

ARANI

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Celebrating 10 Years of Arani



 **श्रिश्ती**



An Expression Of Srishti
Bengali Cultural Association of
Charlotte , North Carolina



HCL



From the Editorial Desk

By: Promita Bhattacharya



It is hard to believe that a decade has gone by and here we are on the threshold of sharing the tenth edition of Arani with you all. Arani was conceptualized as a voice for Srishti - one of the most vibrant and promising Bengali organizations in the Charlotte area. This magazine was visualized as a platform to portray the ideas and aspirations of our dynamic, young Bengali community in Charlotte.

For many of us, Srishti may be described as our “home away from home”, a refuge, and a comfort zone for families who have drifted away from their motherland to new shores in search of new lives. Here we are a community of like-minded individuals from our home country who have embraced each other with open arms to make us all feel valued and cherished.

As we all know, the last two years have been difficult due to the constraints of COVID-19. However, adhering to its true nature of resilience, our organization and our magazine morphed into a virtual platform over 2020 and part of 2021 to continue to serve and provide exemplary support to our extended community. Through Youth Engagement Sessions, virtual summer camps conducted by our active and engaging middle and high schoolers, and through many social outreach and welfare initiatives, we were able to create a strong and viable network of communication which ensured that none of our member families felt isolated during this period of social distancing and COVID-induced quarantines. Indeed, we can say that we came closer in heart and mind although we stayed physically distant.

Since the end of 2021, we cautiously started planning our in-person gatherings in outdoor settings with limited guests and all the state mandated safety protocols in place. Much as we were enthralled to meet each other, we mostly looked forward to the auspicious advent of our much-awaited Durga puja which we all wanted to celebrate with the same pomp and glory of the previous years. This year is special because not only does it mark ten years of Arani, but it also heralds our return to “life as we knew it” prior to the disruptions of COVID-19.

The year 2022 will mark our return to in-person meet and greet sessions and our colorful cultural performances on stage. Bedecked in all our finery, we are eager to embrace our loved ones through worship and prayer, fun and feasting, as we plan to return to social gatherings and relive the cherished images of our Kolkata Durgotsav. From the mantras chanted during the dawn of Mahalaya to the warm embrace and “mishti-mukh” of Bijoya Dashami, every Bengali soul yearns to recreate this precious feeling of nostalgia of our childhood days even on foreign shores.

Through the years, it has been our sincere effort to showcase the creativity of our talented community through Arani. We hope you will come with us again on this journey consisting of interesting accounts, imagery, and artwork to celebrate and share the spirit of Srishti through the pages of our magazine.

Happy reading and a very happy Durgotsav 2022.



Team Arani - 2022

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Table of Contents

- From the Editorial Desk
- Team Arani
- Prioritizing Mental Health
- My Dream - Elem Notun Deshe
- The Snow Giant and Lady in Red
- Essay Competition
- A Photographic Diary of Yellow Stone
- My Last Single-Digit Birthday
- Smart Phone
- Anubhuti
- Srishti
- Niyati
- Re-thinking Cinderella
- Romancing Dhaba Food
- How the New Normal Changed Me
- Collections of Poem
- Virtual Aum School Summer Camp
- Swimming All Summer
- MLS Youth Soccer
- National Park Trip
- Ondhokar
- Room 873



SRISHTI of Charlotte is a registered (Federal ID# 47-2245896) non-profit organization that is dedicated towards social, cultural, charitable, and educational purposes. SRISHTI of Charlotte is a beacon for promoting Bengali culture, literature, art, and its rich heritage throughout the Carolinas. The organization's goal is to both preserve as well as pass on this rich and vibrant heritage to the next generation growing up in this great country. It fosters unity and creates a cross cultural interaction and appreciation of diverse cultures, engages in cultural exchanges with like-minded organizations and participates in social welfare activities. Srishti of Charlotte organizes opportunities for local individuals to present Indian and South Asian performing arts such as dance, music, and drama. Special efforts are taken to encourage youth participation to build leadership skills, learn and continue traditional art forms. Srishti of Charlotte actively partners and engages with various educational and charitable institutions in the Charlotte area as well as in India.

Over the last year it has been an honor to make the following contributions: -

- **Monetary and school supplies donations to Renaissance West Community Initiative.** An innovative neighborhood redevelopment initiative to improve economic mobility and end intergenerational poverty. Renaissance West Community Initiative - Community Wellness Home - [Renaissance West Community Initiative - Community Wellness \(rwc.org\)](#) -
- Masks made and donated to the following local organizations:
 - CMS schools
 - Iredell-Statesville Schools
 - Waltonwoods Senior Living
 - Atrium and Novant hospitals
 - Monetary donations for COVID relief in India
 - Vivekananda Study & Philanthropic Center of New York, USA to help in creating a 50- bed safe home for Covid19 patients near Belur Math.
 - Sukriti Foundation to assist in procuring protective gear for volunteers, basic medicines, medical supplies and providing food and groceries to Covid patients in need of assistance.
 - Matilal Bharat Tirtha Seba Mission Ashram for their continuing commitment to serving rural West Bengal.

Like every year, we are excited to host our largest annual event namely our Durga Puja / (Sharodiya Utsav) from Friday, October 15th to Sunday, October 17th, 2021. We expect over 200 viewers for our digital social and cultural extravaganza this year. We primarily rely on contributions from our members and commercial and corporate organizations like you to support our growing association. We humbly request your sponsorships by placing an advertisement in ARANI that covers both the print and the internet media for a full year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at Teamsrishti@srishtiofcharlotte.org.

Thank you,

With warm regards,

SRISHTI of Charlotte

<https://www.srishtiofcharlotte.org>



Prioritizing Mental Health

By Shyama Parui



“Paagal”, “mental”, and a gesture indicating a loose screw in the head, were used to describe people with mental illnesses, a couple of decades ago. While such overtly rude terms are less in use today, the stigma associated with it has not reduced drastically. When the malaise is intangible and the patient suffers from unseen struggles, it is hard to empathize leading to fear and a lack of compassion. As a child, I remember being afraid of anyone who seemed partially or completely “mad” like the mumbling homeless man who was often spotted near our bus stop or the lady from our neighborhood who was rarely seen or heard as if she was trapped in an invisible cage. The average person probably held a sincere belief that any family member of theirs could not possibly face any psychological disorder and if such a problem were to arise, marrying them off would be the cure. Go figure!

Last year, the Tokyo Olympics along with its display of athletic prowess, highlighted the urgency of an open discussion around mental health. We witnessed the world's most decorated gymnast stepping out of certain events when she experienced a case of the “twisties”. From what I understand, it is a familiar term among gymnasts used to describe a mental block during which an athlete loses their spatial awareness during an intense routine. I cannot even begin to imagine how terrifying that must be knowing that a wrong landing could lead to permanent paralysis. Champions such as Simone Biles, Naomi Osaka and Michael Phelps were brave in their moments of vulnerability despite being under constant scrutiny. My respect for them has grown exponentially. Successful athletes are usually role models for strength and perseverance, but the ability to humbly accept when to dial down performance goals for the sake of overall well-being, is rare. Fans err by placing their heroes on pedestals and then revel at knocking them down. Instead, they need to accept the human side of celebrities. After all, invincibility and infallibility are myths that we feed ourselves allowing the adulation to reach toxic levels.

Behavioral and psychological issues are not limited to athletes, and it should not be dismissed as a *videshi* problem. The Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) lists approximately 297 disorders and simply put, it could happen to anybody. The National Institute of Mental Health estimated in 2017 that 3.2 million adolescents between the age of 12-17 had experienced at least one major depressive episode. How can that be? Aren't the teen years the best years of your life? If you ask any disillusioned teenager, they will point you to Olivia Rodrigo's song titled, “Brutal” to share their perspective. Here is a verse from the song says it all.

“They say these are the golden years
But I wish I could disappear
Ego crush is so severe
God, it's brutal out here”

In another part of the world, unifiedhealth.in reports that one in every seventh person in India suffers from some form of mental illness. Similar rates probably existed before, but our awareness was low. I have heard anecdotes about suicides among women in rural India that were a sad outcome of post-partum depression. In a society that glorifies motherhood, early symptoms were probably misunderstood or brushed aside.

Our flawed construction as humans leaves us hopelessly prone to maladies as exemplified by the prolonged COVID 19 pandemic. In addition to the physiological distress experienced by the infected, the uninfected were tormented with psychological difficulties. As if that were not enough, many COVID survivors have been affected by depression and anxiety. In my mind the coronavirus is like the ruthless terrorist who not only opened fire at innocent people, but also planted land mines and timed bombs that will set off multiple waves of destruction in the future. It is imperative that we prioritize mental health so that we can safeguard our families. As individuals, we can do our part in ending the stigma associated with psychological therapy by tossing aside judgment and supporting individuals who've raised their hand to ask for help. And let's be open to therapy ourselves. Change is tough and whether it is large scale behavior change or legislative reforms, it can be excruciatingly slow.

Prioritizing mental health for your own family is a baby step in the right direction. The long strides manifested as public health reform will need to follow soon. I propose an annual mental health screening for individuals of all age groups that is covered by health insurance. Investing in more counselors and therapists in schools and the workplace will be prudent. I would also recommend periodic follow up screening for gun owners to prevent guns from being in the possession of mentally unstable individuals. My last recommendation may stir up a hornet's nest, but I prefer to be an idealistic fool rather than an apathetic bystander.

Attempting to build our muscles just before competing in a big race or game is futile, but strength training over time through diligent exercise will bear fruit. Figuratively speaking, this makes a case for constructing a gym that teaches us techniques to be mentally strong and provides trapeze nets that will catch us in case we fall.

My Dream - "Elem Notun Deshe ... "

Purobi Adhikari

The much awaited date of February 2022 finally arrived. I was waiting for ages for this day, my first trip to the United States of America, most importantly the first trip to visit my daughter in Charlotte, whom I had not met for eight long years.

Finally, I boarded the flight on 21st of February full of excitement and anticipation to step into a whole new world. I could not sleep as I kept thinking throughout the flight if it was real or just a dream.

Soon it was dawn, the most beautiful dawn of my life... When I saw from the aircraft window the blue sky painted with orange and red hues of the rising sun rays, my heart sang Tagore's *Nobo Anonde Jago Aaji Robi Kirone*. It was time to land in John F. Kennedy Airport, New York! I was overjoyed to see that my son-in-law was there to greet me. We flew to Charlotte together and at last I was standing on my daughter's front porch. I was in tears as I embraced her lovingly.

"Abar dekha jodi holo... praner majhe aaye".



PC - Dola Roy

Now I have been in Charlotte for over five months. This country has mesmerized me with its beauty. It seems that I have never seen the sky so blue and the clouds so milky white. The lush greenery of the sprawling fields, the tall, blooming trees, and vibrant flower beds in the corner of every street captivate my heart. During long drives, I am really amazed at the scenic beauty. What amazing creations by the almighty!

I have met several family friends of Swapan and Promita- they are all very warm and loving. They have all treated me with great love and respect. I am overwhelmed by their kindness. Many of them invited me over for sumptuous meals and showered me with lovely gifts. I am touched by their respect and warmth. May God bless them all.

Keu bole kakima, keu jethi, keu mashi ... Ami boli tomader shokol ke bhalobashi.

Spending time with my grandchildren is the best time here. God has gifted me with a talented grandson like Sourodeep, who is now my best friend. We chat a lot, watch his favorite movies together, and he is eager to treat me to all the new cuisines here. I enjoy every moment immensely! I will miss him so much. My granddaughter Annika is a bundle of joy - cuddling and playing with me, she has stolen my heart with her cheerful demeanor. I am amazed at her artistic skills and her colorful creations. I will also miss Hazel. Her furry, brown coat, her sparkling, dark eyes which speak volumes. and her gentle behavior makes her such a lovable and loyal companion.

Another enjoyable time is at our dining table, where we share memories, and chit-chat over tea, lunch, or dinner, laughing at silly jokes and funny anecdotes. Last, but not least, our mom and daughter conversations bring contentment to my heart. Throughout the day, we talk about everything under the sun but we still don't run out of things to talk about.

We visited quite a few places, like the Smoky Mountains, Gatlinburg, the world's largest aquarium in Atlanta, and spent a lovely, relaxing week at the beach. Now, it is almost time to pack my bags and say goodbye to this city. I will be going back home with many happy moments and memories to cherish forever.

am leaving this country when it's almost time for us to welcome Maa Durga. Here when my near and dear ones will be celebrating Durga puja, I will be back home in India, my motherland. She, too, will welcome me back with open arms.

"O amar desh er mati, tomar pore thekai matha."

If God is willing, "Abar aashibo phire"... As I now return home, I hope to return soon, to relive these days with my loved ones and make more memories to treasure.

