

Class of 2022  
presents :

# ***EKFRASI***

E X P R E S S I O N

## *In this issue:*

### **IN CONVERSATION WITH SUDEEP SEN**

An interview by Areez Haque

### **THE MYSTERIOUS DIARY AND COVID 19**

I was able to find out half of the truth about the so-called pandemic.

### **MEDUSA: THE GREEK TRAGEDY**

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### **IN A MILLION YEARS**

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### **WHEN YOU ARE THE VILLAIN IN SOMEONE ELSE'S STORY**

Confessions of a recovering toxic  
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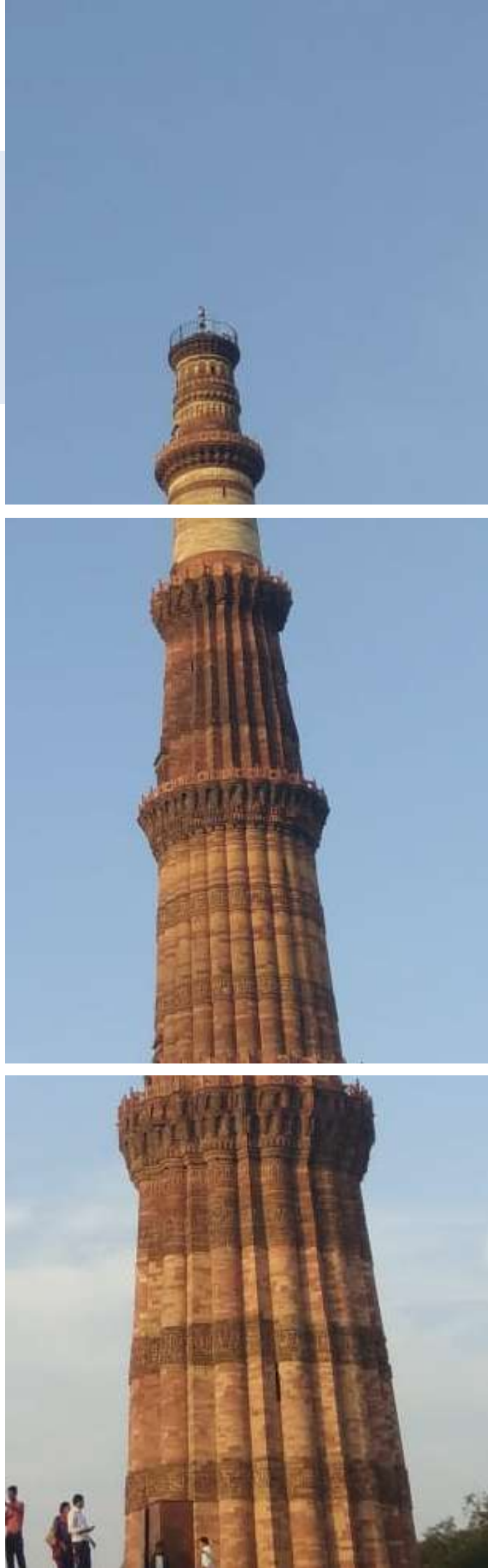
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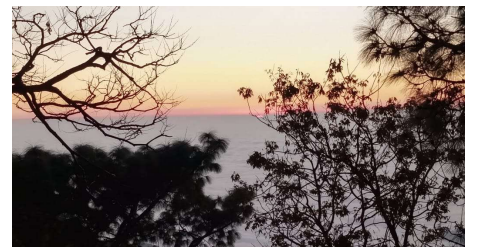
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# In conversation with *Sudeep Sen*

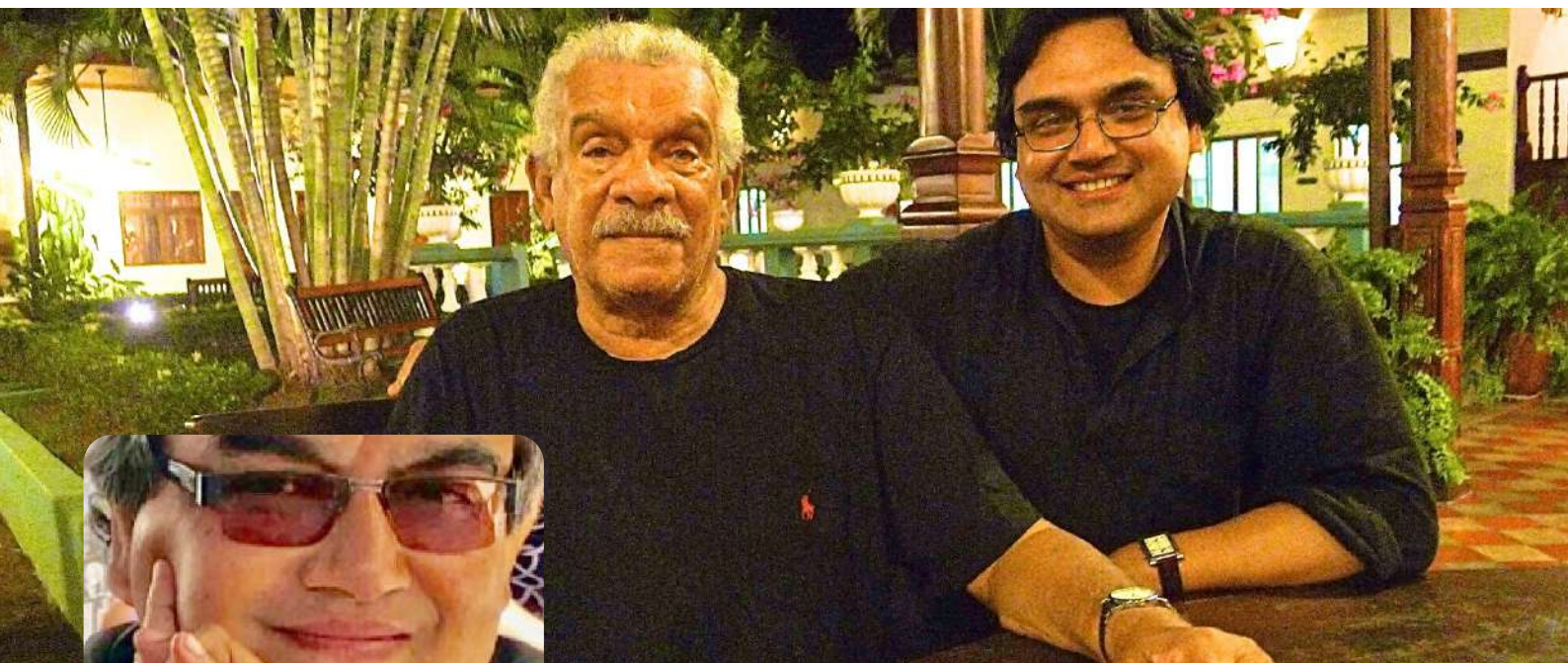
Interview by

*Areez Haque*

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*'Writing can be a truly magical, transcendental,  
wonderful world'*

*These questions  
have been prepared by Areez Haque, after a small survey of college students who  
are interested to become full time writers in the near future. The entire  
class at Gargi College, University of Delhi, are elated with this interview for  
our college magazine.*



*Sudeep Sen with his mentor, Derek Walcott 1992 Winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature*



PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMI S.

Sudeep Sen's [[www.sudeepsen.org](http://www.sudeepsen.org)] prize-winning books include: *Postmarked India: New & Selected Poems* (HarperCollins), *Rain, Aria* (A. K. Ramanujan Translation Award), *Fractals: New & Selected Poems | Translations 1980-2015* (London Magazine Editions), *EroText* (Vintage: Penguin Random House), and *Kaifi Azmi: Poems | Nazms* (Bloomsbury). He has edited influential anthologies, including: *The HarperCollins Book of English Poetry* (editor), *World English Poetry*, and *Modern English Poetry by Younger Indians* (Sahitya Akademi). *Anthropocene: Climate Change, Contagion, Consolation*;, *Blue Nude: Ekphrasis & New Poems* (Jorge Zalamea International Poetry Prize) and *The Whispering Anklets* are forthcoming. Sen's works have been translated into over 25 languages.

His words have appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement*, *Newsweek*, *Guardian*, *Observer*, *Independent*, *Telegraph*, *Financial Times*, *Herald*, *Poetry Review*, *Literary Review*, *Harvard Review*, *Hindu*, *Hindustan Times*, *Times of India*, *Indian Express*, *Outlook*, *India Today*, and broadcast on BBC, PBS, CNN IBN, NDTV, AIR & DOORDARSHAN. Sen's newer work appears in *New Writing 15* (Granta), *Language for a New Century* (Norton), *Leela: An Erotic Play of Verse and Art* (Collins), *Indian Love Poems* (Knopf/Random House/Everyman), *Out of Bounds* (Bloodaxe), *Initiate*: Oxford New Writing (Blackwell), and *Name me a Word* (Yale). He is the editorial director of AARKARTS editor of *Atlas*, and currently the inaugural artist-in-residence at the Museo Camera. Sen is the first Asian honoured to deliver the Derek Walcott Lecture and read at the Nobel Laureate Festival. The Government of India awarded him the senior fellowship for "outstanding persons in the field of culture/literature."

## LANGUAGE

*for Malshri, Anamika, Namita & Neeta*

*Without translation, I would be limited to the borders of  
my own country. The translator is my most important ally.*

— ITALO CALVINO

My typewriter is multilingual,  
its keys mysteriously calibrating

my bipolar, forked tongue.  
Black-red silk ribbon spools, unwinds

as the carriage moves right to left.  
In cursive hand, I write from left to right.

My tongue was born promiscuous —  
speaking in many languages.

My heart spoke another, my head  
yet another — the translation, seamless.

\*

Auricles, ventricles pump blood —  
corpuscle-like alphabets, phrases, syntax

cross-fertilize my text, breathing life.  
Texture enriched — music, cadence

spatially enhanced — osmotic,  
polyglottal — a polygamy of grammar.

Letterforms dance, ligatures pirouette —  
ascenders, descenders — pitch perfect.

Imagination isn't caged in speech —  
speech cannot be caged in language.

\*



1. Thank you for this recent new poem of yours, 'Language'. Tell us about your early days, your beginnings as a writer.

**Sudeep Sen (SS):** I have been writing poetry since Class 10 while I was at St Columba's School in New Delhi. Of course I read poetry from a fairly young age.

I was always convinced that writing poetry was extremely difficult (even though I thoroughly enjoyed reading it), and was best left to the masters themselves. Then one day in 1980 (I was in Class 10 at the time), daydreaming through a boring lesson in school, I penned, quite unknowingly, in perfect rhyme and metre, my first poem. Then followed those first few years when I wrote sheaves and sheaves of, what sometimes seems embarrassingly "callow", and sometimes naive poems. But then again, I feel there was a sense of innocence, idealism, seriousness, and honesty about them.

My first "unofficial" book was a collection, *Leaning Against the Lamp-Post*, containing poems written between 1978 and 1982. In 1983, relying on my incipient enthusiasm, I summoned up my courage, typed out about fifty poems from a much larger batch I had written up until then — and with the aid of a modest donation from my grandfather as his school graduation gift to me, took it to a local printer. They were cyclostyled through one of those now-extinct, messy, gargantuan machines (photocopying was still quite expensive then) and hand-sewn at the bindery by an old man who until then had only bound thousands of legal manuals and commercial reports with ubiquitous red cloth or leather spines with their titles stamped in gold. This was however the first time he had bound a collection of poetry, and he did it with genuine interest and with the care of a fine craftsman. He was a poet himself, and wrote and recited in Urdu. He also knew Bengali (my mother tongue) fluently, having spent his early life in what is now known as Bangladesh. Perhaps it was propitious that my early poems were blessed by the tactile touch of a true poet. It would only be fair to say of my grandfather that his patronage made him my first publisher. And as it turns out, this limited hand-assembled first edition of poems was to be my first "unofficial" book of verse.

I grew up in a liberal and educated family with a lot of poetry and music around me. Art, literature, philosophy, and the world of ideas in particular, had always been a part of my upbringing. As a child, my mother and grandmother would recite children's verse and sing songs for me. I realise now that much of my interest in form, structure, sound pattern and rhyme scheme comes from hearing aloud the incantatory music of their prayers and songs, which I had obviously internalised over the years.

