

Odyssey

July 2022 | vol. 2

Epistemo's *magical* literary magazine!

Dragons | Wizards | Adventure



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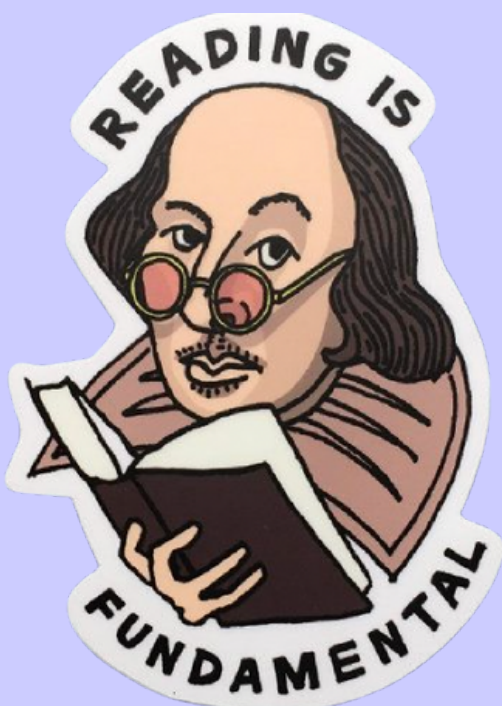
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What new leaf will our Odyssey turn in this issue? What kind of a theme will it branch out to? Readers, embark on a new journey with Mew Mew to a vast world of magical beasts and beings. Imagine yourself in great scenarios and let your mind fly away from all the pressure that burdens it.

Dwell into the unknown secrets about Dragons and Wizards and read stories ranging from the battle of these elements to origami armies. Enjoy the well-curated content written by the creative minds behind Odyssey and scrutinize some realistic content from great Non-fiction reads.

Welcome aboard our Second issue covering magical fantasies! Odyssey exists to provide a safe reading environment to all readers and creators, ensuring all ideas and opinions are put in place because here we firmly believe that no idea is too little, or too much. Everything is perfect, Everything is divine.
Happy reading!

Lot's of love,
Chanakya,
Head Boy/Editorial Board Member.

Notice:

Hidden in this issue, deep within a story, is a secret word from a language that is not English, which is meant to mean "potato"

He or she who shall find the answer first, and inform us of such, shall be entitled to an issue of two books for four weeks from the school library!

Get reading!



The Wizards and The Witches

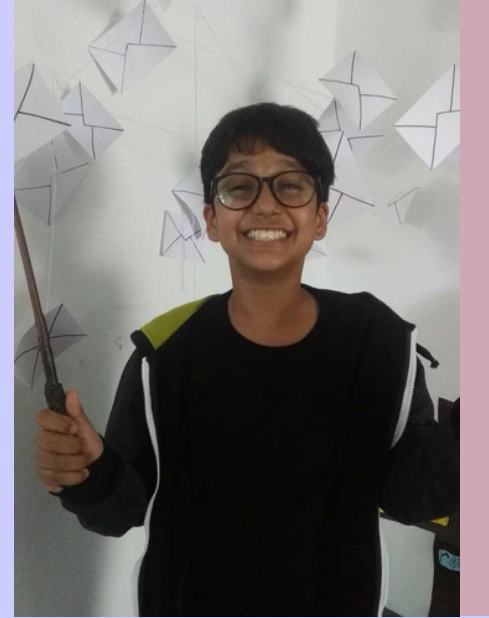
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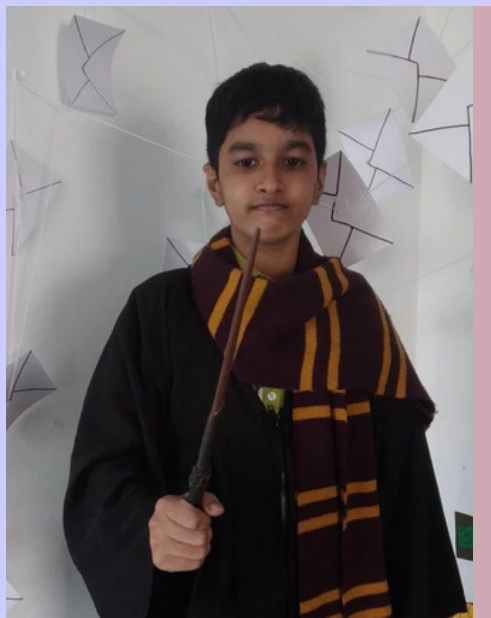
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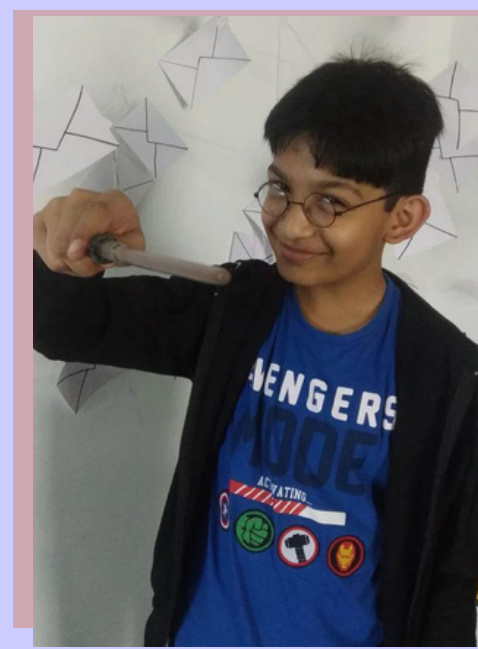
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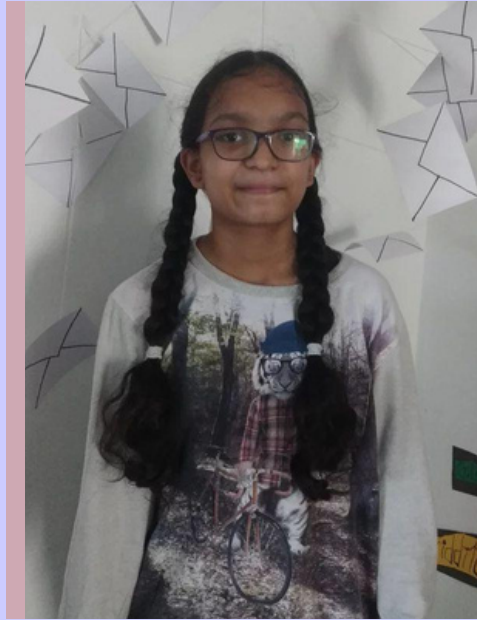
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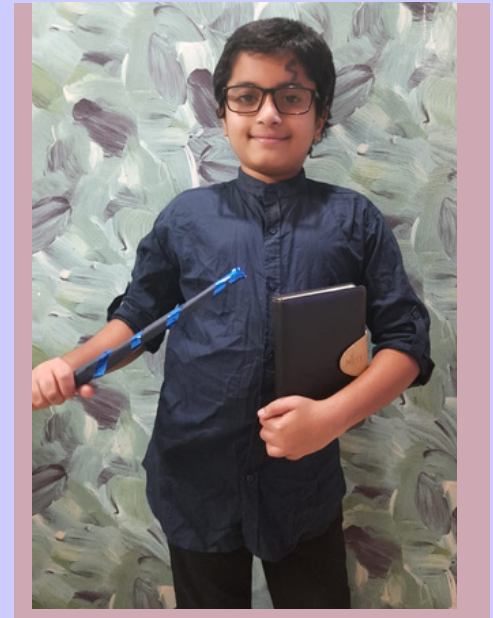
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Supreme Wizard**

Fanfiction

Artemis Fowl: The War of The Red Mountain

Written By Aarish

In the clutches of darkness, hidden within the heights of the Luggala Mountains, lay an extravagant manor contained within a parallelogram of tall five-meter crenellated stone walls with gates forged from reinforced electrified steel with cameras on top of their pillars. The 200-acre Victorian estate, held far away from any signs of civilization, contained an assortment of different rooms and inhabitants, which most would overlook as just another overly-elegant mansion owned by a wealthy magnate and his family.

However, unbeknownst to the rest of the world, the same manor held a dark secret. Within the depths of its basement lay a peculiar cage with a certain elf with pointed ears and dark nut-brown skin, cropped auburn hair, and hazel eyes. She stood a meter tall with a hooked nose and very plump and cherubic cheeks. If you were to look at her face you could see her eyes were visibly red on the corners from crying.

“What does that Fowl boy want with me? I did nothing wrong to him in my entire life. He even painfully conducted experiments on me, absorbing my magic and putting me in such pain. Anyway now is no time to be crying like a Bubak. I need to get out of here”

The strange, sentient creature named Holly Short monologues, stood up to face her troubles.

Outside, a war rages on in the sandy mountain slopes. The magical Lower Elements Police's camps stationed a few miles from the manor were furious.

“How is that puny human and his little guild able to repel our advances! “We must attack with more force!” yelled a senior LEP officer.

“Yes we must!” replied an elf nearby.

“Yes!” shouted another officer.

“Shut Up! The boy has been successful in beating us in this mind game and we have already lost too many resources to continue our assault. I will

forge the paperwork for the transfer of 1 tonne of gold to the boy in return for officer Holly. This endeavour is finished!”

The head of the LEP, Julius Root, yelled at the top of her voice, clearly showing who the highest ranking officer was in the room.

“I am afraid it might not be so, dear commander root,” said a stuffy-looking dwarf, entering the room.

“I am Mulch Diggums, a former associate of Artemis Fowl. I am here to sell you the location of a secret tunnel that leads into the Fowl Manor.

“And what exactly would you like in exchange,” Julius asked suspiciously, knowing the man’s previous exploits through the magical world.

“Just atonement for my previous crimes, a bit of gold, blah, blah, blah, you know nothing too much,” the man replied in a nonchalant tone.

“Well Artemis Fowl is already offering Officer Holly up in much less,” commander root phrased, looking for a way to effectively barter the price.

“Oh, but you don’t know that he will keep his end of the bargain. As far as you know he might just take the money and leave you without fulfilling his end of the deal, and from my experience with him, it is very likely.” Mulch replied, a clear smirk visible on his face.

“Very well then, we agree,” Julius root replied, grimacing at the possible repercussions of the decision.

In the Fowl Manor, Artemis Fowl sat on a couch sipping his tea, thinking about the current predicament he was in. He had ordered many of the precious magical artefacts owned by his ancestors to be moved out of the Manor and into a few of the other estates his family-owned. If you knew him really well, then you might be able to tell that he was worried, a deep contrast to the normally stoic mask the boy held. It had been seven days since the LEP had started their raids on his manor and his initial confidence had dwindled along with his supplies.

It had been seven days since the LEP had started their raids on his manor and his initial confidence had dwindled along with his supplies. He was sure that the LEP would give up after the first 3 days of failure, but they just kept the onslaught going. As he thought of the matter, his thoughts

his thoughts lingered on the elf he had imprisoned in his Manor: Holly was it? He could almost feel something that could only be described as sympathy for her, but he quickly waved such menial thoughts away. Why was he feeling such thoughts for an unusable prisoner to whom he had committed such businesses before? Had he gone soft? Should he retire for a while to, as the uneducated layman put it, get his mojo on?

He was quickly pulled out of his thoughts as a loud boom reverberated through the halls of the mansion. He was quickly joined by his butler Domovoi.

“Artemis, the LEP have breached the house, apparently Mulch turned on us.” Artemis quickly fought to keep his calm and stop the raging storm of anger within him.

“Activate Ghost Protocol,” he calmly stated before walking through the hallways to reach the secret chamber, and with it his elven battle-suit.

If the LEP wanted to go down with a fight, he would give them one.

An hour later and Artemis, with his accomplices Domovi and Juliet Butler rummaged through what was once the Fowl Manor. The LEP had been successful in reaching and saving Holly but had done so with major setbacks and colossal casualties. Then while going through the dead they saw her. What was she doing here? Wasn't she supposed to be in London? These were just a few questions raging inside the mind of Artemis Fowl. The LEP had taken someone important from him so it was only right that he got them back. On that day he swore to destroy the magical world and make them pay for taking someone important from him. Little did the magical world know of the raging storm about to come its way.

Did you know?

Artemis Fowl is a best-selling novel written by Eoin Colfer in the early 2000's. Before becoming a full time writer, Colfer was a primary school English teacher. His protagonist, Artemis Fowl, is inspired by the children he met in school.

You can find all the books in this series in our school library: Athenium!



The Young Dragon Shiro

Written By Aashrita and Sanjana

This story takes place in an alternate universe named Mattermonium. In this universe, everything contains magic even the smallest of microbes. Everything was divided into two: The light and The dark. The dark was for the wizards and the light was for the dragons.

One day a wizard snuck into the dragon king and queen's palace with their newborn child. Now every dragon is different and has some speciality. The dragon the wizard stole was a space dragon. A space dragon is a dragon that knows all and can travel all around the universe. On the way, the wizard was caught stealing the newborn and the dragons chased him.

