

ज्योति

- शारंग

शब्दावली का देखो कमाल,
 बेसुध दौड़े सांसों का जंजाल,
 बांधे धड़कन सोच से धागा,
 प्यासा ना रहे प्यार अभागा,
 हाथों ने खोया आज हींसा का साथ,
 अखियाँ रोवे जैसे कोई मासूम अनाथ,
 पैर थे जैसे ज़मीन में गड़ गए,
 जिगर बचे थे आज फिर युं अढ़ गए,
 अंधेरे से किया सवाल,
 सुरज कहाँ है?
 दे फिर मुझे उजाल!
 सीने ने ना ज़िद को छोड़ा,
 प्यार करेंगे चल मिल जा बोला,
 रास्ते फिर युं थे मुड़ गए,
 अपनों से बिन कहे ही दिल थे जुड़ गए,
 आशियाना सा लगता जो कभी था विरान,
 प्यार ने दे दी है एक नई रफ्तार,
 एक ही है अब मेरी मांग,
 संहित संचिता का रखुं ख्याल।

अमन बिक गया है

- सुनील शर्मा

आज क्या हो गया है इंसानियत को ।
 क्यों फिर से बेहाल अमन बिक गया है॥

क्यों तोड़ा गया है उन खड़ी दीवारों को ।
 पीछे जिनके तूफानी सैलाब रुक गया है॥

कोरोना वाइरस की तैयार कर के कब्र ।
 अब कौन खूनी तराना लिख कर गया है॥

वक्त की भेंट कर के यह घिनोना कर्म ।
 तारीख का कौन सा बहाना दिख गया है॥

ग्लोबलाइज़ेशन का नाम लेते लेते ।
 क्यों अलग अलग इंसान हो गया है ॥

यह क्या हो गया है इंसानियत को ।
 क्यों फिर से बेहाल विश्व हो गया है ॥

चंद लोगों के हाथ अपने मतलब के लिए ।
 आज फिर से बेहाल अमन बिक गया है॥

Travel to City of Peace

- Tosani Ghosh, Grade III

In 2020 summer, I with my family travelled to a place to visit the tragic history. It was very tough to choose to travel during pandemic COVID-19.

The Japanese bullet train (Shinkansen) took 3 hours 30 min to reach that history place. The journey between Tokyo and our destination was so comfortable that I could not realize running 300 kmph. The most sound less destruction happened here, Yes, you are right we reached HIROSHIMA.

After we checked in hotel, we decided to visit the Hiroshima Peace Museum.

The world first Atomic bomb was exploded at 8:15am August 6 1945 just above 200m from Peace Museum Park. The Atomic bomb Dome is the only building that still exists today and only structure that survived complete destruction. More than 100000 people impacted by soundless bomb.

The Hibakusha (survivors) Stories - In peace museum one can know about the painful stories from A-bomb victims. The undelivered letter, the lunch box from school children, are some of the items visible in the museum. Disease like cancer remained very common in Hiroshima residents for a very long time.

One can feel the inner peace & pray for spirits of A-bomb victims if spend some time in Hiroshima Peace Park. This travel taught me the impacts of A-bomb & the world must unite against A-bomb. Our beautiful planet must pledge against any use Atomic Weapon.

THE CITY OF DEATH BECOMES THE CITY OF PEACE.

Here is small Travel Blog, please do watch:

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mnr1uhGrmDk> ■



HIROSHIMA ATOMIC BOMB DOME

Trip to ISKCON, Mayapur

- Abheek Dutta, Grade VI

Last winter, when my parents and I went to India to meet my grandparents, my grandparents wanted to go to Mayapur to pray in the extremely famous ISKCON temple. A plan was made to spend the New Year's Day in ISKCON, which stands for International Society for Krishna Consciousness. My father and my grandfather found the fastest route to ISKCON using google maps. The route that my father and my grandfather found was 4 hours and 29 minutes long if we were not caught up in traffic (though whether we were or not is debatable). In my opinion, manual paper maps are very good as once all of the roads and geographical details are printed on the map, then the information you started with will never change (unless the paper gets burnt, ripped up, erased, etc.). However, now that we have smartphones and Navi and all, everything is so much clearer. In comparison, virtual maps tell you different routes you could take, which one is the fastest, how long will the other routes take, where the other routes go, phew! But there is one slight snag with these virtual maps, sometimes they take you on extremely round-about routes where you plunge into deserted tunnels, venture into dark alleyways where (God forbid!) you open your window for some fresh air and a horde of bobcats fly into your car and, well, let's not go there.

Anyways, on 31st December 2019, we set off to ISKCON in my grandfathers' car. We decided that my grandfather would drive in the busy part of Kolkata since that's where he always drives. And then when we come to an almost deserted highway where we meet at the most one or two passersby's, my father would then switch with my grandfather and drive the rest of the way. This was because my father has not driven in India for a really long time and does not fancy a brawl with India's crazy traffic. The entire time we were looking at the roadsides for a restaurant for some food or a drink. We packed just some snacks and soon got hungry. Finally, we found one restaurant, not too shabby looking (thank you very much!) and got a coke over there. After I came back from India and told my friends that I had gone to ISKCON, Mayapur, they immediately asked me how the journey was. I told them that if you wish for a 4 hour long full deluxe body massage (maybe painful, maybe not) then go at your own risk. If you want more details then check out my Yelp review, hmmm, let us see, I do not think I rated it anymore than 0 stars, did I? The journey was extremely monotonous and painfully bumpy as I may have mentioned before. My parents, grandparents and I (5 people in total) had nothing to survive on except for some packets of chips and 2 bottles of coke. Well not that there wasn't any food, but they were way too healthy for me.

