EDITION 2023

A MAGAZINE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE

EPISTEME

Photo Story
Mujh Jaisi

A platonic dialogue
Eudaimonia



It brings me great delight to inform you that Jamia Millia Islamia's Department of Political Science has agreed to issue
the publication of Episteme's fourth issue. The journal will serve as a venue for dialogue, argument, variety, and originality. It will promote creativity and opinion and create a lively public place for both students and professors.

I want to extend my congratulations and best wishes to the magazine board and all of the students who participated in this outstanding project.



Professor Muslim Khan
Head of the Department of Political Science
Jamia Millia Islamia

FOREWORD


Photograph by Adnan Hasan Khan

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I introduce the long-awaited edition of Episteme, the departmental magazine, which has finally emerged after a two-year hiatus. As the title suggests, Episteme aims to serve as a dynamic platform for both students and teachers to express themselves in a diverse range of academic and non-academic realms. Furthermore, it endeavors to illuminate the socio-cultural fabric that intertwines with the field of political science within our esteemed department. The contributors to this edition of Episteme predominantly comprise our talented student body, whose intellectual prowess and creative expressions have breathed life into the magazine's pages. Notably, we are honored to include a special contribution from Prof. Rumki Basu, the esteemed former head of the department of political science, whose wisdom and insights continue to inspire us.

The creation and continuous publication of this magazine owes much gratitude to the unwavering dedication of our department's subject association. Through their tireless efforts, they have triumphed over numerous obstacles, upholding the legacy of yesteryears and delivering this year's remarkable edition. I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Prof. Mohammad Muslim Khan, the current head of the department, for his wholehearted support of the subject association in this noble endeavour.

In recognition of their invaluable contributions, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the editors of Episteme: Annie Pruthi, Roopambica Tripathy, Durdanah Masoodi, Somya Sharma, Anam Khan, Mohd Wali Akhter, and R Nilay Nirupam. Their exceptional skills and unwavering commitment have brought this magazine to fruition. Additionally, I extend my sincere thanks to Medha Singh and Zainab Fatima for their meticulous efforts in designing and infusing the magazine with aesthetic brilliance.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to all those who have played their unique roles in the successful completion of this project. Each contribution, no matter how small, has contributed to the culmination of this labor of love. Your dedication and enthusiasm have ensured that Episteme shines as a beacon of intellectual exchange within our academic community.

With warm regards,

Krishna Swamy Dara
Student Advisor, Department of Political Science

FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to The Episteme 2023, an annual magazine by the Department of Political Science.

In this issue, we are thrilled to bring you a collection of insightful articles, captivating tales, and thought-provoking features that embody the spirit and essence of our students. This year we bring to you a blend of opinions, thoughts, and heartfelt emotions, that reflect the diversity of our department. While a few chose to battle up thoughts of vivid realities on the canvas of pen and paper, inked with expressions of diversity; others refresh memories from the pages of history into descriptive thought. As you flip through the pages, you will discover shades of every Jamian. Though some have tried to relate it to their academic field, predominantly we see students moving beyond that to express themselves. Each piece is thought-provoking and attempts to promote learning and critical thinking.

We would like to express our deepest appreciation and regard to our student body advisor, Dr. Krishnaswamy Dara. His unwavering support, guidance, and belief in us brought out the best in each member of this team. His constant efforts to make this department a thriving center for inclusive deliberation and collaborative initiatives inspired us greatly.

Furthermore, we extend our sincere gratitude to the contributors - faculty members, students, and ex-students, who were instrumental in making this magazine possible. We thank them for chipping in their time, wisdom, and skills to bring forth a magazine that is not only informative but also soul-stirring.

The editorial board of the magazine composed of editors, designers, and photographers has poured their heart into this issue. This publication is a testament to the unwavering dedication and perseverance of our team.

We believe that creativity and self-expression are essential components of a holistic education, and we are proud to provide a platform for our fellow students to showcase their unique voices. We invite our readers to engage with the magazine, share their thoughts and become active participants in the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and stories.

We hope you enjoy this issue of our department magazine.

Regards,
The Editorial Board.

EDITORS

Annie Pruthi
Roopambica Tripathy
Durdanah Masoodi
Somya Sharma
Anam Khan
R Nilay Nirupam
Tuba Qureshi
Mohd Wali Akhtar
Ekta Adhikari

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Mantonama *by Tooba Khan*

EPISTEME

2023

MEMORIES OF A FRIEND

WRITTEN BY
PROFESSOR RUMKI BASU

> From my earliest meetings with her, it was fairly apparent to me that Savitri was a woman of tremendous brilliance, grit and determination who had overcome severe personal and professional challenges to keep herself going

My first meeting with Dr. K. Savitri was in Janki Devi Memorial College in the year 1995 where she served as an adhoc lecturer for a few months, before she joined Jamia Millia Islamia as an Assistant Professor in January 1996. It was the beginning of a friendship that was to continue for the next 25 years, though we met intermittently between 1996 to 2005, employed as we were in separate institutions. When I joined the Department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia as a Professor of Public Administration after serving two decades in the Department of Political Science in Janki Devi Memorial College, we finally became colleagues in the same Department for the next 16 years. Her husband Dr. Abdulrahim Vijapur (my contemporary) who worked in Aligarh Muslim University, Dr. Savitri (12 years my junior in age) and I had one denominator in common: we had been awarded doctoral degrees from CIPOD, SIS, JNU at different points of time.

From my earliest meetings with her, it was fairly apparent to me that Savitri was a woman of tremendous brilliance, grit and determination who had overcome severe personal and professional challenges to keep herself going and continue with her academic



**Prof. Rumki Basu (left) was a Professor of Public Administration, Department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia (2005-2021). Currently, she is a Senior Fellow and Head, Centre for Public Policy and Governance, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi.*

pursuits, quest for knowledge and her commitments for professional growth. She had a sharp mind, a sparkle in her eyes, and a ready wit which distinguished her from all others I knew. When I joined Jamia as Professor of Public Administration in the Department of Political Science in 2005, our destinies intertwined for the next 16 years. Ironically, we both vacated our posts in the Department in the year 2021. I left because I was superannuated in May 2021, from Jamia Millia Islamia. After 25 years of service in Jamia, Covid took Savitri away as serving Head and Professor in the Department of Political Science on April 22, 2021. This uncanny coincidence of two friends leaving the Department around the same time, is something that I have never been able to "get over" with, or reconcile in the last two years. In the sixteen years that we were together, in the Department of Political Science Jamia, Savitri was by my side in everything I did -encouraging me, advising me, cautioning me and a reassuring smile from her was enough to keep me going because she was the kind of friend who would not only fight your battles as her own but also lend you an umbrella to cover yourself with, against the sun or rain as the case may be on a particular day. She would never let her friends down or suffer any wrong or injustice even if that led her to become unpopular without any fault of hers. This is a fact that will be corroborated by another friend of hers, Dr. Vivek Dubey, who was her best friend in the university for 2 decades, standing by her as a rock in good times and bad. When I had to coordinate the Special Assistance Programme (SAP) of UGC for my Department for five years (2016-2021) we virtually planned everything together to fulfill the mandate of SAP.

Selecting Visiting Professors, organizing seminars (national and international) and purchasing Departmental library books for all three M.A. Programme students of the Department. She aided and assisted me in everything, giving away her time so generously for the Department.

It was not as though we never had differences of opinion, in fact we had so many. She was very blunt and honest if she disapproved of anything and she would not spare anyone, not even those who were considered close to her. But that was her style. She would rarely budge from a position she believed was right. In any university forum, I noticed that she stood out for her sharp and analytical arguments backed by data and research. Even if she had no supporter, she was always vocal for the causes she stood and strategized for, she was an activist in every sense of the word. When she joined as Visiting Chair Professor in Singapore in 2016, she promptly invited me to visit and stay with her in her university flat. She wanted me to come and stay for a month, I went for a week to visit her. However, in that short period, she took me around and we would cover the whole city of Singapore (walking or by bus) - sightseeing, shopping and eating out in restaurants where she insisted that I should have my favorite non-vegetarian food since she could not cook the same in her kitchen for me. Savitri was a strict vegetarian, who used to constantly joke with me that it was difficult to satisfy a Bengali when it comes to different kinds of cuisine. I have treasured her gifts to me over the years, because they reflected her thoughtful aesthetics and a very evolved ethnic taste. She was an extremely discerning buyer and her choice of books purchased for the Departmental library in Human Rights showed her versatile and

voracious reading on the subject. She built the Human Rights section of the Department and her inputs into the Human Rights M.A. Programme (teaching, research and revision of courses) was extremely enriching. When she became the Head of the Department in January 2021 (Covid times), she worked with an amazing speed, putting new energy to the online classes, getting the office shifted (with impeccable logic), revamping the classrooms, and systematizing office procedures. I can never forget the period January 2021 – April 2021. She was the HoD of Political Science and I was the Centre Chairperson, Jawaharlal Nehru Studies Centre of Jamia. We met almost every alternate day in Political Science department after office hours, where I listened to her plans to revitalize the department by . I realized that she was working very hard and I warned her not to over stress herself and ruin her health. It was Covid times and she was coming to the department every day, though HoDs in Jamia were working from home. She seemed to be in a hurry to do things her way and accelerate the pace of change in the Department. Looking back, I now feel she had a premonition of her destiny that she had very little time in her hands. I owe my greatest intellectual debt to her for my recently revised book on ***"THE UNTIED NATIONS: In the New Millennium"***, which I have dedicated to her. At one point of time, we were to have co-authored the revised edition. However, after she became HoD, realizing that she wouldn't find the time, she gave me a detailed new chapterization plan for the book, indicating a roadmap for a major revision. She was truly an expert on International Organization and had taught the paper for years in the Department. Her last publication was a chapter in my 2021 edited book ***"Democracy and Public Policy in the Post-Covid-19 World: Choices and Outcomes".*** During the launch of this book (during Covid times), I found it again so unreal that she was not physically present to receive a copy of my edited book given to all chapter contributors. In every Book Discussion (held in different parts of India) I would begin by saying that her absence is some times not missed by me because she has such a visible presence in my mind. Every day, when I go and sit in my new office room in the Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, my chair faces the opposite book shelf and Savitri greets me with her inimitable smile in the photograph on the shelf. She had a wonderful family. Her husband Prof. Abdulrahim Vijapur was our family friend. He was a well-respected intellectual who worked in AMU. My family was very fond of her only daughter Anika, whom we got to know better during her stay with us when Savitri was in Singapore for a year. She meticulously balanced her family responsibilities with academic duties to excel in both. She was taking care of her daughter and husband besides devoting her full energies for administrative and academic duties in JMI as Head of the Department when she succumbed to Covid-19 on 22nd April,2021.



Bio-Profile

Education/ Fellowships:

Dr. K. Savitri came to Delhi in 1981 from Hyderabad to study in Delhi Kannada School in Lodhi Estate. She completed her Matriculation in 1984 in English medium though till class 7th she had studied in Kannada medium in Hyderabad. In 1986 she completed her 12th class from the same school. From 1986 to 1989 she was a student of Khalsa College and received her B.A. (Hons) in Political Science from the University of Delhi.

Before joining the Centre for Political Studies, JNU to pursue a M.A. course in Political Science she was awarded a four-week study grant by NORAD to attend a 1989 study session on Human Rights at the International Institute of Human Rights, Strasbourg, France. She completed her M.A in 1991. She joined CIPOD, SIS, JNU to pursue M.Phil/Ph.D programme in 1991. Passed NET/JRF of UGC in 1991. She was awarded her Ph.D by JNU in 2002. During M.A. she published two research papers in UGC Care listed Journal, Third Concept – An International Journal of Ideas. In 1998 she was awarded a four-week Research Grant as a winner of the First Prize of the American Civilization and Culture course at the American Research Centre, Hyderabad. In 2002-2003 she was awarded the British Chevening Scholarship to pursue a M.A. Human Rights Programme at the University of Leicester. She won the UGC Research Award (Post-Doctoral Fellow), 2012-2014. She prepared and submitted her study to UGC on ***"Emerging International and National Framework for the Protection of Minority Rights: Domestic Application of International Norms in India".***

Publications:

In 2014 she published her book, titled, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding: UN Engagement in Cambodia, New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2014. This book was based on her PhD thesis. During her career of 25 years in Jamia Millia Islamia, she published nearly 50 research papers or book chapters in national and international journals, like ***India Quarterly, Jadavpur Journal of International Studies, Journal of Asian Politics, Indian Journal of Politics, ISIL Yearbook of International Humanitarian and Refugee Law, and Human Rights Today.***

She was invited to contribute around 10 Modules/Reading material units for IGNOU courses (M.A. Gandhi and Peace Studies) and e-pathshala modules of M.A. Human Rights for a MHRD project.

Career/Employment

In 1995, she joined as Assistant Professor in Janki Devi Memorial College on an adhoc basis. In January 1996 she joined Jamia Millia Islamia as an Assistant Professor in the Political Science Department.

In January 2006 she became Associate Professor and in 2012 she became Professor of Political Science.

In January 2021, she was appointed Head of the Department of Political Science. She had 25 years of illustrious service in JMI. During this period, she was invited to deliver nearly 50 talks/lectures, Keynote addresses, seminar presentations in various Universities or HRDC Induction/Refresher Courses in AMU, JMI IIPA, JNU, BHU, H.N. Bahuguna Garhwal University, ISIL, IIC, IGNOU/ GSDS (Gandhi Samiti Darshan Samiti), Delhi University, NCERT New Delhi and Pune, SCERT, Solan, Directorate of Training, Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi, NBT, New Delhi, O.P. Jindal Global University, Pondicherry University, Ramanujam College, DU and Indira Gandhi Tribal University, Amarkant. Seven Research Scholars have worked under her supervision for their Ph.D in the Department of Political Science.

Visiting Professor, ICCR

She was a Visiting Professor, Indian Council for Cultural Relations' (ICCR) Chair for India Studies at South Asian Studies Programme, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore (NUS), for one academic year, 2016-2017.

DEDICATION



"To my late friend Professor Kadloor Savitri, for all our years together in the Department of Political Science Jamia Millia Islamia, where she taught International Organization, and it was she who gave me the blueprint for revisiting my original book on the seventy-75th year on the UN"

Friends never die, they just live on in our memories



Memory Lane

Rafia Reshi

“I don’t know where to start….. it’s been a great learning experience having spent three long years at the Department of Political Science with the smartest bunch of professors. High commendations to Sucharita Ma’am for always being a beacon of wisdom for me, the one who inspired me to pursue the path of financial independence and be the fiercely independent woman that I am today. I owe it to her. Her constant efforts in helping me land on the route of self-discovery by not letting me lose my confidence are worth appreciating. She has been an inspiration all along. Dara Sir – our philosopher king, kindest of a human being I have ever met. I remember the days when he used to discuss our SOPs, and applications abroad for hours together. His feedback helped us grow and look beyond the obvious. He used to have a fan base of his own during our era I’m sure the legacy continues. Adnan Sir – class personified such a decent and empathetic professor, someone who inculcated a good and honest reader in us, P.S.: the only professor for whose book reviews we read the books end to end. No cheating you all, he’ll catch it!!! Nisar Sir – someone who helped me with my networking with different think tanks. A great mentor and an amazing human being.

It has been a beautiful journey and the presence of a diverse and inclusive crowd has furthered the richness of this experience. My Jamia hostel experience has been incredible, a place where surviving on Maggi and coffee was a norm, being broke, and still laughing it off was a ritual. Thanking each of my professors and colleagues once again with a heart full of gratitude as each interaction has allowed me to learn something”

**Rafia Reshi is currently working with the World Bank Group as a Knowledge Management Assistant and specializes in Conflict Transformation.*



Gerda Philipsborn** was the first **women founding member of Jamia**, famously known as **"Aapa Jaan"**. According to Sayeda Hameed, she was also called **Jamia's Khatoon-e-Awwal, which means Jamia's Woman Number one



My discovery of Jamia's First Woman 'Aapa Jaan'

BY **NEHAL AHMED**

Everybody has their favorite spot at the university. If you haven't picked one yet, please do so. My admission in Bachelor of Political Science at Jamia Millia Islamia was a dream come true, and I am sure most of you agree. Since I hadn't had proper schooling in high school, graduation became something to look forward to.It is because you gain some freedom from your family, and there is no structure like school in a university. Having been admitted to graduation in 2012, I wanted to experience every moment of this journey. I spent almost 15 hours a day on campus. If you end up spending so much time on campus, you find new ways to explore. My favorites would remain to talk with professors in-depth, attend seminars and conferences from every possible department and center. In my first year of Bachelors, I attended a discussion on Edward Said, and my friends taunted, "Did you understand anything?" I replied, "Yes!" knowing who Tariq Ali was, who wrote a critique of Edward Said. My goal was to learn at least one word. I decided to visit different parts of the campus because one finds newer ways to explore Jamia. The Mass Communication department canteen to the Fine Arts department and its beautiful artwork displayed in the open lawns, everything becomes a learning. While scrolling like this one day, it led me to the Premchand Archive Centre, a place I see every day from the outside. The archive building is beside the Old Reading Room, also known as the Ibn-e-Sina block. I found a beautiful gallery with portraits hanging on the walls as soon as I walked in. No one inquired as I entered, which was strange because back then in Jamia, you were required



to present your I.D. card at every gate. The first room I entered contained few letters, books, and a photograph of Premchand, upon whom the center is named. The first thing I read in that room that gave me a proud feeling about Jamia is Premchand wrote his famous story Kafan while sitting in Jamia. Meanwhile, a girl with a scarf entered and welcomed me so lovingly. I joked about how this is the only place in Jamia where I was welcomed in such a way unexpectedly without an ID card. She gave an informative tour of the center where the history of Jamia remains preserved. I must suggest you visit the Premchand Archive Centre. She showed me old photographs of the founders and warned me not to take pictures. In one frame where all the founders were seated, I only saw one woman, her name was Gerda Philipsborn. That was the striking moment for me. This year was 2013, when I looked her up on the internet but could not find anything relevant. In October 2021, on the 101st foundation day of Jamia, journalist

Mehtab Alam wrote an article on Gerda Philipsborn on the digital platform of 'The Wire'. After reading that article, the information about her struck me somewhere and I tried researching her. Gerda Philipsborn was the first women founding member of Jamia, famously known as "Aapa Jaan". According to Sayeda Hameed, she was also called Jamia's Khatoon-e-Awwal, which means Jamia's Woman Number one. A daycare centre and a hostel are dedicated after her. She was a German Jew, born in Germany on April 30, 1895, and died in Jamia in April 1943. Jamia's graveyard was her choice because she wanted to be buried with her Jamia's friends. Gerda met Dr. Zakir Hussain and Dr. Md. Mujeeb in Germany. She became familiar with Jamia as not just an educational institution but also a movement. At the wake of Hitler's rise to power, she fled to India and served Jamia until her death. During the time of the depression, she chose India despite having many options to go to, including the USA and other parts of Europe. She began caring for the kids at the school the day she joined. In 1942, she signed for life membership of Jamia with a salary of Rs 150 per month.



**On Chair L-R Zakir Husain, Gerda Philipsborn & Obaidul Haq, lecturer, Arts Institute with resident students on a Sunday morning.*

My curiousity for Gerda did not stop here as I wanted to know more. I asked my German friend to check the German newspaper archives. She came up with a big blast of a 40-page article on Gerda and her partner Leo Szilard with 122 references by a German named Gene Dannen. "A Physicist's Lost Love: Leo Szilard and Gerda Philipsborn" contains many significant documents such as letters, photos, identity cards, documents, etc.



**Gerda Philipsborn with Dr. M.A. Ansari, Amir-e- Jamia, teachers and students, Karol Bagh, Delhi, 1934*

Gene described how Leo and Gerda were together and how German fascism separated them, as well as Gerda's dedication to humanity (choosing Jamia). Also, he mentioned that Leo wanted to come to India and stay with Gerda, but this didn't happen. As a scientist, Leo conceived the nuclear chain reaction. He also worked with Albert Einstein. The Gene article contains many helpful references to learn about Gerda. I emailed him to get more information. He referred me to Jamia faculty member Professor Sonya Surbhi Gupta. On contacting her, I discovered another article on Gerda named "Remembering Gerda Philipsborn - The German 'Aapa Jaan' of Jamia Millia Islamia", published in a journal called 'The Women Link' by Professor Sonya herself. In that article, Professor Sonya detailed Gerda's life at Jamia and her philanthropic work in Germany and India. Upon joining, she was likely the first woman to be a teacher and warden of Jamia school. She mentioned a few important works on Gerda such as an obituary written by Anita Kashyap, published in Jewish Advocate,R in 1946 Md Mujeeb wrote an article in Jamia's Journal Jauhar named "Aapa Jaan: Miss Gerda Philipsborn" and on the occasion of Jamia's Platinum Jubilee Professor Sughra Mehdi wrote a small book called "Baccho ki Aapa Jaan: Gerda Philipsborn". She also mentioned the availability of a book in Jamia library written by Gerda herself, titled "Bachhon Ka Chidiayghar" which is an activity book for children. She used many creative teaching methods, such as- photography, songs, crafts, etc.



**Gerda Philipsborn's grave at the Jamia in Delhi as it appeared on May 8, 2000. Photo by M. Zahid.*

I am still hopeful to read more about Gerda Philipsborn and write a complete profile of her. Her story, her life, and her dedication intrigued me and led me to learn more about her. I also visited her grave in Jamia's Graveyard where she rests with her comrades. As I write this piece, I hope you'll be prompted to read more about her. I will also share possible resources on Gerda. I was asked to write an account of my experiences as a former student of the Department of Political Science, Jamia. Rather than write about my daily routines, I chose to write about my discovery of Gerda Philipsborn. I must tell you what I experienced at Jamia for three years, and I certainly will not say education because that is something everyone experiences. Apart from studying, what I have learned from my teachers is to be a seeker, whether in the classroom, while travelling or watching films in the cinema hall. I have learnt that education is not just limited to the classroom. So here, I would suggest you try and explore outside, beyond the four walls of the classroom and find your own Gerda Philipsbron.



Funeral Procession of Gerda Philipsborn, 2. Back cover Payam-e-Talim, 1943 - Copy



Gerda Philipsborn came to be known as Apajaan. She dressed like an Indian.



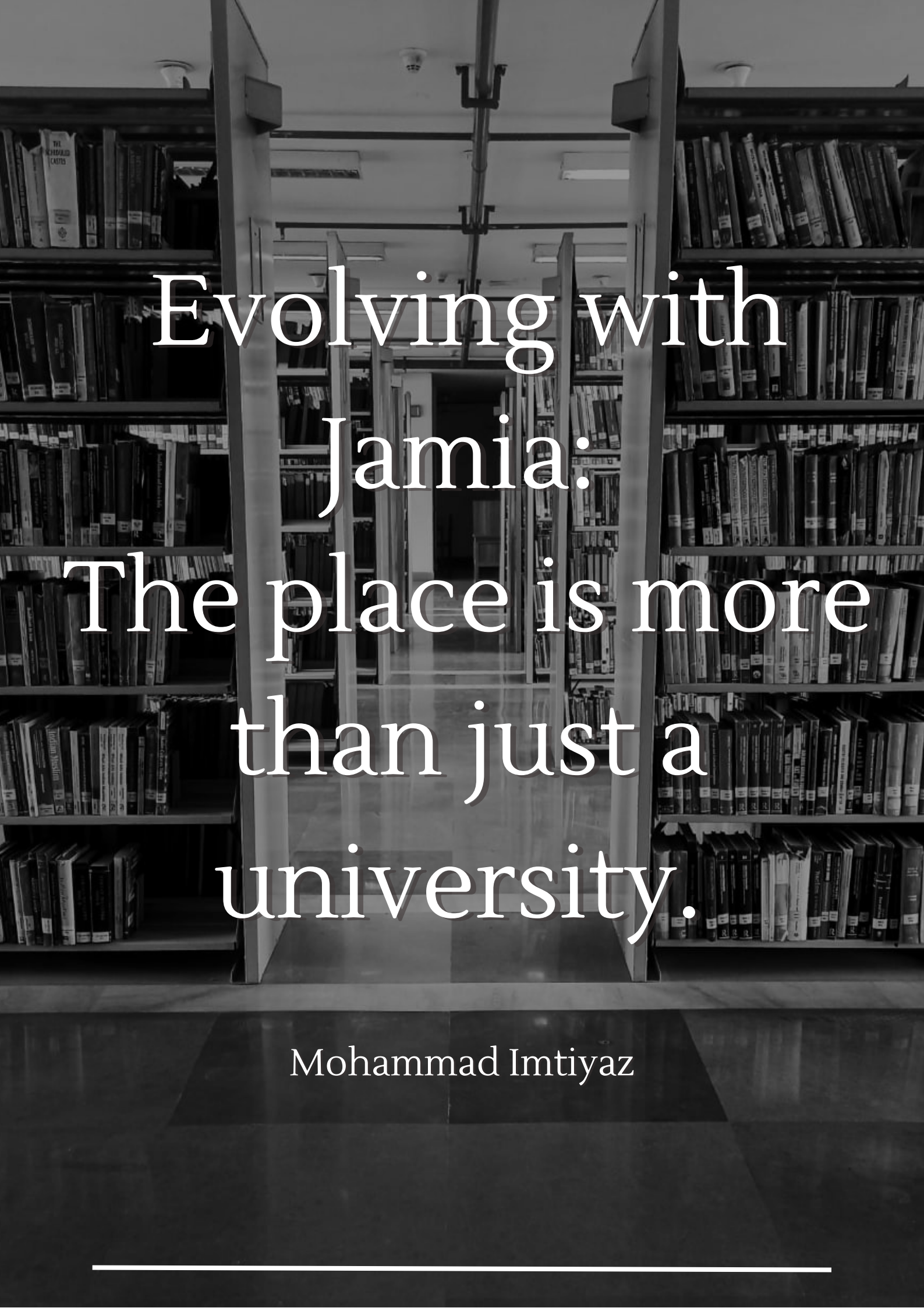
L-R. Mohammad Mujeeb, Gerda Philips born, Karl Hienz & Dr. Zakir Husain, Karol Bagh, 1935

Links:

Gerda Philipsborn, the Lesser Known Maker of Jamia Millia Islamia By Mahtab Alam
https://thewire.in/history/gerda-philipsborn-maker-of-jamia-millia-islamia
A Physicist's Lost Love: Leo Szilard and Gerda Philipsborn by Gene Dannen
http://www.dannen.com/lostlove/
Remembering Gerda Philipsborn - The German 'Aapa Jaan' of Jamia Millia Islamia by Prof Sonya Surbhi Gupta
https://www.jmi.ac.in/upload/menuupload/journals_eg_womenslink_vol28_2021january.pdf
Jamia's first women by Sayeeda Hameed
https://www.india-seminar.com/2021/739/739_syeda_hameed.htm

****All Photo Credit Goes to Premchand Archive through Professor Sabiha Anjum Zaidi***

**Nehal Ahmed is a Research Scholar at the Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia. He is the Author of Nothing Will Be Forgotten: From Jamia to Shaheen Bagh*



Evolving with Jamia: The place is more than just a university.

