

A DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
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# PAPER CASTLE



# Paper Castle

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Department of English

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## *Foreword*

A limited space that creates unlimited creativity - Good magazines offer varied emotions, myriad possibilities, unbridled imagination and powerful voices.

Our students have taken up this challenge and have come up with the English (UG & PG) Department's first e-magazine "Paper Castle".

This annual e-magazine will be the newest feather in the cap for the English Dept. Best wishes for generations of students who will continue building "castles" with enthusiasm and imagination.

**Maumita Dhar (Dey)**

Head of the Department & Coordinator  
Department of English  
(UG and PG)

## *From the Editorial Table*

"April is the cruellest month"

But it has no power to stop the creative minds to grow and to glow  
The birds never stop to chirp, the leaves never stoop in the scorching heat of summer.  
Chopin made his 'dreams' real in the name of April. Then why don't we go for a boom?  
It is the perfect time to enliven the innovative faculty of mind and to nurture and nourish it with  
utmost proficiency. And do you want an inspiration? You can take up the birthday-boy of April,  
the Bard of Avon, William Shakespeare, the most glamorous and discussed  
playwright of all time. Won't it be great to pay him a small tribute in terms of some writings?  
With his blessings, come other offerings - stories, poems, photographs, paintings et al.  
And we, some passionate minds, have planned to collate the delicious dishes to  
arrange a buffet of colours for you.  
Now it's time for the readers to have a taste, and mingle themselves within the journey  
that took off on the month of April and is looking at it in the month of May when  
the petrichor has touched the nostrils with the finest creativity of the West Wind as  
sensitized by Mr. Shelley. So please, take a dip into it and let us feel the joy of presenting  
the mind's portrait in front of the appropriate connoisseur.

*Students' Editorial Board*

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**When the Dreams get their Palace- Palace of Words**

## Dream

Madina Sultana (M.A. SEM IV)

The time of the day when I finally sleep off in a desire to meet you is the happiest. There I stand, bare feet, wearing the thinnest cotton all over me, the smooth texture which rubs on my skin. The grass that touches my feet feels so warm but cold at the same time. The sky is red and the grass is blue. Blue? Yes, it is my dream, read along. Sun always sets in my dream but it never hides. It's neither a day nor a night. I see you in my dream and time is still. No one gets young and no one gets old, no one is pretty and no one is ugly. No one has a face and no one has anybody but you.

I know you however I don't, I have seen you yet I haven't. I want to meet you however I Can't. I have seen you in my dream and you generally stand on the opposite side. You may be there, maybe not. You don't have a body, skin, or sense however you will be 'you' for me.

You live in dreams, don't you?

My dreams are real and my life is fake. I live in my dream and I dream in my life. I breathe while I sleep and I inhale when I am awake. I see you. The real you. Do I?

Sitting right behind you watching the scene while looking at the reddened sky by the plight of the setting sun. I don't want to meet you, I don't want to touch you, and neither do I aspire to see your face. Identity is what misleads me when I think of you. I have given you an identity already. And that is YOU.



## Spark

Shraboni Giri (M.A. SEM IV)

I don't want to live. I know that life is a struggle. But life is like the hell to me, where I burn myself constantly. Yes, I am responsible for everything what happens to me. Now I am twenty, in the age of twenty I have faced many bitter experiences. I am tired. I need rest through a deep sleep, an eternal sleep and no one is responsible for my death.

I am standing near a river and I can only hear the sound of the river. I take my first step to end my life, suddenly I hear a voice – “Be careful, you can slip.” The voice of the girl is so heart touching as if I see a gleam of something new. After a long time, I heard the phrase, “Be careful.” Again, she said – “Hello, can you hear me??? What were you doing??? Come with me.”

NO, no, I have to do this, leave me, please leave me and move away.

“Okay, okay; calm down. What? What do you want?”

What I want.....

“Yes”. I don't want to live anymore.

“Why ??”

Because I can't tolerate the pain, the heartache. Let me die.

“Are you sure ??”

Hm.....

“Go ahead.”

It's quite strange.... you want me to die.

“No, I don't.”

You just said it.

“I said, go ahead.”

What do you mean??

“Am just saying ...why do you want to die?”

I told you .... I cannot tolerate the torture.

“Who tortures you?”

You really want to listen...?

“Obviously, tell me.”

Actually, hope keeps us alive ...when it dies, we become an alive corpse. You know nothing about my identity. I don't know who is my father ... my mother struggled a lot to give me a new, and a happy life, everything but she failed and died. I am a scandal in this Society. I am a Slut.

“What's your name?”

My name...! I am a slut and it is my identity, there is nothing else and I have no name.

“No, you are not scandalous, if you are the scandal of this society, then those men are equally disgraceful and they are the criminals if you are a prostitute. Why you tolerate this ...to indulge impropriety is another inequity. It is wrong ...so you have to protest. You are not the prostitute. You are a brave girl. We adore, our society worships the goddess 'Maa Durga', to make the idol, we need the soil of bawdyhouse. Then it's necessary to stop right now the worship to the goddess, the Idol, 'Maa Durga'.

You are right but I can't take it. I am a victim of sexual abuse. Every day I am raped.

“We all are the victim, not only you and suicide is not the correct way to overcome it. Do you not want to save those girls who are like you, the victim, your friends”?

Of course, I want.

“Then go ahead”.

You meant it.

“Yes. Please do something now, look forward, do something fresh and take a step to stop it, to foreclose it. Rescue your friends. Anyhow you have escaped, maybe they can't, so help them.... they need your help. You can do it”.

Who are you??

“Am your friend too”.

Yes, you are my friend but your name?

“You know my name”.

No.

“You know”.

How??

“Let's walk”.

Okay. Her speeches are inspiring. Really ...now I want to live. The darkness around me becomes dim. I turn to her .... where is she?? She is nowhere. She said, I know her name. But.... she is like a dream to me, a colourful dream. She is my inspiration and I will try my level best to solve this oldest problem of women. I don't know whether I will succeed or not but it's my fight, I have to fight it and I will win.

## Mothering

Aditi Sarkar (M.A. SEM IV)

Aashita sits with her laptop after freshening up as she has just arrived home from her office, and her mother-in-law starts her daily tantrums as usual. Aashita can hear her slamming utensils in the kitchen as an act of showing her frustration that tends to develop whenever Aashita is around. She has become used to these things now and does not pay much attention to her mother-in-law's outbursts. Her husband, Jiten condemns her, following in his mother's footsteps. They spend nights in separate rooms these days. Aashita has become indifferent to whatever is going on with her in this house, rather she is tired of trying to fix things as they keep on smashing again and again.

Aashita Roy is a writer and a teacher at a school in the city. Her parents married her off two years ago, to a guy who seemed completely gallant and a nice fellow and someone who'd keep their dear daughter happy. They believed that they got her a secured place in the society but they did not have a trace of what storm was coming to blow their happiness away; though 'what the relatives would think' is still their foremost concern.

And it's not like Jiten was pretentious at first or a completely corrupt person from the beginning. He filled Aashita's life with materialistic love in which Aashita had to detect the warmth of his heart as one has to squint their eyes to track down a certain thing in the dazzling brightness.

It all started with Jiten's mother wanting to see a happy family with a child so much that she turned it into an unhappy one. Aashita told Jiten, "I need to focus on my career right now, and you have to help your mother understand this. Without your full support, our marriage won't work". Jiten and his mother couldn't wait. They wanted Aashita to bear a child right away. Aashita, too, was a tough nut to crack; she would not give up her dreams so easily.

She had started writing since her schooldays and publishing her own book has been her aspiration all this while. She published a few of her writings when she was in college, being inspired by Ishan, the love of her life, who was a brilliant student and could make anyone fall in love with his poetry. But Ishan was not someone who could be bound by relationships; he was a free bird, a liberal thinker; the practicality of worldly life did not matter to him. This is exactly what attracted Aashita towards him, and also, she had to depart from where her heart was, for the very same reason. Although, the love faded away with time, its tenderness lingered in Aashita's heart forever, since it changed her for the better and taught her some precious lessons.

Driven by the urge to not give up her passion, Aashita went to her parents' house asking for their support. But her parents were not of any help and their thoughts were no different from Aashita's mother-in-law. Her mother said, "women have to adjust a bit after marriage and it's not like that they are asking you to leave your career. They just want you to concentrate more on making a home and being a mother what you have to do eventually at some point. Then why not now?", to which Aashita replied, "I would love to be a mother someday, Maa, but now is not the right time for me". And the lecture on motherhood and its necessity to a woman, went on for a few more days.