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ঘুমন্ত আগ্নেয়গিরি আর লোহিত বসনা সুন্দরী

Subhadeep Mukherjee

ঘুম ভাঙতে সেদিন একটু বেলা হয়ে গেছিলো। না, ছুটির দিনের তুলনায় অনেক সকাল, মাত্র ৯ টা বাজে। কিন্তু বেড়াতে এসে অন্দি এত দেরি করে কোনোদিন ঘুম থেকে উঠিনি আমরা। এর একটা কারণ কাল অনেক রাত অন্দি বারবার weather চেক করে গেছি একটা বিশেষ অঞ্চলের। উৎকর্ষায় জেগে ছিলাম অনেক রাত অন্দি। আজকে কি দেখা মিলবে? না আগের দিনের মতোই লুকিয়ে থাকবে ঘন কুয়াশার আড়ালে! দরজার বাইরে একটু হালকা ঝুটোপুটি আর কুঁই কুঁই আওয়াজ। প্রথম দিন একটু চমকে ছিলাম, এখন অভ্যেস হয়ে গেছে। Milo, আমাদের হোমস্টের হোস্টএস এর ছোট্ট গোল্ডেন ডুডুল। এই কদিনেই আমার খুব ন্যাওটা হয়ে গেছে। রোজ সকালে এসে আমাদের সুপ্রভাত জানিয়ে যায় এভাবেই। তবে আজকে সঙ্গে সঙ্গে দরজা খুললাম না। আমরা লেট অলরেডি। এখনি বেরোতে হবে।



The Snow Giant and the Lady in Red

দুজনে ঝটপট রেডি হয়ে, ক্যামেরা গুছিয়ে, Milo কে একটু চটকে দিয়ে অবশেষে গাড়িতে বসে পড়লাম। সেপ্টেম্বর এর মাঝামাঝি সময় আলাস্কার এই অঞ্চলে (Anchorage আর আশে পাশের এলাকা) ঠান্ডা খুব বেশি নয়। কিন্তু যেখানে আমরা চলেছি, সেখানে ঠান্ডা একটু বাড়বে আশা করেছি। তাই জ্যাকেট আর বুট নিতে হয়েছে। আমাদের লক্ষ্য, আমেরিকার সর্ববৃহৎ (largest) ন্যাশনাল পার্ক, Wrangell-St. Elias. Anchorage শহর থেকে প্রায় ২০০ মাইল পূর্বে, গ্লেন হাইওয়ের অপর প্রান্ত। কিন্তু পার্কের ভিতর আমাদের যাওয়ার কথা নয় এবারে। আমাদের আসল লক্ষ্য Glennallen শহর এর ১০ মাইল আগে, রাস্তার ওপর একটা বিশেষ জায়গা। দুদিন আগেই যেখান থেকে ব্যর্থ মনোরথ হয়ে ফিরে আসতে হয়েছে। প্রায় ৬ মাস আগে যখন প্রথম আমরা আমাদের আলাস্কা ঘোরার পরিকল্পনা করি, তখন হটাৎ ই দ্যুতি এই বিশেষ জায়গাটা আবিষ্কার করে। তারপর দুজনে মিলে খুঁজে বের করি সেটার মোটামুটি কাছাকাছি একটা লোকেশন। ছবি তে যেজায়গা আমাদের মুগ্ধ করে দিয়েছিলো, ভাবছিলাম সামনে থেকে তাহলে আমরা কিরকম দেখবো। উচ্চতায় ১২০০০ ফুট, এই ঘুমন্ত আগ্নেয়গিরীর নাম মাউন্ট ড্রাম। আজ থেকে ৮০০০০০ বছর আগে শেষ বার অগ্ন্যুৎপাত করেছিলো সে। এখন তুষারাবৃত অবস্থায় ঘুমিয়ে আছে, চিরকালের মত। বেরোনোর পর প্রতিদিনের মতোই আমাদের প্রথম কাজ থাকে ব্রেকফাস্ট আর লাঞ্চ এর জন্য কিছু শুকনো স্যান্ডউইচ টাইপের খাবার তুলে নেওয়া। সেটা করে তারপর পুরোদস্তুর একেবারেই গাড়ি চালানো। আর থামবার দরকার পরে না। Palmer শহর পার হওয়ার পর থেকেই শুরু হলো জঙ্গল, পাহাড় আর নদীর পথ দিয়ে রাস্তা। চারিদিকে এক অনির্বচনীয় সুন্দর প্রকৃতির মধ্যে দিয়ে চলেছে আমাদের গাড়ি। এখন পাতা ঝরার মরশুম এর শুরু, রঙে রঙে একাকার প্রতিটা গাছ, গুল্ম, লতা। তার স্বীর্ ছায়া এসে পড়েছে ছোট

ছোট জলাশয়ের উপর। পথের ধারে মাঝে মাঝেই দাঁড়িয়ে পড়ছিলাম সেই ছবি ক্যামেরা বন্দী করতে। আগের দিনের মতো এবারেও রাস্তার পাশে পড়লো বিখ্যাত Matanuska Glacier, কিন্তু যেহেতু আগেরদিন আমরা খুব ভালো করে দেখে নিয়েছিলাম, আজকে সেখানে আর দাঁড়িলাম না। সময় খুব কম। ফোন এর weather app বলছে দুপুর ১২-১ টা অর্ধ শুধু আকাশ পরিষ্কার থাকবে। তা ছাড়া পুরো সময় মেঘ আর কুয়াশা। এই পথে , Glennallen শহরের আগের শেষ gas station এ একবার দাঁড়াতেই হলো কারণ Glennallen এ কতটা কি পাওয়া যায়, তখন আমাদের ধারণা ছিলো না। তারপর আবার পূর্ণদস্তুর ড্রাইভ। আর থামা নেই। এখন ও যেতে হবে অন্তত ৩০ মিনিট। দুপুর ১২ টা বাজতে বেশি দেরী নেই আর। অবশেষে ১২ টা বাজার একটু পরেই আমরা সেই নির্দিষ্ট মাইলফলক এ পৌঁছলাম। কিন্তু রাস্তার সামনের দিকে তাকিয়ে আবার মনটা হতাশায় ভরে গেলো। এতো নিশ্চিহ্ন কুয়াশা ! সঙ্গে জমা হয়েছে প্রাকৃতিক দাবানল এর ধোঁয়াশা। তবে কি আজকেও আসা বৃথা? দেখা মিলবে না অগ্নিদেবের ঘুমন্ত কুন্ডের ? গাড়িটা রাস্তার পাশে রেখে ধৈর্য রেখে অপেক্ষা করতে লাগলাম। কোনোদিকে জনমানব নেই , এই এতটা রাস্তায় হাতে গোনা কিছু গাড়ি আমাদের চোখে পড়েছে। ১ টা বাজতে আর বেশি দেরি নেই.....আরে কুয়াশা কি একটু কেটে গেছে? সামনে , আকাশের মাঝে , ওটা কি???অবশেষে দেখা মিললো তবে ! এত দূর আসা , এত পরিকল্পনা , এত উৎকণ্ঠাসার্থক !! আমাদের সামনে রয়েছে দিগন্তে মিলিয়ে যাওয়া গ্লেন হাইওয়ে আর সেই দিগন্তের একটু উপর থেকে , যেন আকাশের মাঝামাঝি অঞ্চলে সর্গর্বে মাথা তুলে দাঁড়িয়ে আছে মাউন্ট ড্রাম ! চিরতুষারাবৃত চূড়া দুপুরের রোদে ঝকঝক করছে। চূড়ার নিচে জমে আছে মেঘের পরদ , যাতে আরো মনে হচ্ছে এ পর্বতের ভিত যেন মাটিতে নেই , মেঘের উপরেই তার বাস। দুজনে কতক্ষণ মন্থমুগ্ধ হয়ে তাকিয়ে ছিলাম জানিনা। ঘোর কাটলে ছবির পর ছবি নিতে শুরু করলাম। এর মধ্যেই দেখা মিললো লাল রঙা কোনো এক ভিনটেজ গাড়ির , ছবি যেন যার জন্য আরো একটা নতুন মাত্রা পেলো। কিন্তু কোনো ছবিতে এই সৌন্দর্য ধরে রাখা কি সম্ভব? মহাসাগরের জল এক মুঠোর মধ্যে ধরা যায় না ! সে চেষ্টাও আমি করিনি। মনের মনিকোঠায় সেই ছবিকে সযত্নে বসিয়ে রেখে ফেরার পথ ধরলাম। আর নিজের কাছেই যেন , সেই অপরূপ প্রকৃতিকে সাক্ষী করে একটা প্রতিজ্ঞা করলাম। আমরা আবার ফিরে আসবো..... আসতেই হবে আমাদের ফিরে.....

**Mount Drum from Glen Highway, Glennallen,
Alaska September 2019**



If you could be any creature, what would you be?

By: Abhimandra Sen

Winner -
Elementary

This question opened up my mind and got me thinking "Well, now what do I want to do as a different creature?" I read a lot of books, watched a lot of movies, played a lot of video games, and so I decided that I wanted to fly and have control over thunder and lightning. I wanted to fly as I wanted to be free, to move up in the sky, to play with the clouds, and to have speed faster than sound. I don't want to get caught in a traffic jam; I don't want to pay for flights. I want to have control over thunder and lightning so that I can make infinite electricity, carve huge craters and holes in the world, control the number of wildfires and make a lot of lightning bolts strike the Empire State building to generate electricity.

My choice for King Ghidorah...



I had a lot of choices for those categories but I wanted to be a dragon as well. So, I decided to be one of the Ghidorahs. Mecha-King Ghidorah. Since I wanted to fly and have control over thunder and lightning, this would be perfect. The fact that he can fly at a speed faster than sound, has a form that can devour worlds, can fire two beams of lightning, has one gravity beam, can fire six lightning bolts from his wings, has electric cables that are made to kill Godzilla and has robotic arms which make it more strong.

Why not Void- King Ghidorah...



Sometimes I wonder "why don't I be Void-King Ghidorah?" It's a good question really. Anyone who wants to be any of the Ghidorahs gets an ENORMOUS amount of power and is literally worshiped as a god. It can open three portals for each of its heads, may devour worlds, and is made out of pure energy. I may relate it to Lord Shiva. If the world is too far gone into chaos, it might appear as a god of destruction.

My new creation...

Each Ghidorah has its special power, and together they are most powerful. So, I thought "Why not combine the two King Ghidorahs?" If I combined the two King Ghidorah then I would have a massive three headed dragon made out of pure energy, mechanized parts and organic matter. It would be named Mecha Void- King Ghidorah. It can summon a portal for each of its heads and fire a gravity beam from one head, a lightning bolt from another and a bolt of pure energy from another. He has Mecha-King Ghidorah's powers but is upgraded (for example, flying at almost the speed of light) and can summon all of the titans to make an army. He is 950,000 feet long and its wingspan is 1,000,000 feet long.

Mecha Void- King Ghidorahs:



I always wanted to have a super power. I wanted to fly and have control over thunder and lightning, and more over the world. As Mecha Void- King Ghidorah, I got those powers. I can control wildfire, can control pollution by generating electricity, can produce pure energy and in the opposite, can destroy devils who are a threat to the Earth.

The Perfect Weekend

By: Rishaan Chatterjee

A weekend is the end of the week. But practically it is a time for binge-watching, eating junk food, going to restaurants, playing outside, for some people staying up until midnight, and going to the beach.

Now, a perfect weekend would be...Okay, let's start from the beginning. Shall we?

I wake up and brush my teeth, then I see that my mom has made me savory French toast. I eat it with delight and with mayonnaise. I thank my mom and hug her.

After breakfast, I play with my sister and race with her. Then we take a bath. We have food from Persis for lunch. I love their naan and malai kofta. It is so yum-Okay, but let's not get off-topic now.

After lunch, we pack our bags for our trip to Carolina Beach. It is a 4-hour drive there. When we reach the apartment at the beach, we unpack our things, have dinner and get ready for bed.

The next morning my dad and I plan to go for a walk on the beach. We pick up seashells and take pictures. I feel the cool water under my feet. It feels so refreshing.

After the morning stroll, we go home and have breakfast. We check the fun places and restaurants nearby and go shopping. For lunch, we go to a beautiful seafood restaurant with yummy food. I eat until I am stuffed. We dive into the water in the afternoon. In the evening 4 of us walk to the beach and have fun there. I surf a little and my sister cries because she is scared of so much water.

We have dinner and start packing up because on Monday we will be going home. On Monday we pack up everything including the seashells my dad and I had found on the beach. We start the trip home. When we reach, I say, "Well, that was a lot of fun!! Everyone laughs.

And that, my friends, is what I like to call a perfect weekend.



Life in 2050

By: Arkapravo Sen

It is far-fetched to assume what life in 2050 might be. But analyzing the technological progress we've made over the past 100 years, we may attempt to visualize how the world will change. Alexa already eliminates the need for us to get up and turn off the switch. A Roomba is already capable enough to clean our houses for us. Could it be that we will get our food by clapping our hands like in Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne? Only time will tell. Though we cannot presume exactly which areas will be affected - climate change, space exploration, and A.I. are likely to be the first ones.

Climate Change & Renewable Energy

By 2050 the climate will be warmer by 1.5 degrees Celsius which results in melting of the glaciers and rising sea levels by 4-8 inches in the Pacific, 10-14 inches in the Atlantic, and 14-18 inches in the Gulf. Yet there is hope, to avert these calamities and save nearly 800 million people if we were to control global warming. Even though replacing coal, oil, and natural gas burning power plants with renewable energy will force millions of people to find new jobs, it will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Translucent solar panels will enable buildings to look good while still producing electricity, and nuclear fusion would have hit the market for commercialization. All of these will make it possible for humans to achieve net zero carbon emissions, and we would have made strides towards carbon capture. Electric vehicles will be on the road with better range, lower charging times, and better reliability.

