

— T H E —

carpe diem

C H R O N I C L E S



VOLUME THREE

Welcome to Carpe Diem Chronicles – Inventure Academy's very own student-run publication. Acting as a 'voice of the students', CDC showcases a miscellany of submissions from across the student body. It is a space for Inventurers to express their creativity, share important ideas and stay connected to the Inventure community.

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Hey Inventure!

This issue of the Carpe Diem Chronicles is filled with piquant poems, superb stories, and amazing articles from you. Each and every one of them is extremely engaging and together, they cover a variety of topics and themes.

Speaking of themes, our next issue is going to be a special one, celebrating an exciting milestone. We'll be posting more information and updates about this, on our Instagram page, @carpediem_chronicles, so do be sure to check it out!

Lastly, thank you, thank you, and thank you for all your support and involvement in our publication. We love seeing your contributions, so keep them coming!

Carpe Diem, we seize the page!

happy reading!

From,
The Editors

(P.S.: If you would like to submit anything to be featured in the next issues, reach out to us on our website (carpediemchronicles.com) or e-mail us at carpediemchroniclesinv@gmail.com)



Inter-House competitions have always been a strong part of Inventure's culture. In these unprecedented times, when most of us are confined to our homes, it has become more important than ever to keep yourself fit. In addition, online classes can leave people feeling disconnected from the school community. To help promote physical fitness and continue Inventure's competitive Inter-House spirit, the Inter-House Fitness Challenge was created.

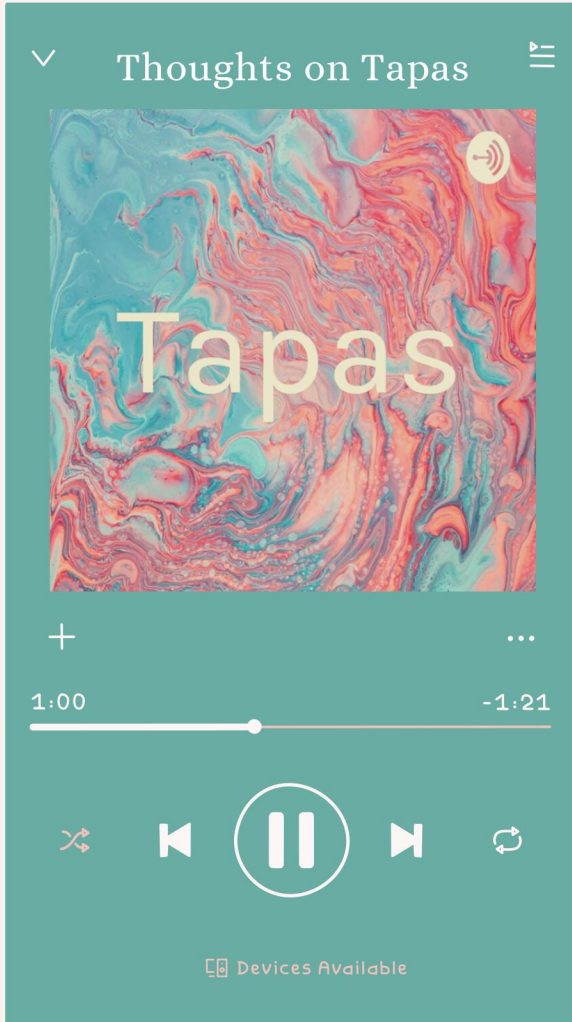


The Virtual Inter-House Sports Challenges were offered to students taking Athletics/Fitness, Basketball, Cricket, Football, Table Tennis and Swimming (dry land). Students were allowed to participate in upto 3 sports, and these challenges were completed asynchronously over a 2 week period. Congratulations to all the participants! Certificates and, of course, house points have been awarded for the Top 3 places in each category.



THOUGHTS ON 'TAPAS'

By Arya Murthy

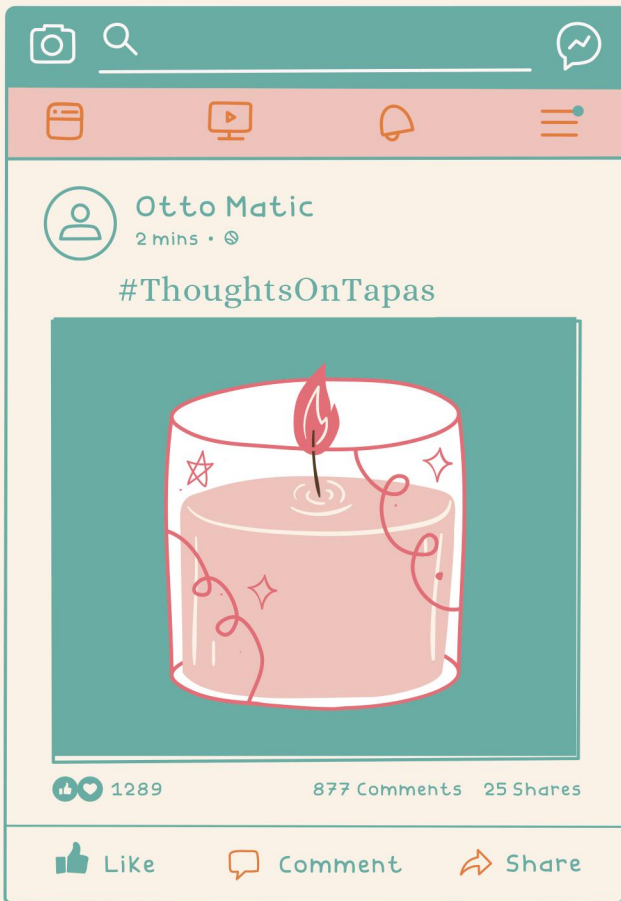


I follow through the motions as directed, tensing and relaxing my eyebrows, cheeks and shoulders. Slowly, almost against my will, I find myself settling down. The ambient music, combined with the soft-spoken instructions, is like a sedative, and clenching and unclenching muscles really does seem to work. By the end of it, after I'm told to "gently open my eyes," I'm almost surprised at how relaxed I feel.

I am skeptical at first. I click on the website with trepidation, not quite sure what to expect.

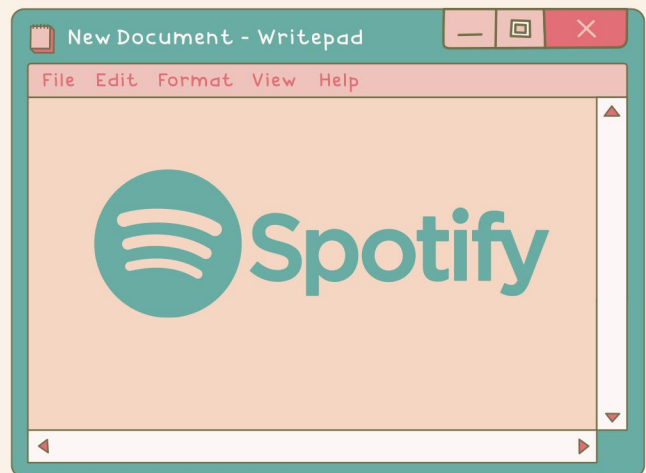
I plug my headphones in and press 'Play'. A few kalimba-sounding chimes in the background, sonorous and peaceful. Then, Sanaaz Ma'am, Inventure's Middle and Senior school counsellor, speaks. "Hello, and welcome to our first episode of Tapas'. The music continues, now with a soft beat every few bars, as Sanaaz Ma'am explains progressive muscle relaxation – "You will tense each muscle group vigorously," and I decide that this podcast just might be interesting after all.





