ADHVAN

Issue 2 | Volume 1

UDAAN'S BIANNUAL MAGAZINE

"I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship."
Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

"What happens when people open their hearts? They get better."
Norwegian Wood by Haruki Murakami

"It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are."
E.E. Cummings, Complete Poems

The Art of BECOMING

"All grown-ups were once children, but only a few of them remember it."
The little prince by antoine de saint-exupèry

"You get older, and you realise there are no answers—just stories."
Normal People by Sally Rooney

"Sometimes, growing up means letting go not of people, but of the version of yourself you used to be."
Contemporary Indian Poet by Arundhati Subramaniam

EDITORIAL DESK

Every journey begins in chaos, and *ADHVAN* was no different. What started as a blank canvas soon turned into a whirlwind of ideas, late-night edits, coffee-fuelled debates, and countless deadlines. There were moments of uncertainty, bursts of inspiration, and that quiet satisfaction that comes only when something dear begins to take shape. Through every page and paragraph, we have lived this journey together—of dreaming, doubting, and finally, doing.

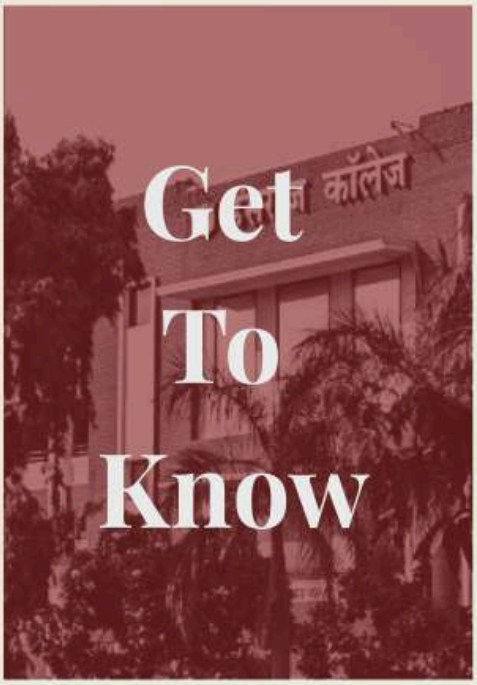
The theme ***"Crossroads: Teenage to Adulthood"*** came to us almost instinctively. It felt like a mirror, reflecting every fear, hope, and hesitation that defines this in-between space of growing up. It's a phase where nostalgia meets newness, where we learn that growth often comes wrapped in confusion, and where the comfort of yesterday coexists with the curiosity for tomorrow.

The submissions we received beautifully captured this essence: poems that hum the tune of innocence, stories that ache with realism, and artworks that speak the unspoken emotions of youth.

Creating this edition was more than a process; it was an experience. Each volunteer, editor, designer, and contributor poured a piece of themselves into it—from brainstorming layouts under pressure to catching tiny typos minutes before the deadline. Together, we built not just a magazine but a memory, one that smells of perseverance and nostalgia.

As you turn these pages, consider this your **disclaimer: you're now aboard a boat of memories with us.** By the time you reach the last page, we hope you find yourself smiling at the chaos, cherishing your college days a little more, and holding your friends and your own journey with utmost love and care.

Because when you look back, may you find laughter in the rush and meaning in the mess.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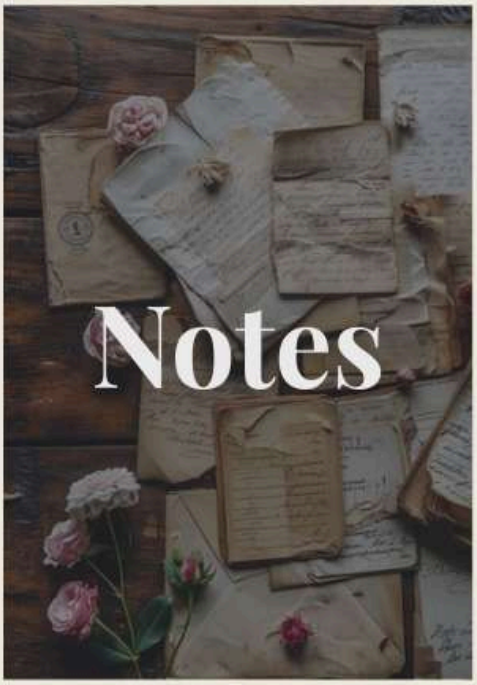
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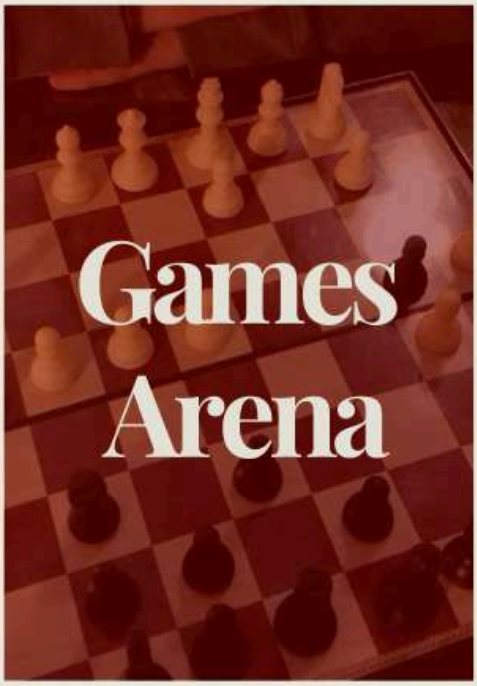
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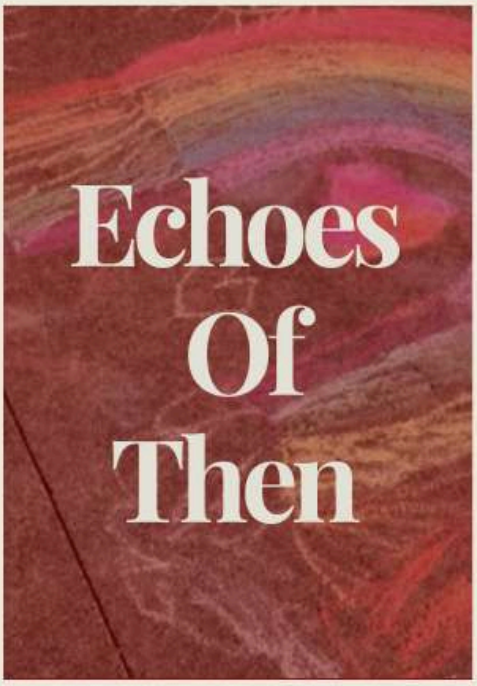
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About Hansraj

Step into Hansraj College, not merely a college, but a Crucible of Giants, located at the pulsating heart of the University of Delhi. Established on July 26, 1948, this institution doesn't just span over seven decades—it holds them, a library of achievements bound by time. It is a living monument to the wisdom of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati and Mahatma Hansraj, whose profound vision wasn't merely to educate but to ignite the mind and temper the steel of unyielding character. History is alive here, continuously creating new paths.

The campus is a meticulously engineered 15-acre sanctuary of ambition, where heritage and modernity coexist in harmony. Here, the silence of history meets the hum of innovation. This sprawling, green environment is not static; it is continually evolving and impeccably maintained, underpinned by a commitment to 21st-century sustainability and smart infrastructure. This proactive approach serves as a living example of disciplined excellence—a fertile ground for groundbreaking research and holistic elevation for every student who walks its grounds. This commitment is a fact validated by its ranking as the 3rd best college in India in the 2025 NIRF Rankings, a clear beacon of supremacy in shaping tomorrow's leaders.

This Crucible doesn't just shape character; it launches legends. Hansraj is the epicentre of aspiration, responsible for a dazzling spectrum of alumni who define the national landscape. From the cinematic brilliance of the entertainment sector, exemplified by Shah Rukh Khan and Anurag Kashyap, to the solemn corridors of governance, which produce esteemed civil servants, and the high-stakes world of entrepreneurship, our alumni are vanguards in every domain. Hansraj is also actively leading the transition to future-focused learning, investing heavily in interdisciplinary research and next-generation academic centres, ensuring our education remains cutting-edge. As Hansraj celebrates 77 years of unparalleled brilliance, it continues its profound work: shaping individuals who will lead the world with unassailable wisdom and absolute integrity. Here, every pathway you walk is not a crossroad of uncertainty but a launchpad into a new beginning – a horizon bristling with limitless, exhilarating possibility.

ABOUT UDAAN

Where Courage Takes Flight

Every great journey begins with courage, and for UDAAN, that courage took its first flight on JUNE 6, 2021, under the visionary guidance of Dr. Rama, principal of Hansraj College, and the inspiring leadership of Ms. Jahanvi Rai, founder of the society. What started as a simple idea—*"Hosla hai to Udaan bhi hogi"*—soon evolved into a living philosophy: to celebrate stories of perseverance, to embrace struggle as a source of strength, and to remind everyone that every fall is only a step toward flight.

From its earliest days, UDAAN has inspired countless hearts through transformative speaker sessions featuring achievers like Ira Singhal Ma'am, Ilma Afroz Ma'am, IAS Sonal Goel, and Dr. Vikas Divyakriti, who redefined success with resilience.

Over the years, society has evolved from a motivational platform into a multidimensional space for growth, creativity, and compassion.

Through initiatives like Project Eklavya, UDAAN connects with PwBD schools and underprivileged children, spreading warmth and inclusivity beyond college walls. Our mental health campaigns, such as "Ink, Screen & Soul: Managing Social Media Anxiety" featuring Ms. Nayab Midha, address the emotional struggles of youth with empathy and understanding. We continue to nurture individuality and expression through cultural platforms like 'Khyalo Ki Mehfil' and 'Manmarziyan,' where words and art find their true wings.

Aligned with this year's theme, **"Crossroads,"** UDAAN stands as a symbol of that tender transition from **teenage to adulthood—a** stage where dreams meet responsibilities and hope meets reality. At every such intersection, UDAAN helps its members discover not just their path but also their purpose.

Because at UDAAN, we believe that with courage in your heart, the sky is never the limit—it's only the beginning.

NOTE *from* THE PRINCIPAL

PROF. (DR.) RAMA

Dear Readers,

With immense admiration, I would like to express that witnessing the dedication and resourcefulness of our student community in bringing out the second edition of ADHVAN, the bi-annual magazine of UDAAN—The Motivational Society of Hansraj College, fills me with immense pride. This magazine is a step towards a more holistic environment, capturing all edges of youth, as it opens a multitudinous discourse about pivotal agendas like mental health, inspiration, and motivation.

A distinctive theme unfolds through ADHVAN as it explores the quiet yet transformative journey from teenage years to adulthood. Moving beyond rigid definitions of age and milestones, it creates a reflective space where uncertainty, growth, and self-discovery coexist. The magazine challenges the notion that adulthood is marked by instant clarity or perfection; instead, it embraces the in-between, where young minds learn to navigate responsibility, identity, and emotional depth. Through this, ADHVAN invites readers to acknowledge change not as a sudden shift, but as an evolving process.

Acknowledging the deep endeavours of our students and the respective faculty involved, who have worked tirelessly to make this vision a reality, I express my appreciation for each and every member. Also, I highly appreciate the guidance and support provided by the convenor, which has been invaluable in shaping this initiative. I sincerely hope that ADHVAN becomes a source of inspiration and thoughtful introspection for every reader, sparking meaningful conversations and self-discovery. My heartfelt congratulations to the dedicated UDAAN team and convenor, whose unwavering commitment and hard work have brought this magazine to life so successfully.

With Best Regards,
Prof. (Dr.) Rama
Principal, Hansraj College

NOTE *from the* VICE PRINCIPAL

PROF. (DR.) VIJAY RANI RAJPAL

Dear Readers,

It gives me great joy to witness how each year our students push boundaries, nurture their creativity, and build a vibrant community of learning. Their energy and commitment are what make every initiative truly meaningful. ADHVAN is a celebration of that spirit—a reflection of young minds coming together to share ideas, experiences, and dreams that go far beyond the walls of classrooms.

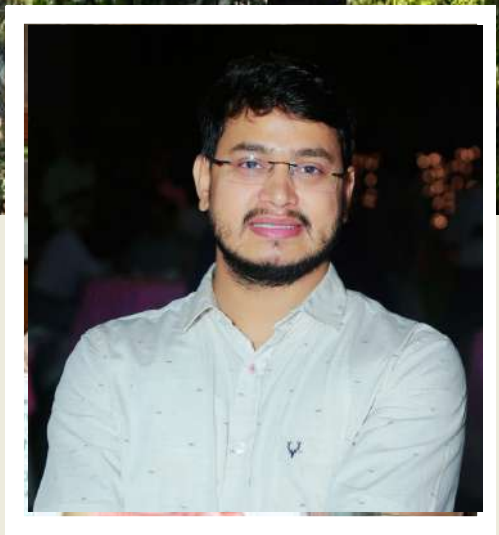
This edition's theme—Crossroads—captures the beautiful yet complex transition from childhood to adulthood, a journey filled with choices, doubts, and moments of awakening. It reminds us that learning is not confined to textbooks or lectures; it unfolds in every hesitation, every decision, and every step we take toward becoming ourselves. It symbolises the timeless journey from innocence to understanding, dependence to independence, and dreams to decisions. It is in these in-between moments that true learning happens.

This theme shows that life's turning points are not obstacles but opportunities—moments to grow, to choose with heart, and to move forward with faith. In making these choices, students not only shape their futures but also inspire everyone around them to keep moving forward.
I deeply appreciate the unwavering efforts of the UDAAN team, the faculty members, and every student who contributed to making this vision a reality. Their dedication and passion reflect what makes our college community truly special.

May this edition of ADHVAN become more than just a magazine—may it be a source of strength, hope, and encouragement for every reader. May it remind you that your journey is unique, your growth matters, and your dreams are worth believing in.

Warm Regards,
Prof. (Dr.) Vijay Rani Rajpal
Vice Principal, Hansraj College

NOTE *from* THE CONVENOR



MR. VIKASH SINGH

Dear Readers,

With heartfelt appreciation, I extend my congratulations to the UDAAN team for their consistent dedication and collaborative spirit in bringing forth the new edition of ADHVAN, our Bi-annual magazine.
The book you now hold is far more than just a magazine; it is a reflection of thought, curiosity, and purpose that echoes the true spirit of UDAAN.

ADHVAN represents our shared belief in learning beyond conventional textbooks. It invites readers to pause, reflect, and explore ideas that foster emotional strength, resilience, and a deeper understanding of values that have become essential in today's ever-evolving world.
Every page of ADHVAN stands as a testament to the dedication of our talented authors, editors, designers, and coordinators—whose creativity, perseverance, and intellectual depth have transformed a vision into a reality that is not only worth reading but also worth celebrating. This collaboration and passion are what give UDAAN its vitality as a dynamic and impactful community.