When we finally reached Mayapur, I was so pleased that there would not be much traffic in a deserted place like this, but boy was I wrong! I would wager that we waited in a line of cars for about half an hour to go 1 kilometer. After our treacherous journey to go 1 kilometer ahead of where we started, we finally got to the security check. Well, it was not exactly a security check, it was just 2 guards who checked our car's trunk and asked for our guest house reservation sheets (which my grandfather handed over, happily or annoyed, I do not know). We had reservations for two guest houses which were called Conch and Gada. My grandfather and I checked the quality of both guest houses and in the end, we chose Conch as the room was a lot bigger and because we wanted to stay together, possibly in the same room if we could. Also, my grandmother said that Conch was just beside the main temple and we could enter the temple as and when we wished. I was

surprised to find a lot of international crowd all over the temple premises. Not only were they guests, but they also seemed to be devotees. It helped that the Govinda's restaurant was also close to the guest house. For me the Govinda's restaurant was very tempting and which, compliments to the chef, had great food, such as noodles, dosas, puri aloo (my favorite). The new Sri Mayapur Chandroday temple project was just across our guest house. The new temple is currently under construction and the construction is expected to finish in 2022.

In the evening that day we finally went to the ISKCON temple and prayed. I wasn't really that excited about the praying part, I just wanted to see how the inside of the temple looked, and it looked amazing. For a while, a band was playing tablas and sitars. The music was divine, I felt as though I was slowly entering a world where I had absolutely no worry in the world (at the time, I had a lot of homework left to do). The temple was completely made out of polished white marble except for some plates of gold on the ceiling and domes. At one end of the large hall was an intricate altar where idols of Lord Krishna and Radha were surrounded by idols of Gopis. This was the Sri Sri Radha Madhav temple. It was the most magnificent sight that I had ever seen. All of the fancy clothes and jewels on the idols reminded me of princes and royalty. In the center of the temple was the idol of Lord Nrisimhadeva. The half lion incarnation of Lord Vishnu (thanks Amar Chitra Katha!). After spending some time admiring the main halls, we went to a gallery where a lot of holy men were depicted in paintings (in chronological order). The life story of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu



was told there. When we exited the gallery, there was the option of gift shops or to see other parts of the temple. Thankfully, we headed over to see more parts of the temple which (from the looks of it) was a lot more interesting than the gift shops. After we passed the arch that separated the main hall that we had just visited, I spotted five 10-foot-tall (each) golden statues of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his four companions. Some woodwind (probably flute) music was playing in the distance

which gave it a particularly misty tone (Hariprasad Chaurasia?). This triggered my thoughts a lot and sent me deeper into the other world which I mentioned earlier (probably the world where I told my teacher that I didn't do my summer homework/the world where I would most likely cease to exist). After we finished marveling at the temples, we went to the Govinda's restaurant and then back to Conch for a goodnight's rest.

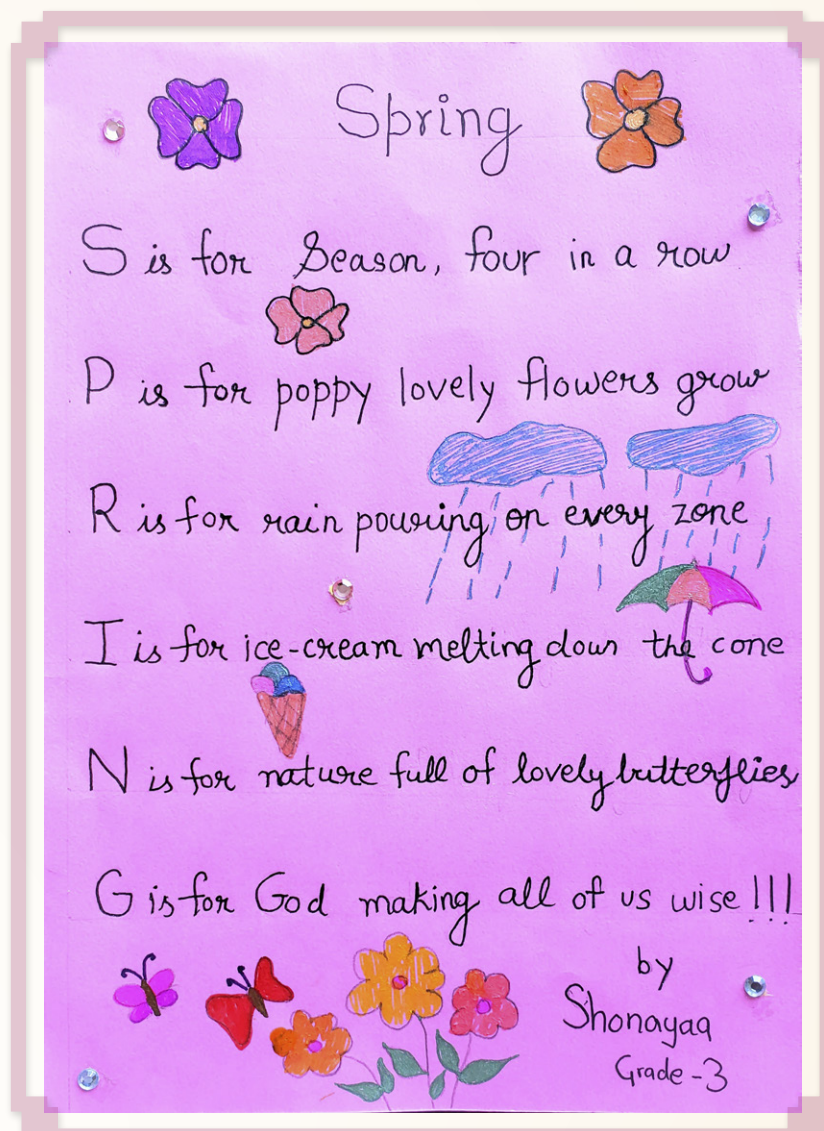
The day after was the 1st of January 2020. My grandmother and mother went early in the wee hours of the morning to the temple for prayers. While my grandfather, my dad and I relaxed. I got a good shouting from my mom for going to the temple late (welcome to my world!). After breakfast at Govindas', we visited the Goshala by auto. All of the cow's names were the names of gods like, Indra, Vishnu, Narayan, Brahma, Shiva and all of the other Shakti's. Some of the cows allowed us to pat them and some were quite traumatized that more petty humans were approaching when they had already finished their shift. If you are allergic to cow manure (is that a thing?) and four trillion gallons of methane, then I would recommend that you stay away or come in a hazmat suit. The

ride back in the auto would've been perfect for a Sharukh Khan movie scene as we were riding while the sun was setting and with the wind whipping up our hair.