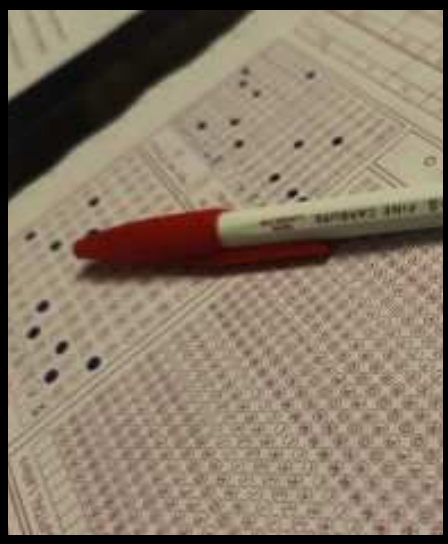
Mohammad Imtiyaz

I was on several academic submission deadlines when I received a message from one of my juniors from the department on writing about my experience at Jamia for the departmental Journal 'Episteme'. I had to think, but my nostalgia and emotions for the institution have held me back from being contemplative of anything. I replied in a couple of seconds and agreed to write. But, for me, it was challenging what to narrate as I thought it would be dishonesty to the moments, I would not be able to capture. Finally, I decided to chronicle my own journey as a student on campus. I started my Journey with Jamia Millia Islamia back in 2012 as a school student. It was the screeching heat of June when I attended Jamia's first day of school. Yet, that day remains crucial for my moral values and future trajectory, which I would also love to pass on to the upcoming generations. I was among the many aspiring youths who come to Delhi in quest of knowledge, exposure, and experiences. Belonging to a small town in Bihar and coming from very conventional schooling when physical punishments were not banned entirely, there used to be an evident bureaucratic hierarchy between teachers and students. With my exposure to life till that time, I already produced endless anticipation and subjectivities within myself about the institution and the city. However, the first day when our teacher in Jamia School started to approach us, that seems reflecting very much the 'urdu adab' inside them. For students, I have heard from any teacher the word "aap" for the very first time; their benevolence and respect for every student was commendable that changed my entire imagination of Jamia as an institution, and that always holds me accountable and motivated to perceive what they desire for us After I completed my school in 2014, I applied to and was accepted into the prominent department of Political Science at Jamia. This has opened up a whole new universe of opportunities for me in terms of ideas, knowledge, and professionalism. I couldn't wait to go through all the political theories, thoughts, and politics that I was now reading about in a condensed form. However, my excitement was quickly diminished by anxiety as I realized that I would have to tackle multiple subjects in a semester. However, this moment has taught me the 'idea of inclusiveness', not just something written in the gleaming papers of books but in a practical sense when I found how welcoming the entire department to tackle my childish queries and questions, be it professors, seniors, or my fellow classmates.Since then, I have continued my journey as a student inside the department; however, since then, both my duties and responsibilities within the department have evolved. As Ph.D. students, we have enormous responsibilities that we have to fulfil in order to maintain a high regard for both the department and the institution. One of the first assignments I was given to teach the graduate students was a blend of my past and present moments. In this context, I am incredibly fortunate, even though it is only for a brief period of time. Moreover, it is not often that people get the opportunity to serve the institution they believe has nurtured them and made them into who they are today. For this journal, first I was

asked to write about my 'Invigilation duties experience' though I thought it would be better to make it holistic to deliver an individual's experience, especially to the juniors in the department. The invigilation duties have changed my entire perception and taught me what it seems to be on another side of the table. Earlier, writing the semester exams and looking at invigilators often made me think ‘inke toh mazey hain’; however, this turned out to be a myth and demystified all my anticipations as it takes immense patience and concentration to be inside an examination hall as an invigilator.



The writing would be lacking if, as a political science student, I didn't portray my political bone about campus. When I joined the campus, it was a very depoliticized space, and there merely used to be political gatherings and there in contrast with other universities in Delhi like JNU and DU Jamia, often considered as a hub for 'Biryani' Which still persists but the changes over time, especially since 2015-2016 the campus has seen the resurgence of students repoliticisation which in a way fights for everyone inside the highly securitized university campus and outside highly inequitable societies. It fights against all the systemic injustice, societal cleavages, and taboos. The repoliticisation of student politics seemed producing several upheavals for the students on the side of the state, albeit everyone fought it with valour. As the disruptions continue, I close this piece with a statement from Epictetus: *“The greater the difficulty, the more glory in surmounting it. Skillful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempests.”*



**Mohammad Imtiyaz is a doctoral candidate at the department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi.*



EVERY MILE A MEMORY

Sampurnaa Bharadwaj

The stately statue of Mirza Ghalib adorns the front lawn of Gulistan-E-Ghalib, the Department of Political Science at Jamia Millia Islamia, my alma mater. The department is home to a myriad of memories I reminisce about, even a decade after graduating.

Gorged on food at CC? Check. Bunked classes to watch movies at Saket? Guilty as charged. Ran low on attendance? Every semester.

Much before the term became a cliché, we had chai pe charcha after every lecture. I walked late into a class one day holding a steaming cup of chai to beat the freezing January cold, expecting to be reprimanded. Tongue in cheek, our teacher said, “Sampurnaa, where’s my chai? After all, how many cups of chai is too much chai?

Gen Zers are the coolest of the lot? Wait till you meet Dr. Adnan Farooqui and Dr. Sucharita Sengupta! The coolest teachers in the university and my most trusted mentors, Adnan Sir and Sucharita Ma’am have been my biggest cheerleaders during post graduation and continue to guide, support, and encourage me ten years later.

My filmy group of friends lived by the pyaar dosti hai philosophy. What a blessing it has been to have friends who WhatsApp twenty-five pages of handwritten notes the night before an exam! Friends who were worried about my shortage of attendance more than theirs, friends I have laughed, cried, and disagreed with, and friends who became family. Some of those bonds have remained intact, in fact, deepened over time. Others have grown distant but remain fond memories.

Jamia Millia Islamia is a confluence of cultures, accepting everyone who walks in with open arms.
Unlearning biases and opening up to diverse worldviews through candid conversations with fellow students across the globe have been intellectually enhancing.

The Department of Political Science at Jamia Millia Islamia has nurtured me individually, academically, and professionally. It has nestled, protected, and prepared me for life. Wherever life takes me, those two years on campus will remain etched in my heart forever.

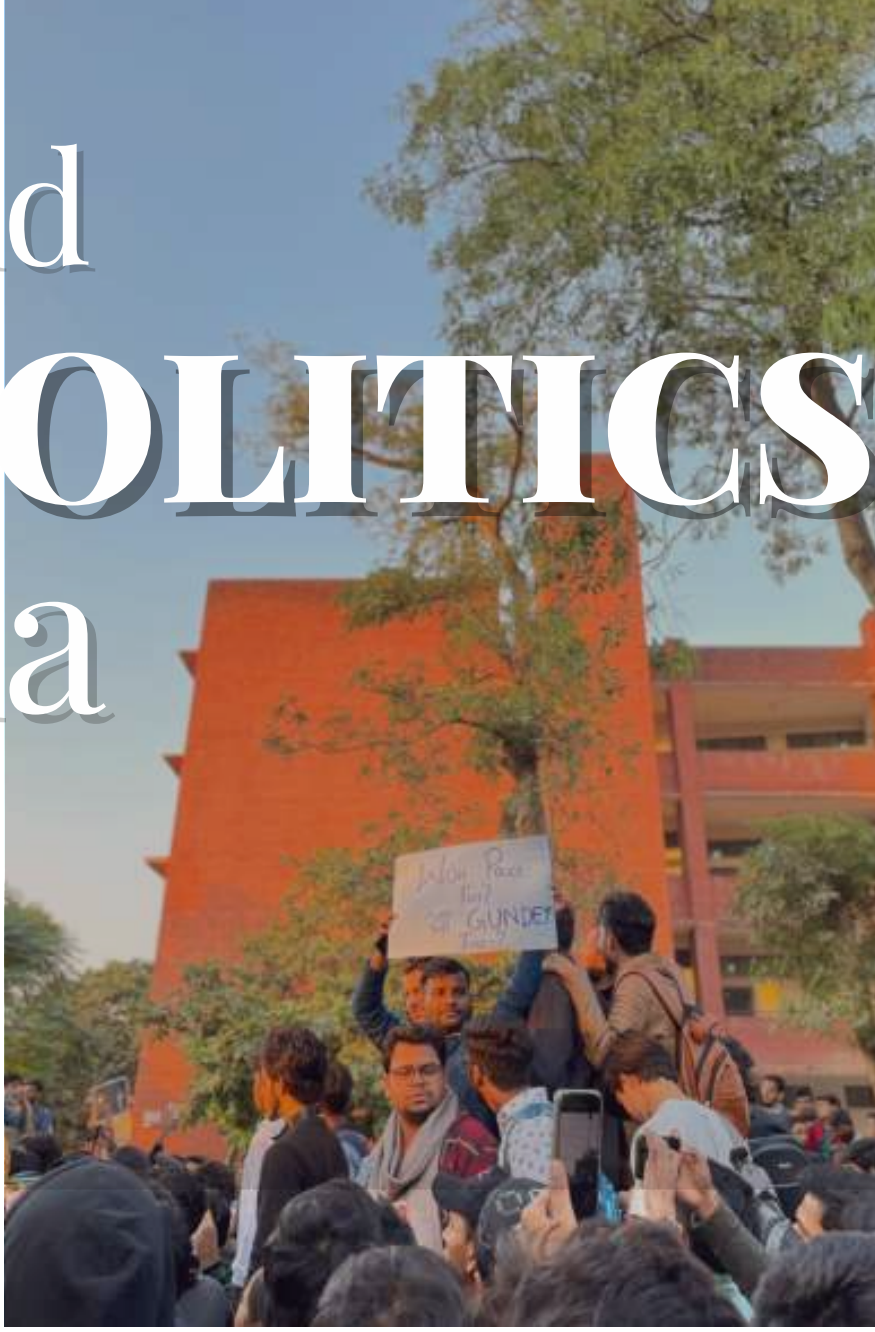
* Sampurnaa was a student of M.A. Political Science, Batch- 2014

रंजिशे

-वैष्णवी सुदा

हम बुख़ार देखते रह गए,
मरीज प्राण छोड़ चुका ,
बिल भरने के बाद ही,
श्मशान घाट को फोन लगा,
परिंदों की तरह उड़ान भरने की उम्मीद में,
पाव कुचल कर बैठे हो,
5 साल के मेहमानों के लिए,
जिंदगी के हमसफरो को खो बैठे हो,
चिता जलाने के लिए जगह नहीं,
लेकिन अंगूठे पर निशान बनवाने के लिए इंतजार कर रहे।
मजहब की गलतियां उठाकर,
कौन पहले गलत गिन रहे हैं,
देश में चुटकुले सुनाने वालों को ,
थाने में कैद करते हो,
नरसंहार की बातें फैलाने वाली को पद्मश्री की गद्दी पर बैठा देते हो,
खाली खोखला मन है तुम्हारा,
मारपीट समाधान हैं,
हिंसा,क्रूरता ,बेरहमी सब धर्म रक्षण के नाम है,
इंटरनेट पर गांधी - नेहरू
असल जिंदगी में तो तुम्हारा गोडसे मेहरू,
सोशलिज्म की बातें कागज पर,
और पापा जी का बिजनेस आगाज से,
अंबेडकर- पेरियार को कभी पढ़े नहीं,
इक्वलिटी के गाने गाते हो,
एलीटिज्म की दुनिया में बैठ के,
रूलर पुलिसिंग तुम सिखाते हो,
पाखंडी हो मायावादी हो ,
मिलेनियल जैन जी के पुरुष - नारी,
तुम तो अंदर से ही खाली हो,
अगर आप की जली हो,
आप नाजुक सी कली हो,
इससे आगे बोलूंगी नहीं,
सिर्फ हरी ओम।

Poetry and POLITICS in Jamia



After independence, the relationship between poetry and politics took an interesting turn. Poets started writing about the contemporary political situation, criticizing the government and highlighting the problems of the people as well as shedding light on the flaws of society.

BY **Md Kaifee Alam**

Poetry has the ability to cast complex philosophical ideas into interesting, simpler, and understandable words. This quality of poetry has a very deep effect on the consciousness of society. It's not for nothing that Plato wanted to banish poets from his Republic because he believed that they could present lies in the guise of truth. Percy Bysshe Shelley thought poets were ***"the unacknowledged legislators of the world,"***. June Jordan, an American poet and activist believed that ***'poetry is a political act because it involves telling the truth."*** Poetry & politics have been & continue to be intertwined with each other for a very long time. Almost all over the world, including in India, poetry has been used as a vehicle of political expression. Poets across languages have influenced the politics of their time through their poems, and people in power have responded to them with censorship or better, patronage. There exists a variety of poems that criticize, support, resist, or mock political activities. In pre-Independent India, poems and songs invigorated feelings of oneness for the motherland. Moreover, these pieces instilled pride in us by glorifying our historical, geographical and cultural legacy. The Revolt of 1857 led to the rise of poetry as a voice of protest. Some poets such as Hadi Sambhli and Ismail Fauq were even punished by the British.

The introduction of the Vernacular Press Act in 1878 by Lord Lytton testifies to the concern of the regime. '*Deshbhakton ke Geet*' by Satyendar Nath, '*Angrezon ki Tayen Tayen Phis*' by Pandit Babu Ram Sharma, *'Dard-e-Watan'* by Om Prakash Sahni, *'Payam-e-Bedari'* by Nau Bahar Singh Tohanvi are few examples of poems which were banned. None of us are unaware of the slogan ***"Inquilab Zindabad"***, coined by an eminent Urdu poet Maulana Hasrat Mohana & later popularized by Bhagat Singh. It went on to become the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association's official motto.

The year 1935 marks an important point in history. It was for the first time that literary figures had organized themselves under a political ideology and an association named the Progressive Writers' Movement of India came into existence. It was dedicated to inspiring people through their writings, advocating equality among all humans and attacking social injustice and backwardness in society. The association was anti-imperialistic and left-oriented. Each line they wrote was an active commitment to the issues of the time and also an attempt to empower their audience. Many writers and poets were part of the association during the independence movement. Personalities such as Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Josh Malihabadi, Kaifi Azmi, Sahir Ludhyanvi, Ali Sardar Zafri, Jan Nisar Akhtar, Habib Jalib, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, and Premchand were among the members of the association. Even after partition, the movement remained active on both sides. After independence, the relationship between poetry and politics took an interesting turn.

Poets started writing about the contemporary political situation, criticizing the government and highlighting the problems of the people as well as shedding light on the flaws of society. Poems were written which called for peace, change, rights, and revolution.

Mujrooh Sultanpuri, the renowned lyricist of Bollywood who wrote numerous songs that we sing even today, was a member of Progressive Writer's Association and leftist by heart.. He wrote many revolutionary nazms and ghazals. One of the being:

'Dekh zindan se parey rang-e-chaman josh-e-bahar.
Raqs karna hai to paon ki zanjir na dekh'

He was one of those poets of the sub-continent who weren't afraid of speaking about the atrocities of the government. He was arrested in 1951 for comparing Jawaharlal Nehru with Hitler when he wrote and recited the following poem that criticises the move of Nehru to join the Commonwealth of Nations:

Aman ka jhandaa is dharti pe, kisne kaha lahrane na paaye
ye bhi koi Hitler ka hai chela, maar le sathi, jaane na paaye!
Commonwealth ka das hai Nehru, Aur tabahi lane nap aye,

Known as the poet of the masses, Baba Nagarjun, wrote a lot of political poetry. He wrote against both Nehru and Indira Gandhi. During a poetry recitation event on the occasion of Nehru's birthday, he said.

Watan bech kar pandit nehru phule nahi samate hai
Phir bhi bapu ki samadhi par jhuk-jhuk phool chadhate hai

He was jailed during the emergency when, for the misuse of her power, he targeted Indira Gandhi with the following words:

Satta ki masti me bhool gayi baap ko,
Indu ji indu ji kya hua aapko?
chhatron ke lahu ka chaska laga aapko,
kale chikne maal ka maska laga aapko
kisi ne toka to thaska laga aapko, ant-shant bak rahi junoon me
shaashan ka nasha ghula khun me,
phool se bhi halka
samajh liya aapne hatya ke pap ko,
indu ji, kya hua aapko
bete ko taar diya, bor diya baap ko!

Shailendra had responded to the injustice meted out to people through his poem, ***'Har zor-zulm ki takkar mein, hartaal hamara naara hai.'***

tumne maange thukraai hai, tumne toda hai har waada,
chheena hamse sasta anaaj, tum chhatni par ho amada
to apni bhi taiyaari hai, to hamne bhi lalkara hai
har zor zulm ki takkar me hadtal hamara nara hai!
mat karo bahane sankat hai, mudra prasar inflation hai
in baniyoN chor-lutero ko kya sarkari concession hai?
mat aankh churao, bagale mat jhaako, do jawab,
kya yahi swaraaj tumhara hai?
har zor zulm ki takkar me hadtal hamara nara hai!

RSahir Ludhyanvi exposed the hypocritical nature of the state on the centenary death anniversary of Ghalib, with the following words:

jis ahd-e-siyasat ne yeh zinda zuban kuchli,
us ahd-e-siyasat ko marhum ka gham kyun hai Ghalib jise kehte hain urdu hi ka shayar tha, urdu pe sitam dha kar Ghalib pe karam kyun hai

In Hindi, *'Sansad se sadak tak'* is an anthology of poems by Sudama Pandey Dhumil published in 1972. It contains 25 poems. The titles of these poems are *'jantantra ke suryodai', 'akaal darshan', 'mochiram' 'gaon',* and *'naxalbari'*. *'Ve musalman the'* by Devi Prasad Mishr is a strong critical comment on communal politics and riots. Adam Gondvi was a poet who always locked horns with power. Following lines by Gondvi give a good idea of the work he has done. ***'Jo Dalhousie na kar paya wo ye hukkam kar denge, commission do to Hindustan ko nilaam kardenge.'***

Poets in Pakistan were in no way behind in their poetry of protest. Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Habib Jalib were the stalwarts of resistance against the atrocities of the authorities in the neighboring country. Faiz's literature has always dispatched an articulate message of eradicating social injustice, political dominance, suppression, and any act which is a product of class struggle and regressive behaviour. His words have shown left-inclined ideology and counter-narrative literature to extremism. ***'Hum Dekhenge'*** and ***'Bol ke Lab Azad hai tere'*** are celebrated as a powerful weapon of resistance and protest even today. 'Hum Dekhenge' written in 1979 scared a dictator, and he was imprisoned. It was declared an anti-state poem at that time and continues to hurt the government's sentiments even now. Poems such as *Aa Jao Africa, Falasteen Shuhadaa jo Pardes main kaam ayay*, are examples of his poetry with a touch of internationalism. *'Dastur'* by Habib Jalib is well known but *'Pakistan Ka Matlab Kya?', 'Bootan Di Sarkar'* and *'Khatre Mein Islam Nahin'* by him are amongst the finest examples of political expression through poetry. Following lines show

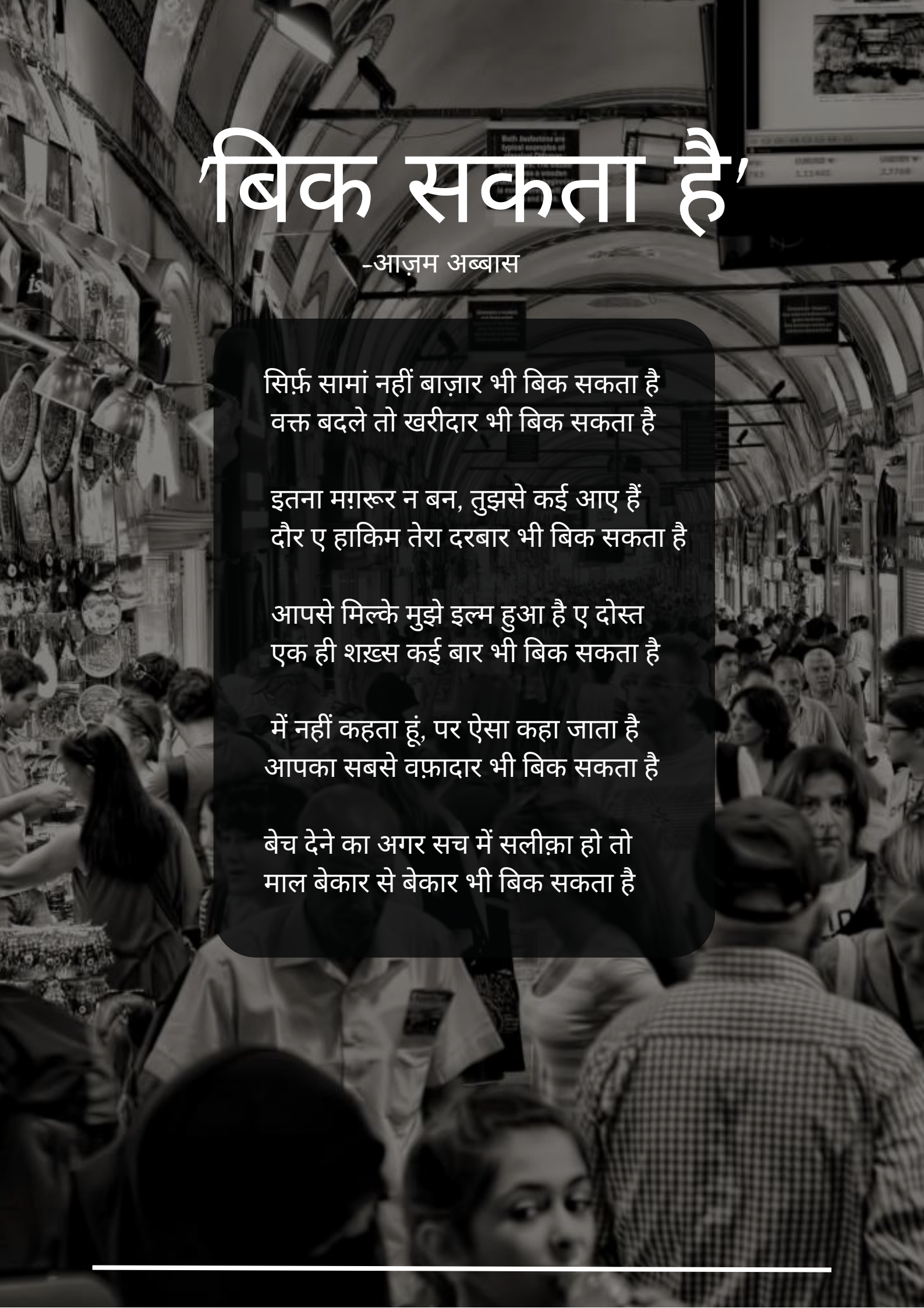
how he viewed the relations between India and Pakistan:

'Hindustan bhi mera hai aur Pakistan bhi mera hai, Lekin in donon mulkon mein Amrika dera hai.'

The tradition of expressing political views through verses has been passed on to poets of our generation quite well. On one hand, lines mentioned above continue to echo as a sign of protest and on the other, verses like *'sabhi ka khoon shamil hai yahan ki mitti me kisi ke baap ka Hindustan thodi hai'* have become the voice of dissent. Rahat Indori has said ***"If I don't write about what's happening around us, what will be the difference between me and Nero? There is a fire raging through my city, my country and if at this time I write about my mehboob's zulf (beloved's tresses), I must be either blind or deaf".***

'Suna tha ke behad sunehri hai dilli, samandur si khamosh gehri hai dilli,
magar ek maa ki sada sun na payi, to lagta hai gungi hai, behri hai dilli.'