We did it! I hope ADHVAN sparks meaningful conversations and continues to inspire each one of you on your unique journey of growth and self-discovery.

Looking forward to many more milestones together!

With Best Wishes,
Dr. Vikash Singh,
Convenor
UDAAN, Hansraj College

PRESIDENT's MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

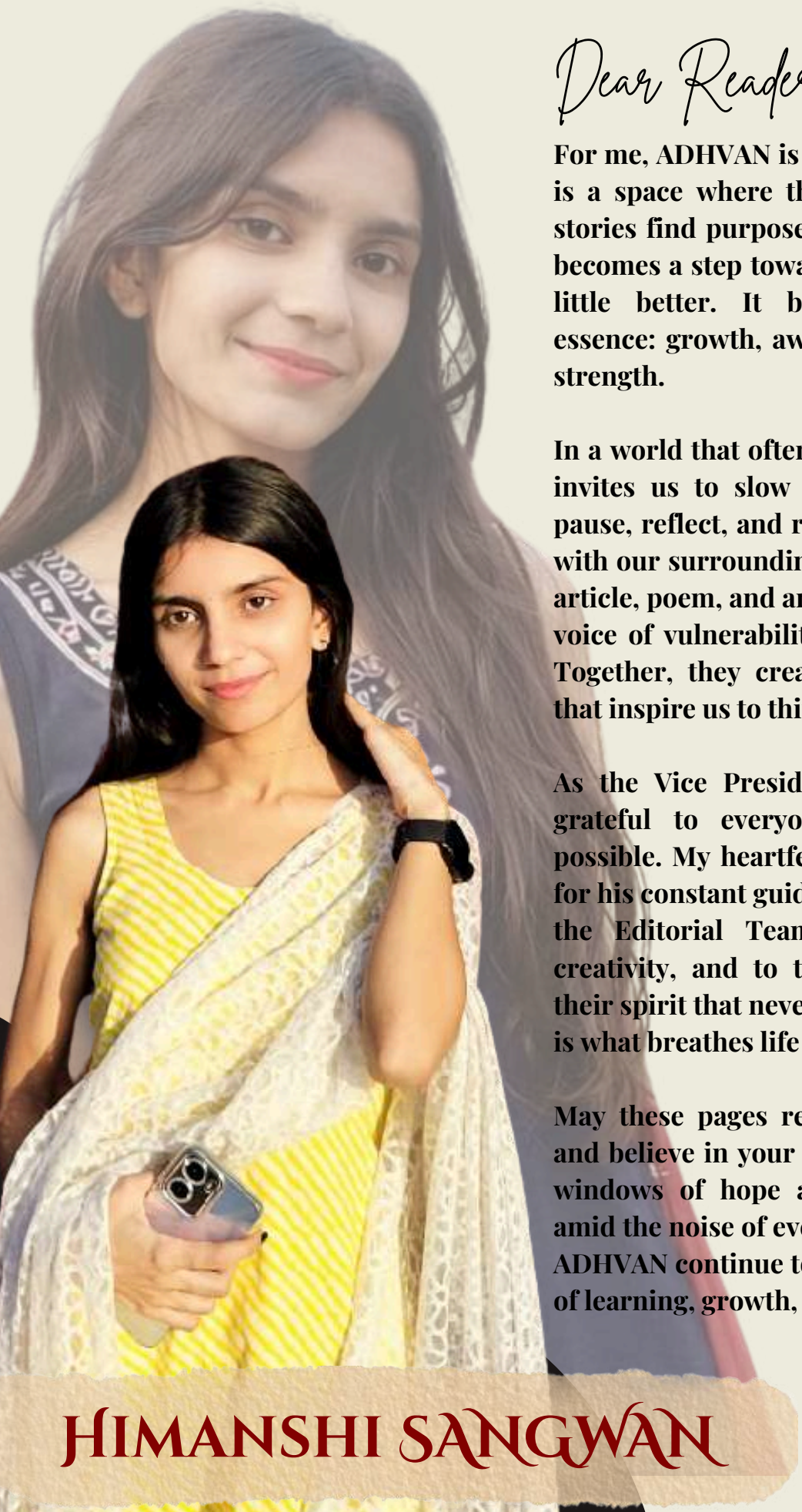
When I look back on my journey with UDAAN, I don't see struggles; I see triumphs in the making. Every late-night brainstorm, every challenge faced, has shaped a spirit that believes we are not defined by our falls but by the fire it takes to rise again. UDAAN has always been a compass of limitless possibilities, a launchpad where every dream finds its wings.

With that same conviction, I proudly present ADHVAN, the inaugural biannual milestone of the UDAAN legacy. More than a magazine, it's a celebration of human strength and healing, a reflection of our shared journey toward wisdom and self-discovery.

My heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made this possible—to our convenor, Vikash Singh Sir, for his constant guidance; the Editorial Team, for turning vision into art; and the UDAAN family, for embodying our motto, "Hosla hai to Udaan bhi hogi."
As you read ADHVAN, know that you're part of a story that continues to inspire and uplift. May these pages remind you that your potential is boundless, so keep soaring with conviction.

ADARSH SINGH

VICE-PRESIDENT's MESSAGE



Dear Readers,

For me, ADHVAN is more than just a magazine—it is a space where thoughts meet feelings, where stories find purpose, and where every expression becomes a step toward understanding ourselves a little better. It beautifully reflects UDAAN's essence: growth, awareness, resilience, and quiet strength.

In a world that often moves too quickly, ADHVAN invites us to slow down. It gently urges us to pause, reflect, and reconnect—with our emotions, with our surroundings, and with each other. Each article, poem, and artwork in these pages carries a voice of vulnerability, courage, and sincere care. Together, they create a tapestry of experiences that inspire us to think deeply and feel fully.

As the Vice President of UDAAN, I am deeply grateful to everyone who made this edition possible. My heartfelt thanks to Vikash Singh Sir for his constant guidance and unwavering trust, to the Editorial Team for their dedication and creativity, and to the entire UDAAN family for their spirit that never fails to inspire. Your passion is what breathes life into this magazine.

May these pages remind you to pause, breathe, and believe in your journey. May they open small windows of hope and offer moments of peace amid the noise of everyday life. And above all, may ADHVAN continue to be a companion in your path of learning, growth, and self-discovery.

HIMANSHI SANGWAN

FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

Every remarkable journey begins with one fearless step. ADHVAN took that step... and refused to stop. What once started as a spark of belief has now evolved into something greater—the dynamic Second Edition, bold enough to challenge silence and loud enough to celebrate every story worth telling.

What started during my time was never just a magazine—it was a vision to inspire power, purpose, and pride in every journey being walked. Today,
as I watch ADHVAN continue to grow, I feel immense pride in seeing that vision being carried forward with even more passion and purpose.

This edition stands as a celebration of exploration and fresh perspectives. Within these pages, you'll meet the thinkers, doers, storytellers, and dream-builders—each voice adding a new dimension to the journey ADHVAN represents. Every article is an invitation to look beyond the ordinary and discover something new about the world and yourself.

To the brilliant team that continues to shape this dream you have turned an idea into a living legacy. To our readers and supporters, your belief remains the heartbeat of ADHVAN.

As you turn these pages, remember—your journey is not ordinary. Your voice is not small. Every choice you make has the power to reshape your tomorrow. So embrace the courage that has always lived within you.

ADHVAN 2.0 arrives with new faces, new fire, and the same fearless spirit.
Call it a journey. Call it a movement. Call it a reminder that growth never goes out of style.

With pride and gratitude,
Arpit Yadav
Founder, ADHVAN
Former President, UDAAN—The Motivational Society

ARPIT YADAV


Expert
Insights
Scotch
C-60
CASSETTE 3m

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

WITH THE FOUNDER OF BOUDHIK VIKAS SPECIAL ABLED SCHOOL

*On visiting **Boudhik Vikas Punarvaas Kendra Avam Vishesh Vidhyalya**, we met a woman named **Mrs. Sarika Rajora**, whose compassion and perseverance have transformed countless lives. Her humility, warmth, and unwavering dedication radiate through every word she speaks. What began as a deeply personal experience has today become a movement of hope and empowerment for children with special needs.*

What first inspired you to start teaching underprivileged or specially abled children? Was there a particular moment that moved you to take this path?

"It all began at home," she said softly, as her eyes reflected both love and memory. Growing up, she had a cousin who was a special child who couldn't eat or dress herself without help. She said, "There were times when no one could take care of her. Watching her struggle every day made me realise that I wanted to help children like her become self-reliant. They should not depend on anyone for their basic activities such as eating, dressing, or doing small daily chores."

As she spoke, her eyes reflected the compassion behind her words. She had seen her cousin grow up and had closely observed how special children learn. She recalled a turning point when her cousin went missing after visiting relatives. Everyone was terrified. It was then that they received a call from a kind woman who had found her. The only reason she could be traced was because she had memorised her home phone number, which her cousin had taught her orally. "That moment changed everything," she said. "It made me realise how important it is for every child to know about themselves. Even the simplest piece of knowledge can save a life."

How did your own childhood or teenage years influence your decision to work with such children?

A gentle smile appeared on her face as she recalled her younger days. "When I was a child, I wanted to become a police officer," she said. "But my cousin's presence changed my direction completely. She became my motivation, my curiosity. Watching her grow made me want to understand how these children think, feel, and learn."

*There was another figure who encouraged her early interest. A tutor who used to come to teach her cousin noticed her involvement and advised her to pursue a **diploma in mental retardation** so that she could professionally work with special children. When she appeared for the interview for the diploma, the panel asked her why she wanted to take this course. She simply replied, "I want to help these children wherever I go, no matter what." That sincerity and commitment are reflected in her every word, even today.*

She also spoke about the constant support she received from her spouse, who believed in her vision completely. "I was the one who dreamed of all this," she said with gratitude, "but it was my husband who helped me make those dreams real. Without his support, I would not have come this far."

What challenges do you face while teaching children who may not have access to basic resources, and how do you overcome them?

*She faced neglect, lack of resources, and constant rejection while trying to teach underprivileged children. "Everything looked perfect on paper, but the children were being ignored," she said. Determined to make a real difference, she worked closely with families, helped them obtain **disability certificates,** and began teaching just five children outside her home. "I started from rock bottom," she recalled, "but the parents stood by me." Over time, with community support and shared belief in the children's potential, the initiative grew into a space of dignity, hope, and inclusion.*

Our magazine's theme this year is Crossroads: the transition from teenage years to adulthood. How do you see your students experiencing this crossroad in their lives?

Her expression turned serious as she explained how crucial the teenage years are for these children. "Adolescence is a confusing phase for every human being," she said, "but for special children, it is even more complex. Bodily and hormonal changes affect them in ways they cannot understand. That is why we must teach them about these changes, about proper manners, and about how to behave in public. This stage plays a very important role in shaping their adulthood. It decides how confident and independent they will become later."
She then added gently, "Every child deserves guidance at that age. It is our duty to make them feel safe and aware of what is happening within them."

Can you share a story of a student who really stood out to you, someone whose journey touched or changed you in some way?

*Her eyes brightened as she began speaking about **Pinky**, one of her earliest students. "When I first met Pinky during my surveys, she could not eat or dress herself. She could not even hold a spoon. We began by teaching her how to hold that spoon and then how to eat with it. Gradually, she learnt to hold a pencil and write her name. Every small step was a victory."*
With pride in her voice, she continued, "Now, Pinky is independent. She can eat, write and manage herself. She even helps other students during meals or writing sessions. She receives a pension and is no longer dependent on anyone. She loves dancing and recently secured second position in a dance competition. She can manage the whole class in the teacher's absence and is now the head girl of her class. She even participated in a fashion show. Her progress is a source of inspiration for everyone."
She paused for a moment and then added softly, "There are many Pinkys whose lives have changed through this journey. Each one of them reminds me why I began all this."

Finally, what message would you like to share with our readers, especially those who are at their own crossroads, trying to figure out what they want to do with their lives?

*Her final words were filled with wisdom and hope. She said, "**Sapne hamesha khuli aankhon se dekho, kyunki sote hue sapne sabhi dekhte hain. Aap akele chaloge toh aapke saath karva chalta jaayega.**"*
Keep going, always have hope, and spread love and care wherever you go. That is what keeps the world alive."

"From starting with just five children in front of her house to running a fully functioning school built with her family's own savings, her story is one of resilience and devotion. Even during the pandemic, she did not lose faith. In 2022, she became the Mahila Morcha Adhyaksha, and on 14th February that year, she finally received a 300-square-yard plot to build the school. With help from friends and community members, they constructed the building within a strict three-month deadline given by the MCD.

Today, Boudhik Vikas stands not only as a school but also as a symbol of compassion, courage, and community. Each story in that school is a story of transformation."

