



Lumière

Art & Words

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Poems

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Gentle readers,
Lumière reflects the creativity, insight,
and promise of our students. Each page
highlights their growing potential as
thinkers and future leaders. I commend
the Lumière team for their dedication in
bringing these voices to light.
I invite you to explore this edition with
curiosity and pride. May it inspire you
and showcase the brilliance of our
academic community.

Warmest regards.





Dr. Sadia Mazeer

Head of English Department

Chief Editor, Lumière Magazine

Lumière continues to shine as a space where creativity, reflection, and imagination come together. This year's edition celebrates the voices of our students, their stories, their questions, and the worlds they dare to create.

Within these pages, you'll find pieces that inspire, challenge, and comfort. Each contribution reflects the spirit of our community and the power of expression when young minds are given room to grow. May Lumière spark new ideas and add a little more light to your day.

Warm Regards!



Ms. Shumaila Ashee

Co-editor, Lumière Magazine
Lecturer, Department of English
Language & Literature

Reading opens a door to endless dreams, where words paint worlds and every page becomes a new adventure. As co-editor of Lumière, I've seen how stories connect us, helping us travel, understand others, and feel the humanity we share.

Lumière celebrates this magic of storytelling, a place where ideas shine and voices matter. May these pages bring you warmth, wonder, and stories that stay with you long after you're done.

Happy reading!

A dark, textured figure, possibly a mannequin or a sculpture, is shown from the waist up. The figure wears a dark top hat and a long, dark coat with a high collar. The figure's face is obscured by a long, pointed beak, giving it a bird-like appearance. The figure holds a thin, dark cane in its right hand. The background is a dark, gradient grey.

SHORT STORIES

The Religion Day...



Aleena Saeed | BS English | Editor

Lyna, a teacher, entered the classroom and wrote “Religion Day” on the board. Each student was telling the class about their religion. Meanwhile, a boy in the back had his head on the table. He recalled all the incidents his classmates had shared about their religions.

He remembered how his Christian friend had explained the killing of a king in a church. He recalled how Muslims and Hindus had been separated based on religion, yet within each group, there were both innocent and corrupt people. He thought about how his Jewish neighbour had told him about the rape of children in a village. He was tired of discussing which religion was right. The boy thought, “The world isn’t corrupt, but humans are.”



“Backbencher, now it’s your turn,” Miss Lyna said. The boy went into deep thought and then said, “There is only one God. We should follow God’s rules and focus on life’s purpose.”

Glimpse

Anum Bakhtaj | BS English

Jenna, a teenage girl, was running, wearing her uniform. She caught the bus to her college just in time. It would take her thirty minutes to reach her destination. As she gazed out the window, she saw a cute cat, but her attention quickly diverted to the littered roadside. "Why is there so much rubbish here and there?" she thought. "And there goes more trash and more." She could smell the gunk in her mind. The cars honking made it more chaotic. "So noisy." It was a traffic jam. She watched all the vehicles inching along. "They produce so much bad gas. People get lung diseases because of all the toxic emissions." She remembered an article. "Should I close the window?" But she wore a mask instead. "The weather is so dull today," she thought as she was entering her college.

In the break, she and her friend decided to go to the cafeteria. They debated what to snack on. "The orange juice looks refreshing," she hesitated, thinking about the plastic waste. While looking at her drink, "let's sell glass straws," she said to her friend, who answered with a knowing smile, "You are at it again."

When they were walking on the soft grass, a sudden storm erupted. She saw plastic bags, straws, bottles, and other trash swirling around her. A tsunami of dust and trash enveloped her. Some dust went into her eyes. She couldn't see anything.

There were noises. Noises of motorcycles, horns, and machines. She struggled to open her eyes. The noises kept getting louder and louder, and with a jolt, she opened her eyes. She was sitting in her bed. The noises had stopped. She looked around, taking in her room. She was back in her room.

There was nothing to worry about. She looked at the calendar. "5th May, 2010." She sat down with a feeling of freedom. But she thought, "I wouldn't have survived in that space." She took a deep breath of the clean, scented air. "It was just a dream. It was just a dream." She was calmed as she watched the green trees swaying gently outside her window. But was it really just a dream, or a glimpse of another dimension?



Areeba Muneeb | BS English | Graduate



It had been a hectic week at work for Sienna, which was an understatement, she thought while lying on her couch watching a rom-com movie after a rough day of police investigation. After all, receiving the news that your boss is now a “Wanted Killer” isn’t exactly something anyone would have expected on a Monday morning. And it didn’t help her case that she was his secretary.

Turning off the TV, she got up from the couch, striding towards the kitchen. A creaking sound came from the wooden floor; she frowned, irritated. She hated this apartment. The owner, Amanda or Samantha—she never cared enough to remember names—wasn’t around to fix the flooring issues, so she had to deal with this rundown, cheap apartment.

After brewing herself a cup of coffee, she moved towards her “work table,” as she liked to call it. Files and papers were scattered around, each bearing names and information of various people. After a long sigh, she finally decided to stop procrastinating and get organized.

She took one last sip from her almost cold coffee while putting the last file away; she scoffed and glared at the name that caught her eye. Just because of this man, she almost blew her cover.





Henry, Sienna's now late boss, was a nice man as far as she knew him. It was a shame he left the world so early. But in Sienna's defence, he was at the wrong place at the wrong time. If he hadn't seen her murder the director of the firm, Henry's father-in-law.

"That idiot. If he wanted to be with his father-in-law so bad, he could have waited a day. That way I wouldn't have had to go through all that trouble of hiding and disposing of two bodies," Sienna murmured.

But the message Sienna sent to Henry's wife through his phone worked like a charm. It read, "Honey... I can't stand him anymore. Your father is a selfish old man who is nothing but a nuisance to this company's bright future; he should have retired by now. I am going to have a talk with him. Eat dinner without me, I'll be late." Everyone knew James and Henry didn't see eye to eye when it came to business deals. The wife, once coming out of the shock of her father's death, showed the message to the police as evidence.

The Police suspected Henry straight away. After being unable to locate or reach him, they assumed he was guilty and must have run away.

She read the name out loud, "Mr. James Harold," the company owner. Sienna's last mission during her stay in California. Two more months and she'd be off to a new destination.

Her train of thought came to a halt by a knock on the door. Carefully taking out her gun from a nearby drawer, she stepped towards the door, opening it just enough to peek.



“Oh my, Hello! Yes, Mrs. Frankly, how may I help you?” Sienna smiled, her eyes scanning the surroundings. The neighbour smiled in return.



“Oh, nothing dear. Just wanted to hand this to you. The mailman left this in my mailbox by mistake.” The lady handed her the package. Taking it with another fake smile, Sienna thanked her.

Mrs. Frankly continued, “You are keeping Amanda’s place in pretty good shape. You guys must be close.”

“Yeah. She’s a great friend for entrusting me with her apartment,” Sienna replied with a smirk.

As soon as the nosy neighbour left, Sienna tore open the package. Inside there was a file with fake identity papers and a passport. She sighed, placed it back on the table, and just stared at it.



A new location.
A new identity.
And new targets.

In the Shade of

Love and Loss



Nimra Javid | BS English | Graduate

The wind was cold that evening, but inside the old apartment, warmth flickered from the low lamp beside Rehan's bed. He sat in silence, a cream bottle near his feet—his daughter had left it there moments ago, whispering, “Your heels are cracking, Baba.”

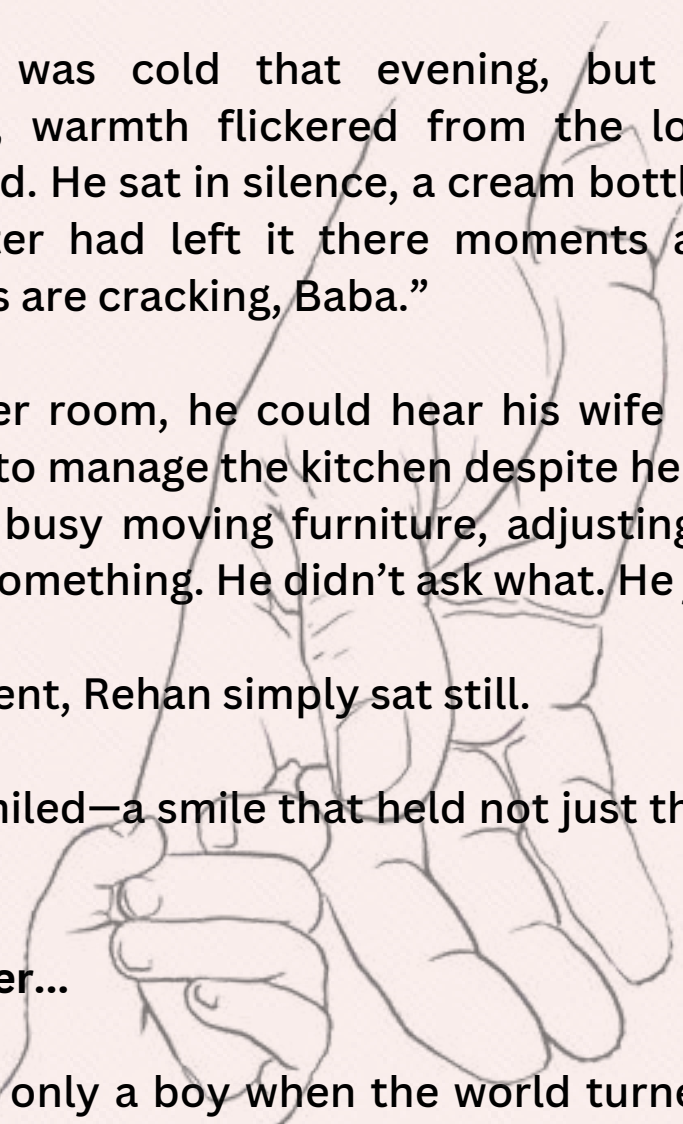
In the other room, he could hear his wife coughing softly, still trying to manage the kitchen despite her own frailty. His sons were busy moving furniture, adjusting things, making space for something. He didn't ask what. He just watched.

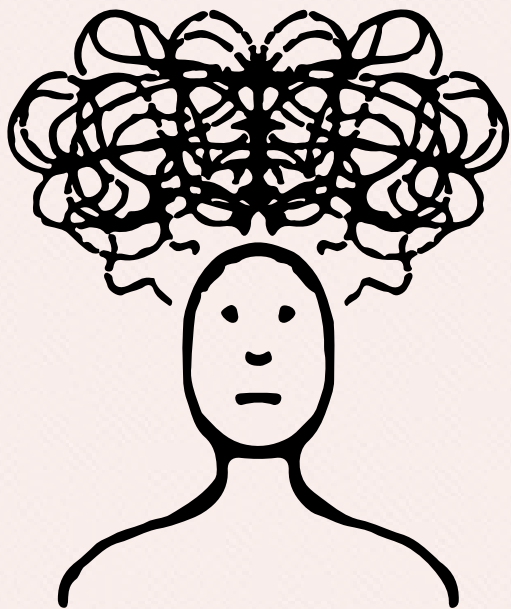
For a moment, Rehan simply sat still.

Then he smiled—a smile that held not just the present, but a lifetime.

Years earlier...

Rehan was only a boy when the world turned upside down. His mother, Amina, was the softest thing in his life—his laugh, his teasing partner, his peace. But death, as it often does, arrived uninvited. One quiet morning, when he was barely stepping into manhood, she was gone.





The memory of her warmth still wrapped around his soul like an old shawl. But now it scratched with guilt.

“I teased her too much.”

“I never said sorry.”

“I never told her how much I loved her.”

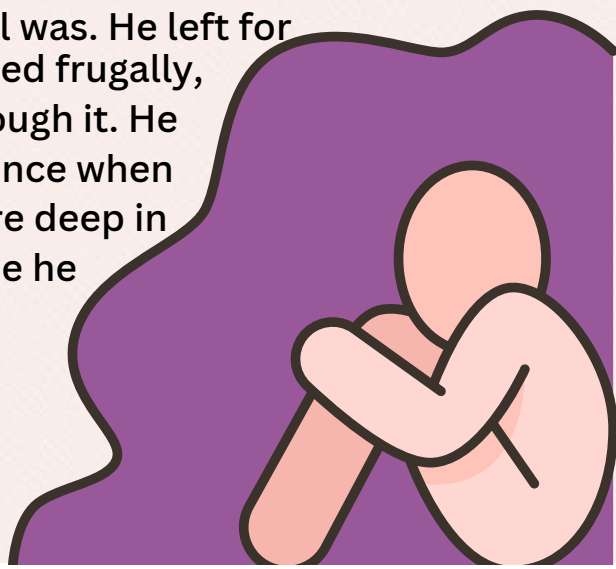
That guilt aged him faster than time.

It was Sheheryar, his college friend, who once found him crying quietly during prayer. Gently, Sheheryar placed a hand on his shoulder and whispered,

“Don’t carry that burden forever. You were her son. A mother never holds anger for her child. She would want you to live—not survive, but truly live.”

Life didn’t pause for Rehan’s grief. His father, Inam Ullah, a man of few words but heavy responsibilities, remarried. A woman named Neelam entered their lives—sharp in tone, selective in her love. She loved her children deeply, but it came at the cost of excluding Rehan and his siblings.

Rehan noticed everything: the way she smiled only for her children, the food portions, the backhanded complaints. Slowly, he learned to shrink his presence. He wasn’t a child anymore, people said. But inside, he still was. He left for college without asking for money. He lived frugally, often skipping meals, but he smiled through it. He laughed when he could. He bore the silence when he couldn’t. His father saw it, somewhere deep in his eyes—but never said anything. Maybe he couldn’t.



Time pushed forward.

Rehan married through arrangement and had five children. He wasn't rich, but he was grounded. He gave them time, patience, his shoulder, his soul. But Neelam's voice still found him—complaining about the lights his children turned on, the noise they made, the air they breathed.

So one day, Rehan made a choice. He packed his memories, his hope, and left his father's house with his wife and kids. He promised himself one thing:

“My children will never feel what I did.”

Years passed again.

Rehan, now aged and retired, found himself in a home full of voices—but his own began to vanish. His children were older now. They had jobs, goals, ambitions. The world around him had become faster, more material. They still loved him—he knew that—but they no longer needed him. He began to speak less. Sometimes his words came out sharp—not from anger, but fear.



Fear of being forgotten. Fear of becoming a burden. Fear of dying with unsaid words again. And every time he snapped, he came back—eyes heavy—with soft apologies: “I didn't mean it. I just... felt lost.”

