

# SPARSH NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2020

## EDITORIAL

**Dear Readers,**

We are greatly pleased to compile and share this edition of Sparsh magazine despite the challenges of COVID-19. It was heartening to see the enthusiasm of our young learner of grades 2 to 5 as the entire magazine is driven by their creatively contagious and passionate writings. This becomes more important to mention as all this literary development occurred amidst the questions of effectivity of online learning. Well, it is satisfying to see how our passion to explore and express drove our learners to overcome all hassles. Have a good laugh with the poets of grade 2, trying humour poems or venture into the minds of the learner of grade 4 with their memoirs. That's not all, read some exciting stories in our 'Young Authors' section.

Also, meet our Parent Coordinator Ms. Lata Arora in the 'Spotlight' section where she sheds some light on how Manthan has evolved in its vision towards educating pupils.

All this and lot more is waiting for you in this edition of the magazine.

**Happy reading!!**  
**Sparsh Team**

## FEATURED ARTICLE

# THE PRISONER

SHREYA CHALLA

It all started with a single episode. A single episode didn't seem like much, at only forty minutes- without the ads, of course. Boredom had finally crept upon me after months of quarantine, which I honestly couldn't wait to be over with, and I had watched all the movies I had any interest in watching online, and was after something far more...

sustainable. That is, I wanted to find some television show that had run for at least ten seasons so I could endlessly fry my brain in front of the television instead of actually searching for anything. I clicked through the never-ending list of old television shows, mind still on the pasta I had had for lunch, until I saw something that mildly caught my interest: some old show about a group of friends and their adventures and drama, with- get this- twelve seasons. Sounded boring. But, I reasoned as I stretched out on the sofa like a cat, there

was a reason it was popular, and there were enough seasons to keep me entertained. Grabbing my tenth- eleventh?- packet of chips that day, I settled down among my pillows.

The first episode was done quickly, so quickly I almost felt cheated. Was that it? How many more episodes did I have to watch in order to find out who Morris' fifth wife was, and how on earth did that affect his marriage with his seventh wife? There seemed to be no other option but to watch the next episode, and the episode and after that, and the episode after that, and...

Before I knew it, the sky outside the window was dark and the moon was up. I had spent my entire day just watching this show, and I felt strangely... empty. Not happy, exactly, or even sad, but just... numb.

I sighed and tossed my head back, watching the ceiling fan spin around steadily. Hadn't there been an online meeting with my colleagues today? I frowned, wondering if I had really been so engrossed in some stupid, ancient show that I had forgotten about work. I toyed with the drawstring of my sweater, worry creeping into the crevices of my mind, but I shoved it all aside. Never mind. I'd just message them and tell them I was busy. Busy with what, goodness knew, since I couldn't even leave the house anymore, but it would do for now, as long as I didn't keep this up. Tomorrow I wouldn't even turn on the

television, I vowed. I'd finish all the work I'd skipped today. It would be fine, I assured myself as I got up to find something to eat.

The next day came, and I sat perched on my sofa, laptop in front of me, working. After hardly an hour, I sighed and pushed the laptop away, massaging my forehead. Could life get any more boring? Here I was stuck in my house working, working, working. My phone buzzed as messages from my colleagues came in, but I couldn't be bothered. What was the use?



My eyes strayed towards the blank television. Just one episode couldn't hurt, right? I needed a break, after all. Working continuously wasn't good for anybody. Satisfied with my reasoning, I turned on the television to watch just one episode. Those forty minutes passed in a flash, and soon I was staring at the tantalizing, blinking 'Next Episode' button on the screen. Well, you only live once, I supposed, and accepted.

Needless to say, I watched more than just that one extra episode. How could I stop, when I had finally found out who Morris' fifth wife was- and boy, was she a firecracker and that Leia's cafe might be shut down? Any reasonable human being with even the slightest emotional investment in these characters would continue. Could you even call yourself a real fan if you didn't?

For the second time, I sat in the dark, numb. My laptop had been long abandoned and my phone was going crazy with all the messages from friends, coworkers, maybe even my boss. Irritatedly, I turned it off and sat in the darkness, silent. The next day, I didn't even question waking up on the sofa and immediately going back to which episode I had left off at. Evidently, I reasoned, I was going to come back to this show every time, so I might as well just get it over with.

So that's what I did. Every day I would fall asleep on the sofa and wake up there and watch more episodes. Days slowly went past, but it didn't matter to me, to the point where I did not know what my name was. I would occasionally leave the couch to get another bag of chips from the kitchen, but eventually those ran out too. Instant noodles were my saviour then; but eventually I stopped cooking them altogether. The same things were going into my stomach whether or not I cooked them; there wasn't much of a point. Cooking was just a waste of time. The only logical conclusion was to eat the noodles raw, and since I couldn't be bothered to make anything else to eat, it only made sense to eat the noodles for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Why not?

Around season six, my phone stopped vibrating and calls stopped coming through. It seemed as though my colleagues and my boss had given up on me by now. No matter. At least the incessant messages wouldn't bother me anymore, though it was probably an unsaid fact that I had been fired by now. Or maybe it was said? Maybe my boss had messaged me to tell me I was fired? Whatever. I snapped my attention back to the television screen. As long as Leia's cafe didn't get shut down for the fifth time, it would be alright.

I had reached season thirteen when there was a vigorous knock at the door. I heard my neighbour's voice outside. "Come out! The quarantine is over! Do you want to go get some ice cream?"

Oh. The quarantine was over. Okay. I turned back to the television to finish this last season- then I could go out in peace.

A couple of hours later, there was knocking at the door again- my neighbour. "Hey, I'm getting a little worried so now I'm coming in with the spare keys you gave me, okay?" she called. I heard the jingle of the keys as she unlocked the door and opened it with a click.

As soon as she saw me, she recoiled, hand shooting up to cover her mouth. "What are you doing? It stinks in here!" She took a hesitant step closer. "How- how long has it been since you've taken a bath?! I- oh my goodness! Respond to me!"

Why was she disturbing me? I was on the last episode! Just wait for another forty minutes!

"And why are you staring at a blank screen?"

A blank screen? Couldn't she see the fight Leia and Morris were having? Couldn't she see the pain they were in? Was she blind?

"Who- who do I call? The police? The ambulance? Any relative?" When I didn't respond, her eyes widened and she whipped out her phone, stumbling outside to make some call, chattering at top speed.

I rolled my eyes and turned back to the television screen. The screen was blank. I could see nothing in it but my own reflection.



# SPOTLIGHT

## LATA ARORA Parent Coordinator

Ms. Lata Arora has been with Manthan as the parent coordinator and plays a pivotal role in fostering a connection between the parents and school. She shares with us her experiences, nostalgia, and work life in the times of pandemic.

Sriya: What are your fondest memories with Manthan as a parent coordinator?

Lata Ma'am: Well, I had originally joined in 2013. It is a courageous venture, as, my role as a parent coordinator involves high-end responsibilities such as facilitating clear communication and maintaining cordial relations between the parent and the school. I feel deeply honoured that I am being assigned this stupendous task. During my career, I have heard many



compliments. Parents would come to me in the parent-teacher meetings requesting me to not leave Manthan (laughs) until their child has graduated from high school and praise me as to how well I coordinate with them. I was gifted a diary by one of the students as a gesture of appreciation. I get beautiful handwritten cards for teachers' day and also hand-baked cakes during Christmas by one of our parents. These tokens of love, greetings, and wishes are some of the cherished and frozen memories I would carry with me for a lifetime.

Sriya-What has changed over the years in Manthan according to you?

Lata Ma'am: (Smiling) A lot has changed over the years: earlier the campus used to be at Madhapur, a cozy cove, and now it has shifted to Tellapur, a much wider campus. It has changed in terms of size and number of learners we train. Previously, we used to





# SPOTLIGHT

## LATA ARORA

have a small number of only 300+ students, now we have more than 1600 students. Most amazingly, we continue to grow academically as well physically. I have seen children when they were little, like in 4th grade and now they have ascended to higher grades. I have watched them grow and blossom. Our children are scaling new heights and Manthan is making a mark globally.

Sriya-Any specific challenges you have encountered while handling the online schooling environment.

Lata Ma'am: One main challenge has been gathering everyone online be it children or parents. But now, everyone is adapting, children are getting used to online classes and parents for meetings. All of us have learned the techniques to manage this situation and are gradually improving to do better.

Sriya:One thing/many things you miss about physical school?

Lata Ma'am: Kids. I miss the students- their peals of laughter, their lively chit chats, their carefree stroll in the corridors and their shrieks in the playground.

Sriya-What is your message to the parents of Manthan school children as a parent coordinator?

Lata Ma'am: I have noticed that a few parents are relieved while many are anxious, especially, in this pandemic situation where schools are yet to function physically. However, I believe that we can cope with this transition. Also, it is my request to parents to inculcate a few habits in their children's routines like making them rise early and engaging them in physical exercise, so they do not struggle to adjust to the usual school routine.

Sriya: It was wonderful talking to you ma'am. Thank you for your time.

**-Interview conducted by Sriya Ammanamanchi**



# ***AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY***

## **AMOGH 5B**

My feelings the previous day:

The day before I went to school, I felt extremely anxious. Would I fit in? Would I make any friends? As I slept, I was both comforted and troubled by these thoughts. Maybe I would make some friends. Maybe I would fit in.

The journey to school:

My journey to the Madhapur campus always started after my sister got on the school bus to go to the Tellapur campus, as she was in 8th grade at the time and I was in 1st grade. Then, I would get on a tuk-tuk with my mother. Towards the end of the journey, I didn't have to think about these because we encountered a particularly stinky road on the way to school. The good part of that was that I forgot about the troubling thoughts from the previous night.

The first day of school:

The tuk-tuk pulled out of the street and parked right beside the school. My mother bid me goodbye and told me to have fun. As I went inside the school, I saw a school bus parked outside. About a dozen kids rushed out. Every other kid knew the class, the classroom, and the time they had to be there...except for me. Just like that, there were butterflies in my stomach again. Every class that day, I was more anxious than the one before. I still felt like the new kid. I was nervous the entire day.

The memorable moment:

As the day came to an end, students who waited for their parents to pick them up, like me, sat in the school library and read, while others got on the school bus. I had always loved reading, and as I sat down amongst the rows of people, I felt a wave of calm come over me, as I entered a different world. I saw my mother waiting at the door. I took my bag and rushed to join her. School was nice. School was exciting. School was fun. School was great!

As I got into the tuk-tuk with my mother, my mind was filled with thoughts. Not troubling thoughts, like yesterday, but thoughts that comforted me, thoughts that excited me, thoughts that calmed me. I loved school... and I could not wait to go back again.