Aashita's father has always been supportive of his daughter but his view on this matter is that he should not involve in the matter at all. However, getting no help from her own parents almost broke her and she thought that the right thing to do would be what everyone was suggesting her to do. She did not give it a second thought that everyone could be wrong and the right thing would have been whatever she felt was right.

Aashita cannot stand this anymore. She goes to the kitchen to confront her mother-in-law for the first time in two years.

She says, "I take care of the home, I do my work, mind my own business. What do you want from me?"

---"What kind of work do you do that needs you to stay out so late at night?"

---"I'm working on my book that's why I have to work late these days."

---"What's the use of all these if you can't do what you should be doing, to create a child?"

Aashita can't hold her tears any longer. She comes to the room and starts weeping with the doctor's report in her hand, she got a week back, which says that she can never be a mother.

After coming to know this, Jiten has completely stopped talking to Aashita, as if he forgot that he had a wife. Her mother-in-law's insults seem to be a lot harsher now.

Tonight, Jiten returns home drunk. He comes to Aashita's room. She thinks that Jiten's anger has finally dissolved and he has come to talk to her after a week. But she turns out to be wrong. Entering the room, the first thing Jiten does, is, that he slaps Aashita, then he starts to abuse her verbally and keeps beating her. Aashita is burning red with anger in her head. When Jiten leaves the room, she starts to cry loudly. She is thinking of a way to put an end to all this misery and something strikes her mind. She takes a blade and is about to cut the vein that can be seen just by the side of her conch-bangle. She sits in that position for a while, unable to move even a bit. For the past seven days, she has been thinking that her mother-in-law might be right. If she cannot create and mother a child, then her life as a woman is worthless. But now something hits her and she thinks, rather, some divine spirit makes her think, "Did not I create anything at all? My write-ups, my poetry are my creations that I adore with much affection. I take care of each character of my stories, as if they are my children. Did I not create them on my own?"

One year has passed. Aashita is rushing to reach on time for the first premiere of her book and before that she has to drop Trisha at school. Trisha is her daughter whom she adopted after four months of leaving whatever she named as "the past".

Aashita thanks God and herself for not giving in her dreams to the obstacles which life threw at her. Had she not put the blade aside and broke her conch-bangle instead of slitting her wrist, she would still be crushed under the feet of her husband's tyranny.

She comes back to her senses by Trisha's call, "School is here. Bye Bye Mumma". Aashita kisses her goodbye, then leaves for the beginning of a new chapter of her life.

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Swapnil Mukherjee (B.A. SEM VI)

Evenings in Kolkata are always a source of bliss for the imaginative folks like us, especially for the couples for whom even the monotonous city life becomes the place of supreme solace and serenity. Mr. And Mrs. Roy, after a heavy downpour on the lands of Bengal, were struggling hard to hire a cab. It was the month of March, though Kolkata is intensely perspiring due to the scorching heat produced by the fiery cannonball, such abrupt cloudbursts do often provide relief to the fatigued body and soul of the city-dwellers. Finally, the Roy's were successful to fetch a cab and were on their way home back to Howrah.

It was their 50th anniversary. The couple had decided to spend the auspicious day together, enjoying on their own terms. Mr. Sudhir Roy, a well-known advocate of Kolkata High Court, and his wife, Mrs. Ashima Roy, a Professor of Chemistry of a renowned college in Kolkata, were finally able to seek solace and romantic salvation, which was awaiting them for a long intermission of three years.

“Three Years! Oh, how dreary and doleful were those bloody three years! Missed you a lot, Asha.”, said Sudhir, with a look of gloominess.

Asha (as named by Sudhir) aka Ashima responded him with a similar look. After a minute pause, Ashima, with an air of pride, accompanied by tears, declared, “All because of you, Sudhir. Hope you realised my situation then. Alas! That didn't happen.”

The root of all their initial problems was their only son and his wife, Jahar and Amrita. They live in the States. Sudhir, being a man of certain traditional orthodox principles, always wanted his son to become a person who, with utmost importance, will carry out his responsibility as a son towards his parents. Ashima, although placing her belief on the same issue, has a slight contradiction in her perception of responsibility. For her, besides fulfilling every single responsibility, one should opt for everything best in one's job career. Basically, it was this conflict clash, which fabricated both the physical and mental distance between Sudhir and Ashima.

On a fine Saturday morning, three years back, the family were spending some quality time together. After several prolonged discourses on certain mundane aspects, Sudhir asked his son and daughter-in-law:

“So, now you two are going to settle here permanently, isn't it? Did you apply for your transfer, Jahar? Did you send the mail to your office?”

Jahar, with an air of perplexity, replied, “Ummm...yeah....I think they...they'll do s...s... something about it? Isn't it, Amrita dear?”

Amrita, with a look of confused confirmation, said, “Yes, baba, he...he t... tried his b... best.”

Ashima, eavesdropping the whole conversation, reassured them saying, “No worries, dear. You should prioritise your career first, son. For taking responsibilities, it is obligatory to strengthen yourself first. Without proper financial strength, how could a son perform all his duties towards his parents?”

Sudhir, out of void, suddenly burst out, “There again! Ah, that typical capitalistic mentality! Asha, only money can't buy happiness. Every child should remain loyal to their parents. Sending some handsome amount does not satisfy the criteria of taking responsibilities towards the parents. Why don't you get it?”

Ashima, replied with similar intensifying anger, “Yes, it's true that money can't buy all happiness. But, if he works hard, he'll be able to fulfil his responsibilities towards everybody even better. Only being a good and loyal human being, these days is an absolute joke. What the world understands is money. You have money, you have everything. No money, no life.”

Their conversation was gradually imbibing a form of a tornado of quarrel and Sudhir was almost on the verge of hitting Ashima hard, until it was Jahar and Amrita who pacified the whole situation with their words of consolation; Jahar to Sudhir, and Amrita to Ashima.

In the afternoon, both Jahar and Amrita were going for a weekend outing. Jahar, while driving his car, was feeling quite restless. Amrita asked, “What is it, dear? Are you alright?” Jahar, with a pale smile, nodded his head. At the back of his mind, the morning incident was unable to find an escape route from his restless mind. Like a flashback, his mind was going through all those stormy quarrels and encounters his parents had earlier, just like that Saturday morning's incident. He was feeling an extreme pressure over his throat, his mind was in a fix; as he was unable to decide with which side, he should comply himself. When all such things were creating havocs in his mind, then the disaster occurred. A car, running very speedily towards Jahar's car, hit his car and the streets of Kolkata witnessed such a grievous accident, leading to the untimely demise of the young couple.

Ashima, unable to control her emotions, cried madly, where laid the dead bodies of Jahar and Amrita. At the very moment, Sudhir uncontrollably rebuked her, “Look, Asha, look at the rummage. Still lingering on the belief that money brings the ultimate happiness? You are responsible for the irreparable loss, only YOU!”

Ashima, with fumbled words, stated, “Don't you think you are equally responsible for the catastrophe? Your thoughts had too created the strangling pressure over them! How could you be so partial? You constantly forced him to get a transfer, it was that very absurd idea which occupied his mind, and here they lay down, silent, cold and DEAD!”

And after fierce discourses, Sudhir did something unexpected. Losing his temper, he slapped Ashima, his Asha! She, receiving such an inhuman treatment from the person she valued and loved the most, went on to declare their divorce. Too quick a decision! After a lot of consultations and recommendations, they agreed to go through separation.

It has been three years, and the day came finally, their 50th anniversary! Sudhir was about to get ready for his court. Suddenly, the phone rang. He looked upon the screen, Ashima it is!

It was like a bolt out of blue for Sudhir. Is it a call of reconciliation, or is she still lingering on that very same falsified thought? He received it, thinking for a couple of minutes.

“Hullo!”, uttered Sudhir, with a gravity in his voice.

“Busy?”, said Ashima.

“Yeah, leaving for Court. Any issues?”

“Nay, nothing of the sort. Could you please meet me at the Haldiram, at 6 PM?”

“Yeah, but what is it?”

“Don't you remember? How astonishing is the fact that one misunderstanding could make you forget every precious day!”, sobbed Ashima.

“Ah, cool down dear. Will meet without fail.”

They were sitting, face to face, staring at each other. They missed it for three long years! Seems like they're doing so after ages! And then, overcoming the hesitant force, and keeping aside all other introductory conversations, Ashima asked Sudhir,

“Missed me?”

