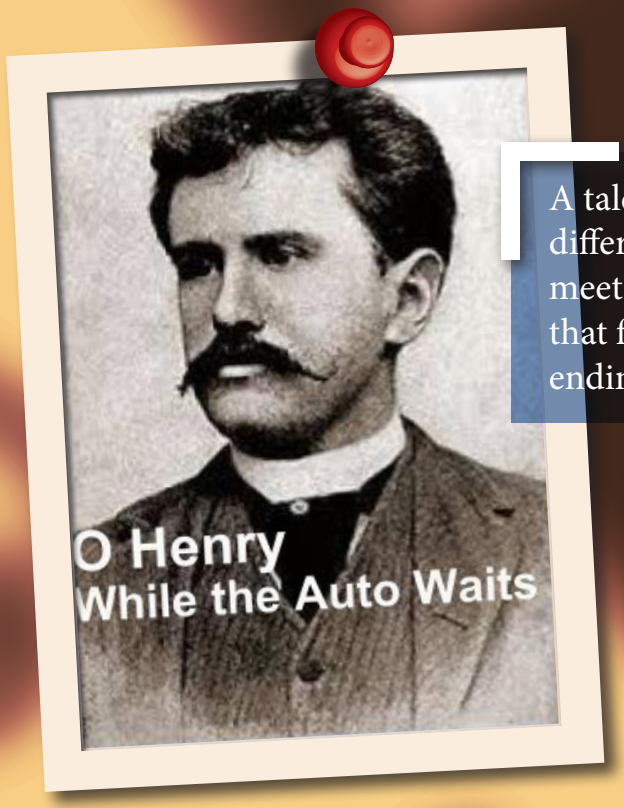
- Rounak Jha

To kick off the New Year, the Drama Club performed a collection of short plays titled 'Classically Ironic' and an independent production 'Meri Suno To' at 'Pagdandi Books Chai Cafe'. For a vast majority of us, it was our first big production, with three of the four directors trying their hands at directing for the first time.

The efforts, the anticipation, and the thrill of finally pulling it off on the big stage was a truly exhilarating experience for all of us, and the immense encouragement we got from the customers at the cafe and all the people from IISER who had come to support this endeavor was heartening to see. All in all, it was an amazing experience and we hope that we can keep performing at various places in the near future too!

An ageless comedy that highlights the inanity of social niceties and hypocrisy of human nature, and what it eventually leads to.





A tale about two strangers from very different strata of society who happen to meet in a park at dusk and the conversation that follows, with a classic O Henry twist ending.



A couple's lives are turned upside down when the wife discovers that her husband is having an affair, and decides to confront him about it, albeit not in an entirely conventional manner.

Meri Suno To

A satirical play on the current socio-political scenario of the country. Through a series of events, the play tries to explore our underlying assumptions and biases towards day to day events and hints at something we can do to change this.





SHOWCASE COMEDY NIGHT PRONITE





Photos by:
Jishnu CV
Sujay Paranjape
Praful Shirsath


WALL PAINTING
SOCIAL INITIATIVES
ART WORKSHOP
2017
RAVAAN

KARAVAAN 2017

Can't tell whether the days are more exciting or the night? Well, that's Karavaan! We saw an equal amount of energy during both, with a plethora of activities happening in and around the LHC.

During midnights, one could find groups of people wandering the campus looking for clues of the Math Treasure Hunt or interrogating people and spinning theories for the Crime Scene Investigation (CSI), while others were enjoying the open mic or Antakshari. But that's just the normal people. The gamers of IISER Pune were all engaged in the spine-tingling matches of Counter Strike and DOTA happening non-stop throughout the day and night.

At other times, you could see people looking either very scary or very funny, which was the aftermath of the Face-Painting Competition, or perhaps hear music made out of the strangest materials at the Junkyard Jamming. Then again, new and weird theories were born at the Blah-Fest and some people just couldn't stop talking during JAM or the Science Stand-up Comedy. The climax of these events was a live Speed-Painting event which happened in IISER Pune for the first time ever. Artist Vinod More astounded everyone with his brush strokes synced to the rhythm of music as a beautiful portrait of Dr. Abdul Kalam appeared before our eyes in a mere few minutes.

Showcase:
The talents hidden in IISER Pune came out with more vibrance than you could have ever imagined in the Karavaan Showcase '17. Who said that IISERites are nerds who are only good at science? The Showcase showed the true variety and flavours of all that we excel at. From classical dances to western ones to Bollywood group dance, mujra and belly dancing not being amiss; from music on classical guitars and violins to vocals and bizarre fusions we saw some great dance and music performances on stage. We also had comedy, live sand art and a juggling performance of sheer brilliance that set the stage as well as stands on fire.

Social Initiatives:
Karavaan, being a science, cultural and social fest, attempted in its 2017 edition to address a wide range of issues and initiate a few Social Events. Youngsters who have worked towards social causes, like Praveen Nikham, Tarun Ayitham and Praneeth Sinha, the latter two being IISER Pune alumnus, were invited to talk about the work that they do and its relevance and implications to our lives. As a part of the Social Initiatives, visit to an old age home and a Blood Donation Camp (which saw a turnout of a couple of hundred people) were also organized, while school children from all over Pune were invited in our campus and demonstrated the research work being conducted in the different departments to inculcate







the scientific spirit in them.

Pronite:
The grand finale of the three day long event that is Karavaan did not fail to leave the audience tapping their feet to some crazy beat. The artists for the night - two Indian bands, The Local Train and Lagori - set the festive vibe with their mind blowing music. The Local Train, with their heart touching rock music, started off the night, while Lagori, with their funky folk rock fusion and immeasurable energy, ended the fest with a bang.

Comedy night:
The first ever Comedy Night in IISER Pune was much welcomed in Karavaan '17. Opened by Shreenidhi Mahishi, an alumnus of IISER Pune and then taken over by one of the most renowned stand-up comedians in India, Sorabh Pant, the event saw a gathering of a couple of thousand people. Entertaining jokes pertaining to current affairs and social issues are always in the air when Sorabh Pant's your guest for the night, and the K'17 Comedy Night was no exception.











Wall painting Competition:
Ever felt rebellious where all you wanted to do was go pour your ideas on a wall for everyone to see? Well that's exactly what happened in the first ever Wall Painting Competition held in IISER. The four shortlisted teams let their imaginations and brushes go wild on the parking lot walls of Hostel 1.

Art workshops:
The Digital Art and Watercolour Painting Workshops were conducted a few weeks before Karavaan '17 by the renowned artist Vinod More. These intense three hour long sessions made sure to bring out the hidden artists in all those who attended them.

- Vaishnavi Patil, Charvee R



For Art And Artists

MEHFIL 2018

It is no secret that the student community at IISER boasts impressive talent in several areas, music being prominent among them. Each year brings fresh faces and interesting skills to the institute, and anyone who has sat in at the annual orientation of the music club, Aroha, has experienced this first hand. I myself met my first Western classical violinist and guitarist here on campus, and my musical appreciation has grown richer due to such chance encounters.

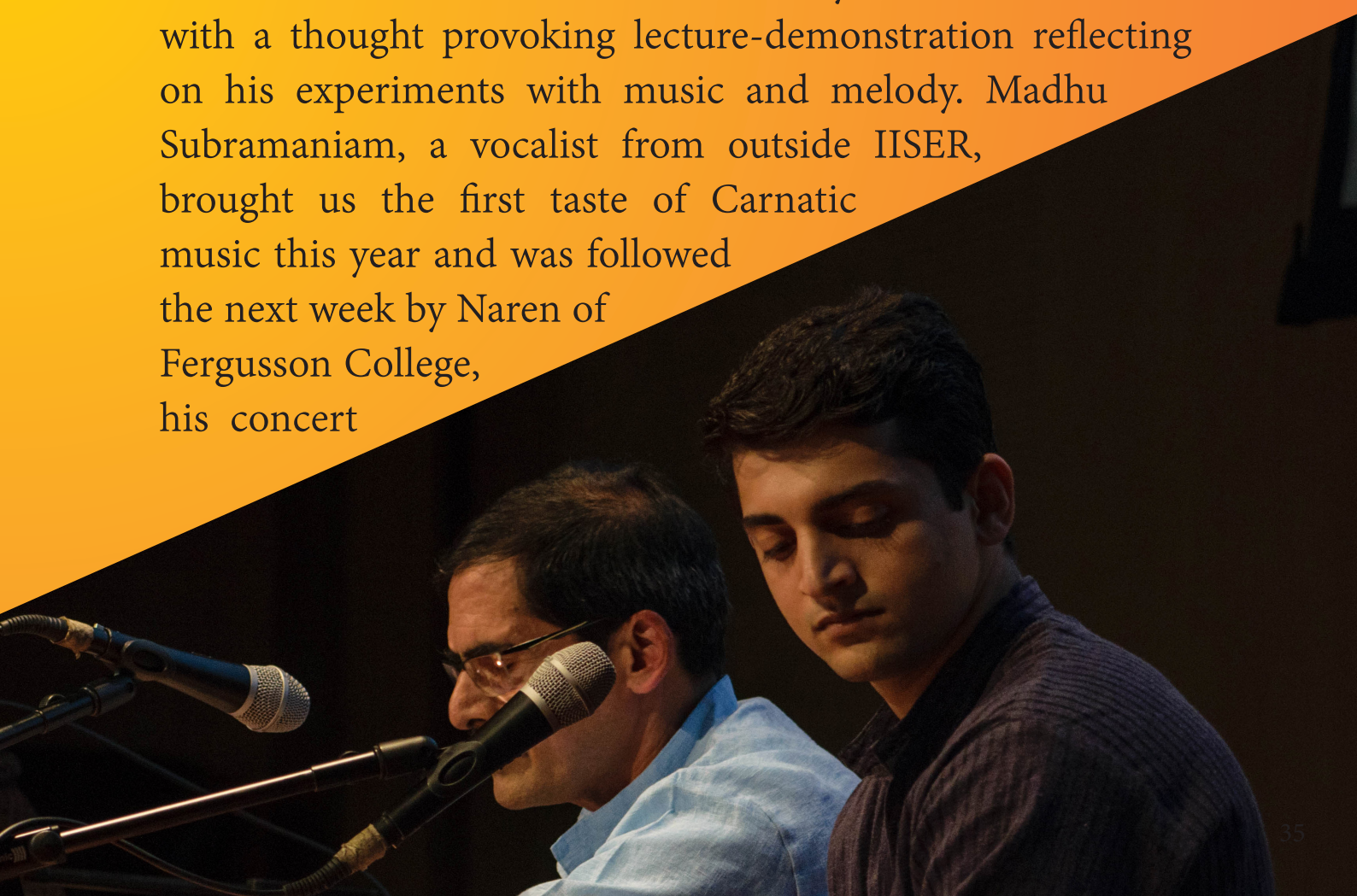
It must also be noted that talent promotion has now become a serious pursuit at IISER. While the luminous Karavaan stages are becoming a mainstay in the performance calendar on campus, musical shows independent of such fanfare too have gained life of their own. Mehfil is one such student-led endeavour that is targeted primarily at Indian classical music, and having seen major success in the past, it continues to show promise for the future.

Mehfil is guided by the simple aim of providing a platform for young musicians to hone their performance skills, by letting them take the stage and give a full-fledged



classical concert. It is a commonly held notion that student performances tend to be on the non-professional side of contemporary concert standards, but with every Mehfil this notion is fast losing traction. While musical skill must necessarily be acquired over time through practice and effort, professionalism in performance is equally due to the musician's attitude, and as a whole, it is this quality that has shined through in all Mehfils so far. This past year has seen a diverse range of performances by artists, both from within the IISER fraternity and without, belonging to both major Indian classical music forms. In a marked departure from last year's format, Mehfil is now reorganized into a year-long series, with each month seeing two or more performances spread over alternate weekends.

Prof. Milind Watve kick-started the year's concert series with a thought provoking lecture-demonstration reflecting on his experiments with music and melody. Madhu Subramaniam, a vocalist from outside IISER, brought us the first taste of Carnatic music this year and was followed the next week by Naren of Fergusson College, his concert





featuring several standard pieces from the Carnatic canon, which he handled with panache. Naren is by no means a new face at IISER and he continues to maintain his reputation as an imaginative vocalist and a promising talent. This year also saw the debutant, Nagananda, giving a creditable vocal concert in the Carnatic style that revealed significant potential; one hopes to see more of him on stage in the months and years to come. From the Hindustani corner, we saw two characterful performances; Ritwick Ghosh, another debutant, has finally brought the santoor to the IISER stage, and we're all very excited by the possibilities in the future, given Ritwick's considerable skill. Neelay Mehendale delivered a remarkable tour-and-a-half long tour de force, complete with bada and chota khayals, along with several other lighter, popular pieces.

As an avid fan of all forms of classical music, it is a great pleasure for me to see such enthusiastic participation on the part of the artists, matched by an attentive audience that is receptive to what the artist wants to share. Kudos must be given to the

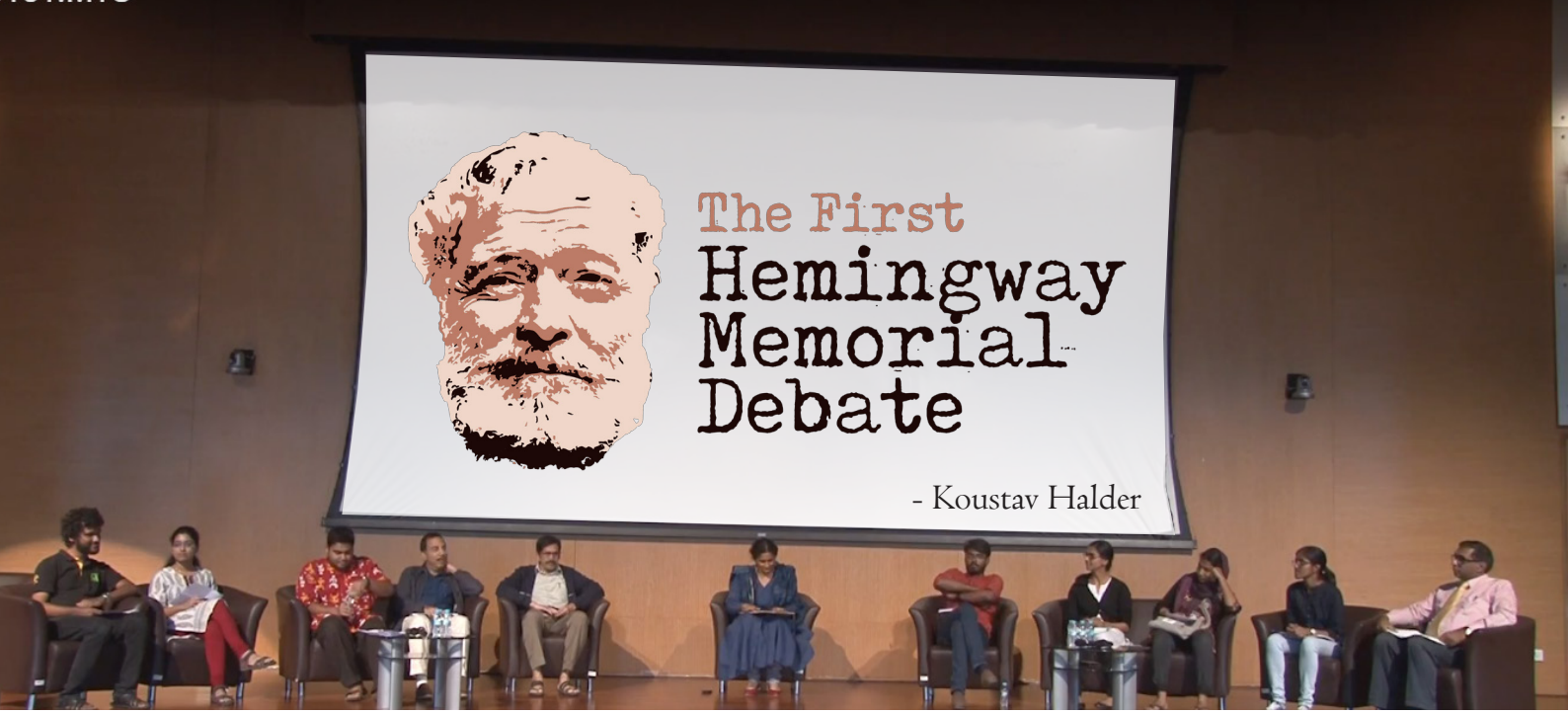
dedicated organizing team who manage to bring such wonderful shows to us despite the demands of their schedules. It would be difficult also to overstate the importance of the technical team, led by the ebullient Narendra Khandekar, who spend endless hours helping the organizers with the sound and lights. The IISER management remain supportive and encouraging, as ever.

Future Mehfils are likely to be more exciting and diverse with several classical dance performances on the cards. Mehfil is fast becoming a cultural engine in IISER and will hopefully continue to provide a meaningful platform that celebrates our shared love for the Indian classical arts; a deeply unifying prospect indeed.

- Vibishan B

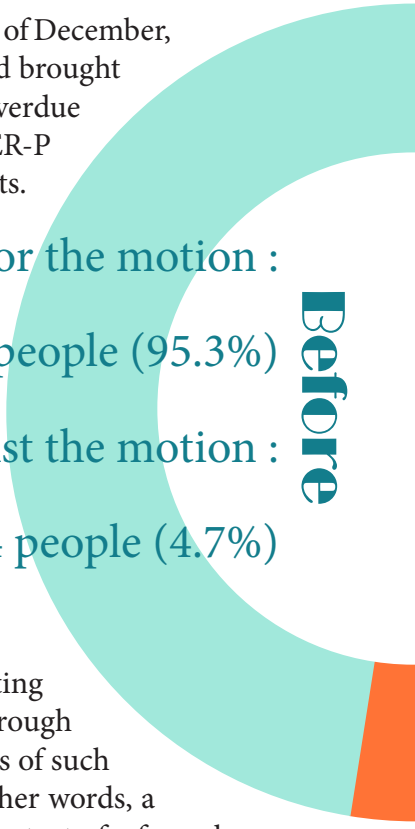


Photos by Anuvind KG



Channeling The Spirit Of Hemingway:

The Hemingway Debate had a rocky and chaotic birth. Conceived in the month of December, it was a scrambled proceeding spanning several cities as the students involved brought it to life through their winter vacations, conceptualised to inculcate a long-overdue debate culture in IISER Pune. Being an institute with diverse talent, IISER-P has a galaxy of eloquent speakers which include both professors and students. The Literary Club, with this annual debate, fashioned after the style of the acclaimed Oxford Union debates, aims to harness this talent and stir up conversation on the critical issues of our times - both scientific and social.



The Topic:

The motion of the debate was:

"This house believes that Sci Hub is a boon to science method and its dissemination."

The Literary Club felt that given the court rulings against piracy advocating sites like Sci-Hub, and the subsequent ripples of controversy that washed through academia, there was no time like the present to weigh the merits and demerits of such moves and to reflect on the current procedures of scientific publishing. In other words, a topic slated for prime time that would be best addressed in the setting and context of a formal and rigorous debate. Cue Hemingway for the win.

> **Recently I downloaded my papers from the 1980s from SciHub and I did not pay Elsevier 55$ per paper. Was I stealing? And if so, from whom? - Sunil Mukhi**

Prime Time:

The First Hemingway Memorial Debate underwent its public run on the 15th of January, 2018, coming to terms with its audience in the CV Raman Auditorium. The floor was declared open at 6:30 PM sharp, to a full house. What followed next over the course of two hours was a tour de force of

> **Just as Alexandra Elbakyan might be picked up by Nature, it is true that Times Man of the Year had such considérées as Adolf Hitler, Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump.**
>
> **- John Mathew**

remarkable eloquence, sheer virtuosity, flying repartees and extraordinary arguments that held the house captive and enthralled. Questions were raised and put to rest, redressals made and deflected, and emotions voiced and denied, with the spotlight affixed firmly on the stage and the dizzying showmanship raging in full force thereon.

The Debate took place in two rounds, with the speakers granted 3+1 minutes of showtime in the first round and 2+1 minutes in the latter. Both these rounds were adjudicated by the moderator, Dr. Suhita Nadkarni, who made her presence amply felt. This was followed by a short session in which the floor was thrown open to written queries, selected as per the moderator's discretion and fielded by both the teams. The debate came to a close with a concluding speech by the moderator and vote of thanks, after which the audience were asked to register their vote by leaving through doors preassigned to a particular side.



After

For the motion :

188 people (70.4%)

Against the motion :

79 people (29.6%)



Moderator

Suhita Nadkarni

In Retrospection:

The Literary Club would like to thank all the speakers involved, as well as the moderator, without whom there could have been no debate. Also, the Literary Club would like to specially thank Dr. Aurnab Ghose, the faculty head of the Literary Club, who helped immensely with the organisation. Finally, a big shout-out to the Literary Club members, who helped make this possible, as well as the IISER Pune crowd who played the part of the ideal audience. Hemingway will be back next year, carrying this time more polish and panache.