My parents and grandparents introduced me to the world of poetry. They would recite the great Bengali poets: Rabindranath Tagore, Jibanananda Das, and Kazi Nazrul Islam; also Shakespeare, Milton, the Romantics and the Victorians. I came to learn many of them by heart. In school and college, I explored Hindi and Urdu poetry, discovered the Russians, Latin Americans, as well as Japanese and Chinese verse. Some of my favourite poets included Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Irina Ratushinskaya, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Octavio Paz, Pablo Neruda, Basho, Li Bai, and many more. My uncle opened to me a wondrous window, a hitherto unsighted world of modern European poets: Vasko Popa, Guillaume Apollinaire, Eugenio Montale, Giuseppe Ungaretti, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Rainer Maria Rilke, Johannes Bobrowski, Horst Bienek, and so many others. Also the Metaphysical Poets and the French Symbolists, in particular John Donne, Baudelaire, Mallarme, and Verlaine, fascinated me. Of course, growing up in the seventies, one could not miss Ezra Pound and T S Eliot. The congregation grew and grew, and through quiet osmosis, I was seduced into the world of sound, rhythm, word-patterns, ideas, syllabics, music, and language itself.

2. At what point of time in your life did you decide, that you wish to become a full time writer and literary editor?

**SS:** My formal debut collection of poetry, *The Lunar Visitations*, was published in New York by White Swan Books in 1990 when I was 24. It was a winner of an American writing competition — the award was some prize money and the publication of the manuscript. At the time, I had a fulltime job with a Manhattan corporate consultancy firm. Soon after that I returned to my home city of New Delhi and joined mainstream journalism with a national newspaper. Rupa published the Indian edition of the same book in 1991.

There was a poetry revival at the time. In the early 1990s Nissim Ezekiel was curating the 'New Poetry' list for Rupa. The inaugural set of six authors he published were Ranjit Hoskote, Tabish Khair, amongst others and me. So I was lucky to have a propitious start to my life as a published author at 25. Apart from Ezekiel's Rupa list — Dom Moraes curated the Penguin's new poetry series and published C P Surendran, Vijay Nambisan and others at the same time. Orient Longman too started a series with poets like Bibhu Padhi on their list. So it was an exciting time.

Here is one of my early poems, 'Remembering Hiroshima Tonight', from *The Lunar Visitations* (1990):

#### REMEMBERING HIROSHIMA TONIGHT

It is full moon in August:  
the origami garlands surrounding the park  
glitter as the stars — plutonium-twinkle —  
remember the fall-out of *that* sky.

Tonight everyone walks around the solemn arcades  
where lovers were once supposed to be.

In the distance, the crown of Mount Fuji sits, clear  
on the icy clouds, frozen in time with wisdom.

Suddenly the clouds detonate, and all the petals,  
translucent, wet, coalesce: a blossoming mushroom,

peeling softly in a huge slow motion.  
But that's only a dream.

Tonight, real flowers are blooming  
in the ancient Japanese moonlight.

My decision to plunge into full-time writing as a career happened after I published my second and third books in 1993 — *Kali in Ottawa Rima* and *New York Times* (published in the UK by John Welch's The Many Press and Rupa in India). At the time, I was much younger, and was willing to take risks. I believed that, to pursue my interest in writing poetry and literary fiction/non-fiction, I needed much more time to think, read and write in an uncluttered manner. I also thought that I was young enough to take this plunge — and if it didn't work out, I could go back to my job as a journalist and editor.

Fortunately since those early days — many decades have passed, and now I am over 30 books old. I have been a fulltime writer and literary editor since early 90s, and have never looked back or regretted it.

**3.** *Do you believe that for somebody to excel in the field of 'literature', it is necessary for them to hold a degree in the same?*

**SS:** Not at all — you can be schooled or trained in any field — as long as you are a good reader and read literary works as a 'serious' pleasure, you can excel in literary fields. But studying 'literature' formally helps to give a literary context, its history and tradition, its legacies and trends.

**4.** *What scope do you see for budding Indian authors and writers in the near future?*

**SS:** The future is bright and open, as long as the young writer is focussed on things that are literary. At times I feel that (some) younger writers get distracted too easily — they tend to concentrate more on publicity than writing, and spend way too much time on social media seeking affirmation on raw drafts of texts that might have been written the night before and too quickly and prematurely. Adding to that, a few 'likes' and congratulatory comments from friends on their timeline, the writers seem to be deluded into feeling that they are actually accomplished or published. One has to be very careful about all this.

It can take a long time to finish a poem or piece of prose — one goes through several rounds of editing, tightening and reworking the same text. For a good piece of literary text to emerge, it takes hours of gestation, baking and hard work, before it emerges as a finished product. And that goes for any kind of art or scientific creation.

**5.** *It is often discussed that writing alone could never feed a family and one has to rely upon other sources of income too, to lead a good life, and this one reason often results in people dropping their idea of becoming full time writers. What is your opinion on the same?*

**SS:** It depends on what one defines as a "good life". If you are talking about merely money to maintain a high-cost lifestyle, then there is certainly less of it in creative writing than say a corporate job — but everyone knows that, and one makes a personal choice depending on one's individual passion and what one wants to do with one's life. So yes, I

would say be judicious — most successful writers, unless you are a national or international bestseller, do a mix of writing oriented jobs. In my case, beyond poetry, it is literary journalism and editing, photography and design.

**6.** *If you hold a degree or a certification in 'engineering', you are guaranteed of a job as an engineer. Do you think there could be any such certifications in the field of writing which can make an individual liable for writing jobs?*

**SS:** The world of creative writing university-level programmes in India, unlike the USA and UK, is at a nascent stage. There are just a handful, and even those are not quite up to scratch. There is a long way to go for that in this country.

However, an MFA degree in Writing (which is a terminal degree like a PhD) allows the student to apply for creative writing teaching jobs in the USA and UK. But if you are patient enough and are well published, then with a good publication record many universities abroad consider writers for the same teaching jobs.

**7.** *With the growth in the digital presence of 'companies', opportunities for 'content writers' have amplified too. But most of these internships are either related to technology, health or hospitality, leaving a very small corner for creative writing. Therefore, do you think that despite of this growth, the opportunities for creative writers still remain deficient?*

**SS:** Sadly, that is true — and is unlikely to change. As I had suggested earlier, the trick is to find the right balance in a judicious manner, if you wish to be a fulltime writer.

**8.** *Do you think grammar plays any important role in writing creative pieces? Can a poem or a story be an excellent piece of literature otherwise, without focussing on grammar?*

**SS:** Grammar is very, very important. It is the basic building block for any good writing and speech. Without that, and without a fertile and intelligent imagination — I'm afraid one cannot create good literature.

After mastering the basics of grammar, writing fluidly can become almost second nature, like driving a bicycle or car. One can even have fun with the whole notion of 'grammar' itself, as in the following eponymous poem from my book, *Fractals: New & Selected Poems | Translations: 1980-2015* (London Magazine Editions):



## GRAMMAR

*she has no english;*  
*her lips round / in a moan ....*  
*calligraphy of veins ....*

— MERLINDA BOBIS, 'First Night'

My syntax, tightly-wrought —  
I struggle to let go,  
to let go of its formality,  
of my wishbone  
desiring juice — its deep marrow,  
muscle, and skin.

The sentence finally pronounced —  
I am greedy for *long drawn-*  
*out vowels*, for consonants that  
desire lust, tissue, grey-cells.  
I am hungry for love,  
for pleasure, for flight,

for a story essaying endlessly — words.  
A comma decides to pr[e]position  
a full-stop ... ellipses pause, to reflect —  
a phrase decides not to reveal  
her thoughts after all — ellipses and  
semi-colons are strange bed-fellows.

*Calligraphy of veins* and words  
require ink, the ink of breath,  
of blood — corpuscles speeding  
faster than the loop of serifs ...  
the unresolved story of our lives  
in a *fast train without terminals*.

I long only for italicised ellipses ...  
my english is the other, the other  
is really english — *she has no english;*  
*her lips round / in a moan* —  
oval, rich, nuanced, grammar-  
drenched, etched letters of glass.

9. *What is that one thing that you have experienced in this journey of yours, which you would suggest as an important lesson to all the aspiring writers?*

**SS:** Read, read, read — read endlessly and voraciously across all genres and subjects. Read the literatures that have come before your time, read literatures in translation, read the literatures of your peers and colleagues. Take on challenges. Write out of the box. Write everyday as a discipline. Have self-belief. There are no short cuts if you want a sustained career as a writer. But once you are on that path, writing can be a truly magical, transcendental, wonderful world.

[www.sudeepsen.org](http://www.sudeepsen.org)



# HOPE

Lives were shattered  
Families were shivered  
Elders were gone  
everyone just mourns.

-Astha Goyal



# Dark

ASTHA GOYAL

*clouds bursting , thunder clapping , wind laughing and he tormenting in sorrow said "let it not harm you as it did to me, i have given you my wisdom to seek it through" said the ailing father to his only daughter giving her lessons to fight the demons within us while he was counting his last breath. Then the heart skipped its beat making a long still beep. 18 she was, weeping in the burden of her loss, all she had was her father but valorously she faced the demon with all her energy to overcome what he was possessed of. The trauma shook her so hard that in the end she was able to see the bright sky pushing behind the tremendous BULLY'S eye. she was a free soul now and was ready to face the demons she was taught to be afraid of.*



H O

P E

From summer till winter  
From spring to autumn  
Every hope was rotten  
Lives were shattered  
Families were shivered  
Elders were gone  
everyone just mourns

It came like a flu but is very shrewd  
it stayed a while but felt a thousand  
mile.

shook by its tenderness or mental  
bewilderment

everything was disturbed  
in the vague universe

impossible happened time stopped  
world stopped humans stopped food  
stocked GDP dropped mind choked  
everything was forced and there is still no  
hope.

*-Astha Goyal*

*CONFESSIONS OF A RECOVERING*

# **TOXIC PERSON**

" NEVER FORGET TO BE KINDER TO  
YOURSELF EVEN DURING  
YOUR WORST MOMENTS AND PHASES.  
INFLICTING HATRED UPON YOURSELF  
WILL ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE, AND  
WILL TAKE YOU TWO STEPS BACK. LEARN  
TO STAY GRATEFUL TO YOURSELF FOR  
HAVING TAKEN SUCH A GREAT STEP  
TOWARDS PERSONAL GROWTH. IT IS  
CHALLENGING AND SOMETIMES TIRING –  
BUT IT WILL ALWAYS BE WORTH IT. "

*By Anushka*

# WHEN YOU'RE THE VILLAIN IN SOMEONE ELSE'S STORY.

Confessions of a recovering toxic person

By Anushka

*We love to hate toxic people, and that is only fair enough. They are controlling, manipulative, rude, and deceptive. In short, their presence drains positivity out of everyone. In fact, at some point in our lives, we have encountered such a person, and the consequences were never good. They had hurt us, lowered our self-esteem, and took away our happiness from us; they left us with no option but to resent them. But what if the toxic person everyone loathes, avoids, and even run away from, is you?*

*Yes. It is a truth that hardly is accepted by many, that we too can be toxic, manipulative, deceptive, delusional, and simply terrible. We are not always the protagonist or hero in everyone's lives; sometimes, we might be the villains in their story. Intentionally or unintentionally, we cause harm to ourselves and others. The later we realise it, or if we never realise it at all, the more damage we will cause to everyone.*

*Sadly, most of the times, we refuse to accept the fact that we have the same potential to be a toxic person like anybody else. We refuse to change our old ways and come to terms with what wrongdoings we have done. I, for one, felt a major shock once my poor habits and actions towards others came into my notice. It took me years to finally come in terms with the fact that I've been a toxic person in so many people's lives. I have found myself engaged in belittling others, hurting their sentiments, badmouthing them behind their backs, taking things personally, spreading negativity, and the worst of all, playing the victim card.*

*However, what I've learnt during my journey towards unlearning and relearning is that toxicity doesn't come to a person naturally. It is, in fact, the product of negative habits, actions, and thoughts we absorb and internalise from others. What we learn and see from others is what we end up adapting to.*

*Growing up, I did find myself in situations where I was surrounded by negative people, and before I could realise it, I became one of them too. I felt as if this is the only way to think or behave during a situation, and that such actions were normal. This is where the problem begins. We normalise traits and actions that are toxic to ourselves and others. From adapting negative thoughts such as "The world is unfair, cruel, and against me", to act as if everyone around you owes you something, we slowly turn to habits and behaviours that emotionally and mentally harm people. During my early teenage years, I resorted to lying, playing the victim card, badmouthing and other such toxic habits because I felt this was the right way of doing things. To make up for everything I was going through in my life, I tried to make others feel the same amount of pain and agony that I felt inside myself.*