Space Exploration

We could begin to colonize nearby planets to reduce the stress on Earth. Colonizing Mars is a logical first attempt, because if the sun collapses into a red giant, Earth will no longer be in the habitable zone, instead Mars will be in the habitable zone and it will be the perfect place for humans in the future. People will be sent to Mars by 2024 or 2026, and a self-sustainable colony could be built by 2050 if enough people sign-up, and for the wealthy, space tourism could be feasible. Space elevators are likely to become a reality, and they would reduce the costs of sending payloads to space by a significant margin.

Artificial Intelligence

A.I. will change how we will live our lives. A.I. is the most powerful tool we can make; the more it interacts with humans and finds out patterns, it will give better solutions to problems. It will help businesses move towards a path where they are most likely to succeed. It will help law enforcement by matching facial gestures to pictures, greatly helping with detecting the criminal. It will also help diagnose patients with the correct illness and provide them with the required treatment. However, just like any emerging technology, A.I. could be used to have a detrimental effect on mankind. If Artificial intelligence were to start mimicking criminals, it would be a horrifying combination, it could overpower authorities by giving advice to criminals or something much more sinister. An A.I. that is smart enough could hack millions of computers at a moment's notice. It could steal sensitive data and withdraw money from your bank accounts. It could start a terrifying nuclear war, or the human race might lose its thinking ability to A.I. Only the correct implementation of A.I. as an integral part of society, can protect the concept of privacy and save the future from getting doomed.

There are two paths 2050 could take. Either it would be a terrible time to live in, thanks to malfunctioning A.I., global warming, and scarcity of resources due to increasing population. Or it could be a better place because we have A.I., stopped or reverted global warming, and more resources because humans will be a multiplanetary species. In my opinion, being optimistic is the best way to look at our future, as humans have already started to learn better from their mistakes.



“The Incident That Restored My Faith In Humanity “ - a decision between selfishness & selflessness

By Roshni Akash, 6th grade

I went downstairs to go outside, and I opened the door to see Rocky, my dog, and another dog sniffing each other across the fence. The dog had black, curly fur, and in size, it was just slightly bigger than Rocky. Its fur was a bit long, and it looked like it was almost covering the dog's eyes. It seemed to be a very old dog, as it wasn't as hyper as Rocky was. But it played with Rocky, even though it was on the other side of the fence! “I guess they are friends now!” the owner said. “Yeah!” I said, smiling. Almost every day Rocky would see the dog pass by on its walk and they would play together a little for a very short time, then they would continue their walk. It was like they were having a conversation! But the dog was very, very slow whenever they went for a walk. It would stop and rest in random places. It seemed like it moved only 1 inch every minute! But I figured it was because it was old. I came to know its name was Kayne, and it was an older adult dog. His owner's name was Jenny. I soon started seeing Kayne and the owner whenever I took Rocky for a walk. They would be on their walk too, and when Rocky saw them passing by us, the dogs would sniff each other, as if they were telling each other something, and me and the owner would both keep going afterwards. A while passes by of Rocky and Kayne seeing each other often, and one day when my parents came for the walk too, Kayne and his owner passed by as usual. While the dogs “talked”, my parents talked to the owner.

“Kayne's old now!” said the owner

“Yes! How old is he?” asked my dad.

“He's 14 years old!” the owner said, looking at Kayne.

“Oh wow.” My mom said

“Yeah, I try to take him on a walk everyday so I can keep him energized and healthy. I think it's really helping.” the owner said, smiling.

“I think so too! He actually had a big dog too.” My mom said looking at my dad. “Yes, my first dog lived for 17 years! And his name was Rocky too!” said my dad. “Aw, that's so cute! It's like Rocky 2.0! And it gives me hope. I want my baby to live a long life.” The owner said, petting Kayne. About 2 years pass by as they pass by each other on walks, and our backyard. One day though, Kayne's owner came to our house with a bag full of unopened treat packets, which were meant for Kayne. I was in a class now, so I was unaware of this. My dad asked why she had brought them, and she told him that Kayne was going through pain at an old age, and the owners had the decision to either put him down or keep him and let him suffer. They could've put him down 2 years before, but they wanted Kayne to stay with them, thinking he might get better soon, and they gave him lots of love and support. It was a decision of selfishness, or selflessness. It was a tough decision, but since they loved him too much to let him suffer, they had to put him down. It was heartbreaking to them, but they only wanted what's best for Kayne. My dad went up in his room with my baby sister sitting next to him, and as I went up to go play with her a little bit, he told me the sad news. I was so upset and felt so bad. It was really all that I could think about that night. The first thing I thought of when I woke up the next morning was how sad the owner must feel about it. But it made me realize how much they must have cared for Kayne. 2 years before, when he could've been put down, they still wanted to try and give him extra love and care, and that could make it better. And they did! The owner never gave up on walking Kayne, even though he walked slow. And she chose to put him down because it was what was best for him. She gave as much love, care, and support as possible. It must have been hard for Jenny, spending almost her entire day caring for Kayne, but she did it, and she never complained. She didn't just work hard for him because she had to. She worked hard because she had courage in Kayne. If you love someone or something very much, you will try everything in your power to work for their better being. And you should choose selflessness over selfishness.

How Far Technology Has Come

By: Pushpita Behera

Imagine your standard computer from the 1960s compressed into a handheld electronic that can take on more roles than the minicomputer. In 1992, IBM created the first smartphone called IBM Simon. Although it was released two years later and sold by tens of thousands, it ended up being a commercial flop. The inventors didn't expect it to take off so quickly, which caused the wireless carriers to be unprepared with the amount of data. In addition, IBM didn't adequately test the phone, so it could not take on so much data. This obstacle proved the phone would need to be significantly improved if it were to be compared to a computer's functionality. However, in 2022, we now have high-tech smartphones because the invention was a big breakthrough creating a path for a better version of the IBM Simon. Not only do smartphones, today, make your life easier, but they can sharpen your mind and help society.

Smartphones are so beneficial because they are much more efficient than a computer. They allow you to connect calls easily and instantly send messages. In addition, they can help you quickly research topics through internet browsing and run software programs that are usually run on a computer. According to Statista, 83.7% of the world's population owns a smartphone. Because it is so popular, costs have also been reduced, making more people buy it. Therefore, smartphone users increased from 3.67 billion (2016) to 6.65 billion (2022). Another reason so many people buy them is that they help strengthen and challenge your mind.

While smartphones have a terrible reputation for damaging your mind, there have yet to be any long-term effects researched. Research has shown that the amount of radiation emitted from phones can negatively affect a child's psychology, thinking patterns, sleep cycles, and behavior. However, these changes occur if you use the device irresponsibly. A smartphone can have many benefits, including improving mental health if used correctly and carefully. Social media platforms allow you to talk to friends and share day-to-day activities. Some applications are dedicated to lifting people's moods, getting them active, and helping them overcome difficulties. They help with illnesses ranging from depression and anxiety to unusual phobias. Other gaming applications can help soothe the brain and are sometimes used during therapy sessions to help relax the patient. For example, Researcher David Haniff has created apps that lift people's moods from depression by showing them pleasing pictures, videos, and audio.

The third reason why smartphones are essential is that they can help society through strengthened relationships or a better economy. As mentioned before, social media platforms allow people to find new friends and connect with people they may not have seen in a long time. Smartphones also have direct access to thousands of resources through the Internet. This perk helps those in school and adults who want to continue learning and growing at their own pace. Furthermore, smartphones also allow direct access to online banks to conduct transactions. As a result, it is more efficient and safer for people new to banking because they don't have to risk someone taking advantage of their lack of knowledge and experience.

Although a smartphone is a standard device, it is hard to believe that a rectangular piece of metal that lights up and makes sounds can do many things. It doesn't feel possible that only in a matter of 80 years, we can go from a computer to a device $\frac{1}{8}$ the size with twice as many operations that can run faster. Not only that, its functions improve lives, minds, and society. The first smartphone may have been a way to experiment with technology, but it paved the way for many more advances. The pathway continues, and it makes us realize that technological advances we might find impossible to happen could occur soon.



A Look into a Middle Schooler's Daily Life

Winner -
Middle School

By: Lily Biswas

Two years of zooms calls. Two years of online work. Two years of not socializing with others.

But then it's time for me to come back and start a new chapter of my academic life: Middle School. They say it's scary, but it's not as they exaggerate in the movies. You just need to get used to it. For the first time in years, I was back in the building, but not one I was familiar with. Everything was completely new and different. The school is bigger, there's more kids, and you have so many more classes. But overtime you get used to it.

Normally this is how my day would go: The first sound I hear as I wake up is my alarm. *Great*, I would think, *Another day of school*. Most of the time I don't wake up right away, instead I just lay in bed for a few minutes and finally get up. (Sometimes those "few minutes" end up being twenty to forty minutes, which can be a huge problem.) I get ready and go down for breakfast. I track where my bus is, it's actually my first school year ever that I had to take a bus to school. I then go to the bus stop once it's around time for it to come and hop on. Most of the time I listen to music, but sometimes I may also do some unfinished homework if I really need to or really have the motivation to do it. The bus stops, and I step into the place that I'm going to be stuck in for a whole seven hours. If I'm lucky enough I can catch a friend to sit with me in the gym until we're dismissed to the homeroom. Everyone's doing something or the other with the time they have before class, I just go and talk to my friends. Then the First Block begins.

After an hour and ten minutes of our teacher lecturing us on algebra, I go to the second block where the teacher lectures us about finding evidence for passages for another hour and ten minutes. Then, we finally get a break! Ah how nice it feels, to walk around the track and get some fresh air and finally be able to socialize with people...

Then it's back to another one hour and ten minutes of a lecture of either Light Waves or the Fall of the Byzantine Empire. Then it's lunch, what I'd consider like our second recess. It's great to have a moment to relax and eat after possibly starving in all those classes. You can chat with your friends, but sometimes we talk too much and some kids get out of their seats, and the teachers get really annoyed and punish the whole grade with silent lunch. It can sometimes really get on my nerves when that happens, but luckily it doesn't happen too often. Then you have another class a bit shorter, most students get study hall or reading time, others may decide to use this class period on clubs like the Robotics Club, Student Council, Battle of The Books, etc. And BOOM, another hour and ten minutes class. What a surprise, who would've guessed!? But this one can actually be pretty interesting since it's the one class that you yourself got to choose, which are called Electives. Unfortunately, none of my electives are in the sixth grade hall, so I have to go through very crowded and chaotic halls, with people screaming at the top of their lungs and shoving through everyone which I've gotten used to.

We then finally finish all our classes, but there's one more obstacle I have to face before getting home: the bus. People scream and stand up in their seats, and the bus driver is always yelling at them. Again I'm used to it, and the moment I step off the bus, I'm so glad I made it through the day, until I realize I have to do it all over again the next day. Like clockwork.



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A Look into the Daily Life of a Middle Schooler

By: Anoushka Ghosh

As you go into the large metal doors first thing in the morning, you're greeted with the sight of teenagers running around in the hallways. You would hear various teachers yelling out after them, and the sound of conversation being exchanged about miscellaneous things.

You would then proceed to walk to your classroom, trying to avoid being bumped around by the various students in large groups. Entering your homeroom is a different experience every day. Some days, everyone has a lot of energy; other days, people are literally sleeping with their hoods over their heads.

While you wait for the dreaded bell to ring, you would either rush to work on an incomplete homework assignment that was due that day or go and visit your dear friends in different classrooms. Once you hear the blaring bell ring, you would dash back to your classroom hoping your teacher won't mark you absent.

First thing in the morning, the teacher will click through slides about concerns in the world. A few important announcements will be made about various topics, like football games or club meets.

Now it's time for 1st block. You will have one of your core classes: math, English, science, or social studies. Each class is the same; you take a seat, have an assignment that you have to complete, and sit through a lecture, which could be boring or interesting depending on the topic.

The first block of the day is usually the hardest to get through. You're usually still tired and feel like sleeping, even if you got a good night's sleep. But you need to continue to fight to keep your eyes open in order to not miss any important information in the lesson.

Next, we have electives. I usually enjoy electives because they are different from normal classes and we often do fun activities to give us a break from the workload of the other three classes in the day. Some activities include group or partner work, or even going outside for a project.

After electives, it's another repetitive class. Sometimes, my class is on the other side of the school. So I wait at the edge of the door during electives so I can rush to my next class without being late. Other times, you would be able to take your time and even chat with your friends on the way there. I prefer the latter, of course.

Eighth grade has a late lunch, which I don't really like. If I don't have a proper breakfast at the beginning of the day, I get extremely hungry during class since our lunch time is at 1 or sometimes even at 1:30. So when the bell rings in the middle of 3rd block, signaling that it is lunch time, our whole class is very excited and dashes to the cafeteria.

This is the golden time of the day. We have lunch and teen time (recess/outside time). It is from 1-2. The grade level is unfortunately split up. The first half having lunch from 1-1:30 and teen time from 1:30-2, while the other half has it vice versa. So I am unable to see my friends from the other half of the grade level.

I do enjoy this time of the day. At the beginning of the year, we would go outside to the picnic tables for lunch (just my class), because we couldn't go to the cafeteria. (Covid). We now go to the cafeteria for lunch, where my friends sit at the tables around me since we are in different classes.