Before leaving, we went to pray one last time for a good life and a safe journey (hmmmm, Air India should probably make that their tagline, only way they'll keep their company afloat). Then we departed from Mayapur to go back to Kolkata. The road back was as bumpy as earlier. This time though, I was shocked to see lots of trucks with large loudspeakers blasting music. I asked my grandparents if it was even allowed and was it legal, as I've never seen anything like it in Japan? I was surprised to learn that this is quite a common way to celebrate New Years in India. Did I mention that we stopped over for Chola Bhatura at Haldiram's once we reached Kolkata? Perfect ending to the trip for me. Now I have been to three well known places in West Bengal (other than Kolkata) the Ganges Raichuk, Sunderbans and Mayapur, ISKCON with my grandparents. This summer I could not visit India, but I hope that the next time we go to India I can visit another interesting place which I can fill you in on. ■

Spring

- Shonayaa Verma, Grade III



My Little Doves

- Ashmita (Tias) Paul, Grade VIII

From the middle of June, my school summer vacation started, so we stopped having online classes. The one thing that occupied me the most during Corona break were my online classes, so for two more months, I have to wait till my school opens. I still have some online tuitions, play board games at home, and go outside a bit to occupy myself in the summer vacation, but there was something special that kept me occupied too...

From the mid of July, I saw a nest made in my bedroom window, with an egg. I quickly called my parents to come see it. As soon as we saw it, we became quite sure what it was.

It was an egg laid by a dove! Doves are a pigeon species, but it has many colors like white, light brown and dark brown. They have small heads, short legs, and a cooing voice. Doves are a bit smaller and more delicate than pigeons. Many doves can be found in Japan, like in gardens or parks. The egg was completely white, and it was in the center of the nest. The nest was completely round, and I had no idea that they would make it here. It was made out of twigs, and they made it very beautifully.

This happened to me last year in May. When we came back from Vietnam during Golden Week, our neighbor observed the dove bird laying an egg in my parents' bedroom window, on top of a pot with a dead plant. It sat there all day long. I was very excited to see her, and I was waiting till the egg will hatch and the babies will come out. Unfortunately, the bird left, without me being able to see the babies. I still did not have a clue whether it hatched or not, but I am sure that it must have hatched and the mother took it somewhere else. Some birds do that.

After several minutes, I saw the mother resting there, covering the egg. Whenever I opened the curtain, it used to swell its neck to scare me. I soon got used to it, and I can understand, since it is a mother, it might have some insecurities. I sometimes waved at her, and she swells her neck. I realized that if I made any sudden movements with my hand, she tries to scare me. Sometimes the dad would come and nest here too. The difference between the dad and the mom is that the mom is a bit smaller and thinner, whilst the dad is larger and broader.

Me and my parents looked after them, to make sure that they are completely fine. They still keep swelling their neck to scare us, but after 1 week, they just stood still. They did not swell their necks as much as they used to. When the parents are there, I can hear their soothing cooing voice in the morning.

After one more week, they hatched!!



The babies were completely green, but had a small black beak, and had some black splotches on their wings. It was just when I woke up to say "Good morning!" to them, when I saw their heads stuck out and moving their cute little heads around. That was the first time I ever saw a baby dove. My parents used to take care of pigeons and other birds in India when they were young, so they have experience. This day was Sunday, August 2nd.

One thing surprised me. There were two babies under the mother! Two! When I saw the nest, I only saw one egg. I figured out that maybe the mother dove laid another egg and we did not notice it, because we could not see the eggs under. Maybe one was younger than the other.

The babies usually stayed under the parent to avoid the scorching summer heat. I could only see them well in the morning, but later when it becomes very hot, they stay under. I could not see them very well in the night either. That time, I could not open the window, because they react when I move my hands a bit, and I did not want to frighten them.

After around a week, they looked like this:



They got larger, and they started walking around the nest. I really enjoy it when they call out and when they start to flap their wings. They still had some green feathers around their body, but their beaks became way longer. One was bigger than the other.

For a couple of days, I could not see their parents. I could not hear their cooing nor wings flapping. I looked at them and saw that they became less energetic. The babies only sat and kept their heads down. They still swell their necks when they see us through the window. It turned out that their parents were not coming to feed them, and they could not eat for two days. Poor babies.

After those two miserable days, a storm occurred here. A thunderstorm. I was worried sick if my little doves were okay. My parents went to look at them, and they were scared to death. They kept their heads very down and they were clumped together. We together decided to feed them by ourselves.

I found out that sometimes the parents can abandon their babies. I have not the foggiest clue why. Maybe it is because they think that they were sufficient enough to take care. My father quickly bought the formula food for baby birds. It is like milk, but it is brownish. We have to feed them with a syringe,

or else they would not open their mouth.

We picked them up from the nest and kept them in a cardboard box with tissue paper on the bottom. They were kept in the living room. I tried whistling to keep them calm and relaxed. While I waited for my dad to come, the bigger dove walked around and pecked the box to try to get out. One time, it jumped to the top left edge of the box and flapped its wings. It tried to fly away, but it couldn't. My mom kept a hand in front of the dove and kept it down. After that, it sat down, and kept its head down again.