*Now that I look back, I realise that I lost out on so much happiness and mental peace. The only thing I got out of by being toxic was the short term pleasure I felt when I inflicted negativity onto others.*



*What did I learn from this experience was that I needed to unlearn my old ways and relearn better habits and mindsets. I distanced myself completely from toxic people, lazy habits, unhelpful actions, social media accounts, and everything that triggered such traits in me. I made conscious efforts to change the way I think, and the habits as well as behaviours I choose to indulge myself in. I made space for myself to become more authentic and confident in who I am. To say that it was an easy task would be incorrect; I went through months of painful transformation before arriving at a stage where I can say that I am a “recovering toxic person”.*

*One of the reasons why many toxic people struggle to unlearn and modify their behaviours is that they believe there’s no way out. They are under the impression that they can never change and that they will remain this way for the rest of their lives. However, we have the power to change each and everything about ourselves if we wish to - this is something not many are aware of and even refuse to believe in. We romanticise staying the same and never changing who we are to become who we wish to be. We want to stay exactly where we are, and receive everything we want. We are rude and demanding to people, and still want them to love us just the way we are. We want to be liked by everyone, yet we bring others down by bad mouthing and deceiving them. Now that we have realised our mistakes, then what’s the way ahead? The first step towards recovery is to forgive yourself.*

*Make yourself understand that you’re human too - just because you were a ‘terrible’ person before doesn’t mean that you’ll stay the same. Realise that there is a lot you can improve on, and will eventually the next step is to discard,*

*delete and remove everything that pulls you down on a daily basis. Stop making excuses for people, habits, and things that bring out the absolute worst in you. Let go of everything that no longer serves you. Although it does sound horribly painful but cutting off from people as well as habits is the best thing you can do for yourself.*

*The more I found the courage to remove toxic people out of my life, the lighter and happier I felt. I finally found space to become the most authentic version of myself, and made room for better things in my life. After this period of difficult changes comes the new beginnings. This is where you identify and adapt to better habits, healthier mindsets, and fulfilling lifestyles. Here, you meet better people, and learn to express yourself in the truest form. Nothing scares you or holds you back anymore. You take accountability of everything you are, and become more receptive to positive changes in your life. This is where you can proudly say that you’ve recovered.*

*Lastly, never forget to be kinder to yourself even during your worst moments and phases. Inflicting hatred upon yourself will only make matters worse, and will take you two steps back. Learn to stay grateful to yourself for having taken such a great step towards personal growth. It is challenging and sometimes tiring - but it will always be worth it.*



# WOULD YOU?

*" Would you tell me that I can have, my  
mother back in time, that It's okay if I couldn't  
save the burning line, and I should smile.  
Would you? "*

Areez Haque

# A POLITICAL PANTOUM

**AREEZ HAQUE**

Mitron!

*This Government is not very secular  
Fascist and Communal*

*Looting votes in the name of religion.*

*This Government is not very secular*

*Arresting students, professors and dissenters*

*Looting votes in the name of religion*

*Killing Muslims, Dalits and Farmers*

*Arresting students, professors and dissenters*

*The fourth pillar – has already been sold out*

*Killing Muslims, Dalits and Farmers*

*The Country, wearing orange, attending funerals*

*The fourth pillar – has already been sold out*

*Fascist and Communal*

*The Country, wearing orange, attending funerals*

Mitron!

*Getting political!*

M  
I  
T  
R  
O  
N

# IN A MILLION YEARS



## AREEZ HAQUE

*As I lay down, upon the fresh sheet of green grass, my mind, no more in my senses, hit the boundaries of my skull, of all the problems that I have in my life, Would you help me out of it? Would you?*

*That my heart beats so fast, that my eyes shimmer my entire body soaking it up in tears, that I can't breathe. Would you help me out of it?*

*Would you lay me down, my soul, my flesh and would make me believe that I shall wait for the rest. That I shall, not overthink my entire life. Would you?*

*Would you come running to me, to save me when I'm drowning, to make me feel alive when I'm rolling? Would you?*

*Would you bring to me a bunch of leathers, to erase the scars in my feathers? Would you come to me and kiss my cuts, shutting the doors for the sluts. Would you?*

*Would you tell me that I can have, my mother back in time, that It's okay if I couldn't save the burning line, and I should smile. Would you?*

*Would you remind me of the makeup in my chest, that it can save me, from the ugly in my breast. That I can come to you the way you expect, hanging the clothes on the crest. Would you?*

*But, I see, you can't. And that my soul has damaged all its part. And the only thing that can help is the strength in my bones, serving tarts. It would take me a million years, but I realise that you wouldn't, and I shall. Because, your love is less, and mine enough, to help me out, in a million years.*

---

# SCAN THIS QR CODE TO ENTER EALVI'S MUSICAL ENCHANTMENT

## DOING IT MY WAY

*It's all in my head  
A war with myself  
I'm trying to stand  
But I keep on rushing  
These bullets they're crushing  
My faith*

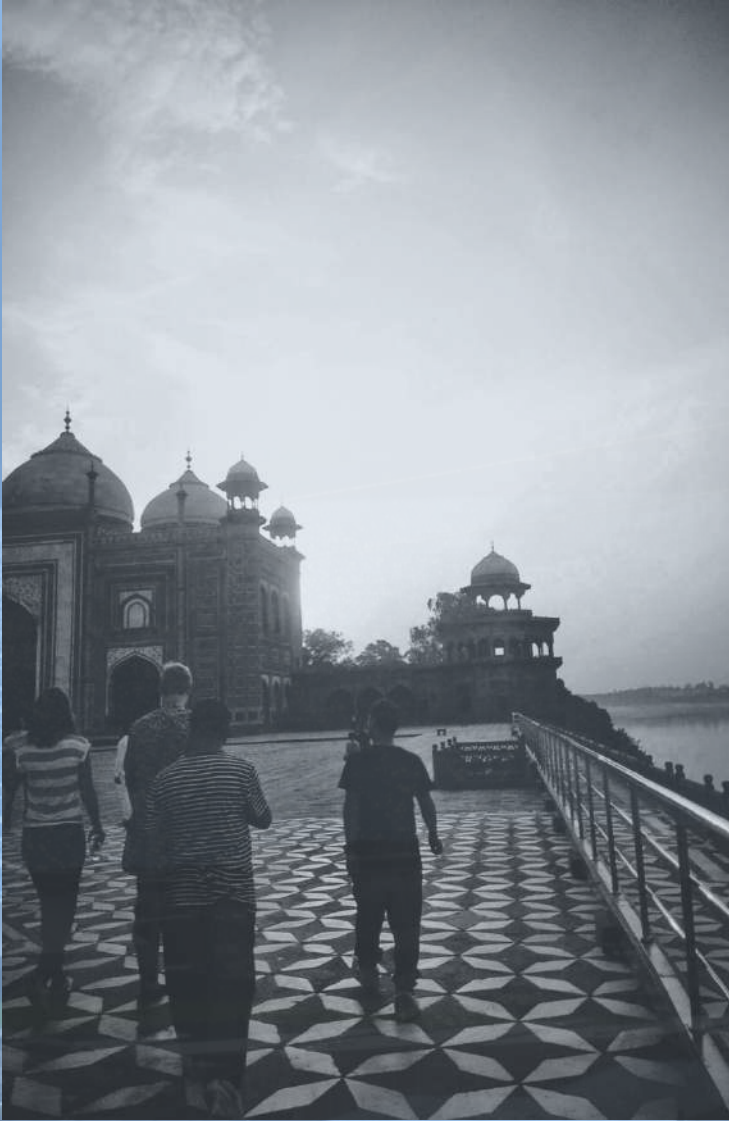
*Where the wind goes  
The city of hopes  
It calls me so I move along  
But all I can give you is a song*

*My heart calls my name to say*

*There is more, there is a way  
I can fight this  
Holding hands with you, right here  
Come on now, don't you hide it  
I'm sure we're doing it,  
doing it, doing it the right way*







# INCONNU...

BY RIGZIN DOLMA

Fetching through the countless numbers  
of faces

A star like face surpassed through me  
I couldn't resist it and turned around  
To make sure the angel I saw is real  
She was stunningly smiling at something  
While talking to her friend  
Her hands carefully caressing her hair  
The moment I saw her, a strange feeling  
echoed I felt as if she was doomed to be  
mine

And I was missing her since so many  
years  
The scenic beauty she was carrying along  
All I could do was embrace the moment  
I couldn't get away by any force  
So I captured all I could

From her eyelids to her perfectly placed philtrum  
The shining earrings of hers to the matching blue ring on  
her finger  
The dying sun was running that moment  
The rising rage inside me was excited to say 'hello' to her  
But she lost into the crowd  
And I kept looking for a glimpse of her.



**/ˈãkɒnu**

**INCONNU**

noun

an unknown person or thing.

# The First Snowfall...

BY RIGZIN DOLMA

*I got up to the clouds landing so heavenly  
And the mountains glooming eventually  
My hands approaching to the dust of snow flakes  
Glued and melted as if showing me  
some kind of a miracle.*

*I cunningly ran into the gust of it  
As if I am chasing them outwitted  
I felt the freezing breeze bog  
When I saw my breath turning into thin fog.*

*Another day, another season  
Just made me a part of it unreason  
Giving me the little essence of it  
As if god's graces are finally lit.*

*It is the first snowfall guest  
And people are still inside their nests  
Warming themselves against the cold  
From which no one was consoled.*

*The streets seem silent and lonely today  
The dogs I see by the roadside everyday  
Also seen to be nowhere around  
And the vehicles are also home bound,  
I felt, as I made my way to the study.*







IMAGE BY : SYAIFULPTAK57 ON PEXELBAY

# Medusa: The Greek tragedy

BY KSHIRJA BEDI

1. You cursed my soul, my mind is dead  
Eyes like a weapon, snakes on my head  
A priestess I was, the pride of Athena  
Now I'm banned to live the life of a beast — Grave Digger, "Medusa"  
In Greek mythology, Medusa is one of the three gorgon sisters, with venomous snakes as hair and with a horrifying visage that turned those who beheld her to stone. Her name has been used vastly in the last few decades but it is always associated with something monstrous or negative. Films like Percy Jackson and Clash of the Titans portrayed her in such a negative light that one cannot help but consider her a villain, especially the young children with their unmolded minds being taught to perceive her in a negative light but the truth is far from this monstrous one. Medusa is not the villain she is perceived as, instead she is a victim of tragedy, maybe the most infamous tragedy the time has yet seen because of the repercussions she had to face and instead of sympathy,

she was turned into the most unfeeling villain that time has ever seen. Initially, Medusa was a mere mortal whose beauty was well known and appreciated by all. Stories of her beauty reached the ears of the Greek god Poseidon. Smitten by her he tried to woo her to his bed but the vow of Chastity that she had taken to serve the virgin goddess Athena stood in his way. Refusing to be rejected by a mere mortal, Poseidon took matters to his own hand and raped Medusa in the temple of the very goddess she served. End of her sorrows? Not even near. After being stripped of her beliefs by her Chastity being unwittingly stolen in the very place she considered holy, she was punished by the very goddess she served and believed in because apparently her being raped in Athena's temple desecrated the holy place and in the eyes of Athena, Medusa was a sinner and sinners need to repent. The Greek goddess turned her into a Gorgon and made her what we now know her as, a villain, a pest that needs to be removed.



Medusa was eventually beheaded by the Greek hero Perseus. According to him “She got what she deserved.” Raped by Poseidon, cursed by Athena and decapitated by Perseus, Medusa was wronged by the well-known Gods and supposed heroes in Greek mythology. Even after her death she was treated unfairly, her head was kept as a trophy and was used by several men as a weapon because it still retained its ability to turn people to stone. Even in death she had no agency over her body and lived in a continuous cycle of abuse through being passed on from man to man. Her story is not of a monster but of a victim. She might have eventually caved in and become what she was perceived as but she was a victim of time whose only sin was her unearthly beauty and believing in something that stood in the way of a male’s ego. In earlier times, when patriarchal views and religion covered everyone’s eye Medusa was considered a villain. Her backstory held no depth for them and her innocence had no meaning because after all she was merely a human and her rapist a god, one that was worshipped and respected by all. In the twentieth century, feminists totally debunk Medusa’s negative image and instead rightly portray her as the victim she is.

