

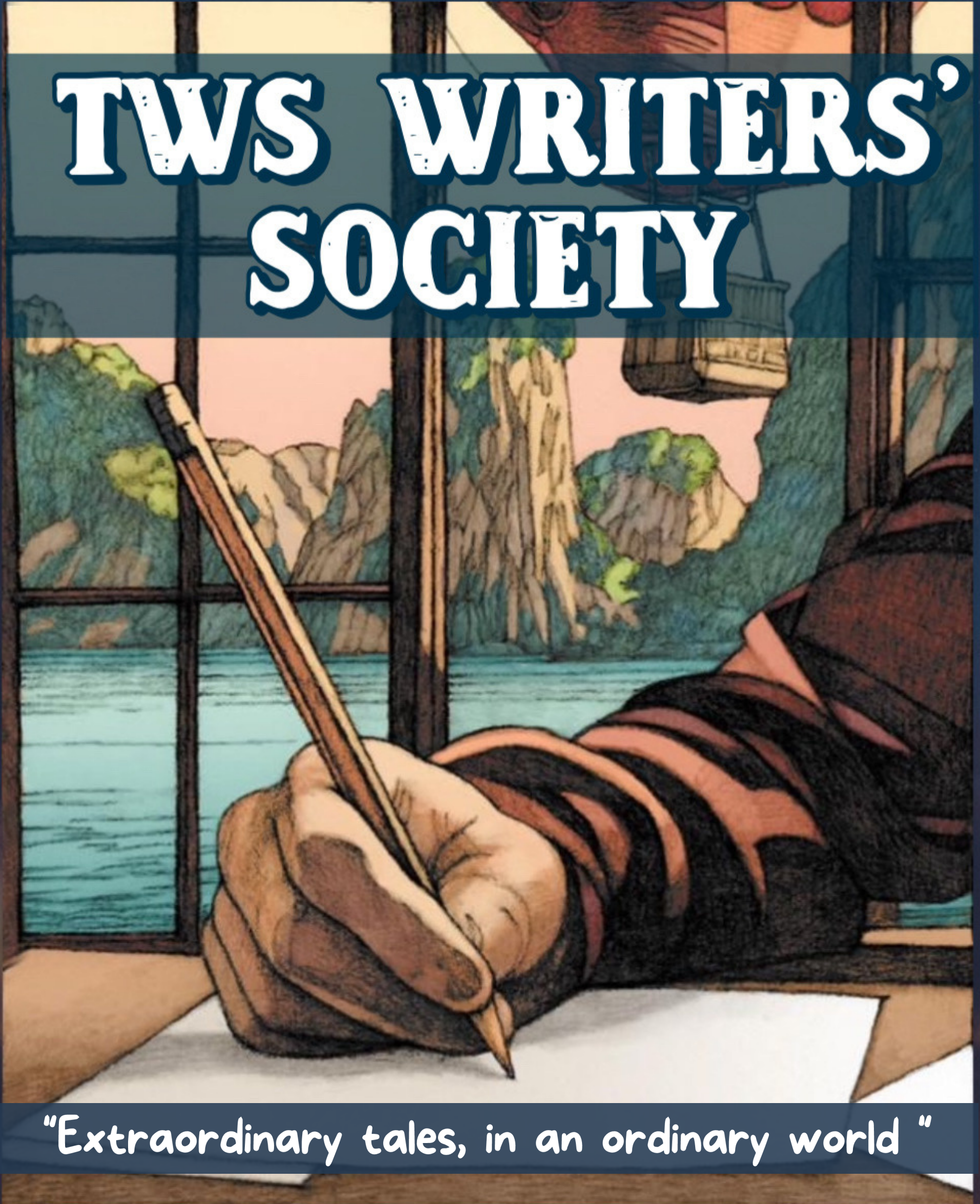


THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL



"If you want to change the world, pick up your pen and write"
-Martin Luther

TWS WRITERS' SOCIETY



"Extraordinary tales, in an ordinary world"

2021 FIRST EDITION



Welcome to TWS Writers' Society!

The "TWS Writers' Society" is a magazine founded at The Westminster School, Dubai. It is an initiative run by the students across the school which aims to help ignite the vision of many students who are passionate about writing and connect them with their skills, community as well as allow them to explore their passion for journalism and writing, by taking their experiences into account and by giving them opportunities to have insightful interviews which bring their visions to life. TWS Writers' Society is devoted to helping writers develop their craft and improve their skills as well as encourage students to get creative and it will present a mix of cultural, modern, traditional as well as classical pieces in each of its monthly issues.

Every issue is packed with often overlooked features such as book reviews, summaries as well as personal views by students, and many more; this boldly illustrated magazine glistens with insight and brings out the hidden talents of TWS. TWS Writers' Society also features tips and exercises on essay writing , short stories, poetry as well as articles, and inspiring prompts, and monthly writing competitions. This magazine will feature some of the best-written pieces every month and it will definitely stand by its motto "Extraordinary Tales in an Ordinary World"

—ZAHRA ALI JAFFER – 10G2—

مجلة "مجتمع الكاتب TWS" تأسست في مدرسة وستمنستر دبي. إنها مبادرة يديرها الطلاب في جميع أنحاء المدرسة وتهدف إلى المساعدة في تحفيز رؤية العديد من الطلاب المتحمسين للكتابة وربطهم بمهاراتهم ومجتمعهم وكذلك السماح لهم باستكشاف شغفهم بالصحافة والكتابة من خلال أخذ تجاربهم بعين الاعتبار ومن خلال منحهم الفرص لإجراء مقابلات ثاقبة تجعل رؤاهم تنبض بالحياة. يكرس "مجتمع لمساعدة الكاتب على تطوير حرفتهم وتحسين مهاراتهم بالإضافة إلى "TWS الكاتب تشجيع الطلاب على الإبداع وسيقدم مزيجاً من القطع الثقافية والحديثة والتقليدية وكذلك الكلاسيكية في كل إصدار شهري كل عدد مليء بالميزات التي غالباً ما يتم تجاهلها مثل مراجعات الكتب والملخصات بالإضافة إلى وجهات النظر الشخصية للطلاب وغير ذلك الكثير ؛ تتلأ هذه المجلة وتبرز المواهب الخفية لـ TWS. يقدم "مجتمع الكاتب TWS" أيضاً نصائح وتمارين حول كتابة المقالات، القصص القصيرة، الشعر والمطالبات الملهمة ومسابقات الكتابة الشهرية. ستعرض هذه المجلة بعضاً من أفضل الكتابات كل شهر ، وستتمسك بالتأكيد بشعارها "حكايات غير عادية في عالم عادي"