— Pranshi Chaudhary

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MUSKAN
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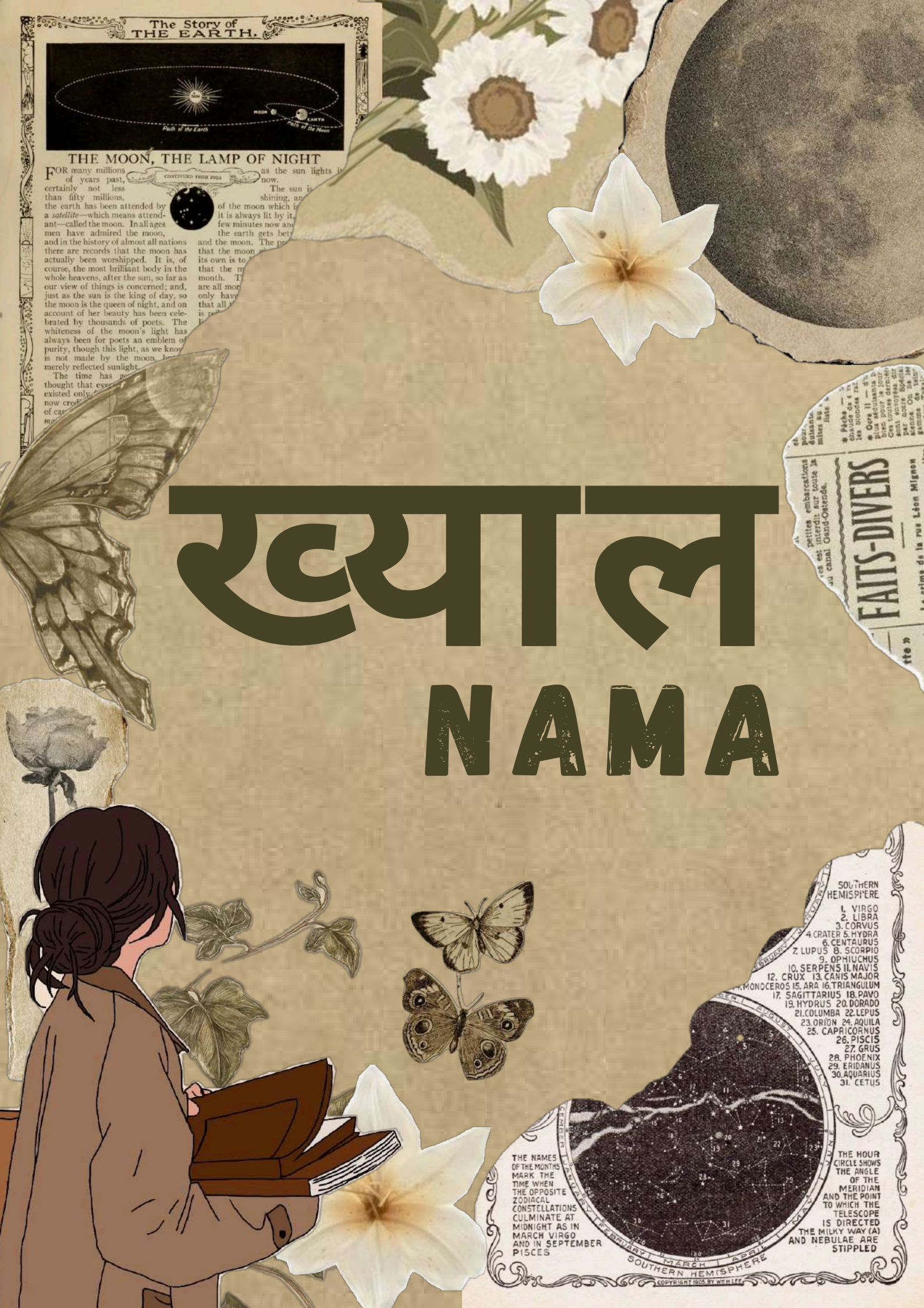
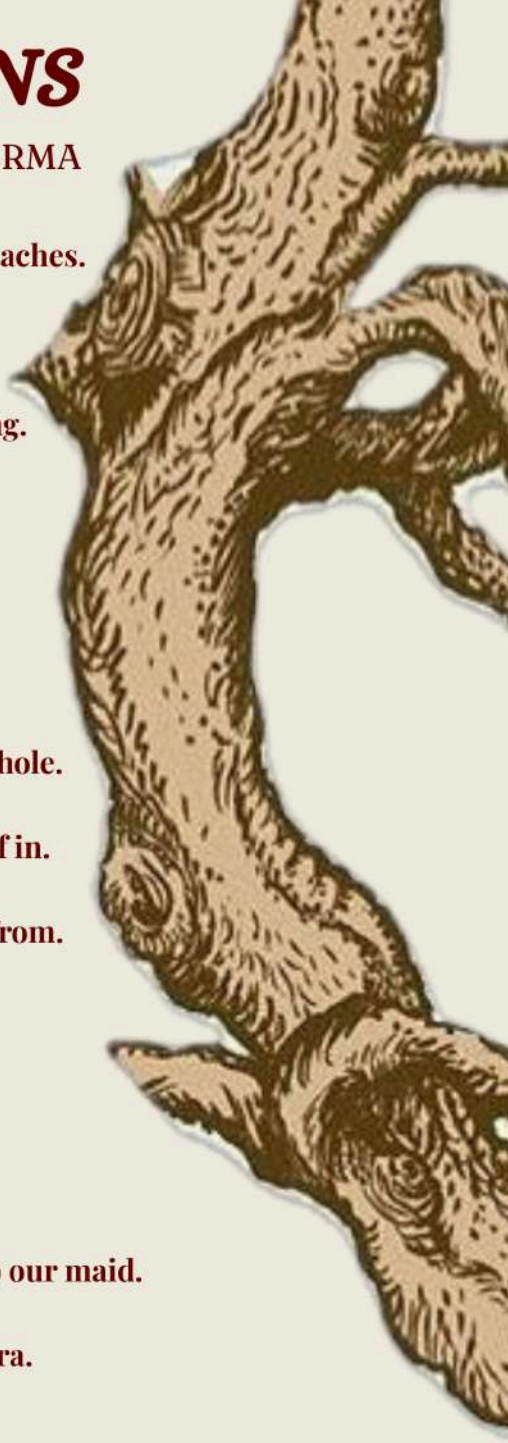

The Story of THE EARTH.
Sun
MOON
EARTH
Path of the Earth
Path of the Moon
THE MOON, THE LAMP OF NIGHT
CONTINUED FROM 2094
FAITS-DIVERS
SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE
1. VIRGO
2. LIBRA
3. CORVUS
4. CRATER 5. HYDRA
6. CENTAURUS
7. LUPUS 8. SCORPIO
9. OPHIUCHUS
10. SERPENS 11. NAVIS
12. CRUX 13. CANIS MAJOR
14. MONOCEROS 15. ARA 16. TRIANGULUM
17. SAGITTARIUS 18. PAVO
19. HYDRUS 20. DORADO
21. COLUMBA 22. LEPUS
23. ORION 24. AQUILA
25. CAPRICORNUS
26. PISCIS
27. GRUS
28. PHOENIX
29. ERIDANUS
30. AQUARIUS
31. CETUS
THE NAMES OF THE MONTHS MARK THE TIME WHEN THE OPPOSITE ZODIACAL CONSTELLATIONS CULMINATE AT MIDNIGHT AS IN MARCH VIRGO AND IN SEPTEMBER PISCES
THE HOUR CIRCLE SHOWS THE ANGLE OF THE MERIDIAN AND THE POINT TO WHICH THE TELESCOPE IS DIRECTED THE MILKY WAY (A) AND NEBULAE ARE STIPPLED
SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE
COPYRIGHT 1905 BY W. H. LEE

GROWING PAINS

- YUVIKA VERMA



I prefer bleeding wounds over heartaches.

They show.

They stand as evidence of my hurting.

Physical pain has boundaries;
it stays under the skin, leaves marks.

But heartache?

It seeps in, goes deeper, circles around, and swallows me whole.

Grief is a circular staircase that I often lose myself in.

Sometimes, I wonder where all my grief comes from.

I have never lost a loved one.

I have never lost a limb.

I have never had to sleep hungry.

My worn-out clothes don't even stay with me; they're passed down to our maid.

As a little kid, my dad made a lot of videos of me with his new camera.

You could really tell he loved me.

He must have.

Those videos captured my essence as a kid in a way that nothing else ever really could 1 was singing poems, hiding my face as soon as I noticed the camera. I danced, I made jokes, I hugged my mom, and I played pretend.

A few days before turning 18, under the heavy implication of the number, I demanded to see those videos again. I wanted to hide between the frames of my childhood, hoping to find something I knew back then. Something I must have forgotten along the way. They couldn't find it. Between my uncle's wedding pictures and my brother's birth, there was one folder missing. Between Dad's work hard drives and the ones with their wedding video, one hard drive is gone. My once-in-a-lifetime childhood had vanished twice, first the birthday and then the memories.

Questions plagued me for days after that: did I not matter enough? Were my poems that bad?

(They were)

I wanted to be held by the memory of being loved; it was the most deserving I had ever felt.

Was I not worth holding onto?

A child is easy to love, but that love is hard to hold onto—harder than folders or hard drives.

A child is easy to capture on camera, easier than to shape into someone you'd keep loving. No one would ever admire me like that in the early stage, as the silver Nikon camera did. No one and nothing would hold the essence of me, viewed through the eyes of the man who was supposed to love me the most in this world.

That moment severed all connection I had with my younger self. If she wasn't worth holding

onto, how could I believe that I ever could be?

I remember it all too well, my mom encouraging me after I hid my face and my dad's laughter. It was a home, our two-bedroom, one-bed rented flat in a town where I got most of my scars from tripping and falling. A place where the only people who mattered in the world were on either side of the camera.

All lost.

All gone.

The home, the people, the love—it still lives within my family, but somehow it circles right around me, never touching. I would trade my life if I got to watch us through the lens again. If I could hear my mom's soft words and feel my dad's love, all given just for singing a stupid poem. If only it were that easy now.

It's too late and too redundant to try to gain their love and pride when all they see a demanding, disrespectful brat throwing a tantrum because she couldn't fawn over her childhood cheeks.

I've been fated to be lonesome ever since I grew too old enough for my parents to waste their camera film on.

The rooms around me are empty, the echoes of my own questions bouncing off the walls.

Grief is a circular staircase; I have lost myself again.

Crossroads

- Ahaan Arora

There comes a day
when laughter sounds older,
and silence asks harder questions.

Dreams still glow,
but now they cost something—time, effort, courage,
and the quiet letting go of who we were.

The mirror changes before we do.
Childhood photos turn into proof
that we once belonged to simpler versions
of ourselves.

We stand where roads split,
not into right and wrong,
but into known and unknown.
Every choice whispers, "Risk or repeat?"

Some friends stay.
Some drift beyond the next semester.
Their names are still saved but rarely typed.

We keep walking,
pretending we know the way.
But maybe growing up
isn't about knowing—it's about moving,
even when the map trembles in our hands,
trusting that somewhere ahead,

we'll meet ourselves again.

At Least I Tried

- Himanshi Mehta

I tried and tried
To make things good,
To be always where help stood,
So none would face that tragic, lonely plight.
I tried and tried
And then just sighed,
Becoming someone's fading, lost goodnight.
I wept and wept
Until my voice gave way;
My throat burnt with the sting.
But my cries meant nothing.
And then I sobbed,
Always yearning for a loving gaze,
Looking for comfort through the haze,
I still embrace
The memory of gentle arms,
Where once my love unfurled,
Protecting me from harm.
In a warmth that filled the world,
I remember and remember
And in that remembering, I broke
For this fragile heart of mine
That was never meant to last.
It clung too tightly, loved too fast.
Now it lies quiet, torn apart—
A fragile toy with a tender heart,
That broke too soon
From loving too hard.

The Space Between Versions

- AHAAN ARORA

I always thought growing up would be obvious. Maybe it would happen after my board results, or the first time I got paid, or when I started taking myself seriously. I imagined there'd be a clear moment when life would feel different—louder, more certain, with applause in the background.

But it didn't happen like that.

Adulthood didn't arrive all at once. It came quietly—in the form of 8 a.m. alarms, unread messages, and the strange realisation that if I didn't fix something, it would just stay broken. It wasn't dramatic. It was gradual, like a software update that installs overnight.

The truth is, crossroads aren't big movie moments. Sometimes they look like a blank Google Form that asks, *"What are your future plans?"* Sometimes they sound like your parents saying, "You'll understand when you're older." They feel like standing between two doors—one familiar, one new—and not being sure which one is yours.

For a long time, I was obsessed with finding the "right" choice. The right college, the right friends, the right everything. I believed that one perfect decision would unlock a version of me who finally had it all figured out. But life doesn't work like that. You don't arrive at some finished version of yourself. Every day, you're just trying to debug your own system—fixing a few errors, rewriting some code, and learning to run smoothly.

The first real crossroad I remember came when I had to choose between what I loved and what looked good on paper. Everyone had an opinion. Passion or practicality? Risk or safety?

My dad told me something simple: "You can't plan every step, but you can plan your next one."

That one line stayed with me. I started using it whenever life didn't give clear instructions.

What no one tells you is that adulthood is mostly about managing yourself. You become your own teacher and sometimes even your own best friend. You start setting alarms for things that used to happen naturally—sleep, hydration, deadlines, and motivation. You learn that no one claps for discipline; no one celebrates small recoveries. But those tiny victories—cleaning your room after a bad day, trying again after failure—starting means the most.

Most crossroads aren't visible. They're made of quiet decisions: sending a message instead of waiting, apologising first, and saying *no* without guilt. They don't make headlines, but they change everything. It's funny; as kids, we can't wait to grow up. We want freedom, independence, and choice. But once you actually reach it, you start craving what you once ran from—stability, routine, a little certainty. You realise that freedom isn't doing whatever you want; it's learning to handle what you choose. Adulthood isn't a fixed point. It's not a single road. It's more like a crowded junction—full of memories, ambitions, and people moving at different speeds. It's messy and confusing, but it's also alive, and maybe that's the point.

The older I get, the more I realise how temporary certainty is. One day, you think you have everything sorted; the next, you're starting again. A dream that felt right once suddenly feels small. A mistake that seemed huge becomes a lesson. The map keeps changing, but maybe that's okay. There's a Japanese phrase I love—*wabi-sabi.* It means *"finding beauty in imperfection and incompleteness."* I think that's exactly what growing up feels like. Learning to be okay with not being fully figured out. Learning that the cracks in your plans are not flaws—they're space for light to come in. And that's where I think the real beauty lies, not in the destination, but in the courage to move forward while still learning who you are.

If being a teenager is about finding yourself, then adulthood is about building yourself—slowly, honestly, and forgivingly. You keep editing your story, rewriting sentences, and crossing things out. Some lines stay, some fade, but the story keeps going.

Every day, we stand at some version of a crossroads, choosing between comfort and growth, between staying the same or becoming something new. And at every turn, we are both the traveller and the mapmaker, figuring it out as we go, taking wrong turns, getting lost, and finding something better than we planned.

Maybe that's what growing up really is: not knowing for sure but walking forward anyway.

From the self, To the self

— Rudraakshi Garg

Two roads diverging into the woods, and I wonder which one I should walk. It's easy to choose between them because even if you are wrong, you can turn around anytime. But the real crossroad is not geographical. It is the moment when the map of childhood ends and the terrain of adulthood begins. And there are no U-turns. Here, at the hinge between sixteen and twenty, I stand, with the residue of the sweet childhood dreams still clinging to my skin and the faint scent of possibility drifting from the paths ahead. The choice is not merely a transition; it is the face-off with what it chooses to become and to endure the silent uncertainty that follows every decision. There's no one to make those decisions for you anymore, and the sudden freedom is as exhilarating as it is daunting.

Every teenager believes the future is a straight line. College, a job, a house, a partner, every step laid out like beads on a string, like levelling up in a simulation. Then comes the first real choice: not a simple yes & no, but a mess of variables. Stay in the hometown that knows every secret, where the neighbours recognise you for the child you were, or vanish into the anonymity of a city that will forget your name by morning?

The daunting moment when freedom reveals itself as a burden. As children, all we want is freedom—to play, to hang out, to buy that dress that caught our eye through the display glass or simply the privacy of a separate room. The adolescent imagines choice as liberation; the young adult discovers it as gravity. Each path rules out a thousand others. To select is to amputate.