Sudhir, hesitating for a while, confessed heartily, “Indeed dear! Believe it or not, those three years were nothing but a painful exile for me, unbearable were those days! Sorry Asha, I've failed to recognise your emotion. You wanted your son to have a life with utmost comfort and luxury, accompanied with peace. It was my fault. I've failed to realise that you too wanted the young couple to stay happy with everything.”

Ashima too got carried away by Sudhir's words, difficult to refrain from it, she too wholeheartedly confessed, “It was my fault too, dear. You wanted your son to become a person with a good heart, with proper principles. You wanted him to be a person who will be good enough to be capable of taking responsibilities. I've too failed to realise that only money can't bring out the happiness and peace. We both are worthless parents! That's why we've lost our true assets. We've lost everything. Can't we again start afresh? What do you think? Can't we try to regain our lost days back?”

Sudhir, unable to cope up with his overpowering emotion, hugged his Asha tightly, and spoke, “And look, it's our 50th anniversary! A blessed day to get reunited once again. Will never leave you dear, and will never ever misunderstand you. Happy 50th anniversary, dear!”

And then they had an eye-boggling celebration of their 50th anniversary, they walked through the evening deluge. The evening sky, with all its splendour, stretched itself tight across the ethereal sky, it glimmered at the happy reunion of the old couple, remained estranged for the dreadful span of three long years. As soon as they mounted on the cab, Ashima, after speaking out those words, concluding with, “...Alas! That didn't happen!”, looking at Sudhir's gloominess once again, his face caused her to laugh out loud. Sudhir, recognising his Asha's witty test, too laughed in response. As the cab started its journey, Ashima's head rested on Sudhir's shoulders, with peace restoring itself back upon the newfound journey of togetherness of Mr. & Mrs. Roy.

## The Sacred Water Body

Anirban Roy (B.A. SEM VI)

1.

Am I still dreaming?

I know I am here for a couple of hours, but when did I fall asleep? Where am I?

Leaning by the window ledge, I woke up. It's a train bogie. I wasn't here at first. Throwing my eyes around I find no one. There is no luggage. Empty to its bare bones. Various noises fill the space. Sitting still I look outside. I can hear the rumbling noise of the wheels. It can be morning or evening. Faded lights glooming all over it. Due to its speed, I can't see close objects which are passing by. In the distance, naked trees are walking backward slowly to the past. The weather is clear. Which season it is, I don't remember. I am not feeling well. Its little dizzy up there. Some rusty thoughts chasing me for a long time now. But how I reached this coupe? Its feeling like the train is running on its own. No one, is or ever was, in this train. Suddenly, the weather is getting changed. Fog is coming closer to the train through those naked trees. Eventually, they fill up my lonely shell. What is actually going on? Wasting no more, I run toward the door. There are no other bogies. With a massive pressure, I hit the lock. It remained the same. I pull the lock as hard as I can. In fractions of second something happens!

I just remember a "Click"...

2.

He opened his eyes. At first, it's hard for him. Bright lights are very disturbing when you wake up. When his eyes got used to it, he looked at the ceiling. There wasn't the fan. What happened? Where is he? And immediately he realized that it was the hotel. He wasn't on his soft, smelly bed. It wasn't a regular day. It was Darjeeling. But what was that noise? He woke up with a yawn and noticed his father, standing by his bed, clicking his pictures while he was sleeping. His father (baba) was waiting for him to return in reality. Baba said, "It's 6:30. You are late by half an hour. Now my Prince, would you please come to our dining? All are waiting for you!"

He just replied with a small "hmm". Baba went out by saying, "thank you my lord."

Our character is 14 years old. A little shy boy with a silent presence. Still studying...but not according to his parents. And as his exams were finished recently, family decided to go for a trip. Actually, every family member wanted this to be happened. Mostly his grandma. She was 82. But he didn't like his grandma nowadays. Basically, due to her age, she became rude. She was a good woman but...actually she needed a change, doctor told her so, and luckily, she was strong enough to go for this trip. As the plan they reached here yesterday.

When he asked baba about the destination, he just told a name, "Lamhatta" with a subtle smile. Lamhatta is a small place in Darjeeling. Many of here are homestays and some resorts. He was astonished to see the dogs around here. Those were street dogs but didn't seem so. And eventually, he found a furry friend over there. Here nature is the dominant figure. A clear Kanchenjunga range,



mountain forests, foggy weather, both strong and pleasant winds, sounds of prayer flags, and friendly clouds. People here are also very friendly. They always have a smile hanging from their face. One more thing which he loved the most, was momos. Specially veg ones. They booked a stay called Chetan homestay. It's named after its owner Chetan. A 27 years old boy, living with his mother and his little brothers. His father passed away around 4 years ago. He and Chetan became good friends quickly. They shared a good bonding on music. Chetan introduced Bipul Chetri's songs to him. Those songs made his day. He also noted the name and the songs.

When he reached the dining, he saw no one was there. Chetan told him that everyone went on a park which was very close to their resort, called Lamhatta Nature Park. What should he do now? After finishing his breakfast with puri and alur-dom, he decided to venture alone. Lamhatta is a silent but not so silent place. Many tourists come here around this part of the year. He walked up the road and found the entry gate of the park. There was a signboard saying "Lamhatta Nature Park. A Govt. Project. Entry fee 15 rupees." He also saw baba in a distance sitting with grandma inside the park. Other ones probably went on. It's quite impossible for 82 years old to hike.

He walked some more. Basically, Bengali boarders were in maximum numbers. He saw some foreigners as well. Some white skinned ladies with golden hairs. Once he heard from his uncle's son, his elder brother, that those women called Blonde. Turning with the road he saw two dogs, looked like Alsations wandering on the street. They came close hearing his call. They rubbed their heads on his pant, took his smell and vibed their bushy tails. Inside his pocket, he found a pack of biscuits which baba bought him last night. He just ate a few.

On the right side a slope went down to dense forest. Fog was coming up through them. It was like a mystery land. A land of wizards. Just like those Harry Potter movies on Sundays. On the left he discovered a path which leads to a different way to the park. It seemed people used it to bypass entry fee. Suddenly, he felt boom of adventure under his pocket. Why not took this way and surprise all the other? A perfect idea indeed. He took it. At first some slippery slope. Then in some high it melted with the constructed way in the park. No one was there. He started hiking up. No noises of the civilized. Just voices of unknown birds. Creepy sounds of leaves. Smooth noises of the wind and his footsteps. In the meantime, he felt like he was here at a time, but when? At what age? Suddenly, a cracking sound of wood. Someone was walking nearby. He slowly went closer. Hiding himself behind a bush he saw his baba with his grandma. They were discussing something. In front of them there was a slope. But how she got there? It's quite impossible for her to reach this height. He heard her panting. Like she was having some breathing problem. Baba was holding her tightly. What is happening? He didn't move. Suddenly, with a stormy wind, baba pushed her. There were huge pine trees guarding the slop. No-one was near, just, the slope and those silent Pines. He didn't see his grandma anymore, just a voice remained. Rather a scream, bashed by the scream of the howling winds.

He was there still. Didn't move a bit. Didn't sound a bit. His father turned back with a smile on his face. Then walked upwards slowly and slowly...

### 3.

Chetan brought a plate of chicken curry. It smelled delicious. His uncle took some with a bright smile but after a single bite refused to eat the rest. It was an English cut. He didn't like it. At the end four of them finished their dinner with just potato curry, including him. He just ate one single roti with some potato. He wasn't feeling well. What he saw back then, was it true? Did it actually happen? Yes! It

was. His father and his uncle went to a hospital with his grandma. Dead at that time. Lying like a wax statue, broken into pieces. Father showcased it as an accident. She felt down for slippery ground and got hung up by a tree. Naturally spot dead. Hospital which was quite a distance away said, they will take time to observe this, and will release the body as soon as possible.

It was a haunting experience at night in Lamhatta. Huge pine trees looked like giants. Someone could imagine a pack of Dementors, coming out from those woods. Something from the shadows. From the darkness. When he first saw this, he closed his eyes. Came to his room, shaking both in cold and fear, he went under the blanket. Soft but without the scent of his mother. It was a wooden room with two separate beds. He was alone in the room. Suddenly, he heard a noise. Approaching footsteps. Probably his father. He looked through a little hole of the blanket. Yes. It was his father. His father went to the other bed. Sat there for a couple of minutes, then came towards him, assuming he was sleeping. He sat beside him. Looked at him a bit. Uncovered the blanket. He was in his reality. His father put his hand on his head. A warm touch. Waiting for a bond to build. He could feel his touch, but not the warmth. Chills went down through his spine. He was waiting, blocking his breath, for his father to go away. Scared of the thought that somehow, he will open his eyes, somehow. He was attempting to act as normal as he can. When he about to give up his breath, his father went away.