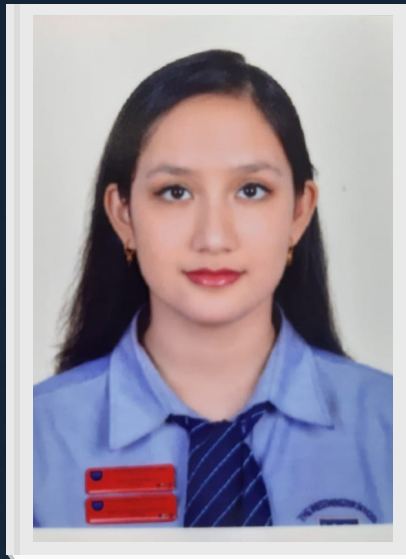
—FARAH ALRAWE – 10G2—



MEET THE *editorial team*



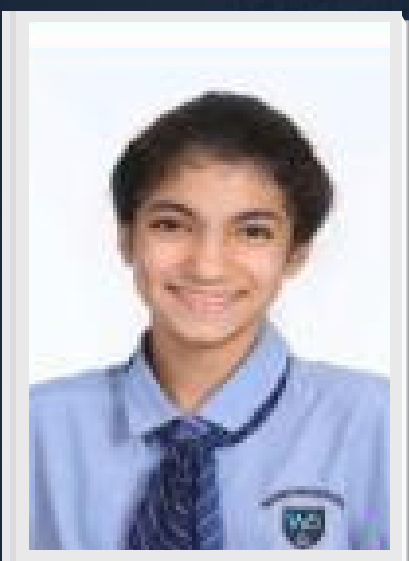
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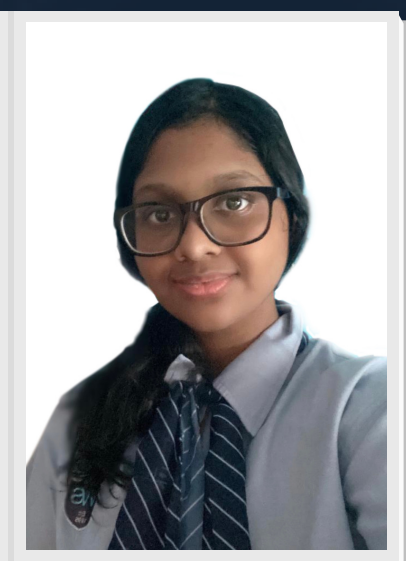
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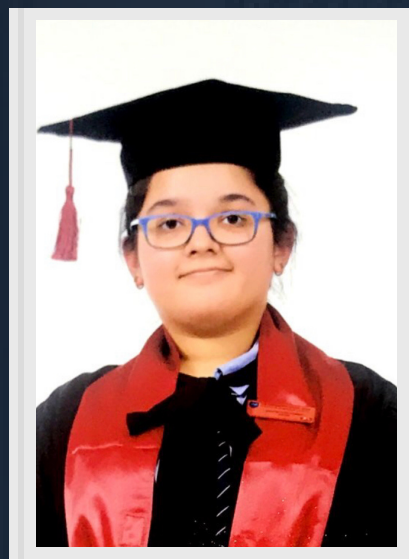
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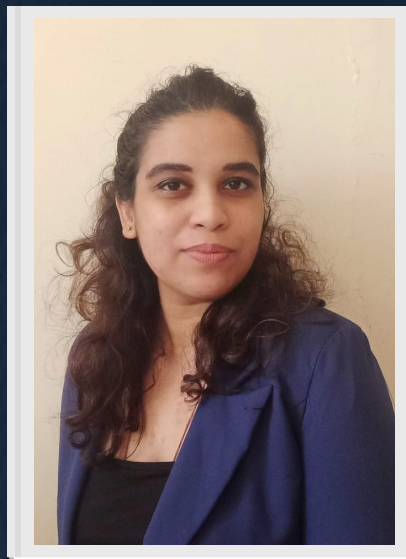
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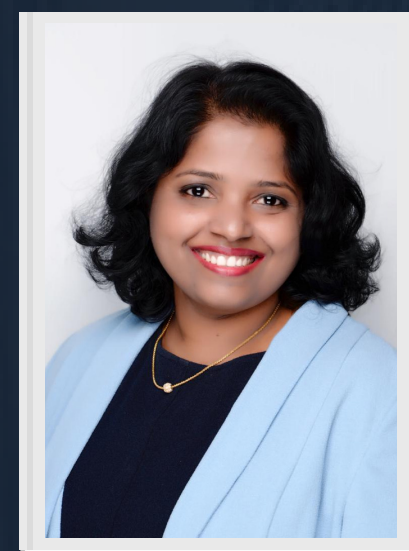
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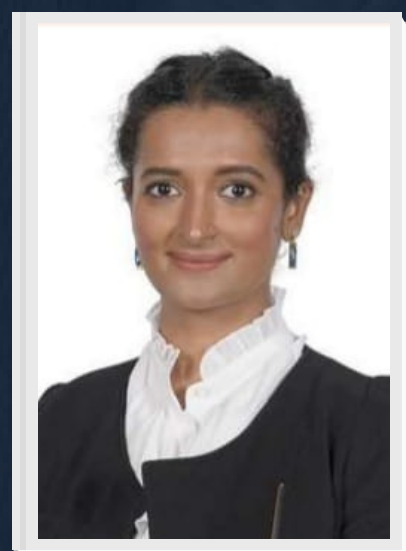
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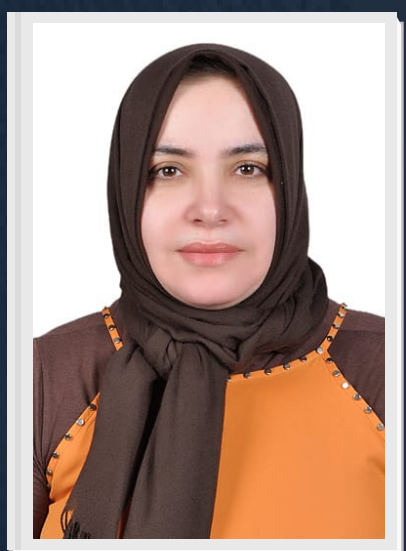
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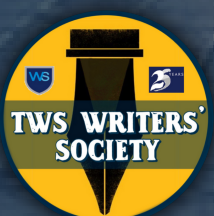
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TWS WRITERS' SOCIETY ISSUE
NO. 1





FEATURED ENTRIES OF THE MONTH

Everybody walks past a thousand story ideas every day. The good writers are the ones who see five or six of them. Most people don't see any.
~ Orson Scott

HER



**By: Khadija
Murtaza, 10G5**

She's that perfect drop of early morning dew on the edge of a
bright green leaf,
Shining under the sun, her skin glows and her beauty goes deep,
What she calls "imperfections" are actually the diverse handful of
gleaming stars strewn across her sky,
With her 8 different phases, she'll bleed you dry,
She'll give you that hope you'll see in an autumn leaf holding up on
a dried up tree,
In her presence, you'll feel nothing but endless glee,
It's no secret, she's the perfectionist of history,
Though how she hides that mess of a mind is an unsolved mystery,
With her, through thick and thin is an understatement,
She'll be that friend who'll walk with you when you get left behind
on the pavement,
Her hobbies come and go like the 4 seasons,
She'll talk your ear off and won't stop for any reason,
The bond I have with her is like the connection I feel with the world
when I watch the sunrise with my coffee in hand,
The power I have with being her best friend, is more than grand.

Short Story

CHERRY BLOSSOM



**By: Bhoomika
Shibu, 11G4**

His hand twitched. He didn't like this atmosphere. The scent of antiseptic and sweat filled his nostrils. He craned his neck to look at the cherry blossom tree located outside the wing. He silently thanked the gods that there was a window, it eased the suffocation of the room, even though it was by a longshot.

He felt his hand twitch again. He adored the way the pretty pink leaves fell to the ground. The way it seemed to envelop the ground in a bright pastel hue. He loved the bright blue sky, whenever it was looked at, he was reminded of the fact he could go anywhere but yet stay in the room daydreaming, going nowhere at the same time.

A tear slipped down his face. It was soaked up by the dull green shirt he wore. It was so mundane, it seemed to be camouflaging with the equally monotone background. The white tiled floors grounded him, always reminding him he could, indeed, go anywhere, but yet go nowhere.

He nestled into the pillow which had been provided to him, feeling his hand twitch on the light, thin blanket provided. He pulled it up, until it covered his whole body, stopping at the chin. Prayers were silently said, but not for the boy's sake, but for others he had the fortune of meeting, and for the ones he hadn't met. Wishes and dreams floated away, lulling the boy slowly into sleep.

His hand twitched no more.

FEATURED COLLECTION



*WINNING ENTRIES OF THE
"TWS CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL"*

Siblings – Always a Little Closer to the Heart

Never had there been a pair of siblings as Jennie and Sean who were always at loggerheads. Never did they seem to get along with each other. The only time they were at peace was when they were asleep.

You might think, were they twins? No! Sean was an 13 year old boy with dark hair while Jennie was a 10 year old bubbly girl with braces and blond hair. They even looked so different that no one would pin them down as siblings.