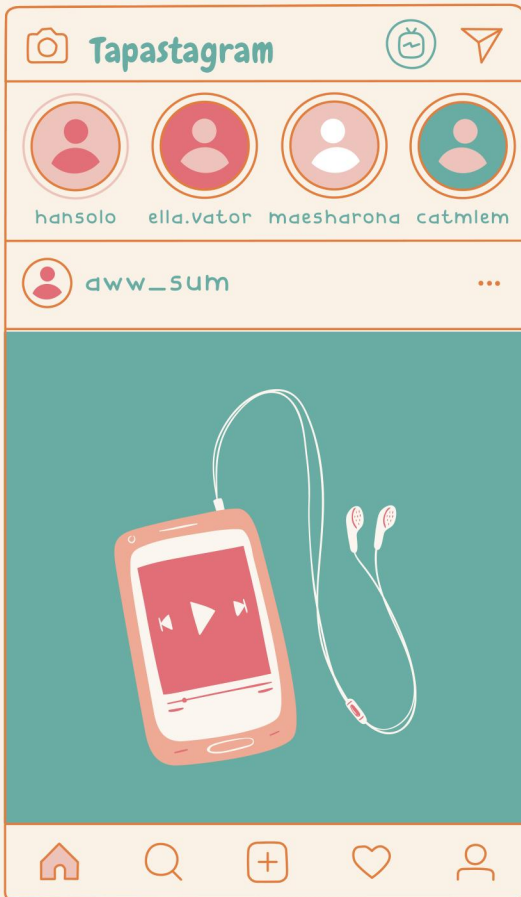
‘Tapas’, according to Wikipedia, is a term for ‘a variety of austere spiritual practices’ in Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism that include meditation and cleansing. It’s a fitting name for Sanaaz Ma’am’s new podcast, which aims to introduce teenagers to guided meditation. Why would teenagers benefit from this? “Research has shown that there are long term impacts of guided meditation, such as changing the brain in ways that protect against mental illness and improve control over emotions,” Ma’am explains. “It also helps one replace their stressful thoughts and anxiety with something positive.”

Tapas is available on multiple platforms, including Anchor, Spotify and Google Podcasts. There are no real prerequisite conditions or instructions on how to listen to it. “Just relax, plug in your earphones and listen. Don’t force yourself or push yourself to follow the voice!” reassures Sanaaz Ma’am.



“Effective guided meditation comes with practice and continuity.”

The podcast is certainly effective. Like most people my age, my exposure to meditation and mindfulness has been limited and often reluctant. While the benefits of meditation have been well established, actually putting it into practice can be boring or frustrating.



The demands on teenagers during lockdown range from physical factors such as headaches, tension and eyestrain, to mental and emotional factors such as stress, anxiety and fatigue. If you're looking for a quick and accessible way to relax and center yourself, Tapas is for you.

**You can find
Tapas on Spotify
or on Anchor**

Tapas, as a podcast, is appealing in its simplicity - there's no elaborate procedure, no esoteric spiritual rambling- just soothing music and clear instructions. I can personally attest to the effectiveness of this podcast. My neck and shoulder pain, resulting no doubt from my dismal sitting posture, was considerably improved by the episode on progressive muscle relaxation, while the episodes on 'Butterfly guided meditation' and 'Peaceful sleep' were great to listen to before bed. I ended up listening to all four episodes that have been released so far.




THE FORGOTTEN WAR

by Kabir Burman

The International Day of Peace is observed annually on the 21st of September. In honour of this UN-sanctioned occasion, Kabir Burman writes about one of the most devastating conflicts of today's world, and the need for a peaceful solution.

“It’s a slow death,” says Yakoub al-Jayefi, a soldier who has not collected a salary in eight months, and whose 6-year-old daughter, Shaima, is being treated for malnutrition at a make-shift clinic. This war has so far resulted in 16,000 casualties (of which more than 1,200 are children), displaced over 3.3 million individuals, and left 18.8 million civilians heavily dependent on humanitarian aid primarily due to a man-made famine. The United Nations has described this conflict as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. No, this article is not focusing on the refugee crisis in Syria or the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya people in Myanmar. Instead, this article is centred around the Middle-Eastern country of the Republic of Yemen. In just over 30 years of its existence, insurrections, conflicts, riots, terrorist attacks and battles have weakened and divided this country. What began as a Revolution, demanding nothing more than equality and representation, has evolved into a bloody civil war exacerbated and sustained by a proxy war between two foreign superpowers. In order to truly understand how we reached this point, we need to look at Yemen’s tangle of sectarian fault lines, the history of its civil war - beginning in the year 1988.





Back in 1988, the modern-day country of Yemen was divided into two separate nations. Towards the south was the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen with its capital in Aden. It was the only communist country in the Middle East, led by a single party and allied with the USSR. Although the country was vast, it was mostly desert and populated by approximately 2.5 million inhabitants. In the north, the Arab Republic of Yemen, whose capital was Sana'a, was an Islamic state. The country had over 7 million inhabitants and was more prosperous compared to its southern neighbour. Then, as the Cold War drew to a close, the USSR, now weakened, reduced financial aid to South Yemen. This pushed the country closer to its neighbour, paving the way for reunification talks. Two years later, in 1990, the Republic of Yemen was born. The former president of North Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had already held power for 11 years, took the reins of the new country.

The former president of South Yemen, Ali Salem al-Beidh, became the vice president, and Sana'a became the capital city. The population was majority Muslim with about 35% Zaidi Shi'ite and 65% Sunnis. However, from the very outset, this union was marred by resentment and misunderstanding. Both parties agreed to unify with the expectation that they would be able to be the dominant force within the new Yemen. The situation was only further worsened when the country took a stand against intervention in Iraq during the Gulf War, causing the West and Arab countries to cut off financial support - a move that devastated the Yemeni economy. With the country in a fiscal crisis, with no improvement in sight, Vice President al-Beidh led the charge to regain independence for South Yemen.

Meanwhile, the nation faced yet another



challenge in the northern region. A religious revival led by Shi'ite communities who believed that it was their duty to fight oppressive ruling governments such as that of Saleh began an insurgency in the North. They name themselves the "Houthi's" after Hassan al-Houthi who was killed by the Yemen army. After a short civil war, the government prevailed over the insurrectionists and the post of vice president was given to the Minister of Defense, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. Although the government was able to quell the separatist movements, the damage done was irrevocable. The country had been destroyed by the revolt in the North, separatists in the South, and extreme poverty and malnourishment.