Photos by Lit Club

Sandeep Varkey



Divya S



Anwesh Bhattacharya



Sunil Mukhi



Milind Watve



John Mathew



Amrita Hazra



Zakhiya P C



Ramya Narayanan

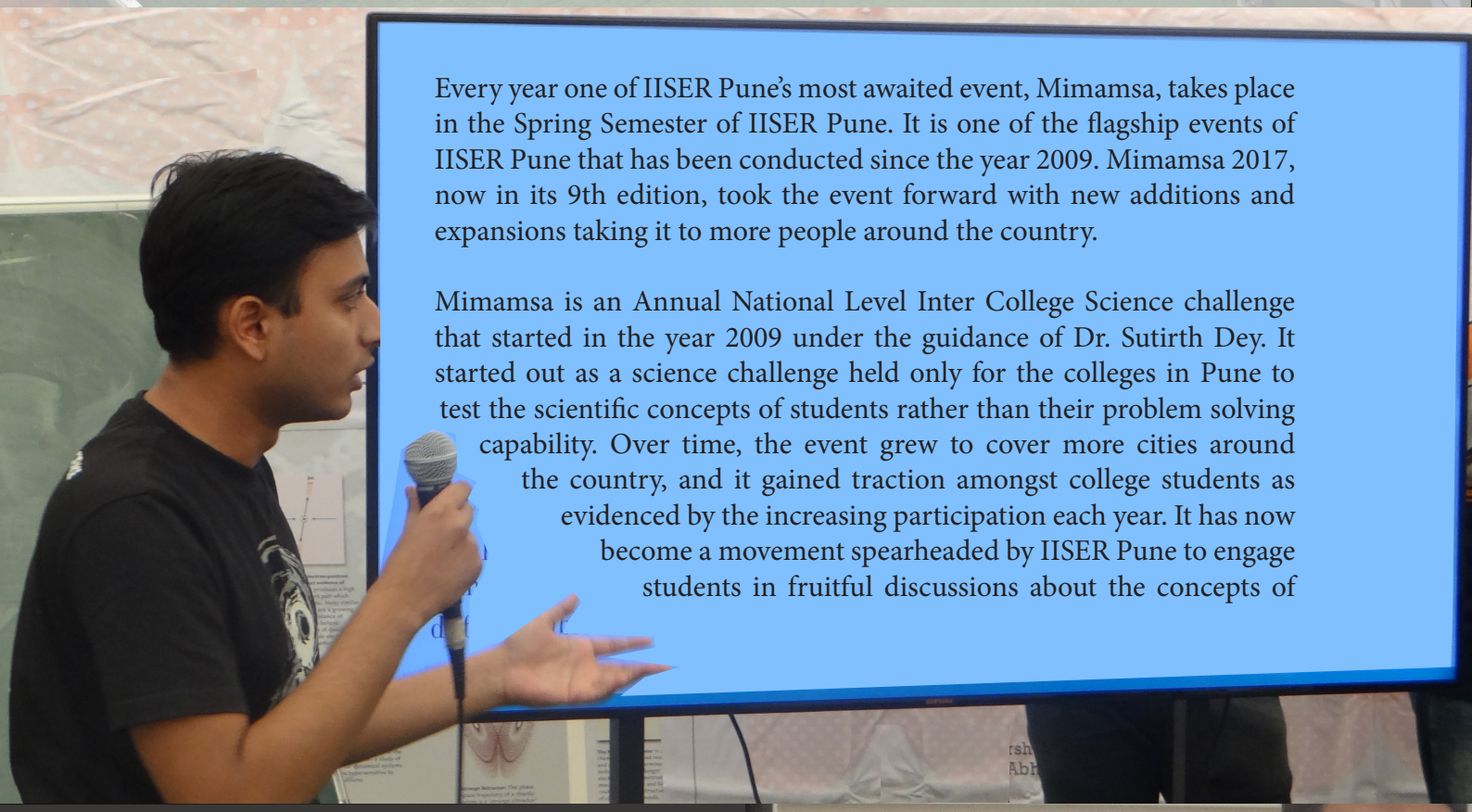


Vibishan Balasubramanian



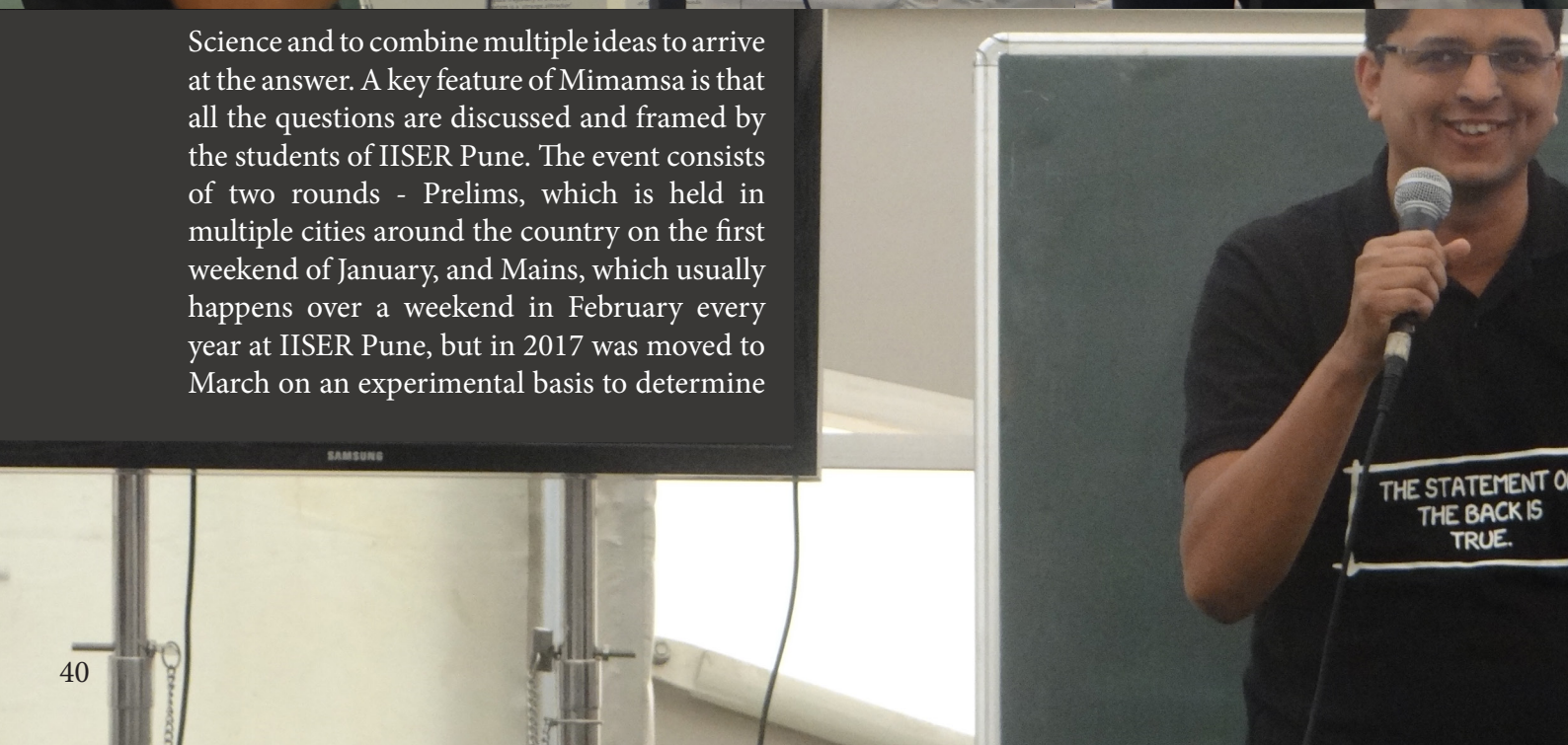
MIMAMSA

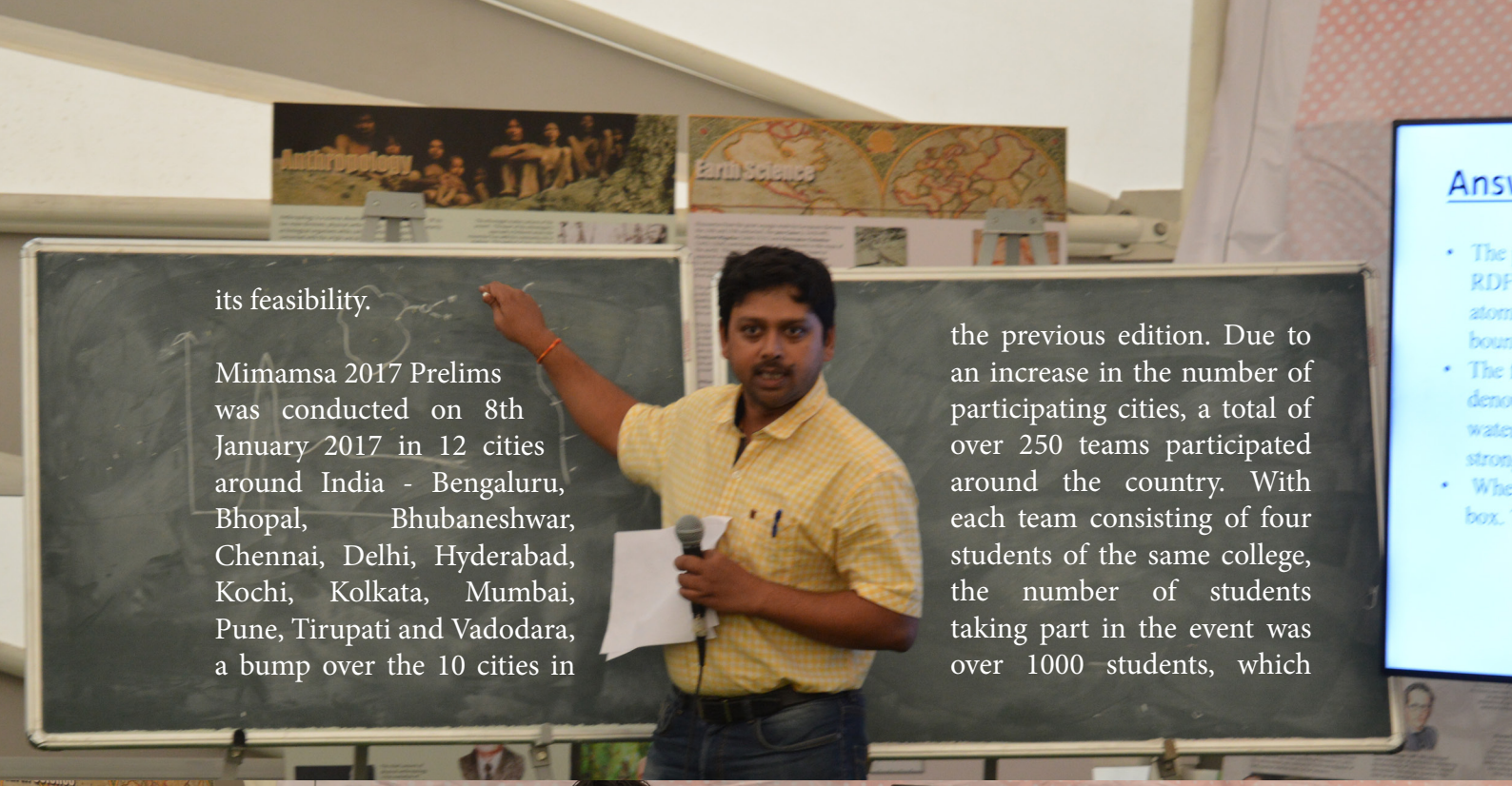
2017



Every year one of IISER Pune's most awaited event, Mimamsa, takes place in the Spring Semester of IISER Pune. It is one of the flagship events of IISER Pune that has been conducted since the year 2009. Mimamsa 2017, now in its 9th edition, took the event forward with new additions and expansions taking it to more people around the country.

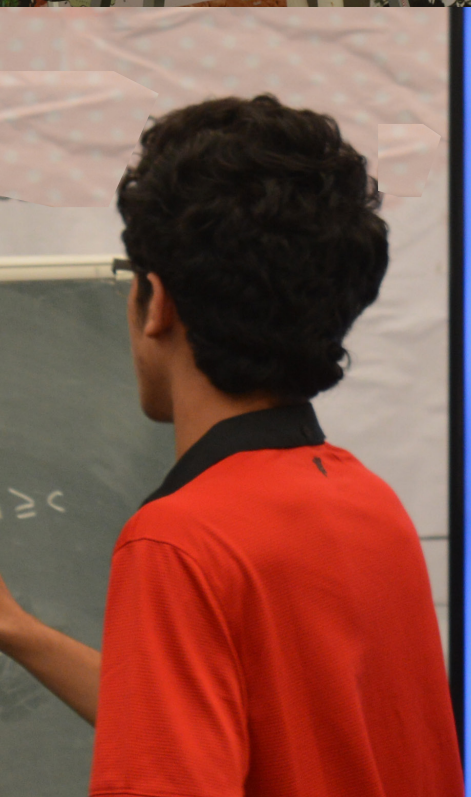
Mimamsa is an Annual National Level Inter College Science challenge that started in the year 2009 under the guidance of Dr. Sutirth Dey. It started out as a science challenge held only for the colleges in Pune to test the scientific concepts of students rather than their problem solving capability. Over time, the event grew to cover more cities around the country, and it gained traction amongst college students as evidenced by the increasing participation each year. It has now become a movement spearheaded by IISER Pune to engage students in fruitful discussions about the concepts of Science and to combine multiple ideas to arrive at the answer. A key feature of Mimamsa is that all the questions are discussed and framed by the students of IISER Pune. The event consists of two rounds - Prelims, which is held in multiple cities around the country on the first weekend of January, and Mains, which usually happens over a weekend in February every year at IISER Pune, but in 2017 was moved to March on an experimental basis to determine





its feasibility.

Mimamsa 2017 Prelims was conducted on 8th January 2017 in 12 cities around India - Bengaluru, Bhopal, Bhubaneshwar, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Tirupati and Vadodara, a bump over the 10 cities in the previous edition. Due to an increase in the number of participating cities, a total of over 250 teams participated around the country. With each team consisting of four students of the same college, the number of students taking part in the event was over 1000 students, which is a milestone for Mimamsa, since it is the first time with more than 1000 people appearing for the challenge. The event was well received by the participants as were the newly introduced badges to celebrate the spirit of Mimamsa. It does take serious motivation for people to get out of their homes on a lazy Sunday morning to appear for the challenge. Although the chance of winning ₹40,000 in the first place is a great motivation for many people, if the true motivation for people is to engage in intellectual discussions, our endeavour can be termed successful.



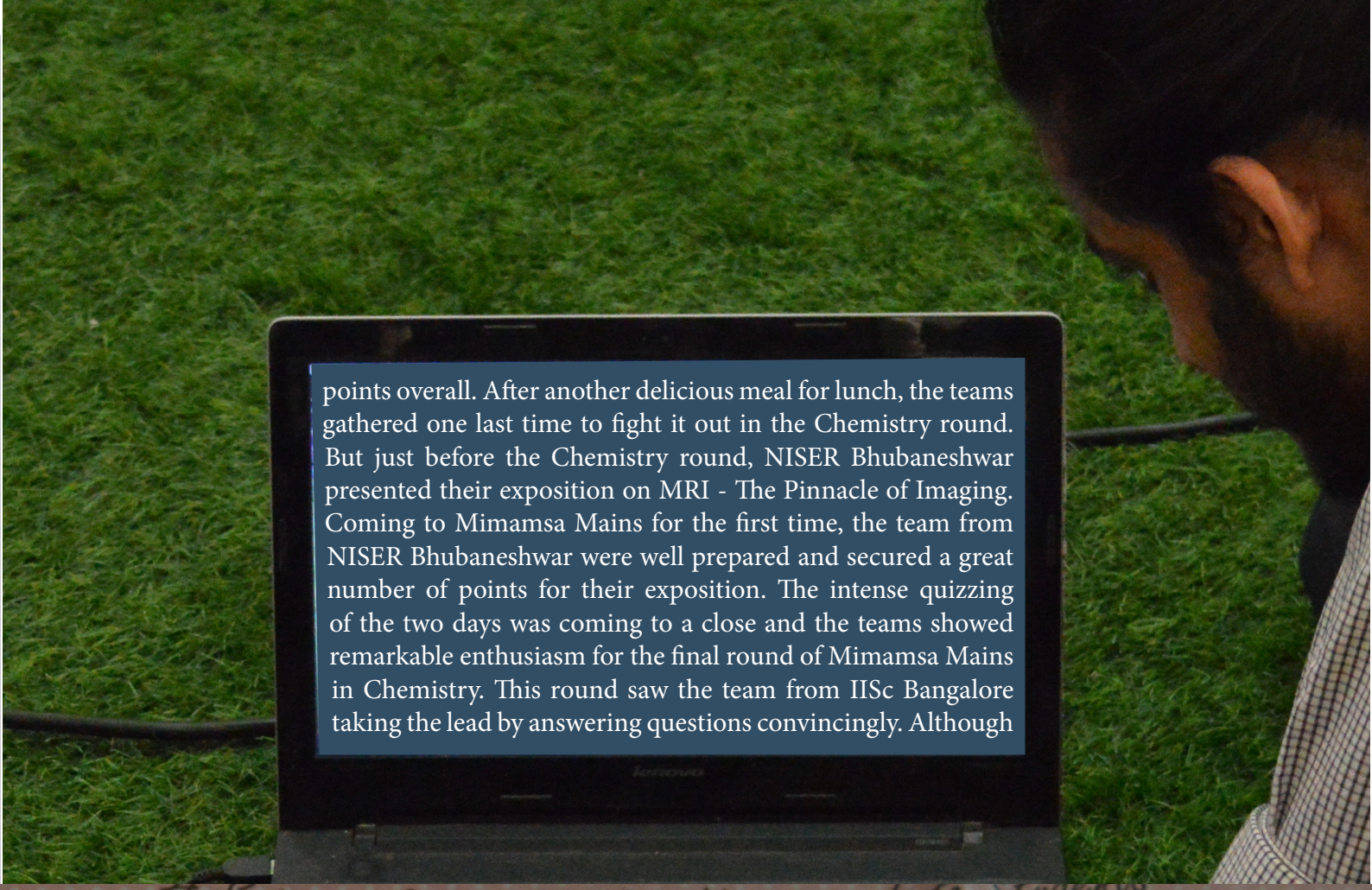
Out of the 250 plus teams that participated, the top four colleges to compete in the Mains were IISc Bangalore, IIT Bombay, IIT Madras and NISER Bhubaneshwar. The top four teams came to IISER Pune for the Mains which was held on 18th and 19th March 2017. The teams arrived the previous day and were briefed about all the rounds and the schedule for the two days. In a tightly packed schedule starting from 8:30 AM on both days, the day's events went on till 7 PM. The changes in the arrangement of the room C-201 in the Guest House necessitated a change in the venue for the first time in many years. The event was moved to Gottingen-Pune Outreach Centre, more commonly known

as the "Structure" amongst students because of its unconventional design. A new venue also brought with it significant challenges in terms of organising the event smoothly, but the organisation team of Mimamsa worked diligently to bring things together for this. From ensuring that the finalists and judges were comfortable to keeping people who could not attend the event updated through posts on Facebook and a live stream of the proceedings, the team managed to tick all the right boxes in the organisation. Keeping all these details aside, the main attraction of the event were the carefully worded, well thought out questions that were the result of months of preparation by the Question Making Teams. Each question was scrutinised by the students and approved by Faculty members to ensure their quality. The first session was Mathematics, which was received very well by the finalists. The Mathematics Question Making team once again poses a variant of their favourite concept of Friendship Polygon, which managed to baffle everyone once again and ended up unanswered. By the end of the Mathematics Round, the team from IIT Madras had a significant lead over the others. Following the Brief and Deep Thought Questions, IIT Bombay was the first team to give their exposition on the topic 'More is Different'. Right after this, everyone was treated to a sumptuous lunch provided by V Square in the Dining Block. After a good lunch and a break for an hour, everyone assembled back at the venue and the session started with IISc Bangalore giving their exposition on Mathematical Aspects of Population Biology. Soon after, we witnessed the Biology round of questions, which saw the IIT Bombay team take a massive lead over the other teams, one that they would not let go till the end. The day drew to a close with the highly anticipated, fast paced round of Occulomotor, in which the teams had to explain concepts shown in videos in a very limited time. This round is notorious for changing the positions of the teams quickly because of its negative marking as well as the high marks for correct answers.

This year however, most teams played safe by not choosing to answer the questions. The teams were then treated to a good buffet in a restaurant, following the tradition of the previous years.

The proceedings of the next day began early with the rapid fire round, which also had the potential to affect the teams' positions drastically. IIT Bombay once again consolidated their position at the top with a solid performance in this round, which all but confirmed their victory. The following session in Physics saw a better performance by all the teams in general, which boosted the scores for all. Remarkably though, the IIT Bombay team held their own to remain at the top. The next exposition was presented by the IIT Madras team on Lightning, continuing their trend of choosing topics related to natural phenomena that has been going on for the past few years. It was well received by the judges and received the most

points overall. After another delicious meal for lunch, the teams gathered one last time to fight it out in the Chemistry round. But just before the Chemistry round, NISER Bhubaneshwar presented their exposition on MRI - The Pinnacle of Imaging. Coming to Mimamsa Mains for the first time, the team from NISER Bhubaneshwar were well prepared and secured a great number of points for their exposition. The intense quizzing of the two days was coming to a close and the teams showed remarkable enthusiasm for the final round of Mimamsa Mains in Chemistry. This round saw the team from IISc Bangalore taking the lead by answering questions convincingly. Although



they performed well in the final round, it was too late for the team from IISc Bangalore, which for the first time since their involvement in Mimamsa ended up in the Fourth position in Mains. In the end, it was IIT Bombay which grabbed the honours with a convincing lead, followed by IIT Madras in second place and NISER Bhubaneshwar in third place.

As a new addition to Mimamsa, the event was concluded with a Mimamsa cake being distributed amongst everyone present there. The prizes were handed over by Professor Raghuram, Chair of the Mathematics, who was also enthusiastically present during the last session of Mimamsa. An event of this scale cannot be organised by a small group of people and requires the work of many people tirelessly for months with a constant will to reach the goal. It also requires a guiding force, which was amply provided by Dr. Chandrasheel Bhagwat for more than ten months in order to bring this vision into fruition. A notable addition to this year's Mimamsa was the inclusion of a sponsor, SciEx, which develops high precision Mass Spectrometers for use in research labs around the world. Their contribution was acknowledged by the inclusion of their logo in the team t-shirts of Mimamsa. As the event gears up for its tenth edition next year, it is bound to reach greater heights and it needs to keep finding the right balance in order to reach more people in the country and truly herald a revolution amongst all

undergraduate colleges in India to engage in exciting discussions on Science topics.

- Kaarthik Abhinav, Harsha MB

Photos by Mimamsa Photography Team

#SENSATIONALQUOTESBYFRAAANDZ

"Flavour is all you need in life."
Keerthi Raj

"Doing error propagation is wrong, because the error is too large."
Manraj Singh

"Bongs are like snowflakes. Each one is different."
Adithya Shetty.

"Heat experiments are so bad, they take the heat out of you."
Adarsh Srinivasan.