Sean was always an introvert, always had his head buried in books. So when Jennie came, his parents thought that he would be thrilled for the company. Boy! Were they so wrong! Sean and Jennie would constantly bicker and bicker and bicker... Well, you got the picture, right!

When Sean went off to college to Italy, his parents and friends were so emotional. Jennie did not even bother to come to the airport. He would call and pen emails regularly to his parents and friends but never, not once would he ask about Jennie. Suddenly in March 2020, the world went haywire. The wretched Corona had spread and created a pandemic situation due to which the world went into a lockdown completely. To make matters worse, Sean had come home just before the lockdown had come into effect in the UAE. Jennie felt so frustrated that she could scream.

But since Sean's return, she felt a change in him. He no longer picked fights with her. She was shocked. He was actually being civil to her. She even asked her mom if Sean was dying for which she got a good rap on her head.

One day, as she was watching TV, Sean came and sat next to her. When she could bear it no longer and she burst out, "Sean, what's wrong with you man! Are you dying or something? How come you are so nice to me?"

After a long silence, Sean finally spoke. In a low voice that Jennie could barely hear, he told of his close friend, Ron, whom he had met in college and who was his constant companion especially during the lonely times when he missed home and family. Ron was an only child. So when Sean would tell him about all the fights he used to have with Jennie, Ron actually enjoyed it and used to laugh so much that, that is when Sean realized that he was actually lucky to have a sibling.

One day in January, Ron felt unwell. Thinking it was just the flu, Ron took it lightly and did not even go to a doctor. Finally, when his condition worsened, Ron eventually went for a checkup where it was confirmed that he had contracted the Covid. He passed away a few days later. Sean started sobbing uncontrollably that Jennie was so shocked and she did not know what else to do but hug him. They stayed like that for a long time.

Finally, when he stopped crying, Sean spoke up and said, "I had to lose a good friend to know that life is short. Do you know what kept me going there? It was actually the memories of us fighting. Sometimes, I would just burst out laughing thinking about a fight we had! That's when I realized that these memories – of you and I, of my friend who I lost too soon, of our parents – all are a Little Closer to the Heart. That is the reason why I returned now, as I wanted to spend time with you, to get to know you better, to get to know my little sister...if you will let me that is." As Sean looked over at his sister, he saw that Jennie was in tears. All she said was, "Sean, we are siblings. We will always be a Little Closer to the Heart!"

Fearing The Unknown

"I don't know where to begin exactly."

My name is Melissa Higgins; I'm a journalist from London. I recently travelled to research on agriculture in konkan (A place in India). What I experienced there was kind of bizarre. "Let me tell you the back story!"

It was a dark, ghastly, and spine-chilling night, when I was travelling through the forest. I could see the trees which had thick roots, which dipped into the ground with twisted and curly branches that reached out. It almost looked like a blood sucking Demogorgon. My stay was arranged in a "Wada" (A traditional mansion found in Indian State of Maharashtra) which was owned by Shreekant Deshmukh. I finally arrived at my destination. The Wada was in a ramshackle condition and reflected the elegance of bygone era with the door covered in web spun by spiders. As I moved in, I began to feel sort of déjà vu and felt that had been here before or at least at a certain part. I could sense the story that echoed within the walls which kind of felt bothersome. Somewhere within mixed with pain, were images of soft flower. The windows there were covered with ashlike debris and all the furniture there was "as old as a ghost." There was a gigantic painting of a spooky man, hanged near the staircase. Then I met the caretaker of the house Annasaheb. Annasaheb was an old but helpful man who cooked me delicious supper. I was really exhausted so I ate dinner, and went to my bed chamber to rest. But first I had to take few selfies before I was off to bed. I was deep in sleep when, I heard an approaching sound. I felt like the sound was walking towards me, as soon as I opened my eyes the sound disappeared. Suddenly, there was smell of that was similar to rotting meat. The smell nearly made me faint and it was literally an experience of a scene from a horror movie. But I was skeptical about paranormal occurrences and did not believe in such phenomenon. I was really tired so I didn't care and went back to sleep. The next morning when I strolled down the stairs to get some breakfast, I saw that the all the clocks stopped at two. I went and asked the caretaker about it, but he replied that the clocks are archaic so they don't work quiet well. I then decided to explore the Wada. As I further strolled, I saw a basement which leads to an attic. Suddenly I heard my phone vibrating so I went to answer it. I started working on my research and completely forgot about the basement. It was almost midnight so I stopped working, and went to bed. I started to hear the sounds again, and as soon as I opened my eyes, I looked at the window and saw someone passing. I saw a lady dressed in white, had a creepy face and was covered with blood. I was petrified so I closed the window and went to sleep. I woke next morning and opened my phone to see the pictures I took the day I came. I saw a shadow of a lady. I had to do something. I went down to basement and saw that the door to the attic was covered with religious thread. I went to the caretaker and asked about it. He started to tell a story. Long time ago Shreekant Deshmukh brutally murdered his wife. Few days after the murder, he disappeared. No one ever knew what happened to him. People believe it was his wife who did it. After that the people decided to call a Tantric (ghost catcher) to seal the room with threads, so that the ghost could lose its power. I decided to leave the Wada so that the ghost could live peacefully.

I wasn't able to complete the research yet I found a story to write on....

Alone

Midst the menacing, hefty ebony that casted an enormous shadow before our eyes, blinding us with darkness and hair-erecting howls that within had a frail scream emitted off, a scream familiar yet embraced of fear and apprehensiveness.

"Guys, we need a shelter to spend the night in, or else it will be too late." shrieked Austin with his bushy, dark ash-blond eyebrows curled up as the pressure of being the leader continues to further exert on him day after day due to our plans opposing to abide by us.

As we swiftly packed our bags to carry on the search of a shelter, climbing up the lumpy hills carpeted by overgrown weeds, the howls increased in pitch like they stood right behind us.

"A-A-Austin, I think we are being...followed" silently uttered Sam whilst shrugging with his porcelain hands tucked in his ivory-black shorts, paired with a plain pecan shirt.

"Everyone stay close by and get a hold of a twig!" commanded Austin expressing bravery from the outside, though had been biting his crusty lips for the past 20 minutes.

I abruptly caught sight of neon red dots glamorously glowing amongst the ebony, floating in the air like handful of fireflies navigating their way through to flex their beauty. But little did we know that our own eyes can sometimes deceive us to danger.

"Run towards the north! Run!" shouted Bella, with tears dripping down her crimson cheeks layered with hours of sweat.

We kept gushing forward without having the slightest peak of what was behind us, or if there was. This was the moment when my precious, heart-shaped locket decided to take the wrong turn, thus dashed away from my neck.

"Oh no my locket!" I screamed out aloud, worried and afraid of losing it.

"Come back Jack! It's just a locket" ordered Austin.

However, to me it isn't just a locket, it is what has kept me going so far, what has always been there for me in my darkest times, what has reminded me of the affection once given by my late step-mother.

How could I have left it behind, when she hadn't left me. When my own biological mother had abandoned me in the streets to solely survive, she was the one who took my hand and ensued hope and confidence in me. The one who made me feel special from the rest, taught me to eliminate the abashment from me. How could I leave her one last memory behind?

Even though the rest of the members didn't hesitate to not lend a hand, it didn't stop me.

"Oh, thank god I found it! I am extremely sorry Mom; I promise to never let go of the locket." I whined.

Once again, I was left behind to exclusively find myself a secured spot, but it didn't bother me as much. Perhaps because I am used to being forsaken, though I felt a peculiar feel of protection circulating me, a feel that demolished my foreboding. I haven't perceived such feeling in a while; it was as though she once more grasped onto my hand, conveying the message of her presence to always be there.

She had always cleared out the deleterious times from my life and so she resumes to do so by creating a way leading to the rest of my team.

"There you are! I am glad you found your way here, if not then I would have spent my life in guilt. I can't believe you approached endangerment for a locket." said Bella in relief with her brunette, curly hair clipped up in a French twist.