2011. The death of a produce vendor in Tunisia sparked a revolutionary uprising known today as the Arab Spring. Emboldened by the protests outside their borders, millions of Yemenis took to the streets demanding lower levels of unemployment, a healthier economy, and an end to decades of corruption. Saleh was soon ousted from his office and replaced by Hadi, who promised positive change through his new leadership. Hadi, in an attempt to appeal to his voters, initiated discussions exploring a democratic restructuring of the



Yemen's Former Leader, Held by Rebels, Leaves Capital

February 21, 2015 | The New York Times

government. Two years later, the promised reforms turned out to be weak and the Houthis began to feel resentful, having inherited no political power in their region. The situation soon took a turn for the worse. The Houthis, convinced that they had been marginalized, joined hands with their previous enemy President Saleh, knowing that several portions of the Yemeni Army had remained loyal to him. With the help of military forces, they soon took over the Sana'a and then the city of Aden. Fearing for his life, Hadi abandoned his country and fled to Riyadh where he tried to convince the Saudi monarchy to reinstate him to maintain stability in the region.

It is here, around 2015, that the story becomes incredibly complicated. To truly comprehend the situation at hand, we must look at it from all possible perspectives. Back in 2011, the Saudis were incredibly concerned with the blossoming revolutionary sentiments they found themselves surrounded by - the Arab Spring's calls for democratic institutions posed a significant threat to the status quo of the Saudi monarchy. Not only was their form of governance at risk, but even their very own religious beliefs. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 had toppled the secular Reza Shah's monarchy, replacing it with Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic State.



Up until then, the Saudis had claimed to be the leaders of the Muslim world, mainly because Islam's two holiest sites, Mecca and Medina, were on Saudi Arabian soil. However, Khomeini claimed his popular revolution made Iran the legitimate Muslim state. There was another divide between the two nations; Saudi Arabia's population was and is mostly Sunni, the majority sect of Islam, while Khomeini and Iran were predominantly Shia. Then, a 1980 CIA report, detailed how the Iranians had started helping groups, mostly Shia, to overthrow governments in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia. This development prompted the Saudis to redouble their efforts to oppose Iran. They bolstered their alliance with the United States and formed the Gulf Cooperation Council, which was an alliance with the other Gulf monarchies.

It was this anti-Iranian sentiment which led Saudi Arabia, when reports of Iranian arms support to the Shi'ite Houthi rebels emerged in 2015, to offer Hadi help. The monarchy had a vested interest in curtailing Iranian influence in the region and protecting the vital Bab El-Mandeb Strait, as well as their 1,800-kilometre long southern border with Yemen.

In March, the Saudis, quoting their official purpose as "restoring the internationally recognised legitimate government back to power",

swung into action. Having formed a coalition with the Gulf States, they moved their military forces into Yemen, formed an Air and Sea blockade and began a ruthless aerial bombing campaign against the Houthi rebels. However, reports by the Yemen Data Project state that almost a third of the Saudi-led airstrikes have targeted non-military civilian zones such as schools, hospitals and even funerals. While all of this was going on, the United States entered the region with an aim to exterminate terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and Daesh who had taken advantage of the power vacuum formed.

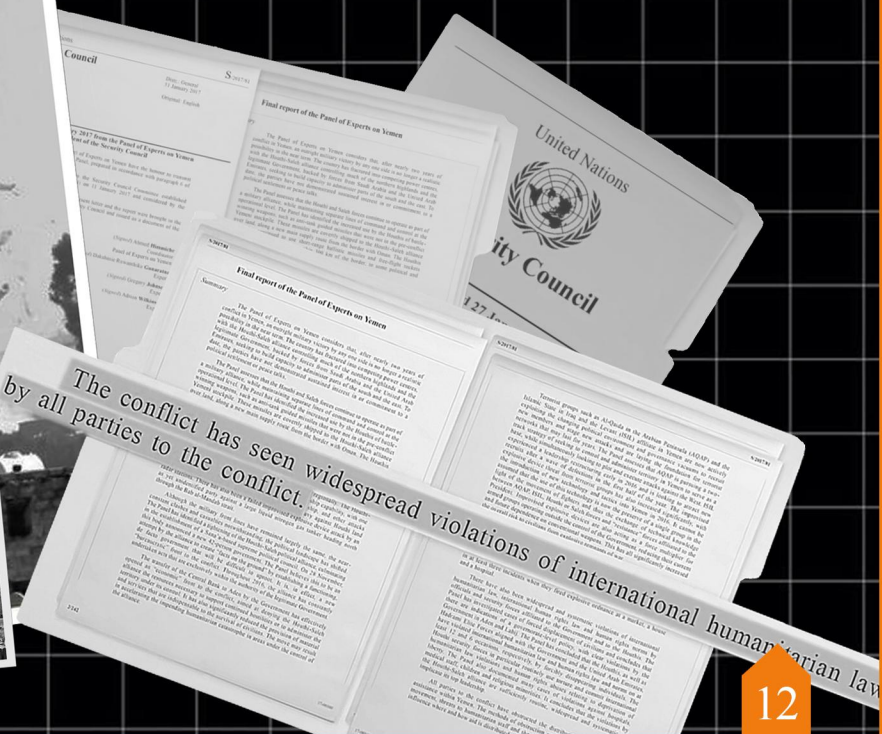
By the end of 2017, the tables appeared to be turning. Former President Saleh, who for months had allied with the Houthis, offered to put an end to the fight with the Saudi-led coalition. However, this move was seen as incredibly treacherous by the rebels. About 48 hours later, Saleh was found dead outside of Sana'a, with the Houthis claiming responsibility for his death. This decision by the rebels was a poorly calculated move, as they now found themselves targeted from all sides. Most of Saleh's supporters turned and became anti-Houthi.





After a brief glimmer of hope, the Gulf Cooperation Council itself now appeared in danger of fragmenting. According to a UNSC report, all members of the coalition were pursuing their own agendas. For instance, the UAE began financially and militarily backing southern separatist movements in efforts to maintain a strategic foothold in the Southern trading ports, crippling the once united campaign against the Houthis. When the Saudi prince Mohammad bin Salman began his venture into Yemen, he thought that the fight would be quicker and that the rebels would come to the negotiating table sooner. It now became clear clear that that calculation has not borne out.

Politics, religion and terrorism have all contributed to this byzantine civil war. Tensions heightened on September 14th in 2019 after a drone strike on the Saudi Aramco refining plant. Iran linked Houthi rebels in Yemen claimed responsibility, which further worsened the situation in the region. The headlines were dominated with talks of the diplomatic repercussions of this event, while the plight of the Yemenis once again faded into the background. While this whole story may seem to come straight out of an episode of Game of Thrones, the reality on the ground is very different. The 28 million Yemenis have time and again been overlooked, with the world choosing to focus on the political aspect over the humanitarian one. But this has to change now. We can no longer afford to watch another elder lose their life to cholera, or another child lose a limb on his way to school due to a bomb being dropped on their bus. For nearly a decade, Yemeni civilians have been bombed, shot at, displaced, starved, and all too often ignored. As domestic and foreign forces battle for the country's future, the fates of tens of millions of Yemenis hang in the balance. Yemen is known throughout the Middle East as "Yemen al-Sa'id" which means "happy Yemen" or "optimistic Yemen." The majority of the Yemeni people really are eager for a resolution, for stability, for peace.