These lines by Imran Pratapgarhi written on the backdrop of the disappearance of Najeeb Ahmed, a JNU student and the failure of state machinery to find him. Imran has also penned several poems on Kashmir and Palestine. Poems like *'Hum kaagaz nahi dikhayenge'* by Varun Grover, *'Sab yaad rakha jayega'* and *'mai inkaar karta hun'* by Amir Aziz, *'vastavik Kanoon'* by Naveen Chourey, *'Hindustani Musalmaan'* by Hussain Haidry and *'I am Miya'* by Hafiz Ahmed are few examples of attempts by new generations. The relationship between poetry and politics is not imbalanced. It is not always that poems are influenced by politics but poems, in turn, also affect politics. Poets use their writings as a vehicle to express their political lament. Politicians use their work and writings as a vehicle to express their political lament. Politicians use the works of poets in their art of rhetoric. From Rahul Gandhi saying *'Har ek baat pe kahte ho ki tu kya hai, tumhi kaho ye Andaaz-e-Guftagu kya hai,'* in a political rally to Mamta Banerjee calling herself **'Bidrohi Kobi'**(revolutionary poet), a lot of politicians have used poetic lines to persuade people and to take jibes at their opponents. Here, you might remember a reel in which Sushma Swaraj and the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh take a dig at each other with Urdu couplets in the Parliament. Many lines of Ramdahri Singh Dinkar have been recited several times by BJP leaders Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Sushma Swaraj, and PM Modi as well. But you will be surprised to know that he was very close to Nehru and was a Gandhian by heart. However, his style of writing has appeals of being chivalrous and demands strength to defend the nation; the elements perfectly coinciding with the idea of BJP. During the campaign leading up to the 2014 general election, a book of poems by Narendra Modi was "plunged into the market". No one can forget Atal Bihari Vajpayee when it comes to poetry in politics. He is a prime example of both. His poems on emergency *'kaisa Chadha junoon', 'Hindu tan man, Hindu Jeevan',* and 'Swatantra Bharat ka mastak nahi jhukega' are some of the examples. There are several poems and poets that don't find mention here due to lack of space. However, there is a potential for the relationship between the two to become mutually beneficial. Nothing could conclude this article better than John F Kennedy's famous words i.e., *"if more politicians knew poetry, and more poets knew politics, I am convinced the world would be a little better place in which to live"*



'बिक सकता है'

-आज़म अब्बास

सिर्फ़ सामां नहीं बाज़ार भी बिक सकता है
वक्त बदले तो खरीदार भी बिक सकता है

इतना मग़रूर न बन, तुझसे कई आए हैं
दौर ए हाकिम तेरा दरबार भी बिक सकता है

आपसे मिल्के मुझे इल्म हुआ है ए दोस्त
एक ही शख़्स कई बार भी बिक सकता है

में नहीं कहता हूं, पर ऐसा कहा जाता है
आपका सबसे वफ़ादार भी बिक सकता है

बेच देने का अगर सच में सलीक़ा हो तो
माल बेकार से बेकार भी बिक सकता है



Is NOTA relevant for DEMOCRACY?

People's participation is the core essence of a democratic system and NOTA can ensure increased public participation in the electoral process. Non-participation in periodic elections tend to cause disinterest and political apathy among the citizens which is not a healthy sign for nurturing a democracy in India. BY **FAHREEN ZIA**

In the words of Abraham Lincoln, Democracy is "Government of the people, by the people and for the people". But if we look at the Greek roots of the term 'democracy' (demokratia), demos refer to the people and kratos refers to power, capacity or rule. Therefore, democracy is the power or capacity of the people to do certain things in the public. In this way the 'people' play a very crucial role in democratic governance, but what exactly are they supposed to do? Our country follows the system of representative democracy that empowers citizens to choose their representative to take decisions through elections. Elections provide people with the opportunity to exercise their power to vote and choose their leaders, who would run the government for them. However, this task is not as easy as it seems. Generally, people tend to vote for the candidate they think is most reliable, accountable, honest and compassionate, but what if the voter does not find any of these qualities in the candidates? Does he/she still have to choose someone? How can the voter exercise his/her power in such a situation? The provision of "NOTA" is intended to provide answers to these questions. NOTA stands for 'None of the above', which implies the right to remain neutral, when a voter feels that none of the candidates deserve to be elected. The idea of NOTA ballot option first originated in 1976 in California (USA). In India, the Election Commission in 2009 asked the Supreme Court to offer the voter a 'None of the above' option in the ballot to provide voters the freedom of not selecting any undeserving candidate,

but the government did not accept the idea. Thereafter, 'The People's Union for Civil liberties', a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO), filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) statement in favour of NOTA. On 27th September 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that a 'None of the Above' option should be provided in elections so that voters are able to exercise their "right not to vote while maintaining their right of secrecy" and then ordered the Election Commission to enable a NOTA button in all the EVMs. Despite criticisms related to this option, NOTA plays a pivotal role in strengthening democracy. People's participation is the core essence of a democratic system and NOTA can ensure increased public participation in the electoral process. Non-participation in periodic elections tend to cause disinterest and political apathy among the citizens which is not a healthy sign for nurturing a democracy in India. It can result in low voter turnout, political stagnation and overall democratic deficits. The option of NOTA gives the "Right to disapprove" implying that if the voters do not wish to elect any candidate, then instead of avoiding elections or choosing the worst candidate, they may reject all candidates by choosing NOTA. Moreover, this would help the political parties to realize that people are expressing their disapproval, which will compel them to nominate a sound candidate so that the best available persons are chosen as representatives for proper governance of the country. Similarly, the instances of proxy voting can be reduced with the help of NOTA. For example, if a voter does not go to the polling booth to cast his vote, there is a possibility that some corrupt political party or candidate might try to cast that vote on his behalf by indulging



in some fraudulent activities. In order to avoid this and to make the voter cast his/her vote by exercising his/her duty as a true citizen, NOTA serves as a crucial option. Furthermore, a provision of negative voting would be in the interest of promoting democracy as it would give signals to candidates and political parties as to what the citizens think about them and their policies.

Hence, NOTA is an essential element to promote a vibrant democracy because a democratic state is not the one which only provides the citizens 'right to vote but also a 'right not to vote' if the contesting candidates are not preferred by the voters. However, the practice of choosing NOTA is lagging in recent times and its true significance can be realised when the existing candidates are disqualified after majority votes are cast to NOTA and then re-elections take place with new candidates. Such changes can make the citizens more empowered, further reinforcing democracy in India.

SCHIZOPHRENIC

-Shah Basit

Was I always schizophrenic? Or did the time make me insane?
As I impetrate for emancipation, anticipating a response,
All my ordeal is void, dismaying my life.
Dreadful of action, still I remain;
Avaricious for something that was just faith.
Being diaphanous, perpetually I was opaque.
Was I meant to be mangled?Was my existence just a shame?
A grimace on my face, courting the bitter end.
Daydreaming for Elysium, which was just an abyss.
Reaching the stub, the question remains;
Was I a butterfly? Or a moth that burned away?
At the door of hereafter, yearning for apricity.
In the end, which was just a fleeting flame.



Eulogising the "GREATER FOOLS

It is no secret that we live in revolutionary times. It is as if there is a recurrence of precisely the same conditions that eventually precipitated World War II, from the crisis of 2008 at Wall Street to the quest for dominance pushing world powers into a tight spot, this time only with an availability of an apocalyptic nuclear arsenal which seems the only possible reason deferring the unthinkable.BY **Mustaf Zul Shafiq,**

Our story begins with Don Quixote, a classic novel by Miguel de Cervantes and possibly the first written modern novel that tells the story of a man who sets out to become a knight-errant in search of an adventure. In the book, Don Quixote is often called the “greater fool” due to his foolishness and naivety. He is a man who is willing to risk his life for a cause that he believes in, even if it is a fool’s errand. Courage and conviction define him. He is willing to take on any challenge, no matter how absurd or dangerous, to pursue his goals. He is also helpful in accepting the consequences of his actions, no matter how dire. Don Quixote is also a man of great passion and enthusiasm. He is not afraid to express his feelings and desires, even if they are not famous or accepted by others. He is a man who is willing to take risks by even going against the status quo. Even in Shakespearean works, the fool speaks the truth and checks on the characters' moral failings. Othello is a fool who comes out as wise, and Brutus is an intellectual who comes out to be a fool, an absolute fool which I will explain in this ahead. Here it may occur to one

why I am going on about Don Quixote or Shakespearean works in the third decade of the 21st century; after all, these writings are over four hundred years old. Indeed, one might even think there is nothing in common in these vastly distant times and thinking, so one is not merely wrong but naively oblivious to the historical crossroads on which humanity finds itself occasionally. These historical crossroads are moments of evolutionary turn and have deep, intricate ties with political, economic and social forces. Of Course, this generalisation should not lead one to think that I need to realise the specificity of processes and interactions across varied spaces in which humanity exists. Instead, I do recognise the specificity. This universal always exists among those specificities. These forces not only actively change organisational structures, but they also shape identities and subjectivities, both individual and group, and how one views the past and imagines the future. Therefore, they actively morph us. To stand at the crossroads where this is happening is to find oneself amid the heresy of old and the creation of new.



**Pablo Picasso created the drawing of Don Quixote in 1955 as a tribute*

When Miguel de Cervantes was writing Don Quixote Spain was losing its place as the leader of Europe. Chronologically he was standing between the Renaissance and the Baroque, but essentially, he was between contestations of what the future should be like. The character he thus gave birth to was this man who, among these contests, was above them and deeply affected by them, and he establishes a motif of fighting, even when it is considered foolishness. He was a fool, but he was no ordinary fool. He was a greater fool. On August 26, 2012, A. Sorkin, D. Handleman and Ian Reichbach, writers of an American TV show called 'The Newsroom' reinvigorated this idea of "greater fool" in an episode of the same title. It is a world where a news anchor is situated in the middle of reporting the news as it is and the business of Target Rating Point (TRP), which is simply an audience-centric sensationalization of the news and, at times, situated between life and death. Against this backdrop, there is also an ingroup fighting with one's corporation, which is always facing the backlash for their own media houses' integrity and not bowing down to pressure groups and politicians. Peter Brock writing a book titled 'Against the Draft' eulogises these greater fools under the term 'conscientious objectors' as those who refused to follow orders or go with the crowd and discusses them in great detail from conscientious objections among the Polish Antitrinitarians to conscientious objectors in Nazi Germany. Peter Brock's book is an important intervention because it brings us out of the fictional world of Don Quixote and The Newsroom and says these greater fools of the fictitious world are real and that it is possible to

be one. It is the living embodiment of both, and it screams out to us that it is not just fiction; it is real people acting in the real world upon their world. It shows us what makes you a fool is when you live in blindness with your conscience. That is a real fool, blind to his conscience, pushed around by currents and malleable enough to be subjugated by the irrational. In the words of Hannah Arendt, “the ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction and the distinction between true and false no longer exists.” It is only when you can not distinguish between true and false that you become a fool, whereas a greater fool is always aware of these things and readily willing to take a stand and be with the former.

It is no secret that we live in revolutionary times. It is as if there is a recurrence of precisely the same conditions that eventually precipitated World War II, from the crisis of 2008 at Wall Street to the quest for dominance pushing world powers into a tight spot, this time only with an availability of an apocalyptic nuclear arsenal which seems the only possible reason deferring the unthinkable. The world is drowned in inequalities and oppression from the east to the west. One comes in touch and interacts with the norms and structures, enforcing and reinforcing them. Like Don Quixote, like the anchors in the tv show The Newsroom and conscientious objectors of Polish Antitrinatarians and Nazi Germany, one has a choice to stand up and say no anymore.

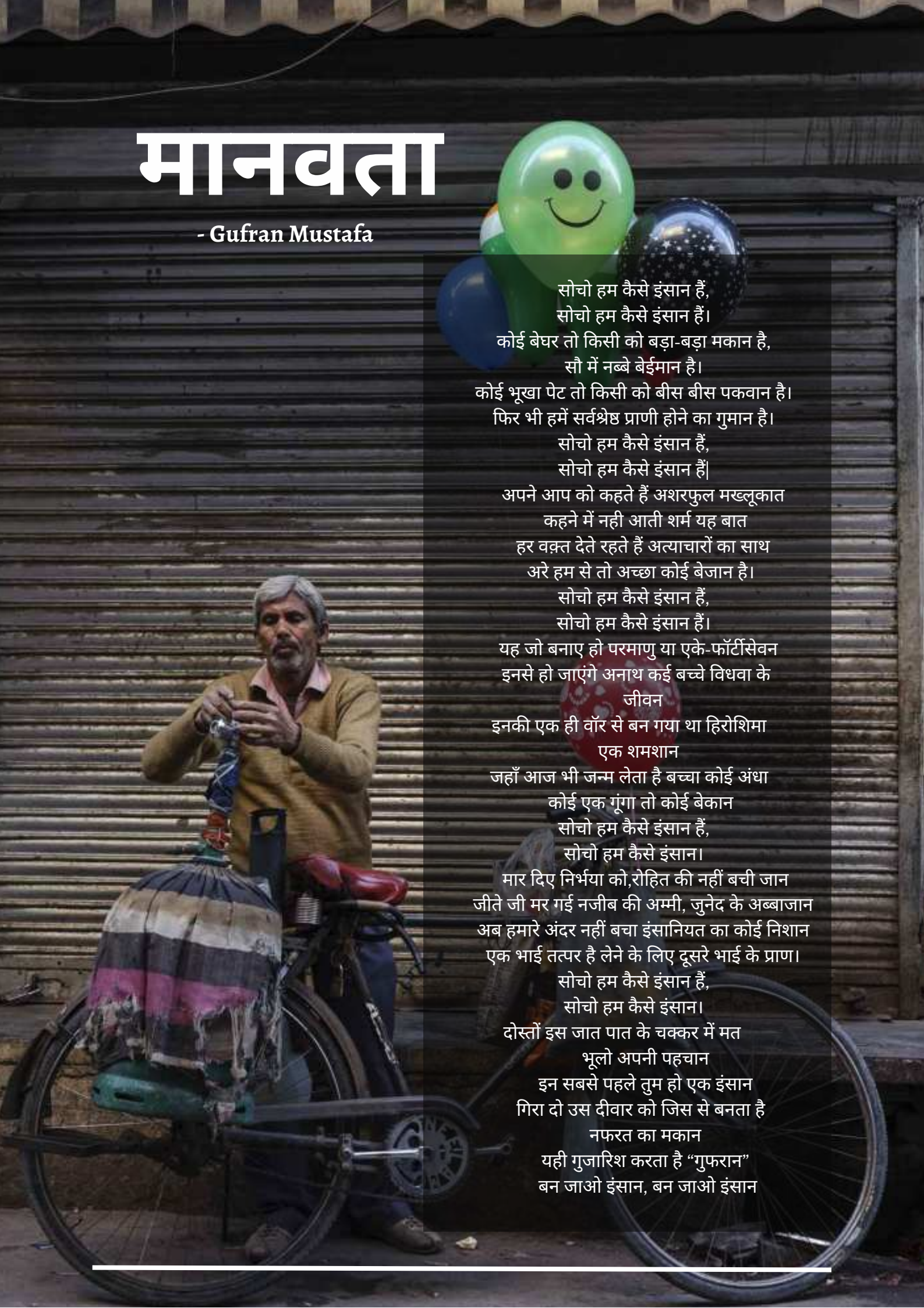


**Don Quixote (left) and Sancho Panza, bronze statues in Madrid.*

I am fully aware that choice is sometimes and sometimes always a luxury of the privileged few. In times like those, they are the ones who necessarily have to carry on the mantle of the greater fools instead of pinning them down to ones who have been left with no choice but to comply. To choose to stand against these inequalities and oppression and to never be in bed with those who inflict these terrors is to be a greater fool. Imagine ending misery and better beginnings, even if it looks futile, even if the outcome seems to be mere ridicule for oneself, even if it means standing alone. Like Quixote is no ordinary fool, you won’t be one either. In the long historical chains of greater fools, you would be an addition, pushing the chain ahead of you towards the times to come.

मानवता

- Gufran Mustafa



सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं,
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं।
कोई बेघर तो किसी को बड़ा-बड़ा मकान है,
सौ में नब्बे बेईमान है।
कोई भूखा पेट तो किसी को बीस बीस पकवान है।
फिर भी हमें सर्वश्रेष्ठ प्राणी होने का गुमान है।
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं,
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं|
अपने आप को कहते हैं अशरफुल मख्लूकात
कहने में नही आती शर्म यह बात
हर वक़्त देते रहते हैं अत्याचारों का साथ
अरे हम से तो अच्छा कोई बेजान है।
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं,
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं।
यह जो बनाए हो परमाणु या एके-फॉर्टीसेवन
इनसे हो जाएंगे अनाथ कई बच्चे विधवा के
जीवन
इनकी एक ही वॉर से बन गया था हिरोशिमा
एक शमशान
जहाँ आज भी जन्म लेता है बच्चा कोई अंधा
कोई एक गूंगा तो कोई बेकान
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं,
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान।
मार दिए निर्भया को,रोहित की नहीं बची जान
जीते जी मर गई नजीब की अम्मी, जुनेद के अब्बाजान
अब हमारे अंदर नहीं बचा इंसानियत का कोई निशान
एक भाई तत्पर है लेने के लिए दूसरे भाई के प्राण।
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान हैं,
सोचो हम कैसे इंसान।
दोस्तों इस जात पात के चक्कर में मत
भूलो अपनी पहचान
इन सबसे पहले तुम हो एक इंसान
गिरा दो उस दीवार को जिस से बनता है
नफरत का मकान
यही गुजारिश करता है “गुफरान”
बन जाओ इंसान, बन जाओ इंसान



What Manto saw in Batote

As it is usually verbalized as: "Only the seeing eye can visualize the eternal truth, the world can scarcely comprehend the blasphemies of Love". Manto's heart was enthroned by a local village girl with her simple and pious nature. He found in her, Not just her physical beauty, but the angelic radiance that seemed to be coming from her soul held Manto's heart.

BY **SM TAJLEEL**

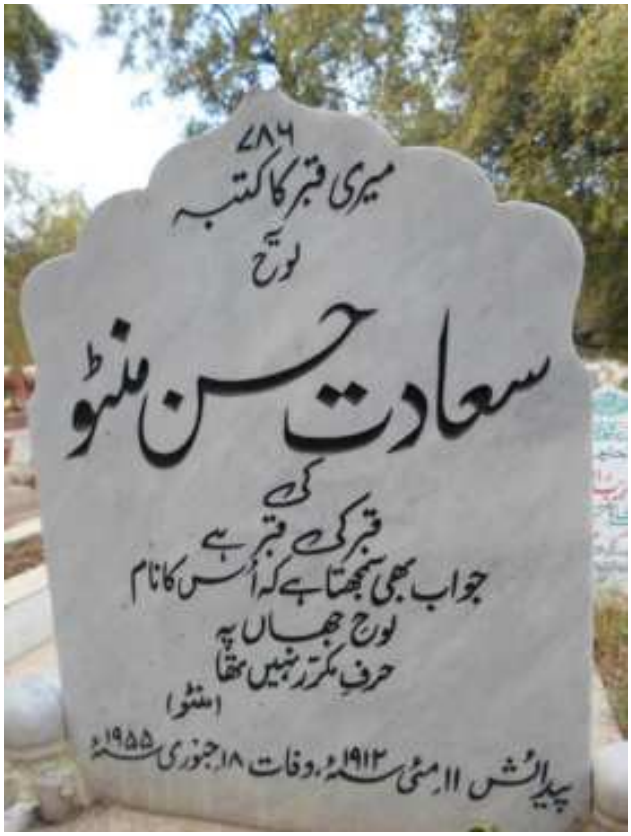
Unfairly rebuked, adored and abhorred equally during his existence Manto, the finest 20th century Urdu writer manifested his beloved in the face of every idol. Manto's life was filled with emotions of all shades and was a roller coaster in terms of acceptance of his work. The excruciating claws of tuberculosis tightened around his neck and made him visit (cannot think of any better words) a Sanatorium in Batote, which trailed him off to seek pleasure from varied sources of pain and melancholy. Enchanting pine forests, tall mountains, bracing climate, angelic folks and the amrit chashma relieved him of all physical and mental agony. After passionate adoration of the scenic attributes of the place; Manto's gaze fell upon a heavenly and winsome hick.

Quoting Manto's lines: *"But love, whether in Multan or on Siberia's icy tundra, whether in the winter or the summer, whether among the rich or the poor, whether among the beautiful or the ugly, whether among the crude or refined, love is always just love. There's no difference."*

Manto repeatedly stared at the shepherdess, Wazir Begum, with a blank look. Now his soul was also relieved from the sufferings. Begu, what he used to call her, was the one with beauty and innocence, Manto struggled to discover earlier and considered love with such characters, an untrue dream.As it is usually verbalised as: "Only the seeing eye can visualise the eternal truth, the world can scarcely comprehend the blasphemies of Love".

Manto’s heart was enthroned by a local village girl with her simple and pious nature. He found in her, Not just her physical beauty, but the angelic radiance that seemed to be coming from her soul held Manto's heart. This reality got buried as a dream for Manto as described by Faraz; “Please do not ask me how it felt, Neither did she chain me, nor did I escape”. Manto loathed the word Love, for he knew that many did not respect its purity. However, he, like his characters, lived all emotions to the best of human limits. Manto had eyes that looked at the world as a rainbow and he alone could count all its colours. He squeezed those rainbows on the pages of his books, bringing all the shades of life upon the bookshelves for people. Those were the eyes that looked beyond the ordinary, the heart that lived beyond the ordinary and a tongue that said beyond the ordinary. He lived a delinquent and dilatory life and wrote true love was a dream, as distant as Begu.

Manto wrote this epitaph for himself: “*Here lies Saadat Hasan Manto, in whose bosom are enshrined all the secrets and art of short story writing.*




Shepherdess, Wazir Begum

'Your Name: Hope in the Face of Love'

-Anam Khan

The poem here talks about resistance & resilience displayed by the speaker in the face of suppression. 'The name' here might have several connotations depending upon the interpretation of the resistance (of any kind) being talked about in the poem

Night weaves patterns of terror on the fabric of my days.
My days, tinged with agonizing wails,
I still cling to your name.

A resistance is simmering within their homes.
Their homes- battleground of bigoted gods-
I take pearls of hope from the string of your name.

I etched on my skin songs of resistance,
Swallowed with courage, names of rebels.
Names of rebels are placed on spikes in the city's main square.
Why am I not afraid? Is it, my love, spring of your name?

I lit myself on fire with the debris of dead dreams, love & hope.
Hope wafts out from dungeons, ghostly dark.
Dark has donned white at the city's main pulpit.
A bird of the morning, on a platter of sunrise, brings me your name.

Minstrels at the top sing songs of valor of batons behind defense shields.
Defense shields are quilts, covering war-mongering minds.
I see a pigeon-connoisseur of peace- carrying on its wing for me, your name.

They've cut our tongues
and silenced synchronous calls for freedom.
Beads of my rosary, in unison, sing me your name.

Heavens pelted stones of fire.
Sun blazed & melted a piece of land I call mine.
And I, burnt to ashes, like before outsing your name.



The Culture of Competition Among Students in Universities: A Different Perspective

Students compete for the best internships, and the competition is so intense that some students are even willing to fake their credentials to secure a spot. This leads to a situation where students are working hard, not because they love what they are doing, but because they want to prove themselves to others. BY **RAZAQ**

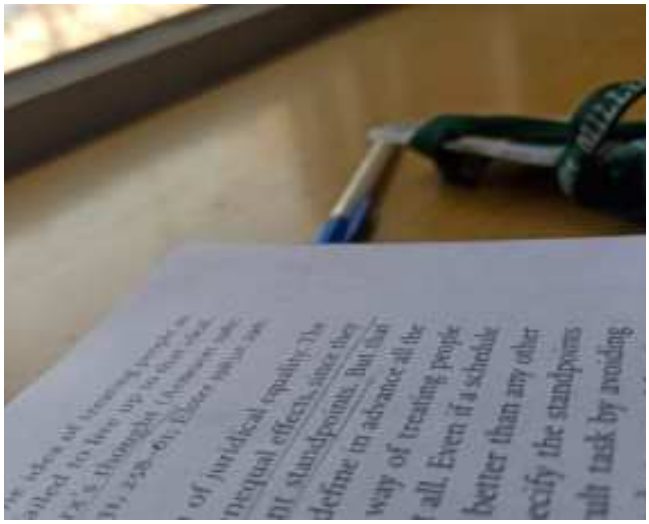
The culture of competition among students in universities is a phenomenon that has become more widespread with each passing day. This culture is fostered by the belief that students are in competition with each other to get the best grades, secure the best internships, and get the best jobs. But, what if I told you that this culture is not just a burden to students but is also a source of humor? The competition in universities starts from the first day of classes when students begin to compare their grades and see who is ahead. This is known as the "grade-checking" phenomenon. Students compete to see who got the highest grades and who got the lowest. This is usually followed by a round of gloating and bragging, which can lead to friendships being tested and strained.

But the competition does not end here, it extends to internships as well. Students compete for the best internships, and the competition is so intense that some students are even willing to fake their credentials to secure a spot. This leads to a situation where students are working hard, not because they love what they are doing, but because they want to prove themselves to others.

The competition even extends to extracurricular activities, where students are eager to participate in as many activities as possible, so they can add them to their resumes. This has led to students over-committing themselves, leaving them with no time for self-care and relaxation. But, despite all the competition, students still find time to laugh and joke about it.

For example, the “grade-checking” phenomenon has become so widespread that it has led to the creation of memes and jokes about it. One popular meme features a student looking at his grades and saying, “I’m not the smartest, but I’m not the dumbest either.” This is a perfect example of how students find humor in their competition. The competition for internships has also been a source of humor, with students making jokes about the lengths they are willing to go to secure an internship. For example, one student said, “I’d be willing to work for free if it meant I could add the company’s name to my resume.” This humor is a way for students to cope with the stress and pressure of competition.

The competition for extracurricular activities has also been a source of humor, with students making jokes about the absurd number of activities they have signed up for. For example, one student said, “I’m so busy, I don’t even have time to breathe, but at least I’ll have a great resume.” This humor is a way for students to relieve the stress of competition and to remind themselves that, at the end of the day, it’s all just a game.



In conclusion, the culture of competition among students in universities is a source of humor and laughter, despite the stress and pressure that it brings. By finding humor in the competition, students can cope with the pressure and enjoy the university experience. So, the next time you find yourself amid the competition, remember to laugh, have fun, and don’t take it too seriously. Because, after all, the competition is just a game, and it’s not worth sacrificing your happiness for.



A Poetic Ode To Solitude

-Maskat

Alone I wander, through the empty streets,
A solitary figure, with my heartbeat.
The hustle and bustle, a distant hum,
I seek solace in the quiet and calm.