# ***MY FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL***

VAESHNAVI, GRADE 5 H

My first day of school, which was on June 17, 2014, was really fun. It was my first day in a new school called Manthan. I, Vaeshnavi, was only four and felt a little shy. I thought I was still too young to go to school! I had expected it to be embarrassing, but the day turned out to be full of laughter.

The night before, I had felt very nervous. I could not sleep. Since it was a new school, I wondered if I would make any friends and if the teachers would like me. I thought about how my class teacher would be and I hoped she would not be strict! I finally fell asleep, thinking how much fun I would have tomorrow.

The journey to school was not long. At exactly 7:15, I was walking to the school bus, with my mother holding my hand. As I boarded the bus, she let go of my hand and waved goodbye. The second my mom let go, I felt alone and scared. I looked out the window and soon calmed down. On the way, the bus picked up a few students on the same route. Finally, the bus stopped.

I had arrived at school.

Walking towards the school, my heart started to beat fast. I began to take deep breaths and walked to my classroom. Unlike what I had thought, the class teacher and co-class teacher were very welcoming. My class teacher's name was Asima Ma'am. My co-class teacher's name was Vaishnavi Ma'am. As it was the first day, the teachers let us play all day. I also learned a few letters of the alphabet and a few numbers. As a result, I had made many friends and had lots of fun.

One memory that stands out is when I received a golden leaf in senior kindergarten. It was my first reward. That day, the teacher leader had gathered everyone for an assembly and announced the reason for the occasion. Then, she called me upon the stage and handed me my golden leaf and appreciated me. The golden leaf symbolized good handwriting and imagination. The audience applauded for me. It was a truly happy day for me.

# War of Words

## THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

SHREEJA PALDE, 11A

Students packed their bags and teachers prepared lesson plans as the classrooms were cleaned once again. The field of education was yet again ready for the new academic year when, at the stroke of midnight, the world of enlightenment flipped because of the unstoppable pandemic.

Big black and blank screens replaced whiteboards; meeting IDs substituted tiring timetables and plain messages and meaningless emojis instead of chit chatting. Was this it? By the time students recognised the changes, lengthy lessons were completed. An EMT (Education Ministry of Telangana) survey says that about 84% of the schools are planning to continue virtual classes. Universalisation of online learning became an outcome of a global health pandemic.

And nothing will ever remain the same. The so-called “norms ” will surely start a fresh leaf in our lives and simultaneously keep reminding us we aren’t safe and sound. The teachers can never again tattle about the “noisy” kids and the children will be denied to even prattle without a mask.

The Covid Pandemic has undoubtedly set up a new tomorrow for all of us, but something like friendship and memories ought to remain the same in our hearts. Every field along with the world of schooling will change, but the distance we maintained has surely taught us to stay united.





# ***MY FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL***

**RAAGHAV MODUKURI, GRADE 5**

My first day at school was dreadful and frightful. When I arrived in the classroom, the first class, English, started off well because we were reading stories from our books. Our next period, Math, proved to be exhausting because it involved rigorous academic work. After that, in Science, we had to do even more academic work. Since at that time, I despised academic work, I started crying. It continued for the entire day. After that, I told my mother all about my horrendous day. Then, my mom encouraged me to study by making me think that academic work was fun. It took a while, but after some time, I started enjoying academic work. The previous night, the 12th of June, 2013 was exciting. My mother told me I was going to school and I was so excited and enthusiastic because I thought it would be all about reading books and fun and games. I could not sleep at all that night! The next morning, I got up at 5:30 AM. I quickly dressed in my clothes and did my ablutions. At 6:00 AM, I was ready and my mother took me to the bus stop at 6:15 AM because the school was far from my house.

The journey was amazing! It was the first time I was going on this route and there were so many parks, houses, skyscrapers, and many more fascinating structures. At 7:00 AM, my mom and I arrived at the school. It was called First Presbyterian Church Nursery School.

Once at school, the first class, English, started off well because we were reading stories from our books. Our next period, Math, was amazing as instead of academic work, we used Magna Tiles as our teacher wanted us to learn about carrying it. In our next period, Science, it was even more fun as we looked at different chemicals. Our final period, Social, was the best as we had to make a model of the Earth with screws and bolts!

One memory that stands out is when I came first in my exam. My friend, Sai Prabir, and I had got the same marks. Then, our Hindi Teacher entered the class, and we quickly advanced to her to ask her the marks. My marks were 54/60 and his marks were 55/60. At that moment, I felt extremely dejected as he had one more mark than me. After our Hindi teacher departed, our ICT teacher arrived. Sai and I rushed up to her and asked her our marks. Our teacher said that Sai got 56/60 and I got.... 60/60!! At that moment, my friends, Gunvir and Sourish, came and carried me on their shoulders. I felt like Sachin Tendulkar!



# ***MY FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL***

MIHIKA, GRADE 5D

It was my first day at Manthan School. I was excited and had butterflies in my stomach! There was a long line formed at the bus stop with children wearing Manthan uniforms. When I reached my school, I scooted up to my class- 3D. My class teacher and co-class teacher- Shruti ma'am and Kulsum ma'am introduced me to the class. When I sat at my desk, I was welcomed by a kind girl called Niharika. She showed me around the school and made a good companion. She was my only friend the whole year and I felt secure when she was around.

The previous night, I felt euphoric, for this was my first time switching schools. At the same time, I felt sad as I was leaving my beloved teachers. The teaching at Abode, my old school, was like playing. I could express all my feelings to the teachers and they would understand everything. I felt sad and happy at the same time.

On my first day at Manthan School, the journey was not a pleasant one. When I arrived at the bus stop, there was a long line with children pushing each other. When the bus arrived, there was a grumpy maid yelling at me. I couldn't understand a thing because she was yelling in Telugu. I looked around and I wasn't breaking any rules! The maid shoved me to a seat with grumpy children who were snarling at me. I felt tears welling in my eyes. I missed my old school and my happy classmates. Once I reached, I felt lost and lonely.

When it was western music, taken by Alen Sir, I experienced the worst nightmare of my life. He played one song multiple times, expecting the rest of us to memorize the song. When my turn arrived, I could only recollect a few words. he scolded me and told me to stand in a corner. My legs started hurting and I was trembling in fear. I missed my old school very much that day.

My most memorable time at school was the end of the term in third grade. The winner of 'Tent of Tales' was to be chosen. I knew I was not going to win because I hardly ever wrote the name of the books I read in my 'Tent of Tales' column. Suddenly, the teacher announced the winners. I could not believe that I had won bronze in the 'Tent of Tales.' My parents felt proud and I was delighted!

# War of Words

## THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

PRANAV ACHARYA C, GRADE 9A

The world we live in today stands as a perfect example of how we humans wander aimlessly in the uncertainty of time. Yet again, nature has shown how it can flip the tables in a jiffy, affecting everything, including education. This could be the most confusing time for students.

Day by day, the darkness of uncertainty starts to close in on you. Buses stop coming, and the chances of meeting your friends after summer start to fade. The days that started by getting ready for school, now start by switching on a big black ugly screen every morning. Schools and playgrounds stand silent and lifelessly accumulate dust as the days move on. Ironically the same device used for games and YouTube is now, being used to attend school. Minutes feel like years and your future seems to be a fathomless dark hole that Alice had once fallen into.

But in the end, every dark night needs to end, and we shall learn our lesson. No matter how rich or technologically advanced our lives become, we will always have fragments that link us to nature. The only thing we can do is to respect it. People shall learn not to take health for granted and shall continue to take the precautions they took in during the pandemic. Children shall grow to have more gratitude for what they have and hopefully everything will return to being normal. Nature has taught us yet again predicting something as uncertain as the future is a waste. Now, the future of education can only be left for time to decide.



# ***MY FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL***


SANJANA, GRADE 5D

My first day of school was hilarious. In Brooks Elementary School, there were a lot of new students, and my new best friend, so I wasn't that nervous. Since I like making a good first impression, I bought stylish new clothes, cool school supplies, and everything to make my school year easy. When I stepped into my class, with adrenaline moving through my veins, I stepped into the most colorful classroom I had ever been in. The day is going to be a blast. The night before, I could barely sleep. Thoughts running in my head like: What is my teacher like? Will I make friends? I was so tired in the morning, but after getting to school, I wasn't tired at all.

On the journey to school, the bus for me, I mostly talked to my best friend. I did notice some people though. Some of them didn't care about a good first impression, and it looked like they wore whatever was the least smelly.

The whole day, we introduced ourselves and played fun games, as it was the first day. I met my Math teacher, Mrs. Chasiyano. We played fun Math games in that one hour period. Overall, we didn't learn anything. My most memorable moment at Brooks was meeting my class teacher for the first time, Ms. Brueske. I have never met a nicer teacher before. We could relate a lot. Her favorite color was blue, like mine and she loves Harry Potter, like me!

That is how my first day of school went.



## Mini sagas

# THE FAIRY WITHOUT MAGIC

JOSHITHA REDDY, 3H

Long ago, there used to be a fairy land named Wonderland. Alagenda was the Queen of Wonderland. One fine evening, Alagenda gave birth to a little fairy without wings and no magic wand. She was so tiny like a honey bee.

Amila, the little fairy, had a lot of problems in her life. She could not fly and she hardly had any magical powers. So, from an early age, she used to depend on her friends. She grew up as a friendly, cheerful and a thankful young lady. So, naturally she made a lot of friends like turtles, frogs, fireflies, and honey bees.

One day, Alagenda decided to announce Amila, as the next queen. But the other fairies did not agree due to her disability and asked Amila to take a test of magic.

The little fairy became very sad and did not know what to do. When the news spread across the forest, hundreds of creatures were by her side and promised to help her with the magic.

On the day of challenge, the fireflies showed light during the night while the turtle and the frog created a rainbow during the night. That's how she was able to prove her magic. She was able to prove magic with support of true friends but not through magic wings and wand. She was made the Queen of Wonderland and lived happily ever after with her friends.







# ***MY FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL***

CHAVIV JAIN 5E

One memory that stands out in my eventful life is my first day at school. I had just completed preschool; was really ambitious and, in a way, scared. My curiosity knew no bounds. I really wanted to make some friends and have some company. I hoped that nothing out of the ordinary would happen. Little did I know what would follow.

The night before, I had many more thoughts. Since I was at home, I was a bit more mature, but at night, my fears were endless. However, I looked on the bright side. I would know more about the world. I would find a lot of people and hopefully make friends. I would go to another level. All these thoughts comforted me a bit and I decided to go to sleep. Before that, I told myself to try and be excited, to erase the negative thoughts. So, I went to sleep with a messed up head, which for me, is nothing short of a miracle.

The journey to school was strange. I tried to read my book and distract myself from all the feelings inside me. That did not help a lot, so I tried sightseeing. That too did not work out, and before I knew it, I had already reached the school. I looked around. It truly was crowded with children. To be honest, I was an introvert, and the enthusiasm of the kids told me that I was an introvert stuck in a world of extroverts. That is not an ideal position to be in for anyone. So, I silently trudged towards the school, trying to look as cool and calm as possible.