Now more than ever, the illusions of division threaten our very existence.

We all know the truth - more connects us than separates us.

But in times of crisis such as these, the wise build bridges, while the foolish build barriers.

We must find a way to look after one another.

It is time to put aside all other differences and hear the opinion of the primary stakeholders,
the Yemeni citizens themselves.





gleaming

poetry by Anjali Mallampooty

i'd rather live as an empty page
than stain cold white with words
because i'm scared that
you'll laugh at me.



The Beast

By Neha Bhati

Navya looked up at the hole in the wall of the pit.

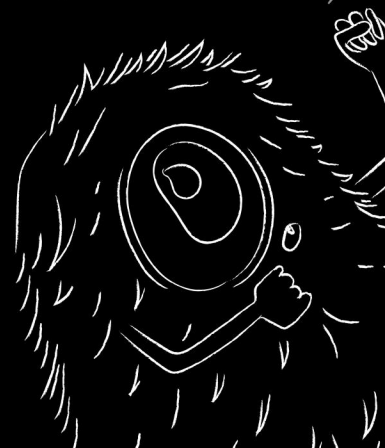
It was far out of reach.

"What do you think?" she asked

Vikram. "I think that this is useless, and that we should just accept the fact that we are going to be eaten by some mythical monster," he said, from his cross-legged position on the sandy ground. Navya sighed, as she surveyed the deep pit once more. It was barely big enough for a small car to fit in. The walls were muddy, and impossible to get a grip on. She looked back at the hole. She and Vikram had

tried every one of their ideas (rather, her ideas) to reach it, but with no success. If her visual map was correct, then the inter dimensional launch pad - or the 'portal', as Vikram called it - would be on the other side of the hole. That was where they had come from - by mistake, of course. It all started when Vikram spotted a crater in the wall of the ruins - well, they weren't really 'ruins', but rather their attempt at making a treehouse that had come out looking like some strange ruined tree structure (hence, 'the ruins').

Going back to what had happened: Vikram, spotting the strange hole in one of the walls of the treehouse, had said, "We really should check out what's through this hole. Maybe it's a magical world! That would be SO cool!" But the moment they entered the hole, they were thrown out of it, right into the Beast's cave. .



Navya had screamed when she saw the Beast. It was HUMONGOUS! She couldn't understand how such a creature could even exist! It wasn't an animal, nor was it human. It wasn't from any of the encyclopedias she had read. Unfortunately, it had been awake. The Beast, grabbing them in its mouth, carried them through a maze-like underground structure, and threw them into the pit. The pit contained billions of skeletons of strange-looking creatures that neither Navya nor Vikram had ever seen before. And then suddenly, Vikram had remarked, "Ha! I have finally proven it, magical creatures do exist!" Navya hadn't believed him, replying that everything had scientific backing. This must've been some sort of interdimensional portal. When Vikram raised the objection, "Fine. Even if that's true, what is the Beast, and these other skeletons?" Navya had answered with the word "hybrids." At that, Vikram

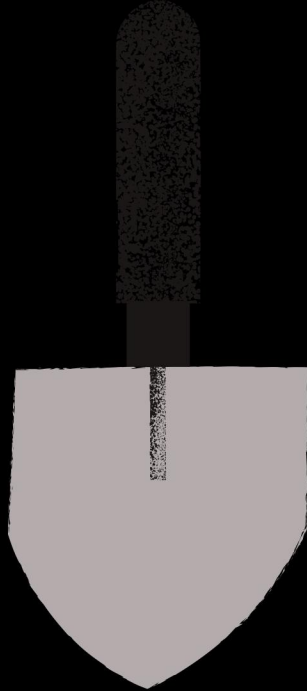
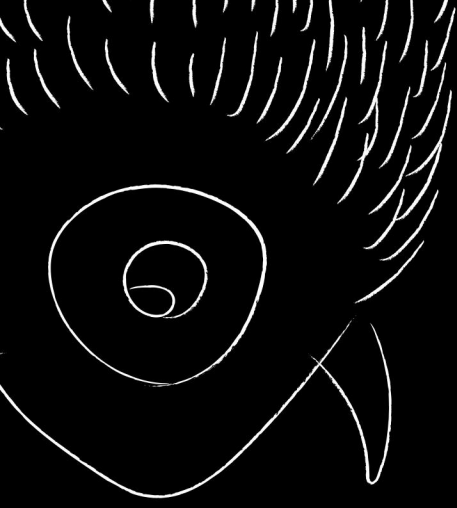
had begun **to grumble** about how having friends from **scientific backgrounds** was utterly pointless and what a **'non-believer'** Navya was. Navya did come from a **scientific background**: both her parents were scientists. She never **believed in magic**, and **never** understood why Vikram was **so crazy about it**. "Come on Vikram," she hissed at him, **"think of something!"** She walked around the perimeter of the pit, tracing her hand across the wall, leaving a line in the wet mud. "I won't give you any ideas until you say **magic is real**," he said, in his annoying and **moody** voice, sticking his chin in the air.

Navya pondered over this for a moment. Vikram rarely had good ideas, and if she **did agree with him**, then he would hold it **against her** for her entire life. But, in **that moment**, since the Beast was about **to eat them up**, she was desperate enough to even try the worst of ideas.



“Fine. Magic is real,” she said glumly. Now at least will you tell me your idea?” Vikram got up, and walked right under the hole. He was taller between the two of them, but the hole was still nearly twice his height. He picked up a few big and strong-looking bones from the sandy ground, and stuck them into the wall. One by one, he poked them into the wall, one above the other, with about thirty to forty centimeters between each of the bones. **“YOU’RE A GENIUS!”** Navya exclaimed, as she ran up to Vikram. He was grinning. **“Magic!”** He said, as he started to hold one bone and climb up, towards the hole. **“It isn’t real. I just said that for the sake of it,”** she said, following him. But she couldn’t wipe the smile off her face. The Beast wouldn’t get them! It hadn’t even come! Vikram entered the hole. He held out a hand, so that she could get into the hole, but she pushed it away. **“I am perfectly capable of doing this by myself,”** she said, climbing into the hole, landing face-first in the mud. **“Well, judging by how slow you climb, it certainly doesn’t seem like it,”** he teased. **Navya pulled her face out of the mud, and wiped it with her handkerchief. She looked up, searching for Vikram, but she couldn’t see a thing. It was pitch-black in the tunnel behind the hole. “Vikram?” she called out to her friend, through the emptiness. “I’m right here!” he called back, from somewhere ahead. She tried to locate him, his black hair and brown eyes in stark contrast to his light blue pants and yellow shirt. But she could barely see a thing. “I really think that you should lead the way,” he said. “After all, you’re the one who knows the way to the chamber.”**





Navya nodded, even **though she knew** he couldn't see her.

She crawled **through the middle of** the tunnel, and brushed past Vikram. **She continued** to crawl through the tunnel, hoping that **he was following**. It was as though the tunnel had silenced **both of them**. Navya didn't speak at all.