I yearn for silence, to clear my mind,
To escape the chaos, to leave it behind.
A moment to reflect, a moment to be still,
To reconnect with myself, and let my heart fill.

The world may call, but I won't hear its plea,
For in my aloneness, I am truly free.
No noise, no chatter, just me and my thoughts,
In this peaceful solitude, my mind untwisted.

So let me be alone, in this world so loud,
For it is in my aloneness, I am truly proud.
I am content and at peace with my soul,
For in my solitude, I am truly whole.

A letter to Parents

(My Constants Mr Javid Ahmad Masoodi and Mrs. Tahira Akhter).

Dedicated to all parents who have immense contributions to the lives of their children.



Dear Mumma and Paapa,

I hope you are safe and sound. May Allah bless you with health and contentment.
It gives me solace to see the top four words of this write-up. Continuously figuring out how to contribute to my department magazine. I was time and again struck by something profound. I wanted to dedicate at least one write-up for you both, and presenting it in the form of a letter seemed the best way I could choose.

I am writing to you from a satisfying environment. The buzz of students around, the winters on the Jamia campus, the sun rays that force me to stay more with friends, the teachers who add to the existing ideas, and much more.

I know when my letter reaches you, waves of happiness will strike you. And that is why I am writing. Though my letter won't do justice and my words will fall short to write something for you. But I am sure not writing would not have been a good idea either. I feel humbled to let you know that it is 'you' who have made me reach this place in my life where I am capable of picking up my pen and writing. This 'you' is of course a combination of all your struggles, glee moments, and ups and downs, of all types.

When I look at your support, love, and trust in me. I close my eyes for a moment, wipe my tears and pat myself. It is not what everyone gets. But it takes me a little while to come back to normal. When I visualize some of your trials, the ones you have narrated or the ones that I have seen, some that we shared togetherly, some that you may not have even let me know. When I think of your patience and courage, other than saluting you what else can I do? I think!

But, amazingly, such tests make us ready for future uncertainties. And your pet word Paapa that you keep on repeating on almost all phone calls to everyone that 'Allah does and will do best' for everyone and always are pushers for me as well. Apart from the people you tell this and boost them.

I appreciate how you have raised three of us. With love, laughter, and smiles. I appreciate how as a girl child you have raised me with honor, dedication, and respect. By inculcating all this you have already won. Anyhow, I won't write much longer. Though my pen does not want to stop while writing something beautiful like this. Let me reserve stuff for some other time. Till then take good care of yourself, and know that I am proud to be your daughter. May we be blessed.

Yours loving,
Durdana

बंद कमरे

-मोहम्मद कामरान

चार बाई पाँच का कमरा, यानी चार दीवारें हैं
इक परिंदे के सिवा न कोई अंदर आता न कोई बाहर जाता है

इन बंद कमरों मे दफन कई सारी राज़ कि बातें हैं
बदनाम फ़क़त यूँ न हैं कि इसमे मौजूद किताबें हैं

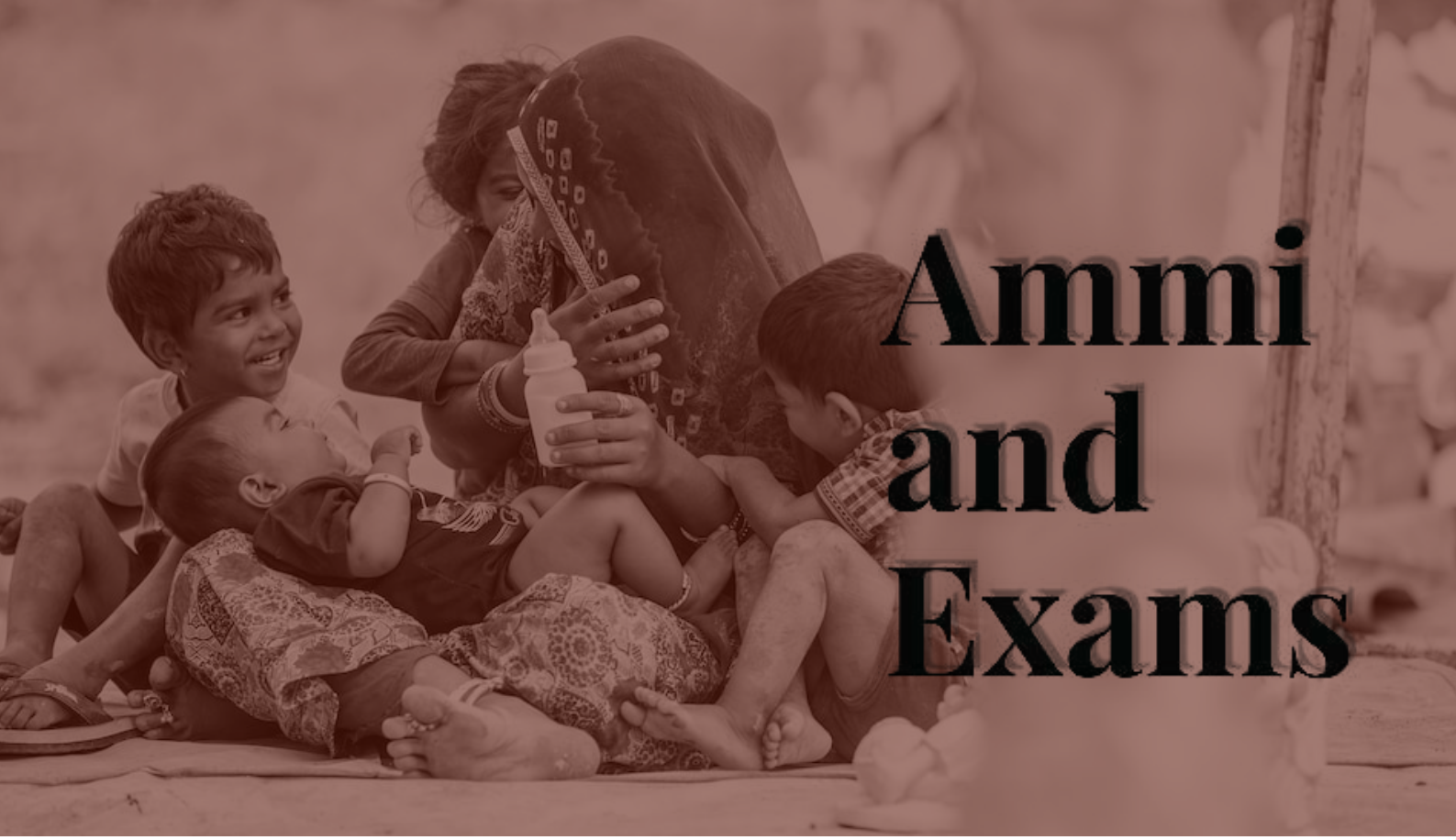
भरी जवानी ज़िंदान जैसे कमरों में रहने कि आदत आखिर किसे है
बस ज़िम्मेरदारियाँ हैं कुछ जिससे पाऊँ में काटे गड़े हैं

ये बंद कमरे असल में कई दरवाज़े खोल जाते हैं
चाभी कि शक्ल मे रखे किताबों के जो ज़ख़ीरे हैं

इन बंद कमरों कि तन्हाई अक्सर डराती है
हाँ घर कि याद आ गयी कभी तो ज़रा रुलाती है

इन तन्हाइयों से इंसान पर सीखता बहुत है
आख़िर कमरे के बाहर जो दुनिया है उसमे खुल कर मिलता हि कौन है

वक़्त हो चला, किताबों ने काम किया, ताले खुल गए
पर न जाने क्यों उन्ही कमरों कि याद अब सताती बहुत है।



Ammi and Exams

Ammi was preparing something for me, and I offered Soni Khala a local sweet called "longlatta," to which she replied in a sad voice, "beta, how can I have that, you won't be here tomorrow," to which Ammi says I should respond like this: "khala, I'm only going there for study; I'd come here again." This line always runs through my mind. Many things were new when I returned home after the exam, but my eyes were only looking for Ammi. BY **FAIYAZ ALAM**

ḳẖāk-e-marqad par tirī le kar ye fariyād ā.ūñgā ab duā-e-nīm-shab meñ kis ko maiñ yaad ā.ūñgā
(I shall come to the dust of your grave, bringing this lament:
Now who will remember me in midnight prayers?) ~Iqbal

Like an election, no exam is a cakewalk. An exam is always difficult to face. But what is more difficult to face is the demise of one's mother. And if both things happen at the same time, it's not only difficult to face but also unbearable. I never imagined that I would have to go through this one day. My Ammi died in an accident near my home in Bihar during my third semester exam. This happened just 36 hours before the exam.

What could I have done? to reach home to attend the Janazah. But destiny had a different plan. I couldn't go as flights weren't available in the morning the next day, possibly due to fog. There were no other options that could compel me to attend the Janazah. If I could not attend the Janazah, it was not prudent to go home after the exam. So, I had to appear in the next exam on December 29. But what to study. The only thing that was on my mind then was Ammi's face. Many things relating to her were fighting with each other in my mind to come out. On exam day, I was on my way to appear in the exam. How could a trip to which I had grown accustomed feel like a burden? How could a routine feel like something I

wanted to escape? And I was surrounded by people in the metro, all of whom were preoccupied with their own affairs. You may never know what the people around you are going through Reaching the exam centre was not similar to the other day. I was normal on the outside, but not on the inside. Most of my classmates were unaware of this. I didn't want to tell, or one could say I didn't want condolences. It's strange, isn't it? In the examination hall, luckily, I got the last seat in the row. Luckily, not because I was distant from the invigilator's eyes but because no one could notice me, The bell rings, the exam begins, and the question papers are distributed. But my exam was already going on for something else. It would have taken more than a minute to write the first word on the paper in the exam that day. Despite having content, we had to stop almost every 10–15 minutes. I was trying not to think about "that," at least in the exam, but it wasn't something easily controllable. Invigilator Azhar sir listens to the sound being produced by the rotating pen between my fingers and, seeing me being lost in thought, asks me, "Faiyaz, have you run out of content?" Almost everyone had so much content that time may not have allowed them to write it all. So, I didn't have to respond like the other students. For me, this exam wasn't only about content; it was also an exam of my ability to attempt all the questions. I tried everything in various ways. Everyone remembers and praises the one who passes away. It's natural. In the case of Ammi, the same is true. But it's also different. The grief is much deeper. One can overcome other losses, but not this one. The loss is not only of what she gave me in her life but also of what I won't be able to have in the rest of my life. Allama Iqbal expresses this in a beautiful couplet written at the top for her late mother. Even after a month, it's beyond my comprehension that Ammi will no longer be with me for the rest of my life. Yes, for the rest of my life! I'm still unable to believe this. With the passage of time, the pain grows more intense, and I realise she is no longer alive. In the same Nazm, Allama iqbal says this too that: -

vaqt ke afsūñ se thamtā nāla-e-mātam nahīñ vaqt zaḳhm-e-teġh-e-furqat kā koī marham nahīñ

(The lamentation of mourning is not stopped by the spell of time Time is no balm for the wound of the sword of separation).



Bibi Sakila, my mother

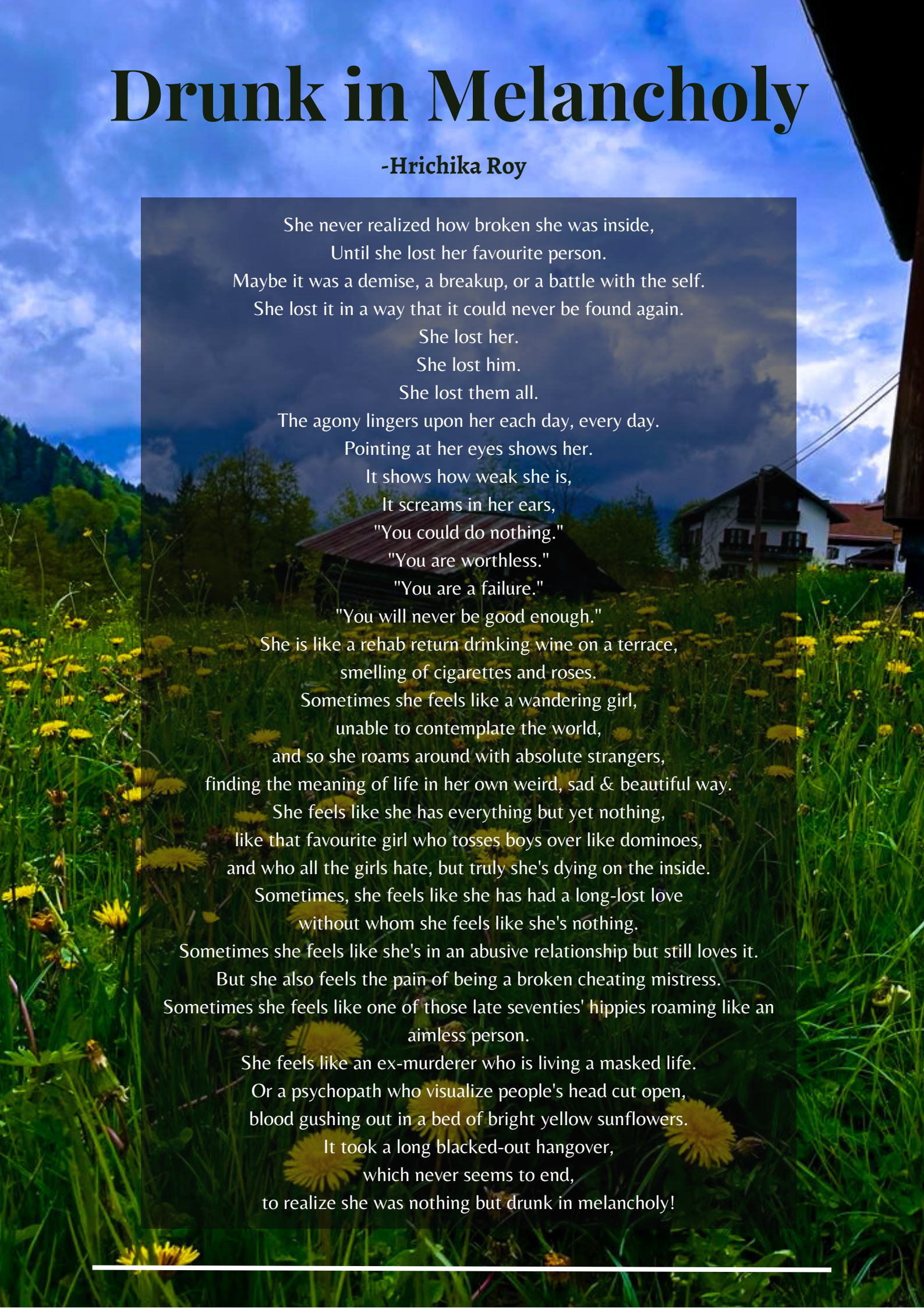
She was the one who got me into the private school despite my poor financial situation without informing Abba, who would have refused for his own reasons. She has always wished for all of our siblings to receive an education. She minimised her needs for this. I remember when the university was in offline mode and Ammi was preparing something for me, and I offered Soni Khala a local sweet called "longlatta," to which she replied in a sad voice, "beta, how can I have that, you won't be here tomorrow," to which Ammi says I should respond like this: "khala, I'm only going there for study; I'd come here again." This line always runs through my mind. I never thought that when I was home again, Ammi wouldn't be there. Many things were new when I returned home after the exam, but my eyes were only looking for Ammi. On this, I wrote:

"When had I thought about this one thing When had I thought it's so near
When had I thought it would be like this When had I thought it could be with me
When had I thought it was last time I was seeing you
When had I thought of coming here (home) would be due to this reason When had I thought I won't have YOU
When had I even thought its happening is inevitable"

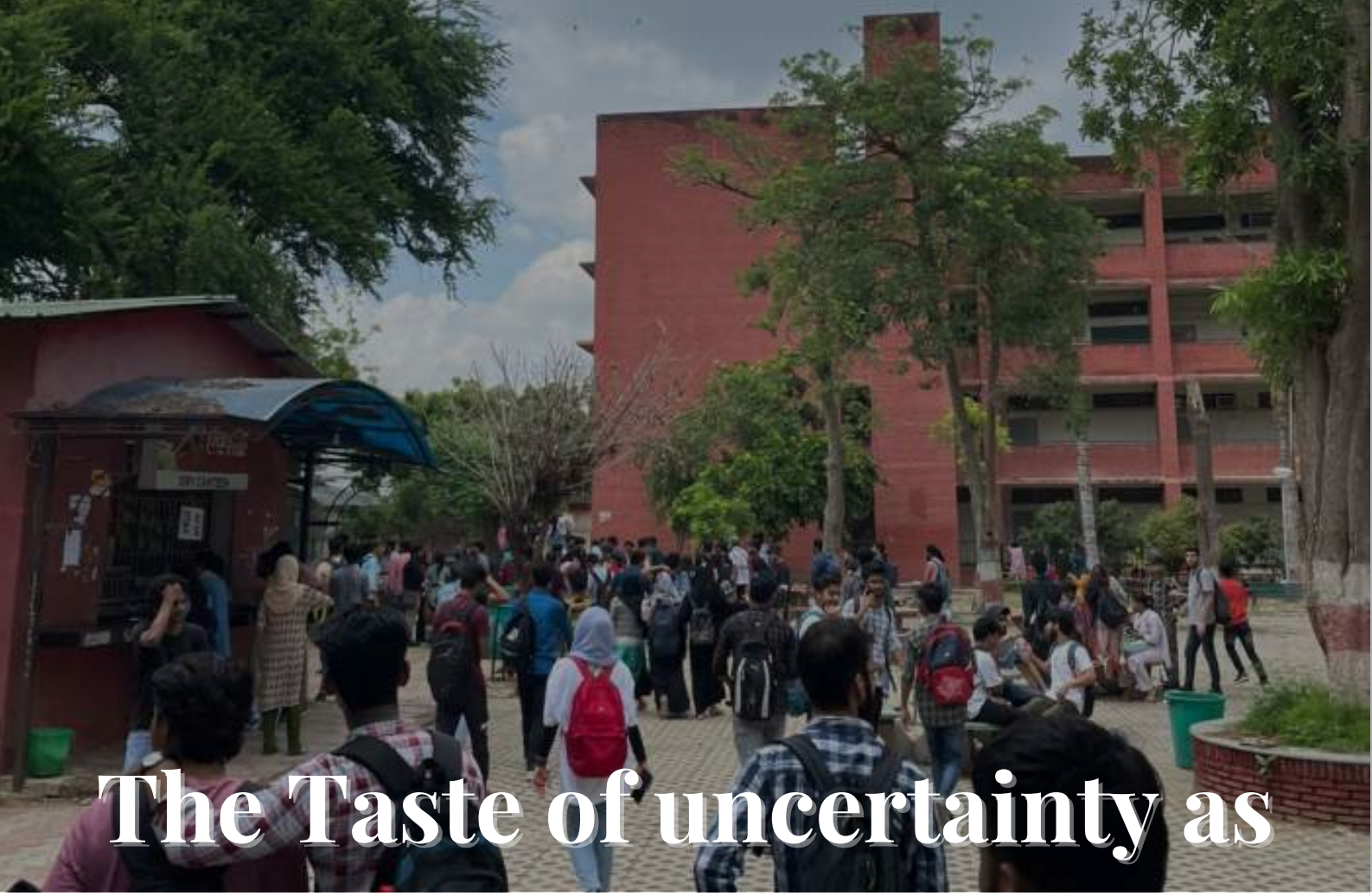


Drunk in Melancholy

-Hrichika Roy



She never realized how broken she was inside,
Until she lost her favourite person.
Maybe it was a demise, a breakup, or a battle with the self.
She lost it in a way that it could never be found again.
She lost her.
She lost him.
She lost them all.
The agony lingers upon her each day, every day.
Pointing at her eyes shows her.
It shows how weak she is,
It screams in her ears,
"You could do nothing."
"You are worthless."
"You are a failure."
"You will never be good enough."
She is like a rehab return drinking wine on a terrace,
smelling of cigarettes and roses.
Sometimes she feels like a wandering girl,
unable to contemplate the world,
and so she roams around with absolute strangers,
finding the meaning of life in her own weird, sad & beautiful way.
She feels like she has everything but yet nothing,
like that favourite girl who tosses boys over like dominoes,
and who all the girls hate, but truly she's dying on the inside.
Sometimes, she feels like she has had a long-lost love
without whom she feels like she's nothing.
Sometimes she feels like she's in an abusive relationship but still loves it.
But she also feels the pain of being a broken cheating mistress.
Sometimes she feels like one of those late seventies' hippies roaming like an aimless person.
She feels like an ex-murderer who is living a masked life.
Or a psychopath who visualize people's head cut open,
blood gushing out in a bed of bright yellow sunflowers.
It took a long blacked-out hangover,
which never seems to end,
to realize she was nothing but drunk in melancholy!



The Taste of uncertainty as

JAMIA STUDENT

BY **Syed Sabqat**

Aristotle had once said about the contingency of human existence. Our existence depends upon some unavoidable phenomenon that is beyond our control. Starting university is rarely easy for students. Meeting new friends, getting familiar with your course and moving away from home for the first time are all challenges. My journey to Jamia was chained with various uncertainties and challenges. The foremost one we all experienced is the COVID-19 pandemic, possibly the gravest turbulence of this century. This gripped and deteriorated my life further as a student. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a sudden shift to online teaching and restricted campus access. Life ordains us in different baskets where we experience and reflect on it from a different perspective. I was so uncertain that my journey to Jamia could be like this. Hailing from one of the most beautiful mountainous border regions of Kashmir (Kachhama Kupwara), it was like a paradigm shift for me to experience student life in the congested, metropolitan city of Delhi. Often, we anticipate prudence in the management of the wheel of life. Yet, uncertainties often teach us in ways that we fail to fathom. For me, it is not the first time that I have experienced an uncertain academic career because, being a resident of Kashmir, I encountered the certainty of uncertainty in almost every sphere of life.

Sometimes, I wish I could get into a better university. It is a sense of never being satisfied, I supoose. Getting into Jamia was not easy for me either; I faced various hurdles over time, including family pressure, but thanks to my lifeline (My Father), who worked as a life-support to fulfil this dream of mine. I cannot miss out on my father's contribution because no one else has shown such concern for me. It was strange and at the same time an exciting experience to be in isolation during virtual classes with teachers and batchmates in the first year. One Interesting point is that we often try to save the contact number of people after having a personal or face-to-face meeting. Still, covid taught us practically what Karl Popper theorised, "Paradigm Shift," I think we all saved our numbers virtually and then got a chance of an in-person meet ----right? I must uphold the positive aspect of the online mode of learning. In fact, students now find it easy to take part in conversations. The time and effort the professors put in are commendable because, despite the fact that the lectures were online, we were still able to email the professors with any questions or concerns, and they swiftly responded. Moreover, the institution has been so helpful that several services were changed to assist the students at home. We connect ourselves virtually through social media and disconnect ourselves. The voyage from the online world of the classroom to offline campus life again was very much amusing & confusing. From here a new chapter of Jamian inaugurates, where I observe cultural shock both inside and outside campus life. Here how can I skip the most gloomy fact of my academic career



"that I got a chance to live in-campus life, mainly in Jamia, as at my erstwhile university (Cluster University of Srinagar, Kashmir), I didn't get the same due to the article 370 revocation and further covid pandemic? But the chaos of covid is still there. Staying in a sans hostel and getting an anticipated accommodation outside but close to the university campus was very hectic and fussy for me. Somehow I managed! Speaking through the lens of an unbiased attitude is very much difficult for us humans but not impossible at the same time.



It is worth mentioning here that I found very kind hearted professors who always welcomed me, especially Krishna sir's thought-provoking discussion, Farah Mam's ethical treatment and my personal narration to Muslim sir. At various crossroads, I interacted with many international students from Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey at Jamia. I think it is the Hallmark of Jamia as a living campus that I appreciate the most.



For freshers, the first week is usually marked by parties, meeting new people and attending events organised by the university. However with the coronavirus measures in Delhi, a normal freshers' week was not possible for our batch, and we had to improvise. Opening the campus for offline classes also yielded uncertainty and a dubious state of mind. Maybe this is not the case for everyone, because we live our own experiences throughout life. I support the other when all the people support one thing. My experience of the shared home is a drawback in getting acceptance from the people. As a sceptic, I am not a pure 'anything' and therefore cannot be trusted. Well, my attitude is also to be blamed for this. The taste of flux and uncertainty as a Jamian remains static till now. It's only a matter of realisation. Enunciating, I hold an exception on the pages of Jamia's history as part of the covid 19 masters batch.



Ode from a Struggling Iceberg

-Wasifa Majid

Walking in solitude & in desolation drags my steps
sometimes towards heaven,
other times to hell.
A fine walk during which the finest unconsciousness wraps me around,
flies me to the stars & to the infinite skies,
where I hold cold hands of mine
& fearlessly dance in stardust, along with my flakes.
A state of mine where all the agony seems to have vanished,
where the entire world seems to have gotten better.
Flying feet plunge impediments
& an inescapable wakefulness pulls me back
& clings me back to the practicality which stinks,
to the reality which terrifies,
to the world which infuses shivers in my nerves.
In all those happy and cheerful gatherings
my heart craves that solitude
which flies me to the stars & to the infinite skies.

MUJH JAISI

A PHOTO STORY NARRATED BY

women for women

Falak:
It was indeed a surreal experience with the girls at Safdarjung tomb, witnessing the beauty of Delhi in winters. The perfect day accompanied by delicious home cooked food, soothing music along with unending college gossip in Lodhi garden was something unforgettable for sure. Those unfiltered girly talks, candid laughs and a long photo session made it special in my heart. I will forever cherish those memories that we made!