Once at school, on my very first day, we were going to the cafeteria to have our lunch. I was the first one to sit down on the lunch bench. Soon after, another boy from my class came by and sat right beside me. I moved more towards the right due to nervousness. However, the boy noticed that and told me that I was a bit too scared. He also told me to become calm and he would help me. That moment, I knew that I had found an amazing friend.

This was my most memorable moment at school. I will remember this for the rest of my life.

From there on, I felt really comfortable in the school environment. Nothing bothered me anymore, and my head was as cool and calm as it could get. Truly, that moment assured me that I would never repent from joining school.

# Mini sagas

## THE AXE SPANDAN, GRADE 4A

“Wow!” exclaimed David. He had just found an axe. “Let me show it to my father,” he thought. He ran to his house and showed it to his father. “This axe is good,” said David’s father after carefully examining it.

The next morning, they went to the forest to try the axe out. It cut very smoothly and they cut five trees that day. The birds hated the axe as they thought that it had cut too many trees. They had a plan. That night, the birds came to David’s house and took away the axe. The next day, David woke up and found that the axe was missing. He informed his father about it, but he did not look for the axe as he noticed the birds taking the axe. He realised his mistake and explained the same to David. David decided not to look for the axe and they lived happily ever after.





# ***MY FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL***

PRISHA, GRADE 5D

My first day of school in Manthan started with my mom waking me up and telling me to go to the dining table to eat my breakfast. It was on the 15th of November. I still remember the date clearly in my mind because I remember the teacher leader telling my parents, "She will be starting school from the 15th of November". I knew that it was the day I started school in India, and I was really excited. New friends, new teachers, new faces, new halls, and all those other fresh thoughts filled my mind.

The night before, I stayed awake for a long time. I missed my old friends in the States, but I knew that I would make many new friends, but I still hoped I would not forget my old ones. I tossed and turned in my bed. After a few minutes, when my mother came to turn off the lights, I asked her what I should do if I made no friends in school. She said that we would talk about it the next day, and told me not to worry about anything. She left me with my thoughts, and there were an awful lot of them.

In the morning, when I had gotten ready with my uniform and school bag, I headed outside. I felt like I had mice in my stomach. My parents came down with me. One of our teachers had told us to drive me to school on the first day, and as we had not gotten a car yet, we got an Uber and drove to school. I tried to memorize everything on the way. I wanted to know the route.

Soon, we reached school.

A teacher came and took my hand. She was my co-class teacher. She took me to my classroom and I saw a lot of kids looking at me. I went to the class teacher, and she talked to me about what we were learning, where I should sit, and what our timetable was. Soon, we had breakfast. I went to wash my hands and some other girls came with me and also talked to me freely. I felt really warm and talked to them too. We had breakfast, which was served on our tables, after which the classes started.

A memorable moment on the first day made the whole day seem like a joke. The smartest girl in the class, I don't remember her name, got up to do a Math problem. She used to take pride in her smartness and when the teacher left the class for any reason, to meet up with the teacher leader or another teacher, that girl would come up to the board and try to teach us the lesson. This one time, she screwed up. There was a problem that we all could solve easily, and she took a long time explaining it, but got the wrong answer! From that day, whenever the teacher asked the kind of question, everyone would look at her and start to giggle.

Eventually, I settled in my new school, and now I have many friends and know a lot of teachers.

# Mini sagas

## OLIVER'S MANNERS

SRINIDHI VEMPATY, GRADE 3H

Oliver was an unruly child who lacked obedience. He mostly got what he wanted, but his parents wished that he would learn good manners.

One day, Oliver visited his cousins, Clara and Mary. They chatted for a long time and played with each other.

Two days later, Oliver noticed their backyard. It was groomed with care. There was an apple orchard and more than a dozen trees had ripened apples. He dashed into the orchard and threw stones to get a few apples. He trampled many herbs and bushes.

Meanwhile, Clara and Mary's mother came with a basket of apples, gave Oliver a few and walked him into the house. She explained him that all the plants that he destroyed would take many weeks to grow back.

Oliver realised his mistake. His parents always wanted him to behave well. During the next two weeks of his stay at his cousins' house, he improved his manners. Before he travelled back home, he thanked his aunt for the apple jelly bottles that she gave him.



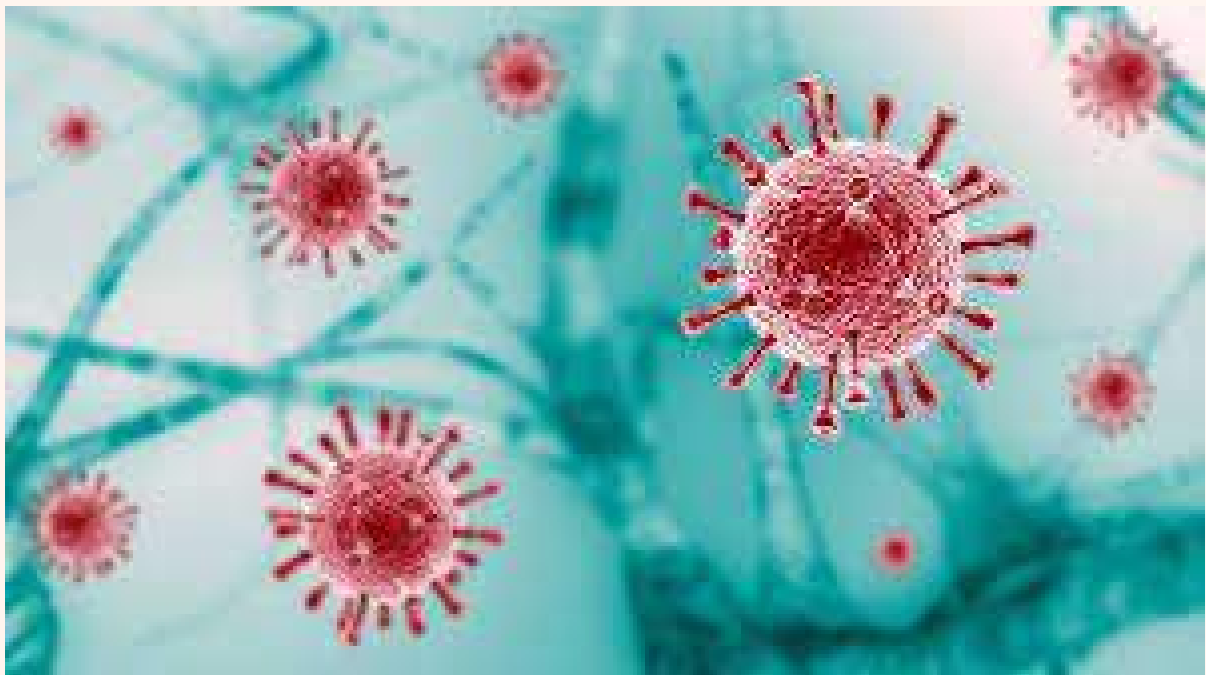
## Mini sagas

# THE ADVENTURES OF ISHA

EESHA HAMSINI DEEVELA-3D

There were three girls Tashi, Deksha, and Isha. They used to play together, but due to COVID-19 they couldn't play anymore. One day they got magical powers. Isha got an idea about how to use the magic powers. She called Tashi and Deksha to tell the ideas. They both exclaimed, "Wow! What a good idea!"

Isha's ideas was to make magical spices to treat COVID-19. The girls started making the spice with the help of a magic cook book. Soon it was ready. Isha, Tashi, and Deksha sat on the flying broomstick and gave it to everyone and saved the world.





# Book Review

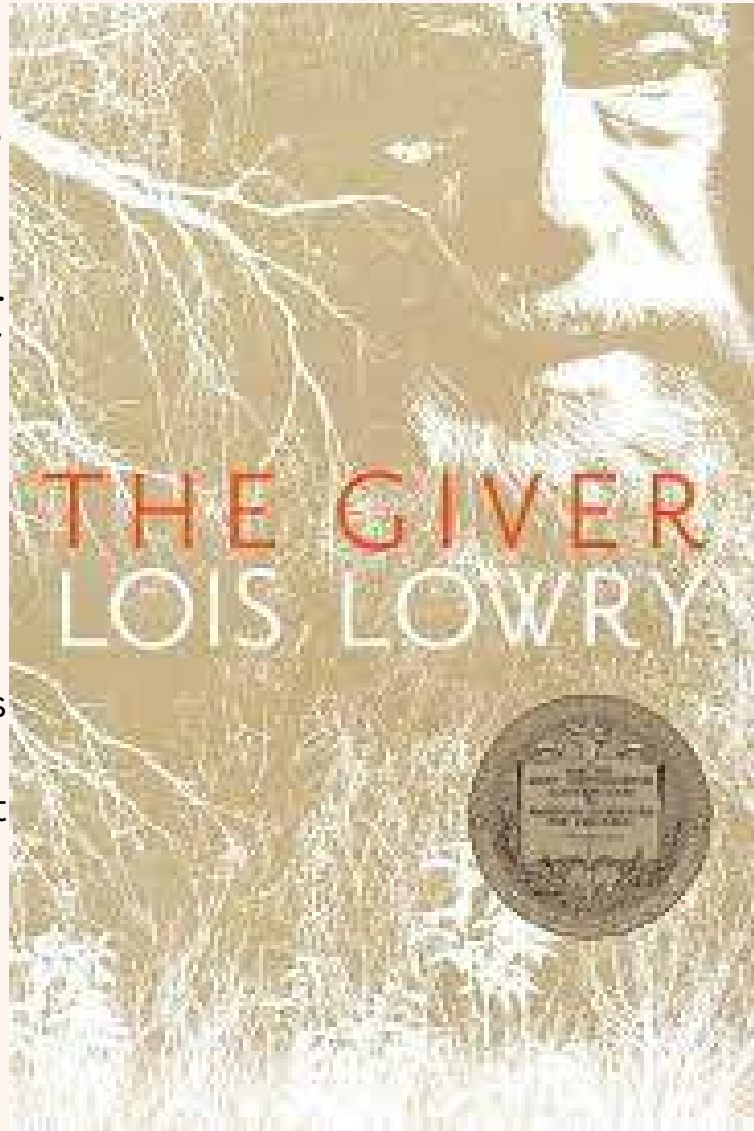
## THE GIVER

Sampurna Chatterjee, 7E

The Giver is a science-fiction novel written by Lois Lowry revolving around the themes of memory and importance of feelings like love, friendship, pain, anger, etc. The novel plays with a rather fascinating idea of how a perfect society isn't necessarily happier than a society with hardships.