Even Vikram, who **would have certainly** been chattering continuously about **how magic was real**, and how Navya was wrong, wasn't **saying a word**. It was almost as though they couldn't speak, **though she knew** that was a very silly thought. She and **Vikram crawled** through the tunnel, in the same uncanny **silence**. Finally, Navya saw a sliver of light coming from **ahead**. "**Light!**" she whispered, breaking the silence. Navya **heard Vikram's feet** hitting the ground harder, and in a **quicker rhythm**. **Just as** they were about to reach the end of **the tunnel**, Navya stopped. "The Beast may be awake. We should **check before** moving ahead," she

whispered to him. **She turned her head** around. He was vigorously nodding. **Slowly, she crawled** towards the mouth of the tunnel, **and peeked out**. The Beast was there, but it was definitely **sleeping**. **Slowly crawling** backwards, she whispered to Vikram, "The Beast is there, but it's sleeping. We may make it!" "**Right...but** first could I click a picture of it?" Vikram **asked**. "**Do you not want to get out of here alive?**" Navya **asked, glaring at him**. Vikram looked sheepish as he followed **her towards** the end of the tunnel.

It had been going **downhill**, so she already knew that getting out of it would **be no problem**. She slid her feet in front of her, and **hopped onto the ground**, which was right below her. **Vikram followed her lead**.

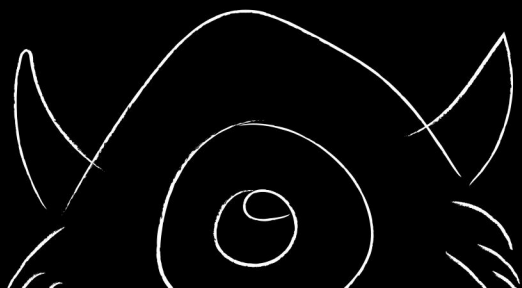


“Okay. Now we need to find the portal,” Navya whispered to Vikram. He nodded. Slowly, she surveyed the giant chamber. It was as big as... Navya couldn’t think of a comparison. It was just too humongous to comprehend. Maybe the size of fifty football fields? She wasn’t sure. In the distance, through a window which was the size of two Olympic sized swimming pools, she saw the Beast. It looked like nothing she had ever seen.

Vikram had said that it was a griffin crossed with a dragon. She could see the resemblance. It had dragon wings, but the body of a griffin. Its claws were of a dragon’s, but its tail was that of a griffin’s. “FOUND IT!” Vikram shouted, from behind her. Navya saw the Beast spreading its cavernous wings, as it got up on all fours. It looked down at them and roared. It was like nothing Navya had ever felt before. The roar of the Beast made her freeze in her spot.

She couldn’t even scream. She felt like a statue, stuck in the same position. The only sign that she was alive was the fact that her heart was pounding against her rib cage, threatening to break it. The Beast lumbered towards her and Vikram. Its big brown eyes looked terrifying and non-human. It sent a shiver down her spine just to look at it, as it opened its beak to roar once more. “THE PORTAL!”

Vikram shouted to her. She unfroze, as she remembered the portal. She spun on her heels, and ran towards a hole in the wall - the one that resembled the hole in the ruins. She could feel the Beast behind her, the wind from its leaps hitting her, nearly making her trip. The last thing she heard was the Beast’s roar as she leaped into the portal, right behind Vikram.



Climbing the Financial Ladder

A guest lecture by Mr. Sampath Iyengar



On 8th September Mr. Sampath Iyengar, global CEO, Investor and Chairman of Metavalue Advisors, gave us an insight into the world of stock markets and trading. The session kicked off with the topic of equity - the definition and types of equity, including common equity and preference equity.

Next, Mr. Iyengar used a clever analogy to explain how risk and returns are two sides of the same coin, the edge of the coin being liquidity. Next, he informed us of the difference between investors and traders when it came to their time horizons, mindsets, approaches and the importance of

diversification. He then introduced us to indexes and how they help us understand how a market is moving, providing examples such as Nifty 50, DJIA and FTSE. And lastly, he walked us through how to invest in the stock market and told us about the AIM method - Asses, Invest, Monetize.

As Dia Menon from Grade II put it, “This session sparked an interest in trading and stock markets in me, after researching and with help from my father, I have invested in mutual funds and am excited to see what comes next.”



~ the *Business Studies*
class of Grade II



When asked about the lecture, Ayushi Mishra of Class 12B said, “When I first joined the lecture, I was prepared to be absolutely clueless. However, once Mr. Iyengar started explaining all the concepts of stock markets - what they are, how they work, and how we can invest in them - I was absolutely amazed. I didn’t expect such a relevant and important concept to be so fascinating. The way Mr. Iyengar explained the concepts was extremely informative and, being a commerce student myself, it was easy for me to pick up on what he was teaching.

My favourite moment of the session was when he used a meme to explain the topic “buy the dip”. I think that really grabbed our attention and helped us relate to the concept more.”

Mehr Sokhanda of Class 12C mentioned that she loved how towards the end of the session, they had an extremely engaging and interactive discussion about how investing is more of a “calculative risk”.

In addition, Sneha Gupta said she realised the impact of the pandemic on the market value and stocks of businesses.

The guest lecture was one of the most interesting sessions we have attended and we are extremely thankful to Mr. Iyengar for sharing his insights with us.



~ the *Business Studies*
class of Grade 12

To Hold a Star In Your Hands

a story short by Nandika Mishra

...

“Strange things, they are, dreams. Anything can happen. You can make anything happen.”

That’s what she told me once, as I sat on my knees, tongue sticking out, utterly focused on building my sandcastle. Not many other people were at the beach that day, so it was easy to recall. If I strained, I could remember that she had a forlorn look on her face, gazing out into the endless depths of the ocean.

But then she turned to me, ruffled my hair, and smiled. I swear, her smile could save anyone.

“Don’t let anyone tell you not to follow your dreams, ok?” When I looked up at her, I could see the sun reflecting off her skin, bouncing into my eyes. The glare was harsh, and I turned away, pouting. Her laugh was loud; it was booming; it was resounding.

...

She was proud of the things I did. Meagre as they were, she was proud nonetheless. And that made me proud to do it. If I wasn’t doing it for myself, I would do it for her. At least someone would be happy then.





I know because I saw the way her eyes shone, whenever I brought back a certificate, no matter if it was a rare occurrence or not. I saw the way she kept them all tucked away in a drawer, even the ones from first grade, never throwing any of them away. Always treasuring each and every one of them. It was the only reason I was ok with being me.

...

I didn't hear the call come in. I was too busy jamming out in my room, to my favorite band, in solitude.

I didn't hear the call come in.

...

I held her hand constantly. I never wanted to let go. How could I? It only took one look at her pale face, her worn-out eyes, the thin wrinkles, and the tired smile, to realize how much I wanted to curl up in a ball and never leave her side.

That smile. I thought it could save lives.

And that monitor. Constantly beeping, my god. I just wanted it to shut up.

I just wanted to go home. With her.

She murmured, "I'm just going to close my eyes for a little bit. Don't worry..."

She squeezed my hand tighter, and I squeezed back. I lay down over her stomach, my head devoid of thought.