#### 4.

“We should spend some time together...ah? What do you think?” his father asks. It’s 7.30 in the morning. Everybody else are so tired that morning isn’t yet happened for them. In the dining, only he and his father are eating their breakfast. Two eggs with brown bread. He isn’t answered yet. His father said again, “Let’s go. Yesterday you are late to go to the park. Now we have some time. What do you say?” He just gives a nod.

The mountains are not in a good mood today. Fogs are looking more fearful. Winds stop talking. An eerie silence is following everywhere. Birds also aren’t fit today. Just two footsteps approaching to the top of the hill. There is a sacred pond which was unknown to him. He is walking in a distance advance from his father. His father smoking a cigarette. He never saw him to do so. It will take more than 15 minutes to reach the spot. Suddenly, his father asked, “why are you far away from me? Are you angry for some reason?” He doesn’t give an answer. “What happened to you? I asked you something!” Again, no reply. His father gives a little smile. “Oh! I see! Your little mind wasn’t ready for this catastrophe. You know son, something just happens. Furthermore, you can’t do anything to stop them. Deaths are one of those. Just take your time. By the way you know what the word “catastrophe” means?”

They walk for some minutes with no conversation. No questions, no replies. After a minute his father said, “When you will come to my age, and when I will die, you will act as I am acting now.”

This last lines suddenly blow a bomb inside his head. He turns towards him and shouts “I will never be like you! You aren’t a human being! I saw everything! Everything...! When you killed grandma, you were laughing! You were laughing! You were laughing!” Suddenly, he starts to run. His father isn’t ready for this. He jumps on a different way covered with bushes. Running like a wild Stag. No aim. No destiny. Just running and running. He can hear his father shouting from distance, “Son! Come back! Come back!”

Slowly those sounds fade away with the wind. After some time, he reaches the destiny. The sacred water body. A pond in the middle surrounded by prayer flags and guardian Pine trees. It’s like

someone painted it with various colours of green. He can hear a cacophony of praying flags, sounds of insects, noise of wind blowing, and all this covered by thick fogs. Warm, thick water drops fall on the ground. He looks at the shivering pond. Something is there in the middle. He can't see. After sometimes he resembles it with a frog. A frog, which is captured by a snake. It is trying to break through that prison. Waves are creating by his fret. He picks up a stone. Throws it towards them. It doesn't hit the target, but it scares the band. It let the frog free and swims away. The frog remains there. Floating silently. He watches it for few minutes. Standing silently...

Staring at the frog for few minutes, he looks up. A leopard is there in the other side of the pond. He knew, father told him once that there are leopards in this forest. It drinks some water from the pond. Then it looks up. They both look at each other. Four bright, burning eyes see themselves.

Deep but silent.

## Garland of Fictions

Priyanka Roy (M.A. SEM II)

### **Feather of Heaven**

Once upon a time, even birds had hands like men. God created them to walk the earth and shape their future with those hands.

Birds worked hard day and night to feed their children and make the world around them beautiful. Tree and plants spread all around.

However, things were not always happy. Sometimes there were fights among various birds, as their physical aspects were quite different. Some had long beaks, while some had strong grips of their claw. Many small birds lived in fear. There was a hierarchy established between them and life was no longer as beautiful as before. Stronger and bigger birds tormented the smaller ones. The purity of nature was overtaken by selfish desires of power and superficial greatness. Children spent their days staying in their homes, afraid they will be subjected to torment and may become prey to stronger birds. They had nowhere to run, the world was in chaos.

One cold night, a little bird looked at himself. He was scratched all over while his hands were bound in heavy chains. He shed a tear and looked up at the sky.

"If only, the sky was my world. If only I could roam the skies and escape, even temporarily. If only I could become closer to peace and closer to you, God. Then I wouldn't be chained down, in pain, with no joy, no freedom, and no life of my own."

With these words, the little bird lay down on the ground exhausted. As he lay down in his sleep, a bright figure touched his fluffy cheek, rough and still wet with tears.

"Fear no more, child. God has accepted your prayers. You and your kind shall soar the skies high and mighty, as free as you can be. Up in the bright blue sky, God will witness your joy with great delight. Your wings shall be your new hands, so you shall explore the endless world above the ground. It has no shape, no form, no limitations, it is the ultimate gift of freedom and joy. Now fly, my child. Embrace your new world, your new paradise."

As the bright figure uttered these words, bright pair of wings began to grow on back of the little bird. His hands, now gone with all his restriction.

When he woke up, he saw his hands were gone. It caused him to panic, but in his panic he felt himself flapping his wings. With a few tries, he could rise above the ground.

This confused him. Soon he saw the skies, his friends, family, everyone was flying in the sky with smiles on their faces. They were so happy.

The little bird tried once again to flap his wings; he could finally fly up in the sky. His joy was limitless, like the sky. He looked up again and thanked God for granting his prayer. He could hear a voice say to him:

"Dear child you shall fly in my garden of paradise eternally in the end".

Once again, the little bird shed his tears. These were tears of joy, sparkling in the sunlight.

### **Congratulations, My Friend**

It was another day of my online classes. We were barely attentive. That day I wondered, is he happy with his new friends?

I was new to the class. I particularly didn't have a good experience with online classes, nothing ever made sense.

However, this class was different from before. Everyone enjoyed talking about things like childhood and perhaps plans to go out and eat together. I just watched them enjoy talking, as always. I'm not a particularly outgoing and confident person, so I found joy in witnessing other talk.

I was particularly interested in talking to a person among them. He was a kind and silly person. I failed to secure a good friendship before with a girl, as I was too late to do so. This thought scared me.

The fear disappeared after we began talking. We talked for hours about ourselves and things we liked. He always gave great advice in my difficult times. Having a great friend supporting you and excited to know more about you, it was a feeling I now knew and loved.

I found a friend, a great friend I can talk freely with. My heart was open for him. I could maybe get hurt by his word or actions, but I was happy talking to him.

I was close to him as well, as we shared feelings of happiness, sadness, funny moments and so on.

I was looking forward to meeting him once offline classes started and show him so many things he would love and enjoy.

However, this hope was left unfulfilled. One day, I saw him say that he was transferred to a different institution. It was necessary because his family was facing problems.

I couldn't do anything but bear the pain of saying "congratulations" to him. I could understand that he was sad too that we couldn't spend time together, and he said he would come see me one day for sure.

But my heart could not accept it. I would tell myself "It's okay, he will be happy. You two will still talk" until it was too much to bear the sadness and I would cry bitterly.

Just like that, offline classes began. We physically met with teachers and they taught so well. One of them took extra care about guiding us, more like a parent would when asked for advice.

Except we didn't ask for it, and he knew how we thought about teachers. Yet he still cared for us, which made me believe he was more mature and stronger than any other teacher I met before.

He seemed like a grown up I could ask for help. One day, I gathered enough courage to talk with him about my friend. He initially thought I was romantically involved with him, but later he understood we couldn't be.

He told me, "Let me tell you something. I once befriended a pigeon. Really, I did make her my friend. She visited me every day and ate from my hand. She sat there and cooed with her partner sometimes. It felt nice to see her sit so close and let me watch her without being scared.

One day, she stopped coming. Do you know why? Because she grew old and weak. I'm sure you know the rest. How do you think I felt after that?"

I thought he felt sad, that he cried too. But his answer was different.

"Yes, I was sad. But one thing I was happy about was that she was happy with me and I with her. I'm sure if she saw me sad, then passing on would be difficult for her and she would suffer in afterlife. So, I would rather embrace her memory one last time with a little sadness and let her go happily.

Would you want your friend to cry when you eventually have to leave them? You could be leaving the country or town for work; would you be happy if they suffer in your absence?"

Of course, I would never want that to happen. If my own happiness will make him feel at ease, then I will be happy for him. I could accept my suffering, but I can never accept suffering of someone close to my heart.

"You are great friends, so cherish it. Next time you talk to him or see him, be grateful that God gave you happy moments with him, and continues to do so".

From that time onwards, I promised myself to say goodbye with gratitude and happiness to my loved ones who must depart from my life. They might not be there physically anymore but they are always there in my heart and mind.