I personally liked the book a lot because of its uniqueness of theme. Unlike most sci-fi novels, it doesn't write about the typical robots, time-machines, etc, but instead fascinated the audience with how a society where everything is organized and perfect can make the citizens bored and upset rather than contented. I really liked the main character, Jonas, and how the story was told in limited third person, from his point of view.

I would highly recommend the book to eight- eleven year olds. However, the book has a lot of implicit meanings and the older you are, the more you can discover about it. From a scale of 1 to 10, I would rate this book as 8.



# POETIC Minds

## SPRING FLOWERS

*Tanishka Gupta, 3B*

Spring is a beautiful season  
with the sun,  
People love the gardens and to  
have fun;  
All I have to do is to stare at  
the flowers,  
And the gardens in England  
beside the towers;  
The flowers always smile cold  
or hot,  
Drinking a cup of tea from a  
pot;  
Oh, I just love the mornings at  
spring,  
The birds chirping as I wear my  
ring;  
I hate the day when spring has  
to fade,  
I love my friend when she  
wants to trade;  
Blooming flowers how  
beautiful they are,  
Beauty of the countryside near  
and far;  
Spring is the season to sing a  
song,  
As the huge bell rings ding  
dong!  
All my friends love to talk,  
And a calm nature walk;  
All the colorful things I find,  
Spring is so pleasant and kind;  
Look at the sky above,  
Let this season spread its love!



# YOUNG WRITERS

## OUT OF SIGHT

SOMANSH SARANGI, 11B

The door creaked open slightly.

Moving as softly as a kitten, I slowly treaded out of my room into the hallway, shutting the door behind me and muffling it with a towel to prevent any sound. My eyes widened to accommodate to the pitch black hallway, and I started my tip-toe adventure to the laundry room with a single goal in mind: chocolate.

This was not the first time I had done this, and I doubted it would be the last. My late night video game sessions often meant my sugar cravings came deep into the darkest hours of the day. My wristwatch read, in luminescent ruby lettering, 2:46 AM. If my parents somehow discovered me awake at this hour, the descent of the gods themselves would not be enough to save me from the beating that would undoubtedly follow.

However, I was determined to escape undetected. Nine minutes of stealthy treading later, I found myself in the laundry room, and the gentle, calm snores of my parents from the adjacent room confirmed my success. I made my way towards the laundry basket, where my secret box of Oreos calmly waited for me.

However, just three steps short of arriving at my coveted Oreo stash, I halted suddenly. The warm, fluffy carpet under my feet was no longer the only thing I could feel. Under the littlest toe on my left foot, the cold, evil touch of metal travelled up my nerves. I glanced down and detected a glint of metal in the carpet, just adjacent to my toe.

Moving as slowly as I had until then, I bent down and tugged at the carpet next to my toe. To my surprise, dread, and utter bewilderment, the carpet readily came out in a large square shape, to reveal an unnervingly large metal square on the floor.

A bullet train of emotions speared through my mind: dread at what my parents would do if they found a huge chunk of carpet missing, confusion as to what this square could mean, since I had lived in the house for eleven years and never seen anything under the carpet except for dusty plywood, and also an unexplainable sense of childish curiosity, the kind of feeling the only hits in the middle of the night, when your mind craves mystery. I wanted to know what was underneath.

The few rays of moonlight coming from the vents in the corners of the room allowed me to see the corners of the square. Upon inspection, the square seemed to be a door, with grooves on the side permitting someone to lift it open. I hesitantly put my fingers on the grooves. The cold touch of metal almost stung me, making me stifle a sharp exhale. My heartbeat tripled.

I took a second to think. It was well past midnight; accidentally awaking my parents would put me in an extremely undesirable situation, to say the least. But some unexplainable voice deep inside my head kept nagging me to do it.

Against my better judgement, I pried open the door.

It was mercilessly heavy, and took every bit of my muscular power to lift the thick metal lid and rest it noiselessly against the wall.

Underneath the square was darkness. I could see nothing. Just pitch black air. Despite their efforts, the rays of moonlight from the vents revealed no secrets. I had absolutely no perception of how deep it was. It was only empty space. I slowly, cautiously lowered my arm into the door space, in an attempt to judge the depth.

And I fell.

In my mind, the space would not have been more than one or one and a half metres deep. But as soon as I descended my arm into the ebony space, my whole body lost balance and I tumbled ungainly into the hole.

# YOUNG WRITERS

## OUT OF SIGHT

I must have been falling for two or three seconds, with nothing but intense fear flowing through my mind. Eventually, I landed on solid ground. Pain impaled me like a knife, and a sharp burning sensation possessed every limb in my body. I had managed to fall on my back only, and my head took minimal damage, which was fortuitous. With my back on the ground, I stared upwards. I could vaguely make out the square pattern of the hole I fell through. It seemed miles, miles away. Gingerly, I tried to get up.

Thankfully, I was able to move my upper body enough to assume a sitting position, but not without the feeling of boulders weighing on my limbs and chest the whole time. I let out an audible groan, no longer concerned about stealth, since my body thumping against the floor might have woken up my parents already.

But the floor of what? For the first time, I tried to survey my surroundings, but the absence of light meant I could see nothing but pitch black. I had no idea where I was. Our house didn't have a basement, meaning I had to be in some undiscovered room under our laundry room. A sinking feeling settled in my rapidly beating heart.

How would I get out of there?

It was dead silent; even the rustling sound of outside trees and bushes that I could hear from the laundry room was absent here. My sporadic breaths and the thuds of my heartbeat were the only sounds in the room.

Painstakingly, I got to my feet. By some stroke of good fortune, my legs were perfectly fine, indicating my upper body took all the impact.

I started moving forward. The surface under my bare feet was rough and sandy, as if it was made of cement. A sinister chill ascended my spine. I felt like a protagonist in a horror movie: stuck in an unknown setting with no place to go. But then, just a few steps later, my foot hit a solid wall.

From the tiniest of light rays entering whatever small underground room I was in, I could distinctly make out the pattern of a staircase. Out of the ocean of panic in my mind, a small fish leaped out. Was this my way back up?

My chest resisting every step, I started to ascend the staircase. What must not have been more than two minutes felt like two hours. Flares of agony burst through my ribs with every step, and I could picture the ugly wince forming on my face.

Eventually, I reached the top of the staircase. I had gotten to about ceiling height, with my head brushing the rough cement. I tentatively reached out my hand and touched the ceiling above the stairs. With a jolt, I realized that it was an identical metal square to the one I fell through. This meant I could open it.

Using my shoulders and head, since my arms were likely to snap off if I applied force to them, I pushed upwards. The metal lid flopped open and banged hard on what appeared to be, to my relief, the floor of my house. The noise was muffled, though, thanks to the carpet. I popped my head above to see... my bed stand.

Least of all was my surprise at the fact that there was a doorway to a hidden basement in my room, because the writhing pain in my upper body demanded my immediate attention. In two minutes, I flopped my body up onto the carpet floor, and used my feet to slam the door shut. At this point, my parents had probably already awoken and were on their way to exterminate me, but the excruciating agony in my chest didn't let me think of anything else.

I never even got to eat my Oreos.

*The End*



# Book Review

## ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

Pavitra Nannapaneni, 7F

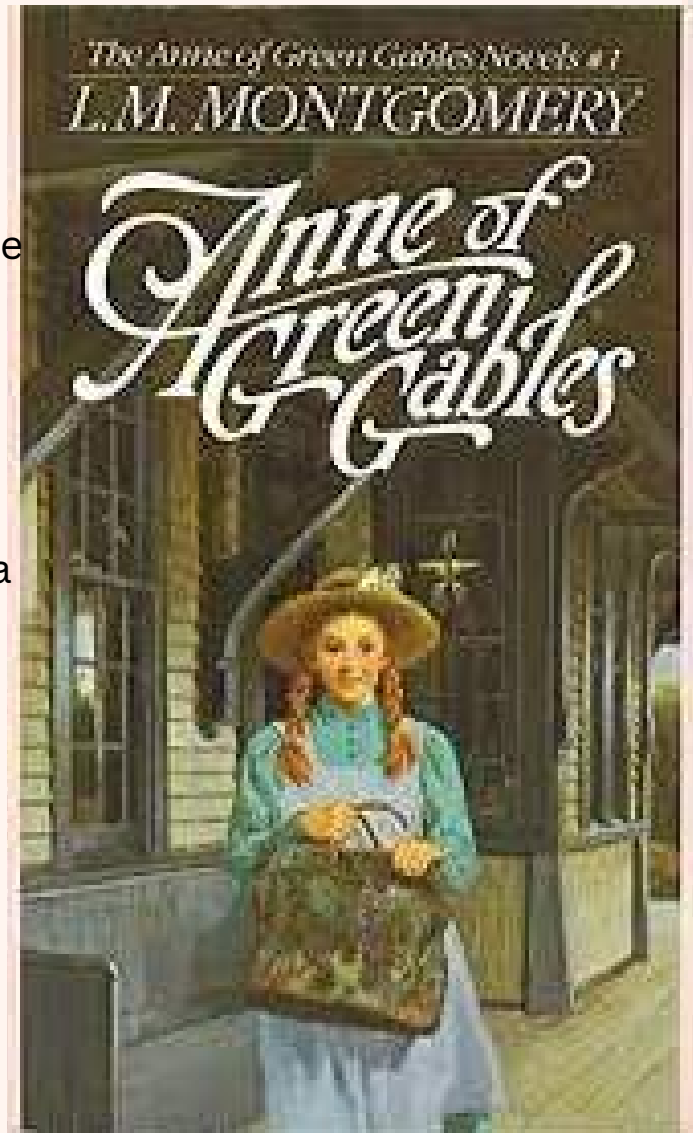
Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert of Green Gables decide to adopt a boy to help Matthew with fieldwork.

A misunderstanding takes place and Anne Shirley is sent from the asylum instead. Marilla initially decides to send her back but with a little bit of persuasion from Matthew and a little bit of mercy, Marilla concludes to let her stay.

The book is a captivating narration of Anne's adventure by skilled tale teller LM Montgomery. It elaborates on Anne's struggles and joys in settling into Green Gables. She soon comes across a beautiful, young girl, Diana Barry, who

immediately becomes her bosom friend. She begins a rivalry with Gilbert Blythe in academics and is fighting for the Avery scholarship before she knows it, to avoid being a burden on Matthew and Marilla and also to beat Gilbert. Read the book yourself to see what happens next.

I would rate the book a 4 out of 5 and recommend this extraordinary tale to 11 to 12 year olds.





# YOUNG WRITERS

## MIA'S DILEMMA

Aruna, 4A

Mia was a seven-year old girl who lived in a house near the woods. She was very brave and liked to take up adventures. One day, when Mia was playing in the garden with her ball, she kicked it so hard that it sprung into the woods. She was terrified. That ball was a present from her parents! Her parents would be cross with her if they knew that she had lost the ball and heartbroken.