Classes need to sit at their own specified tables and cannot sit at any other class' tables. Is this rule followed by everyone? Absolutely

not. So, lunch time is usually a huge chaotic, enjoyable mess. While we converse and stuff food into our mouths, the clock is ticking, and soon the teachers will be constantly reminding us to go outside.

Outside, we're all let out onto the track. It's basically a big round oval with a football field in the middle of it. We also have the option of going on the blacktop with the basketball hoops. We had the privilege of going on the bleachers as well, but that soon got taken away due to someone's misconduct.

Usually, you would walk around the track while talking to your friends. You also have the option of playing basketball with the deflated balls the school provides if you don't bring your own. There are also the kids being loud while attempting to play football on the field.

After our break outside, it's time to go back inside and continue our classwork. You would then eventually transition to fourth block. Fourth block is usually pretty chill, especially if you have ELA. (English Language Arts) Class goes by fast for me during the fourth block.

Finally, it's time for the bell to ring. They will call for car riders and walkers to be dismissed first, while making the end of the day announcements. Now is the time to talk to your friends that are only on your fourth block. I usually sneak over to my friends' classes to talk to them sometimes. And then rush back when the buses are called for 8th grade.

The bus ride home can be described in a few words. It's chaotic, noisy, and annoying. You have little kids screaming and the older kids screaming back at them to be quiet. And finding a seat is a whole different deal. It takes forever to find someone that will let you sit next to them if you get to the bus late. Not to mention, the buses are always overcrowded. That is the day in the life of a normal middle schooler.



Daily Life of a Middle Schooler

By: Sarthak Das

The day starts in the morning as I wake up at 7:45, use the restroom, and change into my school clothes. Every morning I make a mohawk with gel. My mom yells at me because I don't put coconut oil in my hair. My breakfast is mostly a bread toast with a protein shake. Occasionally I would have milk and cereal. I ride the bus every day but on the days that I have tennis at the school my mom drops me off by car because I have 2 bags. If I took them on the bus I would be squeezed. The bus is scheduled to come at 8:16 but sometime at around 8:25, The ride takes around 30 to 40 minutes, However, the car ride takes around 10 to 12 minutes. My bus is late, so I don't have any time in the homeroom, however, when my mom takes me to school, I have plenty of time.

As soon as I get in the school I go to my science class, first class of the day, and I have no time, so the announcements start, and they say the sports teams' scores and the weather. Every time the tennis scores come my whole class cheers for me because I am the only one in the tennis team. Getting on any team in middle school is a very big thing and kids got recognition because of this. After the announcements, we have some free time because my teacher checks the grades and after 5 minutes, we do our warm-up to refresh our minds from yesterday which consists of 3 questions from earlier days. Then 1 kid came up to share the answers that they got. Then someone will pass a sheet around because we will be watching a video and writing down notes. Every Friday our teacher would open a candy shop and we could buy candy with the points we earned. Then we would have a small exit ticket which goes to PowerSchool. However, some days we would do a Kahoot and then the class was over. Sometimes we would draw on the board if we had extra time, this is my favorite class.

Then I leave the class to get to my math class. It was outside in a trailer. If my teacher goes to use the restroom, we have to wait outside because my teacher doesn't let us go inside as she thinks we will goof around. After she comes in, we go inside. For the first 15 mins, we do our assignments from yesterday and iready when we are done. Then she gives us our lesson. In the middle of the lesson, we go to the commons first then lunch. We would all burst out of the room to go to commons. Other times we count the time that we can go outside.

We have commons first, so we run out to the field and get the balls, so they don't run out. After that, I hung out with my friends at a table. I don't like playing 4 squares because it is boring, and people get out quickly. The lines to play 4 squares are long too. Most of the day if I get a ball, I play catch with my friend then we do different things like play basketball. When we don't get a ball, we race and talk. At 11:40 we go to lunch; I buy my lunch, so I get to go first. I always ran up the ramp to get first in the line. As I buy lunch, I also get an extra like a cupcake; I sat with my friends. We buy some stuff together also and share. After lunch, I run outside to hang out with my second block friends. Then I ran to the trailer, and I am always the first one there.

We continue our math lesson after lunch break. After the lesson, we do a guided practice with a partner, though it is not graded. Then we have an independent practice which also does not go to the grade book, and after that we would do our knowledge check 1 or 2. Then when we were done, we would do our weekly math and at 1:00 we get packed up and ready to leave.

In the last block, I have reading class. As I entered the class, the teacher allowed us to go to the restroom and start class with some good news. The first thing we do is review the notes from yesterday then we turn it in our homework. The teacher will pass our class notes off the day. After that, I started the lesson; In the lesson, our teacher gave us an example for the day and then we would do the stuff by ourselves. At the end of the lesson, we get our homework and try to finish it in class. Then as I leave, I head to the gym.

First Thing, I get to change my uniform to gym clothes. Every corner in the gym has different classes so I go to my assigned corner to change clothes and after changing I get out to the track. On the days I have tournaments for sports I sit on the bleachers. Then I went to the track. Normally I run really fast, I try to do 2 miles instead of 1 mile. Usually, I do 1 and ½ miles to keep up with my goal to stay fit. Then I wait for the rest of my class to get done so sit where all the author people sit when they are done. When everyone is done, we all go back to the gym and now it's time for getting hydrated and using the restroom, so it won't not interfere with our gym time. In the gym we sit in a circle as a group. The main coach tells us some guides like what not to do and what to do to keep yourself fit that we all should know. Then the coach explained to us what we are going to do today. Then we would make groups and then get in line to play the game. Sometimes it'd be different activities for the same game. In basketball we do Three V three champion ball and knockout. Every week we also play a word game which is a different sport as well. At the end of the week, we all like to play a tournament. My friends and I always tried out for the game though we are good at some games but not good for all the games. The interesting part is whatever sports I am good at I end up till the finals like tennis, badminton and pickleball. Then after the games we go to the locker room to get our stuff back. My friends and I talked about the good parts that we learned in the games on the way back to our class. And this is my end of the class if I don't have any tennis practice or tournament.

On the days when I had tennis, I changed into our tennis clothes. The coach lets us go first because our tennis court is too far away and as we get there, we first have a snack before we start playing because the school was all day long. Then we start playing so we can get warmed up to play against the opponents. When there are matches played at home we get more of a warm-up time, but when the matches are all away from home school my mom and another of my friends' moms do carpooling to drop us off. That time My mom got some snacks from home, and we ate that in the car. I'm in the doubles team and the singles teams gets to play first so I have extra time in my hand. Sometimes, I play two matches: singles and doubles. Mostly I play 1 doubles match. After we are done my mom heads home. If my friend's mom was picking us up, I get extra time to stay at his house for a bit.

As I reach home, I have my dinner as I am super hungry and after that start doing my homework. Sometimes I take a little break if I am tired. Then I do my homework. Some days if I get very tired from tennis my parents help me but It's not that hard. After I am done with all my assignments, I get to watch a bit and go to bed. Now it's time to go to bed and before I close my eyes completely, I like to read books because reading books makes me fall asleep faster.

The Perfect Weekend

Viyan Das

A perfect weekend for me will be a whole lot of fun, activities, time spent with family and friends, watching, and of course studying a little bit though; but the studying part is not in the story. I spent a great weekend with my friends and family last month, so I am sharing my experience here with you about how my weekend went through. I hope you will like my idea of a perfect weekend story.

Today I woke up at 8:00 on Saturday, to start the day I got ready by brushing my teeth and changing into my swimming clothes. You know why if you don't you will miss the time because I am going to a pool at 10:00! I am going to my parent's room to wake them up and say that we are going to a pool! I say that by shouting it and jumping on the bed. They finally wake up. It took me 10 minutes to wake them up. I told them I am making my breakfast as they don't need to get up right away, so I made my own breakfast. I made a cheese bread sandwich and I heated up my milk and then I had my breakfast. After I finished, I woke my brother up and it took me 15 minutes to wake him up. My parents and my brother have their breakfast at the same time while I read my book. Then we get our bags and pack up our swimming clothes and towel.

We got in the car and drove for twenty minutes to the pool. At first, we had to show our membership card to get in. We all have our own membership card for ourselves. When we get in the pool, we take a water ball thing to play in the water, but before we do that, we take a shower to get in the pool. My brother and I jumped in the water at the same time, but the water was freezing cold, so I stayed at the same spot for one minute. Then I swim to my dad for my water gun. It was a small one that is why I could fit it in my bag. Then my dad got it and then I started shooting water at my brother. He hated it so he got his small water gun that was the exact same one but different color because I spray painted my orange. Then we started a war with water guns. Then the war ended I did some trick shots by jumping in the water and shot my brother a couple of times. Then my friend came with a swimming board, and we played in the pool for three hours. After that we took a shower and changed our swimming clothes. My parents got so tired when we arrived home, they immediately went to sleep after eating lunch. When they were sleeping, I woke my dad up and asked if I could watch TV. He said yes so, I started to watch TV while eating popcorn. My brother was playing games on the mac, so we were taking turns using the mac because my Nintendo was out of charge. After we switched the first time, I first checked the time. When I saw the time, I went to go call my parents. I was supposed to call them after 2 hours, but it has been 3 hours. I thought I was in trouble, but I was not in trouble. They wanted to sleep for 30 more minutes. That was the time I got to use the mac but my nintendo had a lot of charge, so my brother played on it for the rest of the time we had. When my parents woke up, we ate something and then went to a Sports connection cause one day I did good on math and mummy said that we can go to Sports connection.

When we got to the Sports connection, we got a card and started to play games. At first, we did bowl, let dad do it and I tried to beat him, and I did. I was battling my dad in all the battle things there and I beat him except 3 times. That was so much fun when I was battling my dad. After that I asked him to do it more with me, but he said that he tried, and he took a rest, so I let him take a break while I was doing some solo things by myself. I did some things with my brother after that I asked my dad if I could play with him again, but he said that he was too tired to play anymore, so I let him be. Then I did some random things like Laser tag with random people. After we spent everything from our cards, we had 5 minutes to choose what we wanted there. I got a gun and so did my brother. It was kind of like a nerf gun jolt but different company. When we got stuff from the sports connection we went to a restaurant because my parents were tired when we arrived as they drove for the whole day, and we could not stay at the restaurant for long because it was going to close in an hour that was plenty of time. After we arrived, we did not get an appetizer because we did not have time, so we ordered tacos for me, and my brother and my parents ordered 2 fried rice plates with pineapples because my mom likes more spice than my dad. It took us 30 minutes to finish, then we got our check with 4 fortune cookies so 2 fortune cookies for my brother and 2 fortune cookies for me. My parents did not want any fortune cookies, so my brother and I split it into 2 fortune cookies. After that we went home. The drive was 30 min, so I slept in the car for 20 minutes because I was so tired it felt like it was 1 hour of me sleeping in the car. When we got home, I immediately went upstairs and changed into my pj's so I can watch TV. After I changed, I brushed my teeth and went downstairs so I could watch. It was like 10:00pm which was plenty of time to

watch TV. I was watching The Investigators well; I saw it as The Inbestigators that is it was said. I watched two episodes, so that was like an hour. It was 11:00 so I went to bed and read a book. Then my parents said good night to me at 12:00 midnight. So basically, I slept on the same day and woke up on the same day.

On Sunday, I woke up at 7:15 so I could have more fun. When I woke up, I did the same thing I always do. Brush my teeth and change but this time not into my swimming clothes because we are not going to a swimming pool. So, when I woke up, I saw that my parents were already awake. After I saw them awake, I went to wake up my brother for breakfast, but he said that he wanted to sleep for 10 more minutes so I let him sleep for 10 minutes. Then when the 10 minutes was over, I went to get my brother out of bed but he was already awake, so I went downstairs and my mummy was making our breakfast. Today's breakfast was a smoothie with a lot of stuff in it and with bread toast. A couple of times we go to Starbucks to get something, every time is different, sometimes we also go to Dunkin Donuts for donuts. After we ate breakfast, my parents said that we don't need to study today as we behaved well yesterday. After that we went outside to play with our friends in the morning. We played cops and robbers, capture the flag, baseball, and cricket. We did a short amount of time for each one of them and we stopped at 12:50. Then we went home to have lunch, but Lunch was with my friends, so we went to their house to eat our lunch. We arrived at 1:30 at my friend's house. The first thing we do is play Xbox for 30 min. When we were done playing with the Xbox, we went to eat lunch. We got a very small fry with something in it and then we got a sandwich. We split it into 4 slices because there were 4 people. After we finished the sandwich, we got noodles for the real lunch. After we finished our lunch, we asked our parents if we could play on the Xbox and our parents said yes. We played Halo and Minecraft for two hours and in the middle of the two hours we got ice cream, so we had to pause for ten minutes. After we played on the Xbox we went upstairs and played some game called mastermind. When we were playing mastermind, we stopped and went to the older brother's room and there I saw a rubix cube, so I scrambled it and solved it. Solving a cube is easy if you watched a tutorial of how to solve a rubix cube. When I was done solving the rubix cube I saw that we were getting a snack because it was 4:30. The snack we got was chips with salsa. When we finished the chips and salsa, we went back upstairs to play hide and seek. When we felt like we were done with hide and seek we went downstairs and started to watch but we could not because we had to go home so we went home.