**Time for the Lyrics, to Get the Wings**



## My Last Gust

Trideb Das (B.A. SEM IV)

Restlessness has followed me ever'ere  
In this venomous noisy sphere.  
I had tried to hear life's meaning  
But I only heard my soul groaning.  
At which hour moonlight reaches snoring houses  
I cross in my bed with nights sleepless.  
I cried for Help, and asked me to befren,  
Maybe if couldst save me from some pain.

Then thither I found her.  
An Emerald dream with Scarlet smiling  
The scent of her, a smile on me painting.  
Her lullaby I heareth  
Her gentle breath gently soothes me I feeleth.  
I heareth rhymes writ ago two centuries  
And I feeleth what they did feel.  
Like them, Her touch moves in my,  
In my blood, and my heart, and my soul.  
I see Thee, a gust of serenity.

But...  
O nay the colours, they fade away,  
The sweet silent becoming noisy again,  
And the gentle cold anon retiring,  
And in thorns again I am thrown to stay.  
Nay, nay, nay! stop! I pray.

Say what if I wished

I wanted to dream Thee for eternity,

Would thou call me greedy?

Call me foolish if thou want,

If only I want this gust to forever last.

Call me coward or aught thou like,

But thou art not hither, wherefore be in this sourful life?

So anon I sit with a glass of hemlock

Ready to kiss it.

## **Own or Thy-self**

Subarna Chongder (B.A. SEM VI)

The day without you I thought was incomplete. Trust me there was no you in that day.

I cried for a little groaned but a lot. That sound didn't reach your soul.

I felt fear to lose your company. You went towards the maze.

It gave me pain. I didn't reach onto the top.

I forgot to smile. I failed, you ridiculed.

I cried, you laughed. I tried to overcome, you tried to push me down.

You tried to confuse me, I tried to understand you.

You made me befool but didn't try to encourage me towards prosperity.

Time doesn't come back anymore. Adjustment can never soothe the pain.

Although, it's better to save own-self from thyself.

## **For Ever-Over**

Subarna Chongder (B.A. SEM VI)

I look around, remain alone, the bond is broken but who binds it again and again

Turning around I find myself to be in the smoke of clouds to regain.

I am left alone what else is there to overcome the argument?

Conflict is no more but whatever your vanity is, soon you'll get.

The sky is huge and is innumerable, I'm not afraid to lose anymore

Though you were the one North Star whose assistance I thought I'll find to grow.

Today I'm afraid if the star I search for, falls again

I'll match my eyes in finding peace only towards pain.

## **Eternal Beauty**

Debanjana Banerjee (M.A. SEM II)

Is your beauty eternal?

Will it last forever?

Think twice, be clever!

What will you do with a pretty face,

When in your heart, mercy finds no place?

One day, the artificial mask will surely fade,

And you'll miss the thickness of your braid.

Oh belle! Enjoy the moments of your life

For, no one knows the beauty of being alive.

Greet people with your charming smiles

So, they can remember you, even after miles.

Instead of your body, make your soul more fashionable.

## **Again Had I Been a Child**

Debanjana Banerjee (M.A. SEM II)

Again had I been a child!

Again I shall crawl.

Taking the support of father's finger

I'll stand, walk and fall.

I'll grab whatever I find.

Curious eyes will give me joy.

Once again I'll play with food.

Paper note will be my toy.

My fingers'll try to reach the switch board.  
I'll demand the needle  
With which my mother will sew.  
When any uncle will offer me chocolate,  
I'll never say "Thank you".

I may not like you, but I'll never flirt.  
With my lisping tongue,  
I'll speak my heart.

### **Is That You?**

**Subhojit Chatterjee (B.A. SEM VI)**

Is that you?  
I was waiting  
For a long decade,  
For a long century?  
Was that you?  
I was fought along  
As Achilles in Troy  
Was that you Or  
The myth of Helen?  
I don't know, so as you  
You were there, I believe  
And you'll be, so long I live.

## Ode to the Mother Vampire

Atanu Ghorui (B.A. SEM IV)

OH, The Priestess of Darkness,  
Matriarch of Deathlessness  
Bore me in your womb of Blackness  
Let me resurrect as your own.

OH, Satan's daughter  
Give me thy power,  
To cheat on Demise  
And let me unite with whom I shall call my brothers.

Embrace me with thy grace,  
Guide me through the Darkness,  
Without the ever need of Sunlight.  
Oh, Countess, let me reborn as your child.

## Being a Nomad

Tiyasha Senapati (B.A. SEM VI)

When the days were gone,  
Suddenly you arisen,  
"Ekta chhele moner aanginate", listening began!

Letter page grew inchmeal,  
Honours book was filled with song coil,  
Why're you mum? Say something if you can!

Never say anything again,  
Will you whet me pain?  
"Abhi na jao chhod kar", you sang!

Else laureation, I am becoming vagabond, a Nomad...

## Thoughts Ignited by a Solitary Boat Amidst Vastness

Archan Dasgupta (M.A. SEM IV)

Like a speck in the broad sunlight

I glitter like a sand slitting through the winds,

Into a distant location.

I wait!

On a bus window, throw my glance at people all around,

Where am I headed today?

What am I heading towards?

I venture on these routes each day, to find a new meaning

But I stray farther away

From my destined destination.

I have waited on these panes for longer than you can fathom.

And now I am lost in this location.

My existence asks(begs) for a validation

Was it worth it?

Was it all worth it?

I have been convinced great duties befall on me.

And for a thousand million reasons those duties; my destiny

But,

In this rut,

I have loved and relived words.

I feel I have weaved my cry for help

Like a showpiece adorning some mantle

But,

The broken metal inside

Resonate my thoughts, dreams(crushed) and memories alike.

## Ending Up Is Not That Easy:

Rounak Bose (M.A. SEM IV)

Those stairs still welcome the boy,  
The fragrance of some unnamed flower reshuffling a long-lost moment--  
A yellowish day suddenly trumpets,  
The sweet little pond stirs.

Dusty books receive a new touch,  
The armchair stays the same---  
A lovely rosary sprinkles from the rooms to beyond;  
Smile keeps the beat.

Eyes behind those specks,  
A Motherly Feeling, A Friend's Overcoat,  
Love's Carpet upon the Thorns  
Diary reeks the Memoir...

The radio is turned on...  
The voice pops up  
Memory cries in the alley  
Five Hundred Miles calls thy name,  
The boy ends up.

Yes, The boy ends up...  
The Man ends up...



## Heal Pill

Srimoyee Maiti (M.A. SEM IV)

Self-doubting, hurting, crying  
The happy spirit in her dying,  
On the bed she was lying;  
Taking nap as a lifeless broken shell  
Alone coping her own hell!  
Bundles of worries and fears,  
Secretly shedding her tears.  
Pathetic yet powerful is the mind,  
Determined for a solution to find.  
A free spirit of her own kind.  
Gives double faced looks of "see, I'm fine"  
Her inaudible silence: her whine!

Depression is not mere sadness, it is much more,  
It is the battle of brain's chemicals at core.  
Depression is a mental cancer  
Gruelling to find an answer...!  
I doubt, if the modern virtual world really understands grief?!  
Mental wars are not simply social media posts, not trivial, nor brief.  
To cure own self, to heal  
Is not an easy deal.  
It's alright to take prescribed pill  
To curb, to kill, whatever is the ill.  
Normalise people being patient, people being member;  
Walking towards their therapist's chamber.  
Not just petty heartbreaks and shatters  
Mental issues are much more, it matters.

## Windy Evenings

Priyanka Roy (M.A. SEM II)

This familiar wind is to me  
Like water to a fish,  
Dimly lit road in the evening,  
And horns of trains,

I hear a man on street,  
Bringing in his food stall,  
The winds blow again,  
As this memory passes by,

Standing on the green ground,  
I played in the park,  
We walked around,  
Eating ice cream as it got dark,

Some houses were lit,  
Yet some were not,  
Everyone was happy,  
With all that they got,

The world was small,  
Our imagination had wings,  
Oh, how it had a great fall,  
Surrounded by buildings,

Now I look up from my screen,  
Down this window on the street,  
How long has it been?  
Since I last looked at it,

The trees swayed,  
The moon shone,  
Upstairs I stayed,  
Listening to a familiar tone,

This nostalgia, this memory,  
It was always in me,  
So, with a longing heart,  
I greet this memory again,

With a heavy heart, I asked  
"Where were you?"  
And it replied happily,  
"Waiting for you...  
To remember me."