One day, Sheheryar visited again—older now, but still carrying the same calm voice. He sat beside Rehan, listened to him speak his worries, and then said:

“Don't think like that. You've raised your children with honesty and love. That's the mark of a good father. You are not a burden—aging is not a flaw. It's a part of Allah's design. True love doesn't seek perfection. It accepts, it adapts, it stays. You're still deeply loved. Even in silence.”

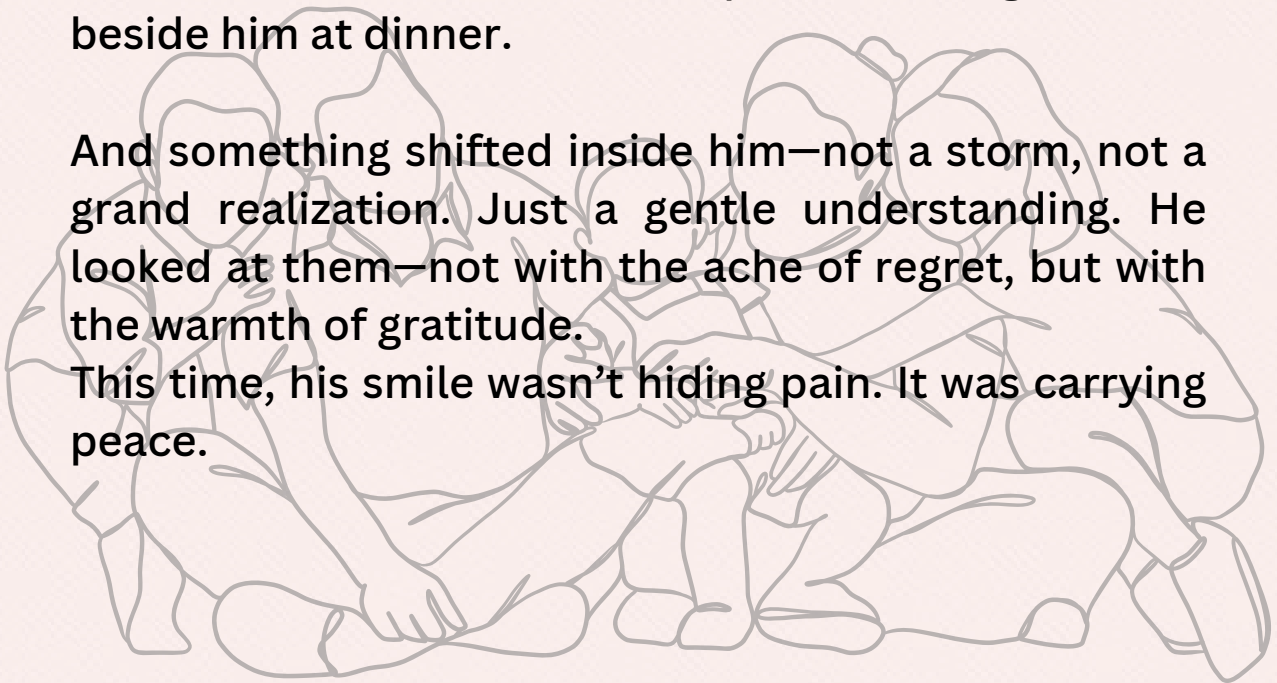
He paused, smiled, and added,

“Just look around again—with softer eyes. You’ll see it.”

That night, Rehan returned home with a quiet sense of awareness. His daughter brought him foot cream. His sons tried to shoulder his tasks and dealt with financial issues. His wife, despite her cough, stood beside him at dinner.

And something shifted inside him—not a storm, not a grand realization. Just a gentle understanding. He looked at them—not with the ache of regret, but with the warmth of gratitude.

This time, his smile wasn’t hiding pain. It was carrying peace.



Moral:

Even through shadows of loss and
silence of age, love endures. We only
need to pause, soften, and look
again.

There is always someone who cares
for you without your knowledge.

A Mirror that Refuses

Alishba Razaq

One evening, a man bent over the river to see his reflection.

But the water showed him nothing—no eyes, no mouth, not even a shadow. He grew frightened and whispered, “Am I not here?” The water shivered, as if laughing, and still gave nothing back.

The man returned night after night, demanding his face, his proof of existence. Others leaned over the same river and saw themselves clearly, smiling, alive. Only he remained faceless. In despair, he hurled a stone into the current.

The water swallowed it without resistance, and for a moment he thought he glimpsed himself—but it was not a face, only ripples, a thousand shifting masks, each vanishing before he could claim it.

And so he understood: the water had never been empty—it was he who was.



POEMS

Overwhelmed

Memoona Muntaha | BS English | Graduate

Is it the sun that's drowning
And me on the shore?
Or sea that's spreading
And my sorrows mourn?
Is it the noise of sea
Or silence in me?
That's making me hear all
Oh, but me!
Am I safe on the shore
Or drowning on land?
Will I breathe in the sea
Oh, the sun might glee.





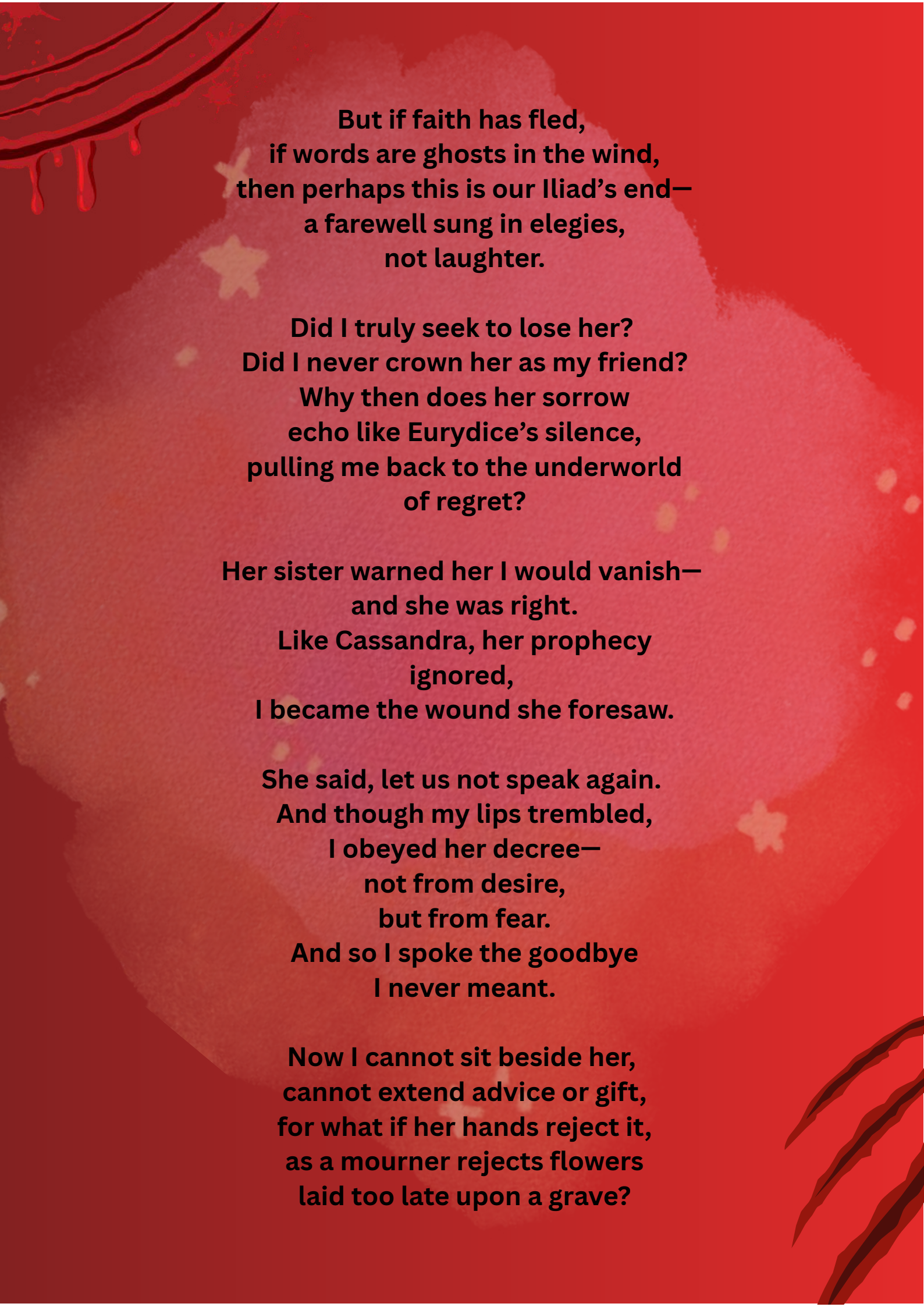
A Wound No Love Could Heal

Nimra Javid | BS English | Graduate

"Some bonds don't break—
they simply bleed in silence."

At times,
I do not know how to say forgive me—
as if my tongue were tied like
Oedipus,
blind to the wounds I carved.
How shattered did I leave you?
Did you ever find your balm?
Or, like Prometheus,
do you still suffer for a fire I brought,
a fire that burned us both?

Things lie in ruins.
Even if I gather the shards,
what temple could I rebuild
from ashes of trust?
What altar stands
when the heart itself is cinders?
I gave you my truth—
from the marrow of my soul.



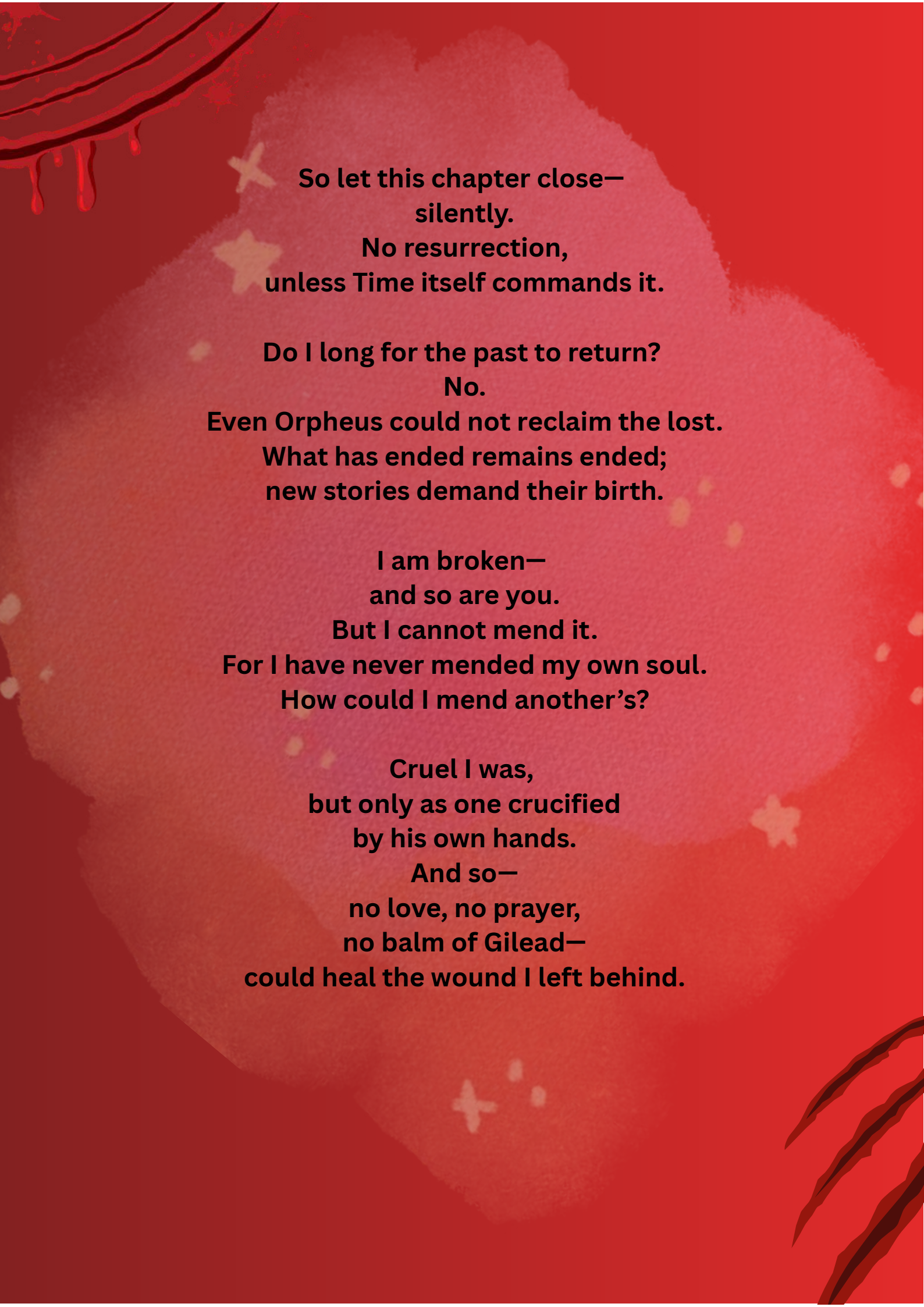
But if faith has fled,
if words are ghosts in the wind,
then perhaps this is our Iliad's end—
a farewell sung in elegies,
not laughter.

Did I truly seek to lose her?
Did I never crown her as my friend?
Why then does her sorrow
echo like Eurydice's silence,
pulling me back to the underworld
of regret?

Her sister warned her I would vanish—
and she was right.
Like Cassandra, her prophecy
ignored,
I became the wound she foresaw.

She said, let us not speak again.
And though my lips trembled,
I obeyed her decree—
not from desire,
but from fear.
And so I spoke the goodbye
I never meant.

Now I cannot sit beside her,
cannot extend advice or gift,
for what if her hands reject it,
as a mourner rejects flowers
laid too late upon a grave?



So let this chapter close—
silently.

No resurrection,
unless Time itself commands it.

Do I long for the past to return?
No.

Even Orpheus could not reclaim the lost.
What has ended remains ended;
new stories demand their birth.

I am broken—
and so are you.
But I cannot mend it.
For I have never mended my own soul.
How could I mend another's?

Cruel I was,
but only as one crucified
by his own hands.
And so—
no love, no prayer,
no balm of Gilead—
could heal the wound I left behind.

The Faceless Reflection



Alishba Razaq

Water has no face of its own.
It is a void, a trembling silence.
What you see in it is not the truth of water,
but the truth of yourself—
distorted, fleeting, fragile.

It is formless, yet it steals the form of every
gaze.
Colorless, yet it drinks the colors of every soul.
To lovers, it becomes a mirror of desire.
To the broken, a mirror of despair.

Perhaps that is the tragedy of water—
to exist without an identity,
to live only as the reflection of another's
longing.
And perhaps that is the tragedy of love too.