Her absence has only made my heart grow fonder of her; hence I do and will invariably keep her given locket adjacent to my heart.

PARENT ENTRY

Treasured Forever

Jenny sipped her afternoon tea, with a large slice of chocolate cake.

"I bake fresh cakes every other day, as my Tony just loves them."

I looked around the living room where I was sitting. The walls were painted a dull brown colour and there was a grey carpet on the floor. On one side there was a fireplace and some shelves full of trophies and medals. There was a grey marble coffee table at the centre. A television was mounted on the wall.

"Your son loves sports, doesn't he? All walls are covered with his medals, trophies." I asked Jenny.

"Oh yes, he does. just look at that trophy." She pointed towards the shelf on the wall.

It was a huge trophy with his name engraved, which was obviously the pride of the family as it was right at the centre on the shelf.

"Would you believe that Tony was born premature? He was so tiny that he spent his first six months in an incubator! "

"Have some cake." She told me.

I just took a small piece of the cake too much chocolate won't treat me well later!

"Tony is fifteen and he loves sports, so that's why when I got a call from the school telling me that Tony had collapsed, I was worried sick and rushed to the school, but by the time I reached they had already taken him to the hospital."

Jenny was quiet for a few minutes. She seemed lost.

"I am sorry, you don't need to carry on." I reassured her.

"After all these years, talking about it still affects me. I don't mind sharing this as it's all over now. When I reached the hospital that day, I saw him lying on the hospital bed with all kind of tubes sticking out of his body, it broke my heart to see him in that state."

Jenny paused for a while and looked at the trophy.

"The doctor broke the awful news after a couple of days. Tony had Sarcoma. A type of tumour which had spread to his legs. And just like that, my world came crashing down on me. I was heartbroken. We started treatment right away. I couldn't see him in pain, I felt I failed as a mother as I couldn't take his pain away.

She wiped off a tear and said, "that's all in the past now, just a bad dream,"

I heard the front door open and a man entered.

"That must be Tony," Jenny said.

"Tony, come and meet this aunty, we've been talking about you. I'm going to get you some cake and hot chocolate".

She went away to the kitchen.

"You are Tony?" I was shocked.

"Sorry Dr Anne, Jenny is my wife and I had called you over to meet her. I need to explain. Tony was our son and he passed away five years back but Jenny refuses to accept his death. She holds him very close to her heart."

"Have you tried therapy?" I asked.

"Yes, but her condition has deteriorated, she sees Tony in every person now. I have a terminal tumour too, so I don't want Jenny to be a burden on anyone if anything happens to me. You run a great nursing home which I want her to live in and get used to while I'm still alive so there will be no problem later on. I have enough funds to pay for her upkeep for life.

Just then Jenny came in with a tray of hot chocolate and cake.

"I'll have more of that cake. Why don't you come with Tony to my nursing home and stay with us for some time? You can bake us more of this delicious cake. There are many boys of Tony's age, and he will love it there." I told Jenny.

"Sure, I would love that. "

—SHAINA ALI—

PARENT OF ZAHRA ALI (10G2) & AHMED ALI (11B2)

My tree house and a very confused me

A special feeling went through me, when my
 grandma hugged me
As I reached my cousin's, where lot of slippery fish
 had fins
In many big glass tanks, I gave some gifts and
 they said thanks

Then I got an idea as I went through the
 weeds
That gave me a glee on my face
Can you make me a tree house in
 the woods?

Next day, my cousins woke me up, early
 I must say
Let us make a tree house as I said Okay, Okay
They put together wooden planks
As I kept on saying thanks!

As birds chirped and whistled, the very little
 Tree house came up.
Sweat started pouring as the sun came up
Hen and rooster roamed around
As they always pecked round and round.

Setting Sun rays made our face pink and rose
As we lay hugged together inside our little
 tree house
Squirrels crawled around
Surprised to see a cute house around

My grandmother peeked inside!
Do you like here or Dubai? She asked.
My friends face and my school flashed in my
 memory cast.
As I looked at a cooing yellow bird who
 flew fast.

I smiled back without answering as birds flew in dozens
A confused me, lay there hugging my cousins!

The end

—JOHAN GEORGE—

Medic's Quandary

What's close to the heart for you?
But that's where perspective
comes through,
It could be a person, a place, or a song.
And the way I see it isn't
wrong.

An intelligent candidate, a medical
graduate,
A passionate physician, who
never abnegates.
I'm somebody without the fear of
blood and bones,
I wracked my brain and have taken
student loans.

I've studied hearts, and all of its
chambers,
I've written multiple essays
and papers,
I recited definitions and
medicine aloud,
And vowed to make my family
proud.

What is close to the heart?
My responsibility, and times I spend apart
From my family and my home,
For I don't know when I'll be called to
diagnose another syndrome.

So, you could say I have
healing powers,
But with them I get only a few
free hours,
As my heart is close to my home
and my sons,
But at work, what's close to the heart
is just the lungs.

—CHAITANYA JAIKISHAN, 8G5—

You were here...

You commuted long roads in a bus,
With a single pair of worn-out shoes.
Facing the daily struggles for us,
Waiting to come back home, staring at the sky's hues.

Never letting any of our desires stay unfulfilled,
From serving the best piece of meat to buying the latest
gaming console.

Broken confidence, but there you are, to rebuild...
And all it used to take was a deep conversation on a short
stroll.

Your phone had never gotten old
And the sleeves of your shirts used to never shrink.
Your wristwatch aged, yet, never stopped ticking.
How could I ever forget that precious smile of gold?
All you ever wished was our happiness in every blink,
Of course it was a happy kingdom- The princess, the
queen and the king.

I am wearing that pink satin ruffled dress you gave me;
mom said I look nice-
Wish you could see me in this, but you're laying six feet
under a bed of flowers.

Yearning to meet you again in paradise...
Tick tock, tick... and I count the hours.

—SANJIDA JAIMA, 10G4—

PARENT ENTRY

Child of Mine

Hey you,
with that sly smirk,
the confidence to which u simply exude,
the slight tremor on your lips,
when things don't go your way.

How does it feel
to bask in the adoration of those around you,
to feel both admiration and jealousy in a delicate swirl,
Do you feel the fears I do,
when your soul is left visible for all to see.

Is it hard to never show weakness,
for even a sliver,
invites thrums of judgement.

As the stars are ever watchful of the earth,
marching in waves thousands upon thousands.
These eyes too watch your every move,
but do you
ever look back?

—MARKOSE ISAAC—

مجموعة مميزة



الفائزين في مهرجان
"TWS للفنون الإبداعية"

انا مثلكم

في يوم من الأيام كانت هناك فتاة اسمها اميرة، كانت اميرة فتاة ذكية، جميلة و مجتهدة ولكن كانت مصابة بمرض اسمه التوحد، عندما دخلت اميرة الصف سألتها المعلمة ما اسمك فلم تجب اميرة عندما بدأت الشرح لاحظت ان اميرة لم تكن تركز بالدرس و لم تكن تجيبها و لم تجب مع أي احد و لم تتكلم مع أي شخص فعندما انتهى الدوام المدرسي،