The clouds blocked out the sun that day. As they do on a rainy day.

...

Why was I surprised by the outcome? I shouldn't have been. It was obviously going to happen.

My eyes, the ones she used to call 'sparkling with joy,' were dead now. My laughter, which she used to say "always made her happy," where had it gone? I don't know. Don't ask me.

The bouquet in my hands was filled with crimson roses and carnations, because that's what the florist told me to take. It didn't matter to me.

The sun was out. I glanced up, squinting at it.

Don't let anyone tell you not to follow your dreams, she had said.

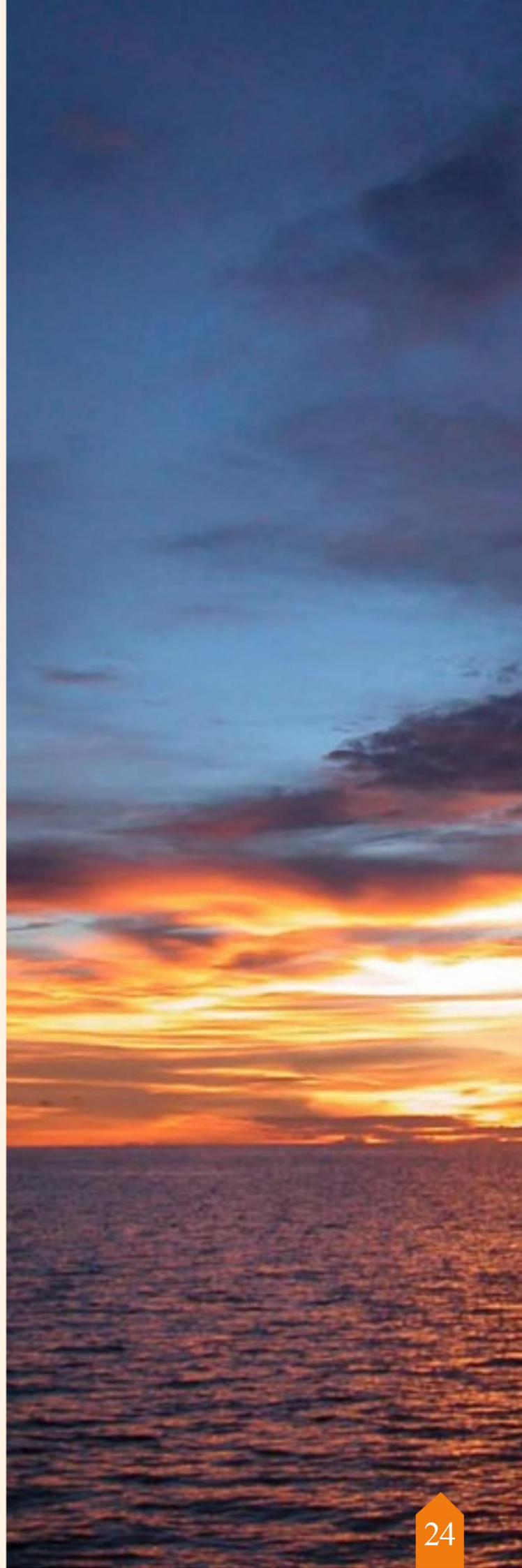
I was tired, though. What if I was too tired to follow my dreams? Then what, huh? I plopped back down, in front of her. In front of her name. "I think I'll just rest here for a while. You don't mind, right? Just let me rest..."

I wouldn't stay there forever. I couldn't do that to her. I had to make her proud, right? But I wanted to stay for as long as I could. As long as I could feel her warm gaze on me, I was happy. Even if it was only temporary.

Maybe before leaving, I could tell her about my day. About how I was doing, and what was going on in my life.

Yeah, that sounds nice. She would want to hear about it, wouldn't she?

I think she would.





VOICE OF THE PRIMARY

THE LEOPARD

POETRY BY AAYUSH LIHARI

A large wild creature
yellow and black
with spots on their sides
prowling animals
Living in trees
That live in the wild

They make a tree
Their very own bed
And mark it with their claws
They eat there, sleep there
Guard there, hunt there
with their teeth and paws

They chase mice
Eat Deer
Sometimes even snakes
They can run fast
Swift like wind
An antelope they'd overtake

A famous creature,
panthera pardus
A fascinating sight to see
For the leopard is here!
A majestic creature
wouldn't you all agree?

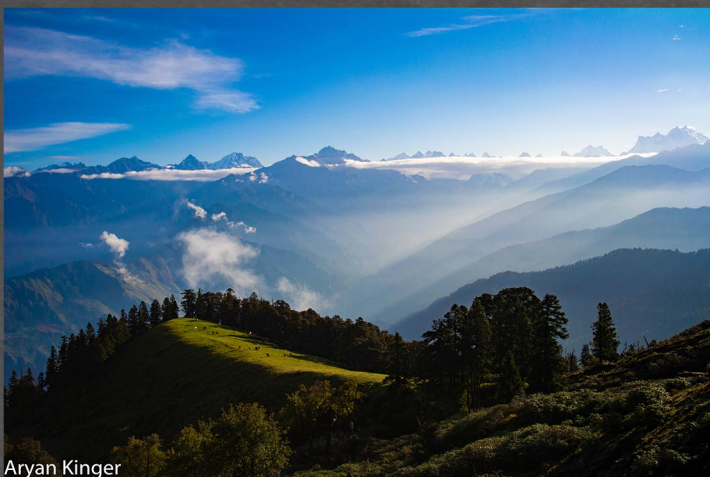
photography



by Tanay Matiyani
Class 11



by Shreesh Madhwal
Class 12



Aryan Kinger

by Aryan Kinger
Class 12

a R T



by Myra Jain



Headache
Oil on Canvas

An anonymous submission

On Roundsquare Global Conferences

*By Anika
Ratakonda*

There's nothing I love more than sleeping. I wouldn't wake up early if someone offered me a hundred dollars. Yet, I found myself stumbling out of bed at 7 in the morning (yes, that is early), when it's cold and the sky is barely blue, to attend this event: the Roundsquare Global Conference. These biweekly events are online meetings which congregate students from different countries around the world (Chile, Ghana, Australia, USA, and New Zealand, to name a few) in order to discuss topics of importance in today's world. So far, these discussions have included themes such as stigma, education systems, and the entertainment industry. Organised by students, for students, these meetings foster enlightening conversations with varied perspectives from across the globe.

So, what are these conferences like? I expected my first conference to be formal, almost solemn, but I was pleasantly surprised.

Everyone quickly warmed up to each other and dynamic discussions ensued. The conversation about education systems was eye-opening since it brought in viewpoints from several different countries. The atmosphere was casual and easy and there were no strict guidelines on what had to be discussed.