To be limited. Yet to refuse selection is to calcify into a monument of indecision.

The classic "Thinkers vs Doers" debate. The courage required is not the cinematic kind, but it stays buried in that romanticised young adult dream—no chivalrous soundtracks, no slow-motion stride into battle. It is quiet. Longer than I would prefer to be left with my thoughts, in a deafening silence where I can hear it ring in my ears. It is the hardest thing to do: to gather the willingness to walk away from the version of yourself that could have been. The what-if kills me.

The boy who mocked conformity now clocks in at a job that demands a tie. The self is not discovered; it is negotiated and occasionally betrayed. Philosophers from Heraclitus to Sartre have insisted that we are a flux, that no one steps into the same river—or self—twice. Yet the leap into adulthood demands a story we can tell at parties, in the dark to ourselves, desperately trying to prove our own self-worth to ourselves. The danger is mistaking the provisional for the permanent. But the gift is recognising that every identity is a draft, subject to erasure and redrawing.

The intersection is filled with echoes of a thousand voices, each trying to say something. The voice of the father whispering, "Don't make the mistakes I did." Equal parts of love and warning, maybe filled with their own regret of what they couldn't be. The voice of the mother asking you to take care of yourself. The reckless chaos of your friends, filled with the desire to enjoy, to forget about the burden of responsibility for once, and to explore the other side of freedom.
And beneath them all, the quietest voice, the one that asks, What do you want when no one is watching? It is the hardest to hear because it is your own.
The sound of the self, beginning to speak in its own tongue. You are not liable to anyone but yourself. We can be kind and forgiving to others for the very same flaws we punish ourselves for. Maybe it is only right to be critical of oneself, to grow. But the small horizon between criticism and hatred often blurs during this transition.

In the end, maybe it is about the realisation that the self is not a noun but a verb, always in the process of becoming. To cross the threshold is to accept that some doors, once closed, will not reopen. Loss is the toll exacted to move ahead. Every step is a betrayal of the person who stood still. But every step is also a promise to the person you have not yet met. The crossroads never end. And perhaps all we could do is to walk. The dust will rise, then settle. And in the settling, a new line will appear, this one not drawn by anyone else but by the imprint of your own feet.

A REFLECTION OF THY SOUL IN THE DUSK

- Abhijeet Singh

A reflection of thy soul in the dusk—
Who art thou in cloaks of husk?
Perhaps a self still waiting to emerge,
Or just a voice beneath the surge.

One that finds peace in twilight's rays,
Unmasking itself before the light decays.
A silhouette shaped by the setting sun,
Not quite lost, and not yet begun.

I passed the wall without a sound.
And though I heard thee all around—
A hush, subtle and unconfined,
Like scribbled verses, time left behind.

Time slips by,
Birds pass overhead and cry.
And there thou liest.
Still and tall,
Inscribed faintly on the wall.

The sun fades in dusky flame.
And so do pieces without a name.
In that hush, I thought I saw
A glimpse of thee, without any flaw.

They call it the art of noticing, of the gentle kind
That only comes when you are not trying to find
Where quietude shows what noise hides,
And something broken calmly abides.

Maybe it's sorrow. Maybe it's grace.
To meet thyself at such a place.
Where dusk and doubt meet,
And unspoken truths find feet.

And dusk closes the day.
What part of thee shall choose to stay?
What will dissolve with the fading light?
What will remain, unseen, in the night?

Kiara: A Voice Unheard

- Jasleen Kaur

She smiles like sunlight trapped in glass.
But inside, a storm waits to pass.
Loud rooms, quiet cries,
Dreams stitched beneath tired eyes.

She wore strength like a borrowed coat.
Drowning slowly, yet staying afloat.
Laughed so the world couldn't trace
The weight she carried in silent space.

She once thought pain must hide,
That tears should learn to dry inside.
But healing isn't weakness; it's a fight.
A candle burning through the night.

She walked into therapy like an unknown street.
With shaky steps and a trembling heartbeat.
"Dimag ka doctor?" she softly said.
"Toh phir sabko jana chahiye," not just the sad or the scared.

Because wounds of the mind don't always show,
They live where only silence can go.
And courage isn't loud; it's the quiet call.
To rise again after every fall.

Her story isn't a fairytale end
But the beginning of learning to mend.
Kiara taught us to speak, not just cope.
To choose help, to choose hope.

Because mental health is not a phase or trend,
It's learning to love the cracks you mend.
And in her journey, clear and true,
She reminds us, healing looks like
You and me.

When Childhood Arrived quietly...

- Arsh Kumar

Your parents promised you would feel it. On your eighteenth birthday, something fundamental would shift. You would wake up differently. Wiser, more like an **ADULT.** You waited for that feeling like you were waiting for a train that would never arrive. It didn't. Instead, what happened was quieter. Less like a transformation and more like slowly noticing that you had been transformed all along.

We have built a mythology around adulthood that treats it like a threshold you cross. But the truth is gentler than that. Adulthood is not hard because you suddenly become responsible. It is hard because you finally stop believing that someone will be coming to save you. There is no lightning bolt. There is only the slow understanding that the world does not care whether you are ready or not

And here is what no one talks about: most of us do not feel it. We turn eighteen, twenty-one, and twenty-five, and we are still the same person we were the day before, wearing the same confusion in a slightly older body. The difference is that now we have no one to ask permission from anymore. Your mother cannot fix this. Your father cannot carry you. The solution depends entirely on you.

My parents used to say that adulthood would be hard. But maybe they mistook change for difficulty. The weight is not new. It is just that no one else carries it with you now. There is a tree that was planted the year I was born. I learnt this when I was seventeen, and it struck me in a way I could not explain.

Here was this living thing that had been growing exactly as long as I had been alive. It weathered storms no one warned it about. Its roots had to find water through droughts it did not choose. It was shaped by winds and pruned by people who thought they knew what was best for it.

No one asked the tree at what moment it felt like a tree. It just kept growing, and the growth was enough.

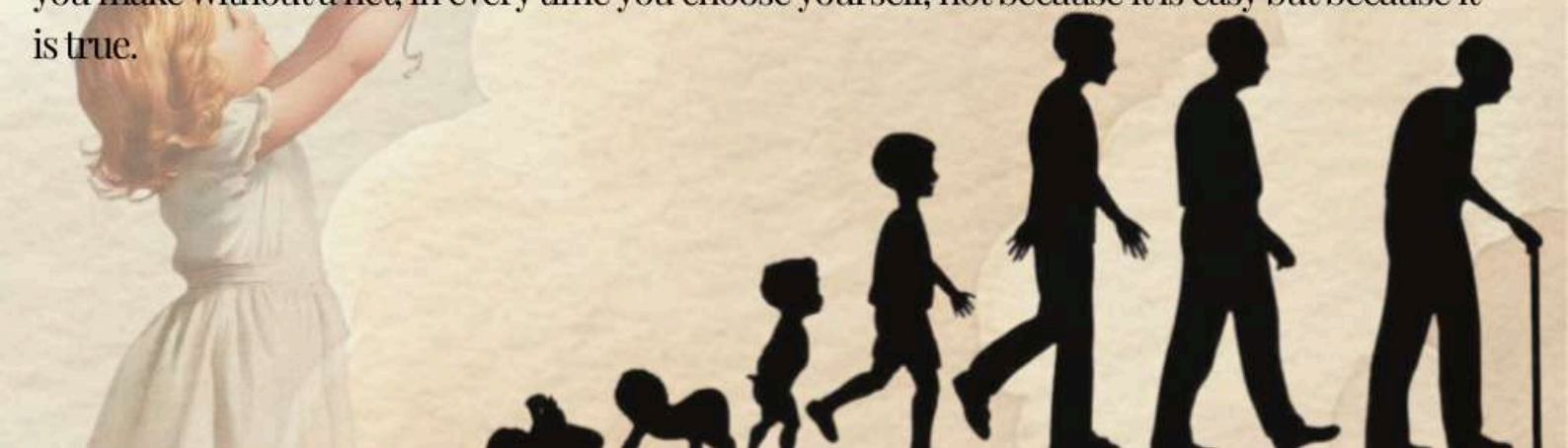
I think that is the real answer. Adulthood is not hard because something changes inside you on a specific date. It is hard because you are always changing, and you eventually have to accept that. You have to stop waiting for the version of you that will have all the answers and start accepting the version of you that is learning the questions. That is when it gets easier. When you stop measuring yourself against the myth of what adults are supposed to be and start measuring yourself against who you actually are becoming.

To say that adulthood is universally hard is to erase the specific, strange beauty of your own journey. What was hard for your parents might be easy for you. What breaks someone else might not touch you at all. Everyone's crossing is different because everyone's road is different.

I did not feel anything when I turned eighteen. The real shift came later, in moments too small to name. When I made a decision, no one would validate it, and I learned to validate it myself. When I failed at something and did not wait for someone to fix it. When I understood that not knowing was not a failure but the texture of being alive.

The tree does not know it is a tree. It just grows. ***Maybe adulthood didn't arrive because it was never meant to.*** It was growing inside me all along, quietly, like roots finding their way through the dark.

And perhaps that is all we are supposed to do, too. Stop waiting for the moment when adulthood arrives like an invitation, and simply accept that it is already here, in every choice you make without a net, in every time you choose yourself, not because it is easy but because it is true.



Who am I if not my scars ?

– *Manjari Mishra*

"Who am I if not my scars?" is a single question that echoes the paradox of being human: the desire to be whole while carrying fractures within. These words, born from a tone of grief and lamentation, transcend sorrow to unveil a profound philosophy of identity, self-discovery, and growth. In an era where self-discovery is draped in aesthetic romanticism like candlelit journaling, serene solitude, and poetic introspection, we often forget that true discovery is not the art of beautifying the self but the science of confronting it.

Self-discovery, in its truest sense, is not merely the pursuit of understanding who we are but the courage to face *why we are the way we are.* It is both revelation and evolution—a gradual unfolding of the soul through moments of discomfort, healing, and reflection. To discover the self is to walk barefoot on the shards of one's experiences, allowing even the cuts to teach, to reveal, and to redefine.

As children, we begin with innocent curiosity, only to grow entangled in the intricate web of our own conditioning. Family, culture, and society act as invisible sculptors, chiselling our beliefs, fears, and desires. Somewhere along the way, we inherit labels like "too emotional," "too loud," "too quiet," and "too ambitious." These labels, seemingly harmless, seep into our identity and cling to us in ways unseen. The tragedy lies not in being called something but in believing it to be the totality of who we are. Self-discovery, therefore, is also an act of rebellion and an unlearning of borrowed truths to reclaim the raw, unedited self beneath them.

The scars we carry, both visible and unseen, are the silent archives of this process. We are conditioned to hide them—to dress our pain in metaphors of resilience, to perform strength rather than inhabit it. Yet scars are not marks of shame; they are emblems of becoming. They record our private wars and quiet survivals, the nights when we stitched ourselves back together without witnesses. To define ourselves solely through our best-lived experiences is to deny the terrain of our humanity. Our scars, in their subtle defiance, narrate the stories that triumph never could.

life, in its essence, resists aesthetic containment. It is whimsical, ephemeral, and metaphysical—an ever-shifting rhythm of joy and despair, connection and solitude, and beauty and decay. The modern romanticisation of selfhood, the idea that healing must look poetic or that growth must be graceful, often blinds us to the rough textures of becoming. To live authentically is not to curate an image of serenity but to embrace the contradictions that make existence real. We are all ongoing drafts, perpetually edited by time and experience.

Gratitude then becomes the quiet philosophy of self-acceptance. We often seek validation from the external world while forgetting that it was we who endured the chaos, made choices amidst confusion, and continued walking despite uncertainty. The parts of ourselves we resist—our insecurities, impulses, and imperfections—are the very foundations of our individuality. They lend depth to our demeanour, texture to our emotional landscape, and meaning to our personal philosophy.

Perhaps self-discovery is not an act of finding oneself at all but the process of remembering—of retrieving the parts we once disowned and welcoming them back into wholeness. Our scars, then, are not the evidence of our brokenness but of our becoming—a testimony that we have lived, fallen, risen, and evolved.

So, when one asks again, *"Who am I if not my scars?"* The answer whispered through time remains: *you are the sum of your stories, the echo of your endurance, and the embodiment of your becoming.*

The Myth of Having It All Figured Out

- DEVANSHU GOYAL

When I was younger, I honestly thought adults had everything sorted out.
Like they just knew what they wanted and how to get there.
Now that I'm 20, I realise we're all just pretending.
College feels like one long improvisation—running on caffeine, panic, and half-typed assignments.
Everyone posts about "growth" on Instagram.
But in real life, we're just tired and confused.
People ask, "So what's next after graduation?"
And I want to say, "Hopefully, therapy."
But I just smile and say something safe,
like, "I'm exploring my options."
Maybe the myth isn't about adulthood being sorted
It's about us thinking it ever should be.
We're all learning, unlearning, and tripping our way forward.
And that's okay.
Some days, I wake up ready to change the world.
Other days, I just make Maggi and call it an achievement.
Both count, honestly.
Growing up isn't about figuring life out;
it's about learning to live it, even when you don't understand it.

सफर कल से कल तक

-प्रांशी चौधरी

कल मैं थी अनजान, अज्ञात,
अब मैं जान गई सब !
सीखा मैंने आज में जीना। पर
क्या जान पाऊंगी मैं, उस कल
को?