A World Without Rush

Ayesha Rehman | BS English

Come, let's go to the fantasy world,
Live without thinking, like a bird.
Happiness is waiting for us,
For there is no human rush.

All around, things look lush—
Waterfalls, butterflies, bundles of flowers, and pine trees.
We will be together, weaving flower crowns in dreams,
Building a red rose castle near the sea.

Mermaids will dance as we watch the scene,
Love will shine bright, like a beacon in the night.
I wish all of this could come true,
But imagination is far more beautiful than reality.





A DREAM

Ayesha Rehman | BS English

I had a little dream that came true at midnight,
An angel appeared and touched my soul with whimsical delight.

We started a conversation beneath the glowing moonlight,
My heart bloomed like a petal, embracing its healing light.

After spending such beautiful hours, the morning breeze kissed
our faces,
Then you left and disappeared, yet I still sense your presence in
life's phases.

Distance and time can't separate us—I search for you in every
place,
In every part of the universe, longing to feel your embrace.

When I look around, I find our emotions and sentiments diverse,
Yet, with desperation, I still wait, hoping time will reverse.

One day, you will return, and together we'll write,
The book of life filled with tales of love, shining ever so bright.

MY LOVE

Ayesha Rehman | BS English

**His love is like a sunrise, filling the heart with warmth.
His love is like the fragrance of a rose, gentle and soft.**

**His love is tender, like the morning breeze;
His love is smooth, like cotton candy's ease.**

**His love is as profound as the depths of the ocean;
His love is like water in the desert, a soothing potion.**

**His love is mature, like a philosopher, wise;
His love is innocent, like an infant's bright eyes.**

**His love is comforting, like a mother's embrace;
His love is countless, like stars filling the endless space.**

**His love is a cure, healing every pain;
His love is a museum, preserving memories that remain.**

**His love is as pure as freshly fallen snow;
His love is a rainbow, making the whole world glow.**

**His love is as radiant as a pearl in its shell;
His love is noble, like a paradise where souls dwell.**

**His love is a masterpiece, a work of divine art;
His love is a peaceful silence, calming the mind and heart.**

if i am Heartless

Ayesha Rehman | BS English

People call her a witch,
But in truth, society is the real bitch.

Venom spreads like fire in my veins,
Feels like a snake's bite burning my brain.

To become more terrifying,
Is the real thrill of a terrible mood.

Though I know all the facts,
Should I spit the poison—or let it react?

Here, all are vipers in disguise,
Beautiful colours masking their lies.

Let them be—none can break your might,
You deserve your own vibe; just stand and
fight.



The Scent of Time

Sana Shah | BS English | Student Editor

Some smells stay with us,
even when everything else changes.

Like a perfume I once used
that now reminds me of college days.
Sometimes a smell brings back a place—
a classroom, a corridor,
the air after rain,
or the scent of floors freshly cleaned.

It's strange how these small things
can hold so many memories.

A smell can take me back
to a moment I didn't know I missed.

Maybe that's how time speaks—

not in words,
but in the quiet scent
of what once was.



Stagnant Heart

Asma Amjad | BS English | Student Editor

A heart once full of life and fire,
Now stagnant, like a still desire,
The flames that fueled its deepest core,
Have faded down to a dying roar.
The beat that pulsed with hope and cheer,
Now echoes with a fear,
The love that flowed like a river wide and free,
Has slowed to a stagnant, muddy narrow stream.
The dreams that climbed on eagle's wings,
Now struggle to take flight, it clings,
To the weight of doubts and fears that bind,
A heart that's lost its sense of mind.
But still, a spark remains inside,
A glimmer of the love that hopes,
To rekindle and revive,
To let the heart again come alive.

He Wrote In Silence

Ansharah Alam | BS English | Semester V

**He never raises his voice to speak,
Yet every page he touched turned weak.**

**Ink becomes his soul,
With trembling hands, he wrote the sole goal.**

**Up at hollow nights,
Couldn't sleep, even with the lights.**

**Each word a whisper, never heard,
A shattered soul in each word.**

**Paper carried the weight,
His voice never cracked.**

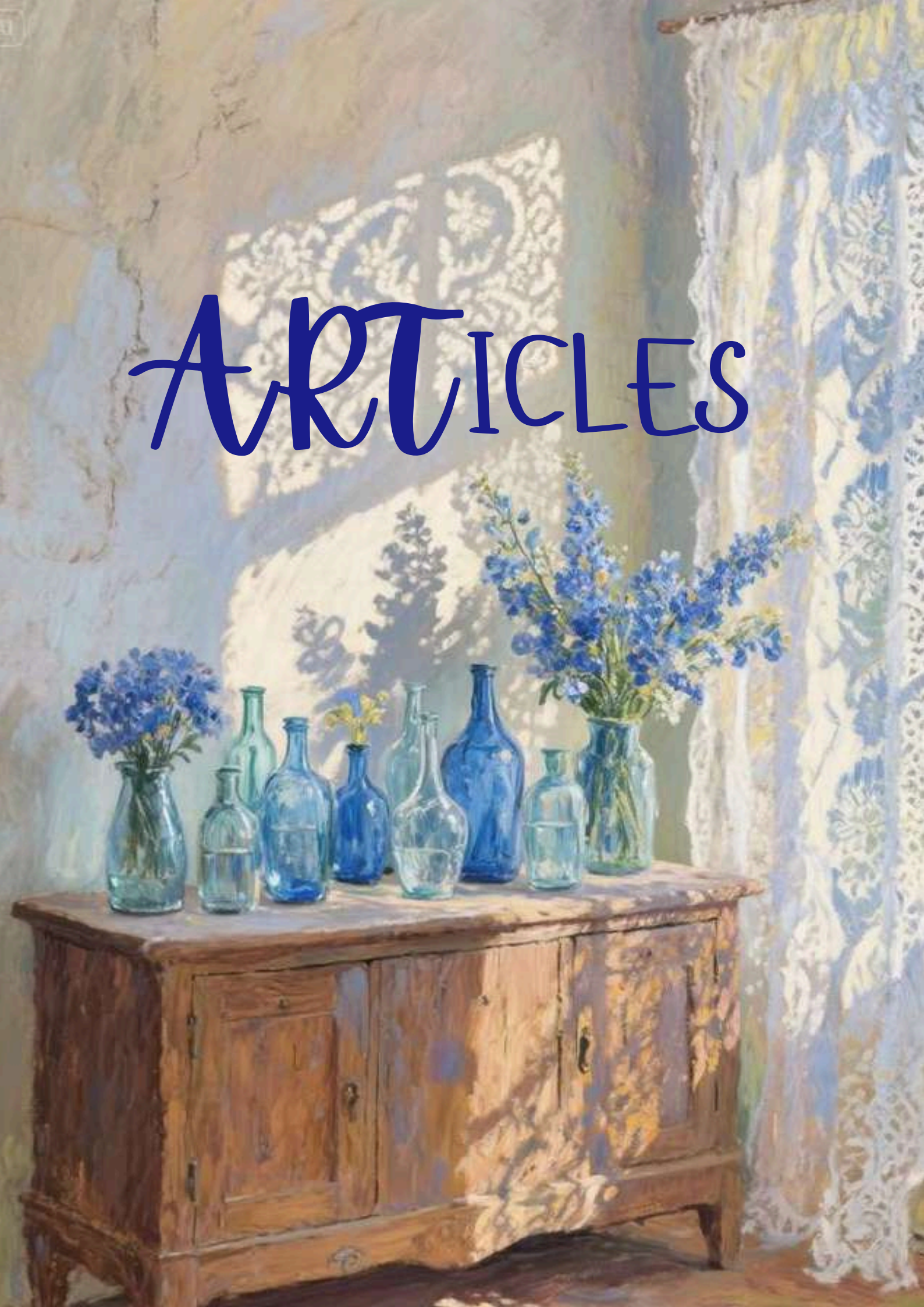
**He smiled by day, unknown, unread,
His pen bled everything, he never said.**

**No one saw the storm inside,
He wore a calm face and never cried.**

**But silence is not always peace,
Sometimes, it's a slow release.**

**And when the pages finally stopped,
Only silence spoke what he'd lost.**

ARTICLES



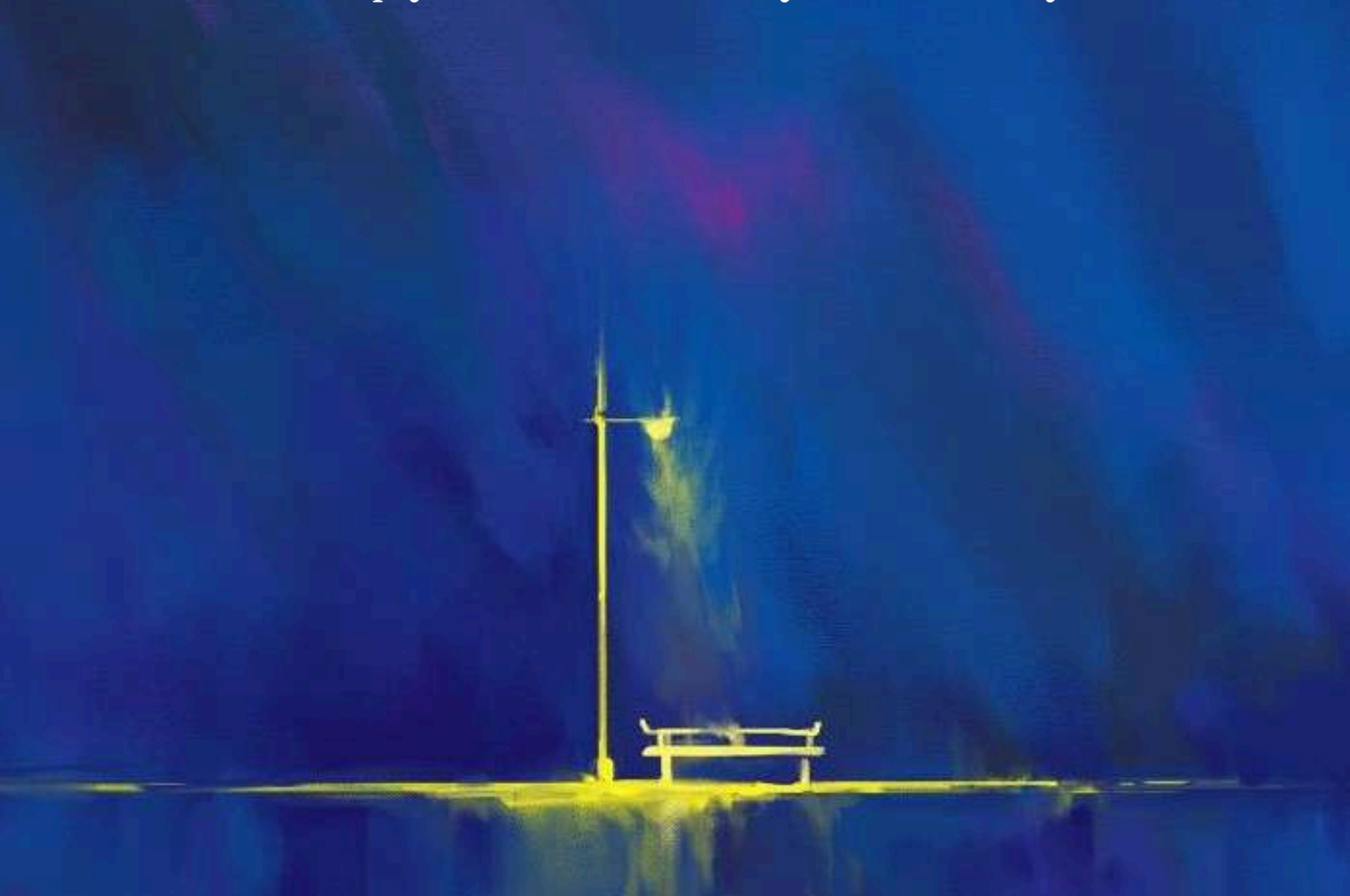
The *Calm* Company of *Solitude*

Sana Shah | Student Editor | English Language & Literature

Most people think being alone and being lonely are the same thing, but they're not. Loneliness feels heavy, like something important is missing. Being alone, on the other hand, can feel calm, refreshing, and even necessary. In our busy world, we are always surrounded by people, conversations, and distractions. Friends, family, university life, social media, there is always something waiting for our attention. While all of that has its own joy, being constantly "switched on" can get exhausting. That is why alone time becomes so important. Solitude gives us space to pause, to slow down, and to simply exist without anyone else's expectations. Spending time alone doesn't mean cutting yourself off from others. It can be as simple as scrolling through your phone without interruptions, enjoying music that only you like, watching a series at your own pace, or lying on your bed doing absolutely nothing. These little rituals remind us that it's okay to enjoy our own company. They become small acts of self-care, quiet breaks that recharge us before we step back into the noise of the world. Sometimes, solitude also makes us face emotions we usually hide in busy moments.