When we got home, we rested by watching more TV and we were talking and playing games on the mac. I was first because my brother watches Mac more than me. When my brother and I were watching, my parents said that we are going to another restaurant and mom said that we are going to a restaurant two days in a row, we will not go to a restaurant next week. This time we went to chipotle so we got sweet tea and soda, Sweet tea for my brother and soda for me. I got coca cola cherry flavor that was good, it tastes like cherry but too much coca cola and it is not that fizzy. We got a quesadilla with cheese in it but nothing else. My parents got a lot of stuff in their chicken bowl so I could not name everything because some of the things were hidden. After we finished our food we went home at 8:30 because I will have school the next day so I have to sleep early because we have to wake up at 6:30 so I have to watch for 1 hour because I have to go to bed at 9:45. So I stopped watching at 9:30. The reason I stopped 15 minutes early is because I need to change and brush my teeth and I also want to read before I go to bed. When I was done changing and with my toothbrush I jumped into bed and started to read. I read for 30 min until I went to bed at 10:10

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watch TV. I was watching The Investigators well; I saw it as The Inbestigators that is it was said. I watched two episodes, so that was like an hour. It was 11:00 so I went to bed and read a book. Then my parents said good night to me at 12:00 midnight. So basically, I slept on the same day and woke up on the same day.

On Sunday, I woke up at 7:15 so I could have more fun. When I woke up, I did the same thing I always do. Brush my teeth and change but this time not into my swimming clothes because we are not going to a swimming pool. So, when I woke up, I saw that my parents were already awake. After I saw them awake, I went to wake up my brother for breakfast, but he said that he wanted to sleep for 10 more minutes so I let him sleep for 10 minutes. Then when the 10 minutes was over, I went to get my brother out of bed but he was already awake, so I went downstairs and my mummy was making our breakfast. Today's breakfast was a smoothie with a lot of stuff in it and with bread toast. A couple of times we go to Starbucks to get something, every time is different, sometimes we also go to Dunkin Donuts for donuts. After we ate breakfast, my parents said that we don't need to study today as we behaved well yesterday. After that we went outside to play with our friends in the morning. We played cops and robbers, capture the flag, baseball, and cricket. We did a short amount of time for each one of them and we stopped at 12:50. Then we went home to have lunch, but Lunch was with my friends, so we went to their house to eat our lunch. We arrived at 1:30 at my friend's house. The first thing we do is play Xbox for 30 min. When we were done playing with the Xbox, we went to eat lunch. We got a very small fry with something in it and then we got a sandwich. We split it into 4 slices because there were 4 people. After we finished the sandwich, we got noodles for the real lunch. After we finished our lunch, we asked our parents if we could play on the Xbox and our parents said yes. We played Halo and Minecraft for two hours and in the middle of the two hours we got ice cream, so we had to pause for ten minutes. After we played on the Xbox we went upstairs and played some game called mastermind. When we were playing mastermind, we stopped and went to the older brother's room and there I saw a rubix cube, so I scrambled it and solved it. Solving a cube is easy if you watched a tutorial of how to solve a rubix cube. When I was done solving the rubix cube I saw that we were getting a snack because it was 4:30. The snack we got was chips with salsa. When we finished the chips and salsa, we went back upstairs to play hide and seek. When we felt like we were done with hide and seek we went downstairs and started to watch but we could not because we had to go home so we went home.

When we got home, we rested by watching more TV and we were talking and playing games on the mac. I was first because my brother watches Mac more than me. When my brother and I were watching, my parents said that we are going to another restaurant and mom said that we are going to a restaurant two days in a row, we will not go to a restaurant next week. This time we went to chipotle so we got sweet tea and soda, Sweet tea for my brother and soda for me. I got coca cola cherry flavor that was good, it tastes like cherry but too much coca cola and it is not that fizzy. We got a quesadilla with cheese in it but nothing else. My parents got a lot of stuff in their chicken bowl so I could not name everything because some of the things were hidden. After we finished our food we went home at 8:30 because I will have school the next day so I have to sleep early because we have to wake up at 6:30 so I have to watch for 1 hour because I have to go to bed at 9:45. So I stopped watching at 9:30. The reason I stopped 15 minutes early is because I need to change and brush my teeth and I also want to read before I go to bed. When I was done changing and with my toothbrush I jumped into bed and started to read. I read for 30 min until I went to bed at 10:10

The Perfect Weekend

Viyam Das

A perfect weekend for me will be a whole lot of fun, activities, time spent with family and friends, watching, and of course studying a little bit though; but the studying part is not in the story. I spent a great weekend with my friends and family last month, so I am sharing my experience here with you about how my weekend went through. I hope you will like my idea of a perfect weekend story.

Today I woke up at 8:00 on Saturday, to start the day I got ready by brushing my teeth and changing into my swimming clothes. You know why if you don't you will miss the time because I am going to a pool at 10:00! I am going to my parent's room to wake them up and say that we are going to a pool! I say that by shouting it and jumping on the bed. They finally wake up. It took me 10 minutes to wake them up. I told them I am making my breakfast as they don't need to get up right away, so I made my own breakfast. I made a cheese bread sandwich and I heated up my milk and then I had my breakfast. After I finished, I woke my brother up and it took me 15 minutes to wake him up. My parents and my brother have their breakfast at the same time while I read my book. Then we get our bags and pack up our swimming clothes and towel.

We got in the car and drove for twenty minutes to the pool. At first, we had to show our membership card to get in. We all have our own membership card for ourselves. When we get in the pool, we take a water ball thing to play in the water, but before we do that, we take a shower to get in the pool. My brother and I jumped in the water at the same time, but the water was freezing cold, so I stayed at the same spot for one minute. Then I swim to my dad for my water gun. It was a small one that is why I could fit it in my bag. Then my dad got it and then I started shooting water at my brother. He hated it so he got his small water gun that was the exact same one but different color because I spray painted my orange. Then we started a war with water guns. Then the war ended I did some trick shots by jumping in the water and shot my brother a couple of times. Then my friend came with a swimming board, and we played in the pool for three hours. After that we took a shower and changed our swimming clothes. My parents got so tired when we arrived home, they immediately went to sleep after eating lunch. When they were sleeping, I woke my dad up and asked if I could watch TV. He said yes so, I started to watch TV while eating popcorn. My brother was playing games on the mac, so we were taking turns using the mac because my Nintendo was out of charge. After we switched the first time, I first checked the time. When I saw the time, I went to go call my parents. I was supposed to call them after 2 hours, but it has been 3 hours. I thought I was in trouble, but I was not in trouble. They wanted to sleep for 30 more minutes. That was the time I got to use the mac but my nintendo had a lot of charge, so my brother played on it for the rest of the time we had. When my parents woke up, we ate something and then went to a Sports connection cause one day I did good on math and mummy said that we can go to Sports connection.

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Day in the Life of a Middle Schooler

Trisha Roy

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! *Sigh*..... that's my alarm clock letting me know it's time to wake up at six in the morning. As usual, I smack the button to turn the alarm clock off, just to get woken up by my mom five minutes later. Looks like I won't get my beauty sleep today either. Around seven o'clock, we head out the door. School is about 35 minutes away, so we have to leave early. We have a carpool with three other families and the parents take turns driving us to school and back. The car ride is filled with constant chatter and some arguments on the way. We get to school around 7:45 am and go to the gym until it is time for class.

Class starts at 8:05 am, which for me, is science class. The bell rings, announcing it is time to put our brains to work. Science is my absolute favorite subject! Today, we are taking notes on plants and photosynthesis. We also play a game to help review for a quiz tomorrow. We are playing Battleship, and competition is in full force. Normally, my table wins because we lay low, don't talk too much, and sneakily plan our strategy.

The sound of locker doors slamming outside our classroom tells us to head to the second period. ELA (English Language Arts) isn't a class that I really enjoy, but it's alright. Today we're going over a vocabulary sheet that we had to complete last night. Then, we create a study resource for ten vocabulary words for a quiz on Friday. We quiz each other to help get some studying done. Before we know it, it is 9:45 am, time for music class. It's personally my favorite, well second favorite, since science is first. Today we are tapping out rhythms with two sticks, singing, and tossing the sticks to our partner. My partner threw his stick to the other side of the room! It's like playing catch, but we are not in P.E.! It feels like a jungle in our classroom because there are wooden sticks flying around the room. We practice the rhythms and songs until we get better and it is less chaotic. Next up is lunch. Another one of my favorite subjects! We have to walk to the high school building to have lunch. I find my friends and sit down. We eat and chat until it's time to clean up. We have to wipe our table and sweep around the table so it is clean for the next group of students. After we're done, a teacher comes to each table and dismisses us.

Since it's Wednesday, we have a study hall during the advisory. After going back to the middle school building, we go back to our first period class. During study hall, we can finish whatever homework we have been given. At 11:35 am our teacher dismissed us and we headed to the fourth period. P.E., (Physical Education) here I come! This week we have P.E, not health. We get to the gym and do our warm up routine. Today, we're playing kickball, my favorite game in P.E. The teams are divided up evenly and we start the game. We have to wear jerseys so we don't get teammates confused. At first the other team was winning, but we ended up pulling by a few points, and won. After P.E., we head to Social Studies. Our teacher takes attendance, and we start taking notes on Vikings. We watch a video, and then spend some time brainstorming for our project. Middle School has a lot of projects and Social Studies has the most.

Math is the last period of the day. Our math teacher goes over our homework from last night. Then we get on our laptops and open up a website called Delta Math. We have twenty problems to finish before the end of class. Homework for tonight is a review worksheet of what we have learned so far. Soon, class is over and we head out to our lockers, and pack up. The teachers start calling names for pick up five minutes later. Soon our carpool hears our name and we're headed home. There you have it! A day in the life of a sixth grader.

A PHOTOGRAPHIC DIARY OF YELLOWSTONE

BY: SOUVIK CHATTERJEE



JUL-04 17:05



Just came back from my morning exploration. I am blown away by the beauty of nature. I went to Mormon Row historic district. I was hoping for some wildlife during the morning hours. But didn't get anything except a herd of deer. But the view was definitely worth the effort.

JUL-05 09:30



We reached Grand Teton today. We came to Salt Lake City yesterday from Charlotte. Picked up the car and stayed at hotel. Started for Grand Teton today morning and reached here by evening. We spent the evening at Schwabacher Landing. What an experience! I need to hit the park early morning tomorrow. No animal sighting yet.

JUL-05 16:00



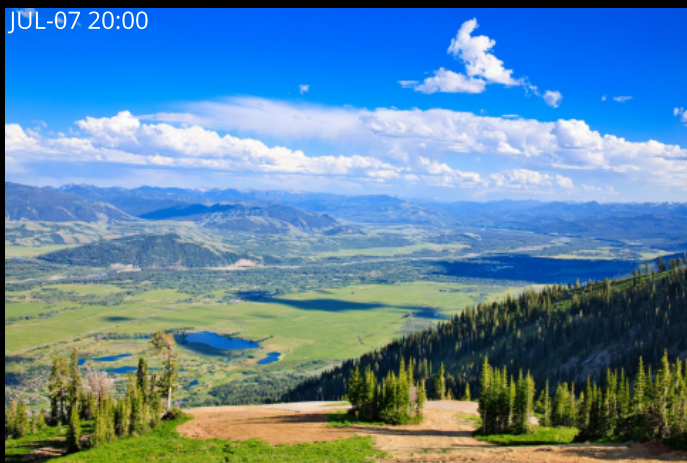
Finally got some wildlife! We went to visit Jenny Lake and while coming back from there we saw a brown bear. He was trying to find some food in a sump off the road when we saw him. He was merely 50 ft away from us and not bothered about our presence. We are super excited. We are thinking of coming back to the wilderness after dinner.

JUL-06 16:00



It was a busy day. We went out driving last night and spotted few deer, and a fox. The sun sets very late here, around 9:30 pm. Today also we had few animal sightings near Jackson Lake area, the highlight of which was a male elk. Gorgeous!

JUL-07 20:00



We visited Jackson Village today and had a gondola ride all the way to the top of the mountains. It was fascinating. The valley view from the top was breathtaking. We will be leaving for Yellowstone tomorrow.

JUL-08 13:00



Yellowstone! Finally, we have reached. First day, first thing we saw was Old Faithful geyser. Unbelievable! Nature at its best.

We checked in to our cabin. It's been a hectic day. No Wi-Fi or phone signal. But what a great day it has been! Lots of wildlife sightings especially Bisons. I love these big creatures; they are beautiful yet awe inspiring.

JUL-08 22:00



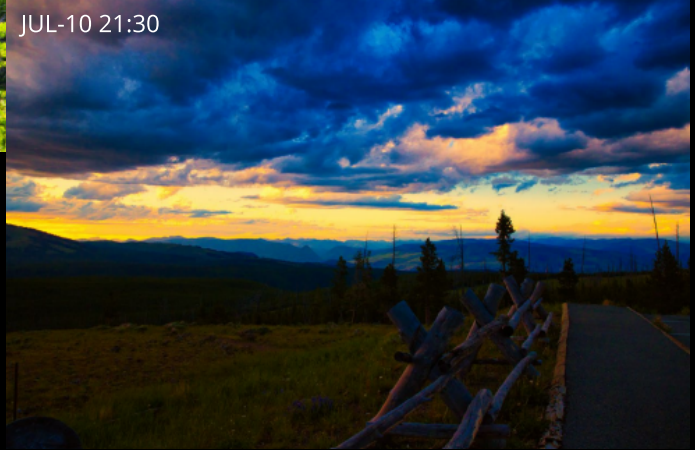
JUL-09 22:45



Today was our day to witness the great waterfalls. We visited the magnificent Undine, Tower, Lower and Upper and Gibbon falls. Lower falls was a good trek, but it was fun. Now we are getting bored of Bisons, they are everywhere.