बिना इस कल को छोड़े पीछे,
क्या आगे बढ़ पाऊंगी? सब
कुछ इसी कल पर छोड़े ! कल
आंखों में ख्वाब थे प्यारे, कल
वो होंगे पूरे। होगा सफल
प्रयास हमारा, होंगे पूरे जो
ख्वाब अधूरे।

छूट गए सब संगी-साथी, छूटे
खेल खिलौने, अब पूरे करने
की बारी है जो लक्ष्य सलोने।
याद बड़ी आएगी हमको बीती
हुई कहानी, एक दिन
दोहराऊंगी मै उसको अपनी
जुबानी।

परंतु, है यह जरूरी जानना कि
आज के बिना ना यह कल है,
ना वह कल है। तो सीखो अब
से आज मैं जीना, तभी तय कर
पाओगे यह सफर कल से कल
तक का।

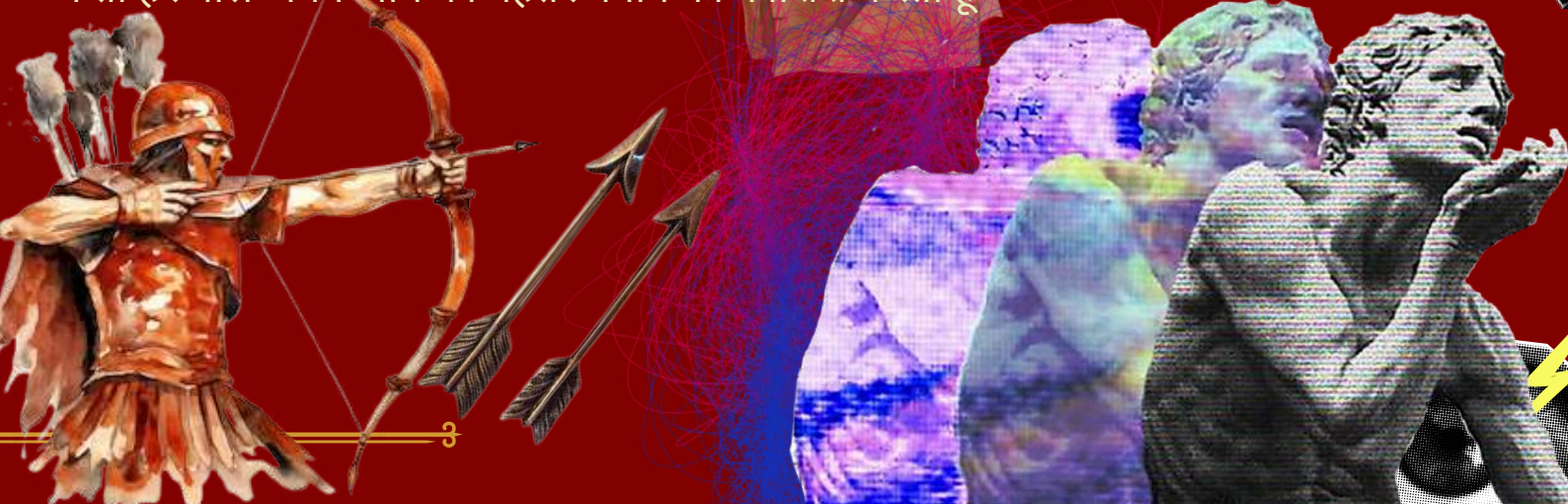
योद्धा

-परिणीता जैन

स्कूल ख़त्म हो गया आज कॉलेज शुरू हो गया
शायद आज मेरा बचपन मुझसे फिर एक कदम और दूर हो गया
मेरी मासूमियत या कहू की उन शरारतों का किस्सा नजाने कहा गुम हो गया
की मेरी हिम्मत का परिंदा था जो, पता नही इस शहर की भीड़ में जाने कहीं लुप्त सा हो गया
मेरे सपनों का मोती था जो वो इस बड़े से कॉलेज के समंदर में ना जाने कहां खो गया
पता नहीं कब मेरे मन में एक डर का सिलसिला शुरू हो गया

इस डर से मैं हर रोज लड़ती हूं
थक हार कर शायद हर रोज फिर वही से शुरू करती हूँ
खुद को काबिल बना पाऊ हर पल यही कोशिश करती हूँ
अपनी इस कोशिश में शायद कुछ अच्छा शायद कुछ गलत कर गुजरती हूं
मैं तो हर दिन अपने आप को कुछ और निखारने की कोशिश करती हूं
कभी अपनी राह बनाने तो सन्तुष्टि खोज में निकल पड़ती हूं

अपने आप को काबिल से पहले एक बेहतर इंसान बना पाउ,
हर पल यही कोशिश करती हूं
अपने इन मासूम सवालों या कहूं कि मन की इन उधेड़ बूंदो से अकेले ही गुजरती हूं
पर क्या कहूं अपना दर्द किसी से बयान करने को डरती हूं
शायद वही आ कर रुकती हू, जहां हर बार फिर शुरू करती हूं
मैं तो हर पाल अपने आप को बेहतर बनाने की कोशिश करती हूं



राहों के मोड़ पर

- सतेन्द्र सिंह भदौरिया

जीवन में एक चौराहा था,
माना वह बड़ा निराला था.
वह छूट गया तो छूट गया।

राही के मन को देखो तुम,
कितनी राहें उसने छोड़ी,
कितनी मंजिल पीछे छोड़,
जो छूट गईं फिर लौट कहाँ?
पर बोलो बीते रस्तों पर
कब राही शोक मनाता है.
जो छूट गया, सो छूट गया।

जीवन में एक सफ़र था कल,
जिसमें सपनों का जल था पल,
वह सूख गया तो सूख गया।

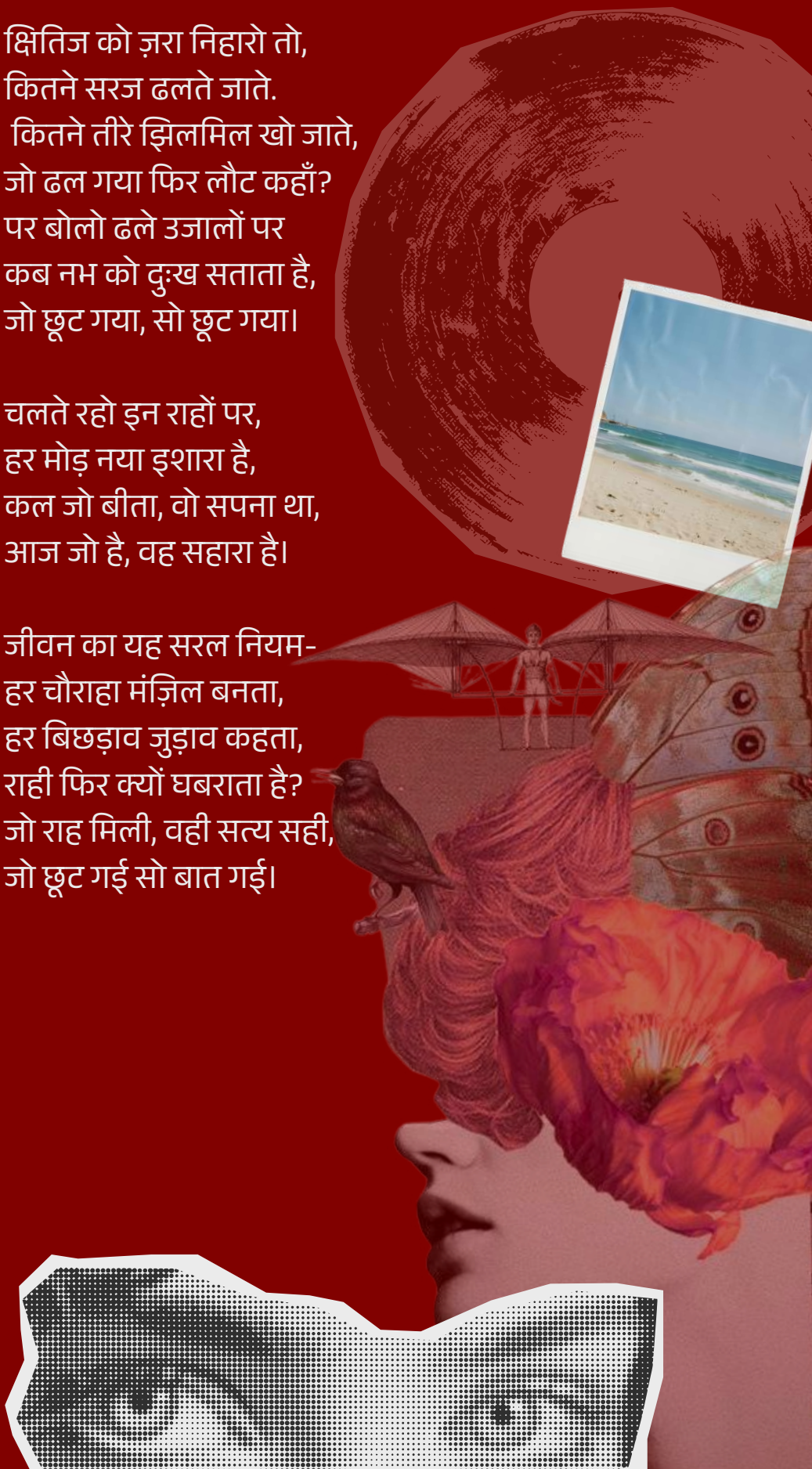
सागर की लहरों को देखो,
कितनी बार किनारा टूटा,
कितनी नावें बीच में छटा
जो खो गया फिर मिर्ले कहाँ ?
पर बोलो डूबी नावों पर
कब सागर रो पड़ जाता है,
जो बीत गया, सो बीत गई।

जीवन में एक दिशामार्ग था,
जिस पर चलना अनुराग था,
वह मुड़ गया तो मुड़ँ गया।

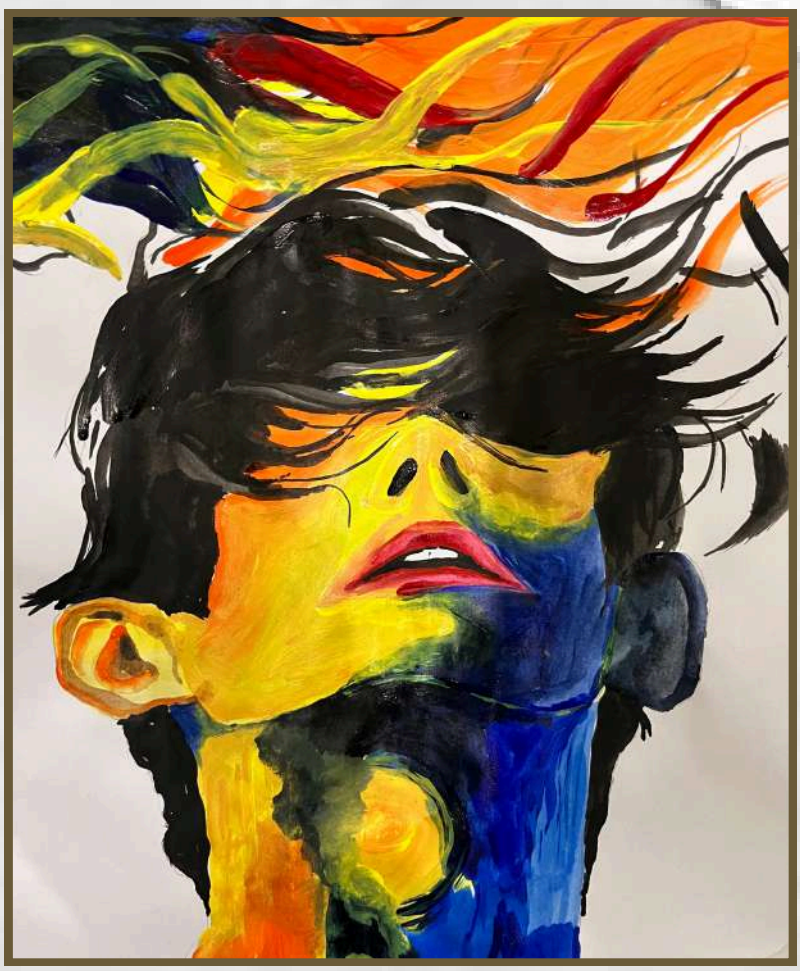
क्षितिज को ज़रा निहारो तो,
कितने सरज ढलते जाते.
कितने तीरे झिलमिल खो जाते,
जो ढल गया फिर लौट कहाँ?
पर बोलो ढले उजालों पर
कब नभ को दुःख सताता है,
जो छूट गया, सो छूट गया।

चलते रहो इन राहों पर,
हर मोड़ नया इशारा है,
कल जो बीता, वो सपना था,
आज जो है, वह सहारा है।

जीवन का यह सरल नियम-
हर चौराहा मंज़िल बनता,
हर बिछड़ाव जुड़ाव कहता,
राही फिर क्यों घबराता है?
जो राह मिली, वही सत्य सही,
जो छूट गई सो बात गई।

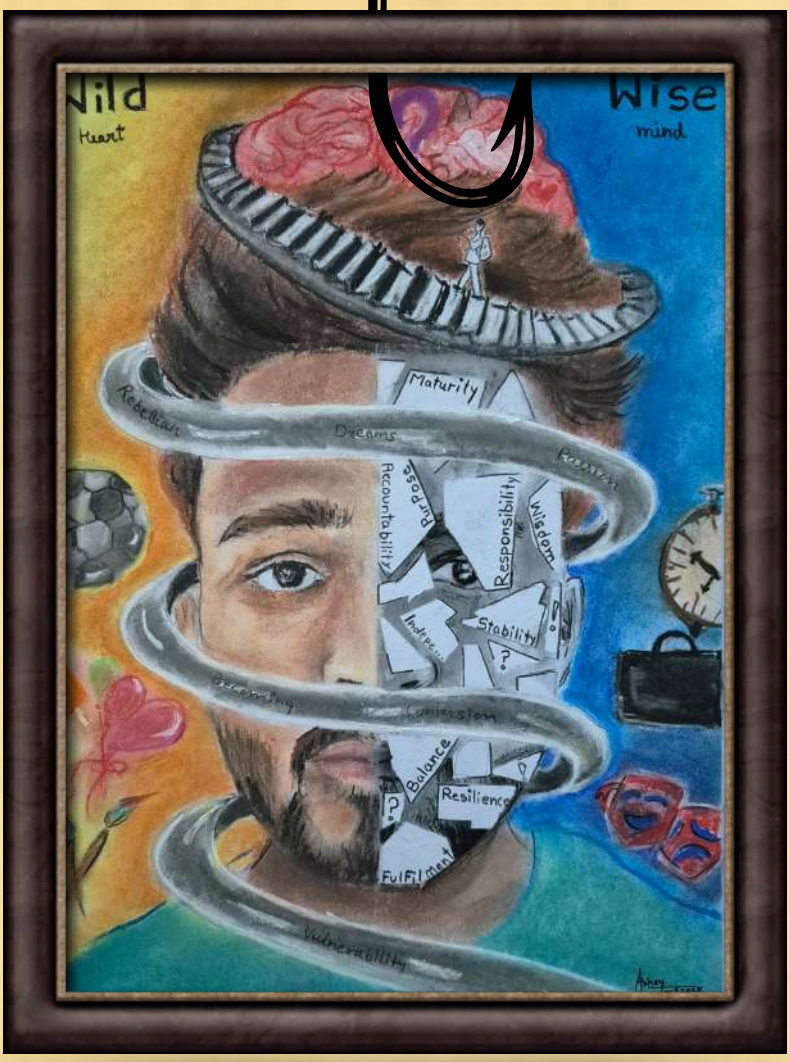


ART Spectrum



The artwork captures the confusion and beauty of growing up, showing how the journey from childhood to adulthood is both messy and meaningful. Through the blend of bright and dark tones, it reflects the mind as its own universe that is constantly changing, questioning, and creating. It reminds us that chaos isn't destruction but transformation and that every emotion and struggle shapes who we become.