Durdana:
A trip that opened up all of us. In one year none of us ever thought to visit a place together, as all we had amongst ourselves was a 'Hello' and 'Bye.'
A usual morning on the campus and the cancellation of a class acted as a catalyst for this plan. Just a few of us sat together and started to discuss where we have been in Delhi, and that is it. We decided to pack our bags in the coming week, take self-cooked food and visit Lodhi Garden. The day began with Hello and Hi and ended with waves of laughter, and smiles and yearning to plan more at least.

Roopambica

Women understand and support each other in strange ways. Some days they bond over long conversations (often with chai) and on other days a mere reading of facial expressions does the job. I am very grateful to have met some wonderful women at Jamia who have reinstated my belief in the universal sisterhood. The disconnect caused by virtual classrooms finally came to an end with this incidental brunch picnic at Lodhi Garden. Nothing beats a potluck party where everyone expresses their persona through food (with that i mean a LOT of food). Needless to say, the brunch ended with some of us wanting to lie down on the grass to nap!



Jannat:

The off base picnic before the fall sets. A day to remember. No wiener roast, no cookout but just all girls flexing their culinary talent. Laughing and joking about campus stories in the beautiful fete champetre is all that we need to refresh our sullen state of mind from busy campus life.

Annie:

A day out in the sun, with good food and a bunch of girlfriends, is sometimes all you need to escape the monotony of life. Even though we did not get the chance to know each other closely (thanks to the one year of online classes followed by academic stress), a picnic date in the chilling January of Delhi felt like a good idea and so, we became chefs and home cooked food, played Anuv Jain, and sat to chat at Lodhi Garden, gossiping and laughing like maniacs. We could relate with each other as we chit-chatted and I realized the weird sense of comfort in that relatability. Hundreds of selfies and videos later, we went back home finally knowing each other. You should try it too. ;)

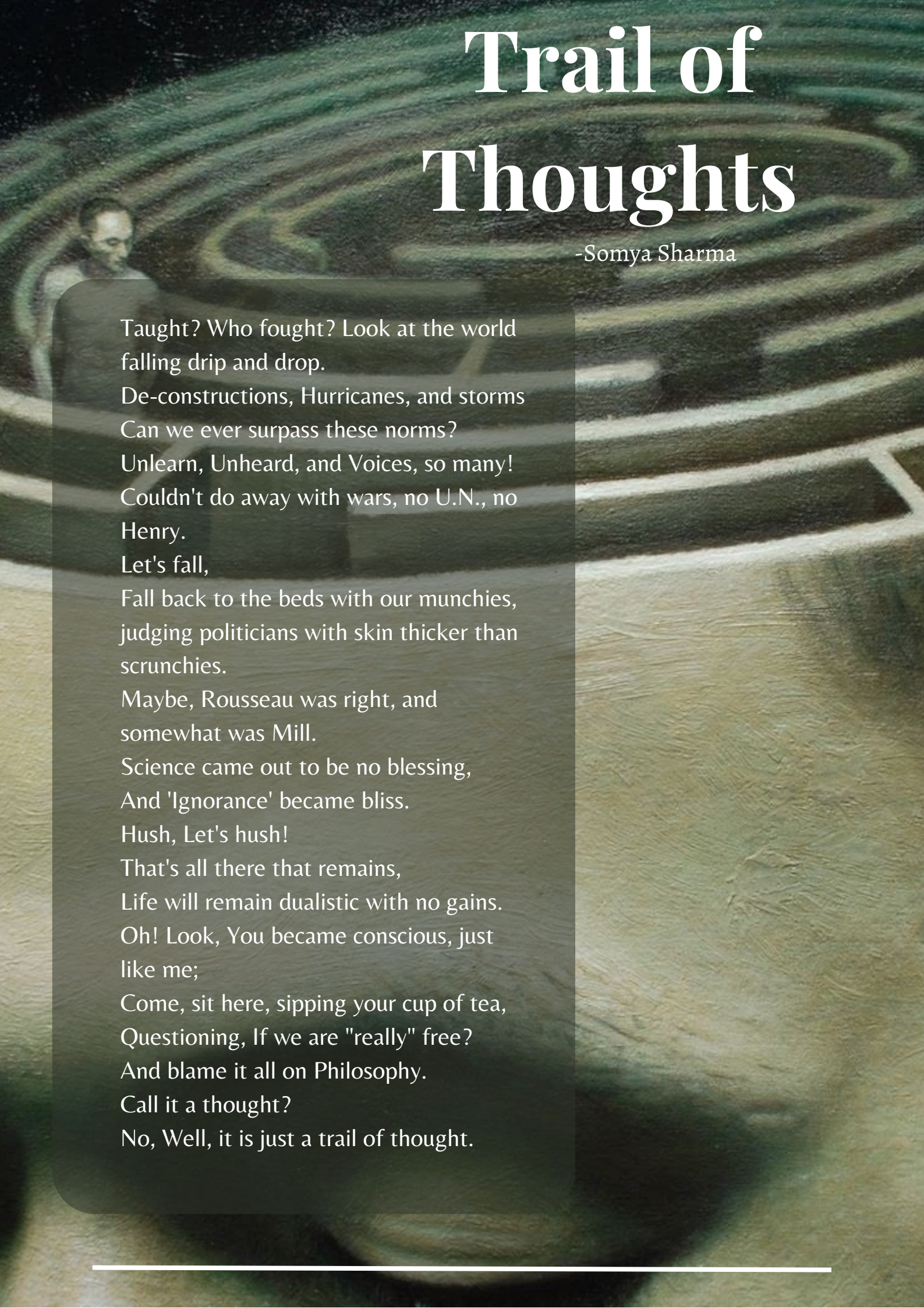


#forever&always



#queenss;)

Farheen:
Just when you feel you've explored everything, Delhi always comes up with something new to offer. This is the beauty of this region, it amazes me with its hidden gems and Safdarjung tomb is one of them.The beautiful Architecture, tall trees, birds flying in the wide open sky and the smell of fresh air (which is quite rare these days) were enough to forget all the academic stress and worries of life. I'm glad we took a day off from our daily routine and planned this cute picnic day to enjoy food, laugh, gossip and appreciate the rich heritage of our country. It was such an indelible and peaceful experience for me, I would love to do this again!



Trail of Thoughts

-Somya Sharma

Taught? Who fought? Look at the world falling drip and drop.
De-constructions, Hurricanes, and storms
Can we ever surpass these norms?
Unlearn, Unheard, and Voices, so many!
Couldn't do away with wars, no U.N., no Henry.
Let's fall,
Fall back to the beds with our munchies, judging politicians with skin thicker than scrunchies.
Maybe, Rousseau was right, and somewhat was Mill.
Science came out to be no blessing,
And 'Ignorance' became bliss.
Hush, Let's hush!
That's all there that remains,
Life will remain dualistic with no gains.
Oh! Look, You became conscious, just like me;
Come, sit here, sipping your cup of tea,
Questioning, If we are "really" free?
And blame it all on Philosophy.
Call it a thought?
No, Well, it is just a trail of thought.

Art to cope

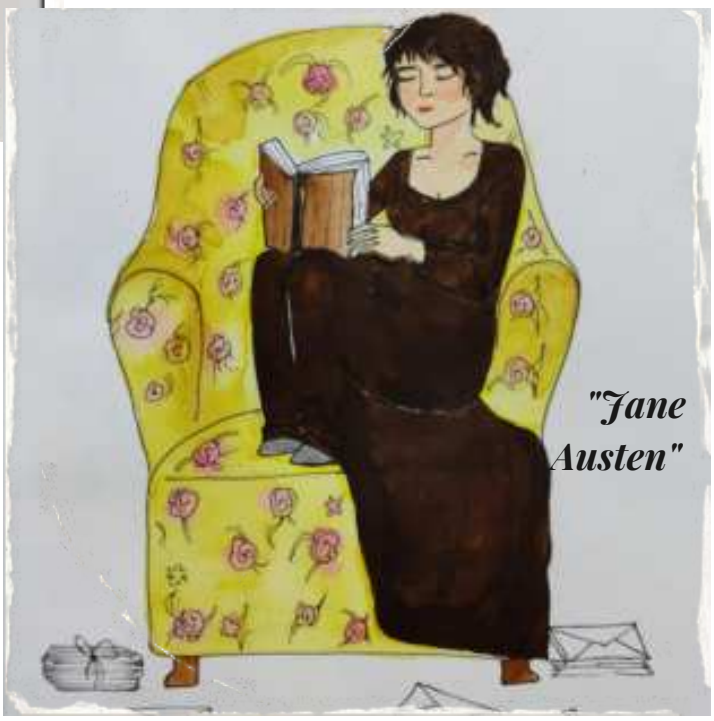
Roopambica Tripathy



Brush pen effect: The Scream

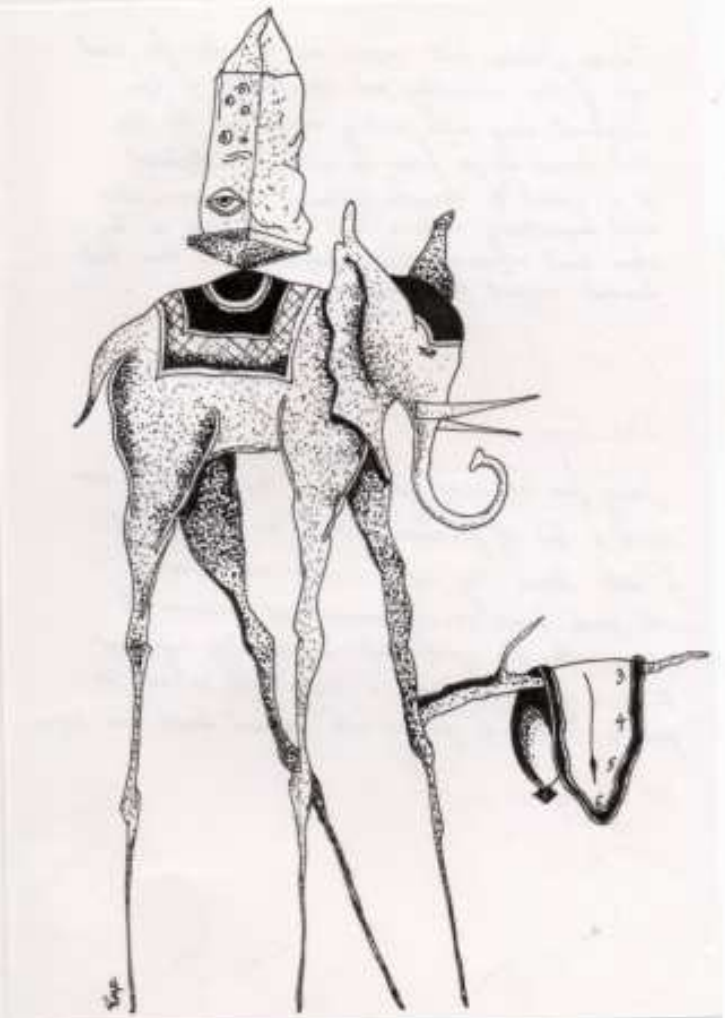


"A Tribute To My First Pet"



"Jane Austen"

I have been using art as a coping mechanism for as long as I can remember. Perhaps, it started as a way to escape the loneliness of being a single child; but the appeal of it extended well into my adulthood. Being in a creative space with an array of art mediums not only brings me peace but instills a sense of power and freedom within me. Art transports me to a lacuna where I can build my own narratives without any inhibitions holding me back. Apart from this, making artworks for loved ones is my love language. It is my way of expressing gratitude for the value they hold in my life. The images above are two instances of such gestures.

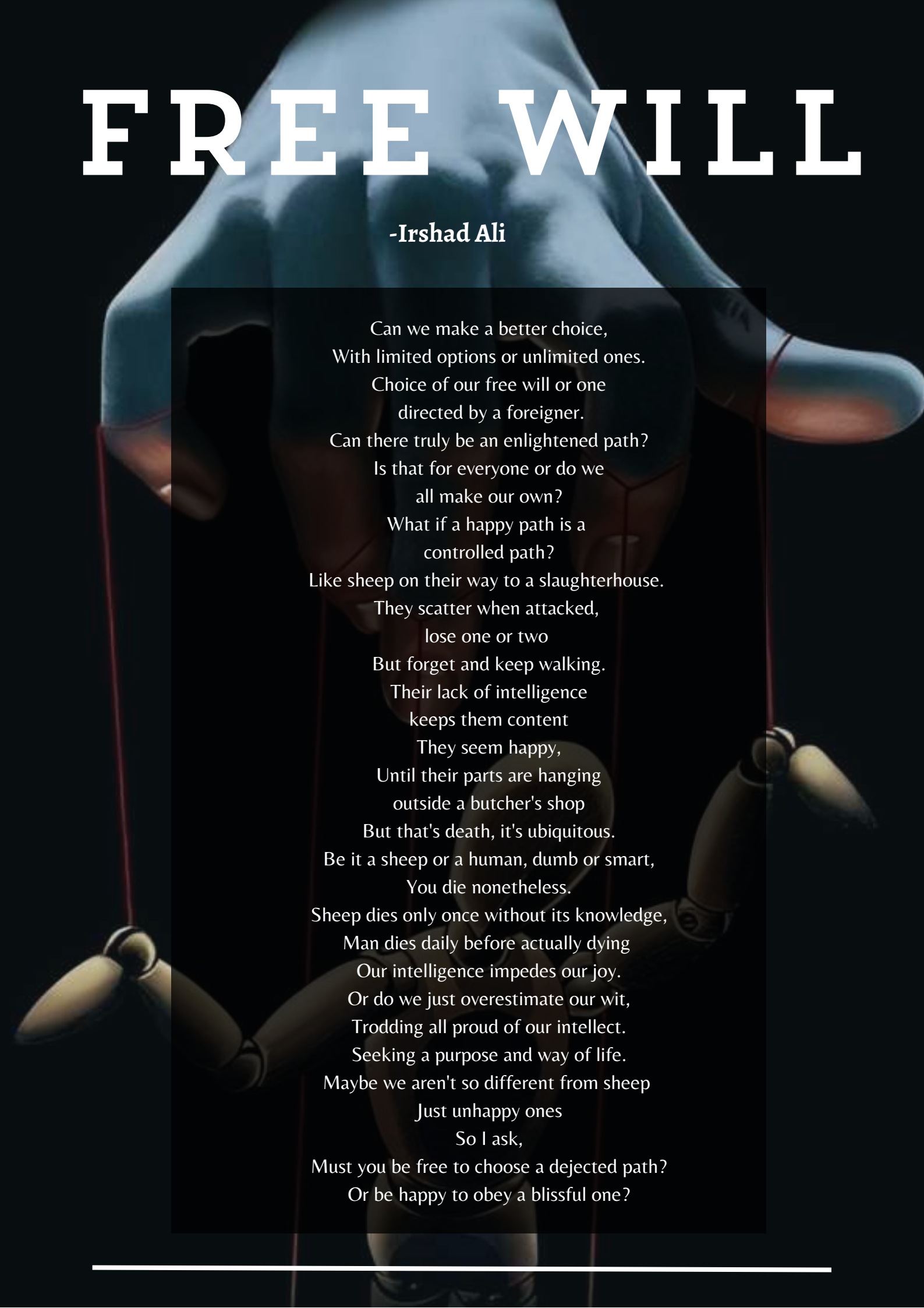


Elements from Dali
(Inspiration: Ilker Goktaslar)

> As they say, all art is imitation and imitation is the sincerest form of flattery

---

I have decided to use this opportunity to present my interpretation of the Scream (Edvard Munch) and the Elephants (Salvador Dali). These two paintings are among the iconic paintings that have come to represent the images of our times. Funnily enough, I was introduced to Munch's work through a social media meme.Art works in mysterious ways. On one hand, you show your personal perspective of the world and on the other every interpretation is subjective to or shaped by the viewers' thoughts and their lived experiences. I am still learning more and more about the world around me, thanks to art. If you are an artist of any kind and have stopped due to undefined reasons, I urge you to give it another chance.



FREE WILL

-Irshad Ali

Can we make a better choice,
With limited options or unlimited ones.
Choice of our free will or one
directed by a foreigner.
Can there truly be an enlightened path?
Is that for everyone or do we
all make our own?
What if a happy path is a
controlled path?
Like sheep on their way to a slaughterhouse.
They scatter when attacked,
lose one or two
But forget and keep walking.
Their lack of intelligence
keeps them content
They seem happy,
Until their parts are hanging
outside a butcher's shop
But that's death, it's ubiquitous.
Be it a sheep or a human, dumb or smart,
You die nonetheless.
Sheep dies only once without its knowledge,
Man dies daily before actually dying
Our intelligence impedes our joy.
Or do we just overestimate our wit,
Trodding all proud of our intellect.
Seeking a purpose and way of life.
Maybe we aren't so different from sheep
Just unhappy ones
So I ask,
Must you be free to choose a dejected path?
Or be happy to obey a blissful one?

पुरानी दिल्ली की झलकियाँ

-मोहम्मद कामरान

सोंधा- सोंधा सा उठता धुआँ
हर तरफ जल रही भट्टियाँ

कहीं है पकता हुआ नान-गोश्त
कहीं हींग में बघरती साब्ज़ियां

दोनों तरफ जगमगाती हुई रौशन दुकानें हैं
बीच में धीमे-धीमे से खिसकते रिक्शे और गाडियाँ

उपर से साया किए तारों का एक आसमान है
बारिश में उफान पर आती हुई नालियाँ

चारों तरफ़ कुर्तों की दुकानों पर लगी हैं कतारें
और कोने में बिकती हुई मखमली साडियाँ

भीड़ का आलम ये है कि पाऊँ रखने की भी जगह नहीं
जभी तो जैसे ही हवा का एक झोका चला उड़ने लगीं पन्नियाँ

उसी भीड़ में पसीने से तर एक गुब्बारे वाला दिखाई दिया
और उसे हटाता एक पुलिस वाला मारता सीटियाँ

वहीं कुछ दूर ग़ालिब के गूँजते हुए अशार भी मैंने सुने
और कैसे ना महसूस होतीं चांदनी-चौक की मस्तियाँ

कोई जो पूछे कि क्या बातें किये जा रहा है आज कामरान
कह देना कि दिखा रहा है पुरानी दिल्ली कि वो झलकियाँ

Odyssey as a student IN DELHI

Either we ignore them or we tend to consider them negligible in shaping our personality. Adapting the former approach becomes a massive problem. More for those who have landed for the first time in a new place. And I believe Delhi is mostly occupied by people like that. People (mostly talking about students here) who have left their comfort spaces and intimate relations in search of something more. BY **DURDANAH MASOODI**

While everything seems smooth as long as we are in our places, it is not the same when we prepare for new places, environments, people, cultures, and much more. Preparing to take admissions in Bachelors. I was on a surfing process aided by knowledge of many people who were acquainted with the Universities and colleges to where I should apply. Finally after filling out all the lengthy applications for various Universities, and now relaxing for a short tenure. I finally landed in the dream college of many girls, Miranda House. And later to Jamia Millia Islamia. Not even slightly aware of how new experiences from college and more from exposure to a place like Delhi will carve out a lot inside of me. We hardly talk about the day-to-day struggles we face in a new place. Either we ignore them or we tend to consider them negligible in shaping our personality. Adapting the former approach becomes a massive problem. More for those who have landed for the first time in a new place. And I believe Delhi is mostly occupied by people like that. People (mostly talking about students here) who have left their comfort spaces and intimate relations in search of something more. Besides, absorbing all new experiences whether they would be social, intellectual, individual, or other. All this leaves one in a state of



fragility. It needs to be tackled appropriately so that it does not hamper one's most important state_the mental state. The latter includes the essence of being a more mature and responsible person. These struggles carve out the potential within an individual that is unknown to one. The beauty of struggles is that each circumstance pushes us toward finding a solution. And that search leads us to strive for new ways and methods. Each new step takes out the hidden potential within an individual.









Everyone faces different situations and responses as per their capacities. Thus everyone takes a truckload of lessons that become the base for new chapters in life. And this cycle continues in everyone's life in one or the other way. Ending this to let myself and every other student know that places like Delhi may push and pull us every time. But such experiences also add to our learning capacities. Which is the real worth.

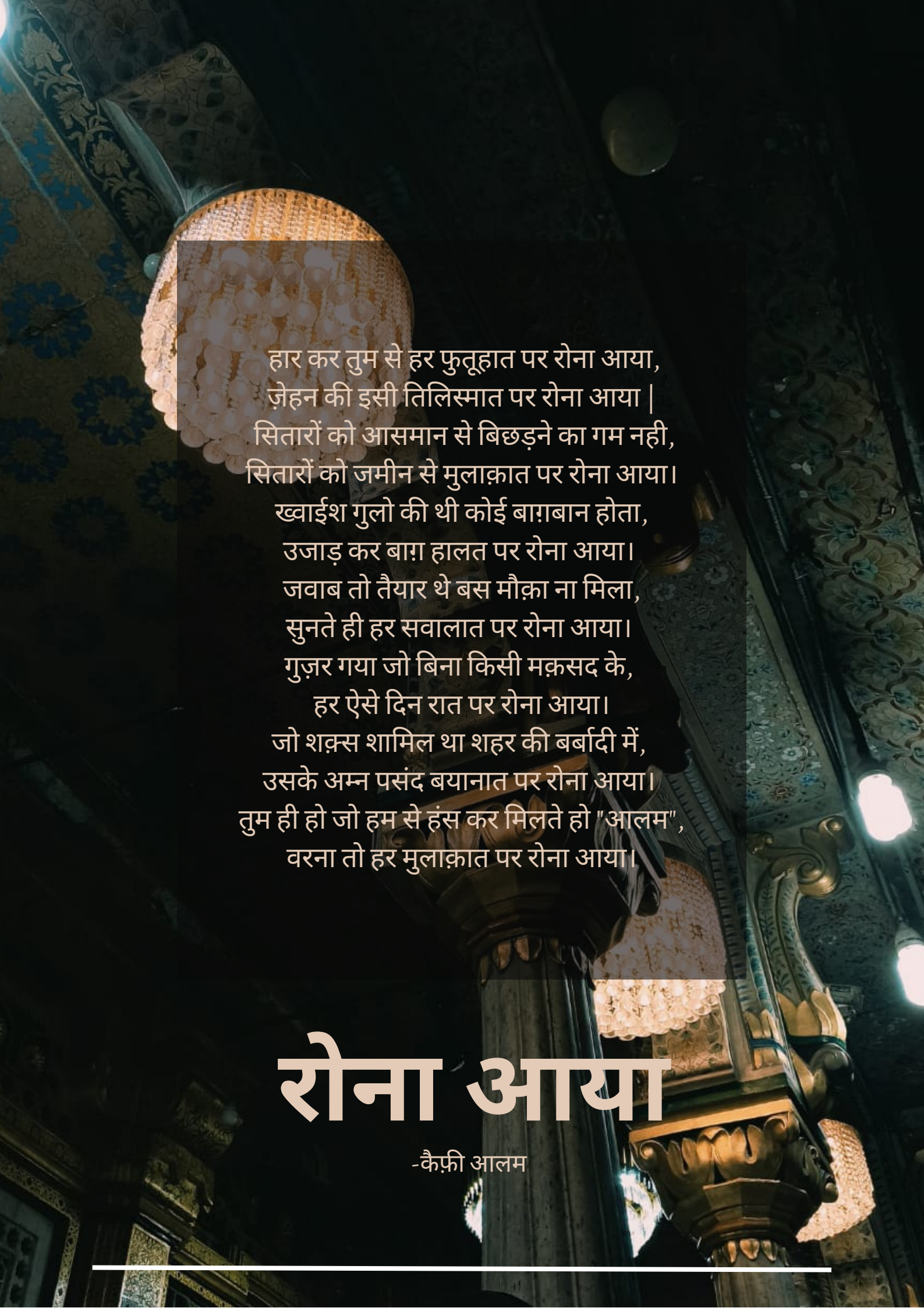


الیکشن کا موسم

-Ahmed Ismail

آچکہ موسم وہ ماحول جسنے آلودہ کیا
جہاں نظریں طواف کریں جمعات فرقہ فرقہ
دیکھی
کیا ریاضی کیا تاریخ سب سیاست سے آلودہ
دیکھی
جیت کا جشن ہو یا ہار کا سوگ
میدھا ہو، طارق ہو یا ہو تسلیم یاد کھوب رکھیں
وقت زندگی کا مختصر ہے یہاں
نفرت نہیں محبت کا امتحان ہے یہاں
جوکوئی جیتا جوکوئی ہارا یاد کھوب رکھے

جوکوئی جیتا جوکوئی ہارا یاد کھوب رکھے
طلبہ کی خدمت فرز ہے یاد کھوب رکھے ۔



हार कर तुम से हर फुतूहात पर रोना आया,
ज़ेहन की इसी तिलिस्मात पर रोना आया |
सितारों को आसमान से बिछड़ने का गम नही,
सितारों को जमीन से मुलाक़ात पर रोना आया।
ख्वाईश गुलो की थी कोई बाग़बान होता,
उजाड़ कर बाग़ हालत पर रोना आया।
जवाब तो तैयार थे बस मौक़ा ना मिला,
सुनते ही हर सवालात पर रोना आया।
गुज़र गया जो बिना किसी मक़सद के,
हर ऐसे दिन रात पर रोना आया।
जो शक़्स शामिल था शहर की बर्बादी में,
उसके अम्न पसंद बयानात पर रोना आया।
तुम ही हो जो हम से हंस कर मिलते हो "आलम",
वरना तो हर मुलाक़ात पर रोना आया।

रोना आया

-कैफ़ी आलम

Tea (Chaii)
For Jamians

-Durdana Masoodi

While it is right that tea holds an important place for many. Whether at home or in outside spaces.Though the love for tea cannot be generalised. But a majority of the people vote in favor of it. For the students of Jamia Milia, it is not just tea. It is not just a cup filled with a mixture of tea leaves and milk. But it is an essence. It is a push factor for sitting long in the Central Canteen at Gate Number 7. And if one wants to make the moment more worthwhile within University, then heading to Prem Ki Chai near Gate number 8 is considered to be a better tea stall option.