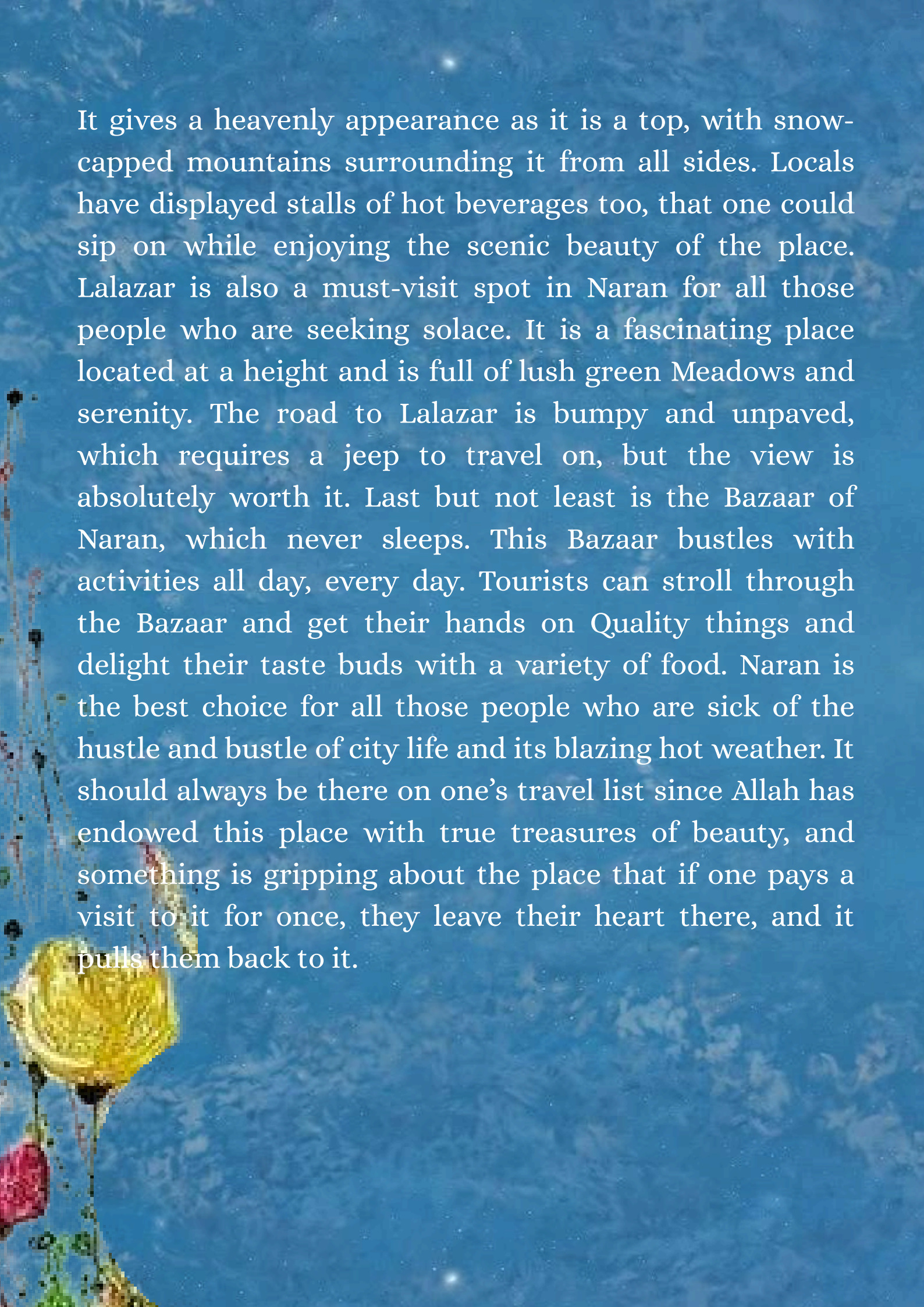
Overthinking, emotional stress, or a sudden heaviness can appear. But that does not mean being alone is bad. In fact, it often teaches us how to understand ourselves better. Learning to sit with our thoughts, even the uncomfortable ones help us grow stronger. The truth is, being alone does not mean you are unloved or unwanted. It means you are giving yourself the same attention you often give to others. It is about balance. Just like we need social connections, we also need private time to recharge. When we embrace solitude, we discover that peace doesn't always come from people or places, it can come from within. Solitude is not loneliness. Loneliness is a shadow that makes us feel incomplete. Solitude is sunlight, it reminds us we are whole, even when no one else is around. So here is to the quiet nights, the playlists no one else hears, the snacks you don't share, and the laughter that needs no audience. Being alone is not empty. It is full of little ways to return to yourself.



The Treasure of *Beauty* Naran

Maryam Mansoor | Graduate | English Language & Literature

Naran, a breathtakingly beautiful town located 2500 meters above sea level in the upper Kaghan Valley, is a treat to the eyes of every single being who pays a visit to it. It is a land of unprecedented charm and beauty, a place full of enchanting landscapes, mesmerizingly crystal-clear lakes, and warm hospitality. Lake Saif ul Malook, my sole favorite spot, also known as the Lake of Fairies, is a treasure of Beauty in Naran that captures the attention of all its visitors, leaving them awestruck. It is called Lake of Fairies because of the numerous fairy tales that have been penned down about this lake. The lake is surrounded by snow-attired mountains on all sides, and different food and other stalls have been displayed for tourists to enjoy their time while witnessing the magical beauty of the lake. In addition, Lake Lulusar and Pyala Lake are also famous lakes of Naran. Another fascinating spot in Naran is Babusar Top, which is the endpoint of Naran Valley and is always accompanied by extremely chill weather.



It gives a heavenly appearance as it is a top, with snow-capped mountains surrounding it from all sides. Locals have displayed stalls of hot beverages too, that one could sip on while enjoying the scenic beauty of the place. Lalazar is also a must-visit spot in Naran for all those people who are seeking solace. It is a fascinating place located at a height and is full of lush green Meadows and serenity. The road to Lalazar is bumpy and unpaved, which requires a jeep to travel on, but the view is absolutely worth it. Last but not least is the Bazaar of Naran, which never sleeps. This Bazaar bustles with activities all day, every day. Tourists can stroll through the Bazaar and get their hands on Quality things and delight their taste buds with a variety of food. Naran is the best choice for all those people who are sick of the hustle and bustle of city life and its blazing hot weather. It should always be there on one's travel list since Allah has endowed this place with true treasures of beauty, and something is gripping about the place that if one pays a visit to it for once, they leave their heart there, and it pulls them back to it.

Kashmir

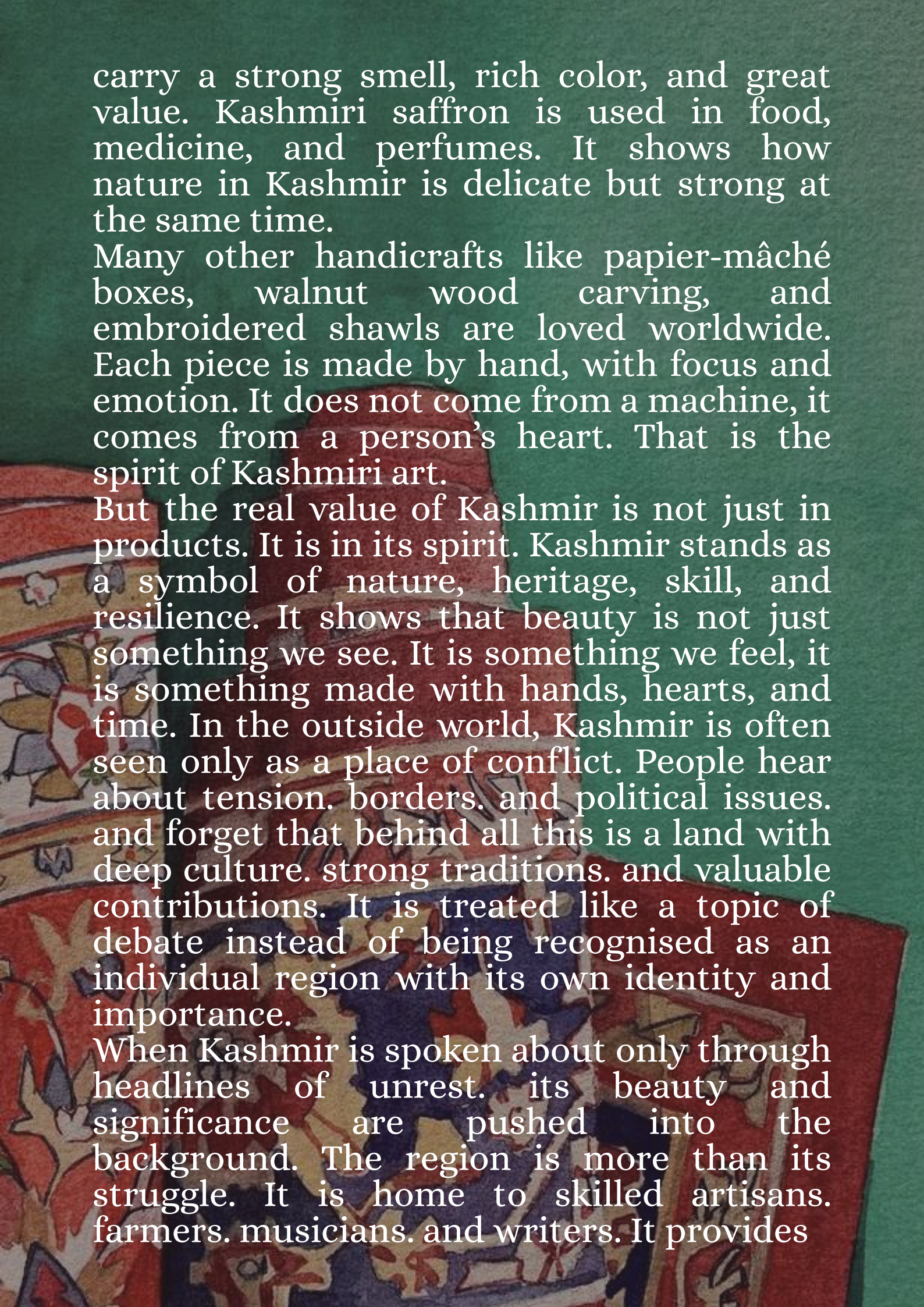
Beyond
the

HEADLINES

Memoona Muntaha | Senior Editor | English Language & Literature

Kashmir is often called a piece of heaven on earth. Its valleys are full of green fields, snow-colored mountains, and calm rivers. But Kashmir is more than just beautiful land. It is a place rich in culture, history, art, and natural treasures that make it important to the world. The people of Kashmir live simple but artistic lives. Their homes smell of fresh bread and kahwa. Their carpets are not just carpets. They are qaleens, woven by hand with patience and care, using designs that have been passed down for many generations. These carpets are famous around the world for their fine quality and beauty. When people in other countries buy a Kashmiri carpet, they are not just buying a product, they are buying a piece of history and hard work.

Saffron is another gift Kashmir gives the world. It grows in the purple fields of Pampore and is known to be one of the best types in the world. One small flower holds only a few strands, yet those tiny strands



carry a strong smell, rich color, and great value. Kashmiri saffron is used in food, medicine, and perfumes. It shows how nature in Kashmir is delicate but strong at the same time.

Many other handicrafts like papier-mâché boxes, walnut wood carving, and embroidered shawls are loved worldwide. Each piece is made by hand, with focus and emotion. It does not come from a machine, it comes from a person's heart. That is the spirit of Kashmiri art.

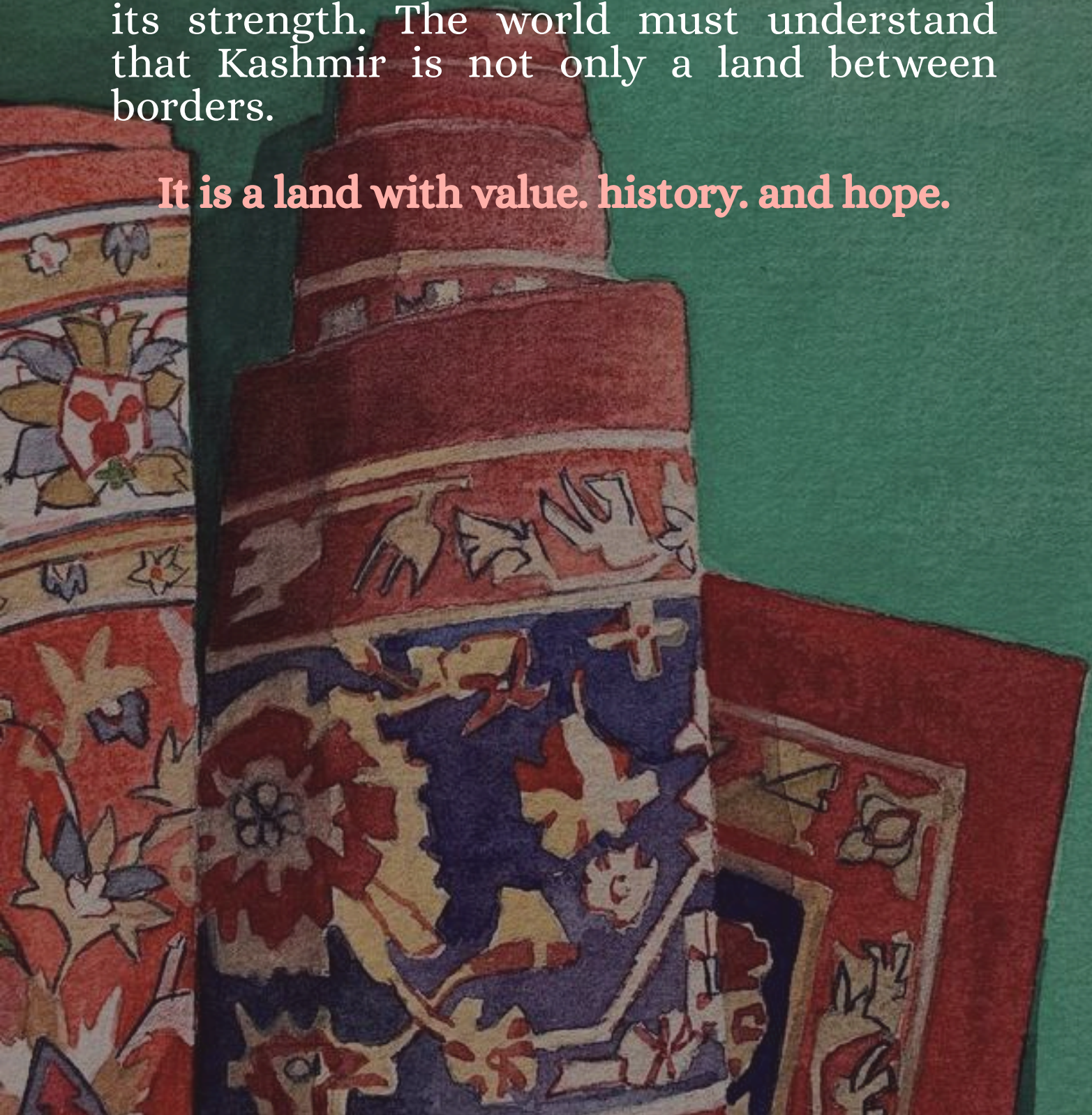
But the real value of Kashmir is not just in products. It is in its spirit. Kashmir stands as a symbol of nature, heritage, skill, and resilience. It shows that beauty is not just something we see. It is something we feel, it is something made with hands, hearts, and time. In the outside world, Kashmir is often seen only as a place of conflict. People hear about tension, borders, and political issues, and forget that behind all this is a land with deep culture, strong traditions, and valuable contributions. It is treated like a topic of debate instead of being recognised as an individual region with its own identity and importance.

When Kashmir is spoken about only through headlines of unrest, its beauty and significance are pushed into the background. The region is more than its struggle. It is home to skilled artisans, farmers, musicians, and writers. It provides

the world with precious goods like saffron. pashmina. qaleen. wood carvings. and high quality fruits. Yet these achievements are rarely highlighted with the same energy as the reports of conflict.

Kashmir deserves to be seen as a complete place. not just a troubled one. It should be acknowledged for its culture. its people. and its strength. The world must understand that Kashmir is not only a land between borders.

It is a land with value. history. and hope.