"You can be fond of somebody but you won't always fondle them."
Vruta Gupte

"That's it, my myosins are just as lazy as I am!"
Janani Ananthanarayanan

"If you find a person wearing deodorant, it means deep down, they're stinking."
Sankalp Choudhuri

"Acceptance is the first step towards ascendance."
Rohan Gandhi

"Whatever error can propagate, will propagate."
Mohan Karra

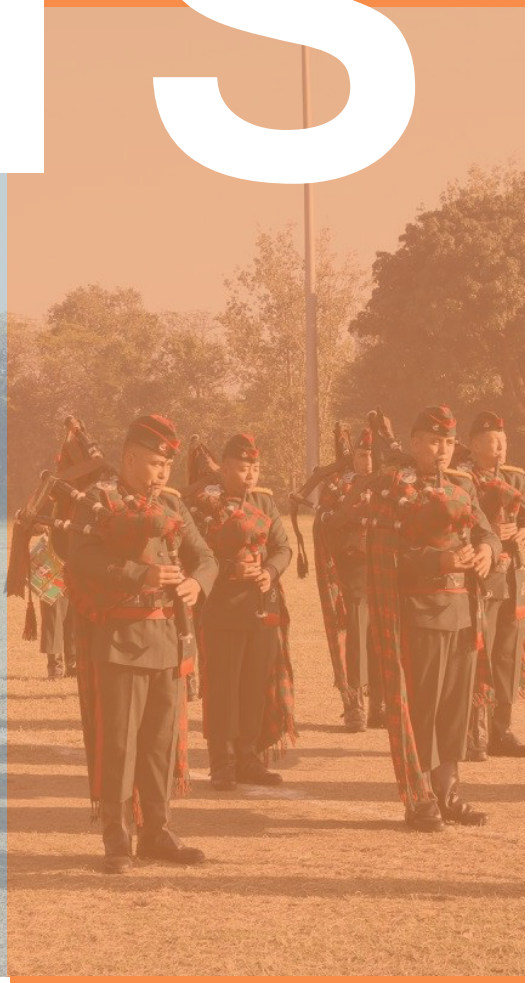
"When ice-cream melts, does it become water-cream?"
Kenny Roffo

"Lassi ko kabhi 'No' nahi kehte, lassi ko humesha lassi kehte hain.[Chika chika]"
Shashank Pratap Singh

"Cohen Tannoudji is called Cohen Tannoudji."
Nandini Hazra

ISM







Spring 2017 was an eventful semester. When the end-semester exams got over, students were keen to go back to their homes, whereas, for the athletes of IISER Pune, this was the time to practise for the 6th Inter IISER Sports Meet which was held at IISER Mohali from December 18-22, 2017.





The meet started with a march past of all the participating teams on the morning of 18th December. Our contingent was led by Pranavi Reddy, who participated in almost every game possible. It was followed by the Oath-Taking Ceremony by the teams, and speeches by the Director and distinguished guests, who emphasized the facts that IISM is conducted to bring all the science institutes together and that all games should be played with sportsmanship.











Athletics saw a series of events in the early mornings every day. The male athletes, though struggling at first, successfully clinched three bronze medals in 1500, 800, and 500-metre races. The girls won the 3000-metre marathon, with Sharada in the lead. In the shot put and javelin throw events, Pranavi dominated and won gold in both events.



In table tennis, men and women had quite a good team, but unfortunately, they couldn't make it to the finals. In lawn tennis, IISER Pune put up a good show. All three teams made it to the finals and added three silver medals to the medal tally.

The Kabaddi team outperformed all the other teams that participated and snatched the trophy from IISER Mohali after a tooth-and-nail fight with them.



For the other team games like basketball, volleyball, and football, it was either the men's or the women's team which reached the finals to clinch the first position. In both basketball and volleyball, girls won the title whereas in football the men's team dominated.

In badminton, we successfully won the gold in mixed doubles, and also put up a good performance in men's and women's doubles.









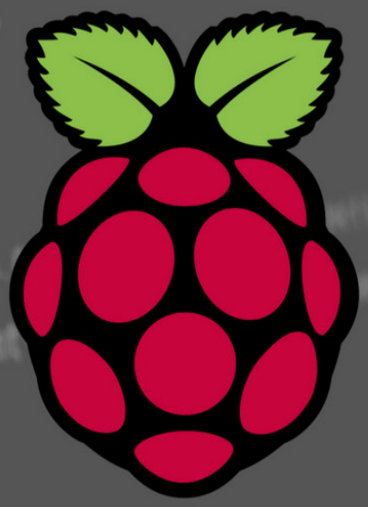

The closing ceremony brought yet another IISM to its culmination. The medals and trophies were given away. We had in all nine gold, five silver, and five bronze medals, and stood third in the overall points table. IISER Mohali organised a spectacular Bhangra and a sword fighting show on the last day to conclude the 6th IISM.

- Simantini Paul






Photos by IISER Mohali



A STEP TOWARDS PHYSICAL COMPUTING

Dayal Singh, Jayanth Kumar

India features relatively poorly when it comes to Computer Science education. Although it is a country with one of the largest graduating population of engineers, a considerably finite proportion of engineers in India are unemployed. The problem narrows down to the roots, our schools' lack of access to technology, quality of computer science education, and limited exposure to experimentation. IPLUG, with The Pi-Jam, a non-profit foundation which aims to expose school students to physical computing, organized an event 'A Step Towards Physical Computing' for school students during IISER's beloved fest Karavaan. Hey, hold your horses! What's physical computing?

Physical computing is a creative framework for understanding human beings' relationship to the digital world. It is a way of building interacting physical systems with the means of software and hardware - one of the frameworks being Raspberry Pi. Raspberry Pi is a tiny and affordable computer used to learn to program.

The aim of the event was to expose school students to Physical Computing frameworks like Raspberry Pi, to demonstrate some of the physical computing projects, and to encourage people to contribute to non-profit organizations. The event started with a presentation given by The Pi-Jam about 'The Nuts and Bolts of Raspberry Pi', sailing through some of the core concepts. The demonstration included a fun game, Snakes and Ladders with SPHERO, a robotic ball that had been programmed by the IPLUG team to play Snakes and Ladders. The school students had to play with SPHERO on a giant board and the winners could take away as many Gems as they wanted from a bowl full of them.

Lastly, IPLUG also had a one day Android development workshop on 'How to create your own simple app'.

IPLUG is not just a techie club, but also promotes computing and programming to rural students who cannot afford a computer. With events like these, IPLUG hopes to enhance computer science education in India.



VIJYOSHI 2017

Vigyan Jyoti Shivir (Vijyoshi), as the 'Jyoti' in its name suggests, has been enlightening the sprouting scientific minds of the nation since 2009. This year, this annual national science camp was held in IISc, Bengaluru and IISER Kolkata. Funded by DST (Department of Science and Technology) and organized by KVPY (Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana) in collaboration with INSPIRE (Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research), this camp was a forum for interactions between as many as 570 students and leading researchers in various branches of Science and Mathematics. The students consisted of KVPY and INSPIRE scholars and selected students from IISERs, NISER, CEBS Mumbai and Central Universities. The camp in IISc was held from 8th to 10th December 2017. Each day consisted of lectures, each followed by interactive sessions between the speakers and the students.

On 8th, the camp was inaugurated with a welcome speech by Prof. G. Mugesh, the convener of KVPY, and an inaugural address by Prof. Anurag Kumar, the director of IISc, followed by a vote of thanks from Prof. A. K. Nandakumaran. Prof. M. S. Raghunathan delivered the first lecture of the day on Fermat's last theorem, which briefly discussed the chronology of various attempts to prove the theorem and how it was finally proven. Prof Raghunathan is a Fellow of the Royal Society and is known for his work on discrete subgroups of Lie groups. In the second lecture Prof. Shubha Tole from TIFR, who investigates the development and evolution of the mammalian brain, spoke about how the brain perceives what we expect, rather than what actually is there. She also touched upon the anomalies in neural pathways. In the next lecture Prof. T. Padmanabhan, a distinguished theoretical physicist and cosmologist in IUCAA, Pune, demonstrated how cosmologists examine the cosmological constant and cosmological density as the determining factors behind every aspect of the universe. Prof. Padmanabhan's research spans a wide variety of topics in Gravitation, Structure formation in the universe and Quantum Gravity. The last lecture of the day by Prof. Sourav Pal, a pioneer in the field of quantum chemistry and director of IISER



Kolkata, discussed how quantum and classical theories are applied to small and large scales respectively, and nanotechnology bridges them by governing the scale in between.

The next day started with a lecture by Prof. Subir Sachdev from Harvard University, on the analogy between black holes and strange metals. He introduced the students to quantum entanglement and elaborated on how the SYK model of strange metals, of which he is one of the conceivers, explains black holes as well. This was followed by Mahan Mj from TIFR explaining classification of 2D manifolds. Prof. Mahan Mj is known for his work in hyperbolic geometry, geometric group theory, low-dimensional topology and complex geometry. The next lecturer was Prof. Rajesh Gokhale, the director of CSIR-IGIB and known for his studies on the metabolic diversity of pathogens. He talked about genomic medicine and how genetic technology would define future medical science. The day ended with Prof. Anil Kumar demonstrating how magic is nothing other than science applied cleverly.

The last day consisted of only one lecture by Prof. S. Umapathy, a professor of instrumentation and applied physics at IISc known for his studies of molecular dynamics using Raman spectroscopy. He spoke about his research on how the 3D shape of an object can be determined using Laser spectroscopy, and how this technique is applied to physical sciences and biology. The camp was closed with a spectacular cultural programme by some creative minds of IISc, followed by the concluding remarks. As the piazza for the country's science practitioners to gather, Vijyoshi 2017 was successful, not unlike the previous years.

- Ayan Biswas



Photos by Vijyoshi Batch 2017

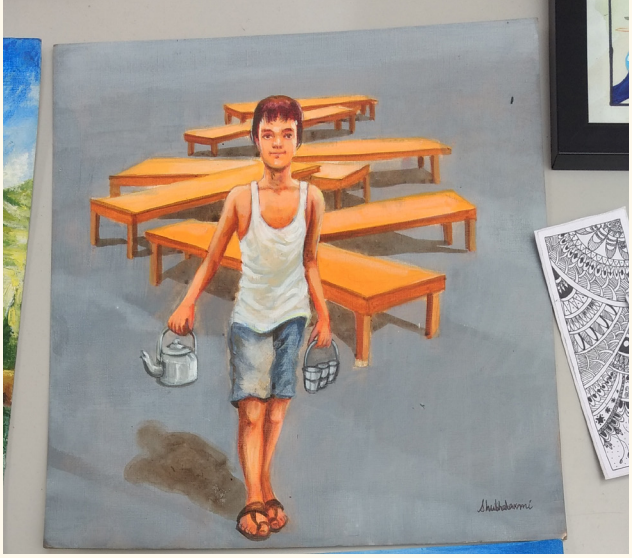
ART BAZAAR 2018



The Art club here at IISER, Pune provides a platform every year for all the art and craft enthusiasts to showcase their work and also make some money off of it. This year the Art Bazaar was held on 1st and 2nd of February in the LHC. Students from nearly all programmes put up their work for the show. The variety of things up for sale ranged from craft works like pen stands, bookmarks, origami to canvas paintings. Thanks to the IISER community almost all of the items were sold. Not only were the artists gratified for such appreciation of their works but also it was a pleasure for the buyers to own a piece of work made by their fellow IISERites. This year, we were proud to have a special guest, a professional artist organisation called 'Monad'. Their doodling pieces were a big hit, faculty and students dug into their work equally. We hope that our modest event was of some help in publicising their organisation.

Also this year we persuaded all the artists to donate a portion of their proceeds to Disha, the social initiative group of IISER, Pune. All the participants of art bazaar including Monad graciously agreed to this proposal and we were able to raise a significant amount of money on behalf of Disha. Special thanks are in order for Monad, who were extra generous in their donation. Disha does extensive work to promote education among children and we thank all the participants of art bazaar 2018 for lending a helping hand to this cause.

- Shubhalaxmi













Photos by Akash Chavan



The Esperanto Club

- Elise Hadad

What is Esperanto?

Esperanto is a constructed language, meaning that contrary to most human languages, it did not evolve slowly through collective use by a society during centuries or millennia. Instead, it was designed purposefully at one point of time, like modern Hebrew or Elvish languages.

There might be many reasons for creating a new language. Modern Hebrew was put together from different pre-existing languages in order to support the foundation of a new society. Elvish languages are part of a fictional world and are fueled by fantasy. Esperanto, for its part, was created for easy communication.

At the end of the 19th century a man called Zamenhof lived in a city where different communities and languages shared geographical space: Polish, German, Russian, and Yiddish were all vernacular languages of natives of the city. Other European languages could be heard in the streets, as this was a port and commercial hub, and thus a cosmopolitan city. This caused problems of communication that were a concentrate of what made international dialogue difficult at the scale of the continent.

Of course, one could rely on one dominant language for communication. At this time, in Europe, this would be French. But learning such languages was – and is, as French students very well know!– a long process. Only a small elite could afford it. Zamenhof thus decided to create a language that would be very easy to learn, through extremely straightforward grammar (the whole of Esperanto grammar can be described exhaustively on a single sheet of paper!), no exceptions to the rules, and an easy vocabulary-building process through roots and additional elements. As for inspiration, he drew all the basic elements from romance languages (like French), Germanic languages (like German, or English to some extent) and Slavic languages (like Russian), which makes it even more intuitive to learn if you already know one European language.

What gets students at IISER excited about Esperanto?

When students found out that the current French teacher at IISER also speaks some Esperanto, they asked her to come and share her knowledge with them. So, amidst busy schedules and the wealth of opportunity for activities at IISER, what prompted them to undertake learning Esperanto?

Of course, every person has his or her motivation, unique and different from the others. But here are a few that people have expressed when entering the club:

- Esperanto has a pedagogical value. Studies show that learning Esperanto will help people master other languages faster, to such an extent that it is more productive to spend one year learning Esperanto, then two years on English than a total of three years on English. It has been showed that students exposed to Esperanto build better language learning skills through the very logical and easy patterns of Esperanto, which allow them to reach better proficiency in two years of English than others after three years. Several students at IISER are enthusiastic about languages, or just want to get better at learning languages. This is one key motivation for them to learn Esperanto.

- Esperanto has been created to promote easy communication of all parts of society in a multi-linguistic setting. In present-day India, some of us feel that this situation is not unknown. Nor are the problems of communications that it generates. Learning Esperanto is a way of thinking about linguistic equity and different solutions that have been developed for multi-linguistic situations.

- Curiosity and having fun: who never dreamt of having an easy "secret" language to speak at dinner table? Esperanto club is a club. Some people come to have fun, and get the thrill of speaking in a language unknown to their classmates.

- And… what is your motivation?

What do we do during the club?

We meet every Saturday afternoon from 2 pm to 4 pm. The routine that has settled after a few sessions has us going through an Esperanto text in the textbook, learning some new words, or some grammar point when there is at all a remaining grammar point to be explained. We can use that text for acting out, or do some questions about the text to get people talking.

After about half an hour of that, we move on to games: card games, board games, all in Esperanto, in order to boost proficiency while having fun!

If the club has some pending communication with Esperantists outside, then writing emails in Esperanto can also be an activity.

Finally, shortly before 4 pm, we watch a new Esperanto short film, telling a different children's story each time, in Esperanto.

What should we expect in the future?

We hope to build contacts with other Esperantists and Esperanto clubs in and outside India. As it is, we already have some correspondence pending. There is also an open possibility for financing travels of some members of the club to international Esperanto events, like the Asian Young Esperantist Convention, at the end of April, in Thailand.

We hope to develop more such opportunities in the future!

Summer Projects

- A Glimpse of the Work Done by IISER Pune Students -
- During the Summer of 2017 -

Vaibhav Ingale - BSMS 3rd year - Prof. Shyam S Rai - IISER, Pune - Seismic Interferometry

Prathamesh Datar - BSMS 4th year - Prof. Neil Marsh - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - Investigating the regioselective attachment of lower ligand in Vitamin B12 biosynthesis

Anupam Bhoi - BSMS 2nd year - Dr. Arindam Mondal - Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. - Cloning and expression of Cap-binding domain of PB2 Influenza-A virus polymerase in bacterial and mammalian (HEK293T) cells

Sankalp Choudhuri - BSMS 1st year - Dr. Aloke Das - IISER, Pune - Pulsed Laser Ablation in Liquids

Vruta Gupte - BSMS 1st year - Gnanaprakasam B - IISER, Pune - Ru-NHC Catalysed Domino Reactions of Carbonyl Compounds and Alcohols

Anmol Kumar Sahu - BSMS 2nd year - Kaneenika Sinha - IISER, Pune - Riemann Hypothesis

Harsha Gouda - BSMS 3rd year - Prof. Ruma Banerjee - Department of Biological Chemistry, University of Michigan - Vitamin B12 rescue mission

Shubhalaxmi - BSMS 1st year - Dr. Pritha Das - Indian Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (IIEST) - Non-linear dynamics and it's application in artificial neural networks

Devika Varma - BSMS 3rd year - Dr. Kai-Uwe Hinrichs - MARUM, University of Bremen, Germany - Paleo-environmental reconstruction via new laser-based technique using lipid biomarker profiles and its implications

Sayan Sarkar - BSMS 3rd year - Sujatha Ramdorai - Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore - Homological Algebra and Algebraic Number Theory

Swastik Mishra - BSMS 3rd year - M S Madhusudhan - IISER, Pune - Predicting protein stability based on 3D structural motifs in naturally occurring protein structures

Umesh KP - BSMS 2nd year - Dr. Shannon B Olsson - National Center for Biological Science (NCBS) Bangalore - A universal insecticide from an Indian medicinal plant targets both the insect olfactory receptor complex and the sodium-potassium pump

Wridhdhisom Karar - BSMS 1st year - Dr. Saikat Chakrabarti - CSIR - Indian Institute of Chemical Biology - Study of Protein Interface properties and classification using Machine Learning Techniques

Sandeep Joy - BSMS 3rd year - Prof. Dr. Andreas Buchleitner - Institute of Physics, Albert-Ludwigs University of Freiburg, Germany - Strong Coupling Expansion Of Bose-Hubbard Model With Density Induced Tunneling

Dilip. V - BSMS 3rd year - Neena Joseph Mani, Suhas Ettamal - IISER, Pune - Oceanic Moisture Transport during Indian Monsoon

Nikhil Gupta - BSMS 2nd year - Dr. Vivek Mallick - IISER, Pune - Non-Euclidean Geometries

Yogesh Mahor - BSMS 3rd year - Rohit, Scientist 'E' - High Energy Material Research Laboratory, DRDO, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Pune - Re-crystallization of ammonium perchlorate

Harshith Bachimanchi - BSMS 3rd year - Dr. Goutam K. Samanta - Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad - Compact Optical Tweezer using a DVD Optical Pickup

Jesil Jose - BSMS 4th year - Prof. Steven Cundiff - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - Multidimensional coherent spectroscopy of CdSe/Cds Core-Shell Quantum dots



Anwesh Bhattacharya - BSMS 3rd year - Prof. Anwesh Mazumdar - HBCSE (TIFR), Mumbai - Asteroseismology of Red Giant Stars

Aditee Kadam - BSMS 3rd year - Dr. Axel Brockmann - NCBS - Establishing a locomotor activity assay to monitor circadian activity rhythms of individual honey bees.

Shreeyesh Biswal - BSMS 1st year - Dr. Bikash Kumar Jena - CSIR IMMT (Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology), Bhubaneswar - Development of RGO and RGO-MoS2-Quantum Dot Composite as Materials for Supercapacitors

Raghavendra Meena - BSMS 2nd year - Dr. Amlan Kusum Roy - IISER, Kolkata - DFT (Density functional theory) of many-electron system.

Vishnu N - BSMS 2nd year - Prof. B Sury - ISI, Bangalore - "Binary Quadratic Forms, Bhargava's cube and Zagier's one-line proof"

Nazia V - BSMS 2nd year - Dr. Rabeya Basu - IISER, Pune - Linear algebra and group theory

Basila M A - BSMS 3rd year - Dr. Salvatore Chiantia - University of Potsdam - Fusion of Artificial lipid membranes

Haritha S Rajeev - BSMS 3rd year - Prof Nadine Witkowski - Pierrie and Marie Curie University, Paris, France - Sputtering and Annealing of Pb monocrystal

Chinmay Katke - BSMS 4th year - Deepak Dhar - IISER, Pune - Industrial application of granular gasses

Siddhesh Zadey - BSMS 4th year - Dr. Alvaro Pascual - Leone - Harvard Medical School - Resting Motor Threshold: A non-invasive neuromarker for cognitive decline in Alzheimer's Disease

Shubham Sohanlal Chhajed - BSMS 4th year - Professor Lisa Donovan - University of Georgia, Athens, GA, USA - Physiological responses to salt stress in cultivated sunflowers

Omkar Joshi - BSMS 1st year - Dr.Nagaraj Balasubramanian - IISER, Pune - Role of Aurora Kinase A in regulation of RalA and Anchorage Independent Growth

Ameya Pore - BSMS 3rd year - Dr. Ronen Zaidel-Bar - Mechanobiology Institute, Singapore - Biophysics of C.elegans embryogenesis

Aarti Kejriwal - BSMS 3rd year - Dr. Chaitanya Athale - IISER, Pune, presented work in Boston, USA at the international conference of iGEM 2018 - iGEM project - To or not TB - Building a genetically engineered diagnostic tool for detecting Mycobacterium Tuberculosis

Mangesh Pandharinath Daspute - BSMS 3rd year - Charles S. Cockell (University of Edinburgh) - IISER PuneAstrobiology - Understanding life in the Universe

Akshay Wagh - BSMS 2nd year - Dr. Pushkar Sohoni - IISER, Pune - "Pune Plague – A Holistic Approach to Epidemic"

Ashwin Gopal - BSMS 3rd year - Chandan Dasgupta & Anupam Kundu - IISER, Pune - Non Equilibrium Statistical Mechanics

Gaurav Joshi - BSMS 3rd year - Dr. Karl Lenhard Rudolph - Leibniz Institute on Aging, Jena, Germany - Identification and characterization of novel lincRNAs in hematopoetic stem cell aging

Komal Gupta - BSMS 3rd year - Dr Angela Giangrande - IGBMC Strasbourg, France - Role of Glial Cells Missing (GCM) in neural and immune development


ORIGINALS
POETRY
PROSE
&
MORE

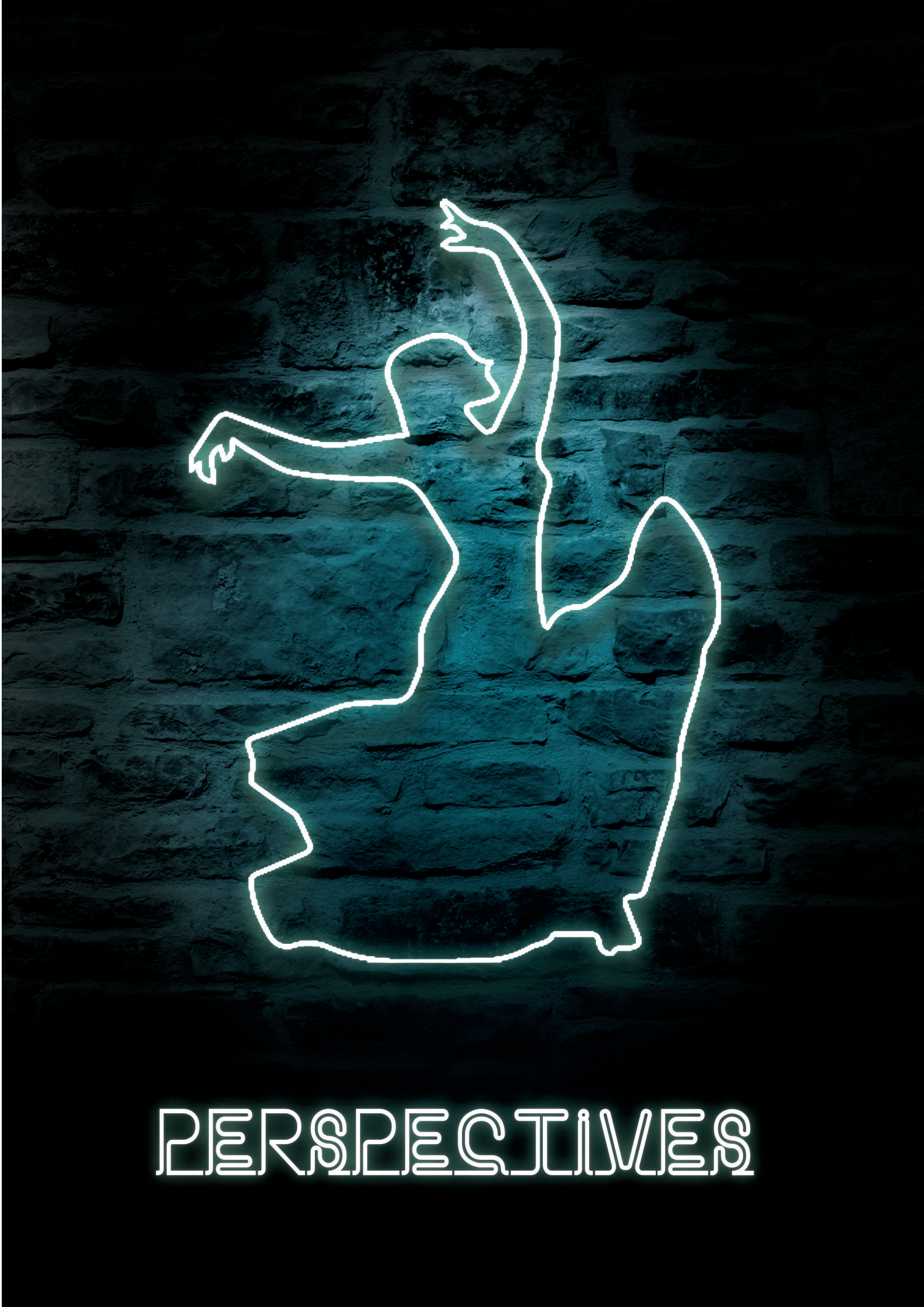

PERSPECTIVES



Illustration by Shubhalaxmi

VISIONS UNBOUND

G Ambika

When...