Mia knew what she had to do. She bravely went into the forest to find her ball. She started searching for her ball. She was so immersed in searching for it that she forgot her way home. When it was dark, she was cold and hungry, but couldn't find her way back to home. So, she made a bed with some fallen leaves and slept for the night.

The next day, Mia woke up hoping to find her ball. She wandered on, worried that she would never find her way home. With her shoulders hunched, she went on. Suddenly, something caught her attention from the corner of her eyes. Mia went closer to investigate.

Imagine the surprise when she noticed what it was! "My ball!" squealed Mia. She had never been so happy in her entire life. But when she turned around, she didn't know where to go. Mia was horrified. But still, she kept her calm and walked on. Just then, she looked back and saw her footprints. And then, she had a great idea. "If I follow my footprints back, I will reach home," she said. So, she started following her footprints back.

When she reached home, it was almost six o' clock in the evening. Her parents were so happy to see her again. From that day on, Mia decided to tell her parents whatever happened and never to go into the forest again.

*The End*

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE BEAMING BIRD OF DREAMS

AANYA DURGA KANIGICHERLA, 7E

One day, when the world was still very young, God looked down and saw a magnificent bird. The bird was beautiful and had shimmering feathers. They were bright red and golden in color. They shone like the Sun himself. The beautiful danced about and caught the attention of God. Allured by its beauty, the God exclaimed, "Glorious bird! You should reside with me in Heaven, and be my messenger."

The bird heard God summon her so she flew up and above until she reached Heaven. Unlike most, she was unfazed by the mesmerizing beauty and the magical aura of Heaven and God. Heaven was made of the clouds themselves.

Iridescent glitter sparkled all around and it seemed like a whole new world. The bird elegantly walked to God and he made his request, "Would you like to be my messenger? You are perfect for the job and not everyone gets this opportunity." The bird readily agreed, "Thank you, your Highness. I would be delighted to serve you." Denisia, as God had named her, now had a purpose and one sole duty.

She was taken to Granda, where she would be transformed. God took a tiny cork bottle and gestured to the bird to take and drink the liquid inside. Once she did, her life changed. She saw the world in a whole new light and there was a visible shimmer that coated her whole body.

God gave her a list of instructions, they were:

She was to travel at night only, she had to visit as many households as possible, she had to pluck a feather from her body to provide a dream to someone (the liquid would numb the pain) and she was to make sure that no one saw her.

She diligently followed all of the instructions. As the years passed, she got weaker and weaker. The shimmer was starting to fade and travelling only got harder. Hearing her hardships, God made a decision to give Denisia a part of his soul. It was an excruciating process but it was worth it as she had stuck by his side all these years. She gratefully accepted the gift and never failed to disappoint.

On one night, God realised. She deserved a gift. She had worked hard all these years but never complained. He couldn't decide on what to give her. Then, an idea struck. He thought, "What if I gave her a home here? She's always travelling... She would be very grateful."

Her reaction was priceless. She was shocked. No one had ever been given a permanent place in Heaven alone, forget about his palace! She readily accepted and proceeded to thank him continuously until her house went hoarse.

They both still live happily in that same palace. Every night Denisia comes to see each and every one of you, delivering dreams to aid your soundless sleep.

*The End*

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE MAGIC DOOR

PRISHA BANERJEE, 5D

Once, in the busy city of Dubai, there lived a young girl named Mia. "Mum! I am going for a ride on my bike... I will be back in half an hour! Bye!" She said to her mother, one evening. She had planned to go on a ride on her new bike that afternoon, to test it out. Mia grabbed her bike from behind the doorway and rode it outside. "This works perfectly!", she announced, happily. Then, she rode it to her community park, to show her friends.

She was so lost in her new cycle that she did not notice what was coming in front of her. Suddenly, a door appeared out of nowhere and she had no time to turn left or right, so she flew through the door and onto the other side. She was astonished of what she saw.

On the other side was a busy road, and the cars didn't look like they are even from this generation...maybe she had time travelled... "This is weird! How did I time travel from my community park?"

"I must go tell my friends!" She said, getting extremely excited. She was wet too, and her nice, new top was completely ruined. "I don't care about it...I need to get the word of the magic door around"

The next day at school she told her best friend, Anne, about the "Magic Door". "What!? No, that cannot be true. I know you are lying!" cried her friend

Mia was irritated. She protested, "It is true. Okay, today afternoon meet me in the community garden. I will show it to you!"

"Ok! I will see you then!" Said her friend, with a serious face, but dancing eyes. She giggled and ran along to her classroom.

Mia was now angry. How could her best friend not believe her and make fun of it! She did admit that it was a little unbelievable, but her friend need not laugh about it. She ran to her class in a temper.

That evening, Mia took Anne to the magic door. "Now, you come over to this lonely spot, where I tripped on yesterday, among these roots, and- there it is!!"

Anne looked, her heart in her mouth. There was the magic door, as magical as ever. "But how did you- "

"I was cycling here yesterday evening. I wasn't looking so I flew through the door. Come, I'll show you what's inside!" Said Mia, feeling proud of herself on finding this precious item.

This time, there wasn't a busy, dark road on the other side. There was a beautiful, aesthetic garden!

"Wow! This place is beautiful!" exclaimed Anne. They walked around the garden, stopping and admiring everything.

"There can't ever be so much greenery in Dubai, right?" Asked Mia.

"Never. Hey, look at that!"

"Where? Oh wow, doesn't it look cozy!"

"That" was a tiny little hut in the middle of the garden. It looked nice and warm and cozy. They longed to go inside and have a little rest. But they realized that it was getting late and they should get home.

"Mia, let's go home. I am a little tired. We will come back next time." pleaded Anne.

"Alright, I don't feel like staying all night here, either. Let us go."

They started walking. Wait, was this the right way? Surely, they must be near their little doorway now? They walked on.

No, this could not be the right way. They didn't recognize anything. After a while they came upon a large patch of grass.

"Here! The door was here! Don't you recognize this spot? But where is the door?!"

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE MAGIC DOOR

There was no door to be seen! "Now what to do!" Cried Anne. "I don't know either. I Maybe we should go back and ask help from the little hut."

They traced back their footsteps. Soon they reached the little hut. They debated whether to knock or just enter. They thought it would be a good idea to knock. So, they did so. A young boy opened the door. He looked like a pixie. "Do you want mum? I could get her for you!" he asked

"Yes, we would like to meet your mother, please," answered the reliable Mia. The boy scuttered along. They expected to see the normal of mothers, hair tied up high, hard work worn hands, tired look. But they were wrong.

After a minute, a young lady appeared at the door. She had a face as pale as the moon, lips as red as a rose, eyes as blue as forget-me-nots in the summer, blonde long hair, and the warmest smile anyone could ever have. A slim neck supported this pretty face, like a stem supports a flower. The girls forgot their manners and simply stared. Then Mia started talking.

"Good evening," She said, politely. "We, er, came upon this place using a, a doorway. But when we came back after exploring this garden, we couldn't find it anywhere. Could you help us?" "Did you use the magic door?" Asked the lady. "Yes, I believe we did." Answered Mia.

"Well, you see, it's a long story, but I will tell it to you. I, here, am a magician. So is all my family. That door is made by me. I needed a safe place for my children, so I made such a place."

"I live here all the time, but that door roams around to different places, leads to different things, so I believe that the door has moved on now, and you can't get home. But don't worry, I will grant you three wishes, and you may wish for anything.

"Well, we would want to get home" Said Mia

"We want a happy life" Said Anne

"And?" asked the fairy

The girls thought. "Whenever someone's pocket is empty, it will be filled up in no time."

Alright! Let me create the spell. I need a piece of a star, a breath of a rose, a chunk of moon, some blood from the rivers' souls, and-

The next second, Mia found herself in bed. "Was it a dream?" then she remembered something. She went to the table grabbed her purse, opened it, and, and...

"Gold coins!! How! Impossible!" She exclaimed

"What? What gold coins?" Asked her mother, rushing in. She had been startled by the sudden shout.

"Here! Look!" Her mother's jaw dropped. "Wow, this is brilliant!"

Well, we will leave off now here. Sometimes you just have to imagine, imagine, imagine, and soon that "imagination" wasn't just an "imagination" anymore, but a real, real, happening!

*The End*



# POETIC Minds

## FUNNY POEM

*Vansh, 2G*

Once upon a time.  
I made a rhyme.  
I saw a bunny, He looked funny.  
I gave him an appy, He felt very happy.

## THE BOY

*Shruti, 2G*

If you ever meet a boy,  
Don't give him a toy.  
Even if he asks for one,  
Just say, "I have none."  
Or give him a bun.

## THE WITCH

*Aafiyah Shaikh-2D*

There was a poor witch  
Who lived in a small ditch.  
Her clothes were strange,  
Because she never changed

## THE GARDENER

*Amyra, 2C*

There was a gardener with a can.  
Who said it looked just like a pan.  
His daughter's name was Dobby,  
And they lived in a lobby,  
They wanted to go to Japan.  
There was a man not too small, Not too big.  
And he loved to wear his wig,  
His country's dance was the jig jig,  
And his pet was a pig.

## MY FUNNY POEM

*Prisha Patel, 2F*

I was cleaning the floor,  
I heard a knock on my door.  
I saw a pig snore,  
He told, "I need some flour."

## THE CAT

*Pranshi, 2G*

There was a cat,  
Who was fat.  
He sat on a mat.  
It wore a hat,  
And got a bat,  
To hit the rat.

## THE DOCTOR

*Aaryukt Deshala, 2B*

There was a doctor named Gru,  
Who loved to wear brown shoe.  
He created a minion army,  
Whose ideas were always barmy.  
There was a naughty boy Noddy,  
Who became all muddy.  
When he fell in a puddle,  
That is how he got into trouble.

## MY VOICE

*Vihaan Kulkreja, 2B*

I don't like my voice rough,  
I find talking tough.  
My throat makes gurgling sound,  
And I growl like a Hound.



# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE BOY'S DILEMMA

MOKSH VIVEK RANE, GRADE 4G

There lived a boy in Africa named Chukameka. He lived close by the woods. It had been a long time since he had visited his Grandma, who lived in a far off village.

One day, he decided to pay a visit to his Grandma. It was a long journey but he finally reached the village. The moment he saw his Grandma, he ran off and hugged her. He was so happy on seeing her after a long time. He refreshed himself, ate food and asked, "Grandma, can I please go out and play in the woods?"

"Hmm," thought Grandma for a while. "Okay, you can go but don't go too far from the house." Chukameka further asked, "Can I go alone?" His Grandma said, "Okay, but on one condition: do not stay in the woods for too long." He said, "Okay, I promise I won't."