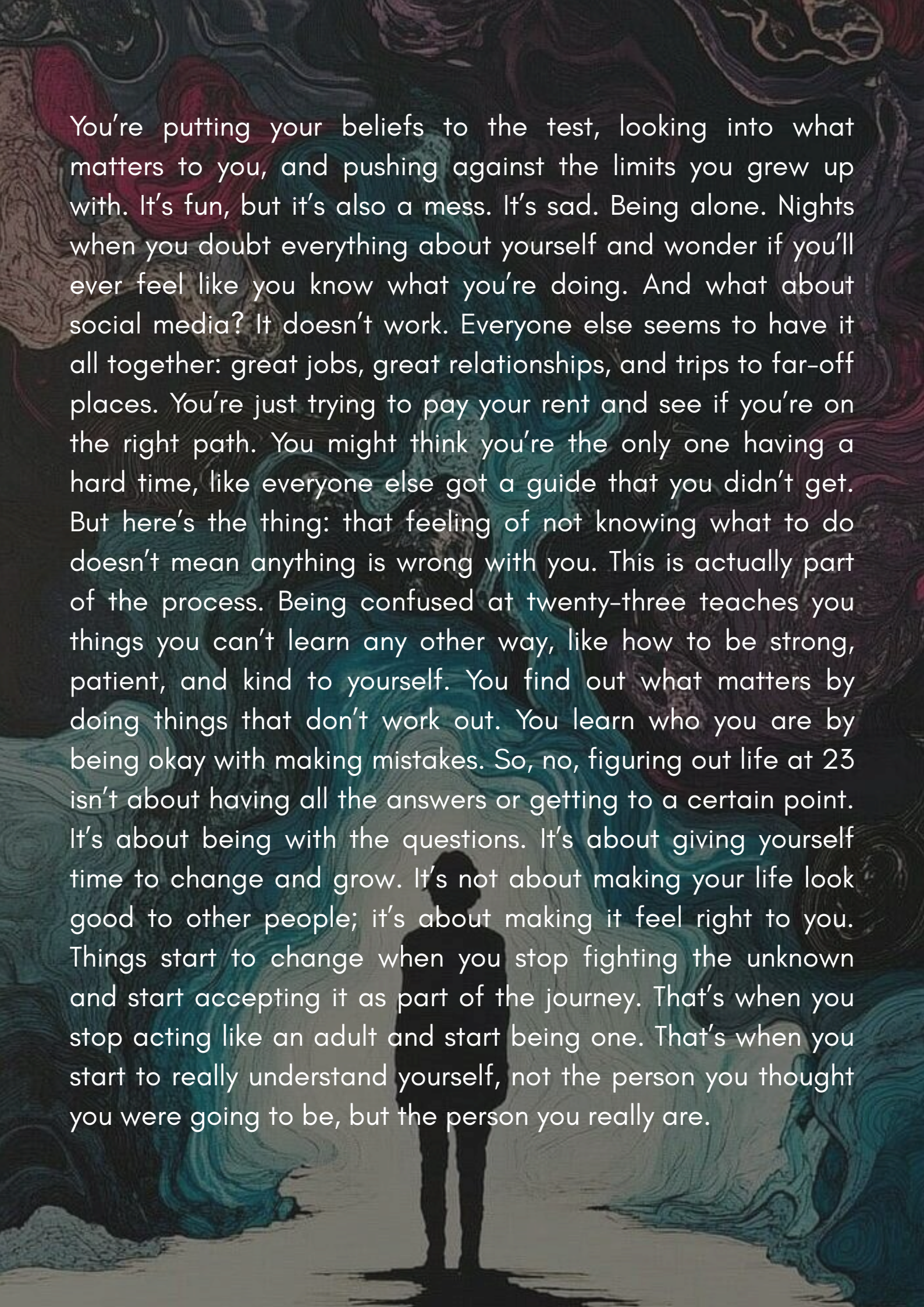


The background of the entire page is an abstract, swirling pattern of colors including deep reds, purples, blues, and greens. In the lower center, there is a dark silhouette of a person standing on what appears to be a beach, looking out towards the horizon. The overall mood is contemplative and artistic.

Life at 23

Laiba Arif | Student Editor | English Language & Literature

Emerging Adulthood at twenty-three, you're in a strange middle ground. Life often feels like standing at the edge of adulthood, with one foot in the past and the other stepping into the future with no idea what will happen. It's like being at a crossroads with a dozen different paths in front of you and no map to show you which one to take. This is when you have a lot of questions. What am I really? What do I really want? Some days you feel like you know exactly what you're doing with your life, and other days you don't even know what you're doing. When your dreams come true, you have to figure out how to balance what you want to be with what you need to do to get by. There is this unspoken pressure that you should have everything in order by now. Not just a side job, but a real job. A serious relationship, or at least a clear idea of what you want. Something to show people when they ask what you're doing. So you act like you're ambitious, driven, and know exactly where you're going. But what's underneath? There is fear. Fear of getting behind. Fear of not being good enough. You are always tired from comparing yourself to others and wondering why things seem so much easier for them. Psychologists call this "emerging adulthood," which sounds official but really just means you're figuring yourself out.

A person's silhouette stands on a beach, looking out at a turbulent, swirling sea under a dark, stormy sky. The water is depicted with swirling, marbled patterns in shades of teal, blue, and purple, suggesting a powerful, chaotic force. The sky is dark and moody, with hints of light breaking through the clouds. The person is standing in the center, their reflection visible in the shallow water on the sand. The overall mood is one of contemplation and resilience in the face of uncertainty.

You're putting your beliefs to the test, looking into what matters to you, and pushing against the limits you grew up with. It's fun, but it's also a mess. It's sad. Being alone. Nights when you doubt everything about yourself and wonder if you'll ever feel like you know what you're doing. And what about social media? It doesn't work. Everyone else seems to have it all together: great jobs, great relationships, and trips to far-off places. You're just trying to pay your rent and see if you're on the right path. You might think you're the only one having a hard time, like everyone else got a guide that you didn't get. But here's the thing: that feeling of not knowing what to do doesn't mean anything is wrong with you. This is actually part of the process. Being confused at twenty-three teaches you things you can't learn any other way, like how to be strong, patient, and kind to yourself. You find out what matters by doing things that don't work out. You learn who you are by being okay with making mistakes. So, no, figuring out life at 23 isn't about having all the answers or getting to a certain point. It's about being with the questions. It's about giving yourself time to change and grow. It's not about making your life look good to other people; it's about making it feel right to you. Things start to change when you stop fighting the unknown and start accepting it as part of the journey. That's when you stop acting like an adult and start being one. That's when you start to really understand yourself, not the person you thought you were going to be, but the person you really are.

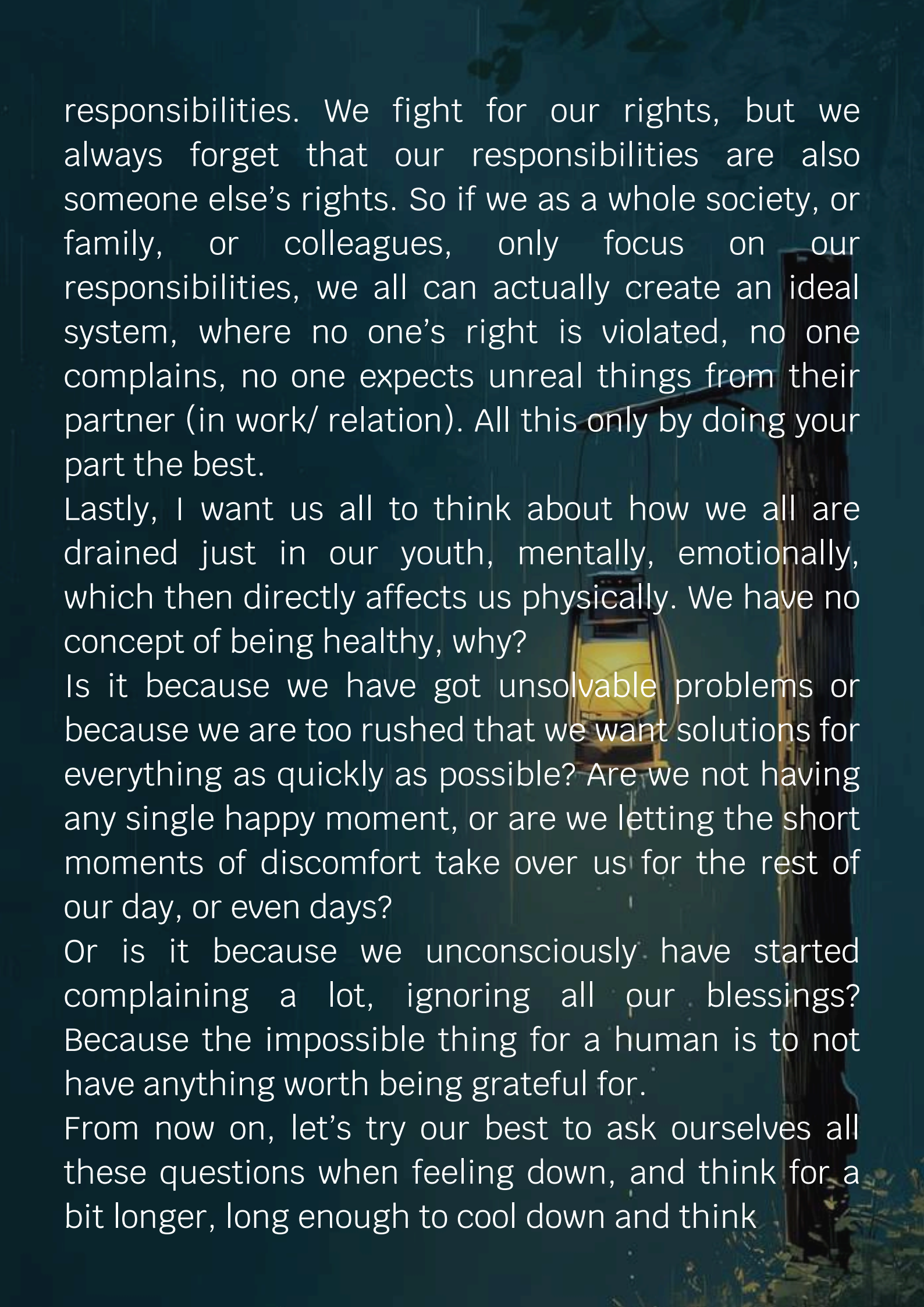
How We **UNLEARNED** Happiness?

Memoona Muntaha | Senior Editor | English Language & Literature

In today's world, no one is happy. Always frustrated and gloomy, ever wondered why?

That's because we have started self-pitying, always confusing it with "self-love". How do you differentiate them? Well, it's very simple; any favour you do yourself which harms you or disadvantages in the long run is you "pitying" yourself, not letting yourself grow, just like an overly pampered child who, at the age of learning, faces issues adapting to the outside world. So when you take an extra hour nap, you skip exercise, when you skip work, you are not doing yourself any favor but are delaying opportunities and growth, because both come with discipline. As there is a Korean proverb that goes "Put off for one day and ten days will pass by"

Another deal with our generation is that we expect a lot without putting in enough effort ourselves. We have a lot of awareness about our rights, but we are oblivious or more precisely blind, towards our

A glowing lantern hangs from a wooden post against a dark, rainy background. The lantern is lit, casting a warm yellow light. Rain is visible as white streaks falling around the lantern. The background is a deep blue-grey, suggesting a night scene with rain. The lantern is positioned on the right side of the frame, and the text is overlaid on the left and center.

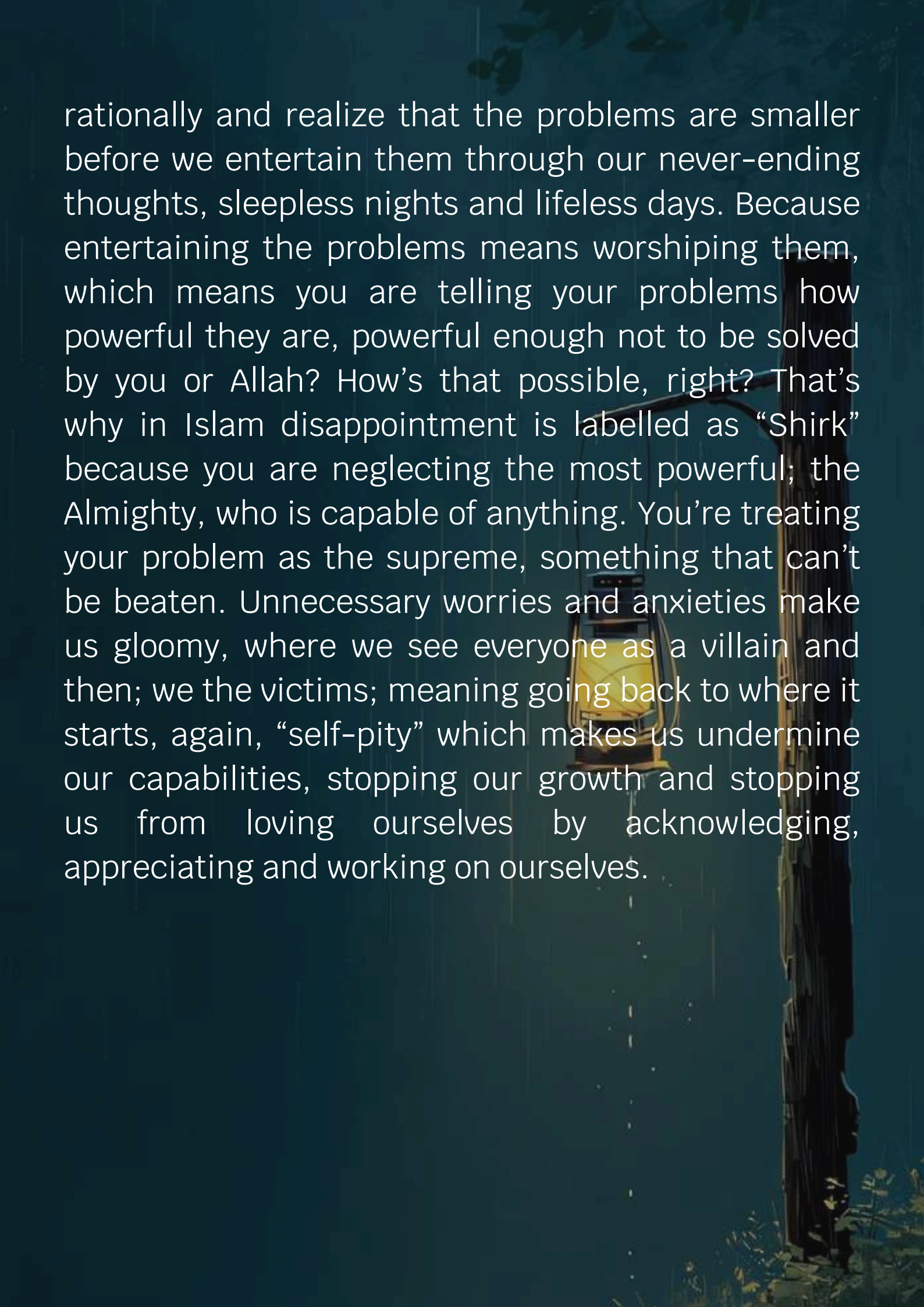
responsibilities. We fight for our rights, but we always forget that our responsibilities are also someone else's rights. So if we as a whole society, or family, or colleagues, only focus on our responsibilities, we all can actually create an ideal system, where no one's right is violated, no one complains, no one expects unreal things from their partner (in work/ relation). All this only by doing your part the best.