Scattered rays from faraway stars
Reach out to me, through the still of night,
Furnishing patterns of flickering fractals
On the uneven landscape surrounding me.
Rain lashed dampness on nearby paths,
Blows on a whiff of earthly scents,
Forwarding pulses of lost moments,
Binding my ethos to farthest of times.

Then...

Stationed at crossroads of ups and downs,
With the arrow of time squeezed on its line;
Apart in years fall nearby on plains,
Projected and collapsed to static designs.
Whirlpools of shadows and visions of past
Catch up in circles that dance around,
Evolving onwards to lengthening trails
That leave out a few but dizzying depths.

Later...

Frantic and fragile through darkening alleys,
Drifting so random with numbness nostalgic,
Will I keep flying on dappled visions?
Or dart on a spiral to the darkest of depths?
Returning rhythmics of half done missions,
Recurring allures of trailing passions,
Push me out onto the vastness of Cosmos
Spreading with fervour on Nature's bounty.

a frustated female.

guard your garment, but ooze desire.
conquer the world, but before bearing children.
act like a boss, but not a nagging disgust.
no means no but don't ask for it first.

the forbidden fruit, eve's eager desires,
keep him satisfied, kill your fire.
drown your name, leave your hearth.
crush your dream, spurn your birth.

after all this, the generous society did bestow
freedom to express but when the tears flow,
the burning brand plunges deep into our flesh,
here lie the weakest.

to revolt, or to be grateful
for this life that i lead,
illusions of independence that i have ferried,
i wonder, how foreign oh freedom you must feel.

-anonymous

Watch It!

-Anonymous

It was time to bid them farewell: the objects in my dream. We had to depart. Exchanging goodbyes with them, I woke up to a fresh morning. A calm breeze passed by. Right in front of me was The Angel - The Angel who had brought me on this earth sixteen years ago. It was a joyous celebration. I had the company of my Angel all day. "What do you desire, my child?" She asked. I had nothing but one yearning - a suitor that would be my companion for years to come. One so elegant, so beautiful, so efficient that he would make me readily give away my current, slightly dull and highly outdated One.

As I entered the emporium, a welcoming figure guided me to the top floor. My heartbeat rose with every ascending step. I had to select a suitor among numerous others that were waiting for me to lay my eyes on them. When I finally arrived at the destination, my face glistened with the light shining off my suitors. I cast a glance around, looking for The One. The One that would be my new compadre. The One that would stay beside me through thick and thin. The One that would guide me in the worst of times.

And there it lay in the spotlight, among a sea of suitors - its silver glittering in the light, its aquamarine tinges twinkling in my eyes. I shot towards it. Ran with all my might. It was mine. No one else had a right to it. "Do not haste," said Her voice, "It's a careful choice to make. Look at the other alternatives as well. Who knows, there might be a better one out there." "Ah Mama, how can anything else in this world be better than this?" I cried. "O Dear, it is always good to see all options out there. You don't want to regret your choice later, do you?"

Grumpily, I moved around. I looked at every suitor on display, none of which appealed to me as much as my One. After a long tour of the entire hall, I returned to my dear One. It was still lying there, waiting for me. It seemed like destiny wanted us to be together forever. We have been together for over four years now. Our relationship is still on firm grounds. Even though it had a belt and a cell replaced a while ago, it stands sturdy, guiding me through the sands of time.

Illustration by Swastik Mishra

solace

I've found myself swimming once again,
Swimming across this boundless sea.
As I approach the distant shore,
The tide drags me back to the sea.
The shore I craved and longed for
Has fallen dark and disavowed me.
So I push through the turbulent seas,
As I tire to keep afloat.
I'm almost drowning yet again,
But luckily I am spotted by someone,
Who drags me aboard with her strength.
The warmth of her benign smile,
Those beauteous, expressive eyes,
As she flicks a stray lock of hair,
I look at her...
Realising that she has brought me
The solace that I had endlessly sought.

~Abhijit Gupta~

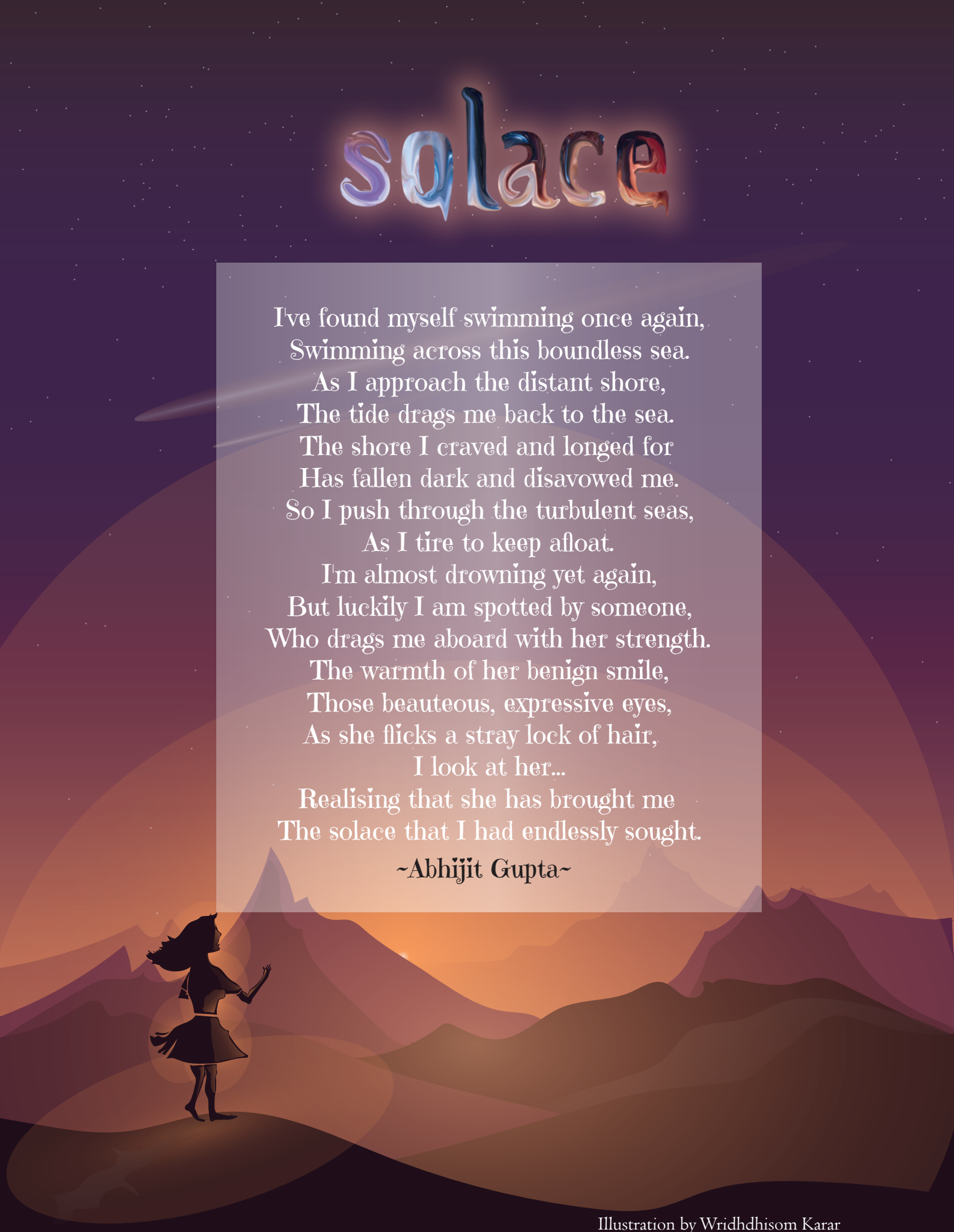


Illustration by Wridhdhisom Karar

blank walls

_anonymous

As midnight morosely made its way to my clock, I longed for my bed waiting with its wide-open arms.
But the jealous journals on my desk just wouldn't let me waltz to my beloved. So, I turned to my regular respite, the beautiful blank wall residing in front of my eyes.

Barely are the ballads of a bare wall ever sung. They whisk you away from the relentless rush of reality to the swaddle of serene silence. The deafening quiet drowns all life and sound until all that remains is you and the wall..

It is in this nurturing tranquillity when peace pervades that queer questions do rise in your head. They make you think. They make you ponder. Though mostly, they are just impossible visions to make you happier. But be it philosophy or infeasible desires the tumultuous sea of worries vanishes leaving you lighter.

Now that the wall had received more than its fair share, my jealous journals jolted me back. To the sweet wall I bid farewell, and with reality frowning over my head, I merrily waltz to my bed.



THE OTHER SIDE

- Satavisha De

Rain battered down the pavement agonizingly, ironing against the bars of windows, drumming into the veins of the innumerable people hidden behind the veils of rotten, wooden doors. The town rested sleepily in this slow and steady humming, monotonically driving a sleazy morning routine.

The rain continued, like a dozen breaths with the stench of death. Inside, the curtains billowed and floated down; shadows flitted across screens behind the ghost of a flickering flame. This was her capsule, confinement for her visceral existence, the slimy bubble of introspection which contained her.

It closed on her sometimes, this mortifying serenity as she floated around the house, her tread flimsy, her footprints wispy, and her voice subservient to the silence as the whispering wind on dark, ghoulish trees. She was invisible. None saw her. She was as invisible as the beads of water impregnating the cracks on the brick wall, or the squalid twines of putrefying vines drooping from the window sill or the uncombed cobwebs draping the unclean corners.

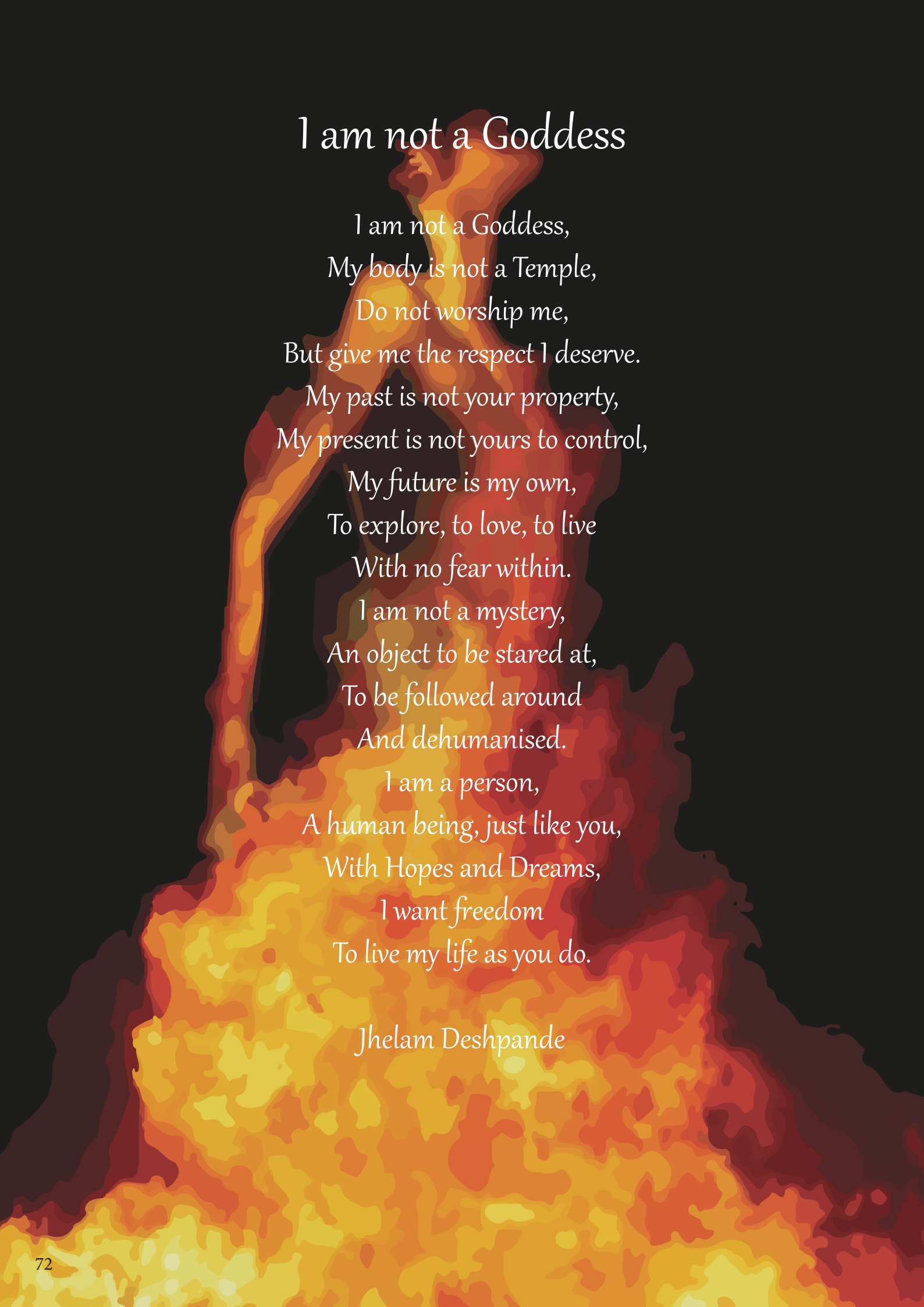
The hollow stank of penitence hanging in the air was as stale as the life foregone. She was an amorphous form lurking in the house, idling away, dreaming of sunshine streaming in, painting the leaden house in gold. She yearned for footsteps pattering down the unswept driveway, for teapots bubbling away spewing plumes of steam and sparkling laughter.

The rain, it petered down the brass pipes, ricocheted on glassy pebbles and wriggled into the earth through fissures. The town, however, was still steeped in a toxic slumber, piercingly grave and stagnant, unforgiving to this spirit who had now been murdered by this splitting silence.

The water ran over knolls of moss, drowning thousands of crawling tentacles, their screams pounding on her ears from another realm of aimless existence much like her own. A bicycle bell tinkered, a little girl in a yellow raincoat and blue boots carting her cycle as she stared at this stony house arising from the bowels of dreary nights. She wailed for this girl to turn around, screamed aloud till her lungs heaved, but the spot of yellow tumbled down the street, fearful of the impending disasters housed inside.

Whilst happy dreams of magnolias and nodding gladioli drawn on scratchy postcards formed a previous life, slinking in the dark crannies was her new one. Was this what being trapped meant? To be fully aware of your existence and yet be submerged in inactivity like inanimate objects, the armchair rocking with the wind or the nested Russian dolls patrolling on the shelves, to be free but nebulous so that the rain can't touch you, neither can the sun kiss you, but be bottled in the very vortex of one's belongingness in a web of your past, desires dwelling on the plunging precipice of sluggish thought.

Then dead is worse perhaps. She remembered clawing dirt one foggy night as she dug a grave for her beloved cat. Was it too locked in this perennial absolution of uncertainty? She wanted to excavate the animal spirit, but alas, she had no hands nor feet, she was all but her own physical self, herself which like great plumes of nothingness was spilling into the ocean of higher existence, not a mortal body, but tendrils of conscious stroking the caverns of time. There is an end at the other side of this impermeable wait, stretching infinitely. She knows she must outlive an eternity to transcend above mere thought, action or identity, and the trepidation to face something so uncertain, sparring with the inertia of a nihilistic life makes it difficult for her to shed the comfort of mortality.



I am not a Goddess

I am not a Goddess,
My body is not a Temple,
Do not worship me,
But give me the respect I deserve.
My past is not your property,
My present is not yours to control,
My future is my own,
To explore, to love, to live
With no fear within.
I am not a mystery,
An object to be stared at,
To be followed around
And dehumanised.
I am a person,
A human being, just like you,
With Hopes and Dreams,
I want freedom
To live my life as you do.

Jhelam Deshpande

It's beautiful,
All of it.
Every speck of dust, every morning sunshine, every drying tree,
Every innocent...or poignant smile – veiled over a storm of emotions
Or perhaps just sheer carelessness.
It's beautiful,
All of it.

How do you become a part of such beauty?
Beauty you are afraid to touch,
You can only feel, only perceive...only admire,
Else you might spoil it.
How do you become a part of this world?

But take a look around you.
The creatures who exist with such demanding insolence;
Who think it is their right to trample the motherland without an ounce of gratitude;
Who – in their best selves – can barely leave her unharmed;
They never seem to disturb the serenity of this Earth.
Yet you – with a thousand rising Suns within you – are afraid,
That you might spoil it.

- Anonymous-

Why is that?
Is it because you know you are not living up to yourself?
To the pinnacle of that ideal within you for which the others can only but strive,
To the ultimate power of will which exists for itself.
Which can make the mountains bow,
and the oceans part,
and the stars explode,
and the flowers smile;
but exists for the sole reason of its own beauty,
without exercising its power just for the sake of proving it.

Is that why you are afraid?
Afraid that even if you fall an inch short of yourself,
You will have failed this Earth more miserably than the wastage of every other wither combined.

But you see, you don't understand.
You don't understand that by the very nature of your being,
You won't fall short.
You won't contradict yourself.

Photograph by Vikhyath Premugh

#SENSATIONALQUOTESBYFRAAANDZ

Durgesh Ajgaonkar: "Arre... pokemon ki serial mat dekh, game khel."
Omkar Joshi: "Nahi nahi, mastery hona jaruri hai, jaise mastery ke saath EA cricket khelenge to alag maza aayega."
Durgesh Ajgaonkar: "Toh jaake train karwa apne pokemon ko."
Viraj Meruliya: "Arre par inspiration toh Sachin Tendulkar ko dekh ke hi aata hai na!"

"Are there any cute ways to deal with infinities?"
Rugved Pund

"Medu vada is a country."
Rounak Jha

"History and Past is a place to visit and not to stay."
M S Dhawale

"I'm still hungry. It's like the food didn't reach my stomach. Oh wait, it found its way to my heart!"
Danish Pannu, after having Banana Nutella French Toast at Yolkshire

"I'm just done thinking for today I think."
Lakshya Agarwal

"I'm also a veggie and I feel a kind of patriotism(?) when I meet a fellow who belongs where I do."
Janani Ananthanarayanan

"Lol is like paneer, goes with anything."
Farhan Amin

"It's not always about free speech. Sometimes it's about the speech."
Prasanth P Chandran

"Valar homeostasis."
Salvyancha Adwait

"Saying 'obvious' in Analysis is a crime."
Abhishek Tilva #MTH311

Shraddha: ...GrabOn is Online Coupons partner, SBI is Banking partner...
Swastik: IISERP is?
>>>>>> Shraddha: It's everything <<<<<
Swastik: Aww
#SensationalQuotesByFraaandz #Karavaan2016

"Bitches are people too."
Bhargavi Parthasarathy

"I don't know how to gender it."
Vishrut Patel

"Eatsome is three Michelin star."
Vrushali Rao

"The classic 'paneer masala syndrome': where even if it is paneer butter masala, or paneer 65, or paneer tikka masala, or pizza, and maybe even pasta, these guys use the same masala.
I'm surprised they don't have a side order for the masala itself."
-Vruta Gupte

"I grew a pair. I forgot."
Meher Kantroo

"Oh! Anybody can use that hashtag?"
Reema Jamal

"Resonance hybrids are not dramatic."
Farhan Amin

"Chocolate and coffee should always be pure. No adulteration."
Nida Farheen

"It's solid, liquid and rice."
Ashrith Jacob (2016, obvi)
#CompoundQuote

it was all very YELLOW

~ WRIDHDHISOM KARAR ~



It was all very yellow
The draperies and tapestries,
Bellowing in the balconies ,
Stirring thoughts in the cauldron,
Minds basking forlorn...