SUBMISSION BY:
ABHIJEET SINGH
BA (H) ENGLISH



This is an art piece about a journey where we cross a road from teenagehood to adulthood. Two background colours, blue (wise and calm) and yellow (charming and rebellious), describe the brain environment of the different ages with some symbolic features. The road reflects teenage (half face with colours), and it converts to stairs, which is the way to adulthood, represented by a half black and white face with some terms. Also, the brain plays an important role in this art by showing the changing different mindsets of the age where a person travels via stairs.

SUBMISSION BY:
ABHEY
BA (H) HISTORY

persona decode

PETER PARKER

"Growing up doesn't always feel like growing stronger. Sometimes, it just feels like learning to hold the weight a little longer."

When I think of growing up, I often think of Peter Parker. Not because of his powers or his red suit, but because of how deeply human he is beneath all of it. He's a teenager trying to figure out life while the world keeps asking more from him than he can give.

In *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, Peter looks up to Tony Stark, wants to be an Avenger, and believes adulthood is about being important. There's something familiar in that—the rush to prove yourself, the belief that recognition equals maturity. He mistakes validation for purpose.

But as time passes, that illusion starts to fade. The same power that made him feel special begins to isolate him. When Tony dies in Endgame and later Aunt May in No Way Home, Peter is left completely alone—and that's when his real transformation begins.

For the first time, there's no mentor, no applause, and no one to tell him he's doing fine. The world keeps moving, and he must learn what it means to keep up with it. The cheerful teenager who once cracked jokes while fighting villains turns into a young man who understands the "cost of caring."

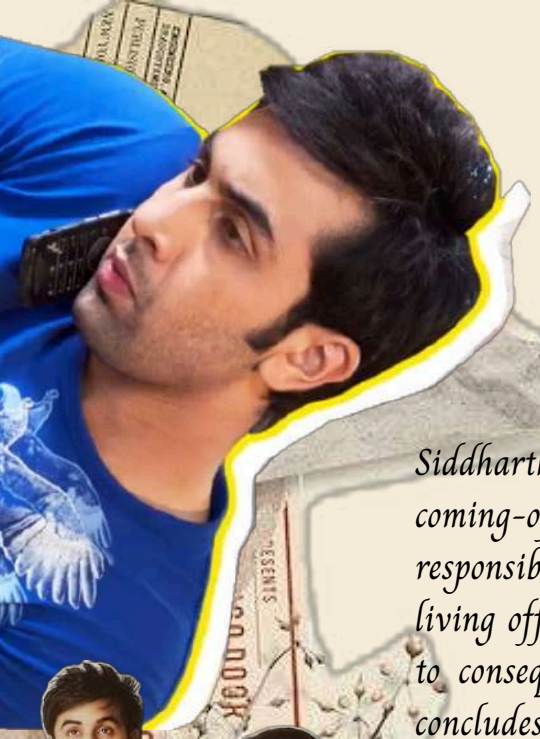
There's this moment at the end of No Way Home that stays with me—Peter, standing in an empty apartment, no longer known by anyone, yet quietly determined. No grand speech, no victory. Just a boy who's lost everything but still chooses to keep going. That's what adulthood really looks like: showing up even when no one sees you.

The beauty of Peter's story lies in how ordinary it feels once you remove the suit. He's constantly trying to balance responsibility and desire, loss and hope. He doesn't become an adult the moment he gains power; he becomes one the moment he starts accepting pain without letting it turn him bitter.

We often imagine growing up as something heroic—like one day we'll wake up and have it all figured out. But Peter teaches something softer:

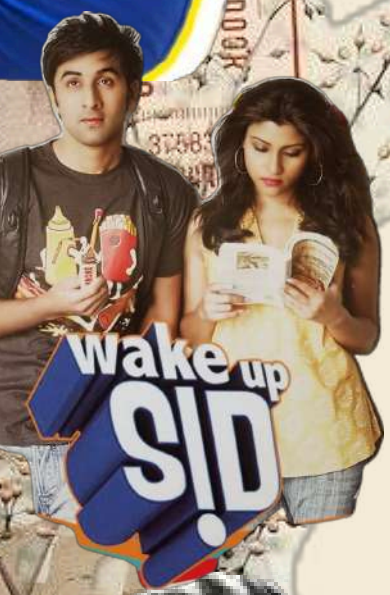
"Maturity isn't about knowing everything; it's about continuing despite not knowing anything at all."

You lose people, illusions, and even parts of yourself. Peter's journey is every young person's quiet truth—that growing up is not a leap but a slow, painful climb.

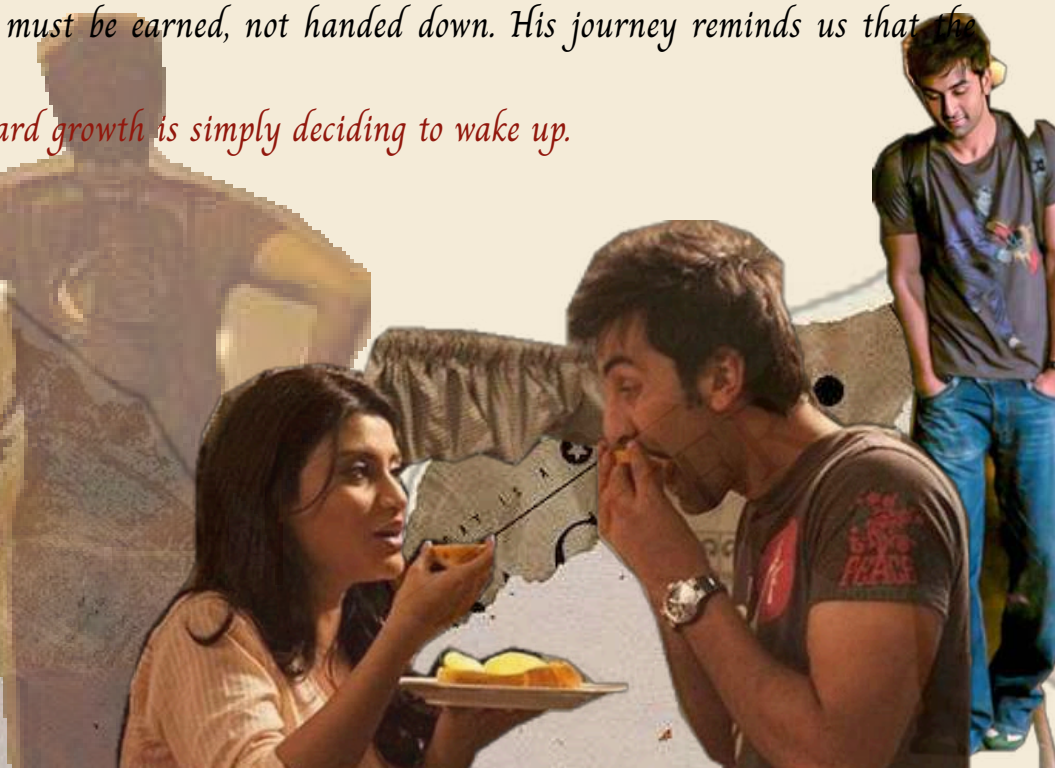


SIDDHARTH MEHRA

Siddharth Mehra's evolution in Wake Up Sid parallels every young adult's coming-of-age transition: the awkward shift between comfort and responsibility. Sid starts in a state of carefree privilege and apathy, a boy living off his father's money and his mother's affection who has no connection to consequence. To him, life is simply a series of distractions until college concludes and reality quietly comes forward. His friendship with Aisha, a spirited young writer navigating the world on her own terms, is the turning point as she shows Sid the meaning of dignity in struggle and the quiet strength of self-sufficiency, both of which he never learnt in his privileged upbringing.



The crossroad comes when he fails his exams and only learns of this disappointment when he is forcibly pushed out of his home by his father. Alone, scared, and accountable for the first time in his life, Sid begins to transform. He learns to cook, to budget, and to take responsibility for his actions; these small actions measure his maturity. What feels like punishment becomes the educator of self-respect. By the end of the film, while he has not "changed" in a cinematic way, he has grown. This story beautifully illustrates that becoming an adult is not an overnight event but an awakening. Sid's crossroad is the point at which he realises that love, a sense of purpose, and identity must be earned, not handed down. His journey reminds us that the first
step toward growth is simply deciding to wake up.



GEETA PHOGAT

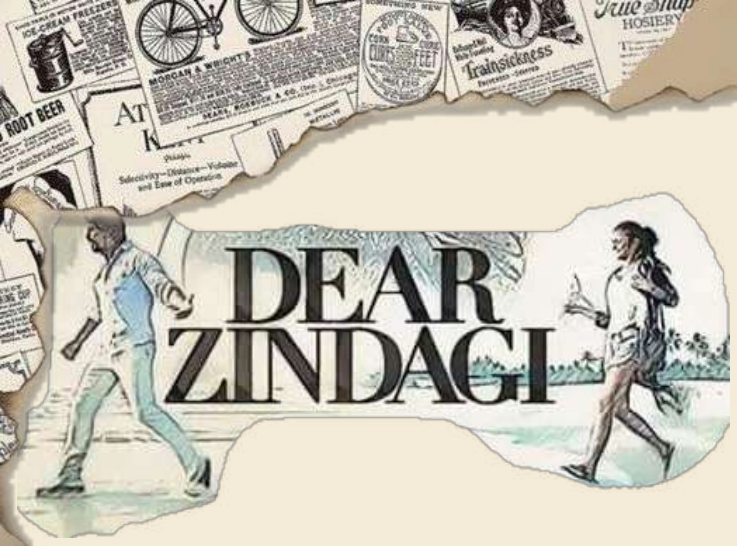
"Every human being encounters turning points that separate who we were from who we become."

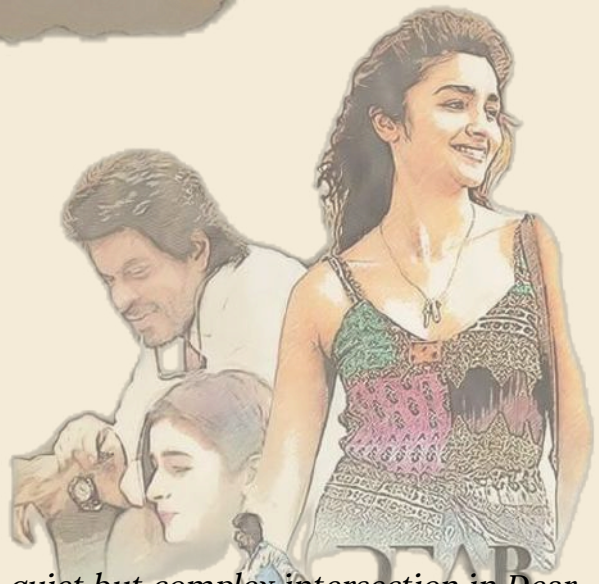
Dangal masterfully captures this juncture through Geetha Phogat, whose transformation reflects the shaping of a self moving through a cyclic confrontation between youthful rebellion and adult awakening. Her story proves that growth isn't a straight path—it's a recurring dialogue between our younger and older selves.

In her teenage years, Geetha embodies youthful fire—ambitious, impatient, and emotionally volatile. She trains under Mahavir Singh Phogat, whose unrelenting discipline felt like oppression. Her rebellion wasn't against wrestling but against the loss of small liberties. This stage represents her first crossroad: she resisted her father's rules, failing to see that this same discipline was the foundation of her independence—a freedom in disguise that allowed her to break gender norms. What initially felt like conflict forged the resilience she would later depend on.

When Geetha enters the national academy, her earlier discipline fades under the influence of new surroundings and social validation. She unknowingly repeats the cycle of immaturity, substituting her father's wisdom with the arrogance of early success. Her subsequent defeat forces her back to the original crossroad, where she must revisit and readopt her father's principles. This return is not regression but evolution. Geetha realises that her father's guidance wasn't physical training alone; it was mental conditioning for life.
Her journey evolves from resistance to reconciliation, from ego to empathy, and from defiance to discipline. In her evolution, Dangal portrays the universal truth that life's lessons often reappear in cycles.

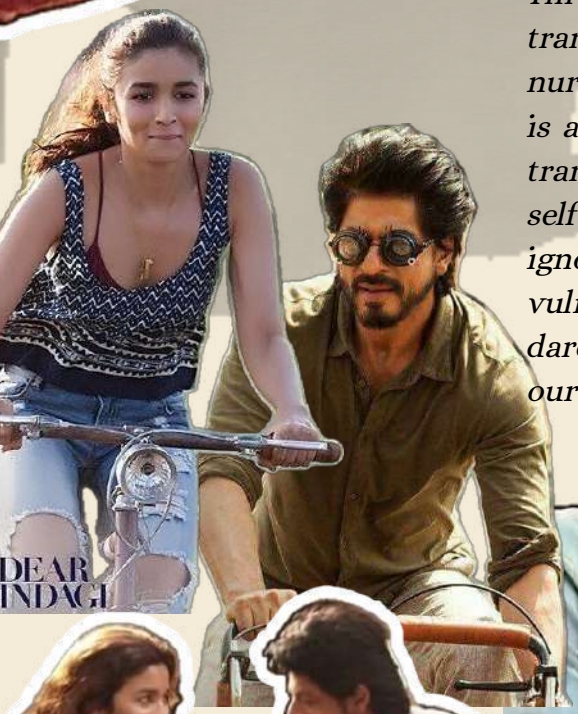
Emotional maturity is not about silencing our past selves but learning to listen to them differently, transforming the crossroad from a line dividing two worlds into a bridge connecting them.





KAIRA *finds herself at a quiet but complex intersection in Dear Zindagi: choosing between hiding behind perfection and being in the depths of her own emotions. As a child, she had moments of abandonment and misunderstanding that shaped her insecurities and contributed to her natural inclination to internalise fear and self-doubt. Kaira appears to be talented, self-sufficient, and in control. However, tapped beneath are layers of anxiety and self-doubt stemming from the earlier experiences. Her journey highlights two pivotal crossroads: first, the choice to seek help through therapy with Dr. Jehangir "Jug" Khan rather than continue suppressing her feelings, and second, the decision to face her fears and embrace her imperfections instead of remaining trapped in avoidance. Through these decisions, Kaira begins the hard work of reclaiming her emotional self. She begins to understand that emotional ease is found in the work of dealing with her own insecurities, not in perfection.*

Throughout Kaira's journey, she undergoes a quiet but complex transformation. She learns to accept herself, confront her anxieties, and nurture healthier relationships and a deeper sense of self. Kaira's story is a representation of the difficult transitions we all engage in, those transitions where we make decisions and develop courage, honesty, and self-awareness. By choosing to confront her emotions rather than ignore them, Kaira teaches a universal lesson: real strength lies in vulnerability, and life's most meaningful growth often begins when we dare to understand and accept ourselves fully, even when the roots of our fears trace back to childhood.