Tea is an invisible member of the thriving discussions. Like Politics, religion, science, and theology, chai is part of each one of them. Chai is the only constant in varied and diverse interests. It is a friend of friends when they decide to relax after a day-long exhaustion. It is the first invitee to the gatherings. It is an indirect way of saying let's stay more and take the best from the moment. If it is outside campus then Nagori tea point on Muradi road, in Batla House as per my observation is the most visited stall. The crowd waiting outside this stall contributes to the human traffic on that road.

Followed by Baaji's tea stall near Gafoor Nagar and Ashoke's tea stall around Gate number 1.



Though the tea cups may feel too hot while holding, one friend would certainly fetch two for others. Thus holding the cups and making them reach their destination (either lawns or round tables) is an art possessed by students, teaching, and non-teaching staff.

Chai is intrinsic to the campus life of Jamia. And jamian's in turn have placed it at the top list of their relishing tastes.

Not at the Cost of Now

-Annie Pruthi

As I sit under the shed of
a humble tree whose canopy
provides me a sense of relief,
I replay the version I was 4 years ago,
and sigh,
and smile to myself
for I have grown, and outgrown.

You see, we are often, if not always-
worried
worried of what ifs-
worried of when it would-
worried of how-
and worried of too many whys,
that you and me forget that life happens ,
regardless of that worry.

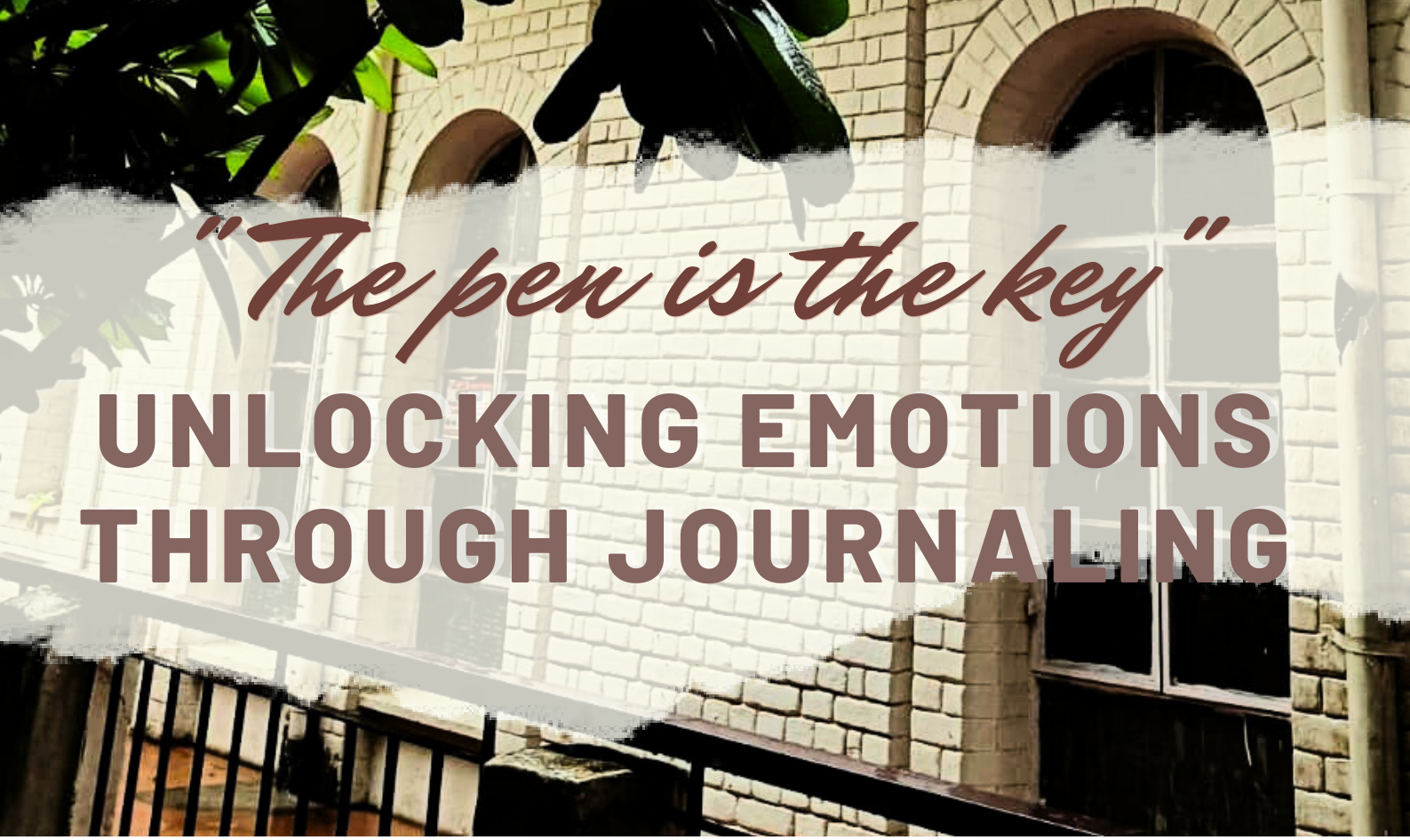
Ofcourse, I think it's important
to think and to act for a better tomorrow -
ofcourse, I believe we should work for
a new morning
But,
not at the cost of sacrificing today,
this moment,
this breath,
not at the cost of now-

Believe in your heart that
all your concerns would be resolved,
and you will see it happen.
Let the blocked energy of your heart,
flow like a wild river,
who does not follow the rules of a shallow
mind

Allow fortitude to breathe through you,
let your heart be a wanderer
and your soul be the guide
gather wisdom like a traveller
who is hungry to pick up wildberries-
stay hungry for knowledge
but do not forget to transform it
and utilise it through wisdom.

There is afterall, only one way
to experience a beautiful journey
and that is, to let yourself
experience it;
people often use four letter word for it,
And they call it life.

2022.08.12 16:06



"The pen is the key"

UNLOCKING EMOTIONS THROUGH JOURNALING

Journaling has the power to invigorate the mind and provoke thought, making it a valuable tool for managing and understanding our emotions. By putting pen to paper, we are able to express our thoughts and feelings in a safe and private space, which can be beneficial, especially for those who find it difficult to verbalise their emotions . BY **Maskat**

William Wordsworth's famous lines *"Fill your paper with your heart's breaths"* perfectly capture the impact that writing has on our emotions. However, when we write for everyone but ourselves, we carefully evaluate each word's significance, the implications, and the ramifications of our thinking, which results in unoriginal writing. Such writing is done to serve the interests of the reader and not as an expression of the writer which, as a result, completely negates the purpose of writing. By documenting our own emotions and thoughts in a journal, we can see how resilient we are to our true selves. Journaling has the power to invigorate the mind and provoke thought, making it a valuable tool for managing and understanding our emotions. By putting pen to paper, we are able to express our thoughts and feelings in a safe and private space, which can be beneficial, especially for those who find it difficult to verbalise their emotions or may not have someone in their lives with whom they feel comfortable sharing. My love for journaling started back when we were taught the format for 'diary entry' in our English class. Funnily enough, I started out trying to be the next Anne Frank by noting down the date & time every time I would make an entry, talking to my diary about my fictional problems & hoping for it to be discovered in future and making me famous after I am gone. Talk about weird delusions of grandeur! As time progressed, I'll be honest, I found it embarrassing. I would hate flipping through the pages. Reading these old entries made me physically cringe so for a brief while, I even stopped altogether. Later, I read the journals of

Sylvia Plath & found it resonating with me. Now, I wanted to be her. I started again & stopped, again. It took me an embarrassing encounter i.e., my mother reading my journal and laughing at it, to realise I had it all wrong. I was journaling for all the wrong reasons. I was trying to emulate people I read and was trying to impress others, who would eventually discover my journals in future. Now that my mother had read them right in front of me, I never wanted anyone else to. But by this time I was addicted to recording the exaggerated versions of my life on paper. I knew I had to be discreet so I started writing in code (not the Da Vinci kind that would need a cryptographer to decode). Writing haikus, poems or stories about a girl & her daily life, I was able to detach myself from the monotony of each day and rid my mind of the anxious thoughts that had been creeping in. I think everyone should journal. Even if there are some approaches to journaling that could backfire, it remains one of the few effective mental health strategies that doesn't necessitate leaving the house or even interacting with other humans. The act of journaling allows us to track patterns in our emotions and behaviour, helping us to identify triggers and make positive changes in our lives. By recognizing these patterns, we can take proactive steps to avoid or manage situations that may cause us stress and anxiety. This allows us to take control of our emotions, rather than feeling like they are controlling us. All these years I spent writing, I learned that journaling truly helps to challenge negative thought patterns by allowing us to explore and process our emotions. This can lead to a reduction in stress and anxiety and an overall improvement in mood. By writing down our thoughts nd feelings or simply making entries about our travels, daily incidents or in my case, not-so-discreet stories, we are able to gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and our



emotions. It eventually leads to greater self-awareness and self-acceptance. Moreover, journaling can also serve as a form of self-reflection, helping us to gain insight and perspective on our lives. It allows us to look back on our experiences, thoughts and feelings with a fresh perspective, and can be helpful in both personal and professional development. Researchers in 2006 asked nearly 100 young individuals to spend 15 minutes twice a week journaling, drawing about a stressful incident, or writing about their daily goals. Journaling participants, especially those who were already severely upset, showed the greatest improvement in mood, anxiety, and aggression. Despite the fact that just 61% of people reported feeling comfortable journaling about their emotions, 80% of people still found it helpful. I know it's so much easier to find a million excuses to avoid journaling. There are times when I have to physically drag myself to the desk in order to get it done. Some studies even imply that after writing, we may experience an increase in negative emotions like guilt, awkwardness, self-consciousness, etc.However, in the long run, we can expect improved health and a deeper sense of purpose. When I think of writing, the adjective "therapeutic" comes to mind because, simply put, journaling is freeing; it is an art in itself, and you don't even have to be good at it because no one but you are ever going to read it, unless you are Sylvia Plath, Annie Frank, or me. In that case, please burn all evidence before your mother or the entire world gets their hands on your journal.

अक्सर तन्हाई में

-तसखीर फातमा



अक्सर तन्हाई में दिल की गहराई में

खुद में डूबी हुई जेन कहा खोई हुई

खौफ है शाम का और सुबह तक सोई हुई

नींद में है बोलती पर दिन में ना हलचल कोई

ख्वाबो को समझे हकीकत सच से ना रिश्ता कोई

है मुसलसल रंज में खुद से है झगड़ा कोई।

पूछती है अपने आप

“क्या वो पाऊंगी मैं

है जो दिल की आरज़ू है जो मुझको बसाज़ू है

जिसका ना सिर्फ जिस्म मेरा वाबस्ता है मेरी रूह,

क्या है इतना आसान ख्वाबो को हकीकत में बदलना?

गर यकीन हो खुद पर तो क्या आसान है कानों पर भी चलना?

पर अगर वो ना हुआ, जो सोच कर बैठी हूँ!

और मुकद्दर हो मेरा, कोई और अंजानी डगर,

क्या वहां खुद को मुकम्मल महसूस कर पाऊंगी?

हां अपनी हस्ती को बनाने में ही मिट जाऊंगी!

अक्सर तन्हाई में दिल की गहराई में

खुद में डूबी हुई जाने कहा खोयी हुई

है यही सोचती बस यही सब सोचती!

Unfortunately, We are all STATUES and have NO UNITY



In India, a child is born into a kesariya or green household wherein his conditioning begins, culminating into a being that views the world around, through either of the inherited coloured spectacles. And generally, an attempt to wear the antithetical lens renders the "crafted mould" visually impaired and a declared fugitive from "The truth"

BY **ANONYMOUS**

We have been raised to believe in "differences" at the best and it's actually the first word of sense and meaning that dramatically sounds euphonious to people of all the designated colours. In India, a child is born into a kesariya or green household wherein his conditioning begins, culminating into a being that views the world around, through either of the inherited coloured spectacles. And generally, an attempt to wear the antithetical lens renders the "crafted mould" visually impaired and a declared fugitive from "The truth". Thus, it is safe to assume that every living soul on this celebrated land is handed a lens at the very first breath that they enjoy outside in the toxic air of the once golden sparrow...

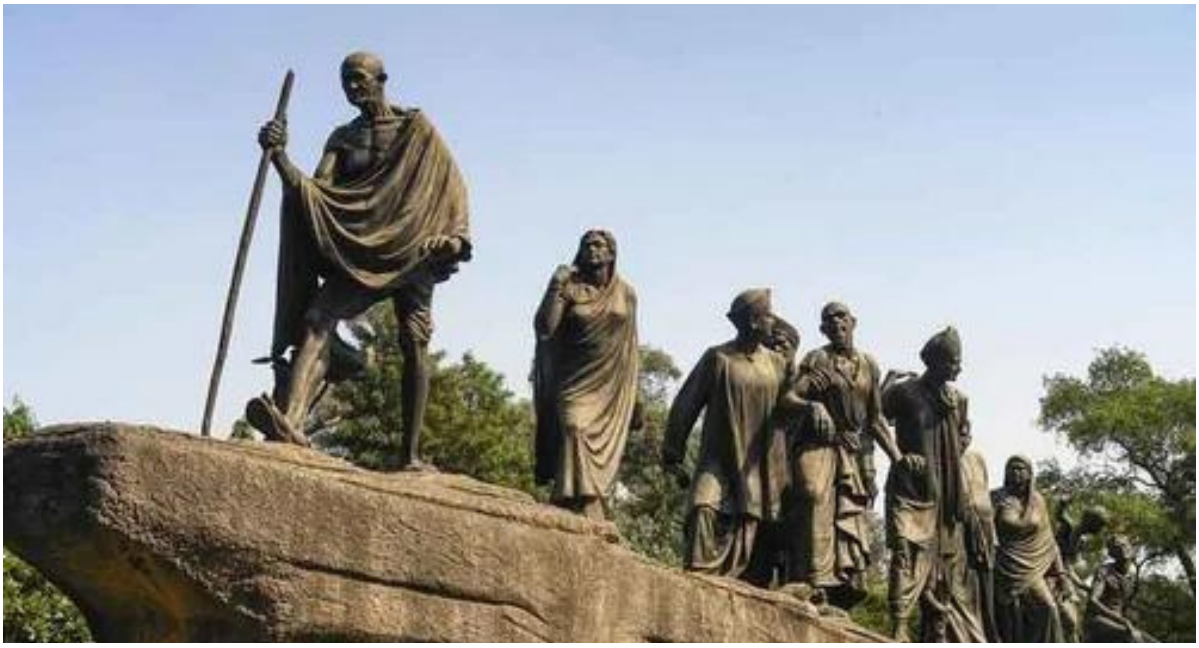
Not to underestimate the will of the Indians ... the rumour says that they begin the teaching process- the art of warfare, of their progeny in the womb itself and the baby is welcomed by the entire household with the version of the truth they too have been passed on to, to award the posterity on account of a place in the "Kula". There have been defectors, there have been challengers...But all lay in their graves or flow in the holy Ganges with bitter lessons learnt that the social revolution ought to emerge at the societal level and not just the individual level. Mahatma Gandhi ji, celebrated as the father of the nation, swam against the tide and tried to offer a transparent lens to all those who were to be born in the

independent India. But to no avail, the spectacles are preserved with utmost grandeur in the Gandhi Museum, which signifies that there walked a man, who tried to blend the colours into a unique though ideally possible mixture of white – peace. The very fact that he failed in his experiments with "the truth" as three bullets pierced through his noble heart and laid to rest one of the greatest apostles of non-violence, violently underline the recurrent theme that we are all statues and no unity. All that Miniscule unity that we have managed to garner and exhibit till date has been momentary and highly conditional. Well the country under examination is ironically the same country that has always proclaimed to have had a healthy social distance from the green-saffron roots of communal disharmony or in a rather shrouding way we can say , has successfully, over the years , employed , stonewalling façade of heavenly gestures of peace and prosperity at life which just falls back and leads into a labyrinth of red grass and stupid "insecurities", to establish its worldview of





"Vashudhaiva Kutumbakam "and dictum of "unity in diversity " recognised. It is the same country that has always bragged at its success in the genre of diversity of "choices" and it is that very country that stands on the framework of a way too manipulated and celebrated "secular constitution". It is the very country where our B&D medium pillars have never left the opportunity to wash their hands in the holy river of Ganges and get their name in some books, only to forget that they shall be remembered by the posterity for their phoney patriotism and genuine sanctimonious approach at the levels of stirrup keepers for some bloody paper and no self respect or moral responsibility as suggested by the highly held directive principles of our state policy. All in all , we can say that today we do not have the man of the iron amongst us, who would have never let our country and the sheep go the places wherein we have blatantly disrespected the soul of our constitution and ended ourselves at the doors of that hell where the keepers of truth have mislead us, only because we had no choice with us for



the angelic ideas had developed the seeds of hunger and weeds , that we left them. Today he stands signifying , in the open skies, unity that he once preached to us only to lose it to his statesmen of sheer blind eyes , only his statue of unity remains today, if he were there, unity would also be there in the country that he built with the angles of democratic diplomacy. We as educated citizens of this country need to raise our voice because it makes us part of the crime, as we silently behold it in process. We know it and that is the reason enough for us to get up, it's there in us, it's there in our blood, we definitely need to learn from the mistakes of our fathers who realised it late. They have us at the better informed side yet we have given up before even trying , we need to wake up and walk the distance uprooting all the weeds along the road to development of Indians and the world eventually. We are every sixth person on this earth and it is high time we put our beliefs through critical examination for the truth, the one that we need today shall emerge when we put aside our inherited spectacles and participate in lively discussions.

And it is my firm belief that we can develop the courage to view the reality with bare eyes; we can look at the sun as the lenses are crushed below our feet and we can possibly celebrate that we are finally all statues only because we are all united ....



Jai Hind

Jai Bharat

ये राजसिंहासन डोला है

-पुष्कर कुमार

जन–जन ने जब जब बोला है,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।
जन–जन ने जब हुंकार किया,
राजसिहंसन पर जन ने वार किया,
थर–थर, थर–थर सिंहासन कांपा है।

जन–जन ने जब जब बोला है,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।

जन–जन ने सियासत में भूचाल किया,
जन–जन ने न्याय का जब मांग किया।
जन–जन ने समता को जब आवाज़ दिया,
जन–जन ने आज़ादी का लड़ाई किया।

जन–जन ने जब जब बोला है,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।

भगत, आज़ाद और राजगुरु
सिंहासन से जब टकराए,
सिंहासन को चकना–चूर किया।
अंग्रेजों को भारत से दूर किया।

जन–जन ने जब जब बोला है,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।

फिर अपनी सिंहासन बनाने को,
विविधता की संस्कारों को,
संगम की सभ्यताओं को,
संविधान में जब निहित किया।

सिंहासन को कमज़ोर किया,
जन–जन को मजबूत किया।
लोकतंत्र को जब कायम किया,
जन–जन को जब आवाज़ दिया।

जन–जन ने जब बोला है ,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।

जेपी ने जब इंदिरा को ललकारा,
जन ने जेपी का साथ दिया,
सिंहासन पर जब प्रतिघात किया,
इंदिरा पर ही प्रतिघात किया,
लोकतंत्र को फिर से कायम किया।

जन–जन ने जब जब बोला है,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।

मोदी ने जो काम किया,
उद्योगपतियों के नाम किया।
सिंहासन को जब मजबूत किया,
मीडिया ने जन को कमज़ोर किया।

जन को अब कमज़ोर किया,
लेकिन सुन ले मोदी ,
जन–जन ने जब जब बोला है,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।

जन ने बोलना अब आरंभ किया,
राजसिहांसन का डोलना अब तय किया।
जन–जन ने संविधान का पुकार किया,
जन ने जनतांत्रिक व्यवस्था को,
फिर कायम करने को आवाज़ दिया।

जन–जन ने जब जब बोला है,
ये राजसिंहासन डोला है।

3 MLA for days



The moment I assumed my seat which was held by an incumbent MLA, the responsibilities of being a lawmaker dawned upon me and I began to feel the gravity of that position. The legislative processes which I had hitherto watched on television or read about in the newspapers and books were not only observed but also executed in real time by me.

BY **Safira Hussain**,

The Delhi Youth Parliament 2023 was held from 23rd to 25th January at the Delhi Legislative Assembly. I got this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sit in the law-making chambers of the capital of India and discharge the functions of a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA). Being a part of the proceedings of the assembly for three days brought with it an enriching and wholesome experience. The moment I assumed my seat which was held by an incumbent MLA, the responsibilities of being a lawmaker dawned upon me and I began to feel the gravity of that position. The legislative processes that I had hitherto watched on television or read about in the newspaper and books were not only observed but also executed in real time by me. I understood the utility of different legislative devices such as the question hour, special mention, and amendment resolutions in the daily conduct of the house. How the bills and resolutions are introduced, discussed and what are the bottlenecks which hinder their passage and how they are strategically tackled were some of the things I learned. I also observed how the ruling party defends its policies and the way the opposition criticises the ruling party's shortcomings. On the first day of the event, an orientation session was conducted where the participants



were apprised of the role of an MLA, working of the assembly and were subsequently allotted their respective portfolios. The day ended with preparations for next day's question hour and special mentions. On the second day, the assembly session began with the Governor's address followed by an oath-taking ceremony by the participants and then the much-awaited Question Hour began which turned out to be very lively. This was followed by Special Mentions by the members. In the second session, two bills and two resolutions were laid before the Assembly by the Government. After the day's proceedings ended, there were discussions by the government and the opposition in their respective lounges on the strategies for the next day. The first hour of the sitting on the third day was also devoted to Question Hour followed by Special Mentions and then debate and final passage of the bills and resolutions. The day concluded with Delhi Deputy Chief Minister's words of appreciation and encouragement. This incredible edition of the DYP 2023 came to an end with a cultural programme and a lavish dinner. The perplexed gaze from the passersby while commuting to the Delhi Vidhan Sabha with fellow Jamians - each carrying the briefcase-shaped jute bag and I Card of the Delhi Assembly, gave an inexplicable feeling. Discussing the proceedings while while going through the bills and special mentions for that day, in the metro, attracted more ears and eyes towards us. This hectic yet desirable three-day routine amidst my exams taught me how to manage and balance such things in life. Stepping into the awe-inspiring premises of the Delhi Legislative Assembly, taking oath as an MLA in the grandiose chamber, deliberating in the MLA Lounge of the ruling party, rushing to take allotted seats as soon as the quorum bell rang, turning on the mic to speak, informal interactions among members at the tea break and of course the presenting of Special Mention—all have been etched in my memory indelibly and will evoke sheer nostalgia whenever I will look back to this episode of my life. All the participants were completely unfamiliar with one another on day one but over three days a wonderful bonding had developed and on the final day, the time of bidding goodbyes was imbued with emotions. Though we had been divided as members of the ruling and the opposition and had arguments during passage of bills and resolutions yet these divisions melted away soon after the closing ceremony.

The dignitaries for the event inspired us to be a part of politics. They believed that youth, brimming with innovative ideas and well-versed with the problems plaguing Indian society at the grassroots, should take up these roles. Only then India can really emerge from being a developing to a developed country. Apart from the Assembly proceedings, I got to learn a lot from the galaxy of talented participants who had come from the esteemed universities of Delhi. Overall, this novel experience will continue to linger in my heart forever.



Noura: A tale of BECOMING

Then one fine summer, when rain splashed the lands of the Orient and heralded both heat and succour, she reached a metropolis on the bank of a river known for its sweetness in the past ages but now stinking of vitriol and grudge. In the heart of that metropolis stood a university,all glass and iron. BY **NIDA PARWEEN**

In a suburb named Ramallah, one autumn night, when a crescent moon hung high over the horizon, Noura, a girl on the threshold of puberty, with mahogany hair and dovey eyes, was pulled out of her sleep, perturbed by a dream that didn't feel like a dream but a jarring, manifest reality. For the umpteenth time, she lamented not being endowed with oneiromancy, the ability to interpret dreams, as prophet Joseph was. She packed her goatskin knapsack, scribbled a farewell note on the papyrus under the coruscating light of the oil lamp, and before tucking it by her father's mattress, she kissed its rough surface, mumbling a long verse from the holy book, praying for her father's well-being but, more importantly, a release from the agony that separation entails. And then she was gone, guarded by angels and guided by stars.

Weeks passed, months flew by, and years elapsed. She covered miles and crossed mountains and deserts. Her mahogany hair grew longer, her eyes acquired the blazing sheen of youth, and she came to be known as a wandering saint. Her womanhood was unparalleled; wherever she stopped, wherever she went, at every dock and caravanserai, her erudition turned men's enticement into reverence; her questions thwarted any attempt to encroach on her sanctum sanctorum, what people call her body; and her answers led those very men to offer her temple and mosque to dwell in and ruminate. All the while, she was empty, the pretext of her quest, the interpretation of that autumnal dream, was nowhere to be found; its memory remained incisively intact in the folds of her eyelids. In every land, she reached out to priests and pundits,

saints and sages, but to no avail; every second person confirmed the same refrain, "Dreams are meant to be forgotten in the morning, not to keep you awake at nights," and every first person refused to entertain the question, fearing a reprisal from God or even gods if one happened to engage with the lowly creation, questioning being a prerogative of men. A dozen more months flew by, and her veins turned ferociously cold; she began to shrivel like autumn leaves. What vexed her sleepless mind? Nobody knew except the breeze, which eavesdropped on her soliloquy; she asked the universe why she couldn't be like those dead-but-alive philosophers? Like Ibn Khaldun, like Ibn Sina, like Ibn Rushd, like Al-Ghazzali, and that plethora of Ionian polymaths? On some nights, she would wail under the sound of howling wolves and jackals, sending her curse to Eve as to why she allowed her genes to be cast and galvanised with enfeebling emotions. On other nights, she doodled on the sand and located the cause of the greatness of those bygone bodies in their callousness, their inherent hardihood. Didn't Ibn Khaldun continue penning his polemics even when the ship carrying his wife and children capsized? Didn't Ghazzali return more redoubtable after 11 years of recluse? Wasn't Ibn Sina reticent enough to shun human contact and devote himself to belles letters alone? As it turned out, these nocturnal musings began to ruin her youth; her face became pale with pain. The more sages she met, the tighter her grip on melancholy became; this fact that they already knew the immortal truth, the wisdom of existence, and the wisdom for the guidance of civilization, but she couldn't even discover a fraction of it on her own, which battered her.