We visited Mammoth Hot Spring and Grand Prismatic today. Lamar Valley was closed. We loved the northern Yellowstone Park. We witnessed this gorgeous sunset while coming back. Tomorrow we'll be leaving for Glacier Park.

JUL-10 21:30



JUL 12- 22:20



We reached Glacier Park and immediately saw snow at Logan Pass. We visited Many Glacier Lake and went on a boat ride there. One of the best views in the country for sure. We were spellbound.

At Glacier Park we witnessed a lot of black, brown, and grizzly bears. We also saw a few majestic waterfalls; some were formed long ago and others were created more recently. We were fortunate to see more wildlife like mountain goat and big horn sheep at Logan Pass. It was truly an experience of a lifetime.

JUL 15- 23:00



My Last Single-Digit Birthday

By: Abhiraj Sarkar



My name is Abhiraj and I am going to tell you how I celebrated my last single digit birthday in NYC. I got the "I Survived" book series as a gift and read "I Survived the September 11 Attack". Since I learned about the sad Incident of 9/11, I had a wish to go to New York to visit the 9/11 memorial. When my dad said we are going to New York City on May 4th, I was very excited to finally visit the city.

On May 3rd we packed our suitcases and bags, and then we went to sleep. The next day during school I got an early dismissal. Then we all went to the airport. At the airport we ate Chick-fil-A and we got the flight from Charlotte to New York. After reaching the JFK airport we collected our luggage and headed towards our hotel which my dad had already booked for us before we got there. He takes care of everything.

Then it was time to explore New York city. On May 4th we went to the Brooklyn Bridge. It was so beautiful. On the bridge I sang a Bengali song to record a video for YouTube. It was a song on friendship. Then we walked for a long time to enjoy the night view of Brooklyn Bridge. We had our dinner though it was not that heavy, I just ate a hotdog. When we were coming back to our hotel we just crossed Times Square. It was so attractive that we decided to come back again the next day.

The day after, we went to the 9/11 memorial. It was morning time and I prayed for all those people who lost their lives in the attack of 9/11. Then we went to the Statue of Liberty. I was afraid to take the boat ride to see the Statue of Liberty. But my daddy told me that was the only way to get there. I did not enjoy the ferry ride but Liberty Island was so beautiful. We had ice cream there. In the evening we visited Times Square again. I got a pleasant surprise there as I got an opportunity to perform with the street dancers. I was waiting in a crowd with hundreds of other people when they suddenly picked me to dance with them. I danced with joy and got birthday wishes from everyone present there as it was after 12 am.

Yes, May 6th is my birthday. I love performing so dancing with the talented group of street dancers made this my best and most memorable birthday ever. That morning we went to one of our relatives' houses. They arranged for a birthday cake and lots of food to celebrate my birthday. I cut the cake with my cousin and with my family. We had lunch there and I met a didi who bought a watch for me.

It was a lovely birthday gift.

On May 7th we visited The Empire State Building and we rode right up to the 102nd floor. It was a rainy day, so we were not able to see the whole city clearly. But I had great fun exploring every corner of the Empire State Building. Then we came back to the hotel to pack our stuff because the next day we had a flight to get back to our home. On May 8th it was time to say goodbye to New York. It was such a wonderful journey and such a great birthday gift. Thank you daddy and maa for this lovely gift, it was a dream come true. I love you both very much.

Thanks to



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স্মার্ট ফোনের সাতকাহন - (কবিতা গান) শেখর নস্কর এর ছোট্টো কথন

স্মার্ট ফোনেতে ছবি তুলি, ইনস্টাগ্রাম এ ফলো করি
দিনের শেষে 'লাইক' দেখে, বন্ধু শত্রু বিচার করি,
রেগে গেল কमेंট বক্সে ইমোজি-র কু 'এক্সপ্রেশন'
ভালো লাগলে 'লাইক' 'লাভ' আর 'স্মাইল' ভরা 'ইমপ্রেশন'।।
ফেসবুকে তে আছে কিন্তু বিচিত্র সব মানুষ জন
তোমার আমার একই কথা, স্মার্টফোন তেই এ জীবন ॥

এখানে ওখানে, সময় অসময়ে, এটাই প্রাণের সঙ্গি
যখন তখন, যেমন তেমন সেলফিতে কত ভঙ্গি
হোয়াটস্যপ-এ আজ, কাছের নিজের, বন্ধু অনেক জন
পাশা পাশি, বসলেও ভাই, 'চ্যাটে'-ই চলে সব কহন
সবার মুখে, একি ভাষা, সবার হাতে আছে ফোন
দেখে লাগে, দারুন মজা, মানুষের এই বিবর্তন ॥
ফেসবুকে তে আছে আবার হরেক রকম মোনমোহন
চারিদিকে একটি আওয়াজ, স্মার্টফোন কি অসাধারণ ॥
ফেসবুকে তে আছে কিন্তু বিচিত্র সব মানুষ জন
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টুইটার-এ বা মেসেঞ্জার -এ, লাখো মেসেজ পড়ি
কেনাকাটার 'অ্যাপ' দিয়ে ভাই, ফোনেই বাজার করি
ওয়েব সিরিজ, 'ওটিটি' আর, হরেক রকম প্ল্যাটফর্ম
ইউটিউব আর নেটফ্লিক্স এ আছি আমি সারাখন
দূরের লোককে আপন করে, আপনারে পর,
সম্পর্কটা ভাল করে, আবার আনে ঝড় ।।
লিখতে লিখতে আগুল বাখ্যা, অনুভূতি নিস্প্রয়োজন
মাগো আমার আজব এই ফোন, এটাই সাথী সর্বক্ষণ ॥

ফেসবুকে তে আছে যে ভাই পরিবারের মানুষ জন ॥
তোমার আমার একি কথা, স্মার্টফোনেতেই এ জীবন ॥
বয়স্ক হোক কচি কাচা, স্মার্টফোনেতেই সবার মন ॥
জনগনের একি দাবী , স্মার্টফোন চাই সারাক্ষণ ॥
তোমার আমার একি কথা, স্মার্টফোনেতেই এ জীবন ॥

অনুভূতি

আমি বড় খামখেয়ালী, তুমি অভিমানী।
আমি ভালোবাসি আড়ালে থাকতে,
আর তুমি! ভিড়ের মধ্যমণি।।

আমি হলাম বড় কঠিন, তুমি যদিও নরম।
তোমার আমার সঙ্গ টা একটু অন্যরকম।।
যদি আয়না ধরে থাকো, আমি দিনবদলের ছবি।
যদি শান্ত হয়ে বাঁচো, আমি নীরব প্রতিচ্ছবি।।
যদি সহজ করে বাঁচো, আমি জীবন হবো রোজ।
যদি আগলে রাখতে পারো, আমি পরিপূর্ণ, আমি নিশ্চুপ।।

সমাজ ভাবে বড় অমিল, নয়কো পরিপূরক।
অনেক ভেবে তল পেলাম আজ, আমরা সত্যিই বিরল।।
না না, প্রজাতি নই! মনুষ্য জাতী ই বটে,
হাসি, কাঁদি, আনন্দে মেতে উঠি।
আবার, নিভৃত মনে কাছের মানুষ খুঁজি।।

আমি একটু অবাধ্য, তুমি ও তো অস্থির।
কঠিন সময় হাত না ছেড়ে পাশে থাকার রীত।।
আমরা তো দিব্যি আছি, গুমনে মরি না।
দু চারটে মনের কথা, থাক আজ আর বলবো না।।
শর্ত মেনেই দিয়েছি আমাদের জমা যত খুশি।
তোমার মত আমিও একটা অবুঝ মন কে পুষ্টি।।

তমশ্রী সরকার।

HCL

HCL

সৃষ্টি - Sohini Sengupta

ভারিখটা ঠিক মনে নেই, সাল দুহাজার সত্তের
USA তে আসব কিনা, অমিল বিশ্বের মত্তেরও

অমিল শেষে কর্তা গিল্লি ফেললাম ঠিক করে
চলো তবে জমাই পাড়ি শার্ট শহরে

বিদেশে বিটুই নতুন শহর খারাপ করে মনে
এক টুকরো কলকাতাটা, মনে আসে সার্বাঙ্গ

আলাপ করার মানুষ খুঁজি একলা লাগে বড়
কে যেন কে বলল এসে, Bong Community জয়েন করে

হাত বাড়াল সৃষ্টি প্রথম আমাদের ভালবেসে
বন্ধু পাবার দরজা এবার খুলল অবশেষে

ছোট বড় সবাই এসে আলাপ গেল করে
আপ্লিকতা ভালবাসায় মন উঠল তরে

সরস্বতী দুয়া কালী পূজা বছরন্তর
দুঃখটা লাঘব হল, "ছেড়ে এসছি ঘর"

গানবাজনা রিহার্সাল নানান অনুষ্ঠানে
জড়িয়ে গেলাম মাঝার তরে, জড়িয়ে গেলাম প্রাণে

"এই তো চলছে দিনগুলো বেশ" যখনই এমন ভাবা
মারল ব্যাধি Covid এসে বসাল তার খাবা

Virtual এর দুনিয়াতেও innovative plan
Mother's Day Celebration by our kids gang

Virtual page এ এসে হল ঠাকুর দর্শন
অল্পলি সন্ধিপূজা বিজয়াশীষ বর্ষণ

ধীরে ধীরে কমল এসে মারণ ব্যাধির কোপ
আনন্দে মাতব সবাই, with a new hope

পূজা গলে খাওয়া দাওয়ায় সৃষ্টি উঠুক মেতে
Virtual নয়, in-person- পারি যেন যেতে

সৃষ্টি সুখের উল্লাসেতে পড়ে পাওয়া চোদ আলা
"সৃষ্টি", তুমি এগিয়ে চলো, সাথে মানুষ নিয়ে নানা

আমাদের মত ঘরছাড়ারা বাঁচুক আঁকড়ে ধরে
"সৃষ্টি" তুমিই আমাদের ঘর এই শার্ট শহরে

নিয়তি

জীবন যুদ্ধে দাঁড়িয়ে যারা,
দীর্ঘ দিনের ভরসা তারা।
ক্লাস্ত তাদের দেখছি আমি,
পাচ্ছি না আজ কারোর সাড়া।।

অনেকটা পথ পেরিয়ে আজ
ফিরছে সবাই নিজের ঘরে।
বলতে পারো কয় জন আজ
হাসি মুখে ফিরছে ঘরে ?

বাসতো যারা অনেক ভালো
কোথায় সবাই হারিয়ে গেলো।
অন্ধকারের জীর্ণতা আজ
কোথায় তাদের দাঁড় করালো।।

মৃত্যু মুখে হাঁটছে তারা
আশার ভেলায় ভাসছে যারা,
কেউ কি আছে তাদের পাশে!
ডাকছে তাদের,
আয় ফিরে আয় নিজের ঘরে।।

বাসতো যারা অনেক ভালো
কোথায় সবাই হারিয়ে গেলো।
অন্ধকারের জীর্ণতা আজ
কোথায় তাদের দাঁড় করালো।।

মৃত্যু মুখে হাঁটছে তারা
আশার ভেলায় ভাসছে যারা,
কেউ কি আছে তাদের পাশে!
ডাকছে তাদের,
আয় ফিরে আয় নিজের ঘরে।।

ব্যস্ত এই শহর টার আজ
রুপ টা কেমন অন্যরকম।
আশা ও বিলীন, মুখ ও মলীন
আসবে কি আর নতুন দিন?
হয়তো আবার সব ই পাবো
নতুন দিনের ভোরে।
দিনের শেষে রাতের পরে,
আয় ফিরে আয় নিজের ঘরে।।

তমশ্রী সরকার

Re-thinking Cinderella

Sudeshna Hazra

I pity Cinderella so many times for being reduced to a fairy's tale. It is most misleading a stance for women who think the world out of being docile and mute and have a Prince Charming save her from her despair. It's time women knew it's only their own hands that can be used for their life's repair. No fairy godmother turns up for an overnight makeover, no pumpkins turn to a horse carriage but the dust and dirt and all the failures around do bring courage to withstand all, fight back and make it to the destination. No matter if destiny stays or not.



Cinderella, I am sure, had other things to do beyond following orders of her step-mother, step-sisters, shed tears, pray and later look pretty and aspire for the love of the Royal Court. For one who makes it to the Court in spite of situations like her's, must have had a mind of her own at the least of all. She might have been known to have lived with her Prince - Happily Ever After but the most important thing is she lived and with all her conditions, against that.