Chukameka walked from the house and noticed that there were two paths. The one to the left led to the woods while the other on the right led to the village. He threw breadcrumbs along the way so that he wouldn't get lost.

While returning from the woods, he noticed that the breadcrumbs had been eaten away by someone. He then saw a third path! He sat there crying, waiting for someone to help him.

While he waited, he thought, "There's a third path here and I don't know where it leads to." He then remembered what his Grandma had said. "If I choose the wrong path, I may be in danger."

Finally, when all hope seemed lost, he saw a trail of smoke coming and wondered what was happening. He followed the trail and after passing through many trees, he saw the village!"

Chukameka was delighted to see the village again and ran to his Grandma. He said, "Grandma, I am back." The moment she heard it, she was so happy and proud that he had finally found his way out of the woods. Chukameka then left to his home and lived happily thereafter.

*The End*

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE BLUE ROOFED HOUSE

JONATHAN FERNANDEZ 9B

Surprising Samarth, the rich aroma of cooking spices had wafted from the Blue Roofed House. The house was left unoccupied for years with the 'For Sale' sign hanging lopsided around the house. Samarth was curious, and wondered what was going on.

He went across the road, and knocked on the door. It swung open, revealing a warm and cozy looking house. The fireplace was lit, and there was a beanbag in front of it. On the beanbag was a book. The house was awfully welcoming, and he felt an unexplainable urge to go in and sit in front of the fireplace. But more welcoming than the fireplace and room, was the aroma of cooking. Whatever was cooking had a smell which made him tingle in a most pleasant manner. Before he could enter, he heard a voice saying, "Come in!"

Without thinking straight, he went in. He advanced toward the kitchen and came across a man cooking. The food smelled heavenly. The man stood still as a rod, his back facing Samarth, but his head turned a full 360° and stared at Samarth, his eyes piercing right into Samarth like blades, and asked, "Would you like some? It's my specialty!"

Samarth screamed and ran out of the house. He glanced back and saw that the man was crawling all over the walls. An absolutely horrifying sight. Samarth ran back to his house and slammed the door shut, and then locked it. But on turning around, he made a shocking realisation. It wasn't his house!

This house had the interiors of the Blue Roofed House, but this time, everything was blue. All the furniture, the walls, everything! They were different shades of blue. This version of the house wasn't cozy looking despite being the same, but it was off-putting. The very nature of the house shook him to the core. It made him tremble, not physically but psychologically. The very sight of the colour blue tormented him. Just as he turned to open the door and get out of the creepy house, the house stretched, growing unnervingly taller and longer. The door was too tall for Samarth to even reach the knob, and the hallway was as long as a football field. However it didn't feel like a football field, but rather a graveyard strewn with unburied corpses.

Samarth felt like an ant. Suddenly, from the ground, emerged the man, from the Blue Roofed House, looking scarier than ever. The man looked like an angry caricature gone wrong. His body was severely stretched and twisted like an inhuman contortionist. Samarth thought that the house seemed to shift and distort everything, including its own dimensions. "You're in my world now!" roared the man, his voice echoing through the corridors like a bell being tolled. The echo hit Samarth like fingernails on a blackboard, and pierced his soul. Samarth ran as fast as he could across the long hallway, taking long strides while thinking to himself, "I'm only fifteen! Why is this

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE BLUE ROOFED HOUSE

happening to me?"

The man chased after him, running on the floor, walls and even ceiling, all the while taunting Samarth, saying that escape was futile. No matter what the man said, Samarth knew that he had to try.

Samarth finally reached the end of the hallway, in what felt like hours, and came to a blue backyard. He jumped right in, relieved at the possibility of an exit. But alas, he was mistaken, as this was no ordinary backyard, but a labyrinth! He ran into the dreadful maze out of fear, as he heard the sound of scurrying, from behind. Left, right, right, left, Samarth kept going, taking turns without thinking, leaving his life to chance. Eventually he ran out of luck and suddenly reached a dead end. When he turned around, he saw the man crawling toward him. Samarth was petrified. There was nothing he could do. It seemed his time was up. Samarth let out an anguished scream.

Samarth woke up in a cold sweat. He was in a blue room. He looked around. It wasn't his room, and the very fact that it was blue made him shudder. There was a creak, and the door opened, revealing the man. Samarth burst into frightened tears, seeing the man's dreadful smile. The tears felt like acid pouring down his face, and just as the man was nearing closer and closer, Samarth woke up. That too, was a dream. All of a sudden, Samarth woke up again and again, from dreams within dreams. Something was seriously wrong.

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Mr Jones looked at his flip book, as he sat on his blue sofa. Mr Jones was an aspiring artist, and had just made a flipbook. It was about a boy getting lost in a strange house. Jones flipped the pages again and watched, pleased with his latest piece of art. He reached the end of his flipbook, in which a boy kept waking up from dreams within dreams.

But all of a sudden, the pages continued to flip past the end, past where Jones had drawn till. He reached a part of the flipbook which he hadn't drawn! He dropped the book in fearful surprise, onto his blue table, but it continued to flip the pages. It showed the boy suddenly, with a jolt, stop waking up from dreams. The boy was in a cold sweat. As the pages continued to flip, the boy in the flipbook looked at Mr Jones, horrified. And then, from within the pages, the boy cried out, "Help me!"

*The End*

# YOUNG WRITERS

## WAR IN THE GALAXY

RUJVI, GRADE 3E

Once upon a time, in the galaxy of the Milky Way, there was a planet called Uniplanet. It was the home for the Unicorns. The Unicorns stayed on that planet, instead of Earth because the alien king on Earth wanted a potion made by the Unicorn's horn, to make himself stronger and immortal.

Uniplanet was ruled by a just and brave queen, named Uve. She had a beautiful golden mane and tail. Uve also had a shiny silver horn and pearl white skin. Uve had a brother named Uvo. Uvo had black mane and grey horn. Uvo was jealous of his sister because she became the queen of Uniplanet.

The Unicorns' sole enemy Gobo, the alien king desired to become the most powerful creature in the universe. Uvo was a friend of Gobo and always offered to help him secretly. He wanted to inform Gobo all about the Uniplanet, but was bound by the Unicorn pledge to not tell anybody about the existence of their planet. Uvo wanted to break the pledge. The very next day, Uvo went to the Alien Kingdom and disclosed all the details to Gobo.

The next day, Gobo and his army marched towards Uniplanet. When Uve heard that Uniplanet was being attacked, she was very worried. Just then, she remembered what her mother had told her. "In the eastern corner of the planet, there is a lonely cave. There exists a magical door that can take Uniplanet to another galaxy. If you find yourself in dire crisis when you have to save your planet and the Unicorns, you can take help of that magical door", her mother has said. Uve followed her mother's instructions and transferred Uniplanet to another galaxy. When Gobo reached to capture Uniplanet, it was gone. Out of rage, he killed Uvo. All the other Unicorns praised Uve for her intelligence and bravery.

*The End*



# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE CLEVER ADVISOR

RISHAAN, GRADE 4F

There once lived a king named Murali. He had an advisor called Rajiv, who was very wise and lived in a small hut in the kingdom.

One day, King Murali received a letter from his enemy, King Trinam, warning him that he would wage a war against him. King Murali was terrified and called Rajiv for his advice.

Rajiv said, "Do not worry, your Majesty! Please give me a few days to find a solution to this." Before leaving, he asked the king for some alms.

Rajiv then set out for the forest. He collected sticks of different sizes and returned to his home. With the alms that the king gave him, Rajiv bought a bell. He made a skeleton with the sticks, put the bell in the middle of it and covered it with a white towel. It looked exactly like a ghost!

After that, he went secretly to King Trinam's palace, placed the skeleton in the garden and hid behind a tree. The king was doing his daily rounds in the garden when he noticed what lay in his garden. Afraid that there was a ghost in his palace, he ran away as far as he could.

Rajiv then returned back to King Murali and the latter was overjoyed when he heard what had happened. He rewarded Rajiv amply who then went back to his home.

*The End*



# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE RUMBLING ROOM

SNEHA REDDY M, CLASS 6A

From somewhere within the depths of the house, not very far from the room in which I was, there was a noise. It was a faint noise, and, strain my ears as I might, I could not make out exactly what it was. It was a sound like a regular yet intermittent bump or rumble. Nothing else happened. There were no footsteps, no creaking floorboards, the air was absolutely still, the wind did not moan through the windowpane. Only the muffled noise went on and my dog, Spider, continued to stand, bristling at the door, now putting her head at the gap on the bottom and snuffling around, now taking a pace backwards, head cocked and like me, listening. Every now and then, she growled again.

After sometime, the rumbling stopped and the wind started to blow again. I checked outside to see Spider racing against the wind. Spider – a magnificent Labrador whom I had since I was a little child. I called Spider to come in for food but the cheeky dog did not listen. I went to go fetch her and, on my way, I passed the rumbling room from which strange noises occurred. Spider was not outside when I went. A shiver ran through my spine, “Spider! Come here girl! Spider!” I called out frightened but no answer came. The last glimpse, I saw was Spider entering the rumbling room and the door closed. My vision blurred as I started to cry for my dog- a beautiful and friendly companion.

I slept through the silent night without her gentle paws beside me. I was too scared to go in, and I was not brave like Spider. But the next morning, I stood near the door of the rumbling room, ready to face my fear.

“Spider, are you in there?” I questioned the room. ‘Woof’ came out a sharp yet sorrowful bark. When I heard that, my eyes welled up with happy tears. I opened the door. It creaked. But when I saw in, Spider wasn’t there! I step inside. I heard my heart beat vigorously. The last thing I remember is the door locking me in with a loud ‘THUD’ I never found out why there was rumbling or my dog...

*The End*

# POETIC Minds

## FOOTBALL

*Karthikey, Kidiyoor-2B*

There is a game called football,  
It's never played in the mall.  
I said to my sire, "I won't admire The  
team playing in the mall."

## I WISH

*Dhruva 2B*

I wish an elephant could be my pet,  
But my mumma is not ready yet.  
So next, I wish for a puppy,  
And this time mumma is happy.

## THE GIRL

*Ravit Prasad, 2D*

There was once a girl,  
Her hair used to curl.  
She was like a pearl,  
She liked to twirl,  
Since she was a girl.

## MY RING

*Sahasra Varma penmetsa, 2D*

While I went up in a swing,  
I lost my ring.  
I looked left and right,  
No ring was in sight.  
Suddenly, I fell down from the swing.

## THE SILLY DOG

*Rachit Bandaru, 2D*

There was a silly dog,  
Who was afraid of the fog.  
The dog used to bark,  
Looking at the lark  
Whenever I giggle,  
His tail will wiggle.