The Wizard left the baby dragon in a small abandoned house, thinking he could find the newborn dragon later. But he was caught and ended up in prison. The baby dragon was found by a small group of kids. The Kids circled around the scared and whimpering dragon and said one by one, "My name is Sam and I am the leader of the Promix gang."

"My name is Mimi."

"My name is Sally."

"And my name is Chuck."

They named the dragon Shiro. The gang was known to be one of the most powerful and notorious until a new gang emerged. This made them realise that the dragon could help. They had to raise him as a disciplined and obedient dragon. Days passed as the dragon helped the kids more and more. Now their aim was to become the most notorious gang once again.

Meanwhile, the dragon king and queen were miserable without their son. They would search all day for their son. One day, Shiro encountered a strange place on the outskirts of the city. It was mostly a dark realm, but there was a faint ray of light peeping out. He went closer to examine and he was very amazed. It was the dragon's realm!!

When he entered the realm, he saw many of his kind there. He was amazed to see this. He would talk to a lot of dragons, but the other dragons were clueless about who he was. They simply thought he was new to the neighbourhood. Shiro reached the dragon castle where his parents were. The dragon queen was perched near the entrance.

The dragon queen spotted the young dragon and spoke to him. She felt some kind of bond with him when she spoke with him and also spotted similarities in physical features. She used magic to identify his past. She was in shock as he was actually her son, Shiro. Shiro grew angry as his mother told what she saw. Shiro's mother found joy in the fact that her son had returned.

She told him to pack his stuff and come live with her in the castle. Shiro told his mom that he would come after taking revenge on the wizards. He went back to the wizard side to his so-called home. The wizards did not know that the dragon found out everything.

Meanwhile, the dragon king had just got to know that Shiro was actually his long-lost son. The king got so furious and declared war against the wizards, whom he believed were the reason behind his misery.

The wizards were baffled by the fact that they had to be in a state of war with the dragons out of the blue. The wizards thought of using shiro to get to know all of

the dragons' strengths and weaknesses. Shiro knew their plan so he made sure that the dragons got all the information they needed and that the wizards did not know anything about the dragons. The wizards and dragons started attacking each other. The wizards were quickly losing to the dragons.

Shiro explained to the Promix gang how he had tricked them into losing the war because they kept him from his parents. The wizards, who were terrified and wanted to save their lives, promised the dragon king and queen that they'd never harm another dragon again.

Although things were not the same for Shiro and the Promix gang ever again, they decided that they would be friends again. Better friends this time.

The End

Dragon Trivia #1

Did you know that dragon mythologies evolved independently in Europe and China? The Europeans depict dragons as evil, murderous and malicious. The

Chinese view dragons as wise, knowledgeable and kind creatures.



Bravery is greater than fear

words: Swastik

Once upon a time, in a deep forest, there lived a witch named Kumbalika. She was an expert in black magic and was very cruel to everyone. Anyone who went to the forest would soon be killed by her. The cave she lived in was full of skeletons.

A month ago, a man named Shiva from the nearest village, went to the forest to hunt. But he was trapped by Kumbalika and could not go back home. From that day, nobody dared to go inside the forest. Shiva's younger brother, Shankar, was the bravest man in town. He decided to seek revenge on Kumbalika for kidnapping his brother. Without saying anything to anyone, he courageously stepped into the forest.

Shankar found Kumbalika sitting under a banyan tree right outside her cave. When Kumbalika saw Shankar, she became very happy and her eyes began glowing.

"How are you, Grandma?" Shankar asked.

"I'm fine, that's why I'm resting peacefully. Where are you going grandson?"

"What should I say, Grandma...I don't know what fear is. I'm busy looking for it." He said. "Oh! You are in the right place! I can send you to a place where you can find fear." Kumbalika said with a wide grin on her face. "I heard a lot about you. People say that Kumbalika's avatars are scary and dangerous. People start shivering when they see you. But you are very beautiful with shiny white hair and glowing eyes."

After hearing him, Kumbalika became very happy.

"Those are very flattering words, my dear. But do you mean them?"

"If you don't believe me, then you can see yourself in the mirror," Shankar answered as he took out a mirror from his bag and offered it to the witch.

Kumbalika looked into the mirror and gushed over herself.

"You are the first person to compliment my beauty, and I shall offer you food in thanks. Come on in."

"I will eat later, first you need to scare me" Shankar replied.

"Hey fool," Kumbalika snapped, "If I try to scare you, you will die. But I don't want to kill you as you are the first person who has ever seen my beauty."

"I know...you don't dare to scare me. Leave it, why should I waste my time with you?" Shankar said nonchalantly.

"Oh! Is it?" Kumbalika looked at him in disbelief. "Then come with me."

The witch took him inside her cave. Shankar was shocked to see a lot of skeletons scattered around the cave. It filled him with immense grief to think of his brother's skeleton being in here. So, he closed his eyes with sadness.

"Do you know I killed all of these people? You are very clever and you can understand that this is the power of my witchcraft!" Kumbalika cackled. "I think you have finally faced your fear."

"Those people were very cowardly. But I am as brave as a lion." Shankar replied. After hearing that, the witch became angry and cast a magic spell. Suddenly, her head transformed into a tiger's and her body was big and scaly like a dragon's.

Then, she put Shankar in her mouth and leapt towards the sky. After flying for some time, she returned to her lair and became her ordinary self once again. There was no fear in Shankar's face. The witch was astonished.

"You are still alive?! I thought I would have scared you to death."

"This was meant to scare me? Oh...I thought it was a fun bonding activity. I enjoyed flying so much. Thank you, grandma!" said Shankar. This only enraged Kumbalika. She began scouring through spells that would scare Shankar. "You have so many spells. If you can't scare me by tonight, then you have to teach me one of your spells." Shankar suggested, and after much deliberation, Kumbalika agreed. Without wasting any more time, she turned into a dragon and blew scorching fire from her mouth. Shankar started laughing instead and said, "You have got to teach me a spell now." Kumbalika had to comply. "Fine. I will teach you a small spell."

Shankar had bigger plans in mind. "No, teach me a good and big spell. There is nothing I can do with a small spell."

"I heard that you can turn into anything but a scorpion. Is that true?" Shankar asked.

"Nonsense. Let me show you." And she transformed into a tiny scorpion. Shankar immediately squished the insect with a rock, killing the witch and her evil powers. As she died, so did her magic. Those she killed, came back to life, including Shankar's brother, Shiva. They reunited and lived happily ever after.

The End

The Karthoshka Serum

words: Amruth and Vaishnavi

{Medina}

I was walking back from school, having just learnt about non-verbal magic spells. Magic was commonly used throughout Terra. It is after all the kingdom of magic, the only kingdom of magic in the world. We hide it from all the non-magic people, the Kraag. It would lead to a great war if they ever found out about the magic.

Dragons are particularly widespread in our kingdom, but they are not easy to tame. Only an impossibly lucky few can touch them, let alone ride on their backs. I heard a pained hiss and I started walking towards the noise. Then I saw it. The creature was magnificent and deep red in colour, having a ridge of spikes going up its neck and a few of them on its head. Its eyes were glowing golden along with striking green irises. Like dianthus in the middle of sunflowers.

Its claws were as big as my hand and it was as tall as 3 tables stacked upon each other. Its tail was stuck in a dragon trap, which people placed everywhere in hopes of seeing a dragon at least once in their life.

The moment it saw me, its eyes softened for a brief second. It lifted its head and gestured to its tail. I slowly went towards it. It did not seem harmful, but it wasn't harmless either. Its tail was stuck only because of one of the spikes that barred the whole tail from being pulled out. I tried lifting it. I was almost there when I heard voices coming straight towards me. I quickly lifted the spike with all my strength. The dragon was free now. It nudged its head towards me in a thankful way. I kept my hand on its head. It was rather scaly and rough. I heard people shouting. I started panicking. People were pointing at me.

Some in astonishment and some in anger. I saw my parents staring back at me, their faces pale and shocked.

The dragon growled and made everyone run, but my parents stood still nearby. "It's nothing." I said, "The dragon's tail was stuck in the trap and just removed it."

"You touched it?" My mother asked.

"Yes," I said, with my voice barely above a whisper. Touching a dragon meant being made the lord, or lady, of the dragons. The last person who touched a dragon was born a millennium ago. Once a person was a lord or lady of the dragons, they were immortal until the next one was chosen.

"I will need to go to the sanctuary of the dragons," I said to my mother. The dragon nudged me towards it with its hind legs, as if saying yes.

My mother gave me a faint smile, full of worry.

"That will be dangerous," she said.

"Yes," I said. "But it will be an honour."

"We are proud of you, Medina," My father announced.

"Are you sure to believe it, Zelensky?" My mother asked my father, "Is it true?" "Of course it's true!"

"We did not hear it, Tsarha. We saw it! If this is not true, then nothing else is true."

"Yes, but take care, Medina. This is not everyone's cup of tea."

"I will be fine, mother". I smiled, to assure her. "I'll be fine"

I climbed my way up to mount the dragon and braced myself as it soared into the skies.

"How is this real life?" I thought.

{Volodymyr Shar}

The lady of the dragons had been chosen. She needed to go. I, meanwhile, planned on using the "Karthoshka serum" to hypnotise the lady and her parents. It would kill the Kraag in an instant, but for us magical people, it would be like hypnotic anaesthesia, or so I think. I will have to test it to see if it works.

"Are you sure?" my assistant asked, "I am sure that this material is dangerous! It can kill anyone in an instant, whether the non-magic Kraag or not."

I did not listen and drank a drop of the dangerous substance.

"I wish my eternal enemy, the one who rules this great land, Zelensky of Itarha dies!" Soon a tingling feeling stopped me and shut my mouth for a small moment.

"Are you okay, lord"

"I am, of course!" I replied.

"But for some reason....that...I can't explain-"

"Sire!" A messenger of mine shouted from across the room.

"Zelensky the 5th has just died! He dropped dead in front of a crowd all of a sudden." My assistant looked at him wide-eyed and mouth agape.

"It has been discovered! What no magician could do for millennia! If I am not mistaken, you would have to stay silent now, my lord? You would not speak?"

"Of course. The less I speak, the better. But the spell caused me to utter what I could not even think of uttering." I replied.

"This means that one's deepest desires can be fulfilled with this concoction!" My assistant added. "However, only one wish shall be granted with each drop, if I am not mistaken."

May I take your leave, my lord?" The messenger asked and I motioned for him to get out. He bowed down and closed the door before leaving.

{Medina}

I reached the sanctuary of the dragons in a day. It was a journey I would never forget for as long as I lived. We flew above beautiful green hilltops and crystal blue rivers. As we neared the sanctuary, I heard hisses and growl. I tensed a bit but they seemed friendly.

We landed a few minutes later. There were dragons of every colour. Glinting and glowing, they roared welcomingly. The sanctuary was ginormous, with a huge amount of verdure similar to a forest. The dragons took most of the space, but I saw a man with white hair and a white beard coming toward me.

"It seems my time has come," the former lord of the dragons said to me, "I can finally die."

Many people thought of immortality as a gift, but it was a double-edged sword; a boon and a bane; a beginning and an end. One who would be immortal would lose many things: maybe a soul or two, some innocence, maybe a few limbs, and certainly loved ones. They would never come back. They are lost forever.

The man whose name was not known disintegrated into a shower of ashes. The dragons howled in sadness, after all, he took care of them for a millennium.

“საპატიო დარბაზი სიკვდილის დარბაზში?” a female dragon spoke in Dragenian; her secret mother tongue

“ძვირფასო და, იმედია მოგეწონებათ კერძი.”

A deep-red dragon that I saved a while ago replied,

“დიდი პატივი იყო თქვენთვის საჭმელი”

I looked around in confusion. I understood that they were conversing, but not in a language I knew.

"Whatever it is, stay here" I ordered the deep-red dragon.

"I will be back," I added. How will I get home now? I can't just ride on the back of the dragon AGAIN! The dragons were still muttering away in their confusing language.

"ძვირფასო ძმაო, მართლა გჭირდება ტარაკნის მოკვლა?[4]" A male dragon asked.

"დიახ," The deep-red dragon replied.

I heard wailing from the entrance and I felt myself running faster and faster, soon reaching the main seating area. My mother sat there, dressed in black and crying. My father was nowhere to be seen.

"Where is father?" I asked, suppressing the ache in my throat.

"He is-" a strangled sob escaped her. Was he hurt? Was he banished because of me?! Was he overthrown?

"He is gone. He is dead. He is no more!" my mother screamed. My knees buckled and I fell to the ground. Tears already stained my face. "How" I managed a whisper.

"Volodymyr Shar. The dragon hunter." my mother answered angrily "Dostovy," my mother called a servant nearby, "announce in every single city that whoever kills Volodymyr Shar will receive a position in court".

"As you wish, my lady." The servant replied.

I had nothing to say, I was sure of it. The people looked to me. I would not disappoint them.

"Your highnesses!" A messenger shouted out loud, "Shar has gathered an army and he is heading towards the castle!"

"I need to go," I told my mother. "I should do something"

"I will come along with you." She went inside to fetch a

long-sword. "This is a family heirloom. It has been passed through several generations.

It is yours now. You can fight effortlessly.

you won't even need a wand.