My dad finally came with the formula food. There was the food powder inside. It had to be mixed with hot water of around 45°C. If the food is not warm, they will not eat it. We poured the powder in a small bowl, and mixed the hot water inside. We then brought the food to the babies.

I first said that I do not want to feed the bigger one, because then it might start biting me. We started to feed the small one first. My dad picked it up from the cardboard box and kept it on his lap with a towel on it. My mom had the syringe with the food inside. She tried to make it open its mouth by pushing the syringe into it. I was very doubtful about it, whether it would eat, because it was already weak, but then it opened its mouth, and my mom pushed the top of the syringe, which pushed the food inside. The baby then closed its mouth, and started to eat it. My dad tried to feed it, but accidentally spilled a lot of the food on its body. We quickly wiped it with a tissue paper.

I then asked my mom if I could try feeding it. She filled the syringe with food and gave it to me. I tried showing it to pull its neck up and to open its mouth by gesturing it. I slowly brought the syringe to its mouth, and it opened and I pushed it. It ate joyfully. I continued to feed it, until it got energy, and walked on my dad's forearm! My mom was taking videos on my phone of me feeding the babies. When it had enough, my dad put it back in the cardboard box and pulled the bigger one out.

I did not want to feed it, but I thought of giving it a try. I brought the syringe to its beak, and it opened its mouth very widely, and I quickly pushed the food inside. Its intentional reason of opening its beak was to bite me. I had trouble feeding it, because it was closing its beak too quickly. Some of the food went into the nostrils, so when I fed it, it spit some food out. It continued to do that, until it opened its mouth properly for the food to go inside.

After feeding them, we kept them on the window, and it started to walk again, and kept its heads up. I felt very relieved after feeding them. My honest opinion was that it was easier to feed the bigger one than the smaller one. The smaller one became more energetic. We added a little more protection. We kept cardboard on the sides, and kept a basket with tissue paper for them if they want to sit on it.

The next morning, I surprisingly woke up at 6:30 am. I heard the cooing voice of the parent doves again, and I heard the baby noise and the pecking noise. I checked on them and they were walking around the nest, and moving their heads like a pigeon. After that, I slept again. My parents then came inside my room and looked at the babies. They told me that they saw the mother feeding the babies. Turns out that they didn't abandon them.

It was the evening of August 17th when I took this picture:



The small dove was on top of the pot filled with moss. It looked ready. Ready for some reason. When my mom went to close the window, it flapped its wings, jumped and took flight. I was flabbergasted to see that and my jaw dropped. I asked my mom, "Did it really leave?" My mom replied that it left. It flew flawlessly, and I did not know that it could fly so well. The bigger one was still sitting on the nest, feeling alone. I felt really bad for him.

The next morning, he flew away, before I woke up. My mom opened the window, and it stinks really bad because of the droppings on the nest. I looked at it, almost tearful. I kept my head down for the rest of the day. My mom told me, "You should be happy that they became strong enough to fly." I agreed with her, but couldn't help myself.

I really miss them, still miss them now. But I am proud of them, proud of the parents too for raising them properly. I was proud of myself and my parents too. I could see them from egg to flight. I could see them grow up. I really hope that I could never forget this story, and I hope that they won't forget it either. Who knows, maybe when they become adults, they will come and lay eggs here too. I look forward to them having a full life. ■

End of a Nightmare

- Arnab Karmokar, Grade VIII

"Hey Nick, where's our car? Why is our car missing?" fellow FBI consultant Jack Thorne asked me.

"What are you talking about?" I said and looked up from my phone. I couldn't believe my own eyes. I dropped my briefcase in shock; our car was missing from the parking lot.

"Isn't this where we parked the car?" Jack asked. I looked at the parking spot number and nodded yes. We stopped for less than 10 minutes at a coffee shop, and by that time, our car had disappeared. What made this situation a lot worse was the fact that our car contained Jack's briefcase, which had documents covering our field investigations on a serious criminal case. We were going to pass those documents onto our research team at our FBI Branch. This was one of our first major jobs to do ever since joining the FBI, and things weren't looking good for us now.

"I'm calling the FBI Branch," I told Jack, and started to pick up the phone to dial the number.

"Wait, don't call them," Jack said.

"Why not? We need help right now."

"Because if the bureau finds out that we lost documents on such a serious criminal case while stopping over to get coffee, they will fire us and take our jobs away. Especially because this is our first ever job."

I looked up at Jack and sighed in disbelief. He was right.

"Well then, what do we do?" I asked Jack. I was hopeless at that moment. I had my worst fear come to life, and that was to get fired from the FBI. I started to panic.

"Wait, wasn't there some sort of GPS connected to the car?" Jack asked. "If we run our car's number plate through our computer, we might be able to find where that car is."

I totally forgot that I had put in a GPS in our car that would tell me exactly where the vehicle was in real-time. "You're a genius man," I exclaimed. I cooled down as I opened up my briefcase, got out my computer. I typed in the car plate number for our car into the software. The software whirled for results. After a minute or two, it showed that the car was moving on a highway headed towards Los Angeles.

"The car's headed towards LA," Jack noticed as he pointed to the map.

"Shouldn't we try to follow them?," I said.

"Wait up, what time is it right now?" Jack asked.

I looked at the time on my computer. "It's 6 PM right now."

"We shouldn't do anything now. It's going to get dark soon, and the people who stole our car would likely stop over for the night, because moving in the night will attract police officers." Jack said.

"Wasn't it you who said that we have to get those documents ASAP? Wasn't it you who said that if we didn't get the documents and submit it by today, we'd be fired? We need to get closer to our car and get those documents back before the documents get transferred to a 3rd party source."