ROUND
SQUARE

In one particular breakout room, we even played a game that was completely unrelated to the topic at hand. That was the best part - while there was a discussion guide, we had the liberty to stray from it and talk about anything at all. At the end, it wasn't so much a meeting with peers as it was a meeting with friends. Sahana, who attended the conference on stigma, summed it up perfectly: *"I attended my first Roundsquare conference at 5:30 am on a Thursday with my eyes drooping and my mind not fully awake yet. But by the end of it, I'd made new friends, I'd engaged in conversations more stimulating than my morning coffee, and I couldn't wait for the next Thursday to come."* These conferences help you be a part of a global community, understand topics from differing perspectives, connect with a diverse range of people (which is particularly welcome during this pandemic that leaves us all homebound), and even possibly create a discussion guide for one of the conferences! There is no preparation required and it is possible to join anytime, even having missed the first few conferences. In addition to the conferences, the Roundsquare community brings many more events to the table, such as Bliss yoga, Art and Artists, Meraki and Firgun, Savoire Faire, and the Resilience Conference. They truly bring a barrage of opportunities your way!

If you're interested in joining, please contact Anvay (Anvay.das@inventureacademy.com) or Preet ma'am (Preet@inventureacademy.com)



ATHAZAGORAPHOBIA

(n.) the fear of forgetting, being forgotten or ignored, or being replaced

by Mallika Venkatesh

The third month of every fifth year, in the darkest night and the shortest day. When the sky glows with a blood moon and when the pinhole stars shine with the luster of a thousand metals. Amongst the fragments of weathered and broken dreams, formed by the norm of society. When the waters at your feet beckon you to come closer, to take another step, to go in just a little deeper. When the air hangs still with anticipation and when the air in front of you steams with your very breath.

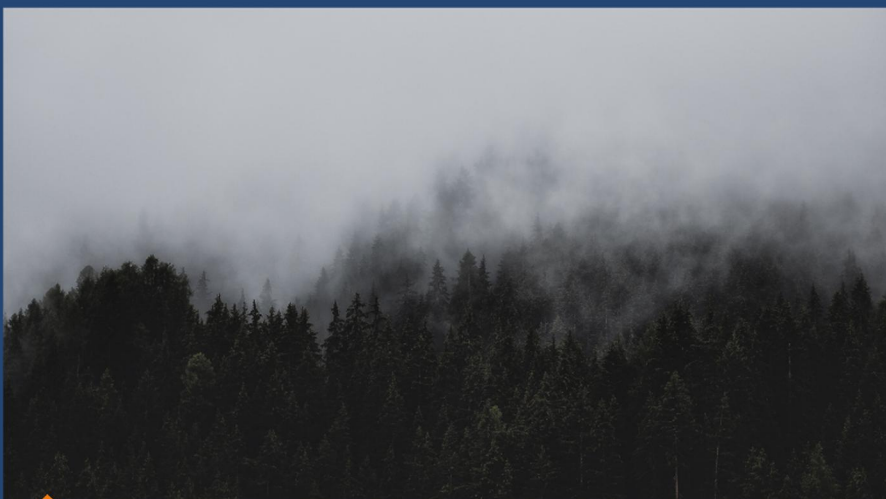
Only then, will you see them.

Walking amongst the dreams with the cloth of their dress floating around their legs, their long, pale arms swaying back and forth, their fingers moving to an unbearable beat. The small steps imprinting on the ground, creating a trail that many have followed in vain. Even with the slightest of winds, their darker than black hair floating in the wind, almost inseparable from the ink sky above them.

Many have looked for them. Many have failed. Only a grain of sand in all the world has succeeded. Only the smallest amount of dust on the sand have had their wishes fulfilled. But none have come back from the venture.

Once you have found them, they will stop where they are and will not move unless you take another step forward. Their head will tilt to you. You will look at their feet, for their face is not to be seen. You will take two more steps farther. Any more, and you will never again remember the touch of life. Then, you will feel a cold feeling over your body. As you do, reach into your right pocket and pull out your sacrifice. It would be best to prepare it beforehand as, if you spill your blood in front of them, you are inviting them far too close.

With every drop of blood spilled before their feet, you are inviting them to take more and more of your soul. Until you are a hollow husk of bones and leather, they will not stop

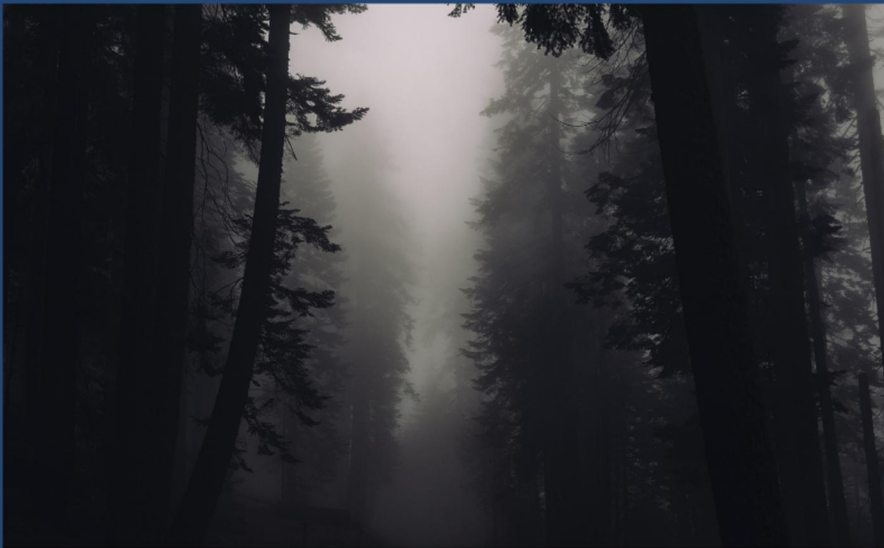


Do not spill your blood in front of them.

Offer your sacrifice with your right hand as that is what you do to earn the respect of the being.

If the humanoid (although, not to be confused with an ordinary mortal) will reach out their left hand to take your offer and if you hear the lowest of hisses in the still night, you will keep your head down to the ground and pray to your beliefs that your death would be merciful.

However, if they reach with a right hand, be relieved but do not look up in thanks.

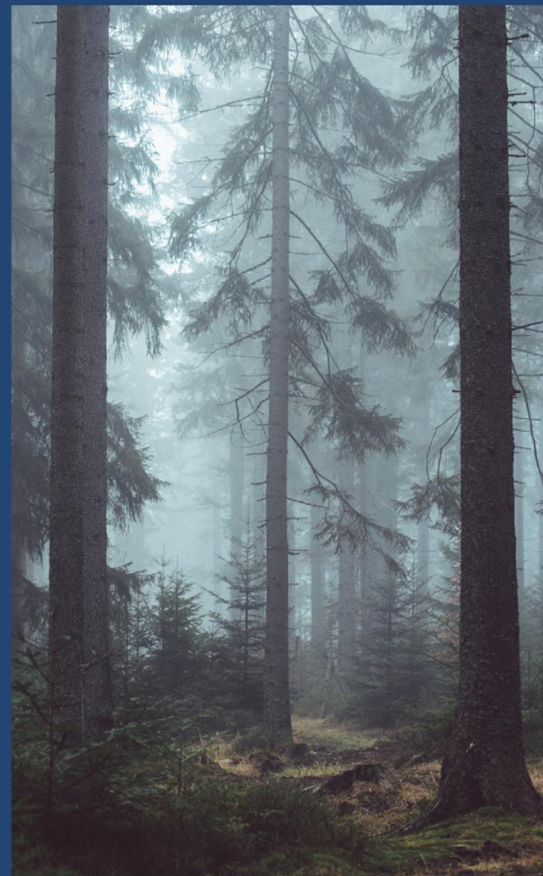


If your sacrifice was met by the right hand, once its weight is gone from your palm, you will stand up. They will start to walk away at a certain pace (depending on the weight of your sacrifice) and you will follow it. If your sacrifice was small or minute, they will walk at a pace unseen before, too fast for the normal eye but just slow enough for you to see them. If your sacrifice was large and

significant, they will walk slower, to accommodate for your loss. They will walk and walk and walk. You must keep pace with them and not slow down. You must not stumble or falter.