You could slash, and you could also spell."

"Can it kill?" I asked.

"Of course," She replied.

"We must raise an army quickly. I have an idea."

"Nikolai," I called to a nearby servant, "bring me as much paper that you can find. Ask all the other servants to do the same."

"Inform me if you find any stone statues anywhere in the castle," My mother ordered, "They will come to be useful."

"There is one behind you, your highness," the servant replied.

"Piertotum Locomotor!" my mother incanted. The statue came to life, jumped down on its feet and spun up.

"This castle is threatened," my mother called to the stone soldier. "Man the boundaries, protect us, do your duty to our kingdom!"

The soldier did as he was ordered and soon stepped out.

"Your highness! I have seen many soldiers made of stone moving about! We have raised nearly 20 stone soldiers. They will not die easily."

"Sorry to interrupt, your highness, but we have found a pile of paper."

The servant informed

"Mother, do you know any spells to mould paper into soldiers?" I asked. "Make your own spell." She nonchalantly replied.

"You all have wands, I hope?" I asked the servant.

"Of course, your highness"

"Make use of any charms and spells to fend the army away.

It would be most appreciated if all of you were to do your best." The servants went running, to protect the kingdom.

Meanwhile, I turned to the pile of paper. I looked at my French and Latin dictionary and soon started crafting

my spell. "Soldiers in French are Soldats, and in Latin, transform means transfiguro, so..."

"Transfigur status soldat!" I chanted to the papers and soon the papers turned into soldiers, one after the other. Each of the soldier held a razor-sharp paper sword that would be enough to inflict a severe paper-cut. "Piertotum locomotor!" I chanted and soon all the soldiers came to life. The paper soldiers walked out of the room and left to fight the enemy.

{Volodymyr Shar}

The great castle was in sight, it would not be long before the siege would start. "Where is the serum?" I asked my assistant and he held out a bottle. "Here, my lord," the assistant replied. I took the bottle from his hand and drank a drop and I soon said, "I wish to win this battle, once and for all, soon with the battle I will have-"

There was a loud boom. My army was getting vanquished fast. There were stone soldiers and they were not easily broken. Medina Itarha was standing near the palace. To my surprise, some soldiers started to go behind the stone soldiers, pulling them down and digging them up. The stone soldiers tried to get up but were too heavy.

"It is unfortunate that I must go to war," I told my apprentice, "which is best avoided at all costs, but it is a side-effect of the spell that all my wishes are known and it is known that my wishes will be fulfilled as well."

Soon, some paper soldiers arrived on the battlefield and were sliced into halves by my swordsmen. They were not really swordsmen, but they had turned their wands into swords by magic. It did not matter what they were called. None of the enemy soldiers did much.

For now, what mattered was that I had won this battle.

The End

PAUSE

for some desert and giggles

Tapasya's Creepy Caramel Apples

Ingredients:

- 1 pound caramel
- 2 tablespoons water
- 6 green apples
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 12 wood lollipop sticks
- 2 white chocolate chips
- 5 dark chocolate chips
- Chocolate syrup

Wash the apples and dry them well.

Make sure to chill the apples properly before dipping them into the caramel sauce so that the sauce will stick to the apples.

Insert a wooden stick into the stem of the apple.

Melt caramels in a saucepan with water and caster sugar and stir until it's smooth.

Dip the apple into the sauce and place it on a cookie sheet.

Refrigerate the apples for an hour or two, until the caramel is firmly cast around the apple.

After removing them from the fridge, use the chocolate chips to decorate a pair of eyes, and a nice wide grin. To make your caramel apple look evil, use the chocolate syrup to make a small "V" above the little eyes of this mini monster.

Serve and Enjoy!!!

The Water Academy

by Sahasra

Good Morning everyone!



gooooo mooorrrnniilnggg sirrr

Okay class today we are going to stat a new topic in history 'The First Axolotl'



Seriously



His name was Guppy Duppy



Now don't be fooled by his name, everyone was scared of him because of his JOKES.



His worst Joke was so bad that many fellow fish died!



What was it?



Knok-knok



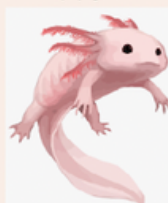
Who's there ?



Guppy



Guppy who?



GuPpY SuPy PuPpY
LuMpY JuMpY



faints



Knock Knock jokes

by Tapasya

Knock Knock.
Who's there?
Ach.
Ach-who?
Oh my, you have a
cold.

Knock Knock
Who's there?
Who
Who Who?
You sound like an owl!
Are you one?

Knock Knock
Who's there?
Woo.
Woo who?
Why are you so
happy? The joke
isn't over yet.

Knock Knock
Who's there?
Boo.
Boo who?
Oh! Don't cry, it's just
a joke.

Aasim's Dragon Fruit Milkshake

Ingredients:

1 medium-sized fresh dragon fruit
1/2 cup of chilled milk
2 tbsps of condensed milk
2 tbsps of Sugar

Cut the dragon fruit in half.

Peel and remove the skin of the dragon fruit.

Add chilled milk, condensed milk, the pulp of the dragon fruit and some sugar in a blender.

Blend until it looks smooth and creamy. Serve in a glass and enjoy transforming into a dragon!



"This is the story of my best friend, Rico. I also feature in it, just a little. We were 15 years old at that time. We were in the beautiful land of Kindroy, the land of the wizards.

"Did you know that Walahanko The Righteous is coming to Kindroy?" I asked Rico.

"Really? I can't wait for him to come here! He's my idol." He replied. "What do you think of him, Pucci?"

"I think that he's overrated; no one has seen his spells," I replied. He looked at me stunned. "Seriously?!?! Did you not hear about the time he defeated Glacius, the great Ice Dragon? The one that attacked our kingdom?" He paused and then sighed, "Let's just get to our spells class now."

The class was boring as usual. There was nothing much to do, so I was flipping through pages and vaguely paying attention to the professor and then-

BOOM

"What was that!?" I said, looking around to see if anyone had said Ignis. Instead, sounds of war came from outside the school. There were roars and crashes, and sounds of people screaming. All of us went outside to see what was happening, only for our faces to turn frozen with fear.

Glacius, the great ice dragon, was back again. Rico could not believe his eyes, "What? I thought that Walahanko defeated that dragon! How-"

Everyone else was screaming, running away from the dragon; we were not so brave, we were just hiding from it. Until Walahanko The Righteous showed up. I could see the relief on everyone's faces instantly.

"Do not worry, I am here" He assured us, "I will defeat the dragon....Again!" We watched as Walahanko battled the dragon and it was....one weird fight. Everyone knows that every wizard has "soul" spells that were personal, but he was using spells that belonged to other great warriors.

Rico would be devastated to learn that his idol was nothing but a scheming fraudster all along. He spent his entire life trying to be like Walahanko.

Anyways, back to the dragon- I could not do much to help since my powers were pretty much useless in front of the Ice Dragon. I discovered that I had the ability to freeze things when I was 7. If this was a fire dragon, I would have done my best.

Then, Rico had a great idea. "Use the fireball spell! We just learnt it in class today... What's the spell? Oh right, Ignimis I think?" Walahanko took the suggestion, but nothing happened- except that he fell on his butt. Despite the pressure, everyone was laughing. You could see the embarrassment on his face.

"I think the spell i was going for was Ignis..." Rico mumbled. Then, the tiniest spark came out of Rico's hands. Only Rico and I noticed it. "But how could this be? I am good at magic, I have a strong magic power right?" He looked at his hands, thinking that he was weak, when Walahanko, his idol, fought right next to him. "It's okay, maybe you were just nervous-" I comforted him, even though I knew that something was wrong. Being nervous or scared only triggered the power, and never sidelined them. We saw Walahanko using powers that we've seen before. The great wizard Monty 'The Core' Yddlakish's gravity powers, pull the dragon toward the ground. Then the wise Wu 'Father nature' Strang's ability to make trees, to hold the dragon in place. Everyone got suspicious of Walahanko's powers.

"I've seen those powers before," said Rico.

"Yeah, everyone has," I replied.

"No, I mean the people who had those powers, lost them a few days ago," Rico continued, "Must be a coincidence."

After a few minutes of watching from afar, Walahanko finally took down Glacius: The Great Ice Dragon. Everyone came out of hiding and applauded him. I was looking at the dragon when I saw that symbol again. Then I realized, Walahanko wasn't whom we thought. Rico would be devastated, but I couldn't reveal this to him. At least not yet.

"Walahanko! I've always wanted to ask you this...What is your soul spell?" Rico was making conversation with his idol just metres away.

Walahanko looked at him as if he was guilty, and said with an awkward to do on the other side of the country. Bye now!" he then flew away. Rico's

smile turned to a frown.

"I am going to go on a quest to find him and find out what his soul spell is." he announced. "I'll come with you." I was quick to answer.

We cooked up an excuse to tell at home and headed in the same direction as Walahanko. It was going to be a long journey, so we paused midway, near a giant oak tree. Rico noticed that it was a full moon that night, and started hiding inside the tree. I asked him what happened, and he kept repeating, "Get away from me! Just hide somewhere!" I realized he was scared of the full moon, and asked, "Are you scared of werewolves? You know they aren't real, right?"

He replied, "I know they exist! Okay, I'm sorry I haven't told you yet, but when there's a full moon, I turn into-"

I then realized what he was about to say, and impulsively said, "You're a werewolf?!" He started to frown, and I realized he was ashamed of it, so I continued, "That's so cool! I wish I was a werewolf!"

"Really? Well, I can only control my powers on some days, like today...anyway, I can't really sleep like this, so I'm going to go get some firewood, that's just wood that's dry right?"

He walked away, just before I was about to sleep, I heard a branch crack right beside me. I looked to my side and I saw Walahanko looking at me. I got so shocked I couldn't even move or was that a spell? "What are you doing here?!" He lifted me into thin air in one swift motion and said, "I know you're onto me. I will get rid of you before you rid me of my reputation."

I tried to play dumb. "I-I have no idea what you are talking about-" I realized he had some amulet on when he lifted his hand to pick me up. "Don't try to play coy with me. Now choose, Either you surrender, and your friend lives, or try to run, and both of you die." He barked.

I gulped and thought, 'Oh, he wouldn't kill us, would he? That would ruin his reputation.'

Then, somehow, he replied to me, "No one will know you are missing. They will only realize that you are dead." I realized he could read my thoughts. From the corner of my eye, I could see Rico, carrying firewood toward me. When he saw what was happening, he knew instantly.

"Be careful! He can read your thoughts!" I screamed. Before Rico could do anything, Walahanko began casting spells on him. Rico was able to duck

most of them, but Walahanko pointed his amulet at Rico and cast a vocal spell. I watched in shock as Rico turned back into a human.

"What is this magic? I'm not a werewolf anymore!" I quickly realised what had happened. Walahanko can steal other people's abilities. He had just stolen Rico's werewolf power instead of his light because it was the magic he was currently using. "I've stolen your power. I'm going to head to my training grounds in the north, so twits like you won't bother me." he threatened us and flew away.

"Rico, it's okay that you lost your werewolf ability. I know it was awesome but, at least you have your soul spell, right?" He looked me dead in my eyes and told me, "You know how I don't have a dad? Well, my werewolf power was the only thing I had left to remember my dad. He was a werewolf, and he passed it down to me." I didn't know what to say, even though I understood exactly what he was going through.

"It's okay, I still remember him," Rico said quietly.

We travelled for days and nights in search of Walahanko, to teach him a lesson. It was getting colder by the minute and Rico helped us stay warm by emitting light. Then suddenly one day we heard long bangs and explosions.

"Do you think that's what I think it is?" Asked Rico and I nodded. Rico looked me in the eyes and grinned. I understood what he was saying.

We watched Walahanko turn into a giant green dragon, shooting blue flames out of his mouth in amazement. We were up against that, but we could not deny how awesome it looked. We watched until he stopped practicing and realised that he got very weak after he transformed back into a human. We knew we had no idea how to do this, but we still went ahead with it anyway.

"Oh! You're still alive? Doesn't matter. My plans are already set." We walked up to Walahanko and started the battle. "Illumino!" Rico incanted, blinding Walahanko's eyes with so much light.

"Glacio," I replied, freezing his legs with my ice powers.

"Custoterra," Walahanko said, pinning us to the ground.

"Illumino maximus," Rico said as he kept increasing the brightness of the sphere near Walahanko's eyes. My eyes were starting to hurt and Rico started to realize.

"Illumino minimus," Rico incanted.

"Is this all you got?" Walahano sneered.

Rico felt powerless as he watched Walahanko jump into the air and expand into a scaly dragon. "I don't think I can freeze a flying dragon..." but Rico already had a plan in mind. He just didn't share it with me. As I fell to the ground, he covered himself with light and became one with light itself. He flew up into the air.

"Wow that is so cool! You look like a star! Now go get him!" I cried to him, trying to hide my pain. "Ignis" I added.

Soon enough, a small fireball the size of a basketball was heading for the dragon. It missed Walahanko completely and it hit Rico instead.