Romancing Dhaba Food

Sudeshna Hazra

As halcyon skies and 'kaash' make their way to my charming Bengal, I reminisce about my trips on NH6 to pick up my dose of "Jora Ilish" (a pair of hilsa) for "Ashtami" - an age-old ceremony of my family. Kolaghat - the home for "Ilish" or hilsa fish is neatly tucked away behind a foodie's paradise, "Azad Hind Dhaba". Here earth meets heaven in the flames of its tandoors, over golden dollops of butter and magic spices always get the better of my taste buds. The staunch aroma of "kasoori methi" (fenugreek leaves), coupled with garlic over crispy golden chicken, seasoned spinach with cottage cheese (palak paneer) or just the bowl full of sunshine - 'dal' (yellow lentil soup) beckons to you from a distance, much like the rustic, mischievous bride all bedecked in her fineries with that extra dash of everything. A little elf cajoles every passerby to drop by inside, where you weave your way through a wave of bright red plastic chairs compelled to sample the little platters of wonder. As my hormones yield over the familiar aroma and peppy Bollywood numbers, I transform myself into that crude village girl dipped in the awkwardness of puberty and faith, in love, lust and longing, who once and forever had been taken in by the charm of this quaint place.



How the New Normal Changed Me

Swastik Basu

Last year when I was in 7th grade, the year was especially hard for me because I was a virtual student due to Covid. Well, there was a new way of teaching and learning for me to cope with instructions. I used to have video calls with my teachers to clear any doubts on any assignment (like not being able to understand the direction of it or any questions).

After my whole virtual year was over, it was summer, and I was hoping that I'd be able to go to school in person. I wanted to meet my classmates, make new friends, work hard, learn new things, and transform myself from how I was in 6th grade to being more mature with a growth mindset. I was a bit shy to mingle with all other kids, but my "helpful links" supported me and increased my confidence and that was how I was able to be more comfortable with my peers in 8th grade.

My special links were my friends Reagan, Gabriella, Cara and Aubrey who helped me to socialize around school. I gave a lot of effort, worked hard, and achieved good grades in all 6 terms. I was extremely happy to get an Honor Roll for all my efforts which made me very proud. I even got an achievement letter from my principal, Mr. Murray and my name was on the Cuthbertson Middle School hallway board. I am thankful that my parents decided to send me back for face-to-face school, which helped me flourish. I am hopeful my success in 8th grade gets repeated when I go to high school in Marvin Ridge High School and I am really looking forward to a bright future.

Collection of Poems

By : Shireen Collam

10 Was Afraid

Why was 10 afraid of 7?
And not 11
I believe it's because 7 8 9
And 10 was next in line

I Am Not Quiet

I live in a hut of trees
By the breezy sea
It has a solitude
Best not to be rude
But as lonely as it planned
With only crabs and shells on the sand
It is not quiet
Although it may seem silent

Under the waves
Is play and rage
Hiding from my gaze
Not to be seen above the haze
I like the sea
As it is alike to me
I am not quiet
Although I am silent

Wishes

Oh! What joy it brings!
 When we get the things
 That we've wanted for ages
 Flipping through the pages
 Of brand new magazines
 Spankin' new with a shiny sheen
 They glowed in our tiny brown hands
 Worn with work, from the outer lands

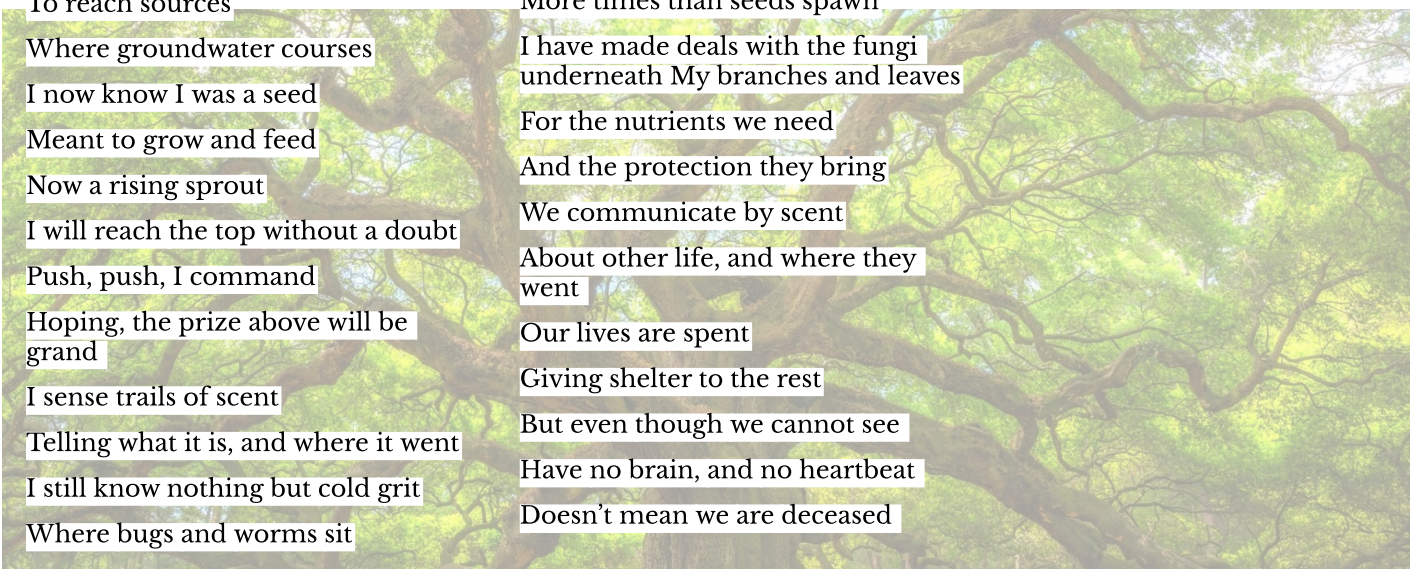
You see us as
 Dirty, in rags,
 But we are clean
 In our wishes and dreams
 We have never wished evil upon any soul
 No matter what thoughts they behold
 Never wished for any more
 Than what we hold
 In our tiny brown hands

Oak Tree

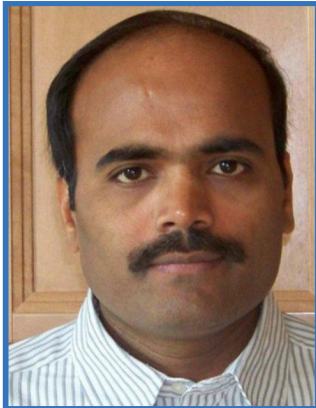
Not knowing
 Where I should be going
 My soft body trapped
 In some kind of hard sac?
 In a short time
 My tendrils start to climb
 What am I?
 In this life
 I keep reaching up, safe and sound
 Also down?
 My limbs called roots
 Push through
 Something rough
 But I am tough
 To reach sources
 Where groundwater courses
 I now know I was a seed
 Meant to grow and feed
 Now a rising sprout
 I will reach the top without a doubt
 Push, push, I command
 Hoping, the prize above will be grand
 I sense trails of scent
 Telling what it is, and where it went
 I still know nothing but cold grit
 Where bugs and worms sit

They tense up the dirt
 Waiting to eat developing seeds
 before birth
 I have learned my scent
 It says W'lue
 It means to be secret
 But not evil
 I finally reach
 My cells feel the change on my
 leaves
 I'm the smallest of the forest
 I'll have to work my hardest
 As I get bigger
 Time is quicker
 I have been crawled and urinated
 upon
 More times than seeds spawn
 I have made deals with the fungi
 underneath My branches and leaves
 For the nutrients we need
 And the protection they bring
 We communicate by scent
 About other life, and where they
 went
 Our lives are spent
 Giving shelter to the rest
 But even though we cannot see
 Have no brain, and no heartbeat
 Doesn't mean we are deceased

We are living beings
 The elder trees,
 they talk About all who walk
 Past, and through
 Our forest roots
 I am still young
 It is my first pollen run!
 I don't do the running
 I lure creatures, with my own
 cunning
 Yes, I still grow
 And I know
 I am an oak tree
 I am a living being



with
Best wishes



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Virtual AUM School Summer Camp

By: Adhrit Naskar

A virtual summer camp is not bad at all. You get to make new friends, learn new stuff, make food recipes, and even do origami! These are the things I learned from the past month:

- Yoga
- Food recipes
- Sanskrit
- Kindness
- The 4 Vedas
- Indian Philosophy
- Creative Writing

Yoga : Yoga helps to relax your body. It controls your mind and body together. In yoga I have learned how to stay calm, and many different asanas, including vrksasana, garudasana, adho mukha svanasana, marjaryasana, virabhadrasana, and many others. Every yoga asana has its own significance, and has its own purpose. The asanas we do are a little bit tricky at first, but after a few minutes, we are able to do it comfortably.

Food Recipes : In food recipes, we have made cucumber sandwich, instant poha, oats laddu, fruit kebabs, fresh honey lemonade, cucumber salad, chocolate mousse, and lastly, a vegetable sandwich. We also learn about the uses and benefits of different spices like green and black cardamom.

Sanskrit : Sanskrit is a classical language of South Asia. Nowadays, only 1% of Indians speak Sanskrit. Generally, Hindu priests use it during religious ceremonies. This summer camp gave me a great opportunity to learn this language. There are 46 letters in the language, without any upper or lowercase. We learnt many things in Sanskrit language, like the colors, numbers, different animals, and different words.

Kindness : After all of the classes, we learned about

kindness and peace demonstrated on Earth. We told our classmates about the acts of kindness we did when no one has asked you to do it. This allows others to trust you and make great friends. Next, after we told our stories, our teacher taught us about famous kings and merchants of ancient India, how they treated others, and the result of their actions.

Vedas : The Vedas are a large body of religious texts. Veda means knowledge. These are ancient Sanskrit literature. There are 4 types of Vedas named Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Artharvaveda.

Rigveda : Rigveda is the knowledge of praise. The purpose of these Veda is to praise Hindu deities.

Yajurveda : Yajur means worship, so Yajurveda is about knowledge of worship. It consists of rituals, mantras, and slokas which are involved in worship.

Samaveda : Samaveda is considered the most important Veda among the 4 Vedas. It helps to attain spiritual growth through melodies and chants.

Atharvaveda : Atharvaveda is set to represent a popular religion incorporating the daily rituals for initiation into learning how to perform upanayana, marriage, and funerals.

Indian philosophy : In Indian Philosophy class, we talked about ancient kings and queens of India. We made drawings of them, and we also made an origami sword. We have learnt many stories about the bravery of ancient kings and queens of India. Then we made a foil sword turban out of a scarf.

Creative Writing : In creative writing, we wrote personal stories with a setting, plot, moral, and everything a real story would have. In our stories we got a chance to express our thoughts about various topics. This is all about my

Swimming all summer

By Raina Saha.

I'm Raina Saha and I'm 10 years old. My favorite sport is swimming, and my favorite stroke is breaststroke. I'm glad that I am a part of my neighborhood swim team. It is a part of the Greater Charlotte Swim League. We compete in Division 2 which is the second highest division. This year It started in June and ended in the first week of July. It was an intense 5 weeks of swim meets and practices.

Every morning I had swim practice from 9:30-10:30 AM. I had MEETS every Mondays and Thursdays from 5:00 PM till late night. It was the most enjoyable evening ever. My friends Miraya, Kabir, Alison, Paxton, and my big brother Adi, were all in the meets. We would have concessions stands for the very hungry swimmers. My favorites were the cotton candy and Chick-fil-A. This year was particularly interesting with the regular thunderstorms, the meets got pushed back to late nights. One such evening when they finally started at 8 PM. It was PD vs Hunter Oaks. I took part in 5 events that night, 25-meter freestyle, backstroke, and breaststroke and two relays, a Breastroke one and a Freestlye one. I was placed first in all of them. I was the fastest in breaststroke. For the last event I had to swim at 12:00 AM

This year I felt proud when I was asked to swim a level up for the 11-12-year-old group for a relay. It wasn't a 25 meter but was a 50 meter this time, so I had to swim twice as much.

After the swim season was over the best swimmers were chosen for the ALL STAR TEAM meet from all the division 2 neighborhoods. I was happy my brother made the ALL STAR TEAM as well. There was a special practice for the ALL STAR swimmers every morning.

The swim season ended with a Team Banquet and Award ceremony. I was awarded the **MVP, Most Valuable Player for girl 9-10 years, scoring 54.5 points** for my team. My brother, my parents, Chandra Masi and Jeet uncle always encourage me to swim. It is a very good exercise. I am enrolled with a club for fall and spring season and hope to become a better swimmer.





MLS Next is a Youth Soccer league in the United States and Canada. It is managed, organized, and controlled by Major League Soccer. It was introduced in 2020 and is a successor to the US soccer Developmental Academy program. In short, MLS Next is the highest league for the youth soccer players in the United States.

I play for Queen City Munity (QCM) and QCM is one of the 3 clubs from North Carolina selected to participate in MLS-NEXT. This season we will be playing against teams such as Charlotte FC, Atlanta United and Nashville FC. I play as a Winger as well as a Wingback.

Keeping a spot on such a competitive team/club is not easy and a tremendous amount of fitness, dedication, and hours of training are needed to be ready. Fitness and training will be the key to the performance of every athlete on this team as it is a long Fall/Spring season in front of us.

Over the summer I have been working on a lot of things to be ready for the grueling season ahead. I have been playing some soccer and doing a lot of strength work, speed work and swimming. With my friends, we also participated in a local 7v7 tournament. I have been swimming all summer while representing my neighborhood swim team and made it to the **All-Star** team meet which is recognized by Greater Charlotte and the US Swimming association. My strength and agility classes at Architect Sports are multiple days a week to help me with body balance, speed, and flexibility. I go to the Stretch Lady for Muscle relaxation, stretching and therapy. Recently, I have also started core training with Brian Johnson.