احضرت المعلمة كتاب من مكتبة المدرسة عن الأطفال المتوحدون فقرأت ان الأطفال المتوحدين يجذب انتباههم الأشياء الملونة و لاحظت انها تجلب انتباهها و أيضا قرأت انهم لا ينظرون في العينين و يركزون في الأشياء الملونة لذلك احضرت المعلمة الأشياء الملونة التي تساعد في شرح الدروس ، ومع مرور الأيام أصبحت تنظر الى وجهها وتجاوب عليها و تتكلم معها و حاولت المعلمة ان تتعلم عن هذا المرض و كيفية التعامل مع الأطفال المصابين بهذا المرض و أصبحت اميرة تحب المعلمة كثيرا ، في يوم من الأيام دخلت اميرة الصف و اصبحوا الطالبات يلمسونها و يسخرون منها ويسببون لها التوتر والقلق وعندما دخلت المعلمة الفصل ورأت ما يحدث قالت للطالبات عليكم احترامها و انهم عليها ان لا يسببوا لها التوتر و القلق و ان يتكلموا معها بلطف و لا يلمسونها وان يساعدونها في التعلم و ان يشعروها انها ليست مريضة و انها فتاة طبيعية مثلهم اعتذروا الطالبات من اميرة و لم يسخروا منها ابدا، عندما كانت المعلمة تصحح دفتر اميرة لقد كانت اجاباتها كلها صحيحة عندما كان وقت الامتحان كانوا جميع الطالبات متوترات الا اميرة عندما انتهت و جمعت المعلمة الأوراق و صحتها كانت اميرة الفتاة الوحيدة التي حصلت على علامة تامة و في يوم غابت اميرة عن المدرسة و قلقت المعلمة عليها كثيرا سألت المعلمة الطالبات عن اميرة و لكن بلا جدوى اتصلت المعلمة باهلها و لكن لم يجيبوا بعد الدوام المدرسي ذهبت المعلمة بنفسها الى بيت اميرة و لكن لم يكن هناك احد علمت من سكان الحي ان اميره في المشفى

ذهبت الى المشفى و سألت المعلمة أهلها ما حدث فقالوا لها انها ذهبت الى السوق و اصطحبت اميرة معها و لكنها تأثرت بالضجيج و كثرة الناس ف أغمي عليها و أخذناها الى المشفى و قال لها الطبيب انها في حالة خطرة وقد تموت شجعت المعلمة اميرة و في اليوم التالي أتت اميرة الى المدرسة فسألت الطالبات "اميرة هل انت بخير" فأجابت "اميرة نعم" فتفاجئ الكلفرحوا كثيرا لانها اجابت على سؤالهم و عرفوا انها أنشئت علاقات جيدة بين الناس و انها أصبحت تحب اصدقائها و معلمتها و اصبحوا يلعبون معها و لا يأكلون الا اذا جلست اميرة معهم وفي يوم من الأيام ذهبوا اصدقائها لزيارتها و كانت اميرة سعيدة بزيارة اصدقائها لها وقدموا لها الهدايا و الحلويات و السكاكر أصبحت اميرة و اصدقائها سعيدين جدا و فرحين

لقد كتبت هذه القصة لنعرف كيف نعامل الأطفال المتوحدين و ماذا يحبون

— قصة الطالبة اسرار وسيم عيسى 4A —

— ASRAR WASSIM ISSA-4A —

لحظات التحدي

إنها أخطر لحظة في حياتي لحظة انتظاري لتسلم الميدالية الذهبية في بطولة العالم للمعاقين، كان قلبي ينبض بسرعة فائقة، وترتفع أنامل من شدة القلق لهذا طلبت مني مدربتي السيدة غادة "سباحة رشيقة القوم قوية البنية طيبة الخلق" أن أشغل ذهني بأي شيء حتى يقترب موعد تسليم جائزة المركز الأول، ويرتفع علم بلدي خفاقاً

وجت نفسي بال شعور أعود للماضي الجميل، وخاصة عندما كنت جالسة في ركن بعيد بالمدرسة أشاهد الأطفال يمرحون، ويلعبون، وأنا ال أقوى على الحركة مثلهم بسبب ساقاي المبتورة إثر حادث سيارة اغتلت طفولتي، وأنا في السادسة من عمري ال أزال أسمع ضحكات زميلتي هند "فتاه مغرورة قصير القامة حادة الطباع..."، وهي تتحدث عني بكل سخرية فكثيراً ما جرحت مشاعري، وأشعرتني بالنقص لكن صديقتي إنجي "رقيقة المشاعر هادئة المالمح جميلة الشكل" كانت دائماً تقف لها بالمرصاد، وتعيد لقلبي البسمة، والثقة بالنفس، ولن أنسى قولها: -فرح يا حبيبتي ال يوجد إنسان كامل، فكل منا جوانب نقص. -معك حق يا إنجي لكن لماذا يجرح بعضنا البعض دون مراعاة للمشاعر، و الحاسيس؟

إنها تصرفات خطأ من الذين يجدون اللذة الذائفة في تجريح الآخرين، وعليك أل تهتمي بتلك- الحماقات، وأن تضعي نصب عينك دائماً النجاح. -معك حق يا أعز ما أملك من أصدقاء لقد كانت إنجي دائماً تشيع البسمة في قلبي مثلها في ذلك مثل أمي السيدة سامية، صاحبة القلب الكبير، و المشاعر الرقيقة، ووالدي السيد يوسف ابراهيم الطيب المشهور، وصاحب العقل الكبير، والتواضع المعهود . الكل يقف جميعاً لمساعدتي خاصة أمي كلنت تكلفني ببعض أعمال المنزل السهلة لتقتل بداخلي إحساس العجز، طلبت منها يوماً الذهاب مع صديقتي إنجي لقضاء بعض الوقت في مزرعتهم بالريف المصري، وكان ذلك في أواخر الربيع، وبالفعل وافقت لتفرد شارع السعادة عطرها على قلبي، وكأني أرى الزهور تتمايل ابتهاجاً بوصولنا

أخذت اتجول معها رغم حركتي البطيئة لمشاهدة المناظر الخالصة، ومعنا أخوها الأصغر هشام "طفل كثير الحركة، والنشاط ضئيل الجسم"، السباحة، ولسوء حظه أنه ال يجيد السباحة، فأسرعت نحوه رغم الصعوبات التي أعاني منها، والقيت نفسي خلفه فكنت كطوق النجاة له، وبفضل هلا استطعت انقاذه، لكن صوت استغاثته جعلت إنجي تسرع نحونا، و القلق و الخوف يعتري وجهها، فأسرعت أطمئنهاز -ال تقلقي يا إنجي فهشام بخير! الحمد هلا لكن ماذا حدث؟-

لقد تعثرت قدماه وهو يجري فسقط لكن الحمد هلا استطعت انقاذه. -اشكرك يا حبيبتي، وماذا عنك؟! هل أصابك مكروه؟! -ألا شيء الحمد هلا، وارجوك أل تعاقبيه، و أل تخبري والديك. أعدك-

مضى الوقت سريعاً، وعدنا الى القاهرة، ولن أنسى ذلك الموقف الذي اشعل بداخلي الثقة بالنفس، و الأصرار على التحدي، و خوض بطولات النادي في السباحة، ولحسن حظي أن مدربتي السيدة غادة كانت تشعل بداخلي القوة، و الحماس على التحدي قائلة:

انت يا فرح فتاه رقيقة جميلة المشاعر طيبة القلب قوية الإرادة. -اشكرك على ذلك. -تعلمين يا- فرح أن ثقتي فيك كبيرة جداً، وعليك أن تعدي نفسك للبطولة بكل قوة. -بفضل توجيهاتك إن شاء هلا سيتحقق النجاح المطلوب

كانت كلماتها تحفذي، وتشعل بداخلي الحماس، وأكثر من ذلك منظر هشام، و هو يستغيث بي، وإسراعي إنفذه رغم ما أعاني منهز فبدأت مرحلة الإعداد، و التدريبات، و كلى تحدي للظروف الصعبة، ومرت الأيام، وجاء موعد البطولة كم كنت خائفة ، وما إن انطلقت صفارة البداية إل، و أنا معها أنطلق، وأمامي خط النهاية، وصورة هشام التي لم تفارقني، وبتوفيق هلا استطعت تحقيق الفوز بالمركز الأول

ايقظني من تلك الذكريات صوت مدربتي تطلب مني الاستعداد لتسلم الجائزة عندها انهمرت عيناى في البكاء، وأنا اسمع النشيد الوطني لبلدي ويرتفع علمنا خفاقاً، و الجميع خلفي كله فرحة، وسعادة، فما أجمل النجاح، وما أجمل التحدي فهو صالح المواجهة الحقيقي