Rico went behind the green dragon. In the blink of an eye, moving at the speed of light, Rico kept speed blitzkrieging through Walahanko's dragon form, but Rico was barely holding on. It took a very very very incredible amount of magic to move at the speed of light, let alone keep it constant for a few minutes. Rico finally hit the green dragon below his neck with all his might. I watched as both of them fell slowly. When Rico fell, I got over my pain to go and look at him. Every step I took was worse than hell, every second that passed made me fear that Walahanko was playing dead. Rico was glowing slightly and he had merged with light. He was no longer human. I couldn't believe it. I tried to lift him, but my hand phased right through him.

The last thing he said was, "Don't worry. I don't feel much pain as a form of light. At least in the afterlife, I might be with you as a good friend."

I ran back, as fast as I could, to report the entire story to the kingdom. Some wizards believed me, while some were refusing to process the fact that Walahanko had lied to all of us. Enough proof was found when the symbol of Walahanko was seen on the dragon and more when his own sister confessed to the court all of Walahanko's crimes.

With all this, my friend Rico attained two titles of his own: "Rico the Great" and "Rico the Fearless".

If he were alive today, he simply wouldn't believe his fate.



The Elf Without A Home

words: Aarish

In the depths of the night a dwarven silhouette skipped through the length of a table, singing a lullaby. Suddenly there was a loud crash on the other side of the house and the dwarf scurried to a hole beneath a wall clock, worrying that the humans had woken up from their deep slumber.

After a while she quietly scurried to the sound of the impact, trying to look out for human foot-thumps but none came. Once she reached the spot she spotted a large crater the size of a human in the middle of the garden.

“What did you do?!” she heard a familiar voice from behind her shouting.

“Father, I did nothing. I just heard a crash and came here to investigate,” She responded, raising her hands up in defence.

“Qidiane! How many times do I have-” Qidiane’s father was forcefully tuned out as she turned to see the glowing purple orb that was the cause of the crater. It seemed to be calling to her. When she came closer, the orb’s top half cracked and burst. A mysterious and seemingly bright aurora blast forth a coloured force. A multitude of creatures that looked like lizards (some flying, others running and some floating through the air) escaped from the orb, which was clearly too small to contain all of them. This left Qidiane and her father on the floor shocked. After an hour or two, though it felt like only seconds, the dust cleared to reveal all the monsters long gone.

TRIVIA

Just like Medina form the story *Karthoshka Serum*, J K Rowling used Latin and French to make up most of the spells in Harry Potter. For example, Obliviate, the spell that makes you lose your memory, originates from the latin word Obliviscor which means “I forget.”



The pair dusted themselves off and as soon as they thought the surprises were over, they were proven wrong. Suddenly, there was another aurora and in front of them was a whimsical book; brown in colour, with gold trim around the edges and a golden lock with multiple bookmarks.

"What have you done, foolish mortals?" yelled the book.

"Sorry if we did anything wrong. We were just taking a stroll when we saw the orb....and then a few things might have happened." Qidiane babbled, both nervous and too anxious to learn of the truth.

"Fools!" boomed the book, "That orb was an extension of my sealing magic that protected the world from dragons and powerful magic!"

"Wait, that orb contained magic?? Is that what that force was? does that mean we can do magic now? Why were you protecting us from an exciting thing like magic?" Inquired Qidiane.

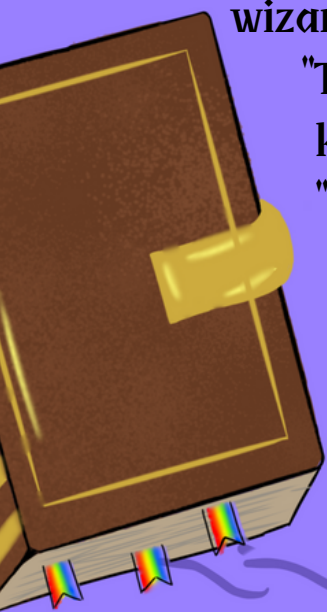
"Yes mortal. You can now do magic, but only with the help of a familiar- which, unfortunately (thanks to your intervention) happens to be me and you have just released the darkest magical being in the world: the species of *Lacrimabilis Rusoretæ*" proclaimed the book in an all-powerful tone.

"What is your name, by the way? I will help you since its somewhat my fault...sorry about that" Qidiane conversed with the book.

"You have no choice but to help me, considering it is entirely your fault! And my name is something that must not be used by a fool like you," proclaimed the book in a way that Qidiane thought resembled the arrogant wizard named Hrothgar who thought he was above all.

"That's not very nice. My name is Qidiane, if you wanted to know."

"I don't care. We have loads of work to do. Touch my cover, mortal. Quickly." continued the book. Qidiane's father was ready to interject that she was too young and inexperienced and that magic did not exist, but before he could utter a word, the pair were gone in a flash.



In the house, the troublesome pair stood behind a bookshelf viewing a behemoth in the form of a red and blue lizard with 4 wings.

“Alright foolish mortal, all you need to do is get me the essence of that creature, which are its scales, so that I can do my magic,” whispered the book, trying not to get the attention of the beast.

“I need you to cast magic and secondly can you please stop calling me that?” Qidiane whispered back.

“Firstly, I want to see how good you are. If you are in any real danger, I will come in and help you out and secondly no. Any questions?” whispered the book, angry at Qidiane. Qidiane nodded yes.

The monster turned its blood red eyes to meet Qidiane, murder written all over its expression. “Umm, hello? Could I borrow your scales?” She asked. The beast opened its mouth and a bright red ball of power started to build up.

“Qidiane!” Yelled her father, pushing her aside from the incoming attack, immediately turning into stone.

“Father!” Yelled the girl, tears welling up in her eyes.

“Okay that’s enough,” stated the book offhandedly as it took Qidiane to the roof.

“Why did you do that?” asked Qidiane, fighting to keep herself together.

“I did nothing, and besides this was just one of the many setbacks,” the book stated without any remorse.

“You were powerful, you could have helped but all you did was wait there like a stuck-up snob and let others fight and die in the battles you waged!” shouted the girl, letting her anger get the better of her.

“You watch your filthy tongue child! You have no idea of the life I have lived before you decided to come and ruin the work I spent my past lives doing,” the book replied.



"I wish I had never met you!" yelled Qidiane.

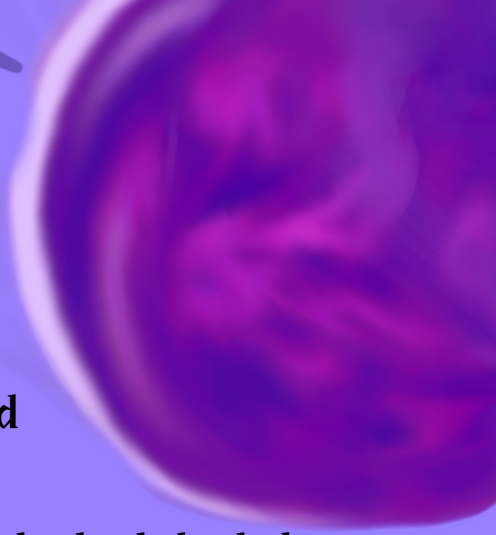
"Well I'll just make that wish come true for you now, won't I!" the book yelled back, flying into the distance. For the next hour, Qidiane sat there in contemplation. She had released a great evil onto the world that could kill more people than she could possibly imagine.

Now, she had to fix it and avenge her father, whether she had the help of that useless and snobby book or not. She looked at the rising sun with fire in her eyes, she was now an elf without a home. She was a hunter - not because of fate, but because of her choice. She was going to end the race of creatures that killed her father. She was going to take revenge. She was going to save the world, even if it was going to cost her life.

The End

TRIVIA

Elves in most fantasy fiction are considered to be friendly creatures with great magical abilities. Sometimes they are depicted as evil and cunning, because of how powerful they are. You can find the elves dancing over meadows, particularly at night and on misty mornings. If a human witnesses the dance of the elves, they would discover that even though only a few hours seemed to have passed, many years had passed in the real world.



The Man Who Saw The Dragon

37

Words: KrishnaPriya

"Good morning class. Settle down!" yelled Miss Hampsh.

"Class today we will be reading a book; The Man Who Saw

The Dragon. I demand complete silence when I read." She announced. She began reading from the well-maintained pages of the book.

"Once upon a time...that's how every old fairytale goes.

This one is a little different. Once upon a time, there were magical beings who were blessed with the gift of translating visions that would predict the future. They were called the "Delphis". A not-so-famous Delphi, Chloe, got drawn into her vision to see quick flashes of confusion. She sat down at her drawing table to decipher the complicated message. Out of habit, she doodled out the dream to understand the vision better. This time, she deciphered the message much quicker than she usually did. The vision delivered a message that of a boy who dreams of a dragon and wakes up with a star-shaped scar on his wrist, would be destined to be the next Guardian of the Delphis.

Chloe knew all about the Guardian of the Delphis. This boy, whomever it would be, has been prophesied to protect the art and history of this rare gift which was bestowed upon a special set of humans ever since the beginning of time. Chloe grew up listening to this myth, and now she was the Delphi who was going to deliver this message to the world.

Thomas lived by the prairie with his mother and father on the outskirts of Abarthacus, a famous city. He went to a small school which was inside an abandoned hospital, a mile away from his house. He was taught by a gentle and kind lady, Mrs. Adams, who was like a second mother to Thomas, who taught him everything, from the most basic of life lessons to the most complicated physics formulas. One day she came into the abandoned hospital with a blue book in her hand, it was untouched and new, taking Thomas by surprise because almost all of the books she used to teach him were second-hand and in poor condition.

Mrs Adams opened the book to display a long story of 300 words in front of Thomas. He slowly traced his finger across the words as he moved through the story of the Delphis and their powers. He smirked to himself thinking "this is as silly as Santa". Little did he know, he would soon be proven wrong. He was the one; the protector, the preserver, the only hope to sustain this marvellous art that managed to survive these changing times. Mrs Adams concluded the class and Thomas began walking home as his mind began to wander and began to imagine a world where such seemingly crazy stories could exist.

When he went home, he recited the story to his mother while she cooked up some rabbit stew. His mother, who knew the truth behind the seemingly silly story nervously fidgeted around the kitchen. She knew she had to tell her son the truth someday, but today was not it. After finishing dinner, Thomas headed to his room to catch some sleep.

It took him a second to drift off to sleep and it was not long enough before he began dreaming. A red fiery dragon appeared right beside his house. The dragon's nostrils flared as he spoke to Thomas with a fairly creepy voice.

"Thooooooooomaaaaassssss," he slithered like a snake that just found its prey.

Thomas awoke the next morning in a swift motion and as he sat up, he remembered the dragon theory that he read in the book. He harshly tapped himself on the shoulder for thinking of such childish thoughts. As he did, he felt a small groove in his skin, he turned his head and shoulder to examine the scar. No blood, no flesh, a simple star shaped scar was staring back at him. 'If the theory is accurate, real or even true to the slightest, what does the future hold for him?' He wondered."

Ms Hampsh was cut off by the bell and the students rushed towards the hallway. "Just know that this story will not be continued tomorrow morning!" Ms Hampsh announced, just before the last student left.

Dragon Trivia #2

Research shows that dragon legends appear in nearly all cultures, because nearly all humans are afraid of snake-like creatures.



A Plot To Dominate The World

40

Written By Amruth

{Damodar}

No one knows I'm capable of some super secretive meticulous magic. Yet there were only 2 kinds of creatures I could ever make: Origami Wizards and Origami Dragons (and maybe armies out of A4).

There was but one door separating my bedroom from everything else. In my bedroom, there was a bed, some books, and of course, there was a big bag filled to the brim with colourful origami. And, I had a few magical friends, who came to life when no one was looking.

First, there was Professeur Jacques, a pink wizard with the grace of merlin, a revolutionary in mathematics and the sciences; Then, following his charm was Ma'am Angrezi (अंग्रेज़ी) my kind and hard-working English tutor at home who was a great blue dragon with black googly eyes; There was also yellow wizard Sir Macaulay, whom I slightly despised because of the subjects he taught me: my second-language French and the Social Sciences. I dreaded both the subjects equally.

If only those 2 stupid subjects never existed! If only my power was strong enough.

Every second I look at another person, my power disappears. Otherwise, I could have dominated the world; alas, that is truly impossible. First, I would have to dominate everyone in my class with good marks.

"Are you sure you need to study this much, dear?" Ma'am Angrezi asked me while being perched on my thumb, "You will forget all of this in that sitting room."

"I think you mean exams," I replied, looking at Ma'am Angrezi and then turning back to my French book.

"Why else are they called SATs?" Professeur Jacques, the French revolutionaire asked me in his revolting tone, "When are you going to enjoy your life on Earth?"

"Shut it, everyone." The British Sir Macaulay ordered, "we must let the boy do whatever he wants. What must be done, will be done. Sooner or later".

“There is such a thing as working too much,” The French revolutionary argued, “and this young chap here is doing just that!”

Sir Macaulay did nothing. It would be a waste of his time and his plans for world domination were soon to be in sight.

He would have to recruit a huge army of wizards and dragons, moreover without anyone noticing. It was unfortunate that there was no spell to turn oneself invisible, let alone to kill someone or predict the future.