## Sleep

Ankush Pal (MA- 2020- Alumni)

“We are such stuff

As dreams are made on, and our little life

Is rounded with a sleep”

1

The foundation of the world is sleep

Few walk around on it like a dream

The magician sits with a magic wand

Showcasing illusions with the setting sun

2

When the story ends and everyone departs

The empty stage plays the tune for exit

All the performances and dialogues

Comes like a reverie, to the tired eyes

3

Travelling from a sleep to another

The magician wants to break his wand

Everything collapses in a while:

The ‘cloud capped’ towers and theatres

4

When everything has come to an end

There comes an earnest request:

Don’t disturb the sleeping bard

As he will travel from dream to dream

5

Does the magician really sleep?

Illusion covers everything!

Amidst all these, cruel April smirks:

“Shakespeare is born a million times!”

**Words Ignited by the Thoughts**

## SHAKESPEARE AND US

DEBOSMITA MONDAL (B.A. SEM II)

“Shakespeare and Modern Culture is a tour de force reimagining of our own mental and emotional landscape as refracted through the prism of protean “Shakespeare.” -Marjorie Garber

Our lives are shaped as profoundly by personality as by gender or race. And he, Shakespeare, moulds all his characters in such realistic features that they seem to be apt and real. Shakespeare portrays the most complex themes of human life with ease and prowess; the way he depicts love, ambition, fame, revenge, betrayal, murder, hatred - flames the pores of one's soul. Our beliefs, prejudices and assumptions are constantly challenged by Shakespeare. The extent, variety, and richness of his plays are quite bewildering as one approaches them. Shakespeare was far ahead of his time as it is one of the fascinating effects of his plays that they have almost always seemed to coincide with the times in which they are read, published, produced and discussed. The idea that Shakespeare writes us, constantly encounters our own preserved thoughts, identities, beliefs and disbeliefs, sorrows, merriment and livelihood.

While portraying each and every character he poured objectivity. All of his characters are so immensely sketched that we can find Macbeth, Othello, Celia, Orsino, Hamlet within 'ourselves'. Macbeth, thane of Glamis, was looked up to with great esteem and known for his great valour throughout. He was a man of virtue and loved and trusted by the commoners, the people of his land. But he got blinded by his vaulting ambitions. Besides, Lady Macbeth, pricked the venom in him more. Ultimately, Macbeth, the saviour, becomes the murderer of his own people. We all are 'Macbeth'. We, too, are virtuous and have some ambitiousness. But if we get manipulated by the 'Three witches' as well as 'Lady Macbeth', we might end up doing same as Macbeth. Tragedy will not be late to find its way to us. The conflict between good and evil, the conflict between two minds have always its game playing on inside. It is up to us what we choose to be. This is where man becomes his own creator of fate.

The point here is that we all are the characters of Shakespeare. Hamlet is nothing but a while of our characters when we become indecisive, engulfed with overthinking. Lady Macbeth is a highly ambitious woman who will go to any extent to gain her own ends with her political ethics. Othello is a possessive general, actually manipulated by his own caged beliefs. Whereas, through the characters like Rosalind and Orlando, Shakespeare sets the ideal of a lover and a beloved never failing to be realist to the point of view of the characterization of Celia and Oliver, coinciding with the times till date. Macbeth is not just a mere tragic hero of Shakespeare's play whether it is his reader or his audience he is pointing at. From mass to class, he has reached every self, fortifying them mentally and emotionally. Even if we just overlook his main leads and

persistently look at the minor ones, we will eventually discover how much relevant exposers they are to the modernity. If we look closely to those characters, we will eventually get to comprehend them as the personas of a person. Sometimes they are so tactfully sketched that they become the main pillars of his dramas. No, they are not fictional rather opened up the clogged sectors of our minds. Surveying this multitude, one can only cry out, as Hamlet does, “What a piece of work is man!”

Shakespeare has scripted many ideas of men and women, youth and age about human character, about individuality and selfhood and about government and about many faces of human being. Shakespeare walked on each and every character’s shoe while portraying them, shooting and cutting down the stereotypes. This is what makes Shakespeare modern and far ahead of times even in this 21st century. He did not just stop penning them down on the pages or staging in his Globe Theatre, he poured out his thinnest, smallest of artistry in his works leaving us just some stunned spectators. Not to forget how he projected every single thought of his, relevant “So long as men can breathe or eyes can see”. He has made his readers identify their actual identity, who they are and who they could be; journeys through many aspects of us from me to ME. By Hamlet’s “What to be and not to be” he tells us everything about being indecisive in the crucial moments likewise in his other plays. From his Globe Theatre he has taken us to his ‘Globe’ and has become ‘our Shakespeare’.

## Shakespeare- The Pioneer

Sourish Ghosh (B.A. SEM VI)

“Shakespeare – The nearest thing in incarnation to the eye of God”

Laurence Olivier

The biography of William Shakespeare, the greatest poet and playwright of all time in English literature, is largely speculative due to the uncertainty and complexity of the variety of information. William, the third child of John and Mary Shakespeare, was born in April 1584, in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon. John was a municipal representative engaged in a variety of occupations, including glove making and farm work. John married Mary Arden, daughter of a farming family, in 1556. William's early education was at the Unpaid Grammar School in Stratford-. After leaving school in 158, he was placed in the ancestral business, because from this time onwards the financial condition of the people continued to decline. In 1582, eighteen-year-old William married Anne, daughter of Richard Hathaway... After a brief stint as a schoolteacher, William moved to London in 1585, due to financial difficulties. William was engaged in a difficult struggle. During this time, he does a lot of hard work, even handling the horses of the guests outside the arena. Eventually, his talent was recognized as an actor, on the stage in the city of London. He was then accepted as a member of Lord Chamberlain's Company of Actors. However, in addition to acting, Shakespeare's popularity and profits have risen to unimaginable heights since then. After the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603, Shakespeare's fame grew during the reign of James I. His team was renamed The King's Company, and Shakespeare's contribution to the history of Elizabeth's drama became legendary. Shakespeare left London in 1610 and returned to Stratford. He lived in a makeshift building called New Place, which he bought a long time ago, in 1593. The plays of his last episode were written here. After leaving London, he was in contact with his playwrights until 1613, until of his death in 1616.

We should know first what is the reason for Shakespeare's all-encompassing excellence? Firstly, his perfection in character creation is incomparable. In his plays, we meet as many living men and women as there are no other plays in literature. Almost every character of his is full of vitality, full of mysteries of life. It seems that when the thorns in their body boil, warm blood will come out. Their language, mannerisms, demeanour, deep heart — all are surprisingly feudal with character-imagination. In general, there is a difference between men and women created in literature and real-life personalities — the fullness of life is almost not reflected in literature. We have an insatiable curiosity about the people we come in contact with in life - we don't seem to know them completely. Peeking into the unknown behind the know, Maria creates a mysterious environment around them the scope and breadth of their personality expands beyond the limits of our knowledge. The analysis of the fragment of life that is depicted in literature has a completeness. The part that the writer holds in front of us is also handed over to us. Shakespeare's characters evoke in our minds an unresolved question of real-life fear.



He is unbeatable to make human character through his Pen, because of his sharp observation on human life. Nicholas Rowe perfectly said “The character of Man is best seen in his writing”.

In Subodh Chandra Sengupta’s opinion Attempts have been made by critics of all times to discover Shakespeare's personality through allusions to men and things of his own time. This questioning impulse leads us to the most prominent feature of Shakespeare's character-an acute consciousness of the conflict between Good and Evil.

Shakespeare had unparalleled excellence in his poetic power and his mature multidisciplinary understanding of human social life. For the playwright, the leisure of mere poetry is limited. He can't write poetry in his own words; all he has to do is put it in his mouth. Therefore, if you write a poem without keeping it in harmony with the character, it becomes the cause of inferiority. The heroes of his tragedy and the lovers of comedy have naturally found the language to express their emotions through high-pitched poetry. Macbeth, King Lear, Othello, Hamlet, Prospero, Romeo - all of them have a deep heart that is expressed in incomparable poetry which proves that Shakespeare could have achieved a very high position as a poet without writing a single play.