It was all very yellow,
The sunflowers in her hair,
The tinted history in her stare,
In the pages of begotten Kafka,

Of little spires of warm mist from her cold laughter.

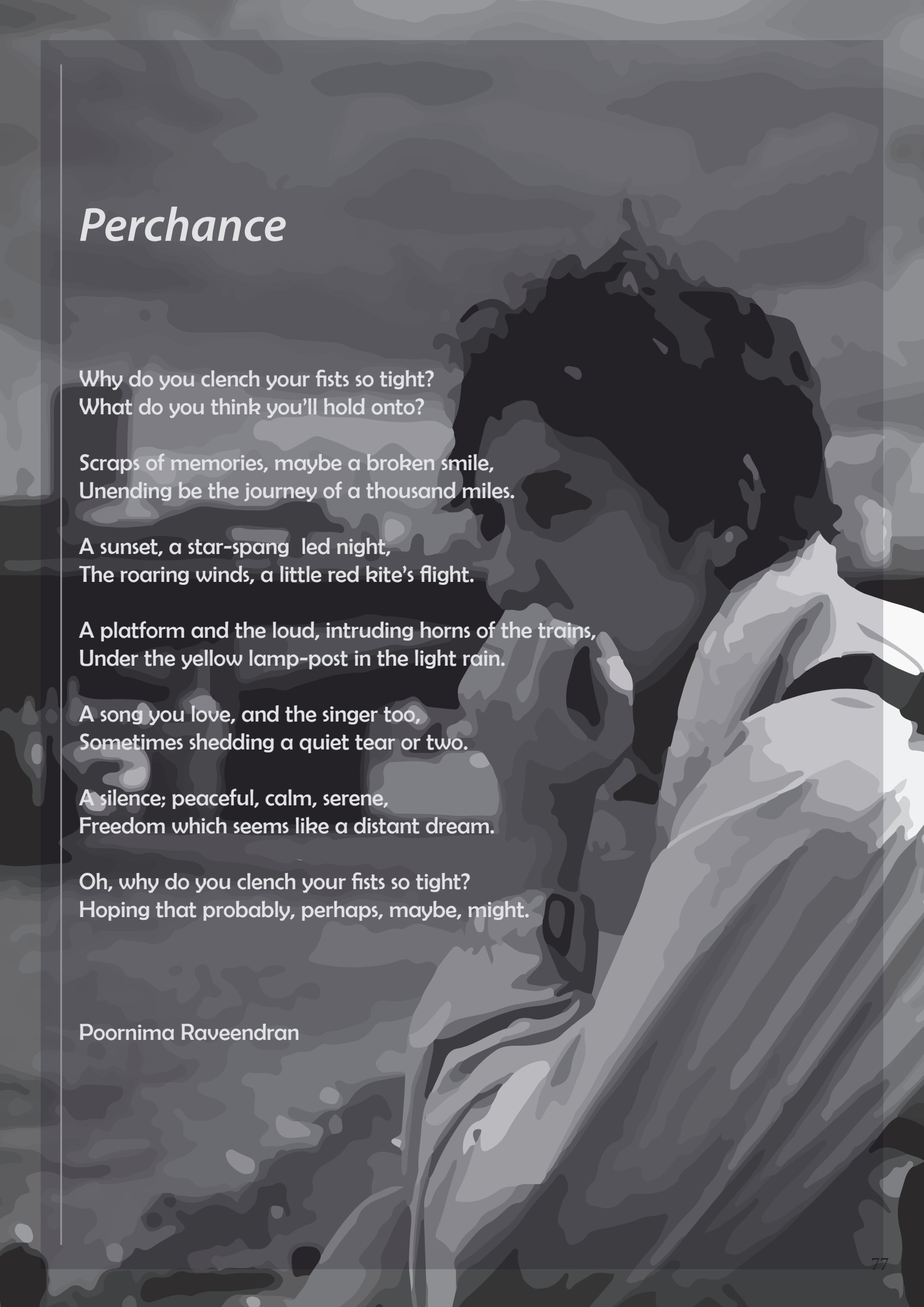
It was all very yellow,
The silhouette of the Taj,
On old Calcutta's Hooghly barrage,
In the strings of a speaking Sitar
Strumming eternal renaissance.

It was all very yellow,
Anne Frank's Diary and Bob Marley,
The seductive sugar on Russia's Barley,
For Donald Duck and his withering luck
Could not Trump the brag of the Buck.

It was all very yellow,
The trickster Love, was standing under the oak,
Searing innocence again with His scheming fork,
The unheard cries of unborn babies,
In the broken hearts of fallen daisies.

It is all still very yellow,
The runny yolk and the slaughtered beef,
The dreamy corals in your mind's reef,
Of butchered voices that blotched paper red,
But by the time you and I cared,
It was yellow all over again.

Perchance



Why do you clench your fists so tight?
What do you think you'll hold onto?

Scraps of memories, maybe a broken smile,
Unending be the journey of a thousand miles.

A sunset, a star-spang led night,
The roaring winds, a little red kite's flight.

A platform and the loud, intruding horns of the trains,
Under the yellow lamp-post in the light rain.

A song you love, and the singer too,
Sometimes shedding a quiet tear or two.

A silence; peaceful, calm, serene,
Freedom which seems like a distant dream.

Oh, why do you clench your fists so tight?
Hoping that probably, perhaps, maybe, might.

Poornima Raveendran

Stars in the Night Sky

"But I'm straight," said Raman, very confused. "I know," I said, "I've known that all along. In fact, that's perhaps why I was - am - so attracted to you. The way you interact with the girls, the way they get nervous-ish around you and laugh at your silly humour and blush - and then, you blush too!" I almost began laughing, having said this, but then, reality weighed on me.

Raman spoke again. "I've always thought of you as a friend," he said, looking away. "I know," I said, "and I'd like for that relationship to stay as it is. I just thought... I'd tell you, of all people, that I was gay. I can like you as I do and we can still be friends, like we've been these past three years, right?" There was silence for a minute.

"Ah, it's my phone," he said, then, "I have to take this call. See you later?" So saying, he got up from his chair and left the gazebo in a hurry. Something told me things between us were never going to be the same again. Yet I tried to forget this feeling.

For the next few days of the sad, last semester of College, Raman tried to avoid me as much as he could. He began sitting at the back during the lectures. I did not feel like getting up and moving towards the back of the classroom.

I gazed at the stupid orange sky one fine evening, walking back from College to my place. I felt Raman's hand on my shoulder for a second. "We've been friends this long, and that won't change. Don't you worry," he said. I turned around in surprise. Nobody was there. I felt so dumb. Foolish. Weak. I looked at the guard at the college gate shamefacedly, almost as if he had seen what I had just imagined. I tried not to cry and began walking fast.

***

It was idiotic for me to have wasted time moping and feeling sad that I had lost a precious friend. So what if I had? Friends aren't everything. I had to focus on my career - do something. Discover something. Make something. Something. The Ramans of the world will come and go. And I will have to stand and appreciate their niceness from afar and just not venture too close. It's pointless.



After the Graduation dinner, virtually no one came to College. Classes were unofficially suspended. One fine Saturday, I headed to the College Library to study. I left College in a little while, having been bored by Max and his hi-fi discussions on Quantum Chromodynamics. I could not find the usual rickshaw-wala and decided to walk home. The same things kept going around in my mind. "How did it matter if I lost a friend like Raman?" "I needed to do something in Science." "Raman can go to hell!"

Then, suddenly, I said to myself. "There's no use pretending! I've loved Raman all this while. He can't reciprocate - nor do I need him to. All I wanted was our friendship to continue. NO. I can't forget those days. I won't." And those lines by Christie flashed upon the inward eye -

"While the light lasts, I shall remember,
In the darkness, I shall not forget."

I suddenly laughed at the image of Raman shouting his head off, back when we were in our second year, saying he was doomed for having kept the physics answer sheet in his bag, and I cried as I laughed at that the handsome image of him. Life... is so funny.

****

I applied to and got admission to a Masters Course in a certain Indian Centre for Organic Geochemists or ICOG in Bangalore. Amangarh, Mom, Nani, my brother, my room - my house! - were all bidden adieu. I remember how much Mom cried and the instructions about carefully crossing busy roads and boarding buses, which she kept repeating till I finally sat down in the cab to head towards the Amangarh Airport. I was almost relieved to sit in the cab and wave back to Mom, Nani and brother. No more instructions on what to do, what to eat, what not to eat - phew!

But the feeling of relief lasted only for two minutes. What followed were bitter sobs, which probably made the poor taxi driver uncomfortable.



"Sorry," I said, "Ghar se itni door, itne lambe samay ke liye…" "Samjha, samjha," said the kind man, "Koi ni. Kuchh maheenon di gal hi toh hai! Pher, chhuttiyaan bhi toh hongi? Fikr not!"

***

One fine day, some six weeks into my stay, as I left the Bioorganic Lab and headed messwards for dinner, I began gazing into the starlit sky. The moon seemed to be directly overhead and was not hidden by any pesky clouds. I gazed and gazed into the sky and was mesmerized by its beauty, when I suddenly banged into a tree. Luckily, no one seemed to have seen me.

"This is terrible," I thought to myself, "I'd love to watch the sky and I'd love to be moving forward. But this combination seems rather deadly!" and so thinking, laughed. I wondered for a moment whether watching the sky while keeping moving was indeed a safe possibility for anyone, and not just clumsy nuts like me.

A thought occurred to me. I imagined two boys walking along the same path as I was and both suddenly expressed a desire to watch the pretty night sky. "You watch while I'll hold your hand and keep you from falling or hurting your silly self!" said the taller one, "and then, we interchange tasks and I get to see these pretty sights too!" So saying, they began walking, the shorter one gazing into the sky, spotting constellations, even a meteor at one point and several funnily shaped clouds - the other one, the taller and much more handsome one, carefully guiding the first one's motion, holding his hand securely, with both his hands, carefully listening to his commentary and occasionally laughing or saying something that caused the other one to laugh. Then, they exchanged tasks and the more handsome one marvelled at the beauty of the sky, chiding the shorter one for misidentifying

some constellations. After a while, they got tired of this and simply kept walking, hand in hand, now only looking at the sky briefly, every once in a while.

These thoughts filled me with immeasurable happiness, for some reason. But - why on earth would they fill me with happiness? Was it even remotely plausible that such a thing would happen to a person like me?! Then, why was I, now, smiling to myself?

It struck me, suddenly, that all this while, those two boys - they didn't just have any random faces. The shorter one was me and the taller, more handsome one, Raman. For a while, it had seemed as if this was really happening. To me. Life seemed… complete.

It took me a while to realize that what I was imagining was absurd. Raman was a thing - a person - of the past, now. A person who could have nothing at all to do with my future. For God's sakes, he is straight! And I, obviously, knew that. Yet, I was imagining such nonsense. Nonsense. How I loved this nonsense. This nonsense... seemed the prettiest thought in the world, at the moment. A tear or two trickled down my cheek and landed on my watch.

That eternal question sprang up in my mind - I can, perhaps, never answer it -

"Is it better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all?"

- Farhan Amin
3rd Year, Int PhD



#SENSATIONALQUOTESBYFRAAANDZ

"Every palmist is a palmist because the other person isn't.'"
-Swastik Mishra #Mainbhijyotish

"Reality's shadow is shadow. Shadow is shadow's reality" [about Shadow Fight 2 vs 3]
-Harsha Sampathkumar

"You are like the super villains on cartoons"
-Arpith Shanbhag, to Farhan Amin

"My roommate is a weird hybrid of a middle-aged man and a twelve-year-old."
-Anon

"You don't come couples. You come in here and be come couples."
-Arya Samanta

"[Hum Paanch] is as close to harem as India can get."
-Vishrut Patel

"[Ecology]...has neither dry lab nor wet lab. It's just moist..."
-Rushil Bala

"Do you think there was a saiyan who went super saiyan and was like, 'I like the power and all, but I don't wanna be blond'?"
-Vishrut Patel

"Everyone is impure."
-Vruta Gupte

"Paise nahi hai toh (lecture hall mein) ek side ka ghadi hata diye hain."
-Deepshikha Sen

"Newspapers are the real newsfeed."
-Arvind Balasubramanian

"You can't apply great theoretical models on live data samples without considering practicality. Great model, ridiculous experiment."
-Anshul Kapoor, #Demonetization

बसंत

- भूपेन्द्र चारण
(Bhupendra Charan)



जगत चराचर जीवड़ां, तकड़ौ तन मन तंत ।
मसती उमंग मांनखै, वाड़ी आय बसंत ॥
आयौ घरां दिसावरां, कोडायौ घण कंत ।
मेळ करायौ पीव धण, मुरधर आय बसंत ॥

दहै टहुका कोयलां, मन मोवै रिख संत ।
मनसिज भभकै मांनखै, व्हाली घणी बसंत ॥
दहै चकारा सूवटा, ठौड़ न हिक बैठंत ।
करिया हरियळ रुंखड़ा, मुरधर आय बसंत ॥

वेस नवादा वीनणी, पैर हुवै अड़िजंत ।
कांमण नै दांमण करी, मुरधर आय बसंत ॥
परस करै तन वायरौ, रोम रोम हरखंत ।
तन निरोग नर नारियां, मुरधर तणै बसंत ॥

सीयाळै बिल संचरै, इब छांडै विसदंत ।
निरखण बारै नीसरै, मुरधर तणी बसंत ॥
काची काची कूंपळा, हिरणी धाप चरंत ।
निरखै भरती चोकड़ी, मुरधर तणी बसंत ॥

Illustration by Soubhadra Maiti

To Light My Own Way



I coveted a beautiful blossom, that I had once seen;
Since then it reflected in my eyes and I called it a dream.
The 'morrow seemed bright with the flower in sight,
But I kept seeking, a guiding light.
Then, by a turn of events, in a trench I fell,
Was the dream a truth or a mirage? I couldn't tell!
I divulged deeper in the darkness, as life moved on,
With every moment wasted and all hope gone.

Now I can't phrase how it came through,
A ray of light shone on me from a dew.
The dew shone bright and lighted my way,
I could then on my path, patiently sway!
After the dark phase ended, which was necessary as well,
I realized I had grown stronger, no more brittle I felt.
I had lost much of myself, but there were benefits too,
The perspective was crisp and the spirit new.

The guiding dew, I chanced to glance upon,
And tried to know what it thrived on.
It belonged to a flower I now possess,
All things are clear now; I feel so blessed!
The flower was less in beauty, but had fragrance sweet and gentle,
Wanting to feel it, I moved ahead but then crossed my temple!

I moved around a little, and then it became clear,
That I was indeed staring into a mirror!
This charged the traces of my confidence, and gave me a reason for hopes to stay,
I realized that it was inside me to light my own way!
Ever since then, I calmly face the blaring Sun,
Glad that I deciphered the real and the deceitful one!

Prachi Joshi

TURNING CORNERS

I turn the corner
and darkness besets me
I look around in vain
for those arms to cradle me
They're long gone
Gone with the innocence
With the naivety
With the cocksure boldness of the inexperienced
Gone with my youth

I look to swim yet my arms fail me
I look to run yet my legs fail me
I look to cry yet my eyes fail me
I look to fight even
Yet my mind fails me

I fear the dreams that plague me whilst I sleep
I fear the reality whilst I lay awake
The hole is deep and lonely
The climb back up is tortuous
There are no footholds, no signposts, no guides
The God I believed in has long since betrayed me

The hallways I strode through brashly
I now slink through afraid
Of judgement
Of interacting
Of disintegrating
Yet as I near the end of the hallway
I turn the corner
And all is well

ANONYMOUS



THE DAY IT RAINED SMILES

As she stepped out of the door, her eyes fell on the dull grey clouds and the sombre surroundings. She walked towards the pavement, hastily putting her right hand in her jacket pocket; it was cold. She held the book in her left hand for a while, but her fingers started to get numb. Soon, she switched hands. Then she tried to hold on to the book by pressing it between her right forearm and her stomach - both her hands were almost numb by now - but it was too awkward to walk that way. A passer-by smiled politely as he walked past her. "Nice day," his smile seemed to say. She opened her jacket's zipper and checked if it had an inside pocket. "Shoot, wrong jacket! Should've left the book inside today," she thought. She couldn't understand why everybody she passed had wide smiles plastered on their faces. At first, she thought they were smiling at her; maybe her hair was awry. Feeling a tinge of embarrassment, she checked her hair, only to find tiny drops of water in it! Was it raining? She looked around. The raindrops were a little bigger than usual. It was much easier to spot them, follow their path, and watch them glide down to the earth. They weren't raindrops. She had always imagined that everything around her would be white

when it snowed. She would wake up in warm pajamas, peer out of the frosty bed-side window to find everything covered with layers and layers of snow. She would make herself some nice hot coffee, put on her favourite beanie and step outside to feel the snow falling on her face. Sometimes she liked to imagine herself sitting in a bed, reading a book, stealing glances at the falling snow while turning the pages. Whenever she imagined snow, she imagined herself alone. Somewhere far away from home, in a place where no one knew her. In a place where she was an outsider. In a place where she did not belong.

She went into a sandwich shop across the street and ordered a meatball sandwich. The lady at the counter seemed unusually amiable. She grabbed a seat at the nearest booth, removed her jacket, opened her book and set it on the table, so that she could hold down the pages and turn them when needed. She kept the sandwich down and took a sip of water. Everything felt just right. Except, when she started eating, the meatballs kept falling out of her sandwich. It was getting messy; her fingers were covered with sauce. The falling meatballs kept distracting her and she couldn't concentrate on the book. Disappointed with her choice of sandwich, she closed her book unwillingly, and holding the sandwich firmly with both hands, finished it as quickly as she could. However, one meatball still managed to find its way out of the sandwich.

When she stepped out of the sandwich shop, she was relieved to see that it was still snowing. Although she did not notice it, she took smaller and slower steps today. Lost in thought, she wandered around, strayed away from her usual route and finally found herself sitting on a cold bench. It seemed like the perfect spot to read. For the next twenty minutes she was completely engrossed in her book with her head bent down over it, and her numb, freezing hands turned its pages with great difficulty. Then her thoughts started wandering again. It was a Wednesday. Usually, she brought lunch from home on Wednesdays. Only on Fridays - once in two or three weeks - did she have lunch at the sandwich shop. Even when she did, she had a roasted chicken sandwich which wasn't messy to eat while reading.

All this while, people kept passing by her - the very people who passed by her every day without ever smiling, without ever making eye contact, and without ever acknowledging that she was one of them. But today, they had smiled. She knew they had smiled just by looking at their gait as they passed by her. Blood rushed into her face and her chest felt warm as it all fell into place.

When does one belong to a new city? Is making close friends or having a family or building meaningful relationships enough? Or does one need to have a routine that they love? A routine that allows time to inconspicuously flow by weeks and months at a time - just the way it does when you belong.

Although these are essential elements, one truly belongs to a city when one makes peace with its little oddities and accepts it for the imperfect city that it is. What makes this process truly difficult is letting go of one's old life, the life in which you were one of those infinite, nameless people who refused to smile at those who didn't belong. But when one does make peace with the idiosyncrasies of the new city, it shows. Only then the people who pass by you every day, the people whom you'll probably never meet in your life, start smiling back.

This was her first time experiencing snowfall, but everything around her was not white; it was a dull gray day. She was not in the comfort of her house and waking up in pajamas; she was out in the cold on a working day. She had a job, a routine she loved. She was not far away from home. She was in a city which, until yesterday, had seemed heartless and filled with people who never smiled. But today they had. She was home.

- Shreyas Malpathak

THROUGH

It was quite a while before I became conscious of her presence in the room. Rather, I should say, it was quite a while before I decided to acknowledge my old friend's presence in the room. My childhood friend of over ten years – and yet it was just easier to think that she wasn't present there at all.

My eyes were roving about the room, occasionally coming to a halt at the floor beneath me. I could hear voices around me, engaged in animated conversation and seemingly oblivious to my predicament, yet I felt as though the eyes of all those whose voices disturbed the calm of the room were boring into me, mutely urging me to show some recognition of her, and to speak to her.

I plucked up the courage to look up for a split-second and then I commenced my observation of the floor again. But in that split-second I had gathered what I wanted to gather. My friend seemed to find the floor as irresistibly fascinating as I did. It was almost as if her mind were an open book, her thoughts writ across it in large letters; for I was certain they were the same thoughts I was thinking. Her parents – for two of the voices in the room belonged to them – were looking at her meaningly, trying to silently prompt her to strike up a conversation with me. Worse still, my parents – for the other two voices in the room belonged to them – were looking at me, too. My mother was looking at me reprovingly, while my father seemed to regard the whole affair in the light of an excellent joke. The amused smile that played about his face betrayed as much.

Something suddenly seemed to go off inside my head, and I was conscious of a wave of annoyance against the four grown-ups in the room. What was their problem? Why were they waging this awful war against me, trying to make me pick up connections that I felt did not exist anymore?

Did not exist anymore? What rubbish, I told myself. I had known her for over ten years. We'd been good friends back in elementary school and in middle school, and our friendship had endured over high school as well, despite the two of us being in different sections. I had left the city, it is true, in my eleventh grade, but we had still been in touch through telephone and emails. What was inhibiting me from merely speaking to her now? I hadn't seen her for two years but we were back in the same city, visiting my friend's family, sitting in their drawing room. Nothing had changed, had it? Of course it hadn't.

And how wrong I was.

I didn't know it at that moment, of course. Being brazen and hot-headed, I decided that I would take up the challenge of speaking to her. I was supremely confident of my success.

I finally tore my eyes away from the magnetic appearance of the floor and forced myself to look up. She had chosen the same moment to look up, and there was no going back now.

"Hello," I managed to say.

My voice sounded strange. As if someone else was speaking, but using me like a ventriloquist's dummy.

FRIENDSHIP

She returned the greeting very hesitantly, as though she was meeting me for the first time.

"Why don't you girls go inside and talk comfortably? It's been two years since you two met; you must have plenty of catching up to do. And I'm pretty sure you don't want four old people like us to join the conversation and interrupt with our inopportune remarks," said my friend's mother, in an attempt to reduce the tension in the air. My friend and I exchanged glances, and by mute consensus, left the drawing room together, and made our way further inside.

We entered an airy, comfortable room with sofas and cushions dotted about, and a huge television set. A fridge, too, stood there, and I remembered times when my dearest ambition had been to finish off the store of chocolates it housed. As I stood there drinking in every detail, I suddenly realized that I was getting sidetracked. Focus on conversing, I told myself firmly.