Sir Macaulay plotted to initiate his plan when Damodar slept comfortably on his squishy pillow. Damodar would have no clue, and more importantly, no means to stop the wizard.

“Don’t do this Damodar.” Ma’am Angrezi tried to convince me against studying, “When you are an adult, you will regret this moment of your life.”

“Please stop dramatizing my life,” I replied.

“You care more about what your classmates and teachers think of you.”

Professeur Jacques rioted revolutionarily, “You are influenced by everyone else, what is there for you to influence? What is left for you to dominate?”

“He does have a point,” I told myself, “Oh well. The truth would be out anyway.”

Damodar’s face changed to one without emotion. “Fine. I will stop studying” Ma’am Angrezi could not believe it! She leapt into the air as an act of pure joy while Professeur Jacques’ face lit up with a grin.

Sir Macaulay, however, was infuriated. This wasn’t going according to his plan.

“How dare you insult the poor boy” The wizard lashed out. “The only thing that separates this boy from a factory worker is education: you can’t just go about insulting it”.

“Anything in high amounts is lethal.” Ma’am Angrezi replied calmly, but in a haggling tone, “So is this great marvel of humanity you are talking about.”

I opened the door to my room. Outside was my mother, as always, she was watching an Indian soap opera. I could never figure out my parents’

choices, they lacked terribly in taste.

Behind me, the origami world had slowed down to a stop.

“Mother,” I asked, “Can I go out?”

“Finally,” my mother exclaimed after pausing the serial, “Finally, you have decided to stop studying. Of course, you can go.”

I took a few steps and reached for the door. It opened without a creak and soon I was out.

There is not much to do at six in the evening. Where to go? Should I ride a swing? Should I daydream in the main park? Or should I go back home?

I hate swings and I shan't go back home yet because my mother's disappointment would lead to a long lecture... Only one option left.

I walked and walked. Soon I was at the main park, which had been closed for a few days due to heavy rains and whatnot. There were seven straight flight stairs to descend before reaching the park below. I took the first step, then the second and the third. Soon, a frog hopped onto the fourth step.

“Please hop over. Please do,” I requested the frog.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, a snake slithered through and pushed the frog down the stairs in an effort to eat the frog. I shrieked and ran as fast as I could back to my home. It was too dangerous outdoors.

{Sir Macaulay}

“I hope you know what your job is, Wilhelm?” I asked my newly created wizard.

“My job is to do as you say,” the green wizard replied.

I smiled an acknowledgement. “Now do your job,” I ordered.

We were hiding behind the bag of origami and would not be seen by anyone.

Damodar was doing some homework; it was common for his eraser to fall and bounce away. And soon enough his eraser fell over his desk.

It was time.

My companion and I flew and magically threw the eraser back to Damodar's desk. “Who are you?” Damodar asked, “I did not create you!” he exclaimed in surprise.

“Don't worry, lord,” Wilhelm replied, “I was summoned by Sir Macaulay.”

Wilhelm followed my orders; it was time.

“Feuerball!” Wilhelm uttered, and a small fire flew towards the lord and me.
 “Sphaera Aquae!” I replied.

The Fire and Water from both sides of the duel nullified each other. Damodar tried to dislodge Wilhelm and he barely missed.

“Armee Papier!” Wilhelm had now summoned an army made of paper.

“Exertus Carta!” Now I summoned my own army. Swords between the 2 armies slashed and clashed. The A4 armies fought and fought on the floor, bleeding colourful origami.

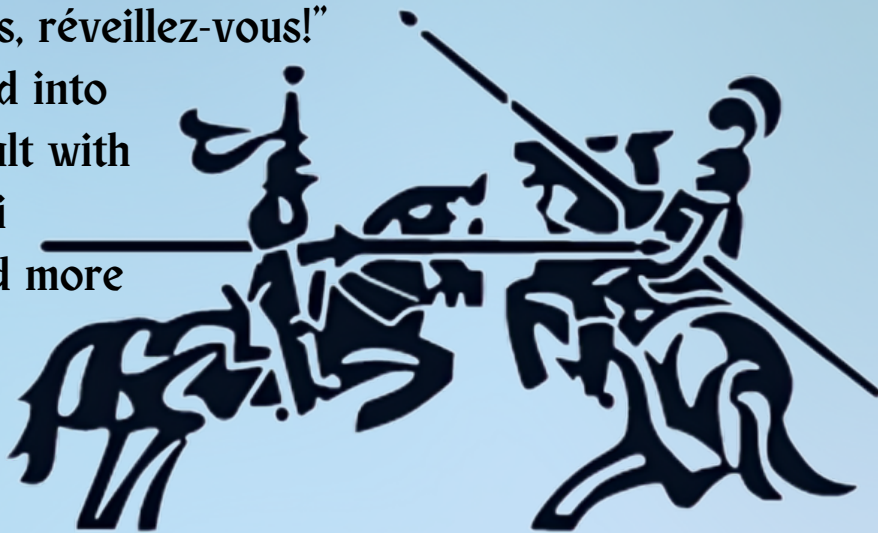
“Retreat!” Wilhelm ordered, “Orderly retreat!” The paper army retreated, but the soldiers fighting Sir Macaulay’s army continued to fight. Wilhelm would have escaped had it not been for Ma’am Angrezi and Professeur Jacques.

“Ma’am Angrezi and Jacques, it is an emergency!” Damodar ordered the revolutionary, “Draft an army this instant and madam, please do as much as you possibly can.”

“Armée de papier à la guerre!” the Frenchman called to his newly summoned paper army, “Chevaliers, réveillez-vous!”

Soon, the Frenchman’s army turned into knights on horses who quickly dealt with the enemy’s troops; Ma’am Angrezi with each breath burned more and more soldiers of Wilhelm’s army to bits.

“Ad Bellum!” I called out to my soldiers, who attacked Wilhelm’s army once again.



“I am not sure if my comrade Wilhelm will survive,” I consoled myself, “but I am sure of one thing. Soon, there will be a war. A war which will decide if I am to be the ruler of the world.”

Blue, Black, and Olive

written by Koumudi

She sat there crying, accompanied by the sky that had been pouring down heavily. The candle illuminating the whole room was about to melt into a pool of wax when the door slammed open.

"Rin, I am very very sorry my love, we could not save her, we tried our best my dear but-" her father tried to console her but she trailed off soon enough. Rin could not say a word. She could not believe this. She struggled to process the fact that she had just lost her mother. Her mother, who was her everything. Her mother, who generously passed down her fierce blue eyes, thick black hair and olive skin to Rin.

Most mothers taught their daughters to walk elegantly, to speak less, to be gentle, and to marry a rich man. Rin was different.

She was taught sword fighting and horse riding. She was only an adolescent but knew a lot more than others of her age.

She was very inquisitive and had a photogenic memory. Rin's mother let her find herself by allowing her to explore the world. Her mother had taught her to be strong and bold. She learnt very well, but she felt like a toddler all over again, trying to process the death of her beloved mother.

She wept, wept and kept weeping. Her loss was heavy, She just craved for her mother to caress her hair while she lay on her lap, listening to her mother talk about politics. But that could never happen again, and thinking about it made her feel like there was a huge hole inside her heart that swallowed her soul in a gulp.

"Time for the funeral, sweetheart" whispered Rin's father gently. Rin gathered up all her courage and nodded.

She went to her wardrobe and pulled out a bright yellow frock, which her mother had made for her. She tied her hair just the way her mother used to and set out of the house. This funeral was not like an ordinary one where everyone would wear black and stand around grimly. This funeral would resemble a celebration, with everyone in bright shades of yellow. The reason behind this unusual setting was Rin's mother, Robin.

Robin was a joyous person who could never bear to see people cry and twisting old traditions had been her speciality. This was one of her last wishes.

Gazing at the sheer blue sky, Rin tried to find her mother's face in the clouds.

"Where have you gone, mother?" she thought to herself, "why did you leave me here?"

Suddenly, she felt something move beside her. When she looked up, she saw a bird gliding upwards, towards the sky and vanishing into thin air in the blink of an eye. Peculiarly enough, the bird had left a suitcase behind. Rin's curiosity urged her to open the suitcase. To her utter surprise, she found pictures of her mother and a few of her friends standing together on the branches of a huge oak tree. She pictured herself playing with her mother under the same branch of the same tree, but she could not recollect where it was. She found a locket as well. When opened, it had two pictures on either side of two birds. The first bird had blue eyes and a blissful combination of black and olive feathers, very similar to her mother's features. The other bird had bright yellow feathers, the colour her mother admired, and shimmering black eyes.

"Why would she have pictures of birds in here?' she asked herself.

"is there any connection between the ladies of her family having bird names and these pictures?"

"and why in the world did the bird drop a giant suitcase here?"

As Rin dug deeper into the contents of the suitcase, she saw something emitting a sun's worth of light. She attempted to touch it, but fell motionless on the ground.

When she opened her eyes, her vision was blurred but she saw a tall lean figure with black hair, olive skin and blue eyes on a tree not far away. The next moment, she was unconscious again.

When she came back to her senses, she found herself in Mrs. Raven's arms. She tried to push the hair covering her face back when she realised that there was something odd about her hands and the way she smelled. When she looked at her hands, she immediately began gasping for air. Her hands, or where her hands were supposed to be, there were feathers! Actual feathers, shining in the shade of magenta.

Mrs Raven was smiling down at me as I looked at her, horrified and confused.

"Congratulations, my dear, your day of ascension has finally arrived. You will observe many big changes, but most importantly, from now on, you shall only be addressed as "Quail".

"Am I transforming into a bird?! Are my family members also like this, like me? I- what is happening to me?!"

Rin felt like she was going crazy with all the questions churning inside her. She tried to ignore that inquisitive urge in her mind, but she could not do a thing about the most pressing question of all,

"Does this mean my mother is still alive?"

To be continued....

Izuma: The Lone Tetris

by Raj Vardhan

Once, there was a lone Tetris named Izuma. His parents were criminal masterminds. They died 4 years ago, leaving Izuma alone. Nobody trusted Izuma.

Izuma was kind, but arrogant.

One stormy night, when he was searching for some food, he stumbled upon the territory of the Night Lighters.

The Night Lighters were a squad that promised to protect the innocent in the night and were extremely powerful.

Izuma decided to cautiously explore, since no one was around. He walked past the tents and came across food supplies. He couldn't fight the urge that demanded him to steal the food and it had been a few days since he had a proper meal. He took a handful of food and was about to flee. He instead came face to face with a soldier.

The soldier looked furious, It was hard to ignore Izuma's hefty pockets.

"What are you doing here? This is the Night Lighter's base. Don't you know what happens when you steal from us?"

Izuma shook his head, while his heart thumped away.

Izuma gulped, "I was just hungry, I was merely borrowing some supplies. I will return them, soon, of course. What do you expect me to do? Starve to death?" Izuma said as if he was the boss of the soldier and prepared to attack him. His hands were however weak from starvation and the guard swiftly pinned Izuma to the floor. He said, "Listen kid, I am Capri, one of the three generals of the Night Lighters. You really have some nerve to come up against me. Just for that, you are coming with me."

Izuma had never been this scared and panicked heavily and closed his eyes.

The next day, he was in the main base of the Night Lighters and he saw Capri talking with two other people whom he did not recognise. One of them said, "Fine, let's take him in. He could probably help in the war." When Izuma heard the word "war" he was speechless. He was no fighter and had no idea why there was a war in the first place! Who were they up against?

Izuma wasn't unnoticed for long enough, though. He was soon surrounded by a whole troop of the Night Lighters. "Welcome to the Night Lighters Squad and heads up. War is coming."



The quest for the Lychnus Scrolls

By El Profesor

"Where are the Mystures? What happened to Garory? He has deep cuts all across his body! What is happening?"

It's only been five days since we came to Mont. Majica. The gates were broken into, and the mystical creatures we brought back (because they were going extinct). One of us was attacked. This wasn't done by Nemangio; the non-magic folk who live in the Ancras. This was someone from the Inferum, home of the dreadful Minotaur.

This was the devastating creation of Mingero, who was one of us but thought that the Veneficus (the magic folk, which were us) was the most superior race in the world. He made the Ultima Consilium (the board of elderly people who decide everything) throw him in the Inferum; the living hell below the Ancras for prisoners.

He took it to his advantage and, with the help of the Sacics, created Monos like the Minotaur, Agrabuamelu, and many more. It has become a threat to other Mystures as they are the prey of Monos. The Sacics used them to turn them into different monos. It was we who had the responsibility of saving the Mystures.

"Solan, we better prepare ourselves for explanations. The Ultima Consilium will ask us where the Mystures went and how the Monos enter the gates and took them away while we were there. Don't worry about Gagory. The Medens will treat him. They are the saviours of Veneficus. They are meant to do that, like those doctors in Nemangio, but the best of the best." We had two options: we could go to the Ultima Consilium and tell everything, or go to the Inferum alone and bring back the Mystures. It was almost Sunset and we had to report to the Ultima Consilium and tell them anyway. It would be better if we get back to the Prytaneum, where the Ultima Consilium always had a meeting every evening for discussing the 3 worlds:

Webes and I walked our way through the dense forests, where the great Sylvia (spirit of the woods) and her Torterra (huge tortoises with forests on its shell) reside.