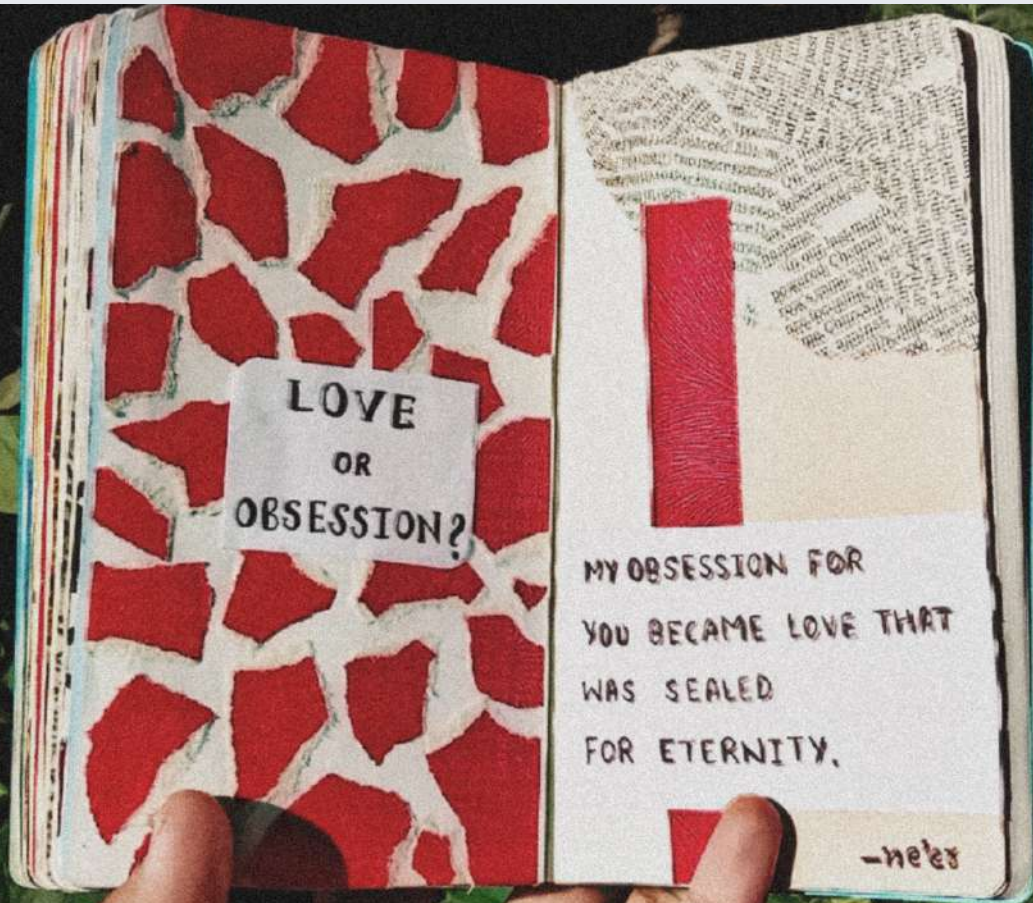
Victim shaming is prevalent these days, whenever a heinous crime such as rape takes place these days, the victim is questioned instead of the criminal. What were you wearing? Where were you? Why were you there? Why were you alone? Are some of the berserk questions that are asked, and the victim is further traumatized and often recedes and tries to nip the matter in the bud so as to not get humiliated any further. If you reread Medusa’s story. You will find that she was greatly victim shamed. Why did Athena punish Medusa instead of Poseidon for desecrating her holy temple? Why was the woman who served Athena punished even though she was not at fault and was instead a defenseless mortal incapable of protecting herself from a god? According to today’s view, Athena couldn’t punish the mighty god so instead she punished the next available person. You might find similarities in this and today’s case where a person who is at a lower pedestal is punished for a crime, he/she didn’t commit and the person in power is acquitted. Hence in today’s time, Medusa is getting more justice than she ever did. She is being rightly portrayed as the victim she is and her rage is being rightly justified.



IMAGE BY WILLGARD KRAUSE FROM PIXABAY

# haiku

A JAPANESE POEM OF SEVENTEEN SYLLABLES, IN THREE LINES OF FIVE, SEVEN, AND FIVE, TRADITIONALLY EVOKING IMAGES OF THE NATURAL WORLD.



MY OBSESSION FOR  
YOU BECAME LOVE THAT  
WAS SEALED  
FOR ETERNITY.

-neeraj

A PAGE FROM NEERAJ'S JOURNAL



# The Mysterious Diary and Covid 19

BY NEERAJ

2020, the year of the inevitable massacre, isolation and submerged hopes of people all over the world is finally about to end. All of us have gone through a lot whether it's the gloom of losing a loved one, or pathetic mental health due to cabin fever. The worst year ever, right? Or perhaps just a starter, who knows? I'm not trying to be pessimistic here. I'm just thinking outside the box. Something happened to me which made me think this way. Sadly no one believed me, not even my best friend, Nidhi. I found a diary before the pandemic had begun. A normal diary of a little girl named Inayat, where she mentioned her daily activities, her family, friends, her pet dog and all the little things that mattered in her life. I didn't know who she was. Her diary, however, warned me about the pandemic. It was a diary from the future. Isn't it strange? It took me months to believe in it. I explained all of this to Nidhi. I went to her place one day and blurted everything out just to make her understand the situation I was in. "Have a look at this diary," I said while handing over the diary to her. "I found this diary in the local park months ago, in January

. It belongs to a little girl. Looks like a normal diary, right? But it's not. It's hard to believe but this diary tells the future. Just-  
"What the heck," said Nidhi, riffling through the pages of the diary.

"Let me finish what I was saying," I pleaded.

"I know it sounds crazy. I too didn't believe in it initially but when I linked the current circumstance with the information in this diary, I knew it is for real."

"And what are those 'inklings' you obtained from this absurd diary?"

"Open page-no 43. Read the entry of 25 March 2020." "Dear Diary, today I did not go to school. A terrible virus has been spreading around like wildfire, and now the schools are shut," Nidhi reluctantly read. "She has mentioned the spread of a virus and schools getting shut down" I added. "She is referring to the COVID-19 pandemic. Don't you remember the day when lockdown was announced? - This girl has mentioned everything: the 9 minute blackout, the mass applause for the healthcare workers - When I read this paragraph, I was in disbelief too. How shocking is it to see it all come true!"

Nidhi let out a sigh "This must be some sick prank. Maybe this girl has no sense of time and date, and wrote incorrect dates on all of her entries. Don't just assume that she's some time traveller - it might happen in your anime world, but it sure as hell doesn't in the real world".

"Is that all you've got to say? And what if it turns out that it wasn't a prank or a silly mistake" I asserted. "It's much more than a joke or an honest mistake".

"So you're trying to convince me that it's a diary from the future," she snapped. "If you really think you're right, then tell her what she has written about this month."

"There's no such monthly reports in it. It's just her personal life which is somehow linked to -," I murmured.

"Linked to the future? C'mon Riya, you sound dumb.

"Nidhi failed to understand what I've been trying to tell her all this time. Well, I don't blame her. My reaction would have been the same too if she had said this to me. I felt stuck and confused - this diary and the pandemic were all that was going in my mind. On top of that, the academic pressure and the burden of online classes took a toll on me. As Nidhi suggested, I took a break from everything to calm down my nerves. I controlled my intrusive thoughts, and diverted my attention to other important things.

Only if the reality was easy to escape from. Everywhere, news and stories of this pandemic were being talked about. More and more people succumbed to the virus, and the economy was driven into shambles. The only hope is a vaccine; a cure for this horrendous pandemic. However, despite the trials and the tests, the hopes remained bleak for most.

As months went by, people became more accustomed to the circumstances - to an extent that the looming threat of the virus didn't seem to bother them. Safety measures began to be flouted, and a careless attitude was developed.

The other day, Nidhi decided to visit the mall. I declined her invitation, for meeting people during this time was the last thing I was interested in. But for her, I could step out of my comfort zone. "Let's go to Select Citywalk! It's been so long since we've been there." Nidhi pleaded. "And what if we all fall sick?"

"I'll pay for your treatment then!" she jokingly added.

For the first time in 4 months, I stepped out of my house. The mall was just a walk away from our homes, and we decided to spend our afternoon there. It was quite an eerie experience.

The places which used to be flooded by crowds of people, now seemed empty and dry. The shops were either closed or devoid of any customer. As I walked around the area, I noticed a certain gloominess in a place that once used to be full of enthusiasm.

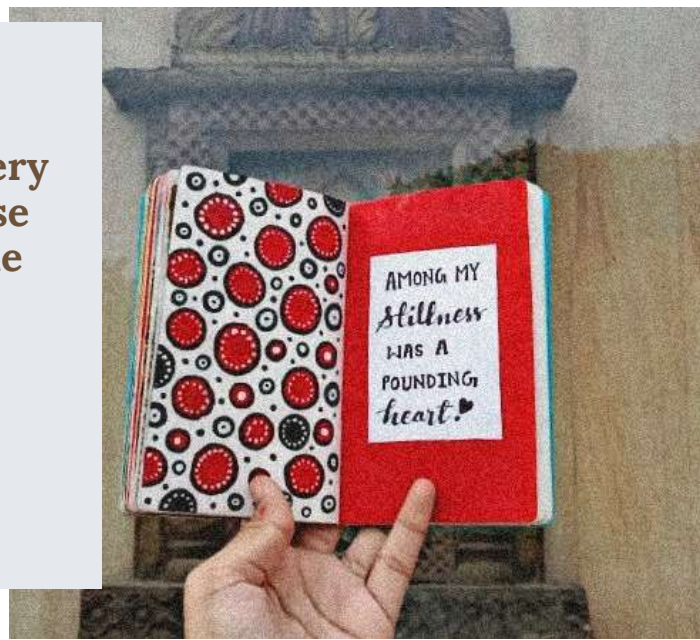
After a while, Nidhi and I decided to visit a nice cafeteria inside the mall. It seemed safe, and all the measures were in place too. We ate our favourite veg spring rolls and everything that we missed in lockdown. We talked and laughed at our lame jokes. It felt good. Finally, I was able to enjoy the little things in my life.

Then from somewhere, I heard some 'happy birthday' rhymes in a not-so-dulcet voice. I looked around to know where the rhymes were coming from. It was a family of three.



**"Coming back to that diary, it's still a mystery to me. But just because of that diary I was able to find out half of the truth about the so-called pandemic.."**

Neeraj



*Mother, father and a little daughter, probably 11-12 years old, sitting at the corner table of the cafe celebrating a birthday. Before I could make sense of what was happening, Nidhi interrupted, "Let's go now. It's getting dark." While she paid the bill, I glanced over the corner table. They were still singing that happy birthday song but the last line stunned me. "Happy birthday dear Inayat. Happy birthday to you!"*

*On one hand, I tried to convince myself that the diary was in fact, a sheer coincidence; on the other hand, however, I was quite convinced that the diary wasn't a joke. I recalled her last diary entry, dated 29th August. Inayat wrote a full account of her birthday celebration in a mall. I could observe everything she had written in her entry come to life. Baffled and surprised, I had countless questions.*

*I did think of talking to the family, or at least bringing Nidhi's attention to this - but I felt too tired to make an effort at all. I wanted to go home. The first thing I did on reaching home was to look for that dia. It was nowhere to be found. For an hour or so, I searched for it. To my shock and dismay, that diary just vanished into thin air.*

*I spent the next few weeks researching on Covid 19. Not the fake number of deaths and recoveries, but something beyond it. With my thorough research, I came across the 'conspiracy theory' of covid 19. What I found was that the pandemic was planned and we were in the midst of a global crime. The pandemic wasn't really a pandemic. It was a scam. I know you don't believe this. But you can search out yourself. The testing method for Covid 19 was patented by Richard Rothschild four years before the disease was discovered. So many countries imported the testing tool kits years ago. Now don't say it's a lie too. All the information is available out there but we're blinded by what our national media shows us. In 2013, the rapper named Dr Creep released a song called "Pandemic" with the lyrics: "2020 combined with coronavirus, bodies stacking". Wow, what a coincidence! In December 2019, Bill Gates tweeted - "What's next for our foundation? I'm particularly excited about what the next year could mean for one of the best buys in global health: vaccines." Still not convinced? I suggest you read a book called 'Unreported Truths About Covid 19 And Lockdowns' by Alex Berenson. You will get your answers. I know it's hard to believe but this is the truth.*

*Coming back to that diary, it's still a mystery to me. But just because of that diary I was able to find out half of the truth about the so-called pandemic. There's something extremely bogus going on and the worst is yet to come.*

# JUST A REGULAR GUY

BY RAMYA KHERA

“This one’s for you best friend,” I said as I finally uploaded my first ever song and made a promise to myself to achieve a successful life just the way she wanted me to.