Lastly, I want us all to think about how we all are drained just in our youth, mentally, emotionally, which then directly affects us physically. We have no concept of being healthy, why?

Is it because we have got unsolvable problems or because we are too rushed that we want solutions for everything as quickly as possible? Are we not having any single happy moment, or are we letting the short moments of discomfort take over us for the rest of our day, or even days?

Or is it because we unconsciously have started complaining a lot, ignoring all our blessings? Because the impossible thing for a human is to not have anything worth being grateful for.

From now on, let's try our best to ask ourselves all these questions when feeling down, and think for a bit longer, long enough to cool down and think

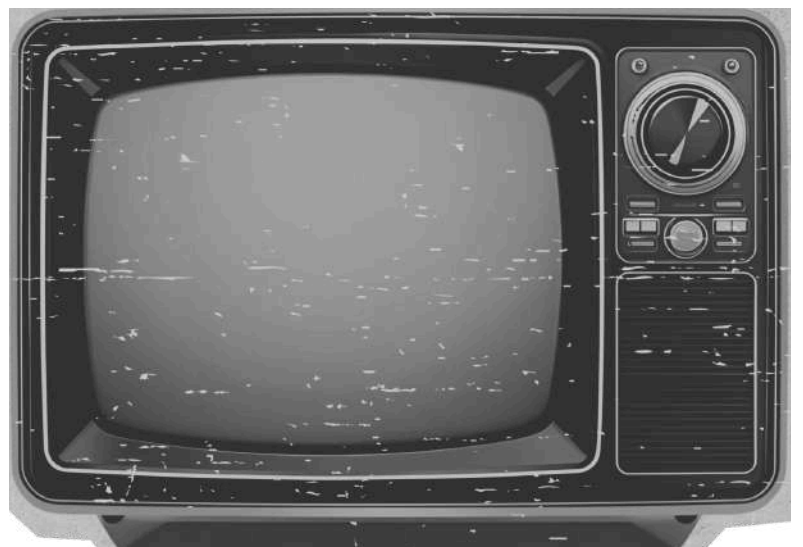
A glowing lantern hangs from a dark wooden post against a dark, rainy background. The lantern is lit, casting a warm yellow glow. Rain is visible as white streaks falling from the top. The background is a deep blue-grey, suggesting a night scene. The lantern is positioned in the center-right of the frame, and the post it hangs from extends vertically. The overall mood is contemplative and somber.

rationality and realize that the problems are smaller before we entertain them through our never-ending thoughts, sleepless nights and lifeless days. Because entertaining the problems means worshiping them, which means you are telling your problems how powerful they are, powerful enough not to be solved by you or Allah? How's that possible, right? That's why in Islam disappointment is labelled as "Shirk" because you are neglecting the most powerful; the Almighty, who is capable of anything. You're treating your problem as the supreme, something that can't be beaten. Unnecessary worries and anxieties make us gloomy, where we see everyone as a villain and then; we the victims; meaning going back to where it starts, again, "self-pity" which makes us undermine our capabilities, stopping our growth and stopping us from loving ourselves by acknowledging, appreciating and working on ourselves.

SOFT POWER

**BY GULRUKH SHAH | SENIOR EDITOR |
ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE**

Power doesn't look the way it used to. It doesn't announce itself anymore with armies at the border or treaties signed in marble halls. Instead, it manifests quietly, like a song that gets stuck in your head, a show you can't stop watching, or a brand that somehow feels like part of who you are. This is the time of soft power, which works in a different way than the blunt power, the brute force we're used to, which we consider as power. It doesn't force you to do what it wants; it makes you want to do it. Both nations and businesses have learned that affection, not obedience, is the real prize. And culture is how you win. Think about how this works in real life. A movie from another country becomes a hit all over the world. Suddenly, millions of people who have never been there feel like they know, or even love that country. They begin to use its slang, cook



its food, and hum its songs. They didn't sit down and make a decision to care; it just happened, almost without them noticing. That's the beauty and the danger of cultural Influence: it doesn't feel like influence at all. Stories are doing the hard work here. They aren't just for entertainment purposes; they're the architect that slowly changes how we see the world, who we trust, and what we think is possible or right. The stories we read and watch do more than just



keep us busy; they change us. And the person who controls those stories has a kind of power that is hard to see but often lasts longer than military threats or economic Power. It's amazing how hard it is to see this battlefield. There are no tanks driving down the streets or big Meetings.

Just a steady flow of affection and attention that builds up until whole groups of people share the same values they learned from screens and speakers. The future belongs to those who get this change: in today's world, real power isn't about making people do things; it's about making them want to do things. The strongest weapon is not destruction but connection. And the winners will be those who know how to make other people feel something.

MAN VS. THE COGNITIVE CIRCUIT

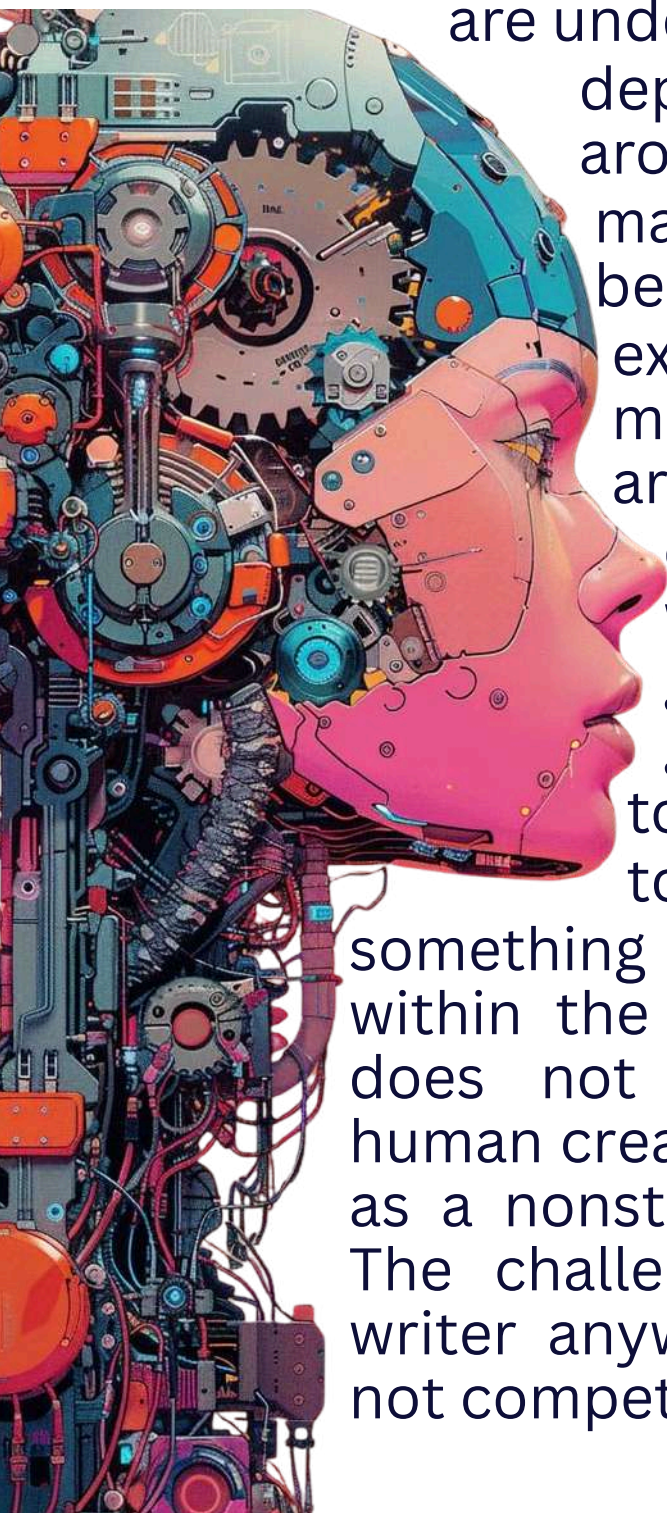
Asma Amjad | Student Editor| English Language & Literature

The most common feeling in an age defined by rapid technological changes is that jobs are under threat and livelihood

depends on it. The discussion around Artificial Intelligence mainly leans toward what can be replaced by it to the extent that headlines are made about making various artists, writers, and

designers outdated. But what if these viewpoints get changed? What if the greatest trends turn out to be by humans and AI together instead of just

something AI flagged? True power within the working situation with AI does not simply mean mimicking human creativity; instead, it will stand as a nonstop, extraordinary partner. The challenge for every artist and writer anywhere across the world is not competition, but it is an empty,



dreaded space, “The Blank Page”. And that is the true space where this AI buddy takes place to prevent creative blockage.

Think of it as a suggestion buddy, never sleeping, always ready to help. A fashion designer could use an AI tool to create endless mood boards and palettes.

The process is neither leaving the job to AI nor about the IA itself, using its massive processing power as a Launchpad for one’s individuality.

Collaboration forms the basis of this partnership. AI can process information and generate content at an incredibly fast speed. But, in a nutshell, it lacks everything that makes human art compelling: genuine emotion, lived experience, cultural context, and a deep understanding of it.

A sonnet can be written by AI, but the pain of a departed love is beyond the artificial intelligence capabilities

It can create a portrait, but the sensitivity of a family memory setting is simply absent.

The human touch and ability to showcase work with feeling, and make critical judgments of aesthetic value, remain the

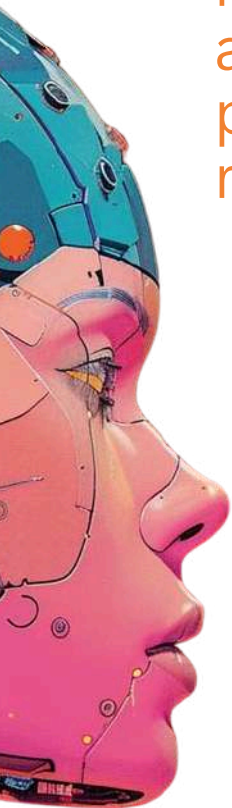


most essential dimension of the creative process. Creativity in the future will not be a matter of fight between man and machine; that who is better instead, it will be a collaboration between both.

So by adopting AI as a tool, we do not lose our human creativity at all, but instead magnify our capability to express it. It's about uniting our enriched imagination with the limitless capacity of AI.

Next time, when you face a creative hurdle, consider asking your co-collaborator. You might be surprised by what you create together, revealing a new way of expressing.

“Never forget, AI can never replace Man-made creations; all it can do is enhance and mimic them based on how it is programmed and trained through our responses.”





Aleena Saeed | Student Editor | English Language & Literature

Every year, thousands of children go missing and become victims of terrible crimes. Some of them roam around in the streets, and some have become transgender. They have been raped in the street, in trucks, and in other places. The number of missing children is increasing day by day worldwide. Each day, they remind their family faces and the love they once had. Their eyes search for their loved one's face and hope for the door of paradise that will be open for them and will meet with their parents, but that moment will never come again in their lives. They cannot understand why they are taken, but are old enough to survive the storms alone. However, I do not call a country developed until a child is not safe. Society fails to protect children. They often ignore the threatening signs, and sometimes the authorities do not take serious action. It leads to mental health problems, anxiety, and terrorism. Whether we are parents, teachers, siblings or leaders, it is our responsibility to protect every single child and to make sure that they grow up in a healthy and supportive environment. They should be protected, safe, and cared for. They are the future of tomorrow and will lead the next generation.

Alumni Interview



Nayab Saqib Ghani

Editor: 2020-2025

Q1: So, what made you take up the editor role in the first place? Did you volunteer, or kind of get pulled into it?

A: Honestly, I was pulled into it. At first, I wasn't sure I wanted to join Lumiere, but then I wrote a poem for the magazine in 2019 and realized I actually enjoyed writing and editing. What started as hesitation turned into passion, I got drawn in and never regretted it.

Q2: Was editing more about fixing the writing or helping people express themselves better?

A: At first, I focused on fixing grammar and punctuation, but soon realized editing is about helping people express themselves. I wanted to enhance their ideas without changing their meaning. I always checked with writers before making edits because it was their voice that mattered most. Editing became a way of supporting expression, not controlling it.

Q3: Be honest, did deadlines drive you crazy, or did you secretly enjoy the pressure?

A: It was both. The pressure was exhausting but also motivating. I often worked under tight deadlines, especially when I became senior editor. Once, I edited and designed an entire issue in just three days while also working on my thesis. It was stressful, but when I saw the final magazine, it felt worth it. The pressure made me stronger.

Q4: Were there any topics that kept showing up in students' writings?

A: Yes, certain topics appeared often, like "say no to drugs" and similar social issues. When I took charge in 2023, I encouraged writers to explore new and bolder themes: Palestine, women's voices, oppression, and inclusivity. I wanted Lumiere to go beyond repetitive moral lessons and talk about what truly matters today.

Q5: How did you deal with pieces that were good but didn't quite fit the magazine's vibe?

A: I guided writers to tone down extreme opinions while keeping their authenticity. Lumiere followed certain guidelines, but I never wanted to silence anyone. I believed in letting people write boldly and truthfully, even if their words were raw, because honest writing always connects more than sugar-coated words.

Q6: What kind of editor would you say you were; strict, chill, or somewhere in between?

A: Somewhere in between. I valued discipline and professionalism, especially before publication, but I also wanted everyone to feel comfortable. I expected commitment and precision because the magazine represented all of us. So, yes, strict when needed, but mostly encouraging.

Q7: Do you think editing changed the way you look at writing in general?

A: Completely. Editing taught me that writing isn't about fancy words, it's about meaning. Reading others' work helped me grow as a writer and thinker. Over time, I became more patient and reflective. It changed me for the better, both creatively and personally.

Q8: How do you think the magazine shaped the campus culture while you were part of it?

A: Lumiere became a platform for voices that needed to be heard. My team and I worked to make each issue different and more impactful. When our 2024 issue came out, people on campus were genuinely excited. It became a symbol of creativity and teamwork, something everyone looked forward to.