We both sat down. Things seemed a bit easier without our parents sitting around us, trying to gently force us to rekindle an old friendship. We slowly began to talk, and conversation began to flow, almost naturally. We reminisced the past years of school, such as oh-do-you-remember-when-so-and-so-got-chucked-out-of-class-for-writing-with-crayon-on-the-wall-in-fifth-grade, or oh-that-school-trip-when-we-finished-nine-packets-of-chips-between-us. Things seemed to be going well. But the past is not endless. Soon enough, we ran out of memories to discuss, and conversation languished. I racked my brains to think of some way to salvage the conversation. I had pictures of the city I had moved to, and my home there, but though she saw them politely, I could see she wasn't the least bit interested. Likewise, she had photographs of a recent trip she had made to her hometown, which she showed me. I looked politely, too, but I, too, wasn't exactly enthralled by them.

Finally, we were both at a loss. I was desperately uncomfortable, not to mention utterly disappointed, hoping that the earth would open up and swallow me. I had an inkling of her thoughts; they seemed to mirror mine.

The immense wave of relief that swept over me as I heard my mother calling me from the drawing room was indescribable, unspeakable. We said our goodbyes hurriedly, and returned to the drawing room. Within a few minutes, when the parents were also done saying goodbye, we left.

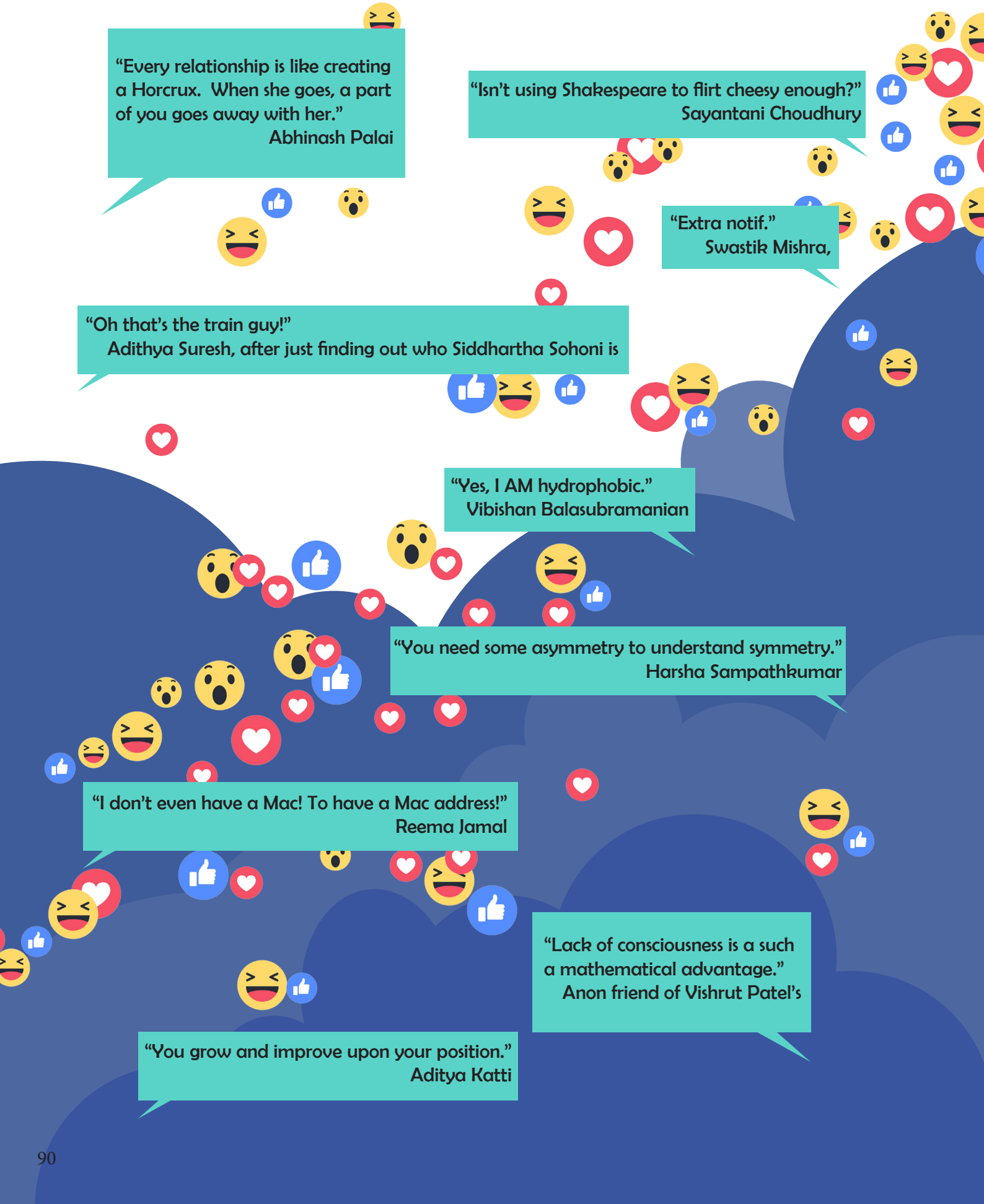
I was lost in thought on the way home. Ten years of friendship in a life of seventeen years. It sounds grand when you say it, but after all, of what use had it been? I thought we had been close, but our friendship had failed the greatest test of all – the test of time. It had crumbled and become dust. Just like the hundreds of acquaintances I had made and forgotten over the years. What was the difference? Had I been deluding myself all this while about what friendship meant? What a friend meant?

Perhaps I had been.

- Amruta Swaminathan

Illustration by Anasuya Karmakar

#SENSATIONALQUOTESBYFRAAANDZ



"Every relationship is like creating a Horcrux. When she goes, a part of you goes away with her."
Abhinash Palai

"Isn't using Shakespeare to flirt cheesy enough?"
Sayantani Choudhury

"Extra notif."
Swastik Mishra,

"Oh that's the train guy!"
Adithya Suresh, after just finding out who Siddhartha Sohoni is

"Yes, I AM hydrophobic."
Vibishan Balasubramanian

"You need some asymmetry to understand symmetry."
Harsha Sampathkumar

"I don't even have a Mac! To have a Mac address!"
Reema Jamal

"Lack of consciousness is a such a mathematical advantage."
Anon friend of Vishrut Patel's

"You grow and improve upon your position."
Aditya Katti



Design by Adithyan Unni

the Killer



The night begins like every other late night at my office.

I am sitting in my cabin, impatiently waiting for a client to call from Tokyo. For the millionth time, I look at the clock.

11:40.

Samantha will be asleep by now. No point in calling. I wish I was home right now, safe and warm, instead of being stuck here. Stupid client. Is it even worth waiting…?

A loud noise, almost like a door slamming, shakes me from my train of thought.

What was that? And why is it so dark suddenly? Where's everyone else?

I reach for the phone to call the guard. Before I can reach the phone, a gloved hand claps over my mouth. I feel cold metal on my neck and realise, with a jolt of fear, that it's a gun.

"Well, well. We meet at last, Mr. Ford. Now sit there quietly in your chair and cooperate, so that we can do business."

I recognise the smooth silky voice, but I can't place it. Fear clouds my thoughts, making me unable to think straight. Instinctively, my hand starts to inch towards the alarm button. I press it once, twice. Nothing. The intruder laughs, softly.

"You underestimate me, Mr. Ford. It was child's play to disable these alarms. And your security? Hah! A ten year old could have bypassed them," he mocks. "Now, stop panicking, and let us talk like civilised people." He removes his hand and steps back.

My thoughts are all over the place. Stall for time.

"What do you want from me?" My voice is surprisingly steady.

"That's more like it. I'll come straight to the point. I need money, because after all, that's what we're all digging for, aren't we? And you, sir, happen to be filthy rich. So, I'll make a deal with you –"

"I don't want to make any deals."

"Now, now, let's not be so defiant," he says patronisingly. A blade of anger cuts through my fear, just a little. "The deal is simple – you must transfer the bulk of your fortune into the bank accounts that I tell you to. You must sign on these – " a latex-gloved hand with an envelope sneaks into the pool of light from my laptop, "– claims of bankruptcy. And you must handle this diary, and lock it up in your safe. Failure to comply with any of these instructions will forfeit your life." He pauses, to let his words sink in. "And that of your wife."

Oh, no. Not Samantha. No.

Fear begins to blot out my thoughts again, but I manage to say, "I don't trust you one bit. How can I be sure that you won't harm me and my wife if we follow your instructions?"

He laughs again, like a rattlesnake's death rattle. "You don't get it, Mr. Ford. For my plan to succeed, you have to die. So, whether you give me the money or not, you will not survive the night. But defy me and your wife will die – and it. Will. Not. Be. Pretty. Cooperate, and she will live peacefully. I will not harm her. After all, it's just your money I want."

I nod, mutely. What choice do I have? I can see no way to escape. I'm terrified, mostly for what is in store for me, but also for Samantha. This man says he won't harm her, but even if he doesn't, my death will.

The following hour passes quickly. My body seems to be on autopilot, entering the numbers, transferring the money. The cleverness of his scheme registers at the back of my mind – he's hacked the bank's website, and pre-dated the transactions so it looks like I've been transferring money for about a year. I can't help but admire him a little. But mostly I'm trying to think through the paralysing fear for a way out, to escape, to live. Time is ticking, and I've never been more aware of my body, my breath, my heartbeat. I sign blankly, hesitating only slightly but the poke of his gun spurs me on. I'm signing my way to my death, but hopefully I've secured Samantha's life.

He hands me a diary, an ordinary one, which supposedly chronicles the past year of my life. Apparently, I was depressed, burdened, in financial debt, facing troubles in my marriage – I pause there, and he says, "This will explain why Samantha knows nothing about this diary." Something in his statement strikes me as odd, but my brain is too paralysed to think clearly. I never stood a chance, Samantha. I'm sorry. The last entry is tonight's, and it says simply that I decided to kill myself.

This is it. Finally. My legs feel like they're made of wood, but somehow I stand, walk two steps to my safe, and lock the diary inside. Everything is done. Over. Finished.

People say you see your life flash past your eyes when you die, but at this moment I see only one of the happiest memories of my life – the day Samantha and I got married – the sun, warm and bright – her face, smiling –

The man guides me back to my chair, makes me sit facing my desk, my back towards the door. He comes closer, makes me hold the gun and put it in my mouth. My hands don't work anymore. It's like we're awkwardly hugging, his latex hands on mine, making mine press the trigger. I can smell cheap vodka on his breath. The smell triggers a memory –

the evening of the wedding – a drunken brawl – Samantha's brother passed out on the sofa, the smell of vodka mushrooming around him –

– and something clicks in my head. I realise what was odd in his statement – he spoke my wife's name. He knows Samantha. This is not some random thug – this is someone we knew, trusted and loved.

I finally know who my killer is, but by then it is too late.



Illustration by : Wridhdhisom Karar, Sanjana Nair

ज़िन्दगी की राह



ये ज़िन्दगी नहीं है मान जाने को,
है दिल की राह थाम चलते जाने को।
हम सिर्फ़ रह गए जो उनके प्यादे ही,
कहेंगे क्या ज़िंदा हैं हम बताने को?

यूँ दौड़ में ही भागते फिरे जो हम,
रुकेंगे कब नज़ारे आज़माने को।
जो कश्मकश लिए ही घूमते रहे,
मिलेगा मौक़ा कब मुस्कुराने को?

ज़हन में दफ़्न ख़्वाहिशें जो मर गईं
एक मरतबा यूँ ही गिनाने को,
तब ज़िन्दगी जिएंगे किस मिजाज़ से
जब ज़िन्दगी बचेगी न बसाने को।

जज़्बात है जुड़ा जिस अंतरंग अंश से
वो माँगता गगन है मुक्त उड़ जाने को।
कहाँ उड़ें ये खग अनंत अंतरिक्ष में
चढ़ा रखा जो नीला पर्दा बहलाने को?

तो क्या पड़े रहें यूँ ही बेजान हम,
बन तिनका दरिया में बह जाने को?
कैसे करें ज़ाया मौक़ा-ए- ज़िन्दगी
जब लाख़ नज़्में हैं रखीं सुनाने को?

इक़रार हाल-ए- दिल करें न क्यूँ भला?
दिल में रखा है ऐसा क्या छुपाने को?
कहते हैं आप भूल जाओ, हम भला
समझाएँ कैसे दिल को भूल जाने को?

फ़िराक की शमाँ ये जल रही है जो
दें मौका उसको क्यूँ कभी बुझाने को?
जो अँधेरी ग़र्त में हताशा की गिरे
कौन आएगा ये हौसला बचाने को?

फिसलते हैं कदम कभी तो जाने दो जनाब।
हम दिखा तो देंगे ही एक दिन ज़माने को
कि दिल में मौज उठ गई कभी कतारों में,
तो गुल नहीं बचेंगे फिर यहाँ खिलाने को।

ये ज़िन्दगी बनी है सिर्फ़ आज़माने को,
दीवानगी में ख़ुद को घोल जाने को।

- देवेश वर्मा -

वो बैठी थी अकेली

वो बैठी थी अकेली दुनिया से परे
नज़रें मिलते ही दिल में समा गई।
पल चल रहे थे हाथों में हाथ लिए
उन पलों में हमें दुनिया नज़र आ गई॥

जो पहचान पाया उसकी खूबसूरती को,
वो धीरे-धीरे उसी में समाता गया।
क्या नूर झलक रहा था उसके चहरे से,
मैं उसी ओर अपने कदम बढ़ाता गया॥

क्या सुकून था उसकी बाहों में
जिंदगी भर उन्हीं में मैं सोना चाहता था।
दुनिया थी तैयार हमें गले से लगाने के लिए,
फिर भी मेरा मन उसी के आँसू रोना चाहता था॥

वो चार पल का साथ उसका,
मुझे हर पल जीने की ताकत देता था।
अनजाने में भोली सी सूरत दिखाकर,
मेरे दिल को मुझ से ही चुरा लेता था॥

आँखों से बहता एक-एक आँसू
मुझे तेरे और करीब ले जाता था।
उन अषकों से बना हुआ शीशा,
मुझसे मेरी ही पहचान करा दे जाता था॥

कौन थी वो मेरी मोहब्बत,
जो मुझे मेरी खुदाई, माई, यारी, परछाई दे जाती थी।
जब रहती थी कायनात हमसे रूठी हुई,
तब कायनात के करीब हमें तनहाई ले जाती थी॥

- गि. वि. मसराम



ഹൃദയ ദൂരങ്ങൾ

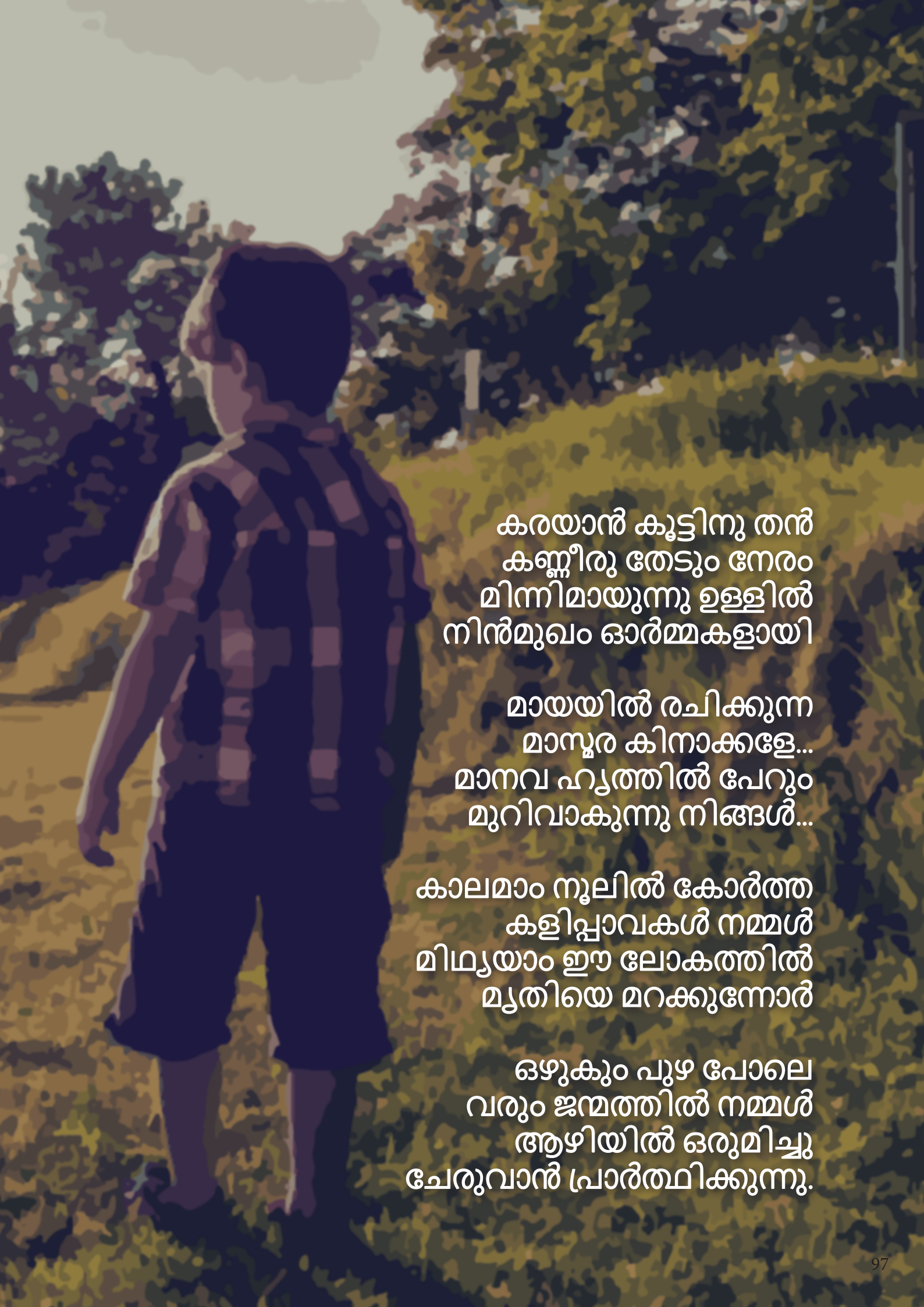
-സോഹൻ എസ്
(Sohan S)

ആരു നീയെനിക്കെന്നു
തേടിയലയുന്നു ഞാൻ
കണ്ണിമ ചിമ്മീടുമ്പോൾ
കാലങ്ങൾ താണ്ടുന്നു നാം

മാഞ്ഞുപോമോർമ്മകളിൽ
നിൻമിഴി തുളുമ്പിയോ?
എപ്പോഴോ വന്നകന്ന
സ്വപ്നങ്ങൾ വിതുമ്പിയോ?

മാനവ മത്സരത്തിൽ
മുങ്ങിതാഴുന്നോ നമ്മൾ?
സ്നേഹത്തെ വെറുക്കുവാൻ
ശീലിക്കുന്നുവോ നമ്മൾ?

നീറും ഹൃദയത്തിൽ നിന്നു-
യരും രോദനത്തെ
അറിയാൻ ശ്രമിക്കാതെ
അകന്നു പോകുന്നോ നാം?



കരയാൻ കൂട്ടിനു തൻ
കണ്ണീരു തേടും നേരം
മിന്നിമായുന്നു ഉള്ളിൽ
നിൻമുഖം ഓർമ്മകളായി

മായയിൽ രചിക്കുന്ന
മാസ്മര കിനാക്കളേ...
മാനവ ഹൃത്തിൽ പേറും
മുറിവാകുന്നു നിങ്ങൾ...

കാലമാം നൂലിൽ കോർത്ത
കളിപ്പാവകൾ നമ്മൾ
മിഥ്യയാം ഈ ലോകത്തിൽ
മൃതിയെ മറക്കുന്നോർ

ഒഴുകും പുഴ പോലെ
വരും ജന്മത്തിൽ നമ്മൾ
ആഴിയിൽ ഒരുമിച്ചു
ചേരുവാൻ പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

പെയ്തു തോരാതെ....

ഇടവിട്ട് തെളിയുന്ന മിന്നൽപിണരുകളെ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കാതെ കലങ്ങിയ മഴവെള്ളത്തിൽ ചവിട്ടി അലസമായി അയാൾ നടന്നു. എതിരെ വരുന്നവരാരും തന്നെ തിരിച്ചറിയരുതെന്ന് വെറുതെ അയാൾ മനസ്സിൽ പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചു കൊണ്ടിരുന്നു. ടാറിട്ട റോഡിൽ വീഴുന്ന വെള്ളത്തുള്ളികൾ അയാളെ നോക്കി ചിരിച്ചു. പെയ്തു തോരാത്തൊരു മഴയിലൂടെ അപ്പോഴയാളുടെ ചിന്തകൾ ഊളിയിടാൻ തുടങ്ങി.

മഴയെ അയാളൊരുപാട് സ്നേഹിച്ചു. ഓമനിച്ചു കൊതി തീരാത്തൊരമ്മയുടെ വാത്സല്യവും പ്രണയാർദ്രമായ കണ്ണുകളോടെ കൈ നീട്ടുന്ന കാമുകിയെയും അയാൾ മഴയിൽ ദർശിച്ചു. ഒരുപാട് കാലം കാത്തിരുന്ന് കിട്ടിയ പെൺകുഞ്ഞിന് അതുകൊണ്ട് തന്നെ മഴയെന്ന് പേരിടാൻ അയാളേറെ ആഗ്രഹിച്ചിരുന്നു. അതിന് വേണ്ടി ആനിയോട് ഒരുപാട് നിർബന്ധം പിടിച്ചതാണ്. "നിങ്ങടെ സാഹിത്യമൊന്നും എന്റെ കൊച്ചിനടുത്തോട്ടു കൊണ്ടു വരണ്ട" എന്നും പറഞ്ഞവൾ ആ ശ്രമം വിഫലമാക്കി. ഒടുവിൽ തന്നെ സമാധാനിപ്പിക്കാനാവണം മോൾക്ക് അവൾ വർഷയെന്ന് പേരിട്ടത്. എങ്കിലും പലപ്പോഴും അവളെ മഴയെന്ന് വിളിക്കാനയാൾ ഒരുങ്ങിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. എട്ടു വർഷത്തെ വരണ്ട ജീവിതത്തിൽ പുതുനാമ്പുകൾ തളിർക്കാനാണവൾ വന്നതെന്ന് അയാൾക്ക് തോന്നിയിരുന്നു.