Early in the morning at around 8 a.m., my phone beeped. "Going to be there in ten, see you downstairs Jeff," it was a message from Emma, my best friend. We used to go to college together. To not be late for college, I quickly got ready, grabbed my bag, locked my apartment and began to steer downstairs. I reached the main gate of the society and found Emma at the opposite side of the road attempting to cross. As she was crossing the road, I saw a car speeding down in the same direction. In the blink of an eye, I heard a loud thud. Before my mind could process what was going on, I heard people screaming and running towards the car. In the crowd, I wasn't able to see Emma any more. In those few seconds, my heart and my mind were driving me crazy. I ran towards her a few metres ahead. My eyes were looking out for her.

I somehow made my way into the crowd and I couldn't believe what I saw. I saw Emma laying on the road soaked in blood. I couldn't believe my eyes. I was completely shaken up. I felt a sudden dizziness in my body. "This can't happen, this is not true! It can't be Emma", I mumbled to myself. But she was laying right in front of me in such a miserable state that it was enough to make me lose control of myself. A wave of extreme dread and woe hit me. I wasn't able to breathe and my vision began to blur. I suddenly opened my eyes. My heart was thumping against my chest. I found myself in my bed. It was a nightmare. This nightmare has been reoccurring to me since I lost Emma in a car accident three months ago. I typically see her in my dream like that.

After that, I couldn't sleep any longer, it was four a.m. I got off the bed and made some coffee for myself. I sat at the balcony and gazed at the stars, thinking of Emma. "I hope she's happy wherever she is," I thought. After a while, I went inside and began working on my music project. I remember how excited Emma was for this project of mine. She was the only one who knew about this song I'd been working on and she wanted me to create a channel of my own. I always opposed the idea as I like to keep my things private, also I'm a little lazy. I remember how she wanted me to get successful, have a good life, and achieve all my dreams. I miss the way she pushed me to be the best version of myself.

All these thoughts flooded my mind as I played my composition. It was indeed a beautiful piece of music but I could never work on this project again since she passed away. I couldn't concentrate on anything. Sometimes I wished I would have listened to her and wished I was the one who'd have crossed the road instead of her. Sometimes, I consider myself guilty for all that.

A little while later I glanced at the watch, it was 6 a.m. already. I took shower and made myself breakfast and left for college. At the doorway of the college, there was a guard who checked our ID cards. He was an awfully generous man. I don't know how could someone be this calm and happy all the time like him, employed as a security guard, a job with no high regular payment. And it's human nature to always stress regarding what we do not have, however, he was not like that. That was the one factor I liked about him the foremost. I commanded toward the class and sat down at the last corner seat of the class. I never liked attending classes. I used to be bullied in school for having extraordinarily curling hair which made me insecure about my appearance. I've conjointly detected from women that they like tallboys and having 5'11 height is nice enough for that, I suppose. Well, I've never had romances in my life. I don't even have a best friend anymore and the relationship is like a million steps away from that.

The day glided by and I at six in the evening, I started heading towards home. My phone started ringing. Without even looking I knew who it was, as she was the only one who always called me, it was my mom. I didn't have any friends besides Emma. "Hey sweetie how are you?" she asked sweetly. "I'm fine mom, how are you?" I replied. "Have you had lunch?" she asked. "Yes mom, just heading home" I answered. "Okay baby, text me after reaching home, I love you," she said. "Okay mom, I love you too", I hung up the phone.

A cold breeze hit my face as I walked my way back. It was December already. Winter is my favorite season. Emma and I used to go out Christmas shopping together every year, but I believed anything wouldn't be the same now.

As I walked back I encountered two little brown puppies. I couldn't stop myself from petting them. I love animals. I took a pack of biscuits out of my bag and gave it to them. I enjoyed a lot as they nibbled on the biscuits, I took a few photographs of them on my phone. It was getting late and I got on my way back home. As I reached home it was dark already, I went to the kitchen straight, dined and did the dishes afterwards. I went to bed early because I woke up extremely early today and was tired attending all the classes. As soon as my head hit the pillow, it took me no time to doze off into deep sleep.

I woke up, it was all dark, and I couldn't find my phone to check the time. I somehow made my way out of the bed. It was way too dark than it usually is in my room. I always leave the window open so that there is some light but it was pitch black that day. As I made my way to a few steps, I stumbled upon something. "Ouch", a little whimper escaped my mouth. "You okay Jeff?" It was her. I knew her voice, and it was hers.

As I turned around I saw Emma standing right behind me. I was shocked but most importantly I was happy. "You're alive?" I asked her as tears rolled down my face.

"Of course I am! I survived! I've just moved to a different place and believe me, Jeff, I'm very happy there" said Emma. "Why didn't you tell me about moving? You shared everything with me, how could you keep such a big thing from me, Emma? I was so devastated you have no idea, I thought I lost you" I said, half speaking half crying.

She pulled me into a hug. "Jeff I didn't tell you because I know you'd be hurt, I don't want to hurt you. Just know that where I live now I'm very happy there and I keep an eye on you from there, I got to be with my best friend always.

And one more thing Jeffy, that accident, it was not your fault, neither was it mine. It was a bad time, you know. Don't blame yourself for whatever happened," she held my hands, "take good care of yourself, I have to leave now and remember whatever I told you."

She took a deep breath and said, "you're going to be a successful musician one day, I believe in you and I want you to believe in yourself too".

I was out of words. I just stood there watching her as tears continuously rolled down my eyes. My eyes opened, and I realised I was dreaming all of that once again. I was sweating and my heart was pounding. It was hard to believe it was a dream. All it felt so real. I glanced at the clock, it was yet again 4 AM. I went out on the balcony, it was all dark outside. For the first time in the past 3 months, I was not depressed about that dream. I usually woke up with such a broken heart every time I dreamt of her, but this time it was different. It was as if I met her and honestly, it made me happy.

She told me she was happy wherever she was. That's all I wanted to know. Remembering the dream I had a smile on my face. Suddenly it hit me, I realised what I needed to do now. I always wanted to make Emma happy and this would be it. I ran back into my room, logged into my computer and created a channel of my own, just the way she wanted. I uploaded my song and named it "To the most amazing friend anyone could ever have", I glanced towards the open balcony door into the sky remembering Emma as a smile formed on my face.

"This one's for you best friend," I said as I finally uploaded my first ever song and made a promise to myself to achieve a successful life just the way she wanted me to.

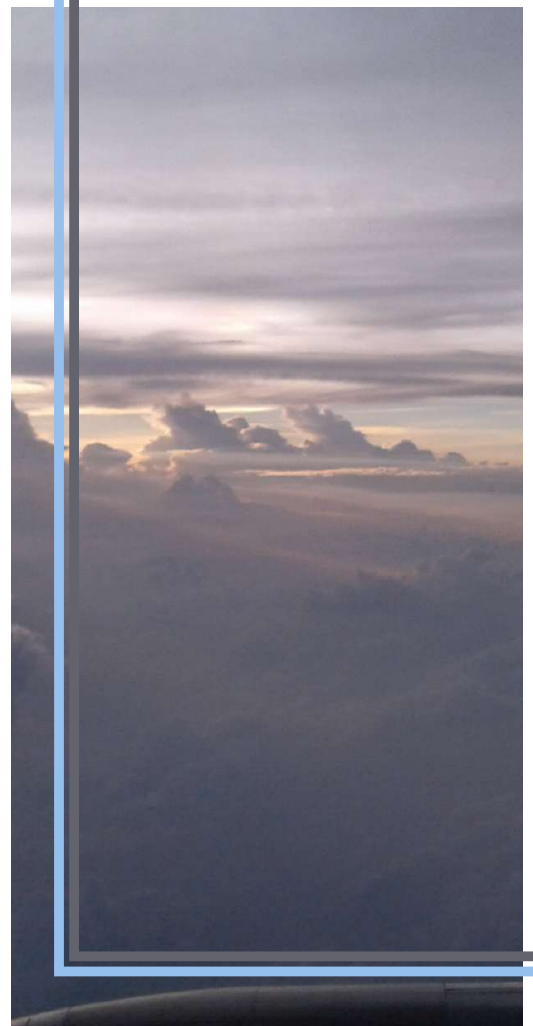




# RAIN: THE BLISS OF NATURE

BY SHRUTI

And today as I left my coaching and stepped outside to feel the cool breeze on my face, blowing the strands, a bit irritating yet soothing. Oh! It was raining...though not heavily but yes I could feel those tiny droplets on my face. I rushed to find a shelter as everybody else did. And in that short lapse of time I spent in the shelter of mine, I observed- the roads and the trees, the buildings and the bricks and the towers and shops, every bit around was shining iridescently as if radiating the bliss of rain. As the educated ones were seen running to find shelters, the little ones were found cheerfully dabbling themselves in the splashes. Sun too found shelter behind the clouds but seemingly was not as afraid as we were.



And then my mind wondered, if rain is such a beautiful bliss, why do we run away from it? Why are we so afraid to let those cool droplets embrace our face, to tickle our souls, to harmonise our mind and to rejuvenate our whole being? Is it because in every shower, we perceive a storm, a storm of thoughts or may be a storm of forced perception. Maybe because we are afraid of being carried away by the storms, maybe those droplets of water terrify us rather than making us feel happy. Maybe that's what our mind wants to perceive. I think we live in a fear, a constant fear of failures, rejections and disappointments. And since the beginning of this world, we are taught to hide, to hide ourselves, our thoughts, our beliefs, our very essence. Why? And a realization dawned upon me.

**Realisation that devoured by the shades of grey, we forget to ride the tides of charm. Maybe the short lived griefs conquer us. Why?**

We don't need to hide our inner self, our thoughts, our beliefs. We need to have faith in ourselves, we need to step outside.

Let those little drops of hope embrace you, let your joys fly, allow yourself in the orbit of happiness because not every rain is a storm. Rain is a teacher, it teaches us to shed away dust of the past, to rejuvenate for a brighter future. Why don't we awaken that child of us who wants to explore the rain? Are we too educated to do so? If so, then was that the aim of education? certainly not. The mesmerising beauty of nature is the real bliss. Step out of those artificial air conditioners, feel the cool breeze and let your umbrella of rules rest for a day. Live some days like a small kid who has no fear of anything, who has no rule book. This innocence is what our soul needs.

**Realisation that devoured by the shades of grey, we forget to ride the tides of charm. Maybe the short lived griefs conquer us. Why?**

**SHRUTI**

# FIRST TIME

BY SHRUTI

*First I saw him was by chance  
Little did I know would change my stance  
The more I saw the more I  
lost My small heart to those big eyes.*

*Fathom of my heart was never touched Never  
felt, Never seen  
Suddenly something started rising Under the  
pain was this beautiful feeling.*

*Felt like a kid to talk to him,  
Fear of something wrong would happen  
occurred,  
I let go my love for the  
best because I knew He was the best.*





SHORT STORY

RAMAANSHI

# THE U TURN

Fiza, is a young independent woman in her early twenties, raised in an upper middle class, fairly modern, Hindu family. She has recently shifted to Delhi in search of better career prospects. She is empowered and pragmatic.

Savita is a retired school teacher in her late sixties, who now runs her own playschool. She was born in Delhi to an extremely conservative and middle-class family. She got married young and had no other choice but to marry the person chosen by her family. Now she lives with her partner, son and daughter-in-law. She is a bubbly, generous and a bold woman.



It's raining heavily, Fiza's office hours just got over and she has had a tiring day. She is waiting for the Uber Pool to arrive. When twelve minutes later, the cab arrives, Fiza confirms her drop location and directs the driver. A few minutes later, the driver picks up the other rider, Savita. As the cab stops at Savita's doorstep, she opens the door and sits, gracefully smoothening the creases in her emerald green 'Kanjeevaram' saree. She seems to be on a call with someone close, one can easily guess that by the tone of her voice. As Savita sits next to Fiza, the latter starts examining the former with her peripheral vision just like a hypercritical teacher grading a test, busy looking for flaws and mistakes that do not exist.

Savita hasn't noticed Fiza yet.