Then every person is well aware of the valuable information he has about life and usage. These are like gems extracted by churning the sea of experience. Phrases quoted from Shakespeare's plays move people around like proverbs. The contribution of one Shakespeare to the English language collection is as great as any other. The art of Shakespeare's writing is so precise and subtle that it reminds us more of the self-evident beauty of nature than of man-made compositions. It seems that the secret energy in this huge inanimate body, which inadvertently works, blossoms, ripens fruit, regulates the rotation of the seasons, inspires regular orbit of the planets, as if sprouting in the conscious mind of man in the moment's self-forgetfulness. No poet in the world has ever been greeted with a higher praise than this

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ইংরাজী সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস- শ্রীকুমার বন্দোপাধ্যায়

## THEY AND US – WHAT NEXT?

Kakan Khanra (B.A. 2020- Alumni)

I always like to introduce myself as a reader than a Storyteller though it is not that I have any kind of problem in handling crowd. But I always love to read literary works of several genres. Knowing about the people from different societal background and specially about those people who represents the lowest rung of this huge society which has always looked down upon them, has been my continuous quest while going through various literary creations. It is very much easy to unfold the topic of today from the whole discussion which have preceded this portion of my writing that my upcoming discussion will be established upon those people who are deprived of their basic rights, whom we have termed as “Other” for so long, who are the signs of unholiness to some people in our society and materials of mimicry to some. But before that I want to share some experiences of mine.

There are very less people in our society who have not at all encountered with people like eunuch in their regular life. In fact, I have met these people time and again in various places like Victoria Memorial, Nandan West Bengal Film Centre, Prinsep Ghat or Dhakuria Lake of Kolkata. I can still remember the date: 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018, I was walking towards Victoria Memorial with one of my friends at around 4:30 to 5 p.m. Being a daily visitor of the same road, quite expectedly we came across some of eunuch people. As both of us were ladies and they generally do not want money when only ladies are around them, we were not prepared for the next event. One of them came in front of us and told so sweetly “you people are the manifestations of the Goddess Laxmi and a new year is starting from tomorrow. Won’t you give anything to us?” In return of some meagre amount which we could give them, we received heartfelt blessings from them. They wished a happy and prosperous new year for us and as usually we did the same to them. They were staring at us in a very unusual way, and then they smiled and said “Nobody wishes us in this way dear, be always happy and safe.” She went away in her own way within the twilight of the last day of the disappearing year. Our mind was getting heavier gradually while searching for the causes behind the unacceptability of the society for this section of it.

Let me tell you about one other such incident of my life. Me and my family were going to a very distant place named Jhikhira from my own town. I can’t remember the name of the particular place right now but I suddenly met one such person who had approached very near to us for some money. When both our eyes met in one moment, as usually I smiled at her and in return, I got a different kind of smile which made me feel that this person was none but a close one to my soul for a long time. After having the money from my mother, she blessed me with both of her hands as if all her soul poured all the good wishes within me, my soul, my destiny. And then the crowd engulfed her, she went away.

Where lies the problem in accepting this part of our society? Why can’t we think about them as a normal heterosexual human being like us? Yes, the Honourable Supreme Court has given the legal rights to them but that is only bound within the four walls of the paper castles just like any other laws like the laws associated to rape, associated to racial discrimination and many more. Have we

forwarded to accept these important counterparts of our society? Have we given them their due respect? The answer is 'no', a big 'No'. I'm not claiming that they are all pure. Yes, they are not. So many of them are associated to many unethical dealings just like us. Don't we? If we can avoid the bad elements of our society to respect the good elements in the heteronormative section, then why can't these eunuch people as well as the LGBTQ people get their own freedom to live their own life freely while getting all the chances and amenities which should be given to an independent citizen of an independent country? As far as my encounter with them talk about them, those are pretty good experiences. What I have realized that their want is nothing but a good behaviour, a bag full of respect just like us. Even the hearty behaviour, which is offered by them in return, I can bet, is becoming a rare quality in our so-called "Normal" society day by day. If the chance is given, even they can be there on the pinnacle of success and examples are no less than any "Normal" human beings. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, when change and continuous update are the needs of the hour why don't we update ourselves? Why don't we update the humanitarian part of ourselves? When you don't even know about the person in front of you then let's start sweetly. At least when deaths and blank spaces have taken all the earth, why can't we be the harbinger of a New Normal behaviour, New Normal Tradition by accepting the society as it is, not by implementing what we think of it?

**The World Listens, While the Horizon Speaks**

## Travelling, the Door Unlocked

Swarnali Ghosh (M.A. SEM IV)

- I love traveling so whenever I get a chance to visit a new place or city, I immediately pack my bags and go out to travel. Shimla is my dream destination and I have visited there three times and each time we planned a different tour. But the most amazing tour was from Shimla to Chitkul, the last village in India – the China border.

For 2019's Durga Puja we had another plan to visit Goa, but somehow it was cancelled. By that time, a sudden tour plan was made by my mother to Shimla. Immediately we booked tickets on Tatkal from Howrah to Chandigarh on Kalka mail. Our train was on 5th October at 11 pm From Howrah junction. It was in Saptami on 2019's Durga Puja vacation. After a journey of 48 hours, we finally reached Chandigarh at about 4 am on 7th October. Then our journey began.

- We have already booked a travel car from Kolkata. Actually, it will be quite pocket friendly if you book a car for your entire trip from the Chandigarh Taxi stand.
- Then it's a two-and-a-half-hour journey to Shimla. On the journey, I would suggest you hold your car on some Panjabi Dhaba and taste their Methi Paratha with green chutney and butter with Aloo ke sabzi. I assure you will never have that taste ever. Finally, we reached our villa.
- Another important thing is that, try to book cottage or villas from earlier because in the season the price gets too high.



### **Shimla, Summer queen of Himachal Pradesh:**

After taking a nap, we went out to visit the side scenes. First, we visited the Mall. There are a lot of things to explore. The road to the mall is full of amazing views. When you enter the Mall, you will have an amazing vibe that you have entered into the 20th-century British

colony. The town hall, church, shopping mall, cafeteria, sitting space, almost everywhere you can find that vibe.

On the other hand, there is a Kali temple. The roadside view is also very nice and foggy.

- We have experienced Durga Puja in the hills. And the Dusshera festival was surely an amazing experience for us.

### **Next destination "Kinnur Valley":**

Our next destination was Kinnur Valley. For many decades, I had been waiting to visit Sangla valley in Kinnur district. Sangla valley is located in the northeast corner of Himachal Pradesh, about 235km from Shimla. It is surrounded by many apple orchards and never forget to visit the wooden fort there.

The road to the Sangla valley is the deadliest in the world. By the journey, one can see many waterfalls there.

### **Sarahang valley:**

The next day we moved to Sarahang. Another beautiful valley in Himachal Pradesh. It's an amazing place for a wedding destination. We had experienced a destination wedding there without an invitation. It's a valley of flowers. Major tourist spots situated there are The Big palace, Shrai Koti Kali temple, Hindustan Tibet Road memorial, Shri Bhimakali temple, etc. We have seen another type of Dusshera there. They took an idol and put it into a "Choudola" and made a beautiful rally from the Shrai Koti Kali temple to The Big wooden palace.

In the evening there were snowfalls and a new type of fruit we had there. It's a pear called "khuskhus". Try golden Apple and wild almond there.

### **Chitkul (The last village of India):**

From the Sarahang valley, our next destination was Chitkul. The village remains covered with snow for several months a year. When we visited there the temperature was below  $-2^{\circ}$ , and at the same time, a strong wind was blowing at night. There is also a facility to stay in tents by the Baspa River. But if it is in October or November, never try to experience this, otherwise, you fall sick due to strong wind.



### **Kalpa & Kailash :**

Kalpa is a small village in the Sutlej River valley, above Reckong Peo in the Kinnur district. It is 9710ft in the northern Himalayas. It's a beautiful village and famous for golden apples and green apples. Various types of apples one can experience there. The simple and friendly behaviour of the locals is another

attraction to this place. From there we started a journey to Kailash. On the way to Kailash, there is a dam on the Baspa River. From there on, the Baspa River will go with us to Kailash and Chitkul. Baspa river is one of the most scenic beauties in the Himalayas.

One, who does not have experienced the views, will never understand it.

- Kailash was our last destination to visit. After that, it was time to return. First, we reached Shimla, then there we stayed a whole day. During the stay, we visited Kufri, another valley in Shimla. The interesting part of the tour was Bungee jumping in Kufri. It was my most daring experience ever.
- Hence, the next day we left Shimla. Our train was from Ambala. On 20th October we reached Howrah station, and our tour ended. And in this way, another album was added to the pages of my memory.

## A TRIP TO VARANASI

Moumita Mukherjee (M.A. 2018- Alumni)

“Travelling – it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller” – Ibn Battuta.