We arrived in front of the Infinitus alongside Gagory, who was now lying on a levitated lectica (which is a portable bed for moving patients from one location to another).

The Infinitus is a small hall with brown gates and walls made up of grey stones that repair themselves when attacked, with magical fortifications all around it. Inside, the hall was a long building that had several flights of stairs going upwards to different rooms and halls. Our purpose here was to go to the Prytaneum. It was a different segment of the Infinitus where the Ultima Consilium lived and did all their work.

We were just about to reach Prytaneum when a cloaked figure pulled us outside the Infinitus and into the Oppidum, where all of Veneficus lived.

"Who are you? Why are you pulling us to the town? We need to see the Ultima Consilium! Leave us!" I yelled at that person.

The person whispered, "You shall save those Mystures by reading the scrolls of Lychnus, which will be found in Scruta, on the borders of Ancras and The Inferum. You will have to

cross many obstacles, Mystures, Monos, Poltergeists, and much more to get the scrolls. And you only get them once every six months, at twilight on a full moon day. That very special day, lucky for you, is ten days from now."

"Now think," the mysterious person added, "If you could get the Mystures and present them in front of the Ultima Consilium, you might as well be forgiven, be filled with treasure and promoted to a higher position in the Infinitus. Maybe even the Head of the Legion, who knows!"

"I don't know how to get there" I grunted, trying to escape from his clutches. "Here's a map that will lead you straight to Scruta. You better get going now, or the Ultima Consiliym may fetch you here. Good luck!" The cloaked figure left us there and fled in a blink of an eye. I was a bit worried.

How had he got to know about the missing Mystures?

His plan was certainly a better option than going empty-handed to the Ultima. I didn't have much of a choice.

"Hey Webes! Would you like to go with me to Scruta? I will try to find some more people, but would you want to go? I asked him. I was a bit doubtful, as he always preferred to stay on the safe side, even though he was being treated negatively.

"Obviously, yes! I will go with you. I can just think of myself standing at the gates and seeing you commanding me. No! I will give you more people, but I will be going. Even if it means my life." I was shocked. But this gave me hope for completing this quest.

We hid in the Oppidium for the night. The next day, while I was sleeping, Webes convinced a woman and two dwarves to join our quest.

A woman? How can she survive a wild quest? I whispered to Webes, "Are you-uh-sure she will manage? And can she perform good amounts of magic, because that is required in this quest?" He looked baffled to hear my concern. He started stomping across the room, talking to himself. I wished to stop him before he could reply.

He yelled, "She is the best witch in the whole of the Oppidium! She even defeated the current Head of Legion, twice! And you doubt her?..."

I had to shut his mouth so that the woman couldn't hear us. I went to the lady who was wearing tight leather armour, with shoulder straps on each side. She was blonde, with a pinkish glow on her face. She was as close to perfection as one could get.

"Hello? Uh, Sir? Are you there? Hi! I am Diana Helling. I just came forward for this quest 'cuz I love adventures, and it has been quite a long time since I have gone for one." I was bewitched by her words. But I put that aside and gathered my thoughts, "How old are you?"

"Old enough. I may seem to be on the young-side, but trust me, I won't dishearten you."

"OK."

That was a lot more relieving.

"Hello, sir! We are the Revoir twins. He is Letalis, and I am Salvus. We are great at doing anything." The Revoir twins were two dwarfs, maybe 3-4ft in height. Each had a different appearance, though they were twins.

Salvus was wearing a dark rosewood-coloured winter tunic with patterned edges accompanying it. This was held tight by an engraved black belt,

Which also acted as a sheath for his dagger. The dagger had a wooden handle and was slightly bigger than a knife. He wore an intricately woven brownish-grey scarf and gloves which allowed his fingers to be exposed in case he needed to use his dagger. A bag was slung over his shoulders to keep supplies. Letalis was wearing a dark emerald green fur overcoat and a brigandine of the same colour below it. His hands had gauntlets on them and he held a magical sword in his right hand. It was long and thin, it looked light but was made only for steady hands. Its handle was covered with a gold sheet, with silver designs on it. And the sword itself was a dark, grey colour. His hair was long, black, and braided in between.

I was excited to see the team, and the bold feats they have done before coming to this quest. So, after discussing with Webes, Dianna, and the Revoir twins, we decided to call ourselves "The Audaces". And this will be our first quest together.

"Pack your belongings. We shall be leaving when the sun departs and the moon with the stars braces the skies." I thought to myself whether I had been too formal and medieval, but anyway, it was well appreciated by others and we started packing. We waited for the day to end, and once it did, we made our exit. But, fate was not on our side at the moment. We were welcomed by a bunch of Custodes of the Legion guarding the gates.

"Hey! Isn't that Solan and Webes? What are they doing there? And who is that lady? And the dwarves?" We knew that we had to run for it now. It was now or never. "Oberstufe! Guys, we will have to run! Use the Stunning Spell! Use the Delay spell! Retardo! Do the What, the..." I saw the dwarves raising their arms after touching the ground in the sprint position. It looked like they were controlling the piece of land. And then, Salvus extracted a boulder from the ground and pushed it towards the Custodes, just by moving his hands in the desired way. Letalis struck his sword and put a huge crack in the piece of land, dividing them and us by constructing a wall between us, so that it would give us some time to escape.

"Aerovelo!" Dianna lifted us all using the wind and we flew to Ancras, leaving the guards confused.

"That was a close one. Good work. And you have also proven yourselves worthy of this quest." I was awestruck when I saw the teamwork, and the coordination between us while driving the Custodes away, it was fantabulous. We just had a couple of hours before the sun pushed the moon and stars to take their place. But we weren't going to doze off to rest.

"Where should we head next, Sir?" Salvus asks.

"I suppose we are in, uh what is it- yeah! We are in front of Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai, somewhere far east. We have to go to the west, to Scruta. The Nemangio call it the Yellowstone National Park, on the Northwest side of the US. I have no idea what the United States is. It shows that the gates of the Inferum are the Yellowstone Caldera, a supervolcano in Yellowstone National Park. But we will have to go on land till Calais, France, from where we would fly to London. Then go on land till Fishguard, Wales, from where we can take the help of Beisht Kione, another Mysture, which is a serpentine eel-dragon, and we can swim our way to New York City US. From there, we can use our magical powers freely as we have people stationed across the US to manage the Nemangio. Until then, we have to limit our usage of magic as much as we can..."

We progressed to an abandoned pink house so that we can take some rest and then use our magic to go north. "We need to be extra careful, now that we are using magic-gather around in a circle, holding your hands, and close your eyes." The Revoir Twins clutched on their arms, and almost broke Webes' and my palm. Fortunately, my other palm was held by none other than Dianna. I was a bit relieved by the agonizing pain given by Letalis. But there was no time for affection now. And in a moment, we reached a dark open ground, where we were not welcomed by the people who lived there. "Weren't they- Nemangios?" Salvus asked in his shivering voice. "I suppose they are Nemangio. We have to run!" I replied.

In just a few moments, some people arrived at the same spot as we were. These were the same people we escaped from The Custodes.

"Now what do we do?" Salvus squeaked. This was the moment that I knew what was waiting for us in the journey ahead. "We need to flee! Let's meet up in Dubai in two days. Take these" I handed them a copy of the map and a magical locito (a walkie-talkie). "Just remember! Don't use magic in front of anyone! Good Luck!"

To Be Continued....

Tale of Sheridan: The last Dracotaur

By Prajwal

I am Sheridan, a typical 15-year-old with a little bit of. I'm not sure if going to a wizarding academy is typical for everyone. Anyway, right now I am trapped in a hell episode from Satan herself, aka Mrs Wilson's lecture. I swear to God, she uses some spells every time we're in her class because time seems to always slow down during her lectures.

Today, I had to use the oldest trick in the book, the all-mighty washroom excuse, to escape from this wretched classroom and took my best friend Melvin along with me to accompany me on my attempt to bunk the rest of the class. It might sound like a simple plan, but all of this is at personal risk. It is hard to bunk classes when your mother is a full-time professor at the same academy. No matter where I went, she found me.

Melvin and I fooled around in the hallways for a while, making faces at our friends who were still stuck in class. As we headed to the cafeteria, I heard my stomach growl like a dragon.

"Are you okay, bro?" Melvin looked at me, his face suppressed with laughter. I shook my head and rushed to the nearest washroom. I felt so sick, even after puking out almost all of the contents of my stomach. My throat and skin somehow felt parched and itchy. "Sheridan, what happened? You look as if you've seen a ghost" Melvin was waiting outside for me, wearing a rare look of worry.

"I don't know, I just felt sick, all of a sudden.."

"We didn't even eat the stale doughnuts, yet. Are you feeling all right now?"

"Yeah, I'll be fine-"

"I think we should take you to the infirmary. You don't look very well to me."

"If you say so..." I said, clutching my forehead.

"I'll see you after class then, take care," Melvin said, before walking to class.

Not long after that, the throbbing in my head increased ten-fold, making my vision blur. The last thing I heard before collapsing to the floor was a gruff voice that urged me to run away.

"Sheridan, Sheridan, RUN, GO AWAY..."

A few countless hours later, I woke up in my room. The blanket draped around me felt heavy and unfamiliar, although it was the same one I was using for the last ten years. After a teensy bit of struggle, I managed to uncoil myself from the drapes and walked up to my mirror, feeling like a walking corpse. Words cannot describe the horror I felt when I looked at myself in the mirror. Instead of my usual wide brown eyes, a pair of narrow, beady black eyes were staring back at me. When I raised my hands to feel my face, I was pricked by the rough scaly texture that now replaced my smooth face. And my hands- they weren't hands at all! They looked like an Eagle's claws- was I a LIZARD?! I pinched, punched and pricked myself thinking I was in a nightmare, to snap out of it, but unfortunately, it was not going away. I quickly calmed myself and thought of a way to escape the house without being noticed. After a quick scan of my room, I found an oversized jacket and a hat that perfectly fit my lizard form, so I quickly put on the disguise, yeeted out of the window and ran as fast as I could to

meet Melvin before he left to attend one of our classes.

finally arrived at his house, gasping for breath. "Melvin! Quick, open your window!" I whisper-yelled, tapping the glass continuously.

"Aa, Sheridan, why are you here so early?" I look up at him to explain but he quickly begins to scream. "Shh, calm down, it's me- Sheridan!" I felt ridiculous jumping around his window sill, trying to convince him that I wasn't a monster.

"I don't know how or when I became a lizard, but I woke up like this and I'm panicking-"

"A lizard?!" He stared at me like I was losing my mind. "You have giant wings protruding from your back, you're NOT a lizard....

You're a- dragon!" Melvin's eyes were wide in fear, and my hands- claws- involuntarily reached out to my back to feel the newly developed wings. "I swear, these were not there in the morning!" I exclaimed. "Who are you?! You cannot be Sheridan- Mom!"

"Wait, I can prove it. Remember that one time when you came out of your room yelling, asking your grandma for your underwear and-"

"OK, OK, I GOT IT YOU ARE SHERIDAN. But- how- what happened to you?"

"I dunno. I was hoping you could help me."

Melvin let me in and we scoured the internet to figure out why this was happening to me. It was not easy to find answers. We were so desperate that we even looked at ancient books.

One book had a section labelled "Dracotaurs" in the part where they discussed dragons. Neither of us had heard of that term before so we were baffled to learn of a race of people who were

half human and half dragon. Apparently, these 'dracotaurs' turn into dragons the first time they turn 15 and they are banished from living with normal people because of their dangerous powers. I was surprised, scared and anxious at the same time, but most of all I felt angry that my mother

did not find it important to reveal this GIANT piece of information in the 15 years that I existed. I am a dracotaur- I am a dragon!

"Dude, I'm freaking out for you! Does this mean you can shapeshift? You've got to learn how to control it so that you can pull mean tricks on the boring profs-"

"Not now Melvin. Thanks for helping. I will see you later" I said curtly and rushed home. As soon as I got home, I screamed for my

mother. "Sheridan? You're home so early-" She saw me and flinched for a quick second. "Sh..Sheridan? Is that you, honey?"

I quickly explained what was going on to her and demanded some answers. "Oh my dear boy, I was always afraid of this day. It feels like just yesterday when I met your father in college, 19 years ago. He was a great wizard and an admirer of dragons. Unfortunately for us, your father was part of an experiment that would horribly go wrong and turn him into a dragon humanoid sort of a creature. We had no clue at that time however and a few months later, we had you. Your father had a feeling that you would also turn out to be a dracotaur like him, but I hoped for so long that it wouldn't be true. He wrote about this rare condition- he wanted to publish a book about how these powers could help us in the future, but the higher authorities saw it as a powerful weapon. When your father found out his research would be used as a weapon, he

burned down all the copies and destroyed the dracotaur serum. Those people were not pleased by your father's actions, so they locked him away in the Royal Prison for the last 13 years-

At that exact moment, our front door slammed open and a buff Dracotaur was standing in the doorway. Scars covered his scaly body and they were poorly hidden by a raggedy scarf. Before I could comprehend what I had just heard, the enormous beast approached me and pulled me into a tight hug, whispering, "Sheridan, my dear boy- I missed you so much" My body stiffened as I realised who it was, and i could not stop the tears from rolling down my face.