Savita: (on call with her daughter)

"Beta, if you want this relationship to work, you need to devote your time. The dollar bills will not walk their way to your doorstep.

(laughs loudly)

Okay bye beta,

take care. I will see you soon"

(she hangs up)

Fiza: (scoffs)

Savita: (hangs up, smiles softly and glances at Fiza)

"That was my daughter, she really gives me a tough time but I love her"

Fiza: (smiles politely, her lack of interest was evident)

Savita: "Actually I am looking for an ideal gift for her, she has hair as curly as telephone wire, just like yours. You two actually look quite alike. Can you help me out choose a good ombre hair color for her? I am going to gift her this salon's gift card."

Fiza: (quite disinterested and already has a negative attitude towards Savita formed on the basis of the brief telephonic conversation she could eavesdrop)

"Not trying to be rude but the dollar bills she is going to score from the relationship she should be devoted to, can buy her an entire Aalim Hakim salon. I must say, you pull off a good Kris Jenner."

Savita: (confused)

"It's okay

beta, if you do not want to help but do not be lightning fast to judge me. You seem like an open-minded person."

Fiza: (surprised at the woman's audacity)

"I am not judging you; this is my first impression of yours, a woman who pushes her daughter to be a gold digger, what else can be expected from aunties like you, pretentiously modern and woke amongst familiar company and a conservative torchbearer of patriarchy and sexism behind their backs"

Savita: (quite upset, teary eyed)

"I don't know you, neither do you know me thus we don't owe each other explanations of any kind. But just hear me- "

Fiza: "Please don't get on my nerves, I have had enough of y'all."

(Savita's drop location is only a few minutes away; she starts to look for cash in handbag)

(The drop location arrives; in a hurry she left her handbag unzipped and her mobile phone fell on the seat and this went unnoticed)

Four minutes later

(a phone rings,

Fiza looks into her bag, it's not her phone that is ringing. She looks towards her left and finds an unattended phone ringing, the caller name read "Mishu", before she could pick up it stopped ringing. She realized it must that auntie's)

Two minutes later

(Mishu is calling again, she manages to pick up in time, before she could inform that the owner has left the phone, Mishu starts speaking.)

Mishu: "Mumma, listen! I actually made you proud, don't die of a sudden surge of happiness but I am going to continue working here for a while and invest in mutual funds and then start something of my own. You were right, this is a relationship, between me and my work, me and my goals and I must feed it with devotion and hard work and if the dollar bills don't knock on my door, no big deal. I will. Okay Mumma, I have to go, my friends are here. Bye, love you. And I am so sorry I am not going to be there with you today on your special day but just know that I am proud of you for accepting who you are and embracing it."

(and she hung up before Fiza could tell her anything and she the call the ended she couldn't stop staring at the lock screen, it was an aesthetic flat-lay of a polaroid and wedding invitation kept on a table, which read "Savita and Maya invite you to join them as they celebrate their third marriage anniversary..". Savita's eyes shone as bright as the emeralds she was wearing in that polaroid, standing beside Maya.)

Fiza: (guilty, directs the driver)

"Can you take a U-turn, there is somewhere I need to be."

Every time I walk down the dusty old roads of Delhi, alone  
And a group of men surround me like a pack of hungry wolves:  
I wish I was a man

Every time a father saves for his daughter's marriage  
And his son's college  
I wish she was his son

Every time a wife chooses to relocate herself  
And the husband lives comfortably in his house  
I wish she was a husband

Every time the HR puts out the appraisal list,  
Rakesh;  
the team manager receives a higher appraisal and Meeta;  
also a team manager, does not  
I wish Meeta was Rakesh

Every time a woman poses in a bikini only to be slut shamed  
And a male celebrity jogs on Marine Drive, shirtless and untamed  
I wish she was that male celebrity

I wish and I can only wish  
that for once; every woman is man  
And every man is a woman

I wish

I WAS A MAN

BY RAMAANSHI



## LOVE

BY VANDANA

He was like breeze,  
Came near to freeze.  
Don't know when I lost,  
Had to pay a high cost.  
My naive heart got stuck,  
And this happened just.  
I lost my appetite,  
On seeing his cool might.  
He became grace,  
And I want to chase.

# LOVE



## MONSTERS

BY VANDANA

Is there anyone left to see my  
plight?  
My wings are chained with the fear of rape  
They are ready to trample me  
There is no one who could save me  
from these monsters  
My wings are chained with the fear of rape  
They have no pity for me in their heart  
There is no one who could save me from  
these monsters  
My dreams are replaced with nightmare  
They have no pity for me in their heart  
They are ready to trample me  
My dreams are replaced with nightmare  
Is there anyone left to see my plight

# MONSTERS





# HAYAT

BY VANDANA



This story is about a girl named Hayat. She is a syrian refugee girl who lives with her mother Shaheen and three siblings Asli, Zayn, and Fareez. They make their livelihood by picking garbage from bins. Hayatis a 16 year old girl who is 5.4 feet tall. She has Brown coloured curly hair and her eyes are green. She doesn't go to school or college because the circumstances she lives in don't allow her to study because being the eldest girl she has responsibilities of her family. She has to wander all the day here and there in search of garbage so that she could sell it in market and could get bread for her family. Everyday she fights a battle for their survival. These miseries have made her more mature and responsible than her age. The burden of her responsibility can be seen in her glorious eyes. The fetters of responsibility have restricted her dreams. She has a friend named Kiwi. Her character is pretty similar to Hayat. They spend the whole day with each other in playing and collecting garbage. Hayat forgets all her grievances when she shares her company with Kiwi. They are refugees at the outskirts of of Syria and have to face troubles in their daily lives. However, they have dreams and hopes in their eyes that one day they will also have a normal life. Hayat has a dream that one day she will definitely buy a house for her mother and siblings. She will go to the university and will earn money from her calibre. Her mother believes her that one day she would definitely accomplish her dreams and Alla will bless her with all the happiness she deserves.



# THE MAN WHO SEARCHED FOR TRUTH

*SURBHI ROHATGI*

There was a village in a kingdom. A milkman lived there. His name was Deenu. He had built his hut far away from his village, in the woods. He loved the quietness of the woods rather than the noisy atmosphere of the village. He lived in his hut with his two cows. He fed them well and took proper care of them. Everyday he took the two cows to a nearby lake to bath them. The two cows gave enough milk. With the milk that the two cows had given, he earned enough money to live happily.

Deenu was an honest man. Though he was content, at times he would be restless. "There is so much wrong and evil in this world. Is there nobody to guide the people?" This thought made him sad every now and then.

One evening, Deenu, was returning home after selling milk in the village. He saw a saint sitting under a tree and meditating. He slowly walked up to him and waited for the saint to open his eyes. He was happy to be with the saint for some time. He decided to wait there itself till the saint opened his eyes.

After a while, the saint slowly opened his eyes. He was surprised to see a man patiently sitting beside him. "What do you want?" asked the saint humbly.

"I want to know what the path to Truth and Piety is? Where shall I find Honesty?" asked Deenu.

The saint smiled and said, "Go to the pond nearby and ask the fish the same question. She will give you the answer." Then as asked to do, the ignorant man, Deenu went to the nearby pond and asked the same question to the fish. The fish said, "O kind man! First, bring me some water to drink." Deenu was surprised. He said, "You live in water. But you still want water to drink? How strange!"

At this moment, the fish replied, "You are right. And that gives you the answer to your question as well. Truth, Piety and honesty are inside the heart of a man. But being ignorant, he searches for them in the outer world. Instead of wandering here and there, look within yourself and you will find them.

"This gave an immense satisfaction to Deenu. He thanked the fish and walked home a wiser man. He changed the way in which he saw this world as well as himself. From that day, Deenu never felt restless.

He took his best to carry this message to the rest of his fellow human beings. All his friends accepted him as their master and consulted him to overcome their mental problems. He led them properly.

# MY SHADOW

*SURBHI ROHATGI*

Dark day, lonely night,  
No hope, only fear in sight.  
Dried tears, silent voice,  
No one hears my inner noise.  
No hope only fear in sight,  
Why does breathing take  
might?

No one hears my inner noise,  
I try to reduce the sound of  
mellow cries.

Why does breathing take  
might?

I fear the wrong and losing  
the fight.

I try to reduce the sound of  
mellow cries,

With every sigh I feel the  
need to apologise.

Dark day, lonely night,  
I fear the wrong and losing  
the fight.

Dried tears, silent voice,  
With every sigh I feel the  
need to apologise.





# COVID

*ARTICLE BY NAVYA*

**There is no doubt in saying that Covid-19 has completely evolved the way of living whether it is for working people or even children. It has affected every single one's life. On March 11, 2020, WHO declared Novel Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) outbreak as a pandemic and reiterated the call for countries to take immediate actions and scale up response to treat, detect and reduce transmission to save people's lives. Since that, it is not coming to an end. Coronavirus disease (covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered**

**coronavirus. Most people infected will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. It spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it is important that one also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow).**

**It has drastically affected the global economy. Amid the pandemic, number of countries across the world resorted to lockdown to ease the spreading of the infection which pushed the global economy into recession. According to IMF, the global economy is expected to shrink by over 3 per cent in 2020 – the steepest slowdown since the Great Depression of the 1930s. It has not just affected small economies but has also shaken the big economies like US and Japan. In India, the situation is worse as India was witnessing pre-pandemic slowdown and**

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**and then the pandemic has magnified pre-existing risks to India's economic outlook. There are about 45% of household who have reported income drop as compared to previous year. India is losing around 30,000 crore rupees every day after the lockdown imposed on 24th March 2020. It has affected India in many ways that caused largest GDP contraction, sharp rise in unemployment, stress on supply chain, decrease in government income, collapse of tourism industry, fall in trade and many more.**

**We can say that middle- and lower-class people are now living more miserable life. They do not have any way to earn money for their living. According to WHO, the whole India has to face this coronavirus pandemic. So, it's better to face it smartly for which government is taking special measures so that they can control the spreading of Coronavirus and economy on the other hand.**

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# SHORT STORY

**BY NAVYA**

**BRAYDEN:** *Brayden is a young and ambitious guy. He loves Amara, her school love and is incredibly happy in his life but deep down he is pursuing the aim of having a lot of money which will accomplish his life.*

**AMARA:** *Amara is Brayden's girlfriend. She is a simple girl with a beautiful heart. She is very supportive and understanding. She loves Brayden a lot and always has been a big part of his life.*

**TAYLOR:** *Taylor is a nominal character in the story. Taylor is Brayden's cousin. He is a fun-loving boy. He accompanies Brayden on a trip.*

**DEVIN:** *Devin is Brayden's father. He is a supportive father. He always helps his son to accomplish all his dreams.*

**PLOT:** *Brayden along with Amara and his cousins were on a trip. This was Brayden's first trip with Amara which was the reason for their happy faces. "No, it's not a good idea", Brayden replied to Taylor. "It would be fun to see Amara at your Aunt's place! She will get to meet her for the first time." Brayden was in a complete dilemma for going to his aunt's place. All his family members know about Amara very well but still, he didn't want his aunt to meet Amara as according to him he and Amara are still young and not in a position to meet and be so open up with them. But the situation was not in his favour, they had to go and visit his aunt's place. After their visit, the trip continues. They enjoyed it a lot. Love and happiness can be seen on both of their faces. Amara was her school love. They were dating each other from their school days. Love and understanding between them was the sole reason for their long-time relationship.*

Brayden was young and an ambitious guy. He always aimed to reach up to glory. Whatever he does, he does it so effectively. He is so hardworking and dedicated. He had everything in his life- loving girlfriend, supportive friends and family. According to him, life can be at its best with two aspects i.e. happiness and a lot of money. He knows the importance of money in one's life. He had everything in his life but the aim for having a lot of money is still incomplete. For this he explored, he worked so hard and did all possible work to reach this aim. After high school, he started doing a job, but he didn't find it good for him. He gave himself so many options to work and explore but he didn't find any work suitable for him.

After some days, his father, Devin, decided that Brayden will have a factory and work for it. Brayden was not that much convinced with this work, but he gave it a chance and worked so hard with full dedication. Unfortunately, after some days of working, he decided not to continue this as this is not what he wants. So, he quit this factory work and started exploring other options. One day, he got an idea and started a new business. He was always more into the business-related things. He finally found his passionate work which he can do effectively. He started the work for his new venture. He worked day and night. He did every possible thing he could do for his business. And this time he was coming close to his lifetime aim through this venture. He was gaining a lot from his business. He did not stop. He worked and worked and at last had his dream come true!