To my astonishment the place that left me speechless and the story of which I am going to write here is neither a mountain nor a sea rather a city just like my hometown, it is Varanasi. Much similar to my hometown Kolkata yet much different too. Varanasi, one of the greatest Hindu pilgrimage sites of India on the bank of river Ganga with Kashi Vishwanath Temple at its heart is a cultural centre of Northern India.

The city, known worldwide for its ‘Ghats’ grabbed my attention on the very first day despite its noise and traffic. The notable ‘Ghats’ include the Dashashwamedh ‘Ghat, the Manikarnika Ghat, the Harishchandra Ghat, the Panchganga Ghat and the Assi Ghat.

The next day was one of the most awaited days of the trip to which all of us were looking forward to. It was the Kartik Poornima popularly known as ‘Dev Deepawali’ in Varanasi. It takes place fifteen days after ‘Diwali’. The clock was ticking to 3:30 am when we reached the Temple of Kashi Vishwanath, and the sight was beyond my expectation. Though I knew that lakhs of devotees came on the auspicious day to the temple yet I could not believe such a long queue would await me in the lanes of Vishwanath Galli at 3:30 am. After an hour of patience, we entered the temple premises and the first thing that grabbed my attention was the gold dome of the temple, made up of pure gold, donated by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1835. The temple stands on the western bank of the holy river Ganga and is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas. The main deity is known as Vishweshwara literally meaning the Lord of the Universe. Since Varanasi was named Kashi in ancient times, hence the temple is popularly called Kashi Vishwanath Temple. After finishing the ‘Darshan’ when we came out of the temple, it was nearing 5:30 am.

The amazement was still more in the evening when we chose to watch the ‘Aarti’ from the bank rather from the floating boats. It was a sight too hard to describe. One lakh or more diyas have been illuminated throughout the banks of river Ganga. Firecrackers, Shell were burning and flowers were used to make ‘Rangolis’ on the ‘Ghats’ decorated by ‘diyas’. Tourists along with the local people were gathered on the banks enjoying one of the most prominent festivals of Varanasi. Mythologically it is believed that Gods descend on the Earth on this day.

Two other main attractions of the city were the BHU Campus and the Ramnagar Fort. One of the largest residential universities in Asia, Benaras Hindu University formerly known as Central Hindu College was set up in 1916 by Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, Annie Besant and Maharaja of Darbhanga Rameshwar Singh. The Vishwanath temple inside the campus is another great tourist attraction.

After the BHU Campus the next destination was Ramnagar fort. Built by Kashi Naresh Maharaja Balwant Singh in 1750 the fort is situated near the Ganges on its eastern bank, opposite to the Tulsi Ghat. We were overwhelmed by the wide collection of American vintage cars, ivory work, sedan chairs, palanquins. The impressive armoury hall with swords, old guns from Africa, Burma and Japan

took our interest. Even the not so-well-preserved heads of the wild animals like tigers, cheetah, deer and lions were the point of attraction.

Though being less interested if the salvation is attained by the soul being created here, I was literally engulfed by the holiness of the otherwise noisy city, so much so that I can now feel what Mark Twain mentioned in 1897 of Varanasi, that “Benaras is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend, and looks twice as old as all of them put together”.

To sum up the experience of the trip, it must be mentioned that Varanasi has literally been a part of me even after coming back. Rightly said by Anita Desai that: - “Wherever you go becomes a part of you somehow”.



**Heaven Out of Colour, Colour out of Heaven**



BURNING HOME

Sudin Malick B.A. (Semester VI)



ABHISAR

Sayantani Chatterjee M.A. (Semester IV)



XARIA

Soma Baank B.A. (Semester IV)



ASWEET STING

Rima Das M.A. (Semester IV)



Anewsya Ray (B.A. 2020- Alumni)

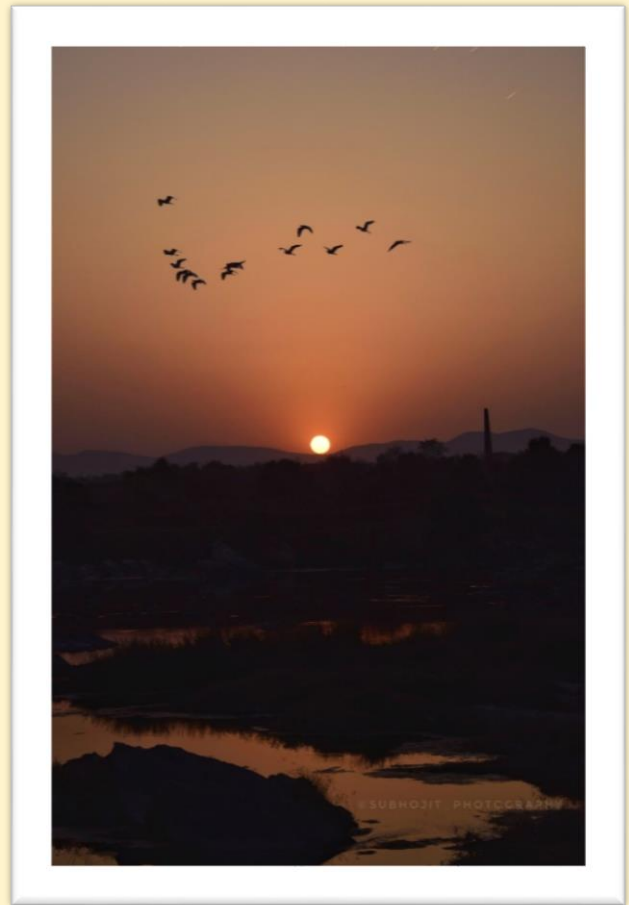


Kakan Khanra (B.A. 2020 – Alumni)

**Each Lens Bags a Different Moment, A Different Story**

‘ঘর ফিরতি’

Subhojit Chatterjee  
B.A. Semester VI



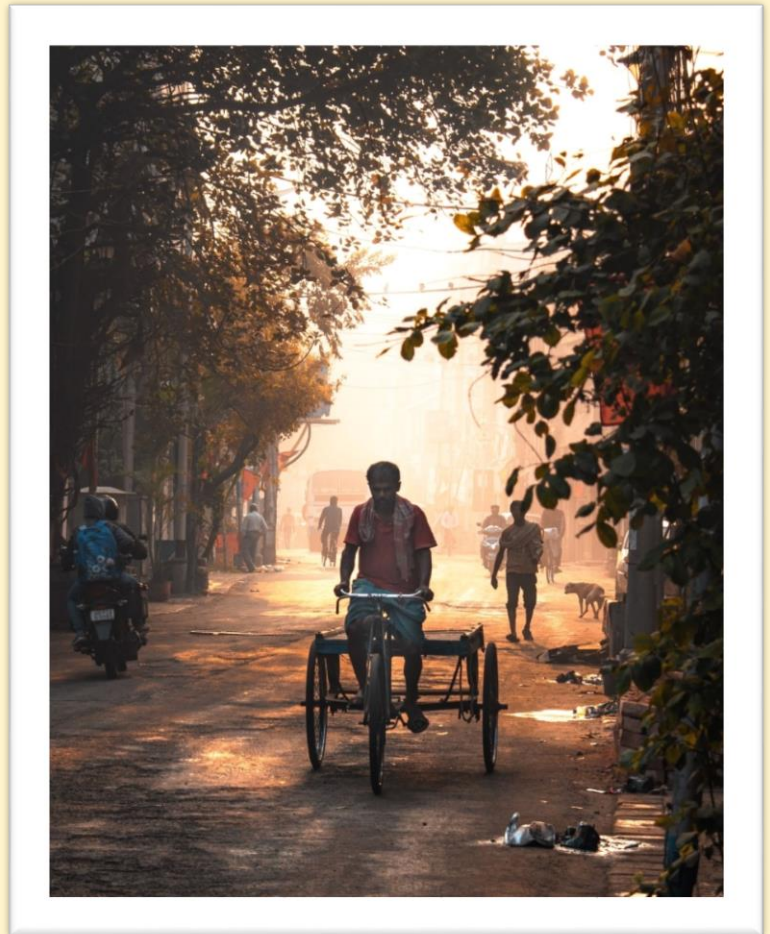
‘Devouring the Sky’

Trideb Das  
B.A. Semester IV



'The Eyes Have It'

Anirban Roy  
B.A. Semester VI



'একদিন – প্রতিদিন'

Swaraj Roy  
B.A. Semester IV

**'The Glorious Eye of Heaven'**

Swaraj Roy  
B.A. Semester IV



*Rituraj Chattopadhyay*

**'Pied Kingfisher'**

Rituraj Chattopadhyay  
B.A. Semester VI