Jack and I started to argue about what to do. At the climax of the argument, Jack's phone started to ring. Jack opened his phone, and his face went blue. He mouthed 'boss' to me. He picked up the phone and put speaker mode on.

"Agents Jack Thorne and Nick Smith, good evening."

"Good evening, sir." We replied.

"Our FBI branch is closing soon, and I'm still expecting the documents from you two today. Where is it?"

"Sir, we've gotten stuck in a lot of traffic, so we are a little behind schedule." Jack lied to our Boss. We heard him get frustrated, but then sighed in disbelief."

"OK. I need those documents by tomorrow. If not, you both will be asked to leave the bureau. Understood?"

"Yes, sir. We will get the documents to you." Jack said and cut the phone. I looked over at Jack.

"We're stuck in traffic? If he looks at the traffic records of today, he'll know we lied, and we'll be fired for sure! Why'd you have to come up with that bad of a lie?!" I started yelling at Jack.

"What better option did you have then? Come on, spill!" Jack yelled back, and I stepped back. I didn't have one.

"Exactly," Jack said. "Don't worry. I promise we won't get busted." I looked back at Jack and sighed. Fighting won't solve matters right now.

We started looking for a hotel. We found a Ritz-Carlton 5 minutes away from us. After 5 minutes of walking, we reached the hotel. We checked in and immediately met back in a meeting room, which we rented out. I opened up my computer to look for any other hidden clues we could find from the GPS software to track the car and document. The car was running the streets of Los Angeles. I noticed an option which was named 'listen.' I was confused, so I turned to Jack.

"What does this option do?" I asked Jack.

"I don't know, click on it and see what happens," Jack replied.

I looked up at the ceiling, ensuring there were no security cameras in the meeting room. After I made sure, I clicked on the option. The screen changed to audio footage from inside of our car. Jack looked at me, shocked. We listened to what was going on inside of our car.

"Any calls from Boss?" We heard one guy in a thick Spanish accent, talk.

"Yeah, there was. We're gonna have to move to Mexico," Another guy, with an Italian accent, started to talk. "Boss said to come to the Los Angeles US-Mexico Border by 3 PM tomorrow. Apparently, that is when the Border Patrol switch shifts with each other. We're going to have to find a gap and smuggle the car across the border. After that, Boss said to dump the car, and bring the documents over to Mexico City, the capital." Suddenly, the connection to the audio device cut. I looked over at the GPS map and found out that the missing car had gone into a parking garage.

I looked over at Jack, speechless. The bad guys were planning to give valuable documents over to someone in Mexico City, Mexico. I closed my computer and turned to Jack. Jack also looked speechless.

"We're going to have to let the border patrol and the police know." Jack blurted out.

"What if they tell the FBI? We'll lose our jobs! We don't even know who the bad guys are!" I panicked.

"Letting them get away with the documents will get us sacked for sure. At least this way, we can show the country our duties before we get fired. And also, it doesn't matter if we know the bad guys, because we're going to catch them with

the help from border patrol and the local police."

Ever since I was a little boy, I wanted to be an FBI agent to fight for justice. Jack looked at me in such pride that I became convinced with his plan. We both agreed that we would let border patrol and the local police know about our private investigation and catch the bad guys.

After a sleepless night, the next morning arrived. I got up exceptionally early and double-checked the location of the car. The car was still in the parking garage from yesterday. Jack knocked on the door, and we went downstairs. Once we checked out, I pulled out my phone to grab a taxi to the border. 5 minutes later, a cab arrived. The taxi driver introduced himself to us.

"Hurry, sir!" Jack told the driver. We told him who we were, and where we were headed. The driver understood that this was an emergency, and pressed hard on the accelerator pedal. I looked up at the dashboard, and it read 70 miles per hour. We didn't care that he was going over the speed limit by 20 miles. We zoomed ahead.

About 2 hours and 15 minutes later, we reached the border. We paid the taxi driver, prayed to get reimbursed by the FBI, and went out of the car. We reached the border patrol's headquarters.

"Excuse me, sir, we are the FBI, and we need to be on the lookout for a vehicle that will pass through here around 3 PM," Jack said, and flashed his FBI badge. I did the same. Showing the other party our FBI badges was standard protocol.

The border patrol officers let us in, and we explained the whole situation to them.

"So, they planned on going through when we will switch shifts?" One of the officers asked.

"Yes, that is their plan. We need to make sure that the shifts do *not* switch at 3 PM."

"We can do that. We will switch shifts after we take the bad guys into custody."

They alerted the local police, and we set up a track-down base, to track down where the missing car was running. The whole set-up was set at around 1 PM, so we headed out for a quick lunch. Around 2 PM, we returned to the base and waited patiently for the bad guys to arrive, while looking at the GPS. They were on the way to the US/Mexico border.

At around 3 PM, we saw an alert come from the GPS, and it said that the car was 200 yards away from the border and was in line C. We were ready to arrest them. The car pulled up. There were two people inside the vehicle.

"Where is the paperwork for this car?" I asked the two.

"Do we need to show it to you?" The bad guy in the driver's seat blurted out.

"Yes," Jack replied to them. The two looked at each other and then started to look for the paperwork, but they couldn't find the paperwork..

"It might be in the special compartment," Jack said. The bad guys opened the compartment and showed it to us.

"Do you own this car?" I asked them.

"Uhh, yes!" They said. I looked over at Jack.

"Where are your passports? We need authentication right now." Jack urged them. They couldn't show their passports.

"Drive now!" The guy in the passenger seat yelled. The car drove through the stopper, and dashed ahead.

"Follow that car, right now!" I yelled from my lungs. Jack and I jumped on to a police car nearby, and we rushed ahead. Eventually the other officers caught up to us with either motorbikes or police cars. The car jumped onto the roads of Tijuana, Mexico, and we started to panic. We couldn't have anyone get hurt.