Picture from Google Photots

## BOOK REVIEW : WITHOUT MERIT

By Maryam Mansoor

Can Sagan  
make her  
realize that life  
is not fair  
and we have to  
accept our  
situations and  
try to move on  
with it?

To what extent are you willing to forgive the other!!! Do u think every mistake must carry a repercussion as a baggage or should it be lifted by forgiveness Is truth not enough ?

This book beautifully sums up the story of a teenager coping with depression who learns the importance of family and self-love. Author Colleen Hoover stresses the importance of family, communication and loving ourselves.

Merit's feelings of despair and sadness are relatable and realistic to the reader, and my heart went out to her character as she navigated a journey of self-discovery and self-love. Sometimes depression sneaks up on us; sometimes we don't realize we have it, regardless of what others see around us, and that's what Merit struggles with. Her family is irritatingly perfect. She collects trophies she hasn't earned, bares the darkest secrets of her loved ones. But Merit is not perfect. She is equally dysfunctional as her family.

Merit always felt being unwanted and was treated as an outsider in her family and is convinced that she's living in a madhouse.

She has a love/hate relationship with her twin sister. She's been skipping her school for weeks, which is not even noticed by anyone in the family. And this is how Merit lives. "Don't make your presence known. Make your absence felt."

It was fate when Merit met Sagan. Sagan saves her from the dark, from herself. Merit finds her feelings conflicting towards Sagan. But are the feelings mutual? Is it Sagan who she really loves? He is the only one who notices Merit's isolation thoughts. As the story advances, we see Merit's life becoming darker and darker to the point where she considers suicide. Can she save herself from the darkness? Can Sagan make her realize that life is not fair and we have to accept our situations and try to move on with it?



Though I was a bit skeptical at the beginning, the story was so interesting that I couldn't put the book down. This book's genre can be called as contemporary-romance, but it has more to it. It speaks about mental health. It reminded me how important it is to love yourself first. To speak to the people you love and how fast it can go in the wrong direction if you do not take care of yourself. I would conclude the review with the most popular saying throughout the book :-

"Not every mistake deserves a consequence.

Sometimes the only thing it deserves is forgiveness."

# Real End

*There are days when I ponder  
Is it all worth it?  
That's the only wonder  
Days that were shady  
Days that made it hard to breathe  
Days that held me hard to move any further  
But then hopped a ray of hope  
A hope, that squeaked inside my soul  
And illuminated it  
Made me realize that  
End is never the REAL END!!!!  
Life has always been an ongoing process  
With some people at their best  
And some who faced atrocities but still got the rest  
And so...here I stand  
With crippled feet that fell umpteenth times  
Scarred heart that got walked all over  
And a soul that has lines running over  
But I want to embrace it all  
Yes....embrace the crooked path  
That will never get traced  
Because here comes the change  
That will forever be the same  
Coz now I've met my real self  
The one that is so blessed*

By Maryam Mansoor



*Art by : Kanika*

# INFERTILITY WAR

An illness that consumed me  
from inside,  
Yes its PCOD, which i am  
trying to hide.

Fat on my belly, unwanted  
hair on my face,  
I have a question  
Will i be able to grow with  
grace?  
Managing symptoms has become  
my struggle,  
I don't know how much more i  
can hustle.

The doctors say the symptoms  
are manageable,  
Nurses tell me to go with the  
flow,  
Don't pat my head, because  
nothing's gonna be fine in one blow!

Baldness, weight gain,  
hirsutism what is this?  
Wait, now are you getting  
confused between Mr and miss?

How much more to face?  
Why it is happening with me?  
When it will end?  
A cluster of questions i  
can't confide,  
Truth is, my hormones and i  
are in one hell of a ride.

Complications ranging from  
irregular cycle, heavy flow, absence of  
menstruation, Miscarriages , believe me  
I don't fake  
Please educate yourself  
because conceiving a baby is definitely not  
a piece of cake.

My emotions are taking over  
my life  
I am sad i wanna cry,  
But the other moment i wanna fly.

What has been the lowest  
point in my life? You ask  
PCOD surprises me everyday  
with a new task.

Pelvic pain, dark patches on  
my skin, ovarian cysts, diabetes,  
PCOD is like a blanket  
covering me again and again,  
I am green with envy , red  
with rage, white with anger oh god please  
explain.

So you see,  
There's really not much left  
of me  
Cried my eyes out  
Sang my heart out  
But is there any cure? I  
doubt.

I want to fly like i am a  
part of wind and dive into the life wild and  
free,  
PCOD isn't my life, it's part  
of my life that we need to realise with  
count of one two and three.

*by : Kanika*



# ***AGE OF FRESHNESS, VIGOUR AND SPIRIT!***

Ah, entering into youth age what a horrific time for parents and wonderful time for youngsters. Youth of today isn't about WHO YOU ARE but more about what you have and What lifestyle one follow. Life is short. With that said, there are many life experiences that are best done early in life.

Talking about the experiences , Remember when you were a teenager , and there was that one impossibly hot boy or girl at school? Yes, those social butterflies which don't stop till you come in your 30's.

Youth age is basically a time to do all the embarrassing things where we pretend to sicker than we are so that our parents pay attention to us. You don't want them around, except for when you do. It's truly a dilemma for whole life.

From listening to our mother taunts just look at our neighbours child and then i have you who is good for nothing, this journey of being utter disappointment for them makes us a typical teenager because if you haven't heard this ,then are you adopted? In the first flush of youth the feeling of freedom to do whatever and the experience of going on trips with friends, bunking the classes, meeting your girlfriends, makes us to relive our youth glory days again and again. And then suddenly life throws us in a phase where we are shouldered with responsibilities and now this youth only achieves the dual goals of intelligence and character. Instead of exaggerating the rebellious nature of

youth, there is a always a kid in teenage, youngster or adult that always brings sheer happiness on their face for something as small as winning lemon spoon race at school or something big like getting an appraisal at their jobs.



*by : Kanika*



# Reliving

BY PREETY

**RELIVE THE MOMENTS OF ELATION,  
FOR THE SAKE OF LIBERATION,  
WHENSOEVER WRAPPED UP IN FRUSTRATION.  
TO RELINQUISH THE STAGNATION OF MIND,  
THOUGHTS AND EXPRESSION,  
AND REDISCOVER THE FEELING OF SENSATION,  
SINCE FEELING LEADS TO ACTION.  
SO,  
FIRST COMES THE IMAGINATION TO FULFILL THE DESIRED  
AMBITION. 'CAUSE LIFE ISN'T JUST ABOUT DESTINATION  
BUT IT'S A JOURNEY OF REALISATION OF ONE'S STRENGTHS AND  
LIMITATIONS.**





# International Brotherhood


## *a Matter of Concern...*

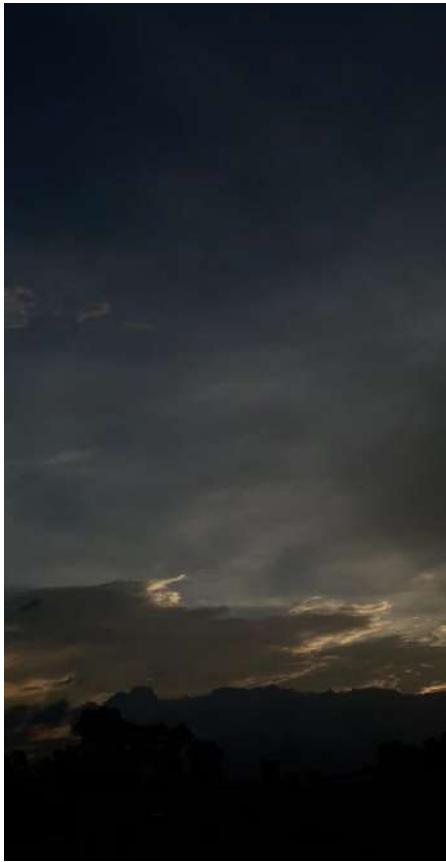
BY PREETY

IN THESE UNPRECEDENTED TIMES, THE ONLY CERTAINTY IS THAT EVERYTHING IS UNCERTAIN. AS THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC AND ITS ATTENDANT CONSEQUENCES HEIGHTEN THE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE GLOBAL POWERS, THE EFFORT TO REFORM AND REBUILD A MULTILATERAL WORLD ORDER HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN. IF THE WORLD IS CHANGING, NATIONS NEED TO THINK ,TALK AND ENGAGE ACCORDINGLY.

THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC HAS JEOPARDIZED ECONOMIC WELL BEING OF BILLIONS OF LIVES ACROSS THE WORLD . IN ADDITION, IT HAS NEGATIVELY IMPACTED MOST OF THE SECTORS , MANUFACTURING AND SERVICE IN PARTICULAR, ALBEIT THE DIGITAL WORLD GOT A SIGNIFICANT PUSH. THE EFFECT OF THE VIRUS IS UNIQUE IN A WAY THAT IT IS NOT BOUNDED BY ANY BOUNDARIES, BE IT NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL, IT DOESN'T DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE PRIVILEGED AND LESS PRIVILEGED. ALL THE NATIONS ARE EQUALLY VULNERABLE TO THE SPREAD AND TO CONTAIN THIS, COUNTRIES NEED TO JOIN HANDS. JUST LIKE A SINGLE WARRIOR CANNOT WIN THE WAR ALONE, A SINGLE COUNTRY CANNOT CONTROL THIS PANDEMIC AND THE ISSUES ARISING DUE TO THE SPREAD. THE WORLD IS NOW WEIGHING LIVES AGAINST RESTARTING THE ECONOMIES. IT IS INDEED TRUE THAT THE ECONOMIES WORLD OVER ARE SLIPPING INTO THE WORST RECESSION , THE FASTEST AND THE STEEPEST AMONG ALL THE RECESSIONS, IN NEARLY A CENTURY ! THE GLOBAL ECONOMY IS EXPECTED TO SHRINK BY ALMOST 8% IN 2020 (AS PER WORLD BANK). THIS IS THE TIME TO ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET FOR FRIENDLY AND NEIGHBOURLY NATIONS, WITHOUT ANY FURTHER DELAY. LIVING IN DENIAL MIGHT DELAY THE REALISATION BUT NOT THE OUTCOME. INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD MAY BE THE ONLY RECOURSE TO AVOID ANY FURTHER DEVASTATION AND GET BACK ON THE TRACK OF DEVELOPMENT. ALL THE NATIONS NEED TO TAKE THE STEP TOWARDS CREATING DEFINITE BONDS, UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE. TO PUT IT SIMPLY, THE PANDEMIC HAS UNEARTHED THE NEED TO DEVELOP, A SENSE OF BROTHERHOOD AND ENGAGE IN DIPLOMATIC AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS, WITH THE NATIONS ACROSS THE GLOBE.

ACCORDING TO MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. , "WE MUST LIVE TOGETHER AS BROTHERS OR PERISH TOGETHER AS FOOLS". TAKING CLUE FROM THESE LINES, BROTHERHOOD IS A MATTER OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE IN THE PRESENT WORLD ORDER AND NEEDS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.





# NATURE

By Vritti

When we surround ourselves with nature, the feeling to be in this beautiful environment makes us feel complete calm and to be in peace. Mountains, forests are the places where we feel most alive.

Looking at the sky with different shapes of clouds gives us the biggest vision of life. The clear blue sky, where the birds are flying, teaches us to live with extreme life positivity.

I belong to Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh. A very heavenly destination covered with Himalayan ranges. My experience of trekking to Triund (Dharamshala) was wonderful and touching the glacier at Ilaqa 5km away from Triund was something amazing. Musical sound of wind was charismatic and it was amazing to inhale and exhale the fresh air. Being there makes me feel calm. Walking with nature is like walking with god.