Q9: Do you ever miss it, the editing, the brainstorming, the teamwork?

A: Every single day. Lumiere felt like my child, something I nurtured and watched grow. I miss the energy, the teamwork, and the creative chaos. If I ever got the chance, I'd go back and do it all again. Those moments were some of the best of my life.

CAPTURED
and
Created



Being a Woman

Being a woman is to feel deeply, love fiercely, and discover beauty both in the ordinary and the extraordinary.

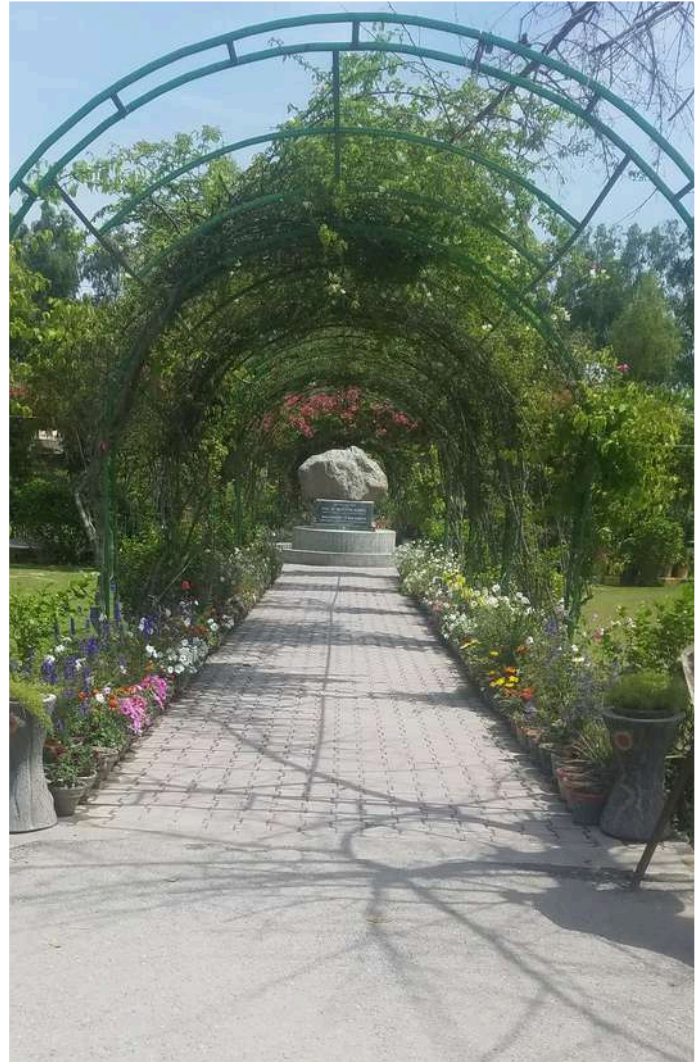


These mesmerizing drawings shared by Aleena Saeed, a graduate from the Department of English, capture life through eyes and a heart filled with love. They say that being a woman is to find joy in ordinary moments, just like a melody that stirs the heart or breathing in the scent of a flower!



The Beauty of Our Campus

Aleena Saeed (graduate) from the Department of English has perfectly captured the sunlight filtering through the branches, casting playful shadows on winding pathways of the campus. Every corner of the campus feels alive yet peaceful, inviting one to pause, breathe, and enjoy the quiet beauty of learning and nature together.



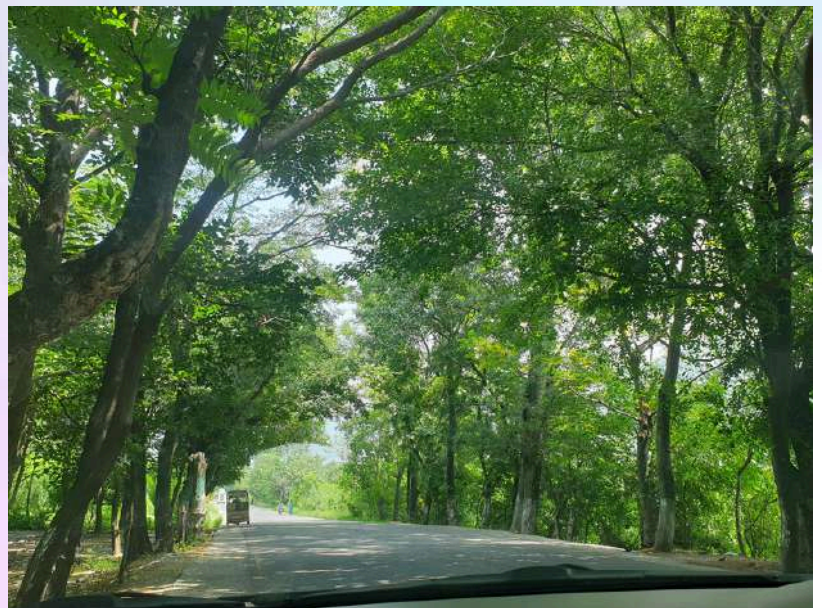
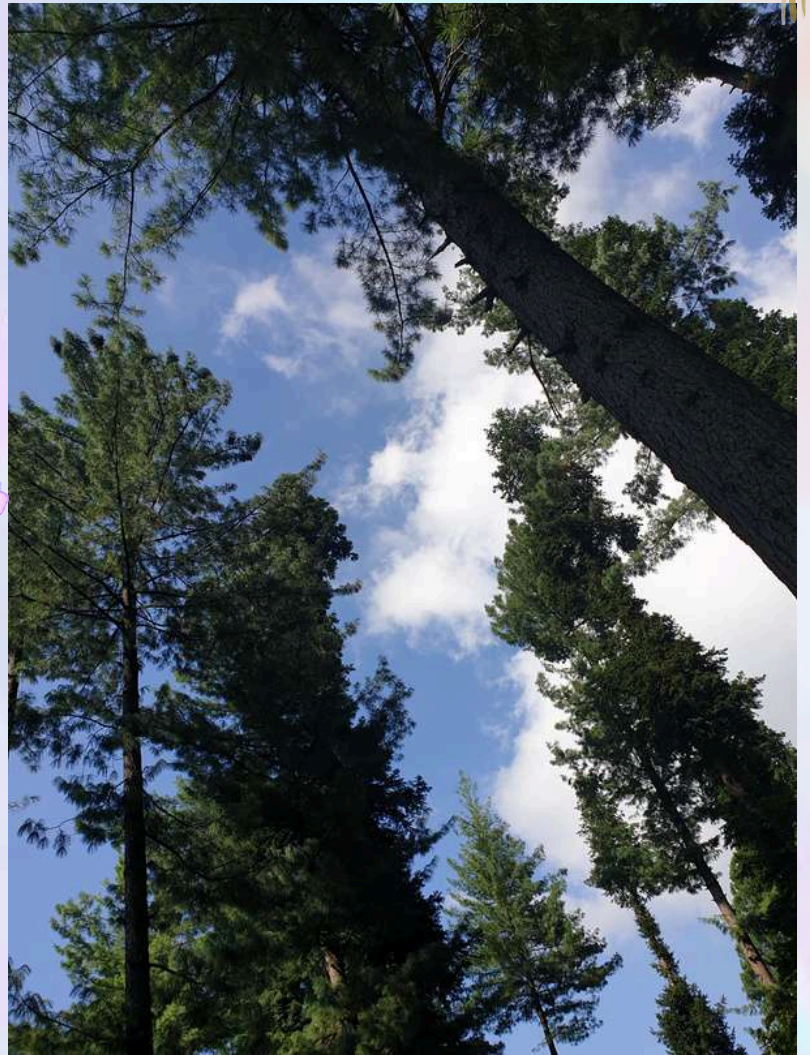
The campus stretches wide under a clear sky, with green lawns and a variety of flowers..



NATURE'S MELODY

Nature sings of beauty, healing souls, and soothing hearts. Maryam Shakeel from the Department of English has beautifully captured the calmness of our beloved Mother Nature.

The blue sky, rustling leaves, and the golden sun peeking through tall trees create such soulful music that no instrument can play!



a Loyal Companion

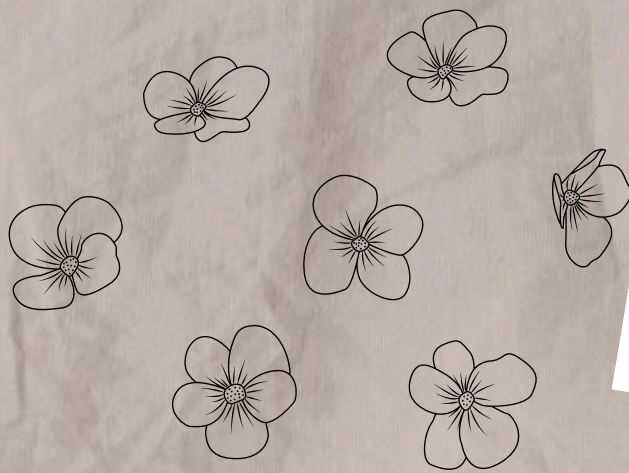
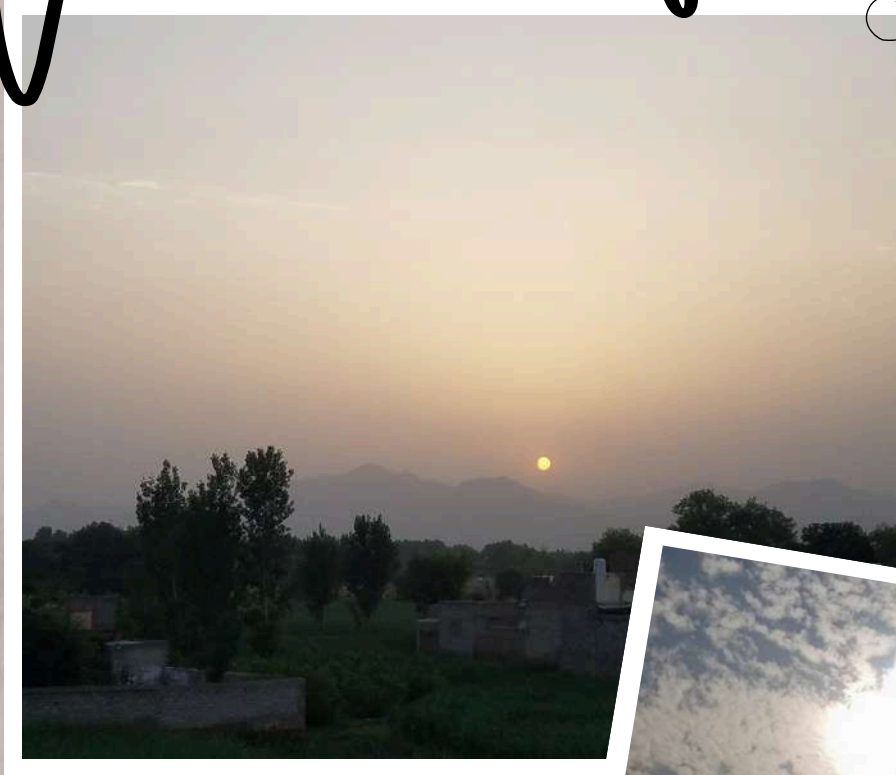
Horse—a symbol
of
companionship,
freedom, and
loyalty



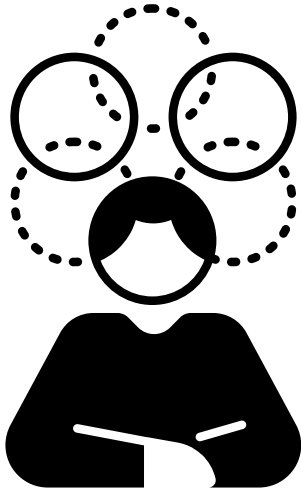
These exquisite paintings shared by Shama Shehriyar of the Department of Political Science remind us of the timeless bond between nature's most noble creature and humans.



Wonders of Sky



Nature often leaves us in awe of its perfection.
The morning sun reminds us of new beginnings
and hope, fueling our minds with energy to start
afresh. Aleena Saeed, a graduate of the
Department of English, has perfectly captured
these moments.

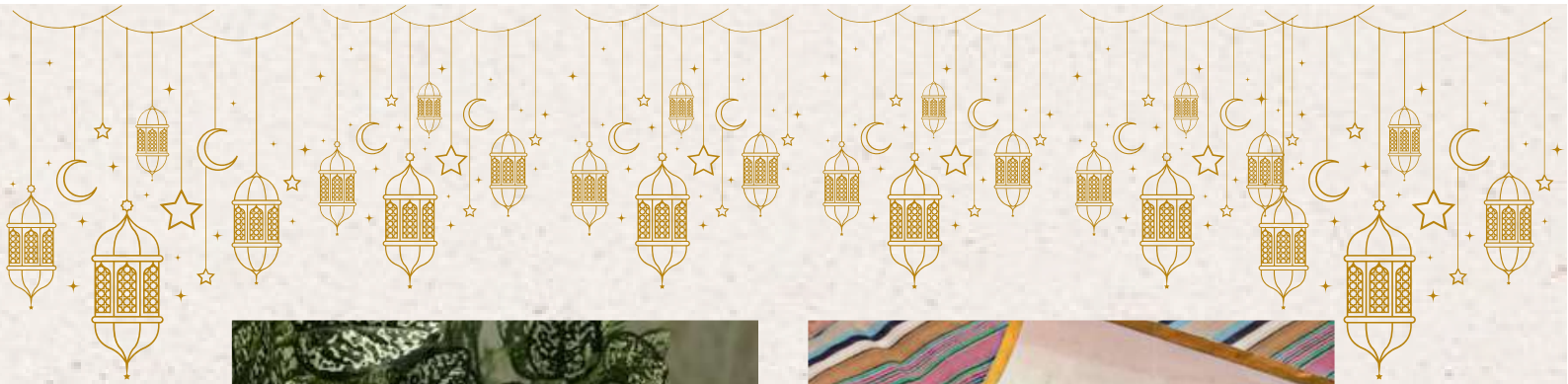


LOST IN THE CHAOS



Shama Shehriyar of the Political Science Department has captured the human mind lost in this chaotic world to perfection. With so many things happening around us, we often lose hope, feel lonely, and rejected, but that is how life has become now!





ECHOES OF FAITH ON CANVAS



These breathtaking paintings shared by Hijab Zohra of the Microbiology Department beautifully capture the spirit of Islam. Together, they reflect faith, peace, and devotion.