Then one fine summer, when rain splashed the lands of the Orient and heralded both heat and succour, she reached a metropolis on the bank of a river known for its sweetness in the past ages but now stinking of vitriol and grudge. In the heart of that metropolis stood a university, all glass and iron. Access to which was granted only after she had penanced for three years and had learned its shibboleth. Between the time when she first crossed its gate and the fortunate day when she earned a chair in the faculty as a teacher of piety, she had grown familiar with every inch of the premise encircled by glass and iron, barring that one which was said to house ancient souls. That day, when night descended, she trespassed into the house of souls. And then it became a routine. Contrary to the myth (or confirming the truth?) The house of souls didn't house souls, but books, half of which had accumulated layers of dust only to be stirred by her. At first she was aghast to see the piles of covers raked up to the edge of the gigantic dome, then she was desperate to drink every single letter resting on those pale papyrus in between the covers, and next she was actually drinking from those books albeit it didn't quench her thirst for wisdom. But gradually a brutal realisation began to gnaw at her sanity: none of the thousand covers she had thus far flipped through carried the name of her own genus, no name written in a flowy feminine hand. Meanwhile, the cluster of "whys" returned with even more vigour, this time in an anthropomorphic state: a man. Unlike her, he was no trespasser; he owned the key to the house of souls, and

for some occult reason he didn't report her ventures but merely kept his head shoved in books. She was witnessing his becoming, and in doing so, she forfeited her own.

In a year, his name began to be mentioned in every erudite circle, and he had already added two more covers to the house of souls. Sages foretold that his words would raise the children of revolution and transform the world, but she herself didn't deign to touch them; self-indignation took hold of her, and she stopped flipping through the covers. She stopped drinking the letters and perceiving the wisdom, but her soliloquy thrived: "Why him and not me?" "Why Adam? Why not Eve?" "Why does intellect have to be confined to men?" and so on and so forth. As things churned out, she even stopped taking the victuals; her emaciated body and dampened spirit led to her suspension from the chair. Rumours flew thick and fast that the wandering woman suffered from that incurable disease called love. The change in sobriquet, from saint to woman, only testified to the haughtiness of traditions. Now was the time to return. And so, she did, and as she marched, she gathered every orphan from every land whose keepers had first denied answers to her questions. The mere thought of her unfulfilled quest and of that still uninterpreted dream made her blood feel like molten lava in her veins, such was the intensity; but as she gathered those wretched and forsaken children around her, a queer change took place. She began to sense a certain sweetness in her chest; she began to regain her lost vivacity, and the lava in her veins turned into elixir. And then the truth dawned on that dawn when she was just a few metres away from Ramallah, her home. She saw the same dream for the second time in her life: in a dungeon, there were statues of clay lined up in a queue with strings attached to their arms in such a manner that they together formed a chain link, the end of which couldn't be traced as it extended into the infinite space. Something else stood out as quirky: the first statue in the column didn't have any navel but mere string, and by its side stood a rather docile figure, hands in hands. It was impossible to tell if there was any precedence of creation between the two or if the first was an extension of the first. Before one could express astonishment at such an obscure spectacle, a blinding light approached, and the next moment all the statues lay in shambles barring the two first. They were brought to life and handed over some unnamed paraphernalia, the details of which were to be known by the two individuals. The light left, and the two scurried to the statues, which had now turned to dust while the manly entity recast them into rather dainty figures. It was the spell and touch of his accomplice, the woman, that stirred them to life. While the former built an abode to house them, it was the latter whose spell kept their hearts beating steadily. But then a revolt took place, and a girl led that revolt; those neonates were no longer neonates but rebels; they crossed deserts and seas and asked for the ascendency of their father in all matters of terrestrial governance. Their argument? It was the intellect of Adam that the world needed, and ipso facto, it was the techniques of creation that the world should worship. And then, in the next moment, it was smoke and blood. The dream vanished.

As it happened, she had dozed off after around a decade, and when she woke, she was whole. The dream had repeated itself, but this time it carried revelation more than puzzlement. She had had her answer if not answers. The epiphany unfolded; her obsession with those bygone philosophers was steeped in ignorance, and her desperate prayers for reason and intellect were all but sane. Didn't Adam's reason lay waste until Eve's love came into play? If the statues and the abode owed their design to the former's intellect, wasn't it the latter's power to breathe love that ensured their survival? The day she had chosen to abandon her home to find the interpretation of her dream, she had already trampled on the established norms, and in doing so, she had in fact led a revolt. Ah! The conspiracies of God She wasn't meant to scavenge the earth for an interpretation of her dream, but rather to live her dream under the guise of her quest. She was meant for a life of action, not just a life of contemplation or sophistry. Years passed, and she settled in her suburb; she found her quietus. Questions still kept her awake at night, but she sufficed with incomplete answers. In a few years, she raised a university and a thousand revolutionary orphans who, once deprived of love, now exuded love, lived love, and disseminated love.

As the line between love and intellect, reason and emotion blurred, the students became teachers, laying the groundwork for a new curriculum that would reshape the meaning of civilization for centuries to come.

Several more years passed, but the truth was yet to manifest itself. One noon, when she was already forty, a messenger arrived with stacks of books and a letter. She flipped the cover of one book; it's very first leaf read "dedicated to the saint who lightened the house of souls."
astonishment, every single book began with the same line. She finally unfurled the scroll and read, "The coming true of the prophecy about me seeks you as the instrument of revolution, just as my becoming owes its inspiration to your existence." She could hardly blink tears; the margin of that rose incensed letter read "from the keeper of the house of souls."

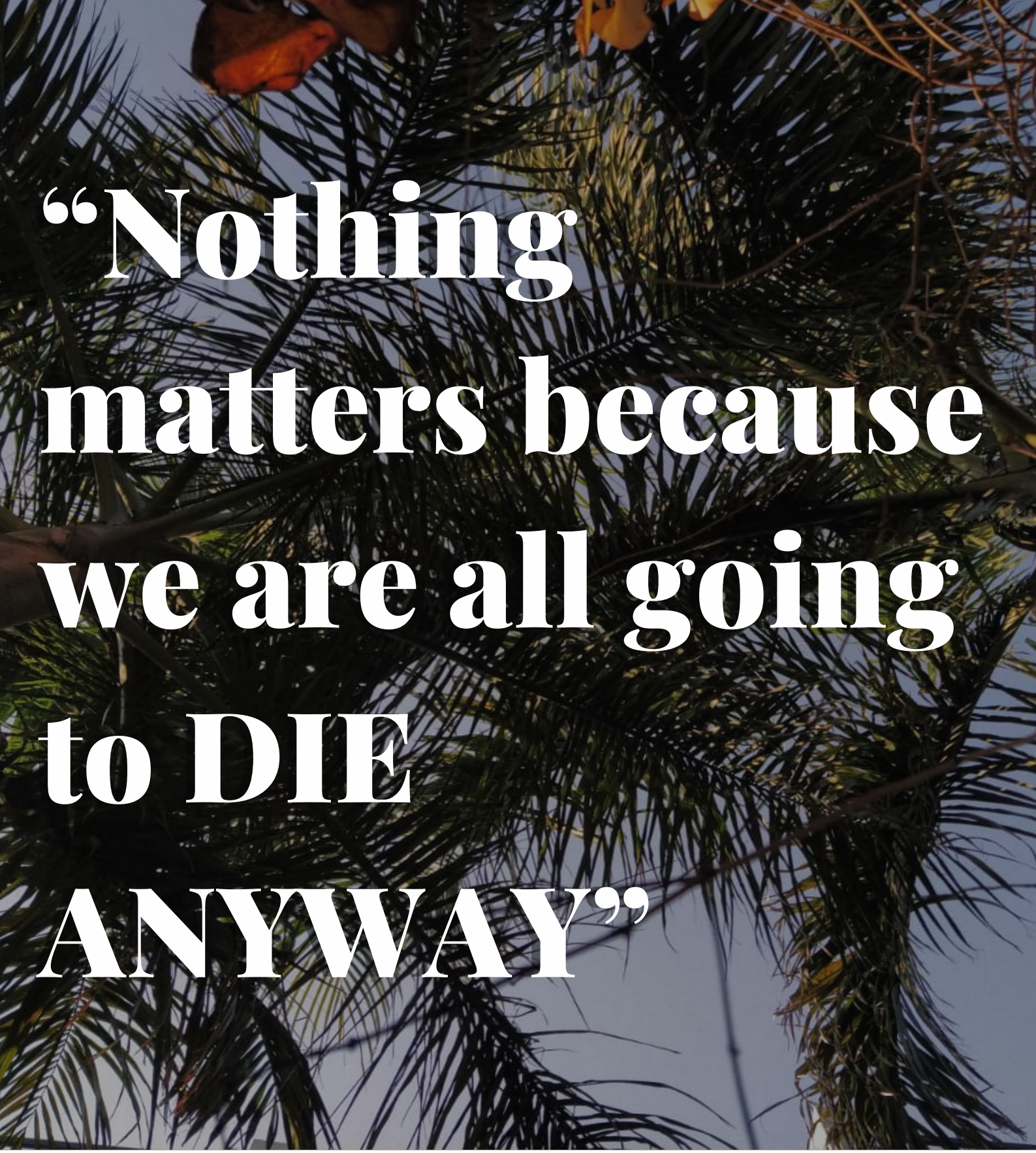




Start Again...

-Zainab Fatima

I want to start again,
For I have travelled so far in want
Of something I shouldn't have
I have made mistakes and do not know
How to correct them,
I have committed sins and my name is
Tainted black,
I am tired of being haunted by the
Demons of the past every night.
I am stuck in a catastrophe
That seems to go on forever,
I want to call out for help,
But my throat is parched and dry
But,
in the grey sky of morning
I see a mystic ray of hope in the
Darkness,
Somebody is there to hold my hand
And say
Start again... Start again...



“Nothing matters because we are all going to DIE ANYWAY”

A person’s instant gratification can be to just fall asleep or watch a movie or order food but our penchant for thinking ahead would make us read a few pages more, do a little exercise or cook at home. We sacrifice our comfort today to better our life tomorrow. BY **IRSHAD ALI**

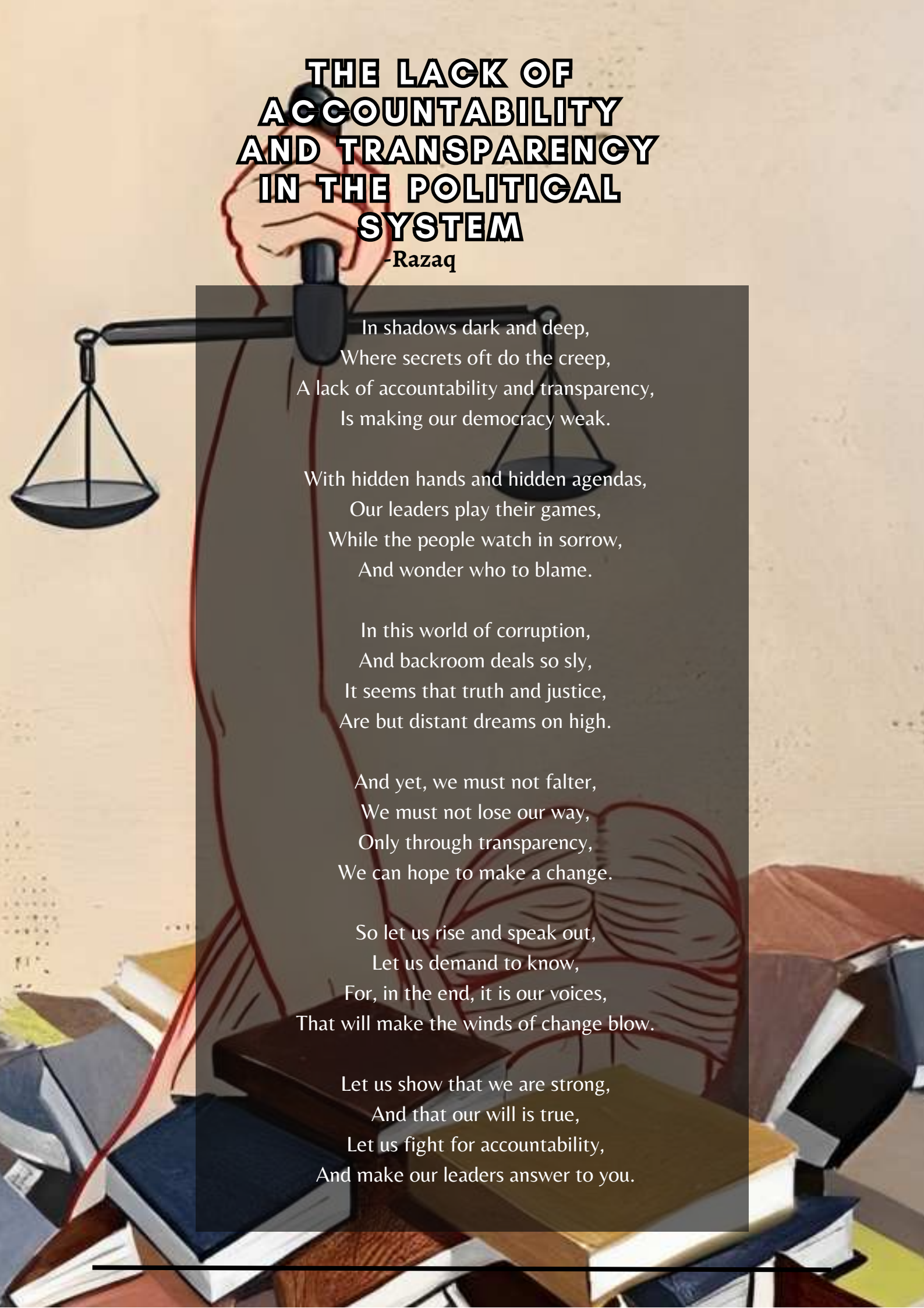
Mortality doesn't negate the importance of a human nor does it make our actions any less inconsequential. Our deeds are an end in themselves, just like our existence. The inevitability of our death is certain, yes but that does not make our life any less valuable or our existence meaningless. The degradability of life across nature is what makes its transient nature even more celebratory. It's like watching a movie; you know that the movie is going to end at some point but that does not stop you from enjoying it or not watching it altogether. A thing has a value not because of how long it exists but how it exists. Everyone dies the same but how you live makes all the difference. We might be the only creatures who know about the inevitability of our death, at least consciously. This gives us an edge over other life forms in the sense that we get to choose how we live. Our rational self constantly balances between our instant gratifications and our foresight, for planning. A person's instant gratification can be to just fall asleep or watch a movie or order food but our penchant for thinking ahead would make us read a few pages more, do a little exercise or cook at home. We sacrifice our comfort today to better our life tomorrow. Our mind rationalizes us into doing this. Our instinct to survive comes from animals, but our aptitude to ameliorate our future comes from our human nature. This is an innate and unique example of our brain trying to upgrade our life. This comes in conflict with the concept of fatalism which believes everything is predetermined and therefore inevitable so there is no meaning to whatever we do.

Even if everything is predetermined, that still does not infer that it is meaningless. It's the post hoc fallacy that states that if Y follows X, then X must have caused Y. Taking a departure from the epistemological analysis, our emotional state also accounts for a major part in our life decisions and overall outlook. We view today as it is but we view tomorrow as we wish it to be. Our existence is not only rooted in our present but in our past experiences and future aspirations; what we were, what we are, and what we can be. In this framework, we do not succumb to the fear of impending death as it is out of our control, but try to shape and mold what we can control, our life, to our liking. So if we ever feel a banality in our life that stresses our mental state, remember that every positive action no matter how trivial has a meaningful impact on your life and the lives around you in one way or the other. Death is an ultimate point and I believe it is our conduct towards that point that merits our existence, not the end itself.



THE LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

-Razaq



In shadows dark and deep,
Where secrets oft do the creep,
A lack of accountability and transparency,
Is making our democracy weak.

With hidden hands and hidden agendas,
Our leaders play their games,
While the people watch in sorrow,
And wonder who to blame.

In this world of corruption,
And backroom deals so sly,
It seems that truth and justice,
Are but distant dreams on high.

And yet, we must not falter,
We must not lose our way,
Only through transparency,
We can hope to make a change.

So let us rise and speak out,
Let us demand to know,
For, in the end, it is our voices,
That will make the winds of change blow.

Let us show that we are strong,
And that our will is true,
Let us fight for accountability,
And make our leaders answer to you.



On SONDER & different STORIES around us.

When I moved to Delhi, my first few months were filled with wonder at the largeness of this city & the rush and diversity it could hold within itself, among other things. "Delhi never sleeps", I'd tell my parents. BY **ANAM KHAN**

How often do we hear this statement "the world is divided into two kinds of people"? The living & the dead. Those who divide the world & those who simply accept this division. Aren't people too complicated to have simple labels? They are too complicated to be divided into kinds & types. When I moved to Delhi, my first few months were filled with wonder at the largeness of this city & the rush and diversity it could hold within itself, among other things. "Delhi never sleeps", I'd tell my parents. People from all areas of life seem to always walk from one place to another. Metro stations were the holy sites where I realized & accepted that everyone had a life of their own & that I am not the main character of the story that started 4.6 billion years ago. That I am not the sun, the earth revolves around me. That the world wasn't waiting for me to be born and save it from a pandemic, the solution of which lies in me scrolling Instagram for the entirety of afternoons. Now, dear reader, imagine standing on a platform of a

metro station, bustling with people of all creeds and colors, each representing one more person you could be or will never be. Inside your backpack is the burden of the presumption that no one is living a life like yours. They're all following the smooth arcs of their lives; the same plot with different contexts. You gladly live with this feeling until you become accustomed to living in a city that makes you feel like a background character in your own story. Before you even realize it, you're struck by an obscure feeling that John Koenig (the person who runs this piece of beauty named The Discovery of Obscure Sorrows) likes to call- Sonder.

Sonder refers to the sudden realization that everyone is leading a life as complex and vivid as your own. There is an epic story that continues unnoticed, populated with the complexities of the people and their lives in which you might appear only once, as extra dining at a crowded restaurant or running late to work in the background, as a blur of traffic passing on the highway or as a lit window in a tall building complex at dusk. This realization comes both as relief and a matter of grief. Why might the reader ask?





Innumerable people are sharing the same complexities, doubts, and worries as you do. And it's a matter of grief for a reason that might've become obvious by now & i.e., you aren't the main character
anymore. You also play the role of an extra and the uniqueness of your life you had hitherto taken pride in has just faded. But it isn't all gloomy, dark and I-don't-matter-leave-me-alone-kind-of sad. This realization that every single person you encounter has a completely different life and a different story is incredible. In my case, I've started observing people a lot more than usual. It's amazing to sit on a bench in a park or on public transport, put your life and your problems aside for a while, and just observe people around you. Thinking about strangers that you've never met and will never meet again.



Their names. What are they going through? What kind of dreams do they see? The people they hold close to their hearts? What would they prioritize over food? What are their stories? Do they find them interesting? What Jon Bois* says about places held for people too. I wonder if there has ever been a single person in this whole world who didn't have a story worth listening to once. Every person you've ever known or will ever know, will always have something that happened to them. Something different, maybe something nobody knows about, but something. You meet new people & you keep knowing them and none of them, you realize, are empty. They're all full of stories. They're all creatures bristling with the uniqueness of life.

At times you'll get this strong urge to talk to them and get to know them or know anything about their lives. But you won't and you will never see them again. But perhaps it'll give you relief to know that the people you pass by and even if it's for the flick of a moment, you were present in a minute section of their lives or that they constituted a small part of yours.



It's depressingly beautiful, at the same time, to realize that people walking past you are one day or the other going to die and we all continue to live our lives despite that. Everyone who walked on this earth shared the same longing for the moon from Mozart and Leonard Cohen to Maya Angelou is now dead. What's the significance of my existence then, you might wonder? I'm not wise enough to answer that but Walt Whitman is. In his beautiful poem 'O Me! O Life!', Whitman says-

"*That you're here-that life exists and identity.*

That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse."

And that, I think, perfectly sums up why we're here; to contribute something to life's fabric, to

the world's beauty (Frank O'Hara)



**Italicized sentences are directly excerpted from other authors & poets*

References:

Jon Bois, 1776 (also known as What Football Will Look Like in the Future)

Walt Whitman (O Me! O Life!)

Frank O'Hara

ROLLER-COASTER RIDE

-Tuba Qureshi

Ever tried a roller-coaster ride?
Come to Jamia for a ride.
Will enter gate no-7 with prudence,
But, you will keep questioning yourself,
Because you never know how many answers you will find.
Assignment prévenir your breath,
But “Dum Biryani” libre your breath.
Ibn-Sine’s taciturnity calling you,
But Canteen’s loquacity also calls you.
Funny friends and loving lectures,
But, freaky fundas and flexible study hours,
Riddle and rumors, gossips, giggles-umpteen,
Adding spices to the junk you hogged at the Central canteen.
Gratification of submitting an assignment on A-day,
But agitation of presentation day,
Crowded Batla House, wanders you in utter dejection,
But, its food takes you in exaltation.
Here you will find a diversity of people, who are inscrutable,
But, you will get the best friend circle,
Most of them are not hi-hat-snobs,
They have good and natural smiles.

There are profuse places to go,
But, your synchronization is strewing.
The Yellow flowers in front of the Department will look alluring,
But, the evening sky will be more fascinating.
You would enroll as a toddler,
But professors turn you into a leader,
Part of you wanted to get a just degree in political science,
But it gives you an interpretation of life
Your ride will be a literary paradise,
Where you learn to critically analyze,
It’s just like a roller- coaster ride.
You would sit with the doubts,
Wheeze deep and go with the flow,
Nothing can stop you or make you slow,
You are just a step away from the start,
The Onset of this journey will heal your flaws.
And in the end, the ride will take you to euphoria.
Come to Jamia for a ride.


THERE IS ALWAYS A NEW SEASON FOR YOU
Annie Pruthi

"The ancient trees are the deep earth's language for speaking to the universe. The earth communicates through trees to the animals and to the birds living above - and to the very heavens. The trees draw the earth's water up from the ground. Then breathing, they return it to the air for the clouds and the blessed rain that falls to begin the cycle anew. She thinks of the thin layer of living things as a fragile space between earth's molten rock core and the frozen outer universe of stars. The thin layer is like her own life here - precious, finite."

-J.J. Brown, Brindle

When you enter a new space, be it a university campus, or a resort on a vacation, or when you visit someone's place, what is the first thing you notice? How do you remember a certain space? What stays in your mind? How do you identify yourself with a place? Being at Jamia came with a lot of different feelings. I have been able to make some friends here, interact meaningfully with professors, and enjoy the wonderful fragrance of cardamom in every sip of a small chai cup. The hawkers selling neatly sliced pineapple right outside the no. 7 and the oily spring rolls of the hygiene café have been my guilty pleasures. But this is not how I identify Jamia. I identify places with the impressions it leaves on me and the comfort it provides. My association with Jamia has been with the trees on the campus. It's weird but my obsession with the canopy of trees is unfathomable. I distinctly remember my first day at the university. There were no scheduled classes and we had nothing to do except to explore Jamia. Each one of us was meeting for the first time. We went across gate no 7 to savour some snacks at Castro Café. My attention was somewhere else. I was captivated by the trees and white butterflies around. The first picture I captured was of the canopy of these wonderful trees.



And over time, I found my favourite tree. While there are so many of them all around the campus, and especially near MMAJ Academy, I adore one of them in particular. This one is in front of the Department of Sociology and is very much visible if you are waiting outside the window of Imran Sir's office.