## THE LION WHO GOT A FLU

*Rhea Sahay, 2B*

There was a lion in the zoo,  
Who had got a flu.  
He went to the pool,  
So that he could feel cool,  
But to his shock he turned blue. :D

## MY FUNNY POEM

*Naitik Kancharia, 2D*

I saw a man,  
To the beach he ran,  
He got a tan,  
He lost his charm.  
I saw a boy,  
He is in joy,  
he got a new toy,  
He is coy.

## MY FUNNY POEM

*Aaryukt Deshala, 2B*

There was a doctor named Gru,  
Who loved to wear brown shoe.  
He created a minion army,  
Whose ideas were always barmy.  
There was a naughty boy Noddy,  
Who became all muddy.  
When he fell in a puddle,  
That is how he got into trouble.

# YOUNG WRITERS

## VOICES

HARSHKRIT GOLLA, 8C

Carlos is walking home along a tree-lined road. Darkness is already falling. Soon, the only light will come from street lamps. Apart from Carlos, the road is empty...or so he thinks. Suddenly, he hears a strange, shrill voice coming from the darkness behind the trees.

\*\*\*

Carlos turned around calmly, knowing that it was one of the many tropical birds in the area. He saw a streak of red flying away into the lush foliage, screaming again. He turned back to the road, cracked in some places and covered in potholes. Carlos didn't believe in the paranormal. He always went where no one else wanted to go in fear of "possession". He was the only one with sense in his town. He was the only one who ever used the road as most people thought the forest was full of demons. Darkness set in. A few dim street lights were illuminating his path and if he hadn't already memorized the path, he would have easily tripped over a pothole. He was never this late, so he started to walk faster.

Though he ignored it at first, he could hear indistinct whispering which he thought was the wind blowing through the trees. However, the voices got louder and louder. He couldn't make out what they were saying, but it sounded like they were speaking to him. He swallowed dryly and sped up. Carlos later thought they were insects.

"Yeah, they're probably just a bunch of cicadas," he thought out loud, becoming calmer.

"Carlos," whispered a voice. He immediately turned around, fists raised. No one. The whispering got louder. He could barely make out a few words.

"Okay, whoever it is, I've attended five self-defense classes. You don't want to mess with me."

The voice suddenly got louder, more agitated. Carlos ran. He ran as fast as his legs could take him when he tripped and fell.

He saw humanoid entities tread slowly towards him from the forest. He was surrounded by what seemed to be hundreds of shadows, solidified shadows walking towards him in slow motion. He curled up into a ball and pleaded, mumbling indiscernible words.

The only things a passerby could hear was the silent chirping of crickets, the rustling of leaves in the wind, and a bloodcurdling scream from the road.

*The End*

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE FIRE

SANJAN J TEARLE, GRADE 9 D

The coals glow red hot, defying the cold and damp air around them. A spark, fleeting and bright, flashes in the dark expanse of the slumbering forest. The spark flashes again, and again, once more; shining brighter and lasting longer each time, until finally the brown leaves atop the coals curl inwards and crackle in misery as they take the final step into ashes. Cold hands that had created the spark sigh in relief but soon fall into unconsciousness.

The fire, now un-monitored, seems to laugh in ecstasy, as it flickers but does not go out, no matter how hard the wind blows. It stays loyal to the hands that had created it and burns bright and undiminished, until it inevitably grows bored of its tamed existence, and begins to expand. Catching unfortunate leaves abandoned by their parent trees into its embrace, the smoke grows higher and higher, a symbol to those who would heed it, as it curls into beautiful abstract lines.

The flames themselves creep toward the forest-line until it arrives flashing in glee at the first trunk of wood. Unstoppable and unimaginably quick, it climbs atop the branches, then leaps to the next and then the next unprotected tree. The hands now sweltering, awake to find horror and scramble away.

Smoke conquering the skies, and flames conquering the Earth, the fire announces to the world its existence.

*The End*



# YOUNG WRITERS

## MAGIC AT MANTHAN

LAASYA GOLTI

Manthan is a famous and a very prestigious school that teaches magic and produces good magicians over the years. The vision of the school is to inculcate good morals and values in the students so that they can use magic for good purposes and help people in need.

It was a bright, sunny day when Laasya, Kelly and Jack met on the campus. They were so excited for the planned field trip to the beach the next day. They were all giggling and discussing the things they need to carry for the trip. All this while, Chuck, who has been observing everything from a distance felt very happy, as he was getting a perfect time to destroy the school. This has been his life dream since long.

The next day, Laasya and her friends had lots of fun at the beach. They built sandcastles, collected a lot of shells, played with waves and ate ice-cream together. They enjoyed it so much that they did not want to leave the beach.

Finally, at the end of the day, they all returned to school, but everyone was shocked to see that the school had disappeared.

Kelly exclaimed, "Oh no! What happened to our school? This is very sad."

Laasya suddenly screamed pointing her hand at the sky, "Look there it is! The evil wizard, Chuck, is trying to destroy our school. We need to stop this."

Immediately Laasya, Kelly and Jack took out their wands and waved and said "Abracadabra" and in a flash, Chuck disappeared into thin air and the school was back to its normal position.

All the teachers who witnessed this magic were very much impressed by the brave act of the three friends and awarded them "The Warriors" cup. The school was safe, and everyone lived happily ever after.

*The End*



# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE MERRY MEMORY COIN

PRANAV, 9D

John was distraught. His adopted parents, who really cared for him, were dead. Now, he was led to a strange place called an 'orphanage', although he was not sure how this was related to age. Yet, he had something very precious- he had a memory, a memory that was of a time when he was stupendously happy, just before their death. He had always been artistic, and his flair was a well-known fact. He loved to draw, but he had no canvas or paints. John did, though, have an idea. He reimagined the memory and engraved it on his last birthday present, an old coin, which he treasured. The intricacy of the image was such, that no one would know if that coin replaced another. Unfortunately for him, the coin would lead him right into a mess.

John treasured his 'merry memory coin' as he termed it and never let it out of his sight. He loved it so much, that he would always have it in his trouser pocket. On Friday, when had to give his clothes for a wash, he told his friend Jack, "Thank god, I kept the coin in my drawer, the last person I want having it is that nasty laundress. She would likely spend it, on purpose"

Unluckily for him, though, he had kept, not the 'merry memory coin' but another doppelganger in its place, in his drawer. Later that day, the laundress noticed a glitter in the fading light. "Aha! One of these orphan brats decided to gift us today! How nice of you, John," the laundress remarked to herself.

Back in the orphanage, a large, cube-shaped building with square rooms, John had discovered his loss. He was dejected. "Why did I forget it? How could I be so clumsy?" he told Jack, "Now I'll have to plead to the laundress."

"It's ok, you can do that afterwards, come and have your dinner now. We'll both go tomorrow."

The next day though, Jack was not to be seen anywhere. John was worried, but he decided to go for himself. He asked the laundress, "Did you find a coin in my trouser yesterday, miss? Because, that coin was really very special to me."

"Hmm, I have a lot of coins at home and I might have got one, but I don't know," the laundress replied, absent-mindedly.

"But miss, can you try to fi-" John began.

"Don't you know not to disturb me, I haven't seen any coins and if you keep bothering me, I'll report you."

John held back a scathing remark, with effort, but seared with rage inside. The laundress, meanwhile, smiled with malice, "Our next victim," was all she said.

To lighten his mood, John went to buy a candy. As change, he got back a coin, a very special one. That coin, had intricately designed artwork, woven from threads of time and memories, the-

"merry memory coin!" exclaimed John. In extreme joy after retrieving treasure, he forgot his candy. The shopkeeper called him back, "kid, you forgot your candy."

"Oh, sorry!" replied John, apologetically and took the candy as well. Had he looked up a second earlier, he would have seen a pair of malicious eyes and lips twisted into a menacingly gleeful smile. A pair of arms brought down a club on his head and knocked him out. The next thing he knew, he was falling through air and remembered looking at a familiar, limp, and motionless body, which had Jack's face. Even as John fell, the coin rolled down a small hill in the park and came to a stop at the bottom, face down, like its former, artistic owner.

*The End*



# POETIC Minds

## ZIP ZAP ZUP

*Akshita, 2E*

Zip zap zup  
They went for a  
trip  
Blup blip blup  
They are eating  
soup  
Tim rim sim  
Dancing on a ring  
Soffy poffy groffy  
moffy  
Running for  
troffy.

## MY FUNNY POEM

*Geetika 2A*

The ice cream man,  
The ice cream man  
selling ice cream.  
Under a tree for  
free,  
Ice cream was so  
yummy,  
It filled my tummy.  
On the street,  
there were so  
many treats,  
The ice cream was  
the best treat.

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE SONGBIRD'S SONG

SANAAKSHI BATRA, 7E

One day, when the world was still very young, the God looked down and saw a magnificent bird. The bird was beautiful and had shimmering feathers. They were bright red and golden in colour and shone like the sun himself. The beautiful bird danced about and caught the attention of God. Allured by its beauty, the God exclaimed, "Glorious bird! You should reside with me in Heaven and be my messenger!" The majestic songbird bowed its head and said, "If that is what you desire, oh holy one," in a voice of solemn submission.

From thereafter the songbird lived in heaven and took her place as God's messenger. In return she was rewarded with food and drink of her choice. One fine day, after having just delivered a message to the moon Goddess, the bird was resting its wings when God strolled in clothed in shimmering gold robes and turned to her.

"Oh songbird, while you are here, from now on, you are forbidden to drink wine." The graceful songbird, though greatly perplexed and bumfuzzled, agreed.

The next morning, while taking her usual warm-up flight, the songbird spotted a glint of gold amongst the trees with her sharp eyes. Upon following in that direction, she found a grove with trees that looked as strong as the very lions that pulled God's chariot. In the centre was a shiny, golden goblet with a snake engraved on the handle. Intrigued, the bird went closer.

"What is this? And what is that red liquid inside?" it mused to itself. Suddenly, the snake on the handle came to life and hissed menacingly.

"Hello beautiful bird. You look tired, why don't you drink some refreshing, seraphic-tasting and delicious wine?" it hissed smoothly with a voice as cold as the snow from the north pole that the bird had felt during her travels.

The songbird eyed the wine cautiously and, entranced by how welcoming it looked, tentatively took a sip. Overcome by how wonderful it tasted, the bird gulped down the rest as fast as lightning and emptied the goblet.

However, something lay at the bottom of the goblet. Something dark and murky. It shot up and out of the goblet and descended toward the Earth that lay below the clouds of heaven. It had been too fast for the bird to get a good look, but the experience ate at her nerves.

The next few days, God thought the songbird looked troubled and hadn't been doing her work as efficiently as usual. He decided to send for her.

"Oh, wise one, you wished to see me?" the bird enquired. When God asked if something was wrong, she felt she could not lie to a being as supreme as Him, and relayed all the events of the day at the grove to him.