"Stop right now! You are under arrest!" Jack yelled at the car, which was about 25 yards away from us.

"Not a chance!" The bad guys laughed it off, and looked up front. The police in Mexico received a message from the Border Patrol, and 5 Mexican police cars had locked down the road. There were no other places to go; they were stuck.

"Hands up! You have nowhere else to go!" Jack yelled at the bad guys and aimed our gun at the car, just in case they retaliate. The bad guys opened their doors and put their hands up. We slowly got closer to them.

"We are agents Nick Smith and Jack Thorne of the Federal Bureau Investigation. You are under arrest for stealing our car, as well as attempting to transfer vital documents." I said. We escorted them out of the car, and handcuffed them. We handed them over to the border patrol, US police, and the Mexico police. We took back our car, and got inside of it.

"Are the documents in the car?" I asked Jack. Jack started to look for the documents and then picked them up. *Thank God*, I thought to myself. We drove off towards our FBI branch to turn in the documents.

We reached FBI headquarters in about 45 minutes. Once we went inside the office, we noticed everyone started to applaud us. Jack and I locked eyes, thinking *why is everyone clapping for us*.

"Agents Jack Thorne and Nick Smith, come with me," We saw our Boss from across the room call us to his private office. Jack and I were both terrified. I started to think of the worst. As soon as we entered the room, I gave the documents over, and apologized for the delay. Our boss looked very angry, but bursted out laughing. Jack and I looked at each other in confusion.

"Congratulations on catching two notorious criminals who were on the Wanted list! You two have done a brilliant job." Our boss exclaimed. Apparently, the two bad guys we arrested were notorious criminals. Our Boss stood up and turned on the TV. Every news network was praising us for arresting the two bad guys at the border patrol. He said that we were getting a raise, and we were being upgraded to a better position.

Jack and I both walked out of the room. We were confused, but were pretty satisfied as well. This was our first task as FBI agents, and instead of blowing it, we were able to nail it, and were able to catch 2 notorious criminals. We looked at each other and knew that this was just the start. This was an end of a nightmare, and a beginning of a wonderful career. ■

Perks of being an introvert

- Akanksha Mukherjee, Grade X

In my life, I have had the freedom to do many things. I could go out for a walk, to a mall, a restaurant, parties, on vacation, etc. I could be around people and socialize. I could hang out with friends whenever I wanted to. These are privileges which I took for granted. I never had to think twice before leaving my home. I never had to consider whether it was safe or not. I never imagined a world where even to breathe fresh air, without wearing a mask, would be a luxury.

Covid 19 has profoundly impacted our world in many ways. The idea of a "normal lifestyle" has completely changed. It fascinates me how, in just a few months, our lives can be turned upside down. Due to Covid-19, we are forced to be isolated and locked in our homes. Most people I know complain about how miserable it is to be separated from their friends. In my case, however, I don't mind staying at home all day.

I always had a shy and introverted nature, making it difficult for me to make friends and socialize. I am usually by myself whilst other people are with their group of friends. Being at home, spending time with my family has felt nice rather than boring. I haven't missed going to school, since there was nothing to miss. When you feel lonely and left out on the inside, being isolated from people doesn't make much of a difference.

On the contrary, it feels better to be by yourself. There is no pressure to speak and socialize with people. Being on your own is a wonderful way to explore your own thoughts and emotions. You can do things you like and whatever makes you happy.

There are two kinds of happiness- the happiness which people have within themselves, and the happiness which people derive from external sources. Being an introvert, I have never depended on huge groups of friends or validation from others to be fulfilled. Simple things such as watching a movie or eating good food provides me happiness. Don't get me wrong, I do enjoy the company of others and being around people at parties and get-togethers, but I also enjoy solitude. Staying at home during Covid 19 has not been a punishment for me, unlike others who strive for companionship.

I used to think that my shyness and lack of conviviality was a weakness, because it was the reason for my alienation. Living through this pandemic has taught me that what I always considered to be a weakness can also be a strength. I don't have to depend on other people's approval to feel satisfied. If I can find happiness within myself, then I know that I can get through this traumatic period of my life. ■

Vivekananda Teachings:

1. The power of concentration is the only key to the treasure-house of knowledge.
2. A brave, frank, clean-hearted, courageous and aspiring youth is the only foundation on which the future nation can be built.
3. Youth is the best time. The way in which you utilize this period will decide the nature of coming years that lie ahead of you.
4. Arise, awake and stop not until the goal is reached.
5. The greatest sin is to think yourself weak.

The Fulfillment

- Kshitij Singh, Grade XII

On a bright night did he undergo a somber journey.
The journey home was one of great pain
But of a beautiful one,
One of liberation that allowed him to step into the light.
He thought, "Without suffering has love ever been felt?"
The journey had been going on for years
And he found that what he had been seeking his whole life had been in him.
He kept running for years,
Searching, looking, seeking but never finding.
He thought in his pain, "I have been seeking life without, but I must now find it within."
He could bring himself to say no more, for silence had taken over
And his heart had become overwhelmed at this joy.

Gently did he place his feet on the earth,
The earth that had become his life.
He felt no pain, no joy but a confluence of both.
They both had become one, like the stream that joins its friend,
And together they formed him, an ocean of bliss.

Beneath the trees where he had played,
By the river that had loved him forever, he was filled again.
The cup of longing had been filled.
His heart was silent, but it danced peacefully in love, for he had come home.

Between the lonely night and the lively day did he sit by the river and forget himself.
He thought in his soul, "Now I have returned. Now I have found my place on earth. Where else can I go?"
He gazed at the beautiful river that had called him for days.
For years it had been wild with longing, but now it was calm.
It wished no more than a listener, for it seemed silent
But spoke to him in utter happiness.
"Where have you been my friend?, I have been seeking you for a lifetime."
He could hear.
He could listen.
He could feel.