SPIRITED AWAY 2001

CHIHIRO OGINO

In the beginning, Chihiro Ogino is a frightened little girl sitting in the backseat of her parents' car, pouting as they drive toward a new home. Her eyes hold a quiet protest against change, against the uncertain path before her. She clings to what is familiar, yet the road ahead has other plans. What begins as a simple journey becomes a passage through a world that will test her fear, her love, and her will to grow.

When Chihiro first steps into the spirit world, she is small and trembling, calling out for her parents, who are soon transformed into pigs. The world around her is alive with strange gods, spirits, and beings that seem to belong to another order of existence. It is in this chaos that she first learns the meaning of courage. Not the loud, heroic kind, but the quiet kind that begins with taking one small step forward, even when every part of you wants to turn back.

Her first words in this new world are not of bravery but of pleading. Yet, as she finds herself in Yubaba's bathhouse, surrounded by greed and power, something begins to awaken in her. She takes a new name, "Sen," but with each act of kindness, each refusal to give up, she keeps the memory of Chihiro alive within her heart. Her transformation unfolds not in grand gestures but through everyday acts of honesty, compassion, and endurance.

When she says, "I think I can handle it now," it is not just a moment of reassurance. It is a quiet declaration of faith in herself. The frightened child who once cried for her parents now cleanses a polluted river spirit, faces monstrous trials, and learns to trust her own instincts. Through her friendship with Haku, she discovers loyalty and tenderness. Haku becomes the bridge between her fear and her courage, guiding her without protecting her completely, allowing her to find her own strength. Her kindness touches even those who dwell in darkness. When No-Face arrives, offering her gold and chaos, she does not fall into greed or fear. She meets his emptiness with understanding, offering him food instead of flattery. Her compassion disarms him more than any weapon could. It is in these moments that Chihiro's heart begins to mirror the true nature of strength, a strength that does not dominate but redeems.

Throughout her journey, Chihiro learns that growing up is not about forgetting who we were, but about remembering who we can become. She works tirelessly, learns humility, faces rejection, and still continues to care. When she helps the spirit of the River God, the scene is symbolic of her own cleansing, the washing away of hesitation and dependence. The sludge that pours out of the spirit is not only his burden but also a reflection of Chihiro's fear, slowly being released through her courage.
Her bond with Haku, filled with longing and memory, becomes the emotional centre of her transformation. When she tells him, "You saved me. I just remembered. You saved me once when I was little." It is as though her fragmented self begins to return. Memory, love, and identity weave together to restore her name, her strength, and her faith. Haku's guidance teaches her that kindness and remembrance can overcome even the darkest enchantments.

By the time she must leave the spirit world, Chihiro has become unrecognisable from the child who first stepped through its gates. Her voice carries certainty. Her movements no longer falter. She bows respectfully, speaks with grace, and looks at the world with a calm understanding. She does not cling to the spirits she has come to love, nor does she fear what lies ahead. Instead, she carries the lessons of the spirit world within her, quietly knowing that courage and compassion will always find their way back to her when needed.
The final moment, as she looks back one last time before returning to her parents, is not just a farewell to that magical realm but a silent promise. It is the end of innocence and the beginning of understanding. The road she once feared now stretches open before her, not as a threat but as an invitation.
Her transformation reminds us that change often begins when we are lost and that even the most ordinary person can rise with extraordinary grace when faced with uncertainty.

GAMES ARENA

BUZZFEED QUIZ

What Kind of Grown-Up Are You (So Far)?

HOW IT WORKS:

- Each option has points (5, 10, 15, 20).
- Add your total and find out what stage of adulting you're currently surviving.

1. What's your first thought when you wake up?

A. "Grateful for another day!" (20 pts)
B. "Five more minutes won't kill anyone" (15 pts)
C. "Why is existing so expensive?" (10 pts)
D. "No" (5 pts)

2. Your mom asks, "Beta, what's your plan for the future?"

A. "MBA, job, house, stability—all mapped out" (20 pts)
B. "Still figuring it out, but have a vision board" (15 pts)
C. Opens Pinterest for inspiration mid-convo (10 pts)
D. "I'm just vibing, honestly" (5 pts)

3. How do you handle stress?

A. Yoga, journaling, deep breaths—I'm healing (20 pts)
B. Overthink till I fall asleep (15 pts)
C. Eat like I'm in a food ad (10 pts)
D. Make a meme and send it to my friends (5 pts)

4. You go grocery shopping. What's your vibe?

A. Comparing nutrition labels (20 pts)
B. "Do I really need this or just crave chaos?" (15 pts)
C. Ends up buying snacks and scented candles only (10pt)
D. Forgets the list and buys other things instead (5 pts)

5. It's Friday night. Plans?

A. Skin-care, wine, and a podcast—self-care era (20 pts)
B. Dinner with friends, then in bed by 11 (15 pts)
C. Watching 6 hours of random YouTube (10 pts)
D. Existential dread, but make it aesthetic (5 pts)

6. Your friend gets engaged. Your reaction:

A. "I'm so happy for you!!" (20 pts)
B. "Already?! We're still babies!" (15 pts)
C. Search 'average marrying age in India' (10pt)
D. "I just learnt how to cook Maggi" (5 pts)

7. You're given ₹500. What's your move?

A. Save it. Compound interest, baby (20 pts)
B. Order comfort food. I deserve it (15 pts)
C. Buy something I'll regret in two days (10 pts)
D. Add to cart → forget → never buy (5 pts)

8. Your email inbox looks like—

A. Colour-coded and cleared daily (20 pts)
B. Manageable chaos (15 pts)
C. 1,254 unread. I fear nothing (10 pts)
D. Gmail gave up on me (5 pts)

RESULTS

120-160: The Full-Time Adult (With Benefits)

You've arrived. You do taxes, schedule doctor appointments, and carry a water bottle. You scare teens—respectfully.

Tagline: "You're what younger you thought 25-year-olds looked like."

90-119: The Semi-Functional Adult (Trying So Hard)

You forget breakfast but remember deadlines. You're trying, learning, and sometimes thriving. It's chaotic, but it's yours.

Tagline: "Running on caffeine and hope."

60-89: The Confused Intern of Life

You're halfway between "I got this" and "help." You've seen rent prices, and you're traumatised but surviving.

Tagline: "Barely holding it together, but your playlist slaps."

30-59: The Forever Teen With Bills

You still text your parents to ask how to boil pasta. Adulthood found you, but you didn't sign up.

Tagline: "Still waiting for someone to say 'time for recess.'"

0-29: The Delusional Teen Trapped in Adulthood

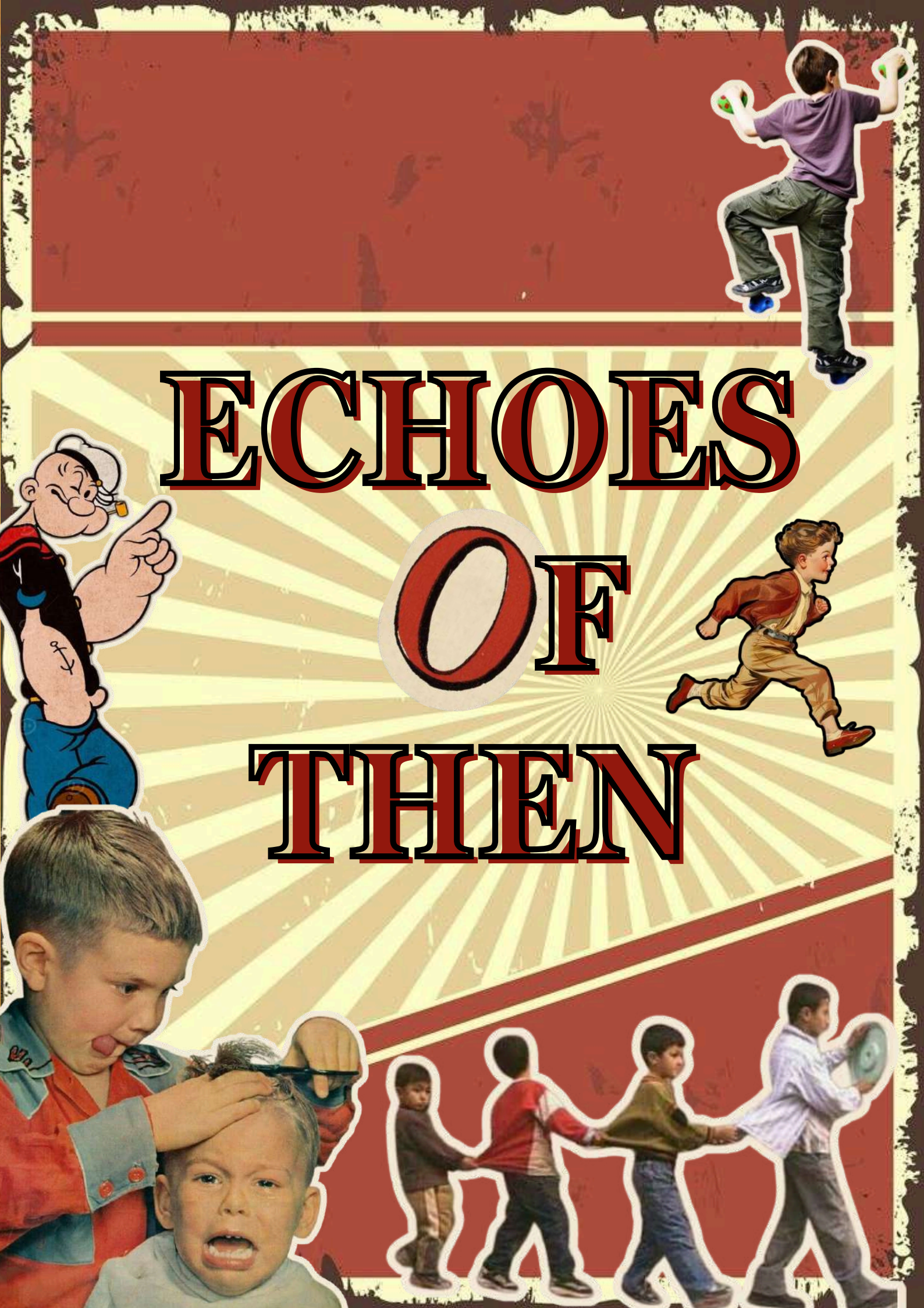
You're spiritually still in school—living on snacks, vibes, and emotional damage. Bills? Don't know her. Taxes? Sounds fake. You're coasting through life powered by memes, nostalgia, and denial—and honestly, it's iconic.

Tagline: "Emotionally 16, legally exhausted."

THE REALITY CHECK CHALLENGE

TICK WHAT YOU'VE SURVIVED... AND SEE HOW ADULT YOU REALLY ARE

- ☐ Realising weekends are for chores, not chilling
- ☐ Googling "easy recipes" at least once a week
- ☐ Missing school but not the homework
- ☐ Carrying a water bottle and calling it "self-care"
- ☐ Feeling excited about new stationery... again
- ☐ Getting emotional over childhood photos
- ☐ Checking bank balance before saying "yes" to plans
- ☐ Pretending to understand taxes (you don't)
- ☐ Calling naps "mental health breaks"
- ☐ Feeling proud after cooking anything edible
- ☐ Missing your childhood room more than some people
- ☐ Saying "I'm too tired" before it's even 9 PM
- ☐ Realising friendships need effort now
- ☐ Celebrating small wins like paying a bill on time
- ☐ Finding peace in being alone
- ☐ Learning to let go—of people, trends, and trauma
- ☐ Being your own cheerleader on bad days
- ☐ Understanding your parents a little more
- ☐ Finding joy in slow, safe, and simple things
- ☐ Accepting that adulthood is just... figuring it out daily


ECHOES
OF
THEN

Echoes of Then

Then it was full of noise—laughter echoing in corridors, shared lunches, and whispered secrets during classes. School felt like a second home, a place where every day brought a new story. I still remember the sound of the bell signalling recess, the chaos of the canteen, and the comfort of knowing that my friends were just a few steps away. But then, everything stopped. COVID-19 turned our classrooms into screens and our voices into pixels. The same laughter that once filled the air now came through microphones.

- Raghav Bansal

Back in school, making a friend was easier than solving 2 + 2. You liked Maggi, I liked Maggi, boom, best friends forever. We swore on pinky promises, shared our tiffins, and fought dramatic battles over pencil boxes. A five-minute fight felt like the end of the world until we forgot why we were fighting and went back to playing FLAMES. Now? Making or even meeting friends requires a full-blown project plan, three reschedules, and a Google Calendar invite with three reminders. “Let’s catch up soon” has become code for “See you at someone’s wedding in five years.” Some of us are one unread message away from being ghosted by people we once traded Pokémon cards with. Adult friendships require emotional intelligence, patience, and sometimes, group therapy. But hey, at least we’ve matured, right? We may not send friendship bands anymore, but we do send memes at 2 a.m. to show we still care.

- Jasleen Kaur

Once the most radiant presence in every room, she was the girl who lit up her class with endless enthusiasm. She participated in every competition, chased every first prize, and wore her happiness like a crown. The unbothered, joyous soul who didn’t care about appearances—her laughter was contagious, her energy magnetic. Now, she walks through life with a quiet numbness—nothing sparks the same joy, and her charm feels tucked away. The weight of unspoken pressures has made her feel different, even “boring” in her own eyes. Yet, time has sculpted her into someone resilient. She has become her own anchor, her own best friend, mastering the mood swings and battles that life throws her way. "SHE" has changed!!

- Varsha

Echoes of Then

We all grow up twice—once in age, and once in understanding." Then it was easy. Back then, growing up looked like the best thing that could ever happen. I thought it meant staying up late, making my own choices, and doing what I wanted. Life felt light. A good day meant bunking a class or having lunch with friends. Now it feels different. Freedom turned out to have its own price. No one scolds me if I waste a day, but no one fixes it either. I make my own choices —and I deal with the results too. The silence after college hours feels louder than any lecture ever did. Friendships have changed. We don't meet every day, but when we do, it feels like no time has passed. I've realised adulthood isn't about control—it's about learning to be okay with not knowing everything.

- Devanshu Goyal

Then, life was measured by the sound of the school bell. The biggest worry was finishing homework before the teacher's surprise check. Friends weren't just classmates—they were partners in secret laughter, shared lunches, and after-school walks filled with dreams far bigger than we could understand. Now, life moves to the rhythm of deadlines and notifications. The tiffin has turned into coffee cups, and instead of the school bell, it's the buzz of meeting reminders that rules the day. Yet, sometimes, when I pass a group of students laughing in their uniforms, a soft warmth fills my heart. Because even though time has changed everything—the people, the places, the priorities—a part of that carefree child still lives inside me.