ശ്രദ്ധയില്ലാതെ നടന്ന് ഒരു കറുത്ത കാറിന്റെ മുന്നിൽചെന്ന് പെട്ടു. മഴവെള്ളം തെറിപ്പിച്ച് അത് കടന്നുപോയി. പെട്ടന്ന് വെട്ടിയ ഇടിയുടെ ശബ്ദത്തിൽ ഡ്രൈവർവിളിച്ച ചീത്ത അയാൾ കേട്ടില്ല.

വർഷ തന്നെയായിരുന്നു അപ്പോഴും മനസ്സിൽ. ചാറ്റൽമഴ പോലെയുള്ള അവളുടെ നേർത്ത ശബ്ദം അയാൾകേട്ടു. നെറ്റിയിലെ ക്രയോൺപുരികങ്ങൾക്ക് മീതെ ഉദയ സൂര്യനെ പോലെയുള്ള ചുവന്ന പൊട്ടും താഴെ കൗതുകം തുളുമ്പുന്ന കണ്ണുകളും ചുണ്ടിൽ നിഷ്കളങ്കതയുടെ ചിരിയുമായി സ്കൂൾയൂണിഫോമിൽ ഓടി വരുന്ന അവളുടെ രൂപമായിരുന്നു വീണു ചിതറുന്ന ഓരോ മഴത്തുള്ളിയിലും അയാൾ കണ്ടത്.

ലൈൻബസ്സിൽ തിക്കിലും തിരക്കിലും ഞെരിഞ്ഞമർന്ന്, ബസ്സ്സ്റ്റോപ്പിലിറങ്ങി രണ്ട് കിലോമീറ്റർനടന്ന്, തളർന്ന നോട്ടവുമായി അവൾ വരുമ്പോൾ ആനി തന്നെ രൂക്ഷമായി നോക്കാറുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. "ഒരോട്ടോറിക്ഷ ഏർപ്പാടാക്കിയാൽ നിനക്കതിൽ പോയിവന്നൂടെ?" ആനി ചോദിക്കും. "ലോകത്തെ പഠിക്കണങ്കി ലോകത്തിലേക്ക് എറങ്ങി ചെല്ലന്നെ വേണ്ടെ" ഒരു തത്വജ്ഞാനിയുടെ മട്ടിൽവർഷ മറുപടി പറയും. "നിന്റെ അപ്പായുടെ സൂക്കേട് തന്ന്യാ നിനക്കും." ഒരൊറ്റ വാചകത്തിൽ തന്റെ അമർഷം മുഴുവൻ അലിയിച്ച് കളഞ്ഞ് അവൾ അകത്തേക്ക് പോകും. അവൾക്കെന്നും ആധിയായിരുന്നു. "ഇങ്ങനെ മകളെ പിരിഞ്ഞിരിക്കാൻ പറ്റാതാവരുത്. നാളെ കെട്ടിച്ചുവിടാനൊള്ളതാ" അവൾടെ ഗൾഫ്കാരൻ ആങ്ങള ആന്റോസച്ചായൻ പറയും.

വർഷയുടെ ചിന്തകൾ തന്നെ പോലും അത്ഭുതപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുള്ളതയാൾ ഓർത്തു. സാഹിത്യത്തിൽ ഒരുപക്ഷെ അവൾക്ക് ഭാവിയുണ്ടായിരിക്കാം എന്ന് താൻ പറഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ നീർക്കോലിക്കുഞ്ഞിനെ നീന്തൽ പഠിപ്പിക്കണ്ടല്ലോ എന്ന് പറഞ്ഞ് ആനി അതിനെ നിസ്സാരമാക്കി. ഒരിക്കൽ ഒരർദ്ധവാർഷികപ്പരീക്ഷക്കോ മറ്റോ കണക്കിൽ മാർക്ക് വല്ലാതെ കുറഞ്ഞു പോയതിന്, വർഷയെ കണക്കിന് ശകാരിച്ച ശേഷം ആനിയും കരഞ്ഞെന്ന് വർഷ പറഞ്ഞു. ഈ അമ്മച്ചി ശരിക്കുമൊരമ്മമഴക്കാറാണെന്നും പറഞ്ഞ് അവൾ തന്നോട് ചിരിച്ചു. നിനക്ക് വിഷമമില്ലേ എന്ന ചോദ്യത്തിന് വളരെ തത്വശാസ്ത്രപരമായിരുന്നു മറുപടി. ദുഖങ്ങളുള്ളതുകൊണ്ട് മാത്രമാണ് ഈ ജീവിതം ഇത്രയും സന്തോഷകരമാകുന്നത്. തന്റെ അമ്പരപ്പിൽ അവളൊരുവേള സന്തോഷിച്ചിരിക്കണം.

പത്താം ക്ലാസ്സിലെത്തിയപ്പോൾ ആനിയുടെ നിർബന്ധത്തിനു വഴങ്ങി അവളെ ട്യൂഷനയച്ചതിൽ അയാൾക്ക് പിന്നെയും പശ്ചാത്താപം തോന്നി. ഒടുവിൽ "ലോകത്തെ പഠിക്കണ്ട നീ; പാഠപുസ്തകം പഠിക്ക്" എന്നും പറഞ്ഞ് ബൈക്കിൽ അവളെ വിളിച്ച് കൊണ്ടുവരാൻ തന്നെ ഏർപ്പാടാക്കി ആനി. അദ്ധ്വാനത്തിന്റെ ഇരട്ടിഭാരവും

മുതുകിൽ പേറി വരുന്ന അവൾക്ക് ആനി അറിയാതെ ചായക്കടയിൽ നിന്ന് മൊരിഞ്ഞ പക്കാവട വാങ്ങിക്കൊടുത്ത് തങ്ങൾ രണ്ടുപേരും കൂടി വീട്ടിലേക്ക് വന്നിരുന്ന സായാഹ്നങ്ങൾ..! അയാൾ നടത്തം പാതിവഴിയിൽ നിർത്തി. അയാളെ പിന്തുടരുന്നതു പോലെ മഴയും ഒരു നിമിഷം നിശ്ചലമായി!

ഒരിക്കലും പുറത്തെടുക്കില്ലെന്നു കരുതി മനസ്സിൽ അടക്കം ചെയ്ത ആ ദിവസമായിരുന്നു ഉള്ളിൽ തികട്ടിവന്നത്. തന്റെ മോഹങ്ങൾ, സ്വപ്നങ്ങൾ... ഇവയെല്ലാമടങ്ങുന്ന ഒരു കൊച്ചു ജീവിതം കുരിശിലേറിയ ഒരു വെള്ളിയാഴ്ചയായിരുന്നു അത്. ഒരാഴ്ചത്തെ മുഴുവൻ ഭാരവും തന്റെ മേശപ്പുറത്ത് കുന്നുകൂടിയ ദിവസം. സമയത്തിന് ബസ്സ്റ്റോപ്പിൽ തന്നെ കാണാതെ വർഷ വിഷമിച്ച് കാണണം. കാത്തുനിന്ന് മടുത്തിട്ടാകണം പതിയെ നടന്നു തുടങ്ങിയത്. തളരുന്ന കാലടികൾ ഓരോ ചുവടിലും തന്നെ പ്രതീക്ഷിച്ചിരിക്കും. കുറച്ചകലെ നിർത്തിയിട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന വാനിൽ പതിയിരുന്ന അപകടം അവൾ അറിഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ടാവില്ല...അവളുറക്കെ കരഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ടാവും... എവിടെ നിന്നെങ്കിലും അപ്പ ഓടിവന്ന് രക്ഷിക്കുമെന്ന് അവസാന നിമിഷം വരെയും ആഗ്രഹിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടാകും. വേദന കടിച്ചമർത്തി പ്രതിരോധിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടാവും... ഒടുവിൽ പ്രധിരോധിക്കാനാകാതെ തോറ്റുകൊടുത്തിട്ടുണ്ടാവും...

നേരം ഇരുട്ടി വീട്ടിലെത്തുമ്പോ അമ്മയുടെയും മോളുടെയും ശകാരമായിരുന്നു ആഗ്രഹിച്ചത്. പകരം സ്വീകരണമുറിയിലെ മാർബിൾ തറയിൽ... വെള്ളപുതച്ച്... വർഷ... എന്റെ വർഷ..! അരികെ ജീവൻ തുടിക്കാത്ത, നിർവികാരമായ മുഖത്തോടെ ആനി തളർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. പുറത്ത് പേടിച്ച മൃഗത്തെ പോലെ ഒരു മഴ മുരണ്ടു. മുറിവുകളുണങ്ങാത്ത കുഞ്ഞുമുഖത്ത് നിന്ന് ഞെട്ടലോടെ കണ്ണെടുത്ത താൻ ഉള്ളിൽ വിറക്കുന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. മഴ പൂർവാധികം ശക്തിയോടെ മനസ്സിനെ തുളച്ചു പെയ്യുന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. വീണുപോയ ഇരയെ ആർത്തിയോടെ വലിച്ചു കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്ന മാംസഭോജിയെ പോലെ മഴ അവളെ തങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് തട്ടിയെടുത്ത്

കൊണ്ടുപോകുകയാണെന്ന് തനിക്കപ്പോൾ തോന്നിയിരുന്നു...

ഒരുപാട് നേരം ഫുട്പാത്തിൽവെറുതെ നിന്നതിന് ശേഷം വീണ്ടുമയാൾ നടക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങി. അതുവരെ ശ്വാസമടക്കിപ്പിടിച്ചിരുന്നതു പോലെ മഴത്തുള്ളികൾ പൊട്ടിവീണു. വലിയ ചുറ്റുമതിലിനെ കടന്ന് അയാൾകോടതി വളപ്പിലെത്തി. തടിച്ചു കൂടി നിന്ന ജനത്തെ കടന്ന്, ആർത്തിപൂണ്ട് നോക്കിയ ക്യാമറക്കണ്ണുകളെ കടന്ന്, കോടതിമുറിയിലെത്തി. അകത്തും പുറത്തും മഴ തോരാതെ പെയ്യുന്നത് അയാളറിഞ്ഞു. മിന്നൽവെളിച്ചത്തിൽ പ്രതിക്കൂട്ടിലെ മുഖങ്ങളെ അയാൾ വീണ്ടും വീണ്ടും നോക്കി. ഇടിയുടെ മുരൾച്ചയിലും വിധി വാചകം വ്യക്തമായി തന്നെ കേട്ടു. മുന്നിൽ നിൽക്കുന്ന ഈ മനുഷ്യ ശരീരങ്ങളൊക്കെയും അവർക്കനുവധിക്കപ്പെട്ട സമയമത്രയും ഭൂമിയിൽ ജീവിക്കുമെന്ന വാർത്തയിൽ അയാൾ ഞെട്ടിയില്ല. ആർക്കും തൂക്കുകയർ ലഭിക്കണമെന്ന് അയാൾ ആഗ്രഹിച്ചതുമില്ല. പകരം ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ കഴുമരത്തിൽ അയാൾ സ്വയം തൂങ്ങിയാടി...

തിരിച്ചറിയപ്പെടരുതെന്ന ദൃഢനിശ്ചയത്തോടെ അയാൾ പുറത്തുകടന്നു. എന്നിട്ടും കൊക്കുകൂർപ്പിച്ചെത്തിയ ചാനൽപറവകളെ അയാൾക്ക് ആട്ടിയോടിക്കേണ്ടി വന്നു. മഴ സൗമ്യമായി മണ്ണിനെ തൊട്ടുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നു...

പള്ളിപ്പറമ്പിലെ അനേകം കല്ലറകൾ കടന്ന് പുതുമ നശിക്കാത്ത ഒരു കൊച്ചു കല്ലറയുടെ മുന്നിൽഅയാൾനിന്നു. "നിന്നെ നോവിച്ച കൈകളിൽ ഒരു വിലങ്ങ് വീണിരിക്കുന്നു. താല്കാലികമായോ... അല്ലാതെയോ? എനിക്കറിയില്ല മോളേ." വാർദ്ധക്യം വിറക്കുന്ന ശബ്ദത്തിൽ അയാൾ പറഞ്ഞു. മഴവെള്ളം വീണുകിടക്കുന്ന മാർബിൾഫലകത്തിലെ വാക്കുകളിലേക്ക് ഒരിക്കൽകൂടി അയാൾ നോക്കി. 'ദുഖങ്ങളുള്ളതു കൊണ്ട് മാത്രമാണ് ഈ ജീവിതം ഇത്ര സന്തോഷകരമാകുന്നത്'. തോരാൻ മടിച്ച് മഴ അപ്പോഴും ചാറിക്കൊണ്ടിരുന്നു...

- Rubna PR

ফিরে দেখা

নগ্ন দুপুর, প্রখর রোদ
হেঁকে যায় ফেরিওয়ালা কোন অজানা ভাষায়
মনে পড়ে যায় "ভাঙাচোরা লোহা-টিন ভাঙা"-র একঘেয়ে সুর
অদূরে হাতছানি দেয় গম্ভীর রহস্যময় পাষাণ;
তার আহ্বানে দিই সাড়া- আর,
এক লহমায় পৌঁছে যাই রাঙামাটির দেশে !
মোটরসাইকেলের ধুলো উড়িয়ে যাওয়া, আর
গোপকলেজের শান্ত সবুজ হাতছানি।
পৌঁছে যাই আরও গভীরে-
ঘুরে বেড়াই ফাঁকা ক্লাসরুমে, হাতে ঝালমুড়ির ঠোঙা ;
হঠা শোনা যায় আজানের সুর !
ভাঙে ভাতঘুম।
ফেরিওয়ালার ডাকটা এখন স্পষ্ট !
আর বুঝতে অসুবিধা হয়না তার ভাষা ;
রৌদ্রমাখা দুপুরে মিলেমিশে একাকার হয়ে যায়-
আমার লালমাটি ও পাষাণ ||

~ মেঘমালা সরকার~

রাধা

আজ বিদায়ী শরতের উদাস
করা হাওয়ার স্পর্শে
আমার রঞ্জিত চিত্ত খুঁজে ফেরে তোমায়,
সন্ধ্যার আধো অন্ধকার যখন রূপ পায় অস্তমিত রঙের উৎকর্ষে
গৃহগামী পাখির দল নিজের ভাষায় রূপায়িত করে তোমায়!
যে মলয় বয়ে আনে সান্ধ্যে ছাতিমের ম্লান মাদক গন্ধ,
তার তালে তুমিই তো আনমনা হয়ে নৃত্য কর পুষ্পবীথিকা মাঝে
এই শিশুসুলভ চাপল্যে বিশ্ব প্রকৃতি খুঁজে পায় তার আনন্দ।
প্রথম প্রেমে পরা কুমারীর মত নিষ্পাপ সারল্য তোমার হৃদে
মনমরা সাদাকালো প্রকৃতি যেন রঙিন হয় তোমারই ছন্দে!
তাই তুমি অপরূপা, তুমি অনন্যা।

ক্ষনিকের স্পর্শে কপোলে নির্মোহ ভালোবাসার চুম্বন করে যাও তুমি,
হে রাধা, তোমাকে দেখতে কেন পাই না?

~ দেবেশ ভট্টাচার্য ~

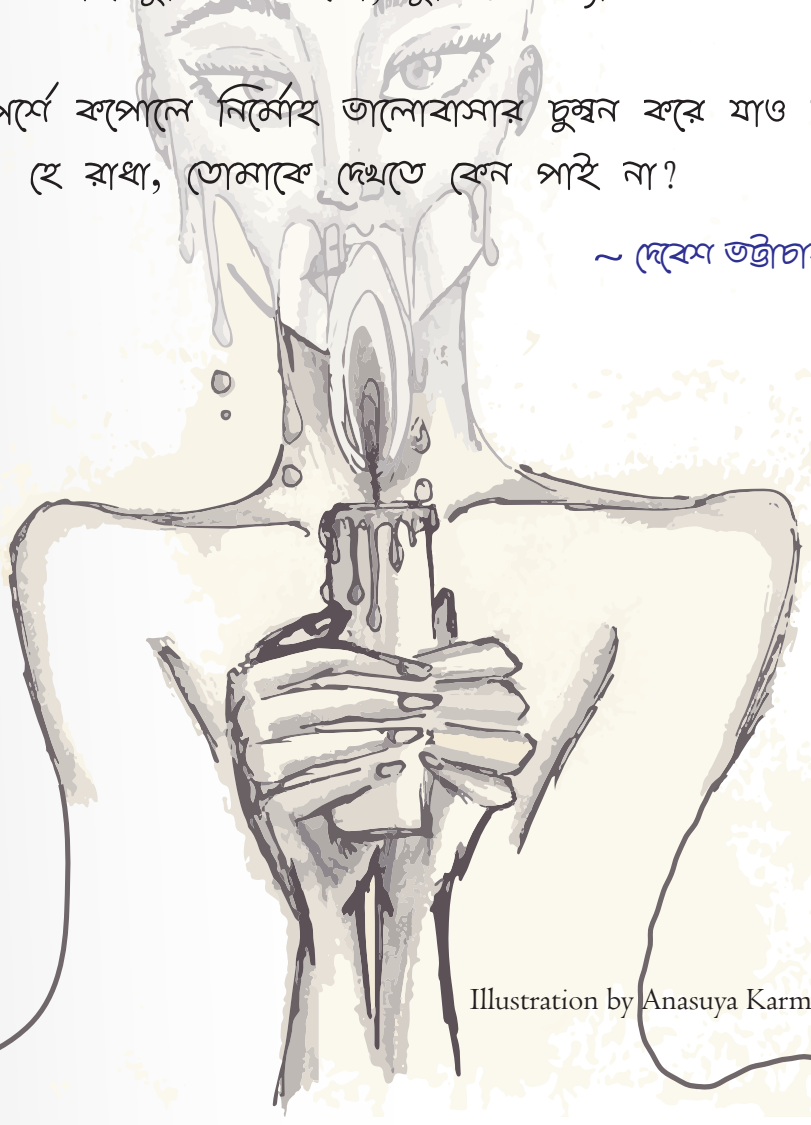


Illustration by Anasuya Karmakar

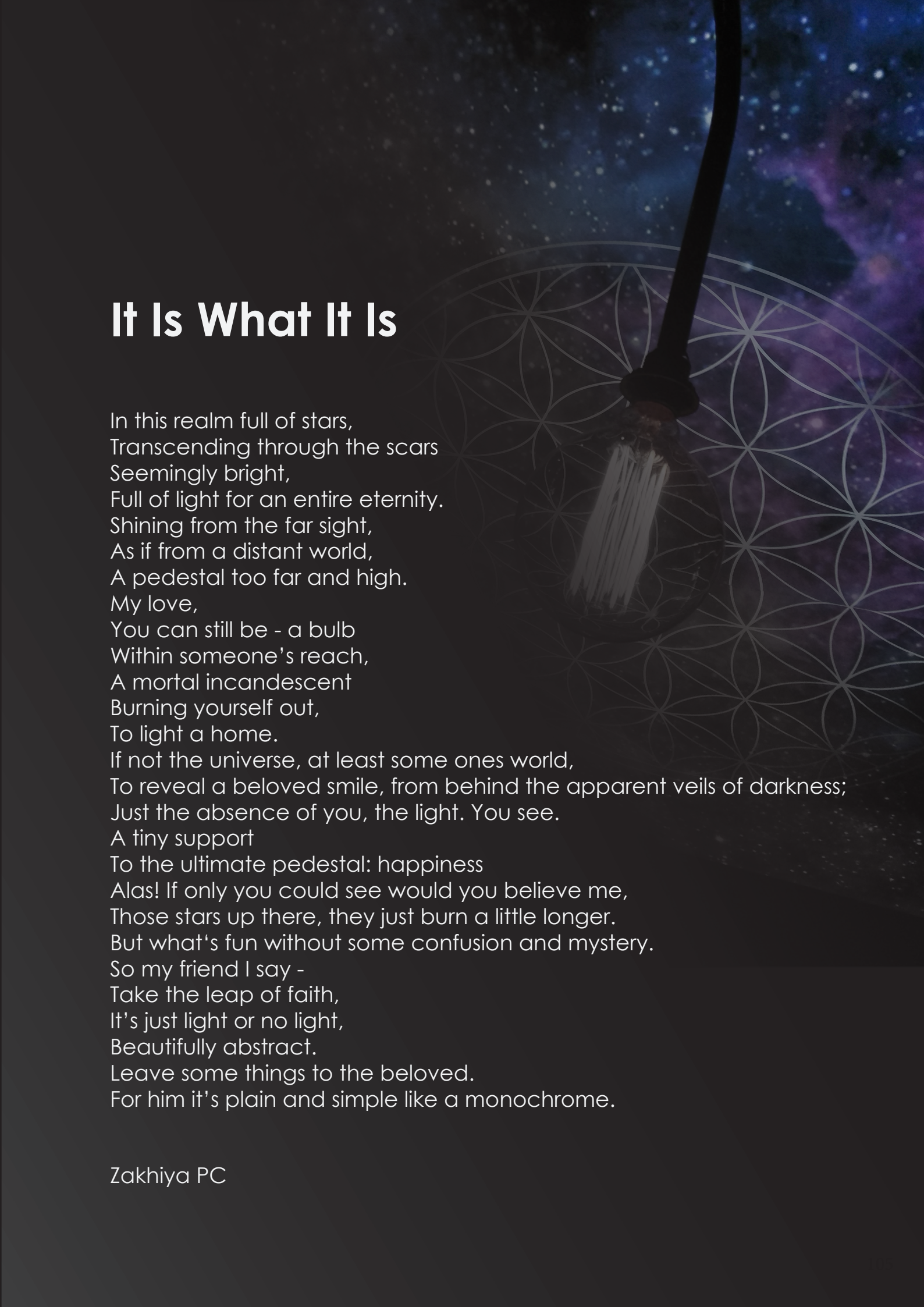
স্বীকারোক্তি

আমি সাদা কাক নই, রোজ
সকালে দুগ্ধস্নান করি।
মরা সৈনিক সেজে রাতে
লুটিয়ে পড়ার ভান করি।
দেখনদারিই বলা যায়,
আমার এই সহমর্মিতা;
দুবেলাই পেট পুরে খেলে
দুঃখ আসলে বিলাসিতা।

বাঁচতে জানি না তবু, জানো,
বাঁচতে শেখাই পলে পলে,
প্রতি রাতে কাঁদি বানভাসি,
স্নান করি আবার সকালে।
মাঝে মাঝে হাসি অকারণে,
মুখে বলি, 'ঢাকছি বেদনা,
এত চাপে আমি তো কাঁদিনি,
অতএব তুমিও কেঁদোনা।'
দেখনদারিই বলা যায়
দুঃখের সাথে বৈরিতা;
জীবনকে বুঝে নিতে চাওয়া ....
সেও শেষমেশ বিলাসিতা