However, we did not have another moment to spare as an army of silver armoured men barged into our house and came charging at my dad. My mother and I tried our best to defend my father, to have one more moment with him, but our efforts were in vain. The guards had overpowered us. They took my father away, again, and I could not save him despite being present this time.

"Sheridan, where are you off to?" my mother asked, her voice still raspy from all the sobbing.

"To save dad," I said, and I took off instantly. I did not hate having wings, perhaps in this singular moment alone.

I met up with Melvin and explained everything to him. He was more than happy to help, and together, we devised the ultimate jailbreak. Melvin agreed to act as the distraction as I sneaked into the dungeons of the palace without being seen or heard. When we reached the palace, everything was almost going according to plan but instead of taking left towards the dungeons, I took a right and ended up in the Princess's chamber. The princess hadn't been seen

in real life, only in pictures, but before I could continue fantasizing, she looked at me horrified. For her security, she grabbed a knife that she was using to spread butter on her toast earlier. When I told her, "Look, I'm not going to hurt you," she looked even more shocked, asking, "what are you?"

"I am a dracotaur, a half-dragon, half-human creature."

"I have heard of Aaron Sherlove's experiment. Did he create you?" she asked while inspecting me thoroughly. My eyes were drawn to her, but I snapped out of it and moved back a bit to tell the princess, "Aaron Sherlove is my father, and I need your help freeing him..: She looked at me for a moment, like she was considering the idea and nodded her head slightly. "I'll do it," she said so quietly, that I was surprised I heard her.

She led me to the entrance of the dungeon discretely.

"This is your last chance to save your father, I'll do something to buy you some time. Be careful." I thanked the princess for her help and stormed into the prison. But halfway through the prison, something felt odd. There was no sign of a single guard or a soul down here, but right then, I heard a groan from a distance.

I followed the noise and encountered a set of jail chambers, after looking through a lot of cells filled with skeletons and corpses, I found the chamber that held my father captive.

"Father! Father!" I called him as I slowly approached him. "Sheridan? What are you doing down here? It's not safe, run away before the guards show up." My father croaked, and I waved his fears away.

"Don't worry father, the princess is on our side. She helped me get to you. She will lead us

out too"

"No she won't. Sheridan- you should not have come back for me."

"What do you mean? I just wanted to be of some help-"

Before I could finish my sentence, the gates of the chamber shut, trapping me and my father in the chamber together.

"You should not have trusted the princess, Sheridan. You underestimated her." My father sighed. Soon, our prison cell was filled up with some weird-smelling mist and I started losing consciousness soon after.

"It is unfortunate that this family will not bend to my will. But no matter what, I will have my way!

Obliviate the father and son, put them under that imperiatus curse if you must- we need to teach them a lesson!"

"As you wish, your majesty"

A guard replied, and the last thing I saw before fainting was the princess's evil smirk.

THE END

There are triangles and squares,
given to us hopeless Apes.
There are sums of addition,
some numbers up for subtraction.
New products from multiplication,
and some new problems with
Division.
Oh, god forbid! There is always
algebra
and factorisation, of course.
Math homework is a dragon.
The more you delay it, the more
dangerous it will be
Even for math wizards
like me.

**-a poem Sheridan would probably
write (By Amruth)**

because life is incomplete without poetry....



There may be many poets who smuggle fantasy into their poetry, but there is none like William Shakespeare, who smuggled poetry into his prose, seamlessly.

Fantasy fiction is about star-crossed lovers, tragic protagonists, mischievous garden pixies, betrayals, deceptions, Kingdoms and Queendoms, knights and damsels, and everything in between. Fantasy fiction almost always tells us tales about struggles and perseverance.

And Shakespeare's plays were all about this

struggle. He was the master in portraying the tussle between the good and the bad, and it wasn't a shallow representation that only captured one entirely stereotypical good person VS a typical bad person (he did write about this too) but they were often about the struggle up in your head, between right and wrong. His tragic dramas like "Hamlet" and "Macbeth" changed the literary genre by expanding the horizons of character building.

Shakespeare showed the world that people preferred reading flawed, imperfect characters, rather than entirely preachy, morally sound heroes.

Shakespeare's audience felt emotionally connected to characters like Juliet, Lady Macbeth, Olivia, Julius Ceaser, Hamlet, etc because they were far more relatable since all these characters felt pain and faced tremendous hardships. Honestly, if we have literary masterpieces like Mr Darcy, Edward Cullen, Loki, Nebula and Wanda witch today, we have Shakespeare to thank for.

He not only gifted us rad words to use, like Swagger, Majestic, Lonely, Bloody and Road (among other shocking words that he created) but he also built us a portal that would allow us to view our characteristics in a fictional character, which enables us to judge and reflect better. I'll leave you with this quote from Shakespeare's play "The Tempest", which according to me sums his work up the best.

*"We are such stuff, As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."*

Turmoil Of The Future

written by Aarish

A wealthier, better-educated world is not necessarily a more harmonious one. Many people like to believe that with education comes enlightenment, and with enlightenment comes the ability to resolve disputes more peacefully. If it were that simple, of course, a highly educated and cultured society like Germany in the 1930s would never have embarked on the path of fascism.

When you look at the historical record it is fair to say that we live in a very peaceful world. However, it is also true that as the world becomes richer, it also becomes increasingly heavily armed. Figures released last month by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, show that global military spending has been rising over the past few decades and is likely to continue rising.

Global military spending is currently \$1.75 trillion. Between 2001 and 2012, the US military alone grew by 69%. The institute's research shows that as the Asia/Pacific region has become more prosperous, countries in our region have continued to increase spending on arms and defence-related initiatives. China's military spending now accounts for 9.5% of total global spending. Also, Chinese arms exports have increased by 162% in the last five years.

If we look at the facts it's not hard to believe that another major war is likely to come in contact with us in another century or so. The tension between China, USA and many other nations have already escalated and we are now at a level of technology that could wipe out our entire species within hours.

However, I am a firm believer in the theory that if we advocate for peaceful policies like eliminating nuclear weapons, initiating alliances with other nations and anti-arms agreements. We have the potential to avoid such a devastating outcome. However, this is just speculation and the future, in the end, is for us to decide.



The War in Ukraine: All you need to know

By: Bhagwath

**"There is no instance of a nation benefitting from prolonged warfare."
-Sun Tzu, The art of war.**

It will soon be 100 days since Russia started a full-fledged invasion of Ukraine. Russia is gradually seizing the eastern regions of Ukraine, including Melitopol, Mariupol, Donetsk, Luhansk, Severodonetsk, Kherson and parts of Izyum, and with these vital towns seized, Russia is advancing eastwards towards Kharkiv and Mykolaiv.

Despite going against the world's fifth largest military, Ukraine is still standing strong, comparable to the "Winter War" between the Soviet Union and Finland which was during World War II.

Ukraine's fierce resistance can be attributed to President Zelensky, who has asked the Western nations to supply additional weapons to Ukraine. He told in a recent NATO summit that his soldiers required "Far more contemporary equipment" to assist them so as to "break the Russian artillery superiority."



Aside from Western nations' assistance to Ukraine, Russia is accused of war crimes. Russian authorities have carried out deliberate attacks against civilian targets as well as indiscriminate attacks in densely populated areas. The most recent of such war-crimes was a bombing on a prison, which held prisoners of war in Ukraine.

This prompted President Zelensky to declare that these are "deliberate Russian war crimes" with Russia claiming that "Kyiv was to blame for the provocation."

On a positive note, Ukraine is exporting grains to countries that require them. According to Ukraine's infrastructure ministry, fifteen cargo ships are loaded with grain at the Black Sea ports of Odesa and Chornomorsk, with as many as ten ready to depart under the deal for safe transit between Ukraine, Turkey, Russia and the UN.

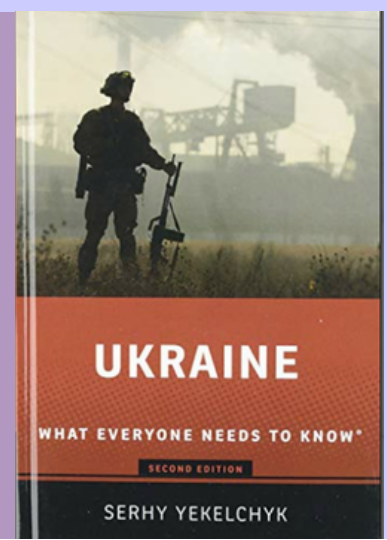


President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine

"vessels that were filled with grain already in winter are ready to go." The ministry said in a statement on Saturday, quoting minister Oleksandr Kubrakov.

"Why should I worry about some conflict occurring on the other side of the world?" you may ask. You should worry because it is terrible that a nation is being invaded under the clause of expansionism. Here is an impact that this war will have on all of us. You may feel like it is nothing, but if this continues, everyone will regret not understanding what was happening in the first place. This is why we need to spread awareness and know of basic facts like the ongoing war.

For further reading, check out the book **"Ukraine: What everyone needs to know"** by Serhy Yekelchyk. It is a good read for those who are looking to explore this topic more.



SDG- A necessity for the future

65

by Aasim

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were created to build a better world for people and our planet by the year 2030. All 193 members of the United Nations have agreed to pursue the SDGs. There



are 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the purpose of these sustainable development goals is to help combat urgent environmental, social and economic challenges faced by our world.

The Sustainable Development Goals are a global call to end poverty, protect the environment and ensure peace and prosperity for all people. I think these goals will build strong collaboration globally, nationally, and locally.

In my opinion, the best part of these goals is that anyone can contribute and every contribution, small or big, will bring an impact on our world.

I believe that climate change is an important topic and the need of the hour is to find a sustainable solution to tackle this issue. India and other countries have seen a rise in temperature, especially in the summer.

In conclusion, sustainable development seeks to achieve social and economic processes in ways that will not exhaust the Earth's non-renewable resources. I would urge everyone to develop sustainable ways to meet needs so that we can help our future generations to inherit a healthier and greener planet.



Guide to Greek Mythology

By Vitesh



Greek Mythology is One of the most "realistic" interpretations of gods, however, the downside is that they were more evil than even Thanos. It all began with the 1st generation of Gods, the primordial deities, Ouranos, the sky and Gaia, Mother Earth. Ouranos and Gaia gave birth to the Titans, and the most notorious of them was called

Kronos, the God of Time, was the youngest of the twelve children that were born to Gaia. Kronos was always looking out for opportunities that would elevate him to the top of the order. A golden opportunity came wrapped to him in the form of a powerful Scythe. Gaia requested one of his children to assassinate Ouranos, and

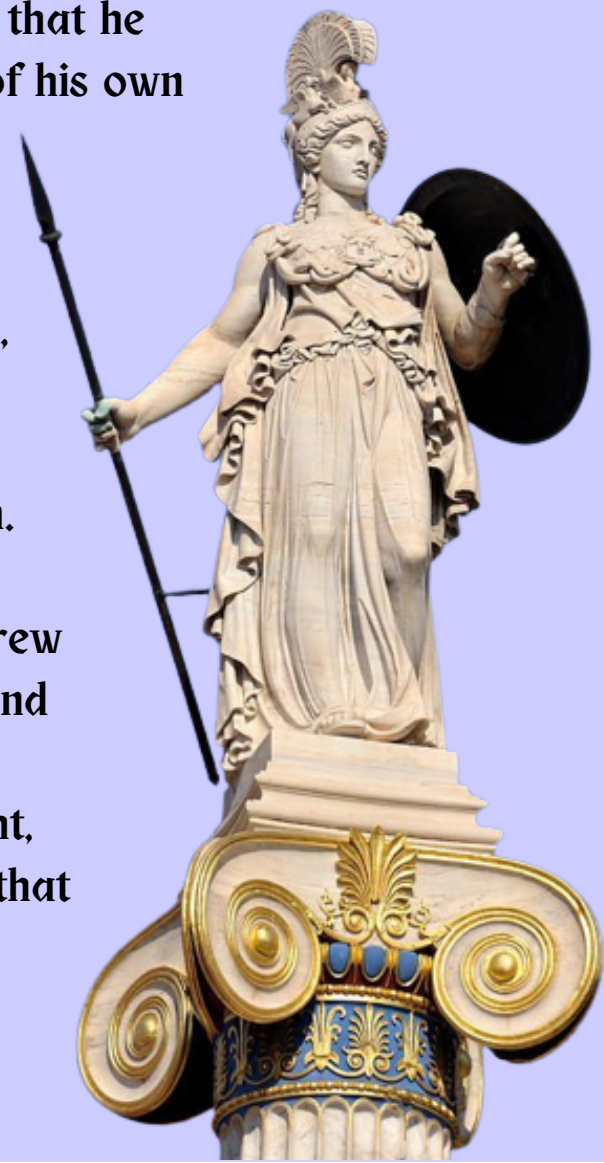
Kronos gladly complied. He mutilated Ouranos's father and took over to rule the world. While dying, Ouranos cursed Kronos that he would die the same death as him in the hands of his own children. Anyway, Kronos married his sister,

Rhea and totally forgot about the curse, until he had a child. Rhea gave

birth to six Primary Gods; Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon and Zeus.