- Mehak Saini

Echoes of Then

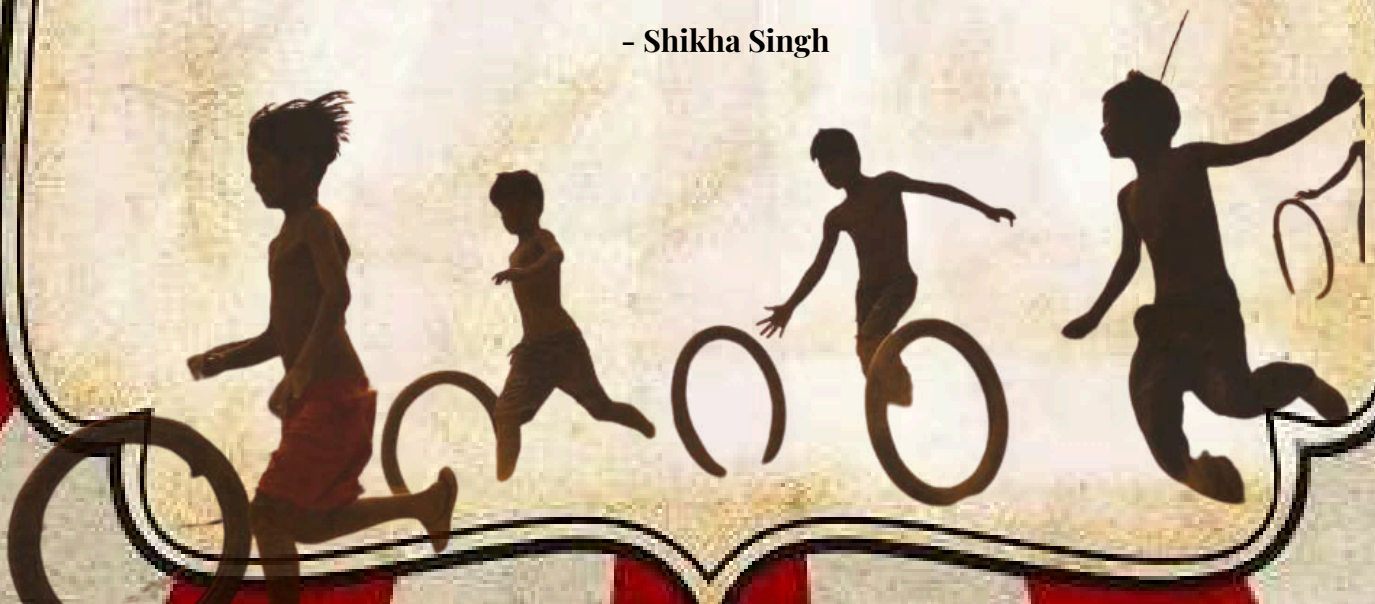
Then, life moved slowly through fields of laughter and sunlight. I remember spending time carefree, running through cane fields, doing things without overthinking, and even getting scolded and teased in the same breath. Every day was simple, yet so full. There was no fear, only the thrill of being young and alive. Now, life is different. I live away from home, careful and alert, surrounded by the noise of responsibility. The laughter still exists, but it is softer, shared through phone calls and memories that linger longer than moments.

Yet, as I walk through this new chapter, I realise I am still learning. Every experience, even failures, carries a piece of my past within it. I am ever-changing like the world around me, still evolving, still searching for meaning. And in that search, I carry the echoes of then, not as something lost, but as something that continues to shape who I am becoming.

- Pranshi Chaudhary

THE WEIGHT OF FREEDOM I craved freedom, fast and bright, yet felt its weight in each night. The flavour of choice was bittersweet. Each step I took was far from neat. Those incredible meals Mom would make, yet I threw a tantrum, my pickiness awake. Now meals seem bland or are eaten in haste, a mess on the plate and no dimes to waste. Once, money was asked for for a simple request; now I am counting out coins to fulfil my quest. Now I roam the store with a burden to bear. Freedom is sweet, yet heavy on my mind. In layers of change, I hold what I gain, as freedom brings joy, but it also brings pain.

- Shikha Singh



UDAAN

INITIATIVES

PODCAST SESSION

UDAAN hosted a **podcast** with political spokesperson **Shri Shehzad Poonawalla** on **"50 Years of Emergency: Lessons in Democracy."** He emphasised that "an informed, aware, diligent citizen is the true saviour of the Constitution," highlighting the importance of dialogue, vigilant citizenship, responsible media, and judicial awareness. Praising Dilip Kumar and Sunil Dutt for their courage during the Emergency, he called **Gen Z "Gen S"—Generation Sanskar**, appreciating their values and awareness.

AMOGH

AMOGH, The ultimate UPSC test series isn't just a sequence of exams—it's an empowering journey toward your dream. Each test **simulates actual exam conditions,** helping aspirants assess their preparation, identify strengths and weaknesses, and refine their approach with precision. Guided by experts, enriched with detailed feedback, and based on real UPSC standards, the series transforms preparation into a process of growth and self-discovery.

PROJECT "EKLAVYA"

Project Eklavya, an initiative by UDAAN—The Motivational Society of Hansraj College, **promotes inclusivity and equitable education.** On weekends, volunteers reach underprivileged children in slum areas through lessons, discussions, and creative learning like games, art, and storytelling. Through its efforts, Project Eklavya **nurtures young minds, builds confidence, and inspires students** to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential.

AAGAZ'25

UDAAN organised an inspirational speaker session, AAGAZ'25, themed "Resilience, Consistency, and the Power of Rising After Setbacks," **featuring IPS Kuhoo Garg,** an alumna and former national badminton player; **Ms. Poorva Choudhary,** an educator and career coach; and **Ms. Nandini Sharma,** founder and CEO of The Invincible Academy. Through their transformative lessons, AAGAZ became more than just an event—it was a celebration of persistence and the spirit to rise stronger after every fall.

MANMARZIYA

On **30th March,** UDAAN organised Manmarziya, an open stage competition that became a beautiful **celebration of creativity and self-expression,** held during the fest season. As talented performers wove their hearts out, thread by thread, into a vibrant tapestry of emotions with soul-stirring performances that spanned singing, poetry, spoken word, and more in front of the chief guest.

OLD AGE HOME VISIT

Spending a day at the **old age home** was an experience full of warmth and emotions.
Meeting the elderly reminded us how **small acts of love** can bring **big smiles**! Their **stories, laughter, and blessings** made us realise the value of time and **human connection,** and they inspired us all with their **valuable experience.** It also emphasised the importance of **bridging the gap between generations**.
Truly, "happiness grows when it's shared."

VOTING AWARENESS

To spread voting awareness, UDAAN launched a vibrant **voting awareness campaign** encouraging youth participation in the democratic process. Using its social media handles, the team created impactful reels, posts, and stories that emphasised the importance of every single vote. Through **creativity and digital outreach**, UDAAN reminded everyone that **active citizenship begins with responsible voting**.

YOUTUBE CONVERSATION

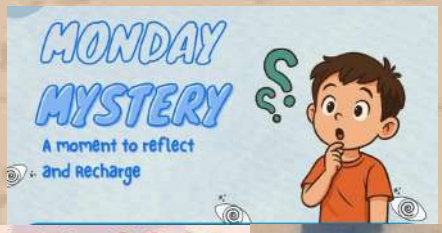
UDAAN has recently shifted its focus toward underprivileged sections of society, **capturing heartfelt conversations with children** who strive to find their way in a world that offers them few opportunities. Just like our previous work, this encounter taught us to stop dwelling on what we lack. These children, who have to fight for every inch of their day, **possess a completely self-made joy.** They are the most powerful evidence that happiness resides within you.

CRICKET OUTING

UDAAN organised an inspirational speaker session, AAGAZ'25, themed "Resilience, Consistency, and the Power of Rising After Setbacks," **featuring IPS Kuhoo Garg,** an alumna and former national badminton player; **Ms. Poorva Choudhary,** an educator and career coach; and **Ms. Nandini Sharma,** founder and CEO of The Invincible Academy. Through their transformative lessons, AAGAZ became more than just an event—it was a celebration of persistence and the spirit to rise stronger after every fall.

POSITIVE PULSE SERIES

Feel Good Friday was a warm and uplifting initiative that encouraged the campus community to pause, appreciate small joys, and share positivity. With engaging Instagram stories, fun games, and heartfelt conversations, it created a space for lightness, connection, and emotional well-being. Alongside this, **Monday Mystery** added a playful touch with quirky everyday-life riddles, while **Dialogue Diaries** shared inspiring movie quotes that offered quick weekly motivation.



Legacy Unwritten

Dear Readers,

ASHI VERMA
Former Editor-In-Chief

By now, you must already know what ADHVAN stands for—so I won't repeat the obvious. Instead, let me take you back to where it all began: when ADHVAN was nothing but a thought, a hazy vision born amidst laughter, confusion, and a little chaos.
We poured every bit of our creativity and courage into it, daring to break the stigma around mental health. Slowly, those scattered ideas, words, and visuals began to knit themselves into something real—a comfy woollen piece of art that wasn't controlled but expressed.

The journey wasn't easy.

There were sleepless nights, impossible deadlines, and moments when being the editor-in-chief felt like performing CPR on a dream—pushing, hoping, believing—and then, finally, it started to breathe on its own.
And when it did, it was magic.
As we move forward into this next edition, I feel the spark of transition within it—a reflection of what ADHVAN and UDAAN truly embody: Change. Growth. Evolution.
I am immensely proud of how the editorial and design boards have carried forward the core vision.
And as I pen down this note, I find myself reminiscing about my journey with UDAAN—a family I never knew I needed but one I'll forever cherish.

To me, UDAAN has always been a blessing—a space of warmth, strength, and endless motivation. Much like a child caring for their favourite plant they sowed, grew, and named Mr. Gigglebots, I've watched my UDAAN grow with love and care.

To all our readers, I wish you find a peace so gentle that happiness makes its home there.

MEET THE CORE

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HIMANSHI
VICE PRESIDENT

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SENIOR ADVISOR

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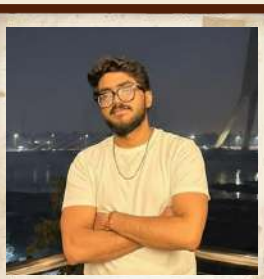

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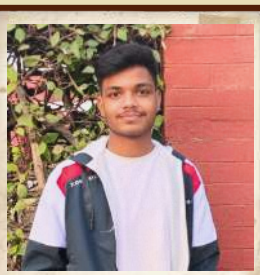
EDITORIAL HEADS

SUBHAM PODDAR



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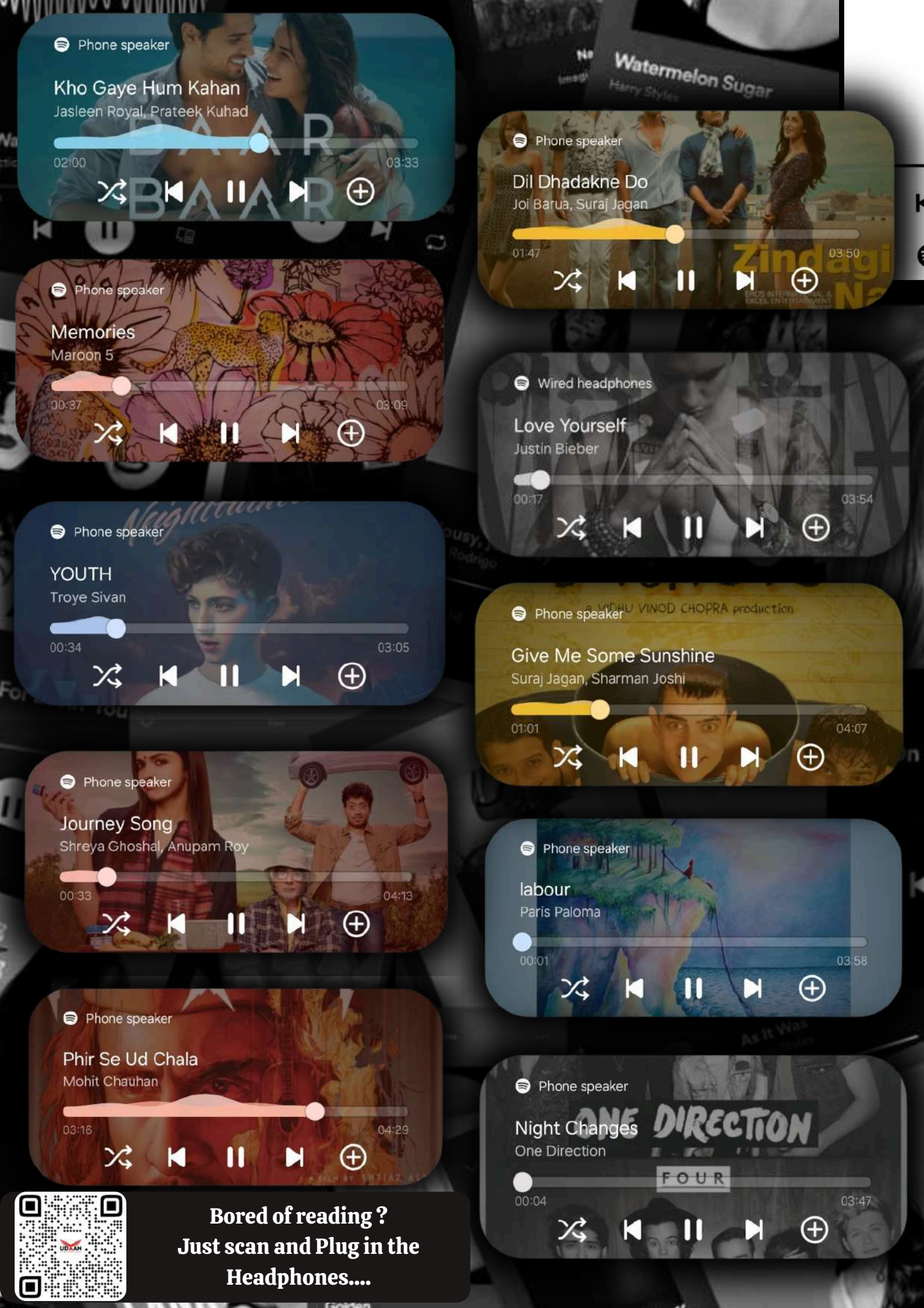

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UDAAN

THE MOTIVATIONAL SOCIETY