—فرح وليد أبل سلام—

—FARAH WALID ABDEL SALAM-12G—

مدرستي

مَدْرَسَتِي أَمِنْ وَأَمَّانِ
مَدْرَسَتِي أَقْصَدَهَا وَحْدِي
عُلُومِي أَدْرَسُهَا فِيهَا
مَدْرَسَتِي أُمُّ حَانِيَّةُ
يَتَجَمَّعُ فِيهَا أَصْحَابِي
وَكُنُوزَ الْعِلْمِ هُنَا فِيهَا
مَدْرَسَتِي عِلْمَ إِيْمَانِ
صُبْحًا وَبِكُلِّ إِطْمِئْنَانِ
وَسَاجِدُ هُنَاكَ تَرْفِيهَا
فَبِرَبِّي كَيْفَ أَوْفِيهَا
فِيهَا أَصْحَابِي وَأَخْبَائِي
أَلْقَاهَا دَوْمًا بِكِتَابِي

— بقلم : إسلام أشرف —

— ISLAM RASHAD ABDEL FATAH, 9B6 —

بغداد

وانسي العتَابَ فقد نَسِيتُ عتابي
شَمسانِ نائِمَتانِ في أَهدابي
وورودُ مائِدَتِي وكأُسُ شرابي
أخفي جِراحاتي وراءَ ثيابي
في البَحْثِ عن حَبٍّ وعن أَحابِ

مُدِّي بساطيَ واملأي أَكوابي
عيناكِ، يا بغدادُ ، منذُ طفولتي
لا تُنكري وجهي ، فأنتَ حَبِيبَتِي
بغدادُ.. جئتُكَ كالسَّفينةِ مُتَعَباً
أنا ذلِكَ البَحَّارُ يُنْفِقُ عمرَهُ

وعلى ضفائرِ زينبِ وربابِ
والفجرُ عرشُ مآذِنِ وقِبابِ
ترتاحُ بينَ النخلِ والأَعنابِ
وأشمُ في هذا التُّرابِ ترابي
بيضاءُ ، فيها كبرياءُ سَحابي
ذاتُ النجومِ السَّكاناتِ هِصابي

بغدادُ .. طرْتُ على حَريِرِ عِباءَةٍ
وهبطْتُ كالعصفورِ يَقْصِدُ عَشَّةً
حتَّى رأيتُكَ قطعةً مِن جَوْهَرِ
حيثُ التفتُ أرى ملامحَ موطني
لم أَغترِبُ أبداً ... فكلُّ سَحابةٍ
إنَّ النُّجومَ السَّكاناتِ هِصابُكم

—محمد أبي باكر—

—MOHAMED ABI BAKER, 12E—



POETRIES

Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity.

~William Wordsworth

SHADOW

Being in the shadow,
where everyone hates to be,
I find it comfortable,
Since I have been living in it all my life,
It's grey and lonely,
But to me its cozy,
It's gloomy and rainy, sometimes it feels homey,
I am used to living in the darkness of my shadow; my feelings grew
to be less shallow,
I have now realized that being in the shadow is not where I want to
be;
nor where I belong, but I cannot change that,
because sadly, the shadow always follows me.

—SHENALI ANDRIANA, 9G1—

GOLDEN TIMES

Everyone will grow old someday,
Look back at life and say,
"What a journey I've had, times of pure happiness, and times when I was sad,
was it all really that long ago?
I thought people said time had begun to slow,
yet here I am, wrinkly and old,
with only glimpses and memories worth gold."

—AMNA BINTE-E-KASHIF, 10G1—

UNSAID WORDS FOR A LONG GONE PAST

You left me when I needed you the most ,
You left me when you said you'll always be by my side,
You made all these promises you never stood by,
You never made me realize you never were what you showed,
I just stood there by myself realizing everything was a lie,
It was hard to know that I only existed when you needed something,
It hurts when someone asks me if I know you , a million memories flash through my mind,
I just smile and say I used to,
Thought we were going to stay together forever but who knew endings aren't always
meant to be happy.

—SYEDA SAAMIYE, 11G2—

STARS ALONG THE NIGHT SKY

I see the stars along the night sky
The light reflects in the eye
I get a glimpse of the moon
In the heaven's high bower

With quite delight
Sits and smiles in the night
For blissful dreams may then arise
What may not bless my waking eyes

As all fades into night
A hollow of absence of light
Only twinkling lights or stars
Sparkling in amid

All the stars which are bright
Will make you forget all your worries and fright
As the night gets more deep
Leave aside everything and have a sound sleep

—AHMED ALI JAFFER, 11B2—

MY HOMETOWN

My hometown
is a black and white picture,
in my brain,
fading away,
silhouettes in a broken frame.

My hometown
is the lover I betrayed,
left behind and forgot for days,
I remember him in the night though,
It rushes like the water of your rain.

Memories.

My hometown
is a tear trail down my cheeks,
Now a dried up river,
where I used to play,
on a summer's day.

I miss you.

I stand upon your grave and cry,
I've left you for a city of lights and lies,
where I could no longer see the stars,
the ones that mattered,
in your beautiful night sky.

hold the dust of my hometown and sigh,
If I stayed would you have too?
Or would I have been long gone with
you?

Do your ashes still know my name?
I open my mouth to scream,
but can't make a sound

If I stayed would you've stayed the
same?
I am sinking, but unable to drown.

—NOUR SALAMA, 11G2—

SHORT STORIES

*My short stories are like soft shadows I have set out in the world, faint footprints I have left. I remember exactly where I set down each and every one of them, and how I felt when I did.
Short stories are like guideposts to my heart...*

~Haruki Murakami



A MOMENT TOO LATE

At 8.05 p.m. on Friday 13th November I was waiting alone for an underground train to Plaza Italia on the platform at Cathedral station, on my way home from evening classes at Premium Language School. The platform was full of people and there was a lot of noise, but I could hear the echoed thunder in the distance as lightning flashed.

People were going about their business as usual, but something struck me, I had forgotten my lecture notes in class, since my school wasn't very far I decided to go back and get it. On my way back, I heard a mellow tune of a violin playing from behind me, I turned around and I was appalled to see that no one was there. I continued to walk and just as I took a few steps ahead, the sound of the lilting music started to become monotonous and brassy, I turned back the second time, but I was taken by surprise as there was no one there, this time I got terrified and tried to run away as fast as I could, just then I saw two men standing in the distance, one of them had a bandana around his face and a violin in his right hand, he was so tall that he was towering over me, casting a shadow.

The other man, had a knife clenched in his fist, just as I let my gaze down, I noticed the knife was covered in blood, I looked up at the two men, making eye contact, and started to take a step back, I quickly turned back trying to run across the platform.

The two men quickly ran behind me, but fortunately, the train doors had already opened, so I quickly jumped in, one of the men tried to take a step in, but I was able to kick him out, he fell back to the platform, and in about a few seconds the train had started moving, so luckily I was unharmed.

As the electronic doors of the train closed and the wheels of the train started moving, I became a little relieved, I was alone on the train and I was able to see out of the glass pane windows. The mist in the windows made it difficult to see, but after a few platforms had crossed, I saw a vague figure of a girl fallen on the ground with a red cross on her neck, it appeared as if someone had brutally slit her neck, I looked up and saw the two men surrounding the girl, with one of the men having a knife to the girl's body.

After reaching a safer station, I boarded off the train and quickly ran to the police station. During my journey on the train, I was weeping and I felt helpless, when the train quickly passed by the horrendous sight I was thinking to myself, "I was about to be in that girl's position, I WAS ABOUT TO BE MURDERED !!!"



WRETCHEDNESS CHOSE HER

On 9th January 2019 a terrible incident occurred at one of Scotland's most famous rivers, River Tay, which was frozen at that time of year.