There was a drop in his eye,
And slowly it trickled down his cheeks and flowed into a river.
Nothing but a boundless drop in an incomplete ocean.
Now, it was complete, the longing had disappeared and it was set alight with joy.
As lovers they had met, as lovers they had been separated for years,
but now they were together.
They were whole again.

My Mother's House

- Kavya Sharma

Everything came to a sudden stop.
Silence spread like sunshine at dawn,
Slowly, then all at once.

I tried to move but something stopped me:
it was the right side of my body.
I could feel pain --
pain that was painless
yet so painful,
that when I tried to escape
It stung my body like a thousand bees.

I heard someone call my name.
I faintly saw someone move the weight off my body,
All a nightmare?
And wake up,
Drive to my mother's house.

I am attached to life support.
My mother awaits.

It's the dreams you have that sometimes make you realize how short life really is. I woke up one morning terrified that something had happened to me. Only to find myself sniping out of a nightmare. But, when you really try to understand your nightmares, you learn your deepest fears. Fears that are small and fears that are big. But our mind has a weird way of understanding them in the same way,

Death is inevitable but how you spend those living hours describes you in the end. Spending years hating or worrying about something that doesn't deserve your attention, ages a person worse than time ever will.

Live days that bring you happiness and peace. Live days dreaming about love and calmness. Love in such a way that the last few minutes of your life, for whenever they are, are filled with no sorrow.

DRAWINGS



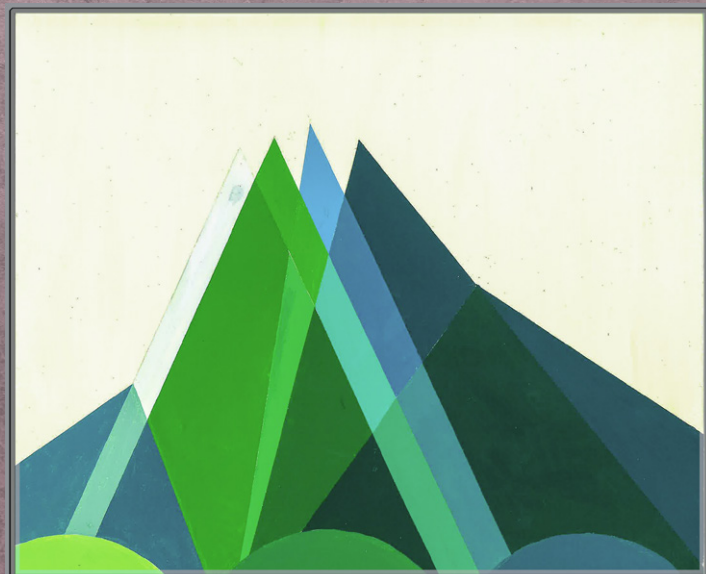
Bird Nest by Meghnasri Sarbarikarthik, 4 Yrs



Autumn Leaves by Gursher Bhatti, 4 Yrs



Paper Flower Painting by Ritisha Verma, K-5



Bhowken Mountain by Kenta Bhowmik (Koto Gakkou), Class-3



Dugga Dugga by Shreyansh Kar, 4 Yrs



Little Durga by Aarohi Kundu, 5 Yrs



Yoga Mudra by Alok Misra, Grade I



My Family by Sasha, 5 years



My Dream Village by Suvechha Bhunia, Grade I



Stay Safe and Stay Healthy by Aditi Misra, Grade II



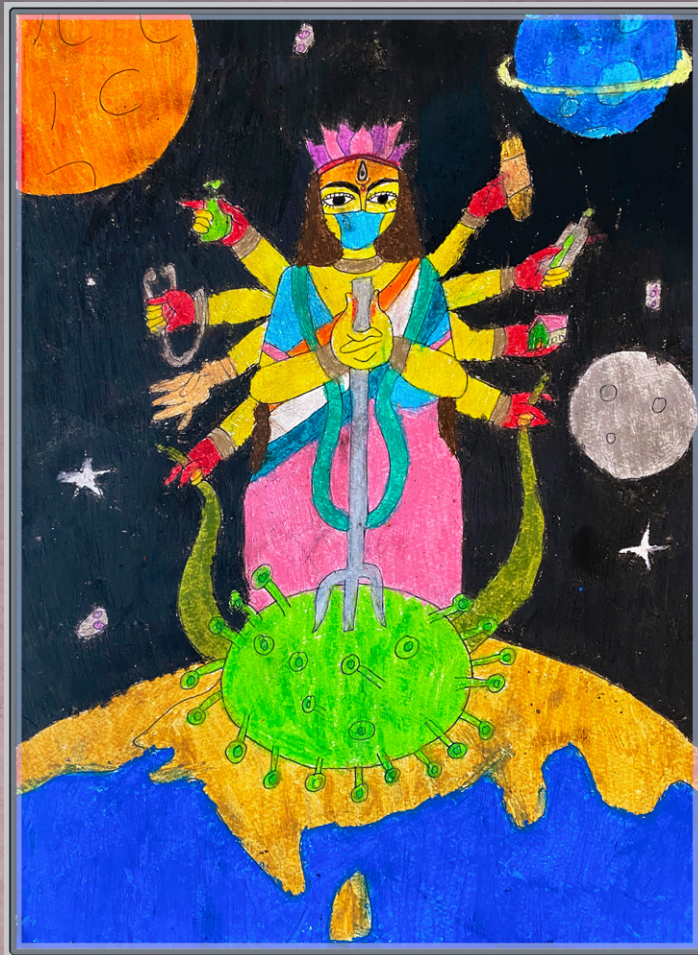
School Mid-Day Meal by Zinnia Dhar, Grade V