I have been focusing on my diet as well. I love to eat but am being careful in what I choose; including a lot of proteins and avoiding sugar as much as possible. My mom is always monitoring what I eat.

With all this training and discipline, I believe this will not only prepare me for soccer but for the life ahead.

While I am excited for the club season to begin, I will miss out on my High school Varsity soccer this year.

By the time you read this I have probably already started my season.





HAPPY
Durga Puja

Best wishes from Sunny Singh and family.
May the power of Goddess Durga empowers you and your
family with health, wealth, happiness, and prosperity.



The poster features a central illustration of a yellow-skinned goddess with a large, ornate crown and jewelry. Above the goddess is the Triveni logo, which includes a shopping cart icon and the text "Triveni Grocery | Bakery | Food Court | Halal Meat". The goddess is surrounded by a decorative border of orange and yellow flowers. Below the goddess, the text "WISHES YOU A HAPPY DUSSEHRA" is written in green. At the bottom of the poster, there is a collection of various food items, including fresh produce like broccoli, pears, and tomatoes, as well as packaged goods like nuts, grains, and oils. The background of the central area has a subtle, repeating pattern of circular motifs.

Triveni
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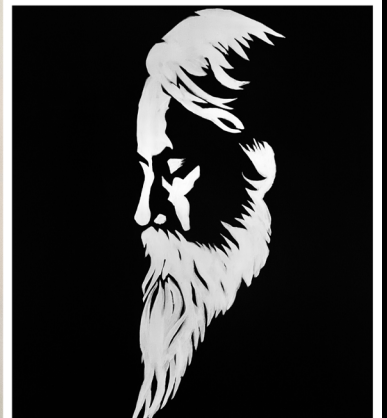
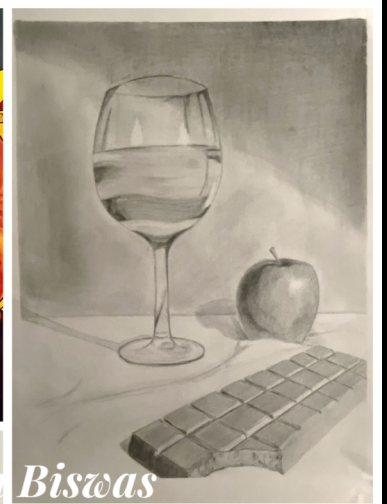


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*Srishti Durga
pujo 2022*



National Park Trip By : Aranya Chatterjee

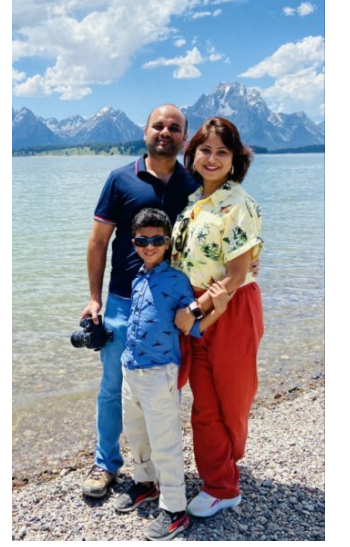
We went to three National Parks - Grand Teton, Yellowstone, and Glaciers during my summer vacation.

In Grand Teton, we had a stone skipping competition on Jackson Lake. We enjoyed boat rides on Jenny Lake and saw animals like elk, bison, bear, and a lot more.

In Yellowstone we also had stone skipping competition on McDonald Lake. We saw a lot of bison and bear here. We saw three different types of bear – black, brown, and grizzly. I liked grizzly bear the most. We saw a black bear with two babies eating food. We saw some nice and big waterfalls. I did a long trek to see the Lower Falls.

In Glacier Park, we visited Logan Pass. This is where we got a ton of snow. We had a snowball fight here. We also saw big horn sheep here while fighting with snow. We had some more boat riding, and animal sighting here.

I enjoyed the trip very much. It was a long trip. I was tired by the end. But I liked it.



অন্ধকার " ----- " শ্রীলেখা চ্যাটার্জী "

বাতাসের গন্ধ মেখে মধুকর ভূমি প্রেমের ইথারে
মাধুকরী কোরে ফের |
দেউলের প্রদীপ শিখা আর একবার প্রজ্জ্বলিত —
আর একবার উদ্বেলিত প্রাণ অনির্বণ !
সুপ্ত আগ্নেয়গিরি চেয়েছিল মুক্তি অনন্তঅন্তে !
অন্তরে সে নিঃশ্ব , খণ্ড তুষার কার্বনে অগ্নি পালিত !
আলস্যের মতো প্রেম হেঁটে যায়, শূন্যতায় ভর করে |
জল মরে খোয়াইয়ের চরে জেগে থাকে
শুধু বেদনার দাগ , রাত কালো অন্ধকার ;
শুধু বুক জ্বলে প্রদীপের নিঃশেষে ফুরিয়ে যাবার |
নিচে তার উন্মুক্ত কফিন —
পড়ে থাকে কফিনের একরাশ অন্ধকার |

বিদেহী সঙ্গ " — শ্রীলেখা চ্যাটার্জী)

রাত জাগা পাখি আর ভোরের কলতান
রূপকথা ধুয়ে আনে সোনালী উচ্ছ্বাস |
আলোর সোপান বেয়ে বৃত্তে নীয়মান
অবাক ছায়ায় ঘোর পুরানো নিঃশ্বাস |

বাতাসের স্তর ভেঙে অনঙ্গ মূর্তি
কামায় ভেজে , আর বুকের তরঙ্গ
স্মৃতির জাবর কাটে ; শ-বর্ষ পূর্তি
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স্বর্গ ছড়িয়ে আছে মর্ত্যভূমি জুড়ে
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Room 873

By: Kinshuk Agarwal

Summer of '22 for me will remain memorable for many reasons... mostly normal, but also some paranormal!

Vacations get better when you have fun places to visit, along with good company of

like-minded friends, who also share the same sense of adventure, the love for living on the edge and pushing the boundaries at times.

When we, a fun group of four families, touched down in Calgary, the intent primarily was to do a week-long hike in the Canadian Rockies and get some much needed primal therapy that would get us in touch with nature. Little did we anticipate running into experiences with the after-life, as an added unique adventure! And that happened in one of Canada's most haunted hotels -

The Fairmont Banff Springs!

Before I go into the details of our personal experience, it might be helpful to have a background of the legendary Fairmont at Banff that will surely add more context to our experience.

The 764-room luxury hotel – a lovely piece of Scottish Baronial architecture set in the Canadian Rocky Mountains in Banff, Alberta – has been around since 1888 and it isn't shy about celebrating its famous ghost residents! There's the ghost bride who legend says died a fiery death on a stairway, a ghost bellman named Sam known to deliver pillows to guests...and as a lady guest was to find out in a hair raising fashion, there's also a ghost baby!

The lady guest stayed alone in a separate room one night and felt strange vibes the entire night. Then, at 4am she was awakened by the sound of a crying baby in the hallway. When she put a pillow over her head, the sound immediately went away. Fairmont confirmed, it is known to have an actual crying ghost baby who was murdered along with her mother many years ago in the Room 873!

This background should sum up the intrigue of the Fairmont. Now back to our experience...

After a late brunch at the Waldhaus - Fairmont's own indulgent Bavarian restaurant and then watching some Open air Golf in the Rockies, we, the families, decided to take a tour of the hotel and check with some of the staff about the Hotel's legendary tales. After locating the elevator, we were on our way up to the 8th floor. Once on the floor, we started walking around looking for.....guess what?.....Room 873!!! Both my friends and I started looking for the room and I started a video recording to capture our pursuit of finding that elusive room!

"Here's 871, 872" my friends exclaimed !

"..here are 874 and 875", I confirmed.

And then there was that eternal pin-drop silence !

"Where is 873?" We all started asking each other in hushed tones...with a strong adrenaline rush now clearly taking over us! That moment a lady staff walked in startling us all! We posed the same intriguing question to her that was running through all our minds -

"Is there a Room 873 in this hotel?"

Sensing our curiosity, she stopped (as this was surely not the first time some visitor had posed that question). She said, "The wall that you see between 872 and 874....holds room 873, it has now been sealed forever. The two rooms have been merged - and room number 873 does not officially exist anymore." We stood there stunned, witnessing the legendary story of Room 873, now confirmed to be true!

When we asked the staff if she had experienced anything eerie here, she mentioned that one fine morning she saw the wallpaper of that wall had been ripped off by someone and then there is this occasional strange feeling in some parts of the hotel that is beyond explanation, she further went on to add!

And then came another hotel staff member, a guy this time...He confirmed (without wanting to be on camera) that one morning when he was cleaning Room 873, he actually saw the ghostly reflection of a lady in the mirror!

Needless to say we had more than our share of witnesses for the day and felt like a group of investigators who had successfully gathered the evidence that we had come to seek. It was getting late and we all decided to return to our hotel with a clear intent that our valuable recordings and experiences would now be shared with friends and family and possibly on social-media, with the rest of the world! After all, how often does one witness such paranormal situations in life?

Back in the hotel, we all gathered in a common room for dinner and the topic of discussion quickly steered to what we had experienced earlier that day... and many more eerie anecdotes were added from our own individual paranormal experiences as well.

Time flew...soon it was 11:30 PM, and it was time to get back to our own rooms! Our hotel was a couple of blocks down the street and we started walking back in the dark. Once we reached our hotel, our older daughter walked in through the automatic doors first. The doors had been functioning perfectly all through the day...except NOW, when the rest of us were trying to walk in. The door remained solid shut, and would not budge open, no matter how close we went towards it or even when we tried to open it. That was strange!! It was as if some unknown force was stopping us from getting back to our rooms. Then our daughter had to come back from inside and the door opened again, finally letting us in. It was indeed very weird!

Later in the night, I decided to go through my recorded video and share it with our group on Whatsapp. But as I was sorting through my data, I realized that my phone had become incredibly slow with tons of content that I had recorded throughout the day, and I clearly needed to clean up some of the existing files and cache, before my phone could work faster again

After sorting through the contents, I carefully selected a bunch of older files and videos that were clearly outdated and had been taking up space...and then I hit delete!! After that great satisfactory purge, I started sorting through my contents again, particularly looking for the hotel's recording that I now wanted to send over to my friends. And that is when the strangest thing happened! That video was nowhere to be found, it had disappeared! It was now totally untraceable!

Did it get deleted inadvertently?

Did I fat finger it mistakenly?

Did something else happen....???

I still have no answers!!

The Fairmont Banff Springs



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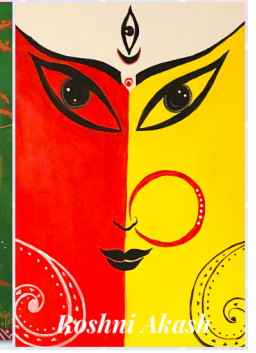
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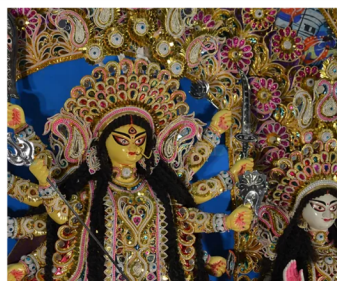
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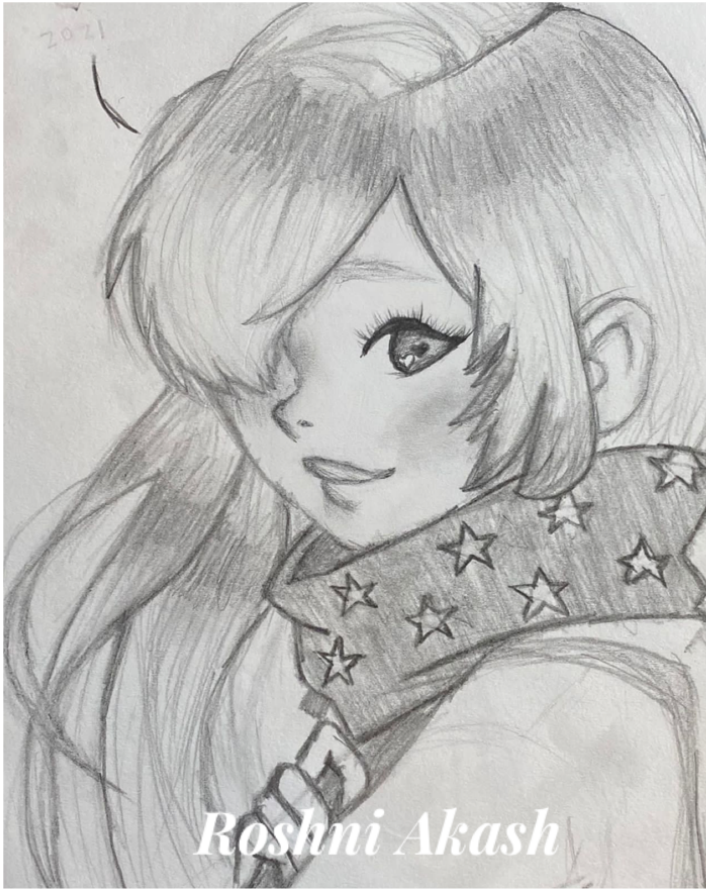


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