The day started cold, breezy and refreshing. Alice went ice-skating all on her own as she happened to be feeling a bit blue lately. The scene of calm spoke for itself until there was a crack on the icy floor and an oversized gecko-like monster presented itself to a terrorised audience. She heard someone with a screechy voice screaming, "I say, RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!".

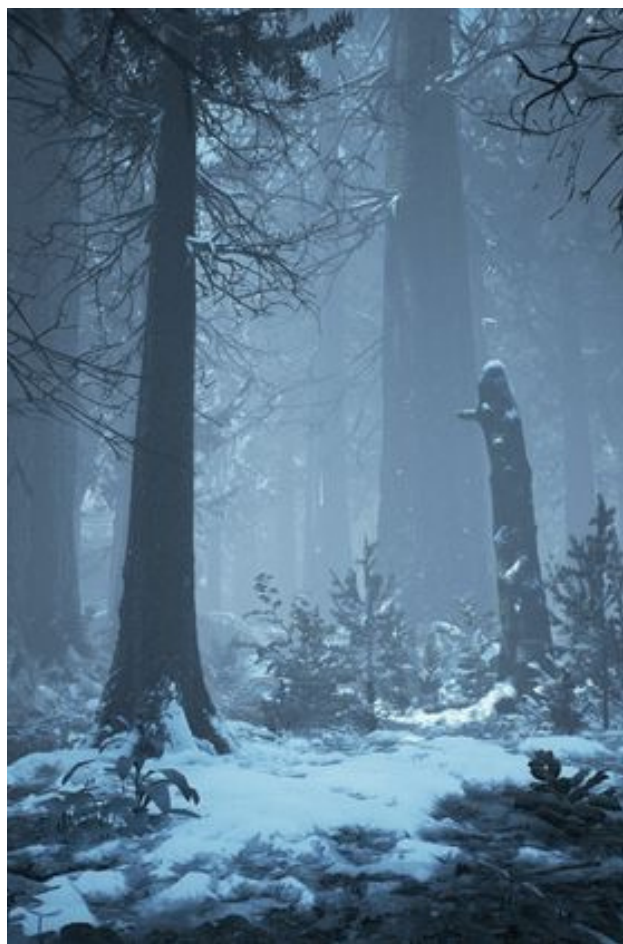
Everyone started to panic and were scattering around in different directions with only the thought of getting away from the monster in mind. Some children between the ages of 9-12 were sinking into the sub-zero water, whilst begging for their lives. She ran towards them with hopes of saving them but by the time she reached there, they were sadly no more.

The colossus never left the River for some reason. Young Alice tried running straight at it to stop it but with a swish of its spiky tail, she was flung across the ice that could not bear the pressure of her falling on it. She kept yelling non-stop for help but no one came to her rescue; even though she used the magic word.

As fear-stricken people ran past Alice, her shivering voice slowly drifted away through the thin airs of the early winter that held the day of her demise.

What had she done that she had to face all this? Was it because her attempt to save those innocent drowning kids was a failure? Or was it something else she did that displeased Mother nature?

If that demon could exist, so could Alice's lonely soul that wonders somewhere with the gelid water along her death scape. No wonder she felt so blue...





ESSAYS

“It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Changing your life through reading!

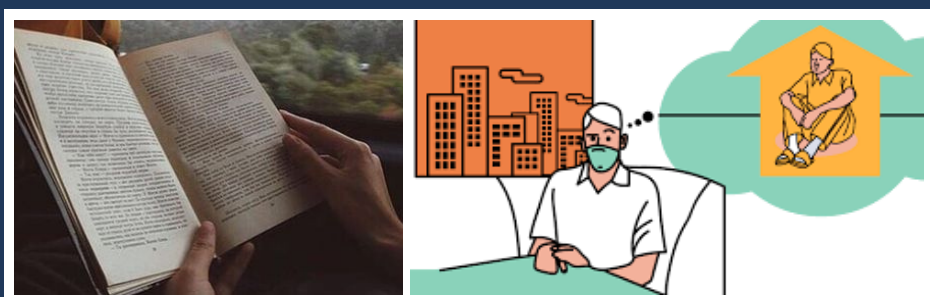
Written by Farah Rakan Alrawe, 10G2

"I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book" ~J.K. Rowling. When was the last time you ever read a book? Did you enjoy it?

To begin with, reading is necessary for your mind the same way exercise is vital for your body. Developing your reading and therefore making it a habit will certainly furnish your mind by reducing stress levels as well as increasing the ability to empathize with other people. You will have an increased rate of vocabulary storage which can therefore improve your communication skills even further. Your brain will thank you later as reading regularly averts cognitive decline which develops as you age.

Moreover, many of us think we are bad at reading or that reading is not our thing, but the reality is that we often choose the wrong books and fall into the trap of being a 'Bad reader' which is completely inaccurate.

When you finally have found your best book type such as non-fiction, you will realize that your ability to read is the best thing that has ever happened to you. You will finally feel more productive and notice that you procrastinate less often. That is exactly the magic of reading!



Life After Covid

Written by Saleha Anwar, 10G4

Over the past year, we saw a pandemic engulf the entire globe. Inevitably, lockdowns ensued, masks were made mandatory and we all learnt to adapt to the "new normal". Moving on from this unprecedented crisis, how have our lives changed with this virus?

This pandemic has had an obvious impact on the economy worldwide. It led to the largest global recession in history and the worst economic crisis since the great depression. Regardless, Covid has shifted our perspective and now earning is increasingly transforming into e-commerce, which would lead to much higher efficiency.

Many employees liberated from long commutes and travel, or students that are learning from home, have acquired new skills during the lockdown and worked towards their personal development goals. People utilized their free time to adapt to better habits such as budgeting or staying active. Due to this newfound balance, it is possible that some of the population will gladly, and efficiently, continue to work from the comfort of their homes.

This crisis was certainly not unexpected, but it was unprepared for. The pandemic has taught us the value of preparedness and stockpiling PPE in case of any emergency, and hopefully, hospitals will be better equipped for outbreaks in the future. In conclusion, humans are very adaptable to change. We have learnt to leave behind toxicity and make the best of these troubling times. Moving forwards, the effects of the pandemic are still a mystery, but will be certainly long-lasting, not necessarily negative.

VIEWS ON ONGOING ISSUES

Perspective gives us the ability to accurately contrast the large with the small, and the important with the less important. Without it we are lost in a world where all ideas, news, and information look the same. We cannot differentiate, we cannot prioritize, and we cannot make good choices.

— John Sununu



TECH SAVES EDUCATION THROUGH E-LEARNING

Written by Zahra Ali Jaffer 10G2

"The Digital Classrooms" which have been implemented all around the globe during this pandemic have allowed students to continue their education. This global pandemic (Covid-19) has forced millions of citizens and residents to work and study from home, forcing them to adapt to a new lifestyle and co-ordinate their lives remotely.

As technology is progressing, we are able to access everything at the tip of our fingers, and now during these difficult times whilst most of the population is in lockdown, we are able to acquire an education very easily. Schools all around the world have already started their virtual lessons.

During a time like this, the quality of attention bestowed upon students is fundamental. We must keep in mind that not every student learns and adapts to virtual teaching in the same way. Some are more vulnerable than others. It might be more difficult for some students to adapt to this change, so most teachers are trying to provide as many resources as possible to make it easier for students to adapt to e-learning.

On the bright side, students around the world who are deeply affected by the current situation, are still able to access education, and e-learning has also made it possible for students in areas with weak infrastructure, where they are unable to develop schools, to get an education.

Healthy for Kids!

Written by Adeena Rehman from 10G1

Something utterly unhealthy that is disguised as delicious does not seem as though it were such a delight, now does it? Children are our future and they do not deserve junk to eat. Then why is it that people encourage them to eat this stuff? It is probably because of the money; is that more valuable than our future? False advertising should be banned, and children should get healthy diets.