Tricolor Rangoli by Sneha Pal, Grade XI



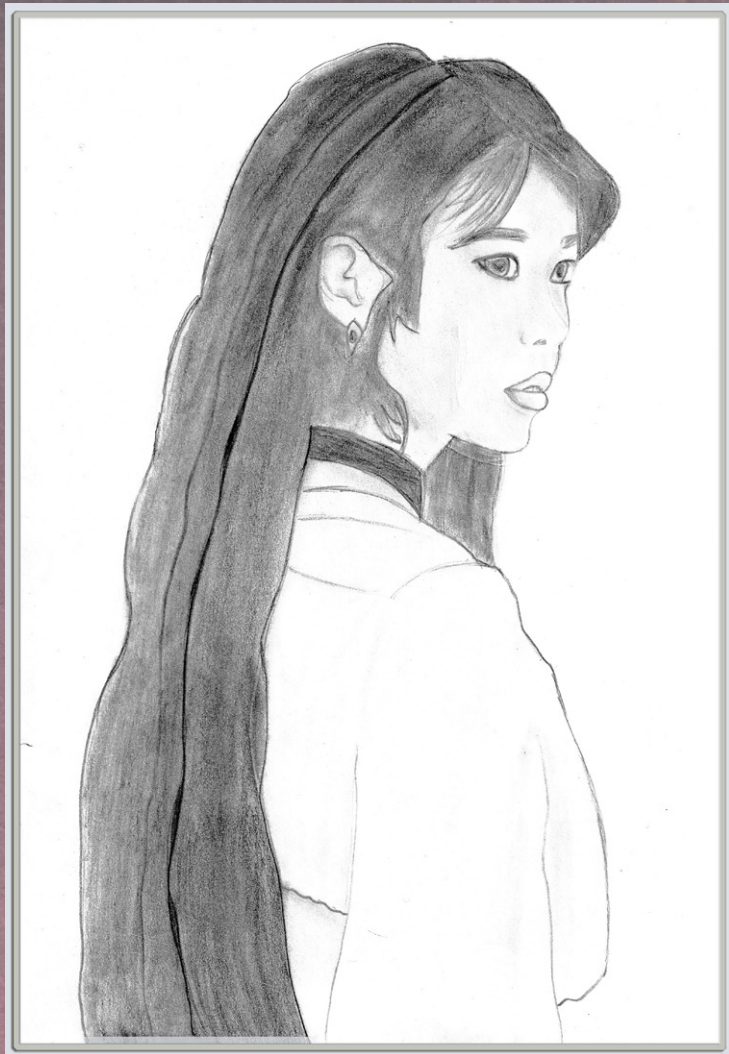
Goodbye by Aakarsh Ryo Kundu, 8 Yrs



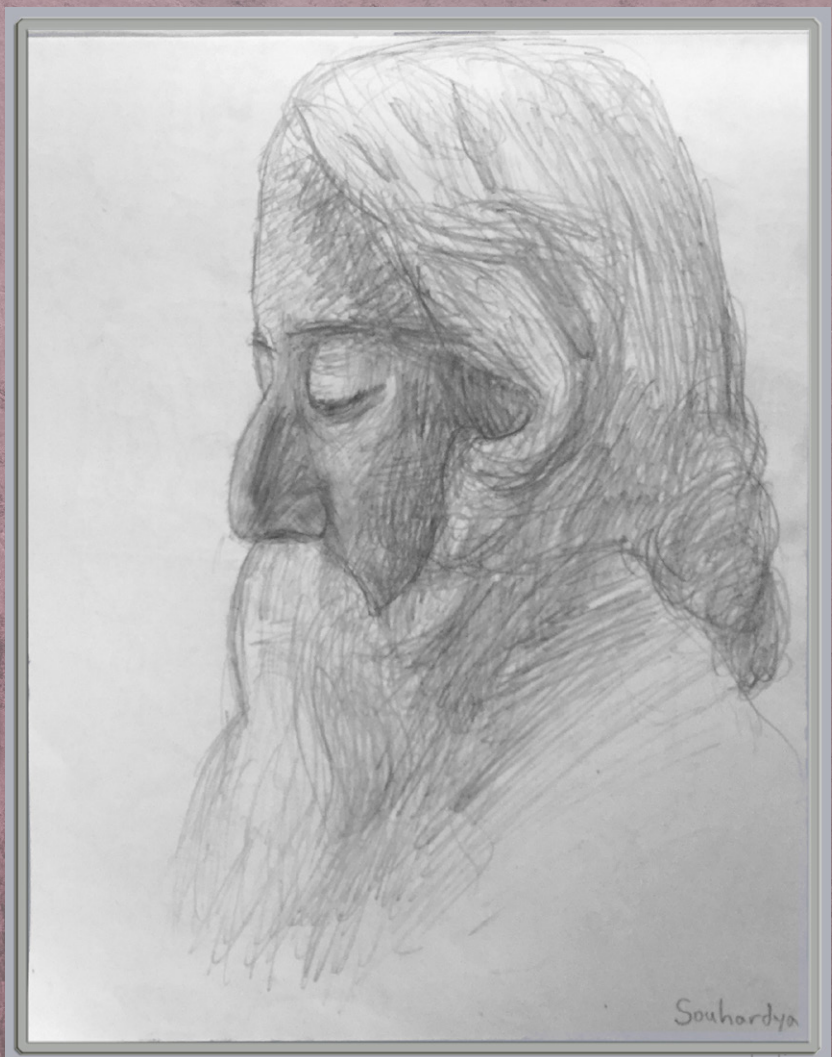
Hope by Advika Ghosh, Grade III



Walking in the Rain by Auyona Gupta, Grade VI



Shades of Lee Ji-eun (IU) by Pramiti Hebbar Grade VIII



Rabindra nath Tagore by Souhardya Kar 12 Yrs

Souhardya

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