~ Ayan Biswas ~

Illustration by Wridhdhisome Karar

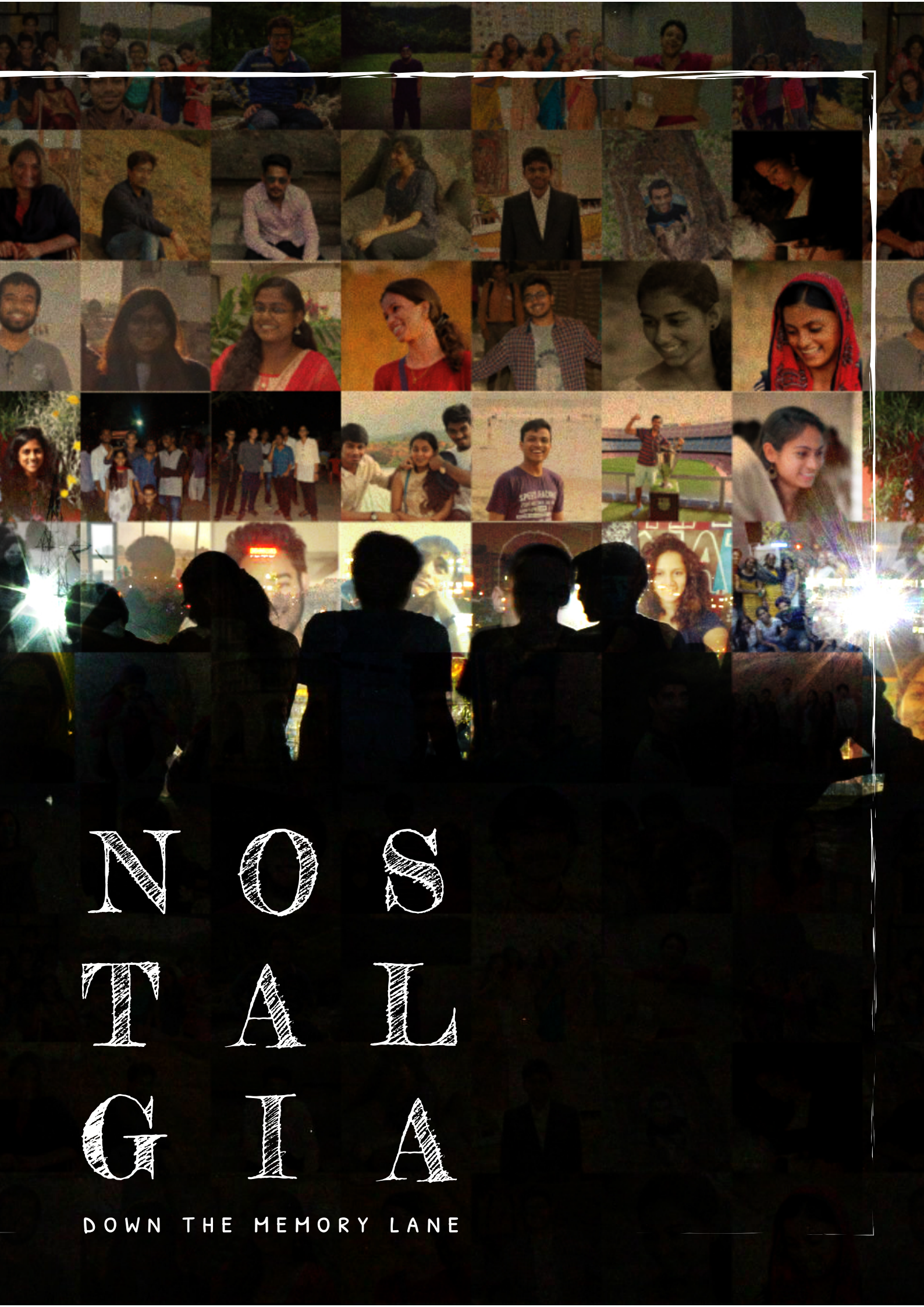


It Is What It Is

In this realm full of stars,
Transcending through the scars
Seemingly bright,
Full of light for an entire eternity.
Shining from the far sight,
As if from a distant world,
A pedestal too far and high.
My love,
You can still be - a bulb
Within someone's reach,
A mortal incandescent
Burning yourself out,
To light a home.
If not the universe, at least some ones world,
To reveal a beloved smile, from behind the apparent veils of darkness;
Just the absence of you, the light. You see.
A tiny support
To the ultimate pedestal: happiness
Alas! If only you could see would you believe me,
Those stars up there, they just burn a little longer.
But what's fun without some confusion and mystery.
So my friend I say -
Take the leap of faith,
It's just light or no light,
Beautifully abstract.
Leave some things to the beloved.
For him it's plain and simple like a monochrome.

Zakhiya PC




NOSTALGIA
DOWN THE MEMORY LANE



Ira Phadke

"We have so much time and so little to do. Strike that, reverse it."
-Roald Dahl



"The boundary is where it begins"



D.V.S.Datta

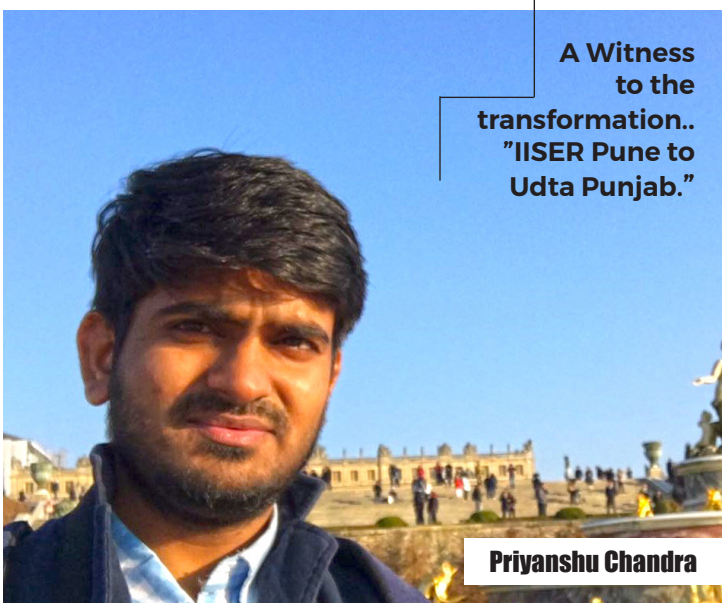
"If you're about to do something stupid, make sure there's nobody watching."

"Love IISERP for all the professional and personal experiences it gave me!"



Bharath Krishnan

A Witness to the transformation.. "IISER Pune to Udta Punjab."



Priyanshu Chandra


"You can call me Pundit. I make puns."
Mangesh Sonawane
"Keep smiling..:D..:D..:D"
Jewel Ann Maria
"Enjoy all you have while pursuing
all you want."
-Manii Kanade



Siddhartha Sohoni

IISER is where I could always make mistakes (and learn through them).



Prachiti Moghe

There can never be misshapen clouds or bad waves. They always do the right thing.



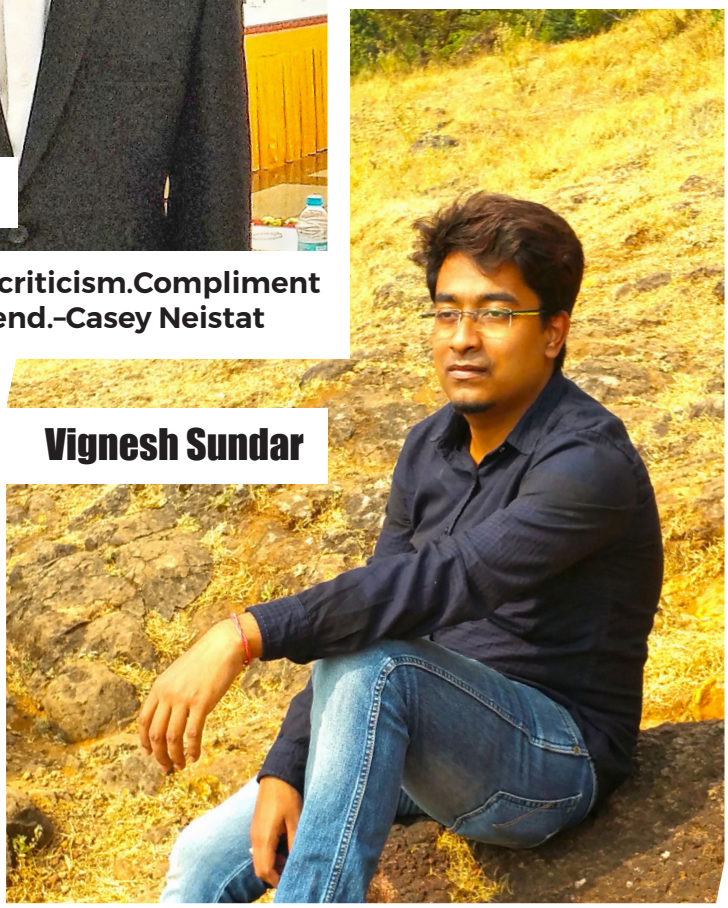
Aditya Kabra

Ignore praise,embrace criticism.Compliment is generally a deadend.–Casey Neistat



Amruta Nayak

A place where you grow



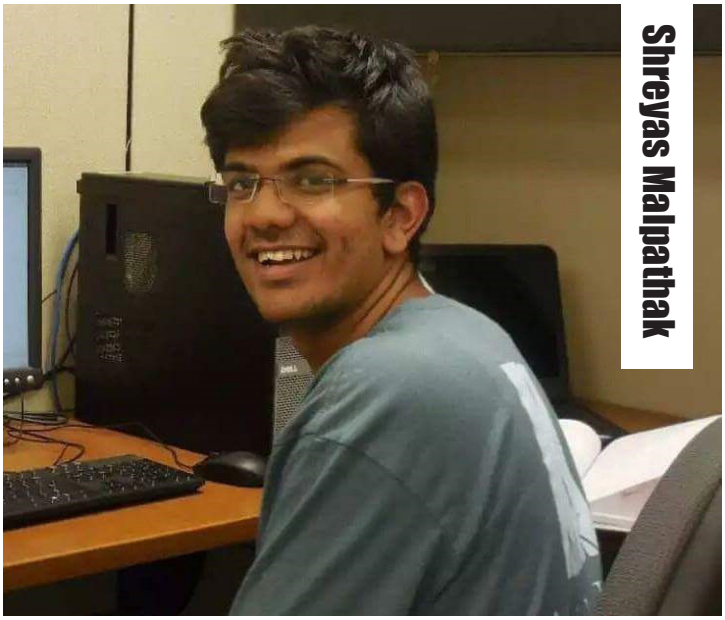
Vignesh Sundar

The one who looks different in every picture.

Bounded by unbounded memories



Kezia J An



Shreyas Malpathak

Almost all good things in IISER happen over coffee or after midnight.

Some infinities are bigger than other infinities.



Faseela E E



Bhupendra Charan

Skipping a morning chai and leaving a game unfinished is just not my cup of tea.



Amruta N, Prachi S, Sameer J, Snehal K



Tanmaya Sethi

We didn`t realize that we were making memories,we were just having fun.



Ghumne jana hai? Kerala chalte hai!! Chalega!!

Rahul, Aditya, Prachi, Chary, Gokul, Shreeya, Nidhi

"Zindagi jhandwa phir bhi ghamandwa!"



Abhishek Das



Mayank Kumar

A place where our feet may leave but heart will always be there.



Prachi S,Rahul B, Gokul



Shreeya Behera

"Bhai Bhai Bhai!!!!"

The late-night dance practice session and then attending 8:30 am class.







Mukta Joshi, Prachi Shinde, Ashwini Jadhav



Swathi Krishna. S

The best thing about memories is making them, and IISER is the workshop of mine.



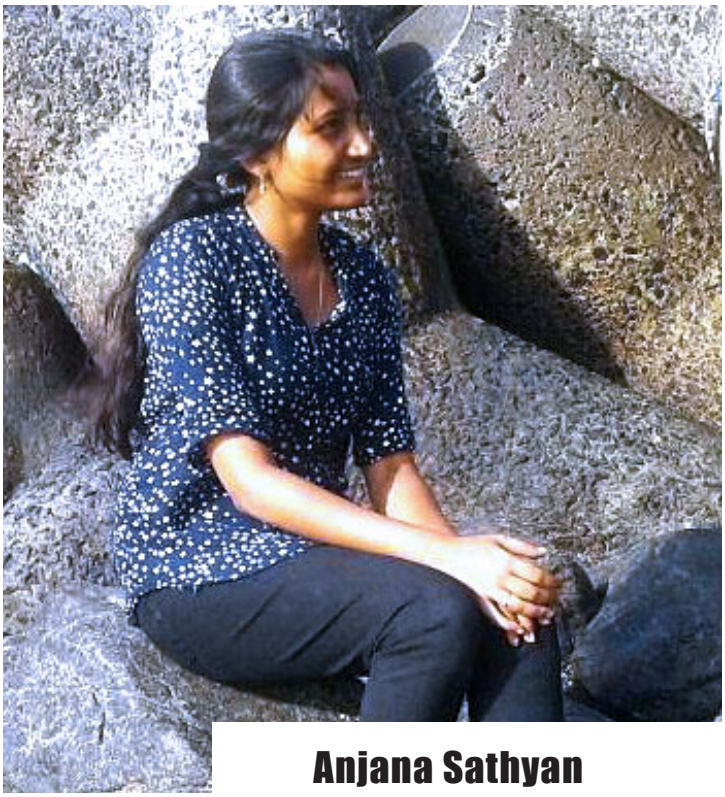
Divya Singh

"And this story, having no beginning, will have no end." - Clive Barker



Alma Mathew

Beautiful days, great memories & wonderful people; the journey has been amazing.



Anjana Sathyan

Some places look the most desirable when we walk away.



Prashant Uniyal

"When asked to choose a random number, choose 17. Always!"



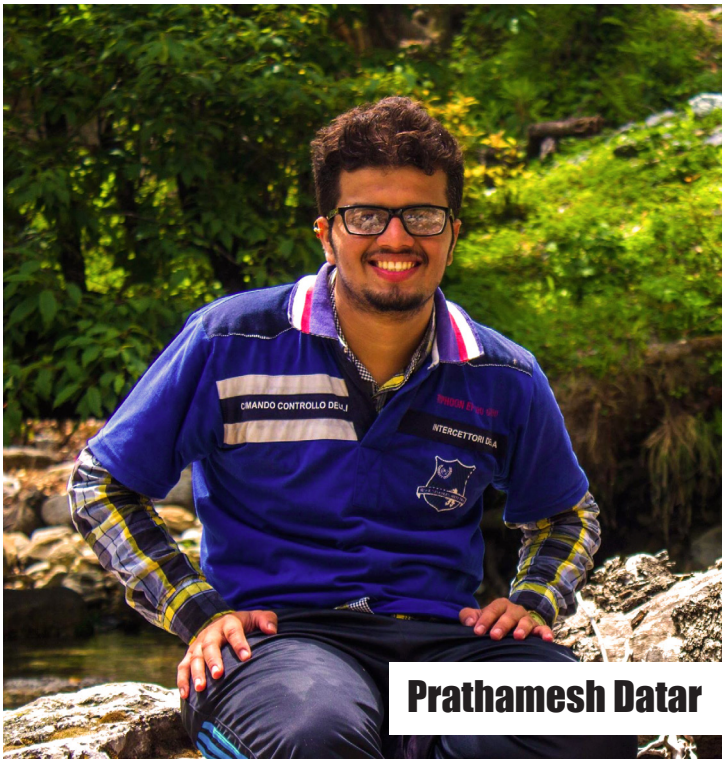
Karthik Prabhu

"master of none..."



Chinmay Timane

"Landed here without knowing how things would play out. But was a great journey."



Prathamesh Datar

"For all you have to do to win is rise each time you fall (DH Groberg)."

"IISER is where I discovered the true joy of Friends; that was one good TV-show !"



Spandan Choudhury



Rajat Kumar Sonkar

"The expert at anything was once a beginner"
- Helen Hayes



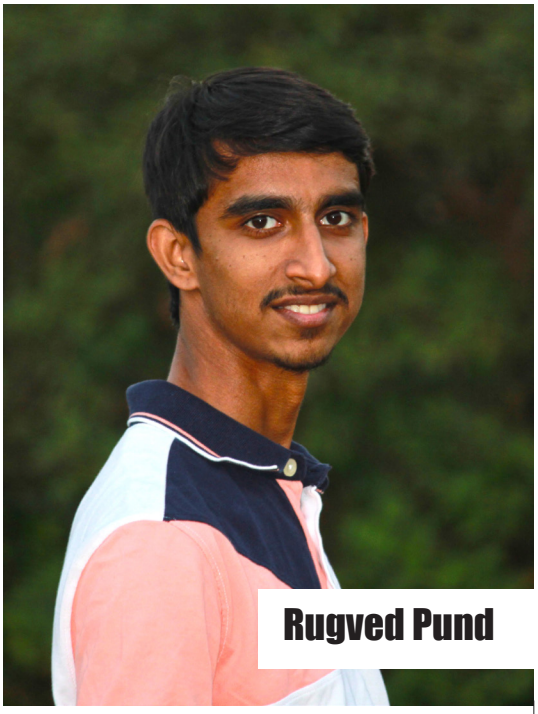
Khilav Majmudar

Bassist in the band which played "Into the void" by Black Sabbath.

Dheerendra Singh



"Here, I learnt how to live as a topper even if you are a mediocre student."



Rugved Pund

"Have fun and enjoy every moment :D"



^ Parijat Banerjee



Nagarjuna Chary

"Live under the assumption that God, if exists, hates you."



Mekhala Kumar

"My imagination is my polestar. I steer by that." - Clive Barker



Nandini Hazra

"It was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity."



Satvika B

"I would compare life at IISER to the feeling of passing in an unprepared exam!"



"My hovercraft is full of eels and seals."

-Prashastha Mishra



"There's no mood that some music, ice-cream and coffee can't fix."

- Vrushali Rao Gumnur



"OHANA"

Swetha Jos

Bijay Kumar Agarwalla

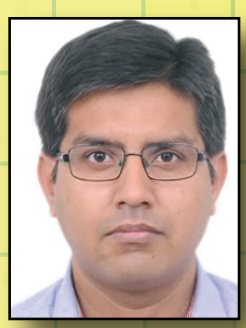


Knock, knock... who's there? Bijay. Bijay who? Let there be joy in the world.

Glasses perched on his nose, a keen gaze and a gentle smile, this physicist works on Non Equilibrium Statistical Quantum Mechanics (phew!) and loves to play tennis, table tennis and badminton (racquet-eer indeed). Although physics was his first and only love, he ended up in med school but eventually dropped it (obviously) to pursue his dream. Now he sits at IISER, in a sunlit room, glad to be working with youngsters and living by the motto "Simple Living, High Thinking."

Knock knock...who's there? ... Debdip... Debdip who?... Deb dipping drowsy diabolic dragons' drawers in dark, deliciously dotted donuts.

Scribbling away (though we guess mostly typing), in a cozy cabin lost in wonders of maths as all mathematicians do, his interests include the study of Partial Differential Equations, Nonlinear and Geometric Analysis, functional inequalities, spectral theory, heat kernel estimates and their equivalence on Riemannian manifolds for second order parabolic operators, cricket, and badminton. We are officially at a loss for words.



Debdip Ganguly

NEW

Vijay Kumar Chikkadi



Knock knock...who's there? Chikkadi who? Okay then, Adieu to you too.

A sober face, an intense gaze and a politely smiling physicist (there are more) greeted us as we walked in. He always hung on to physics as his goal, taking a detour into engineering where he discovered his profound love for colloids, and their application in studying atoms. His 'micelle'-aneous past interests included yoga and table tennis though now he has eyes only for his kids and colloids. Impressed by the state of art facilities for experimental physics, he wishes for maximum students to tap into these opportunities.

Knock knock...
who's there?...
Managave... Managave who?...
Manna, gave the all merciful Lord to thee simpletons.

Sitting inconspicuously at his work space (don't let this fool you) he has the world on his desk, literally. He recreates the climate of an age long bygone, exploring links between climate, geology and species distribution. His other interests include long distance running, travelling and photography. No matter what the weather.



Shreyas Managave

FACULTIES



Sachin Jain

Knock knock...who's there? Jain. Jain who? Gen-Z here to interview you.

An Amitav Ghosh book on the table and Vivekananda's sketch on the wall welcomed us, as he peeped from behind a sheaf of papers. Giving up his chair, jumping onto the table, the young and dynamic string theorist (yes, physicists everywhere) demanded his first question. Proficient in cricket, he plays tabla and yearns to master the flute (nope, no strings attached here). This physicist first found his heart in mathematics but was soon lured away by the Brief History of Time. A passionate teacher, he strives to make 3D movies for his students while admonishing their relentless rat race for marks. He wishes to imbibe the essence of Vivekananda's 'Don't fear' in himself and others around.

Knock knock...who's there?... Anand... Anand who?...An-end to you if you don't open the door soon.

Jovial and sarcastic, this passionate ornithologist is busy resurrecting the long forgotten field of organismal biology. He works with birds and bats and wants to make his way up the animal tree, thus stuck with the dilemma of deciding between "dolphins or dinosaurs".



Anand Krishnan

He loves devising elaborate social experiments (pranks) in his behavioral scientist's haven with a window that allows him to silently stalk those around him. The psychology behind impressionism in lithography is his current preoccupation. He finds IISER students' curiosity compelling (ah, such flattery!) and does not want peer pressure to clip our wings. His hobby is his work and he wants to have a sign that says "Do not punch this face" (quite a punchline, we must say).

Knock knock...who's there? Rahul. Rahul who? Aise kaise? Naam toh suna hi hoga.

Amidst stacks and shelves of math textbooks, we found our interviewee absorbed in something earthly (beyond our saintly souls). Basking in the new found freedom, away from the pinched burrows of industry, he happily compliments IISER and its fertile grounds for sprouting curiosity. He went on to explain his "terrain" of work i.e. inverse modelling - a rather fancy term which he explained to us as "MRI of the earth". He is in utter awe of the cultural mélange at IISER, and on a parting note warned us not to get too distracted, as the semester is short and full of terrors.



Rahul Dehiya

BS MS Batch 2017



iPhD Batch 2017



PhD Batch 2017