Kronos decided that the best course of action to escape this curse is to eat his children.

One child, however, escaped from Kronos. He grew up to become Zeus. Rhea protected baby Zeus and sent him off to be raised in secret. He grew up resenting his father and when the time was right, he decided to take revenge. It was well known that prophecies were only to be fulfilled,

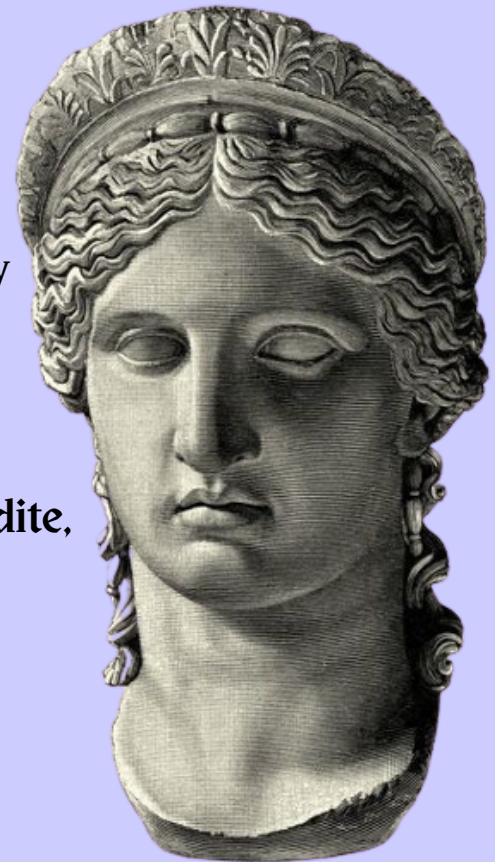


and were impossible to change.

Zeus sneaked into his father's castle in disguise and cleverly comes up with a plan to make him throw up all the rest of the Gods who, surprise, survived in their father's stomach for 17 years, because they were immortal (this is unfortunately an example of anticlimax).

As a result of that, a huge war broke out between the Gods and the Titans. Basically, the Gods won and Zeus cut Kronos into a million pieces and sealed the remains in the depths of Tartarus; an eternal hell for Gods.

Zeus became the King of Gods and chose Sky to be his realm. His brothers, Posiedon and Hades chose the Sea and the Underworld to rule, in that order. These Gods are referred to as the Big Three and they set up a council on Mount Olympus. On this council were several other Gods, some siblings of the Big 3, and some, children of Zeus. They are, namely, Hera, Hestia, Demeter, Apollo, Artemis, Athena, Ares, Aphrodite, Hephaestus, Hermes and Dionysus.



Greek myths are not real, but they make fantastic stories and theatre productions. They are, after all, tales that were meant to invoke fear and morals within people. But we can't classify them entirely as fiction either because these stories, even if a tad bit exaggerated, showcase the good and the bad aspects of humanity. It is also said that some stories of Greek mythology are based on real events. Paying attention to mythology will help us understand the psyche of the human mind, as these stories survived the oral tradition of storytelling, managing to attract and teach mortals like us for millennia.

A comparison by Swastik

Olympus is the home of Greek gods, much like Amravati of the Hindu devas.

Zeus, the leader of Olympians, wielded a thunderbolt like Indra and rode an eagle like Vishnu.

The adventures of the Greek hero Heracles or better known as Hercules, reminds many of Krishna, as does his name, "Hari-Kula-Esha" or the lord of Hari Clan. Krishna's battle with the giant serpent resembles the greek myth that tells the story of Apollo fighting off the evil serpent Python as a child.

The Greek epic of a husband sailing across the sea to bring his wife, Helen, back from Troy is strikingly similar to the story of Ram rescuing Sita from Lanka.



When did Greek emissaries travel to the kingdoms of Mathura and Magadha?

Was there a connection between Greek and Hindu mythology?

Does this have something to do with a common Indo-European trade route?

Maybe this was an exchange of the ideas in the centuries that followed the arrival of Alexander the Great?

Can you draw any more comparisons between these two cultural mythologies? You should, because there is a history lesson waiting to be discovered.

Some book recommendations that are out of this world



Name of the book: Alice in Wonderland

Name of the author: Lewis Carroll

Name of the person vouchin for it:

Vaishali Sharma, English HOD

Age Limit: 7+

The gist of the book:

"It is the story of a girl who is always in her dreamland and one fine day she rolls down an endless rabbit hole and reaches Wonderland, a place to explore."

Characters: Alice (chaotic good), Hatter (chaotic good), Queen of hearts (chaotic Evil), Cheshire Cat (lawful evil), The White Rabbit (lawful good)

Suggestions to the Writer: "I am such a mere mortal to even give suggestions to the author."

Questions to the Writer: "I think I would want to get an answer as to whether the author imagined himself to be like Alice while writing the novel."

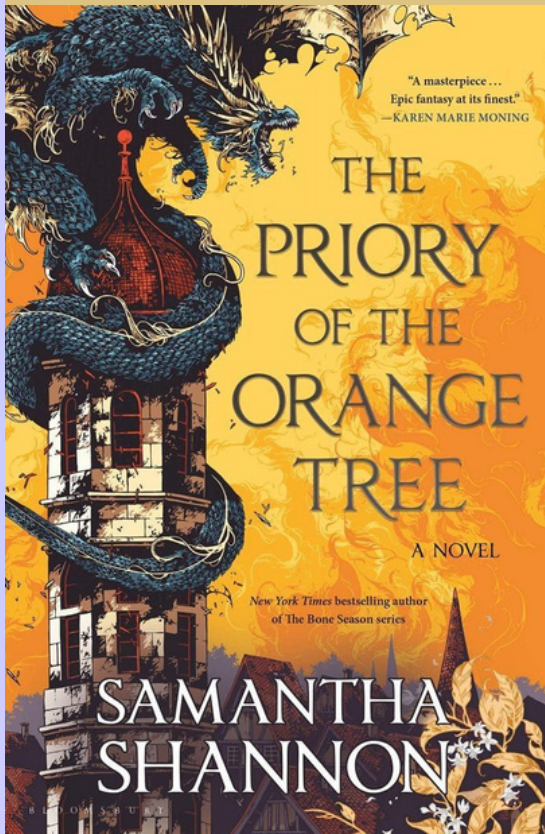
Feelings while reading the book: "I had seen the drama before I read the book. I read the book afterwards, and somehow, the book outlived the performance, so I felt really good about the book."

Favourite Setting/Scene: The Mad Hatter's Party

Favourite Character: Cheshire Cat

Least Favourite Character: The Walrus

Most Relatable Character: "The Mad Hatter, somebody who is always excited about celebrations and dressing up"



Name of the book: The Priory Of The Orange Tree

Name of the author: Samantha Shannon

Name of the person vouching for it:
Mahita, Guardian of The Books.

Age Limit: 12+

The gist of the book:

Queen Sabran the Ninth's power in Inys is tenuous; she has yet to produce an heir to the throne and the Nameless One threatens to awaken again. Ead Duryan is the perfect warrior. Blessed by the orange tree, and powerful enough to take down the wyrm. But are dragons really evil? What is myth and what is real?

Characters: Ead Duryan (chaotic good), Arteloth Beck (neutral good), Tané (lawful good), Niclays (chaotic evil), Sabran (lawful good), Onren (lawful evil), Nayimathun (precious lil baby)

Suggestions to Writer: "I don't think I have any because it is so perfect. While it is fiction, she also represents the real aspects of the world. If anything, she should come out with the sequel soon, as I am dying to read it!"

Questions to Writer: "I wonder how she had the idea of placing everything together, how did her brain work?"

Favourite Character: "I think my favourite is Tané, not just because she rides an amazing dragon, but because she goes through a lot of stuff in life, and she gets back up. Even if the whole world is dark and evil, she still manages to find the good in people and that is something I would like to do."

Least Favourite Character: "Niclays, because he is just there to make everyone's life difficult. He sells so many people off because he thinks his personal interest will be represented."

Most relatable character: "I think I was connected to Tané the most."



Name of the book: Legendborn

Name of the author: Tracy Deonn

Name of the person vouching for it:
Vaishnavi, 9 A

Age Limit:13+

The gist of the book: "It is mediaeval mythology where it talks about the knights of the round table and how their bloodlines give them powers."

Characters: Bree (lawful good), Selwyn Kane (chaotic good), Nick Davis (neutral good), Dr Martin Davis (chaotic evil)

Suggestions to Writer: "No suggestions"

Questions to Writer: "When is the sequel coming out, as I really wish to read it."

Favourite Character: " "Nick Davis, because he really helped Bree in navigating her powers and the world of the Legendborn."

Least Favourite Character: "Except the antagonist, there are not many evil characters."

Most relatable character: "Selwyn Kane it is because I really liked his powers."

Favourite Setting/Scene: "I would say when the scions, main people of the knights, and their squires, who are the assistants who make sure the scions are not killed, are standing in a ballroom and there is a whole lot of tension and excitement buzzing around because the squire of Arthur is going to be chosen. "

The character you would like to be: "I would like to be Selwyn Kane because his powers are amazing and he is the kingsmage, which is basically the protector of the king."

A Random, But subtle Reminder



Did you crack the code?

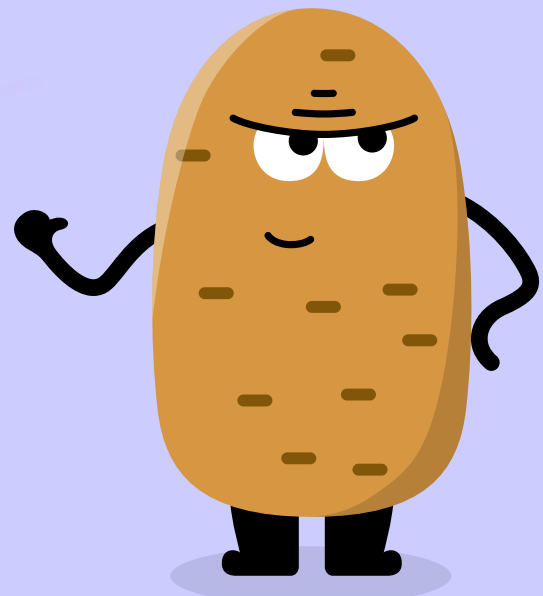
Then it's YOUR Time to shine!

Run to the library as fast as you can, as this special offer ends soon!

The first 2 people to find it gets 2 book checkout!

**Do
It,
Epistemo!**

**This random reminder is from:
Nabhya!:
Mom! I'm famous!:**





Stories never end. What seems like an ending, is often a beginning. You are more than welcome to come up with your own versions of any of the stories you've read in this issue! But here is our gift to you- a story prompt! This could be the start of your story, the end or even the middle- all you need to do is imagine, *and never stop writing.*

Story Prompt: **by Chanakya**

"Many millennia ago, Dragons and wizards were a thing. Real creatures who ruled this very world of ours. They lived in harmony, in accordance with their peace pact until Ryujin was brought into this world. Ryujin was a prodigal wizard who mastered a special kind of magic that would make the dragons yield and bow at the wizard's will. Such a powerful creature had everything. The dragons and wizards were not greedy for his power like in any other story but in fact, they were very careful. They made sure to never anger Ryujin as he could destroy both the races and the entire planet.

Ryujin was crowned as the God of all Dragons by the Wizards, and that's where it started. A few dragons were not too happy with Ryujin- a wizard who had the power to control dragons- being crowned their God. This angered them enough to break the peace pact and wage a war against Ryujin and the Wizards.

Ryujin did not even have to tame a dragon for support, he just killed half the dragon race to show how powerful he really was. He did not care about peace or war and was not a power-hungry person. He was a mere mortal, a rational man, who just wanted to live an ordinary life. But, with great power, comes great responsibility. This realisation hit him right after he accidentally killed another Wizard. He imbued all his powers into a magical crystal orb and became the first human to ever exist. The orb was named Ryujin Hikari- which translates to "A dragon's light". The orb held way too much power, so eventually, it went rogue and destroyed almost the entire race of Dragons and Wizards. Ryujin was the reason behind the Dragon/Wizard enmity. The Ryujin Hikari ended the world once. It was condemned as a dark relic. Ryujin Hakari now had another name, 'my weird crystal thing I found when I moved here which no one else could see.' The relic was no bad omen. All of Ryujin's power was transferred to me, and I could take over the world if I wanted to."

Thank you!

For reading the product of our labour.

This was a project of passion for all those involved.

We would like to take a moment to request you to support us, and join us, as we journey into the depths of creativity.

We don't know where creativity starts or ends, but we do know that it is a world of infinite possibilities.

A very special thanks to our principal, Padma ma'am, for being so supportive in this endeavour of ours. We are grateful to be a part of a school that upholds truly holistic education.