If, however, you are not physically adept and trip over the soles of your shoes, they will turn around, just once. If you lose your footing over a stray rock, you will see their profile as they raise their hand. If your legs give out from under you, you will see claws growing from their paperwhite nails. If your breaths comes out heavy and you lose sight of them, you will feel a ripping in your chest and liquid running down your front. If you fall to the ground with your strength leaving you, you will see a shadow standing over you and feel a burning in your eyes.

If you manage to keep up with them at their varying speeds, they will lead you to a cove, hidden away behind the thick trunks of trees and dense bushes. They will part way for you as if they already know your destination. They will continue to walk forward, going closer, and closer to the water.



As you reach the boundaries between, the water will shine with an ethereal blue, illuminating the foliage and brightening the surroundings. They will stand by the edge of the water with their feet barely touching the liquid. They will hand you back your sacrifice and you will take it with your left hand.

Not your right.

Hold your sacrifice in your left hand and stand to the left of them. Throw your sacrifice into the waters and watch it fall. Keep your eyes on it as it descends. Keep your eyes on it as you see it fading from view. Keep your eyes on it as you feel hands on your shoulder. Keep your eyes on it as you sit down, in arms reach from the waters.

They will sit beside you, close enough to hear the smallest of breaths from their mouth, but far enough that you couldn't touch them.

Again, do not look at them.

Keep your eyes on your sacrifice.

"What is it you wish?" Their voice will be light and airy. It will be filled with innocence and longing. It will be the voice that wishes to explore, that wishes to journey around the world in search of new things. It will be the voice that wishes to be free of all worldly anchors, who wishes to stay amongst the stars and swim amongst the largest of animals. Their voice will make you long for an adventure, running through green fields and rolling in the wildflowers.

You will not move.

You will not answer.

It is the voice of the mother.

"What is it you wish?" Their voice will be low and rough. It will be the voice that has conquered nations and brought armies down to their feet. It is the voice of a being who resents its existence, the voice of contempt and hatred. Their voice will send shivers down your spine and will make you itch on your neck. It is a voice that will make your heart beat harder and faster. It is a voice that will make you want to run.

You will not move.

You will not answer.

It is the voice of the crone.

"What do you want from me?" Now, this is the voice to which you answer. It is the voice that has resigned itself to its fate. It is the voice that is heard in the whispers of the night, telling you to take one more step forward, to swallow one more pill, to light the fire, to let the rope around you tighten, to stay in the water, to breathe the toxic air, to cut your wrists. It is the voice that



wishes all beings be safe from its claws. Their voice will make you want to step into the water until all sounds are muffled, to take one more breath, to let yourself fade into the darkness.

You will stand your ground.

You will tell them your wish.

Do not look at them.

Keep your eyes on the sacrifice.

Speak clearly and do not falter in your words.

Do not wish for something that will benefit you. It will do you no good. They will not find it a worthy gift and you will not live much longer for you to benefit from it.

If you feel sorry for them, if you pity them, if you worry about them, if you want them to be free, you will make a mistake. Your words will fade away momentarily before you are reminded of the rules of which you must follow. You are reminded of the palm trees that bare no fruits and the bushes which bear no berries. You are reminded of the rule that states you will not falter in your words. You are reminded of why many seek out them, why many believe that only they can fulfill their wish. If you wish them to be free, you will not survive for much longer.

If you wish for a wish that will benefit the many, there is a greater chance of them finding it worthy. If they decide to not grant your wish, you will find yourself walking towards the water of the cove with no way of stopping.

If they decide to grant your wish, they will say only one thing.

"I wish to be remembered. Will you remember me?" You will nod and say 'yes'. They will hold out their hand for you. You must take it in your right hand.

Once you do, you will see images. Images and visions of flowers grown in dreams that can't come true. You will experience growing up, playful innocence, blissful ignorance. As you grow, you will notice the war around you and you will start to feel the fear that every victim feels. As you reach adulthood, you will be a part of the war. You will fight for what society believes to be right, not for what you believe to be right.

In the end, you were brought down by a stray arrow from your own side. You were brought down in the enemy territory and your belief dies with you.

As the images fade, only then are you allowed to see their face. You will look up from the ground. You will see their face and you will be in awe.

For you have never seen anything of such beauty before.

It would be a crime to describe it in the words of a mortal.

"I am being forgotten," They will say and they will guide you closer to the water. You will follow without a word. "I am being forgotten. I must be remembered."

Do not respond.

"I must be remembered." Their voice will turn hard and they will look at you in the eye. "Will you remember me?"

"Yes. I will remember you."

Then they will smile a criminally soft smile that makes your inside dissolve and makes your heart beat faster. They will hold your hand tighter and pull you forward until your back is to the water in the cove and you are looking straight into their indescribable eyes.

"Thank you."

You will feel two hands on your shoulders and a force as you fall back. You will feel the cold wind biting your ears as you fall an impossible distance. You will not be able to speak a word as you fall backward. You will feel the harsh slap of the water against your back. You will see the shining water envelope you in its much-needed embrace.

You will not, for one moment, take your eyes off of them. You will keep your eyes on their figure, no matter how far away it seems. When you hit the water, you will see their smile fade into a twisted snarl, taking over their ethereal features. You will see them leap at you and then, only then, will you close your eyes.



When you feel the water over your head, you will open your mouth and take one long breath. For when you drown into its waters, it is much easier to take in one long breath than wait for the burning need of oxygen.

When your vision begins to fade and you feel your heart beating just the slightest bit slower, the water will stop shining and all becomes still.

You will feel a tugging sensation at the bottom of your being and you will know the secret behind them. You will know the secret as you slowly float through the water and fly above the cove. You will know their secret as you float closer to the prone being on the surface of the water. You will know their secret as you feel your being binds itself to them. You will know their secret as they stumble to the edge of the water, where the waters met the fragments. You will know their secret as you feel your arms reach up to the fading blood moon and grasp at the air. You will know their secret as you peer over the edge of the water and see them staring back at you.

For they are not gods. They never were. They are the ones who have no connections to the world, the ones who have faded dreams and the ones who were deemed crazy for pursuing them. They are the ones who were shoved away by society. They are the ones who pounded on the walls of the four-walled box. They are the ones who knew of the world beyond. They are the ones who pushed away all they knew and chased after the dream. They are the ones who broadened the four-walled box and they are the ones who understood their universe better than any other living creature.

And they are you.



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