*"If you want to fly  
give up everything  
that  
weighs you down"*

-Gautam Buddha





# Marriage

## AND DIVORCE

By Roopshikha Chaudhary

*Born in two different family's, we became a part of this galaxy  
From toddlers till teenage, we were of different age.*

*First time met at the age of 17, when you were so mean.  
Irritating me again and again, you were such a madmen.*

*After 2 months of constant trouble, all of a sudden you became so loveable.  
Am I dreaming are the words crossing my mind, or is he blind or just became too kind*

*I love you is what you said, proposing me to be your girlfriend  
with your arms spread  
Yes I will is my answer to you, when did these feelings grew I didn't have any clue.*

*Non stop talking throught the years, I fell in love with you so hard my dear  
On 27th August you went down on one knee, proposing me in front of the blue sea.*

*Married at the age of 22, I'm still attracted to you like a glue.  
Four years have passed with us being together, we're so light like a feather.*

*But now you have become so distant and aggressive, when you were once such a possessive  
Finding out that you've cheated, my heart is failing and I'm defeated.*

*I can't be with you anymore is what I said, my body is here but I'm dead.*

*Separating myself from you was the hardest decision I've ever taken, but now I am finally awoken.*

*Is love really as beautiful as people say, cuz I was just a toy who got played.  
Love can be difficult to bear at times, and this is my lesson for a lifetime.*

# How to slut walk past your highly conformist family

When I was in school, I wouldn't wear shorts in the house if there were males present in the house. But now cut to college, I'd walk into a room with high heels, a short skirt and a dark brown lipstick with absolutely no apprehension or timidity. Every time I posted a picture on Instagram, the length of my clothes becomes the month of the talk among the women of my family. They would discuss the length of my clothes and discuss 'how I was asking for it.'

The first time my mother called me on this I cried and wondered how I turned into the 'undesirable product' for my family. I was the 'those kinda girls' for my relatives. Where they would use my name as a bad example to their daughters. They spew poison about how I carry myself, how I dress and the fact that I have an occasional sip of rum after college. My heart would sink to all this and I would tear up. All this body positivity that I learned threatened to disappear into thin air. For a very long time, we have seen women as a product of sexuality. From the way she dresses to the way she talks, everything society points towards her character. While men behavior is mostly over looked, the patriarchal system has chained women into this systematic discrimination. So, now when I receive a nasty glance at my cleavage or legs. I respond with a sinister smile and I love everything about their aghast reaction.

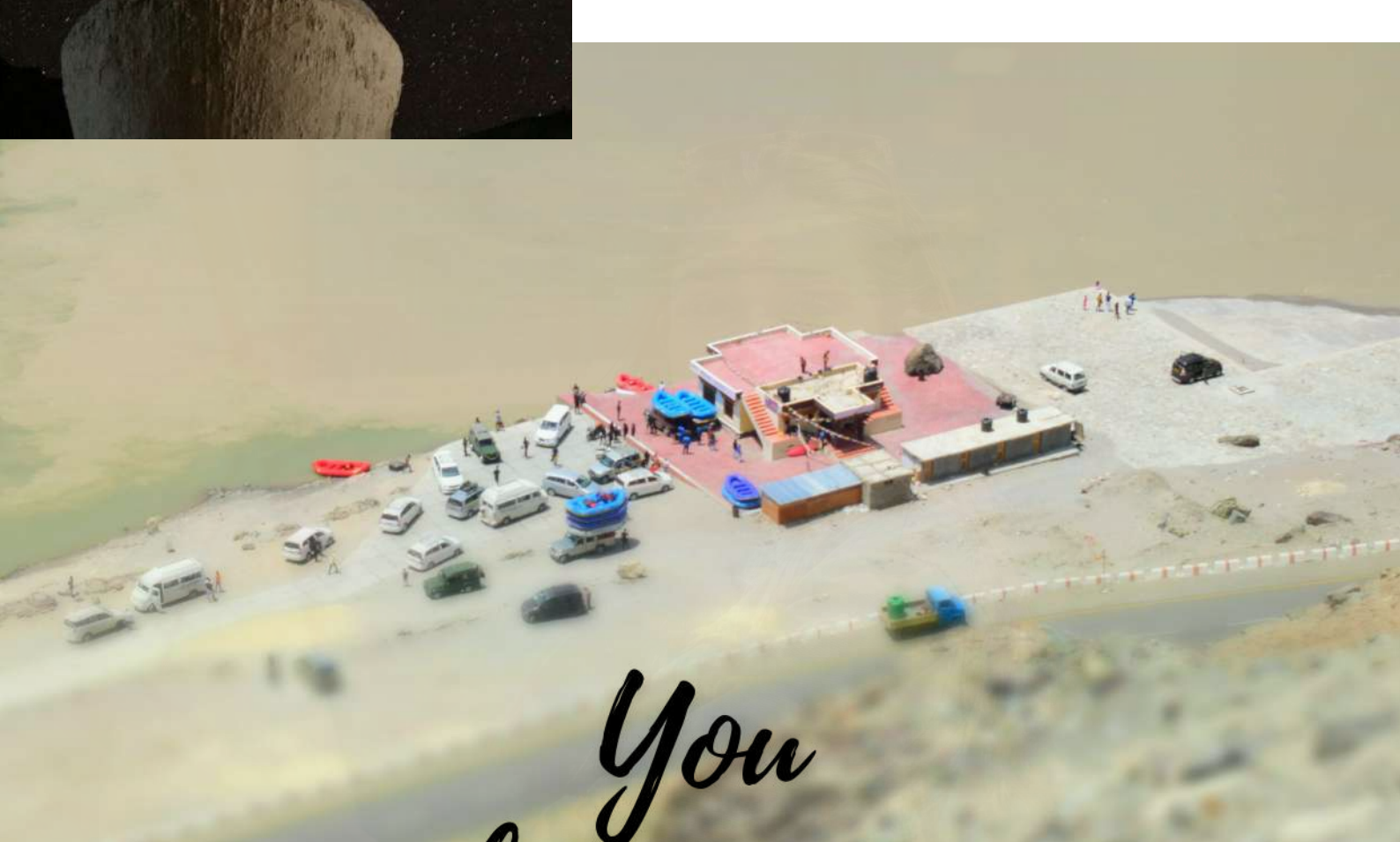


How to

slut walk

-BY GUL DALAL





You  
don't have to like me.

- B Y G U L D A L A L

You hate yourself so loudly. You hate yourself at the top of the lungs. Your loathing for yourself permeates your speech. "Sorry, I am just rambling." "Don't worry about it." "Just ignore me." "Sorry if I am annoying you." "Sorry I don't make senses." "Sorry about that." Sorry, sorry, sorry. You act as if you have to beat everyone else to the punch. As if the punching bag is you. If you hate yourself first, if you hate yourself loudest, the nobody will hate you. You clapped your hand over your ears and shut your eyes and balled yourself up so that you would never have to experience people's loathing for you. And it meant you never heard their love. You drowned it out. You screamed your hatred over it. And you never got to hear it.

**"YOU HATE  
YOURSELF SO  
LOUDLY"**



# Queen to Maiden :

# PERSEPHONE

BY ANJALI TRIPATHI

A young goddess who bloomed in shadows  
Persephone, was the name of juvenile judy of Zeus and  
Demeter  
She meandered murmuring to marigolds in her majestic  
meadows  
Naïve as flower, smiled she. Even the sun was envious of her  
glitter.  
Persephone, was the name of juvenile judy of Zeus and  
Demeter  
Shanghaied was she, by the brave king Hades  
Naïve as flower, smiled she. Even the sun was envious of her  
glitter.  
Queen was now the maiden as the archaic tale alleges.  
Shanghaied was she, by the brave king Hades  
She meandered murmuring to marigolds in her majestic  
meadows  
Naïve as flower, smiled she. Even sun was envious of her  
glitter.  
Queen was now the maiden as the archaic tale alleges.



Image by Pixabay



Image by Anastacia

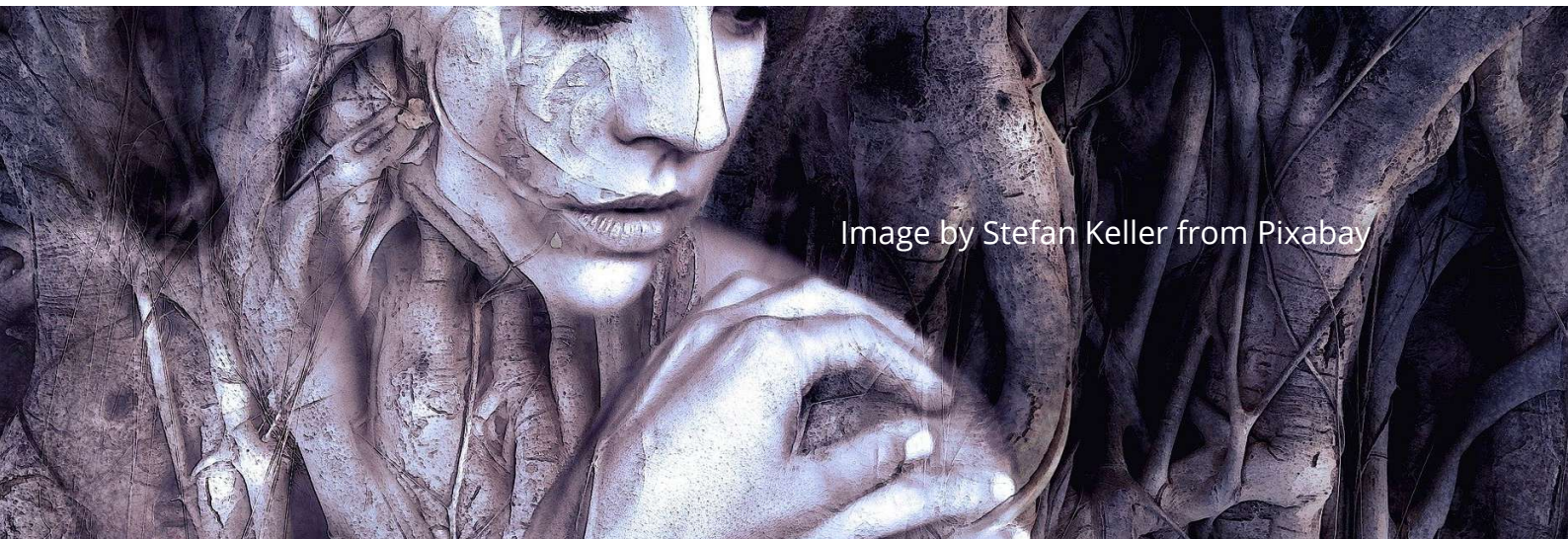


Image by Stefan Keller from Pixabay



# Perks of being a **WALLFLOWER** With a **WILD MIND**

BY ANJALI TRIPATHI

*"After years of taming insecurities of not being able to fit in, I have started to embrace it. The realisation that it is a big part of me and that all my people are always there for me has made me resilient to the negative thoughts"*

## **1)TRAVEL**

Your mind will take you to so many places when you are in a group of people but when you are alone, you'll enjoy the company of your headphones. The struggle of having to choose between Hozier and Prateek Kuhad is real!

## **3)WHY ARE YOU SHY?**

Every person you've ever made has asked this question to you. Do not feel bad about it. You are not shy, you just do not have anything to say and this is a major part of your personality. Live it.

## **2)FRIENDS?**

You do not have many. But the ones you have are not really your friends, they are your parents. They found you and adopted you.

## **4)CANCELLED!**

This is your favourite word. You love it when planned outings are cancelled. You secretly wish that.

## **5)QUIET**

You like to have a quiet time of your own in order to recharge yourself.

# CREDITS

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Shruti,Rigzin,Vritti,Maryam

## **EDITING AND PROOFREADING**

Neeraj ,Anushka,Areez,Anjali,Surbhi

## **ART**

Neeraj,Kanika

## **INTERVIEW**

Areez

## **LAYOUT AND DESIGN**

Anjali



# US TOGETHER



**Anjali Tripathi  
(190008)**



**Astha Goyal  
(190018)**



**Anushka Raghava  
(190014)**



**Gul Dalal  
(190040)**



**Maryam Mansoor  
(190076)**



**Kshirja Bedi  
(190066)**



**Neeraj  
(190089)**



**Rigzin Dolma  
(190117)**



**Ealvi  
(190036)**



**Areez Haque  
(190015)**



**Ramya Khera  
(190113)**



**Shruti Agrawal  
(190146)**



**Vritti Sharma  
(190180)**



**Ramaanshi Narula  
(190112)**



**Kanika  
(190053)**



**Surbhi Rohatagi  
(190159)**



**Roopshikha  
(190123)**



**Preety  
(190105)**



**Vandana  
(190175)**



**Navya**

# Ekfrasi

made possible with constant support of

*Anjana Neira Dev*

*"Trepidation, even terror were my first emotions when I discovered that I was going to teach Creative Writing online this semester. Four months later I am awe struck by the resilience and creativity of the young women who collaborated, cooperated and innovated and cheerfully enhanced their skills and mine. I am blessed to have spent this semester with them."*