All parents should take a stand and manage their children's diet, as most do. But the youngsters are unwilling to let go of it even though it's bad for them. Some say that the companies who advertise and depict their false products are to blame. Maintaining that opinion others add on that they should not be given permission to advertise like this. It is up to the elders to steer the minds of the youngsters, into the right direction because until they do not accept healthy food, they will not make a positive difference to their diet.

Leisure Activities!

Creative Writing Prompts

The Variants of Vampires.

Think of an alternative vampire that survives on something other than blood. Write a story or scene based on this character.

Tornado Season.

A tornado is forming and your character is in the absolute worst place they can be at the moment. Where are they? How do they handle the situation?

What In The World?

Your character's day has been every sort of strange that you can imagine. Write about this day from their perspective—in the voice of a children's book.

No One Can See Me.

Re-write a scene or story from the point of view of someone or something that none of the characters knew was watching. It could be a ghost, animal, the furniture that come to life, etc.



Campfire

N H T S E R O F P L I X C J U Y A D
C K Q H Z X S V N O B F S E K O M S
S Y L E N G A J S U M M E R X F W H
T G B V O T K C G D R Q A Z I O P C
A X N D J E H S Y F N U B G L A T M
R W T I U Q P G M C Z S O L B S H L
S O F X K R N O I T A C A V E N U C
H O S E A O L B S N R M J W D A Q Z
V D G Y T P O X U M H U P S T C X I
T A N J R G W C Q S O Z L F M K B J
I P O T M A B H R V P R D X I S Y T
B Z L C V S T A F O K G E N Q R S W
E M A L F E M I T X O Y V S U N E P
J U G P Q H R W U B R D K H Z L I K
X E N S K C I T S G N I T S A O R F
L V I R D T Z A Q P J H M U W G O Y
F M S B L A N K E T X W L C O J T N
D J Z W G M Y P H E R U T A N V S G

blanket	guitar	night	snacks
bug spray	hot dogs	outdoor cooking	stars
campfire	log	roasting sticks	stories
chairs	marshmallows	s'mores	summer
flame	matches	sing alongs	vacation
forest	nature	smoke	wood



ACROSS

1 Substance in tonic water (7)
5 Methodical, ceremonious (6)
9 Strong in quality (7)
10 1940s trio of singing sisters (7)
11 Shaft of light (3)
12 Style of poem (5)
13 North Atlantic country (7)
14 Beard of barley (3)
15 Air passage near the septum (7)
17 Meaning, nub (4)
21 Albert _____, London building (4)
24 Costly ornamental buildings (7)
27 Time past (3)
28 Fish with both eyes on the same side of its head (7)
29 West Indian republic, capital Port-au-Prince (5)
30 2012 Mark Wahlberg comedy film (3)
31 Red wine produced in Tuscany (7)
32 Establish (7)
33 Deduction from a bill (6)
34 Harlech's Welsh county (7)

DOWN

1 Person who helps the enemy (8)
2 Premium paid on borrowed money (8)
3 Greek architectural style (5)
4 Immortal (7)
5 Stripping the skin from (7)
6 Set right (7)
7 Number of years between people (3,3)
8 Words spoken by an actor directly to the audience (5)
16 Under the weather (3)
18 Bride's pledge (1,2)
19 Be a powerful or conclusive factor (against) (8)
20 Aided (8)
22 Country on the Balkan peninsula (7)
23 Criss-cross pattern (7)
24 Pleating, creasing (7)
25 One of the Marx Brothers (5)
26 Gate for regulating water flow (6)
29 Glad (5)

ACROSS: 1 Quinine 5 Formal 9 Intense
10 Andrews 11 Ray 12 Lyric 13 Iceland 14 Awn
15 Nostril 17 Gist 21 Hall 24 Folies 27 Ago
28 Hallbut 29 Hall 30 Ted 31 Chianti 32 Implant
33 Rebate 34 Gwynedd

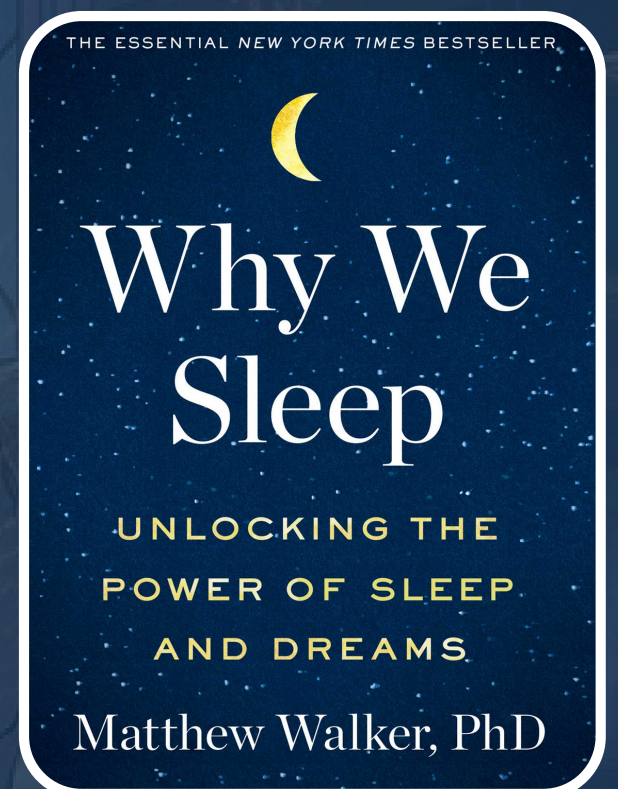
DOWN: 1 Quilting 2 Interest 3 Ironic
4 Eternal 5 Flaying 6 Redress 7 Age gap
8 Aside 16 Ill 18 I do 19 Millitate 20 Assisted
22 Albania 23 Lattice 24 Folding 25 Chico
26 Sauce 29 Happy

Book Recommendations!

Why we sleep?

By: Matthew Walker

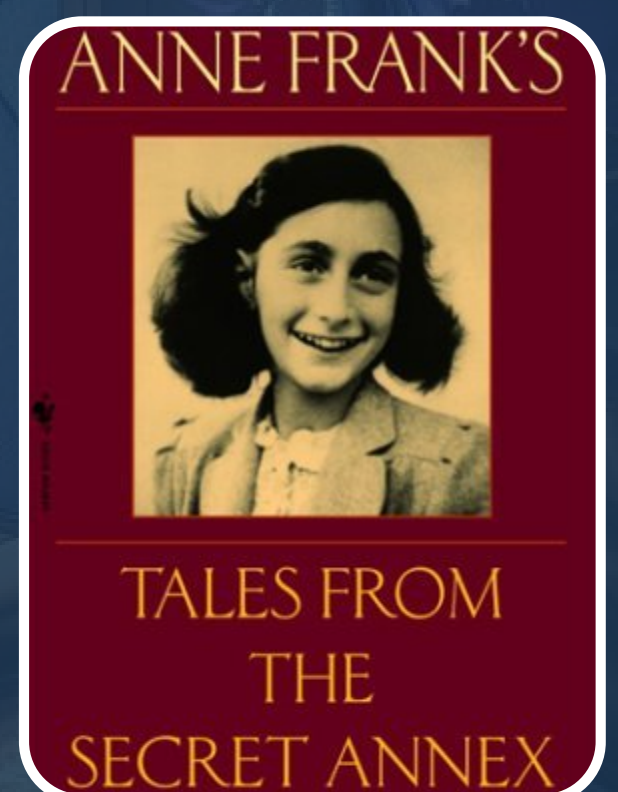
This book highlights the uncountable effects of sleep-deprived individuals and states the amazing benefits of a restful night. It aims to spread awareness of how important sleep is to human beings.



Tales from the Secret Annex

By: Anne Frank

Hiding from the Nazis in the "Secret Annexe" of an old office building in Amsterdam, a thirteen-year-old girl named Anne Frank became a writer. The now-famous diary of her private life and thoughts reveals only part of Anne's story, however. This book completes the portrait of this remarkable and talented young author.



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