"Oh dear! This is truly dreadful!" God cried in anguish. He then explained that the cloud was the essence of nightmares and that it would torture all humans when they slept by haunting their slumbers.

"Is there nothing that can be done to capture it?" the songbird asked fretfully. God simply said, "No." as he contemplated the situation with a grave face.

Desperate to make up for her mistake, that night rather than sleeping, the elegant songbird flew to the peak of the highest mountain on earth and sang through the roar of the biting wind and the numbness from the freezing cold. Her song was so powerful and potent that it instilled dreams into the minds of all the humans on earth as they slept. These dreams were unpredictable as they were sometimes unusual, sometimes confusing, sometimes glorious, sometimes appalling and so on. But always, they distracted the complex minds of the humans from the awful, cruel and horrendous nightmares, letting them sleep peacefully.

From then on, the songbird never again got even a wink of sleep, as every night she flew to the mountain and sang into the night, her heavenly voice ringing through the air and being carried by the winds to all the corners of the vast world. So is the story of how dreams came into existence.

*The End*

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE MYSTERY OF THE STOLEN MONEY

LAASYA, GRADE 4B

In a house at Rose County, Smithara and Neena stood confused, looking at a door that was locked, and had a wall on the other side.

Smithara was an eleven-year old with long and shiny black hair. Her eyes were a startling blue and she was thin and tall. Neena, on the other hand, was thirteen and Smithara's sister. She looked exactly the same, except for her hair which was short.

They were smart girls and could spot the tiniest things, like a man entering into a house that had been emptied. Both of them saw that an hour ago. Lily Gevol, a millionaire, had been robbed, on the news. They always wanted to be detectives and seeing this man entering the empty house made them curious. They followed him only to see him disappear through a door and lock it. All this was very unusual, but the most unusual part was that the door, which he went through, had a wall on the other side.

"Any idea on how to open the door?" questioned Neena.

Smithara replied, "Well, we can if we have a pin."

The next moment, they ran into the house and searched everywhere for a pin.

"Aah, I found one," announced Smithara, proudly.

Smithara inserted the pin into the keyhole and after three loud clicks, the door flew open. It was dark and eerie inside and there was a steep slope that lead to the underground.

"Oh my goodness!" mumbled Smithara, her mouth slightly open.

"Flashlights!" Neena bellowed.

Smithara scampered off and returned holding two torches. She gave Neena one and they both switched them on and made their way down the steep slope casting frightening looks at each other.

After a while, they came into an opening with two narrow passages. Before they could decide which way to go, a voice grunted, "You still have to give me more money."

"I gave you enough money for the loot," said another drawling voice.

The first man growled in agony, "Fine," and two men appeared.

They were short and stout, with curly brown hair and the man with the grumpy voice was the one who Neena and Smithara followed. They went away just as quickly as they had come.

Neena got up and beckoned Smithara forward. Neena made a circle around the boxes and gasped.

"Smithara, look!"

Smithara came to the spot where her sister was standing and saw that on the bottom box, a label with the name 'Lily Gevol' was written in an untidy scrawl.



# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE MYSTERY OF THE STOLEN MONEY

Smithara's eyes widened and she looked at the box on the top, which too had a label, but it read, 'August Frank' and was wide open and empty.

"Does that mean they are going to rob August Frank next?" asked Smithara.

Neena nodded and pointed her finger at another door and said, "They are in there. But, you want to see what they are up to!"

They both headed for the door, making sure they didn't make a sound.

Smithara pressed her eye to the tiny space in the keyhole and narrated the scene to Neena.

"They are walking in circles. No! They are coming right towards us! Run!" yelled Smithara, but it was too late.

As Smithara and Neena ran, they could hear the footsteps and angry screams of the men which told them that they were being chased.

They ran till they reached the door connecting to Rose County. Smithara and Neena went through and locked the door with the pin, panting heavily.

The moment they went it, Neena dialled the cops and said, "Sir, my name is Neena Lavati Jivela and my sister, Smithara Dase Jivela..." She told them all that they had seen.

After telling the cops, Neena felt relieved. Even though she could hear the men screaming from the other side of the door, she felt tranquil for the first time in an hour.

*The End*





# POETIC Minds

## THE GIRL

*Rekha Modukuri, 2B*

The Girl said, "Oh no! I need to go to bed I am feeling very dead."

Then her father came and said, "No matter what you do You are not going to bed."

And the girl said, "But I am feeling very dead."

But it was too late her father started packing her things.

Her books and bags, her tights and her tags,

And the little girl said, "At the end of this mess I will be turned into a dress,

I will be a big drool in one big pool,

And I will be screwed up with one big tool,

And all because I just would not go to school."

## THE CAT ON MY MAT

*Kaushal 2A*

Once I was sitting on a mat,  
I saw a very big cat,

Then he sat on my mat,  
I said, "shoo shoo shoo."

Get out of my mat.

But the cat did not listen so he was still sitting on the mat,  
But he pounced on my hat.

I just shouted loudly, "Please go away!"

## MY DAD

*Vani Madhurkar*

Suddenly, I woke up last night,

My dad came running to me,

He said, "Don't Worry, it's alright  
Are you scared? Don't be."

I said, "I heard a sound, It seems like a monster."

My dad checked and he laughed,  
"Don't worry, it's a hamster!"

## A MICE

*Darsh 2E*

A Mice lived in my shoe,  
Who always wanted to go to the  
zoo

Wanted to see pesky parrot  
Scaring people was his habit  
The parrot came out and said  
boo.

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE HOLE

SIRI, 8C

Carlos was walking home along a tree-lined road. Darkness is already falling. Soon, the only light would come from the street lamps. Apart from Carlos, the road was empty... or so he thought. Suddenly, he heard a strange, shrill voice coming from the darkness behind the trees.

"Boy! Where are you rushing off to this evening?" a voice cackled.

Carlos spun around to find a small shape seemingly materializing in front of him. Squinting, he lit his small lamp and the old hag's face jumped out at him.

"Tell me, boy," she questioned.

He fell back in fright, and shook the black dust on the road off his hands as he got up.

"T-to h-home," Carlos stammered, his eyes fixed upon the lady's unkempt, green hair and toothless grin. He shook his head and composed himself with a pejorative smile.

"Why do you ask, my dear lady," he politely asked.

"You see Carlos, you should not hurry home."

"But how did you-"

"You should not hurry home!"

The hag gave him another look, through which he could see the madness she was inflicted with. She then disappeared into the dark. Carlos was left thinking. He thought of that morning, when his mother and father had wished him a good journey and sent him to sell the gunpowder. He was deep in thought when it shook him. What if my parents are in danger?

It was this that jolted him back to reality. He flung aside his lamp and cast himself into the dark, damp forest, which bordered the road. His only thoughts were of reaching home through a shortcut he had known of for a long time. He thought again of his father.

"Son, this is the quickest way to the village."

"Then why don't we ever use it?" his younger self had asked.

"It is for emergencies. The dangers that lie within are to be avoided if possible."

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE HOLE

This was most definitely an emergency, for family was the biggest pride and concern a person could have. He pulled out his knife and chopped through the vegetation, brushing away the spiders that landed on his back from their webs. After an eternity, he saw the small blaze of fire flickering in the distance. Assuming it to be a lamp, he ran after it. As he proceeded, the smell of smoke and sounds of sirens dazed him.

What could have happened? Could it have been... No. It couldn't have. Maybe one of the neighbors. Yes.

Carlos emerged on the road opposite to his house and stared in horror at the 'red flower' as it ate its way through each precious piece of wood, which had joined to serve as his home for the last seventeen years. He looked around for his parents. He had hoped to find them near the house, and indeed he did. They looked peaceful where they lay, their eyes closed and breath still.

Carlos closed his eyes.

How did this happen?

A sudden vision crossed his head. The gunpowder, the black dust on the road. The buyer complaining that the gunpowder was less than agreed upon. Could there have been a hole in the bag? If so, when he cast his lamp aside...

Carlos sat back, weeping.

If only there hadn't been a hole...

*The End*

# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE GOD'S MESSENGER

PAVITRA NANNAPANENI,7F

One day, when the world was still very young, the God looked down and saw a magnificent bird. The bird was beautiful and had shimmering feathers. They were bright red and golden in colour and shone like the sun himself. The beautiful bird danced about and caught the attention of God. Allured by its beauty, the God exclaimed, "Glorious bird! You should reside with me in Heaven and be my messenger!"

"I am sincerely sorry my lord but I cannot go to heaven abandoning my owner, Suka, whom I love dearly. There is also no guarantee that you will not imprison me in a cage," remarked the bird, glancing at her shimmering, golden feathers.

"Oh, dear one, I will provide you with great comfort and luxury. Please do come with me," pleaded God.

When the bird continued to refuse, God got angry. He grabbed a cage, trapped her inside and abducted her. Tears trickled down her feathers like an open spout.

"You left me with no choice!" growled God.

They reached heaven and he stationed her cage in a corner. Then, he left to take a shower.

Once the bird was guaranteed that God was gone he chuckled to herself like a mad scientist and said, "Silly old man, thinks I don't know how to pick a lock!"

She soared out of the cage and into the blissful blue sky. She eventually reached a forest, where she saw Suka. He was a tall, red-headed, handsome young boy. She was about to descend but she saw a massive, chubby bear silently approaching Suka from behind. She did her utmost to warn him by making a racket while maintaining a safe distance, nevertheless, he did not notice. She noticed the bear getting ready to pounce and her blood ran cold.

In the meantime, God had noted her absence and promptly grabbed his magic globe. He announced the bird's name, consequently, the globe began beeping rapidly. God pressed the globe again.



# YOUNG WRITERS

## THE GOD'S MESSENGER

Momentarily, he was standing next to Suka. He acknowledged what was happening and turned himself to face the bear.

"You want the boy? Then fight me first!" yelled God heroically.

Suka was completely blank, the bird flew down and settled herself on Suka's shoulder. God had left his scepter in heaven so he had to fight the bear with Suka's knife. Eventually, the bear ran away but God had a deep gash on his hand.

The bird was deeply touched by his kind gesture. She shedded a tear on his wound and the gash mended itself.

God gasped, "A phoenix!"

The bird nodded kindly and then glanced at Suka nervously.

"Is something wrong?" questioned Suka.

She remained silent for a second and suddenly hugged Suka, "Oh Suka, I am so sorry! You have always been so kind to me, yet I was tempted to accept God's offer to live in heaven with him! I was almost about to too, but I remembered my dream."

She opened her mouth to continue when God began laughing considerably loud. Suka and the bird glanced at him and then at each other. God had explained that it was him, who gave the bird the dream, teaching her to serve Suka faithfully.

"You have passed the test! You believed in your dream and now it is your job to convey messages, happiness and sadness through dreams." "Behold the messenger of dreams!" His voice echoed throughout the forest, loud enough for everyone to hear.

*The End*



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