The yellow and white flowers that bloom on this tree are intensely fragrant and lovely natural accessories to put in your hair. Its scientific name is Plumeria alba but is commonly known as White Frangipani. The soft yellow centre of these white flowers is full of grace. In Hindi, you call them "चंपा के फूल". Out of my curiosity, and my love for these flowers, I have read about them. These flowers are full of sweet fragrances and are known for them. Mostly used in perfumes, they are relatively easy to care for. The leaves of the trees on which they bloom are lush green and elongated. Since they thrive in warm climates, these trees are at their blooming behaviour in the summer months. These lovely flowers are also symbolic. चंपा के फूल or white frangipani are used in religious ceremonies and also used to symbolise love or beauty



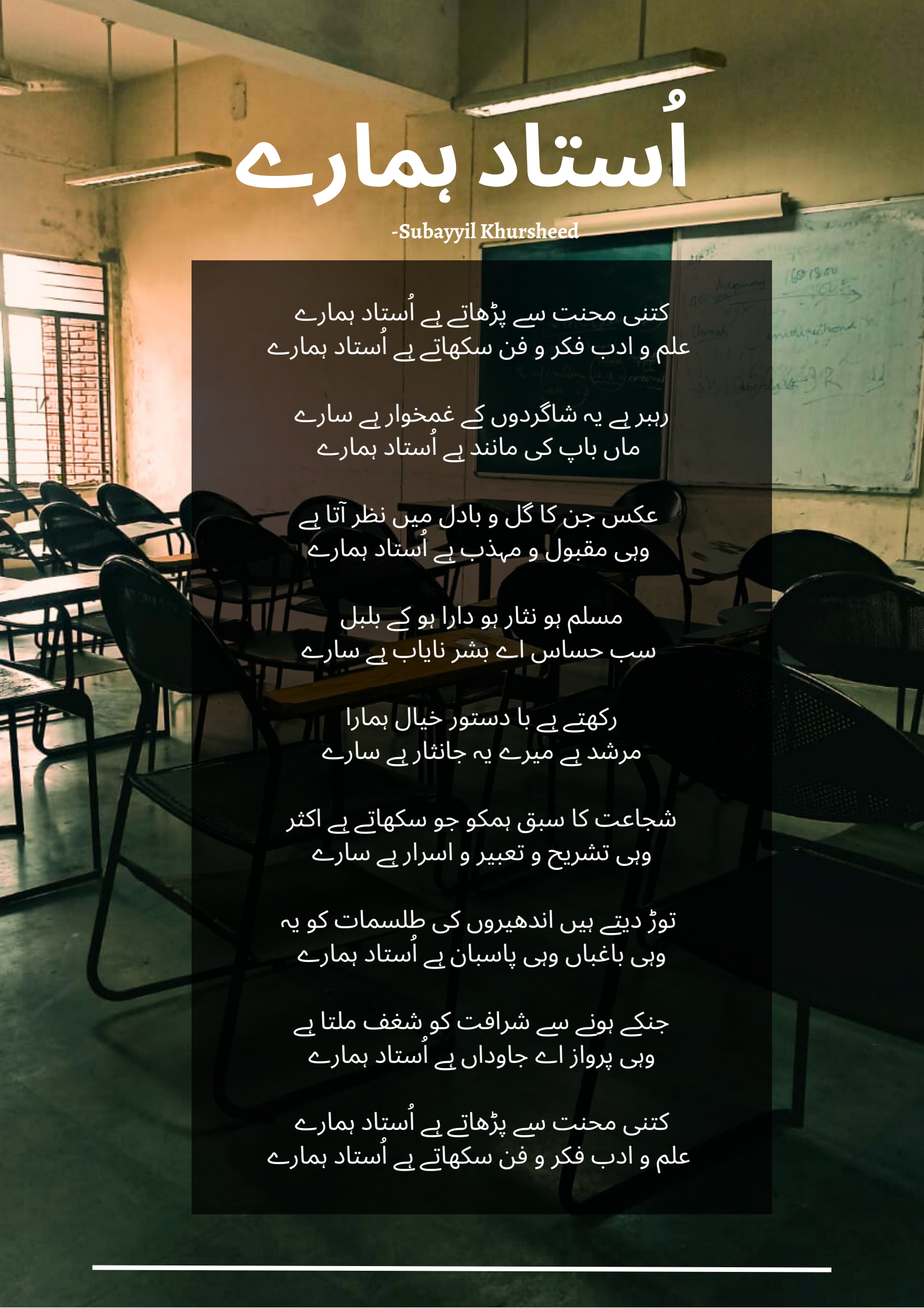
But this is not it. The flowers did not catch my attention. I love the tree that blooms them. Every week I have captured this tree. The duration of blooming for the flowers is extremely short. Mostly, I've seen this tree leafless. It's only for a matter of a few months that you would find it covered & lush green.



I always narrate stories in my head when I look at this tree. If you think about it, it's a perfect metaphor for our lives, isn't it? We all have cycles. Each one of us has our roots embedded in the moist soil of principles. With age, we attain wisdom and become resilient similar to the expansion of the trunk. We choose different paths and make different choices as we reach out into the world like branches. Career, hobbies, family, friends, and relationships are all different aspects of a human being. With knowledge & good mentorship, we develop interests & grow in life. This is similar to how trees grow with the help of sunlight and water. Our achievements and accomplishments become the low-hanging fruits that are ripe with effort and consistent action. But most importantly, like trees, we have seasons. We have seasons of growth and we have seasons of shedding. The only thing different between us and them is their ability to sustain in the long months of shedding.



“Each season represents the different phases of our lives too. There is spring and there is life. There's summer and there is youth. There is autumn and there is adulthood. There is winter and there is demise. A tree always rejuvenates. Humans should too. There is always going to be decay and there are always going to be some failures. And that's okay. There is always hope. There is always beauty. There is always the next season. There is always another spring. There is always warmth. There is always love. There is always life. There is always a new season of चंपा के फूल. There is always a new season for you”



اُستاد ہمارے

-Subayyil Khursheed

کتنی محنت سے پڑھاتے ہے اُستاد ہمارے
علم و ادب فکر و فن سکھاتے ہے اُستاد ہمارے

رہبر ہے یہ شاگردوں کے غمخوار ہے سارے
ماں باپ کی مانند ہے اُستاد ہمارے

عکس جن کا گل و بادل میں نظر آتا ہے
وہی مقبول و مہذب ہے اُستاد ہمارے

مسلم ہو نثار ہو دارا ہو کے بلبل
سب حساس اے بشر نایاب ہے سارے

رکھتے ہے با دستور خیال ہمارا
مرشد ہے میرے یہ جانثار ہے سارے

شجاعت کا سبق ہمکو جو سکھاتے ہے اکثر
وہی تشریح و تعبیر و اسرار ہے سارے

توڑ دیتے ہیں اندھیروں کی طلسمات کو یہ
وہی باغباں وہی پاسبان ہے اُستاد ہمارے

جنکے ہونے سے شرافت کو شغف ملتا ہے
وہی پرواز اے جاوداں ہے اُستاد ہمارے

کتنی محنت سے پڑھاتے ہے اُستاد ہمارے
علم و ادب فکر و فن سکھاتے ہے اُستاد ہمارے



Eudaimonia

Following is the idea of Platonic dialogue put into the perspective of an everyday conversational drama by Anam Khan & Somya Sharma, students of the Political Science Department, with their own interesting reflective thought looking at their day-to-day lives. All of it is open to interpretation and none of it is based on one single true event but a lot of it might resonate with your lives too.

*Disclaimers and Trigger War

Sitting in the lawn, there remains the hustle of people passing by, minds and hearts in a debate somewhere 'round the corner, the beaming sun rays falling down the statue of a legend-Ghalib.

Anam: So, What is it about this place that you like the most?

Somya: Do you hear the silence of this place? It speaks so much. The most peaceful place with written histories of how to make a place silent.

Anam: Is it the peace that you like?

Somya: Yes, well, One can find peace in anything, this dialogue or that chaai sitting next to you from the canteen, or writing words on the 'Wall of Democracy', white roses, or..

Anam: Hold that trail of thought. I don't think 'silence' and 'peace' are the same.
Silence persists with the inability to voice opinions, something that happened due to Covid. Peace is..

***both* - Silence**

Somya: ..but not Silent.
I can write all the shaayaris and poems being here; A lot of them would mostly disappoint Ghalib. One goes like-

कुछ सियासत ऐसी जैसे शतरंज का खेल,
एक राजा, प्रजा अलग,
ये खेल कहाँ?
*checkmate!

Anam: *stares baffled

Somya: Anyway, how did Covid treat your mind? Made you a Philosopher yet?

Anam: Yes, it sort of did, provided that your definition of philosophy means pondering over unimportant questions?

Somya: C'mon, we're students of Political Science. We should know no such thing as 'unimportant questions',
It's all just 'Love of wisdom'. **too expressively*
Now, tell me more about the questions that used to occupy your mind during covid.

Anam: Let me warn you beforehand, you'll regret it later.
I'm sure we all used to think if the world would be the same again? If that was 'the end', I'd grown up hearing about? If not, how long would it take to return to normal? Would I be comfortable with the 'new normal'?
Am I going to spend the first/last year of my college life on a 14 inch computer screen? & there were several other thoughts
I couldn't stop brooding over. But I tell you what, they did nothing more than adding to my fury & FOMO.

Somya: Wait, relax.
Don't you miss being able to scroll through your Instagram feed during classes?
Or giving exams sitting in bed?

Anam: Yeah, but..

Somya: I really miss being able to leave the class the minute teachers start asking questions I don't know the answers to.
But I'm sure offline classes have compensated for the loss of college life? Afterall, who would want to be in a house with a 'war of every man, against every man', for two years!

Anam: Yes, you couldn't be more right. Sitting here, in front of our department, in the company of Ghalib & that of our friends makes one forget the ordeal online classes used to be.
Anyway, did you finish the book?

Somya: Yes, finally finished The Republic, still missing the 'Harmony', 'Justice' and 'Balance' for real though.

Anam: I believe we all are trying to find that part.
By the way, Balance reminds me of chai.

Somya: Oh! c'mon. Haven't you already consumed enough of it? Coffee is always better. It is the absolute beauty of all the aesthetic flavours. It's just..So good. Although,chaai is a necessity.

Anam: You've touched a raw nerve, here.
Don't, ever, underestimate the power of another cup of chaai. There's nothing that a cup of chaai can't do, especially if it's been made by Prem Bhai.
dramatically

Somya: Doesn't Central Canteen offer better chai?

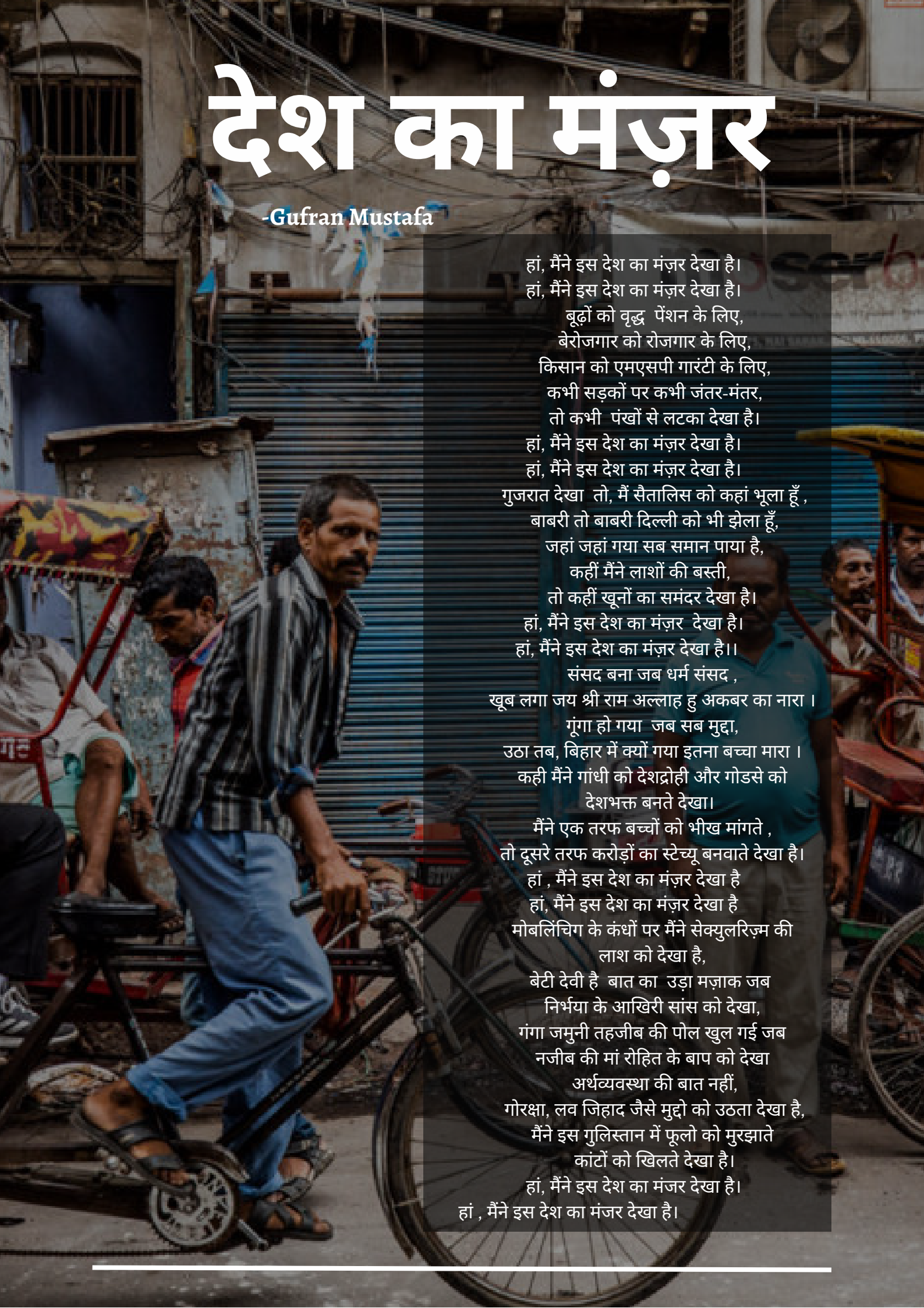
Anam: You were born just to get on my nerves.
I'm gonna end this debate over chai once & for all.
"There is no God, no universe, no human race, no earthly life, no heaven, no hell. It's all a dream, a grotesque & foolish dream. Nothing exists but Prem Bhai ki chai."
I'm not saying this; Mark Twain did.

Somya: *controlling laughter*
I bet he did!
It's almost time for the class.
I will meet you soon over a cup of Central Canteen's chai.

Anam: *annoyed*
Okay, just why would you do that?

THE END

Both get up to get their nth number of chai from *place remains debatable to the day; they're still arguing over this*



देश का मंज़र

-Gufran Mustafa

हां, मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है।
हां, मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है।
बूढ़ों को वृद्ध पेंशन के लिए,
बेरोजगार को रोजगार के लिए,
किसान को एमएसपी गारंटी के लिए,
कभी सड़कों पर कभी जंतर-मंतर,
तो कभी पंखों से लटका देखा है।
हां, मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है।
हां, मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है।
गुजरात देखा तो, मैं सैतालिस को कहां भूला हूँ ,
बाबरी तो बाबरी दिल्ली को भी झेला हूँ,
जहां जहां गया सब समान पाया है,
कहीं मैंने लाशों की बस्ती,
तो कहीं खूनों का समंदर देखा है।
हां, मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है।
हां, मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है।।
संसद बना जब धर्म संसद ,
खूब लगा जय श्री राम अल्लाह हु अकबर का नारा ।
गूंगा हो गया जब सब मुद्दा,
उठा तब, बिहार में क्यों गया इतना बच्चा मारा ।
कही मैंने गांधी को देशद्रोही और गोडसे को
देशभक्त बनते देखा।
मैंने एक तरफ बच्चों को भीख मांगते ,
तो दूसरे तरफ करोड़ों का स्टेच्यू बनवाते देखा है।
हां , मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है
हां, मैंने इस देश का मंज़र देखा है
मोबलिंचिग के कंधों पर मैंने सेक्युलरिज़्म की
लाश को देखा है,
बेटी देवी है बात का उड़ा मज़ाक जब
निर्भया के आखिरी सांस को देखा,
गंगा जमुनी तहजीब की पोल खुल गई जब
नजीब की मां रोहित के बाप को देखा
अर्थव्यवस्था की बात नहीं,
गोरक्षा, लव जिहाद जैसे मुद्दो को उठता देखा है,
मैंने इस गुलिस्तान में फूलो को मुरझाते
कांटों को खिलते देखा है।
हां, मैंने इस देश का मंजर देखा है।
हां , मैंने इस देश का मंजर देखा है।

ख्याल ए अरस्तू

–मोहम्मद कामरान

इंसान का हर सूरत नाजाएज़ है ख़िलाफ़-ए-अक़ल होना
यही तो है जिसकी फितरत में है मजलिस की शकल होना

यूँ तो पढ़ने को किताबों के जिल्द हैं काफी
ख़ुद आगाही से शुरू है दानायी कि पहल होना

ज़ेहन को तालीम और क़ल्ब को रखना ग़ाफ़िल
बिल्कुल ऐसा है जैसे की बे-अक़ल होना

फ़सीह-उल-बयान कि ख़ूबी है वाज़ेह दिखना
पर ज़ेहन पे हर शर्त में लाज़िम है बा-अक़ल होना

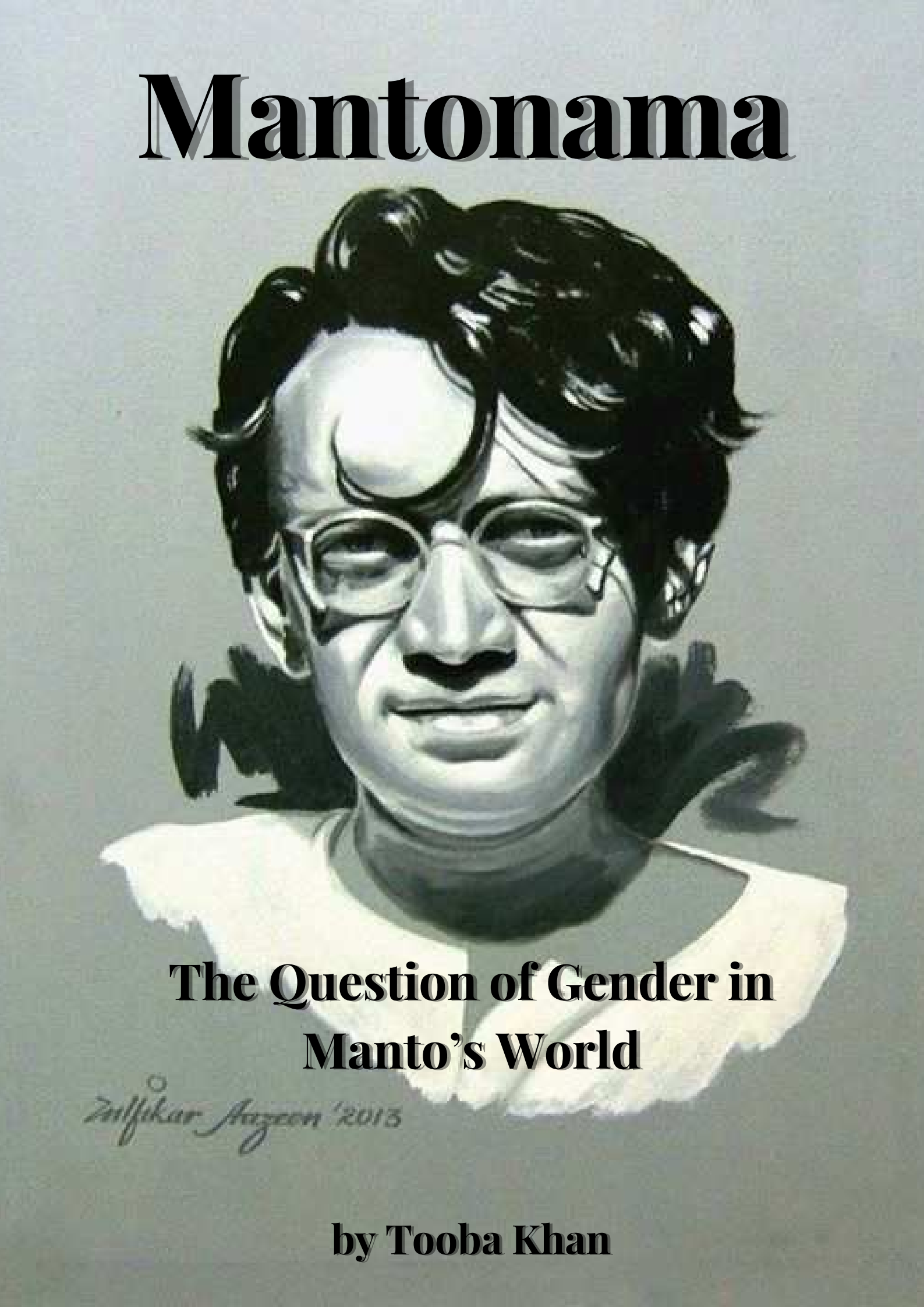
रौशन ज़मीर से कम-ज़र्फ का फ़र्क़ है बस इतना
जिस तरह मुर्दे से जुदा है सकुशल होना

कैसा है हक़ीक़त में किसी का यावर होना?
एक रूह का दो जिस्म में एकल होना

ये काफी नहीं की जंग को बस जीता जाए
ज़रूरी है अम्न-ओ-अमान की पहल होना

वो ज़ेहन-ए-जबर अब तक रू-ए-ज़मीन पर उतरा ही नहीं
जिसके क़िरदार में शालिम न हो थोड़ा सा पागल होना

Mantonama



The Question of Gender in Manto's World

by Tooba Khan

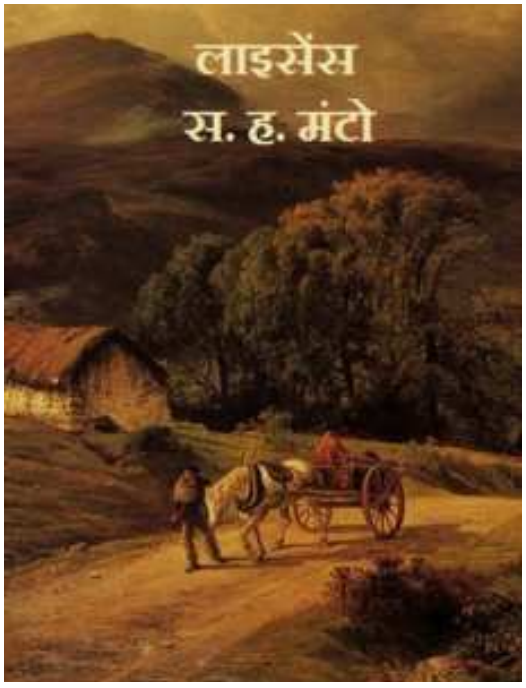
It's the opportunity to craft a narrative that draws parallels between fiction, gender dynamics, and societal norms. This article aims to bridge the world of Urdu literature predating 1950 with contemporary gender and societal concerns. It deals with the gender and society curse in Sadat Hasan Manto's short story License. As is widely known, Manto was a writer, social thinker, and future observer who died in 1955, since then seven decades have passed. But while one reads it, it is not possible to recognize the time-frame of the story because that is how well it would fit in even today. Manto was the writer who used time and space accurately. Generally, stories revolve around its protagonist but the uniqueness of License is that it raises the issues of society instead of Abbu Mia and his wife Neeti (who are protagonist of short story License). It is the society, rather than the characters, that appears at the center of the framework. In this story the author delves into the themes of gender socialization, gender roles, cultural traditions, gender inequality, injustice, the body politics, temporal and spatial dimensions, caste and community dynamics, the authoritative role of the state, and the barbaric exercise of power. Since ages women have been central to social segregation and crimes associated with it, rape or social abuse is mundane practice. According to Manto, all these problems exist because of Gender socialization which is created by our society, and I take forward his critical evaluation.

"If a woman becomes a prostitute, the problem is society, not a particular woman"
-Manto

Gender socialization entails acquiring the societal norms and attitudes linked to one's gender. Carol Gilligan, an American feminist, has drawn a comparison between the moral development of girls and boys in her theory of gender and moral development. According to her, they utilize formal rules to delineate what is right and wrong. In this framework, girls are characterized by a perspective centred on care and responsibility, where personal relationships play a role in evaluating an individual. In the context of this story, gender socialization plays a vital role in deciding the course of life of Abbu Mia's wife Neeti. She was not permitted to ride Taanga and earn her living by that, while she was in the midst of a miserable situation. It is very much a reflection of the already established, pre-defined socialization on the basis of one's sex. A woman cannot ride a taanga for her basic livelihood whereas a woman can only do household chores and even prostitution. In the story, Abbu Mia a Muslim man marries a lower caste Hindu teenage girl and is jailed in the name of kidnapping and forceful marriage, and later he dies in jail. After all this, his wife attempts to sustain with the help of society but fails and forced into riding a taanga for livelihood. However, the authoritative state with its barbaric nature gets to intervene in the matter and decide the fate of Neeti. As citizens, we expect justice from the State but over the decades, it has been pretty clear how State perpetuates gender socialization and discrimination against women. In case of this story, she doesn't get license of the Taanga but easily accepted as a prostitute. Today, modern society is no different; it is the

the same as it was when Manto was writing 50-60 years ago.

There is a shift in theory, but that's as far as it goes, as it hasn't yet translated into practical implementation. Let's assume we belong to a culturally and traditionally rich society where modernity doesn't align, and thus, we adhere to our cultural norms and traditions. However, it's evident that engaging in prostitution is not considered part of our cultural or traditional livelihood. So, the question arises: what does it represent? In license and our everyday lives, where similar situations occur, it's a clear instance of gender injustice and discrimination. This compels us to ponder the origins of this discrimination and those responsible for perpetuating it. Ultimately, it appears to originate from the intersection of caste, class, community, and a patriarchal society. In the story, Neeti realized while riding the Taanga *"wo aksar mehsuskarti ke who khudko nahi bech rahihai par logusse chupke chupke kharid rahe hai ..."*





In this story, social security of a widow has also been brought up. Why a woman is oppressed, simply because her husband has passed away? Another instance which makes Abbu mia's wife a prostitute is case of body politics. As mentioned in the story, when Neeti rides the Taanga people used to travel for leisure of her body. And the committee which cancels the license of Taanga were also men because they needed prostitute in society to satiate their lust.

In a nutshell, it is very shameful to analyses today's society through a story which was written sixty years ago. It is clear that nothing has changed in terms of the norms our society enforces upon women. It's time we ponder on questions that make many of us uncomfortable. How has a woman's body been seen through the ages? How correct is it when it's our very society that grooms this indifference and these differences? All these questions were raised by Manto in his stories and always rejected by every section of the society. He rightly said *"Zamane ke jis daur se hum iss waqt guzar rahe hai, agar aap us se nawaaqif hai toh mere afsaane padhiye. Agar aap in afsaano ko bardasht nahi kar sakte toh iska matlab ye hai ki ye zamana naqaabil-e bardaasht hai".*

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"The journey is never-ending. There's always going be growth, improvement, adversity; you just gotta take it all in and do what's right, continue to grow, continue to live in the moment"
-Antonio Brown


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