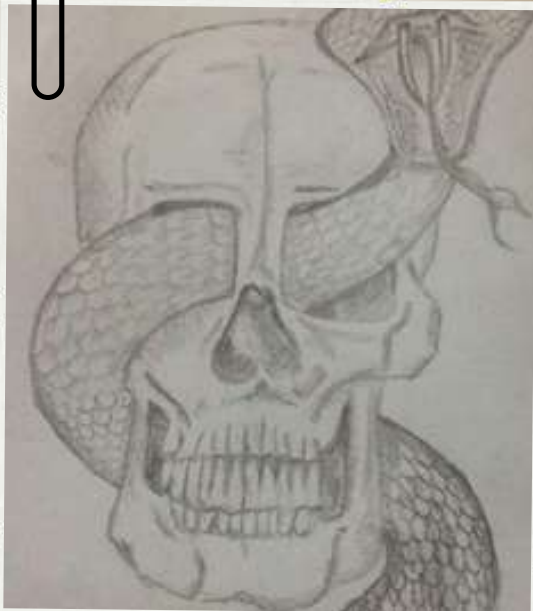


COLOURS OF SPRING



Spring reminds us of joy. Um e Rabab Khan of the Law Department shared some very aesthetic shots filled with life and colour.





*A True
Artist*

Huma Bibi of the Law Department
has shared her wonderful
sketches showcasing her talent
and love for art!
Her work is truly inspiring and
unique.

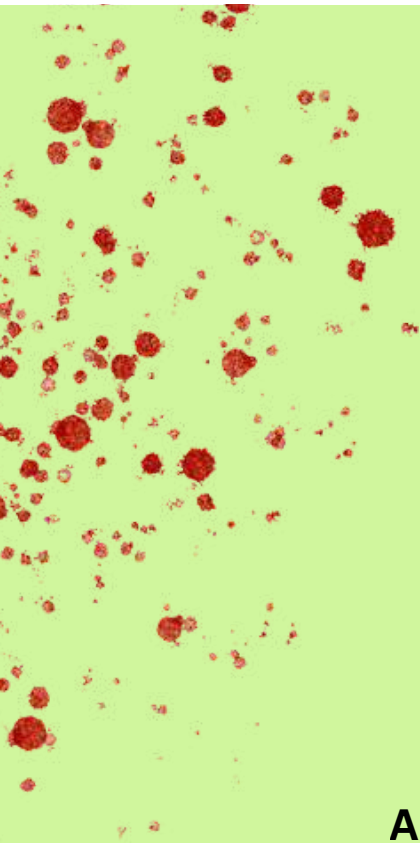
Life on Canvas

Ujala Mehsud of the Art and Design Department has shared her paintings, leaving us in awe!

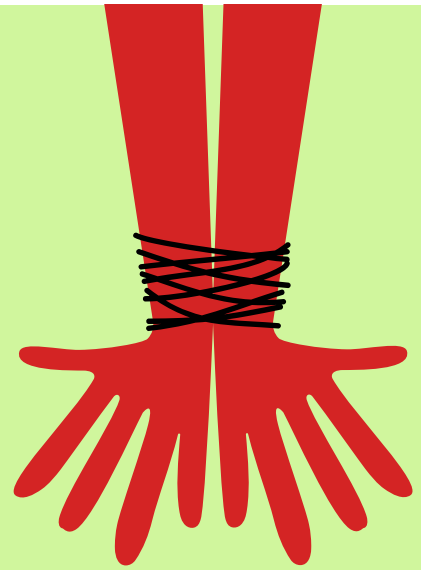
Her masterpieces speak of life, colour, and spirituality.







Lolita



Aleena Saeed | BS English | Graduate

Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* is one of the most monumental works I have ever read. It is known for its poetic language and socially taboo themes.

It reveals the hidden sexual desires of a man. A middle-aged man, Humbert Humbert, is sexually attracted to a twelve-year-old girl, Dolores Haze, whom he calls Lolita.

“Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul.” He exploits her innocence and her childhood by sexually abusing Lolita after becoming her stepfather. The novel inspires readers to think critically about pedophilia, manipulation and morality.

Rating: 5/5, but this one deserves more.

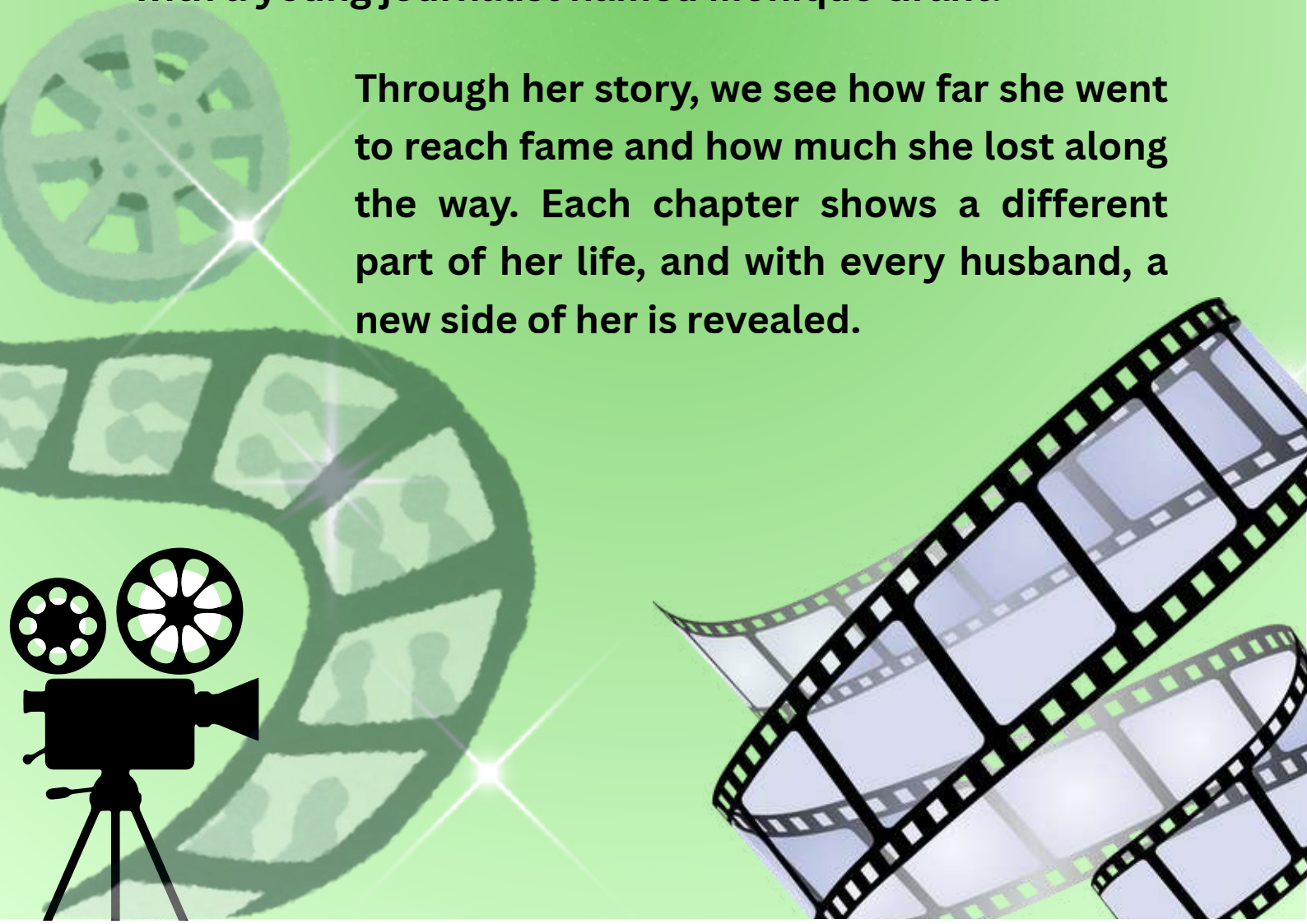


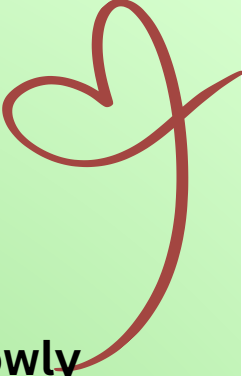
The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo

Sana Shah | BS English

The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo is a story that feels both glamorous and heartbreaking. It tells the life of Evelyn Hugo, a famous Hollywood actress who finally decides to share her truth after years of silence with a young journalist named Monique Grant.

Through her story, we see how far she went to reach fame and how much she lost along the way. Each chapter shows a different part of her life, and with every husband, a new side of her is revealed.





What seems like a story about love and fame slowly becomes a story about finding yourself and being honest about who you really are.

The book is easy to read but full of emotions. It makes you think about the sacrifices people make for success and how difficult it can be to live freely in a world full of judgment. Evelyn's story is powerful because it is both dramatic and deeply human, showing that fame does not erase the struggles of the heart.

It is one of those books that stays with you long after you finish it because it feels real, honest, and unforgettable.

love



be
yourself

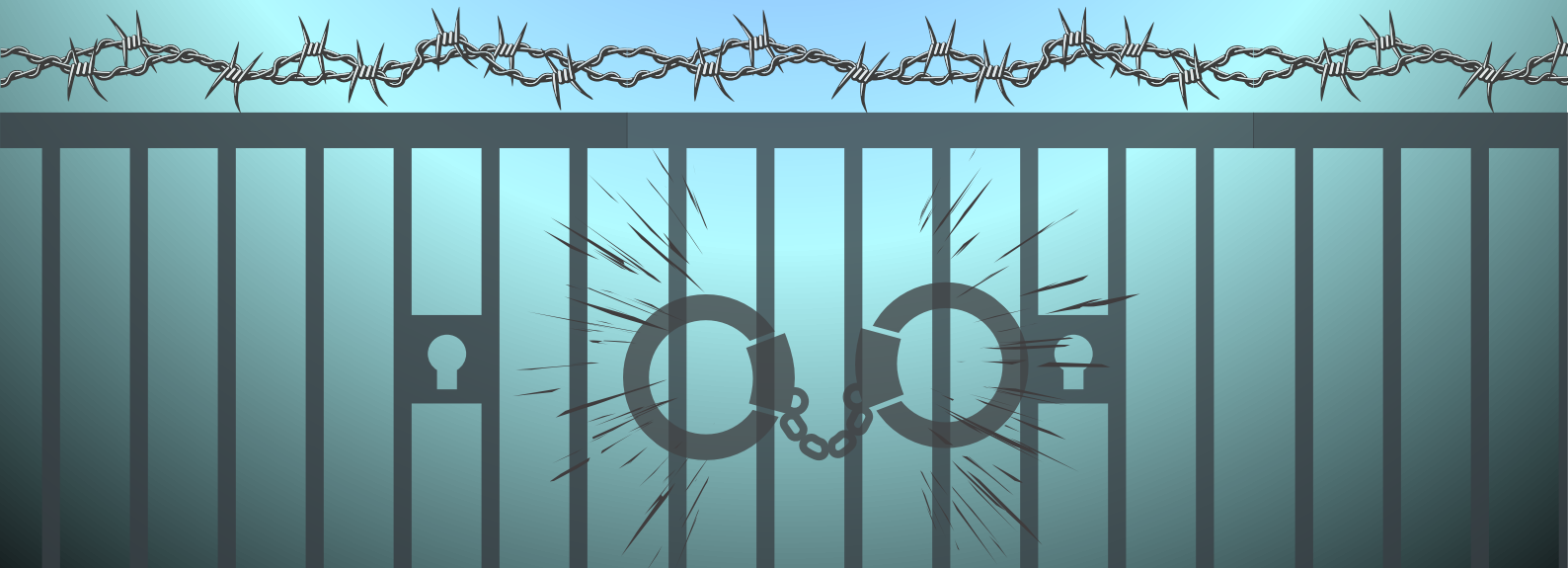


Shatter Me

Gulrukh Shah | Graduate | BS English

Shatter Me by Tahereh Mafi is an exciting mix of dystopian fiction, romance, and psychological drama. Juliette Ferrars, a 17-year-old girl with a deadly touch, is the primary character. At the beginning of the book, she is alone and locked up by a harsh government called the Reestablishment. She believes she is a monster. But as the story carries on, it becomes a journey of self-discovery and reclaiming both emotional and physical strength.

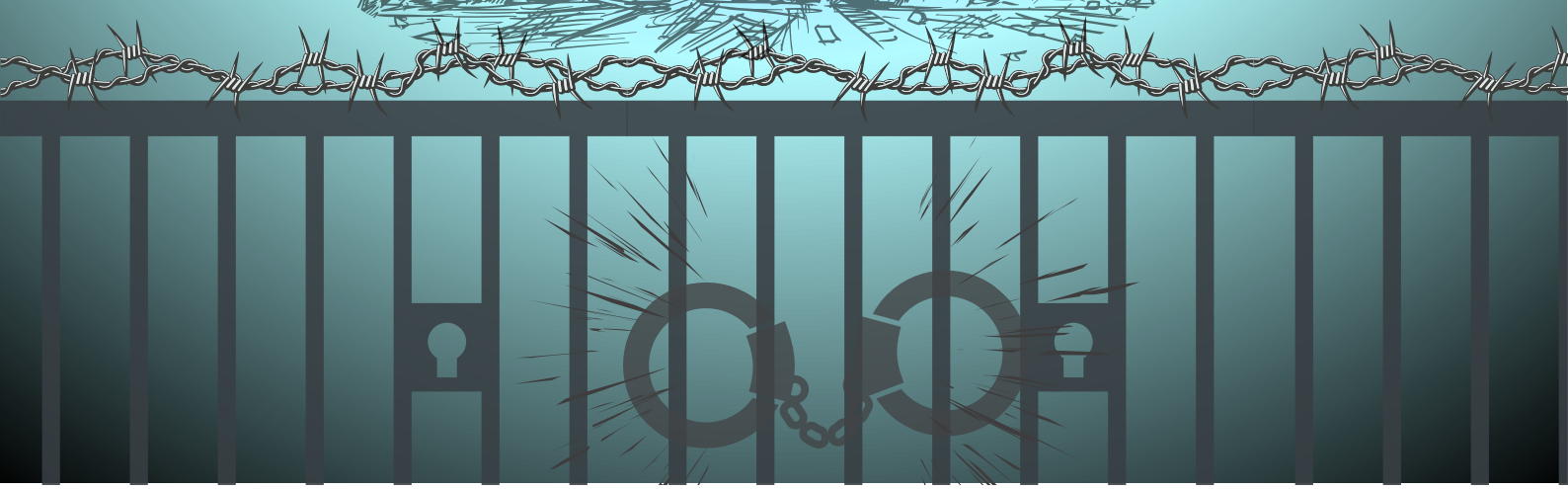
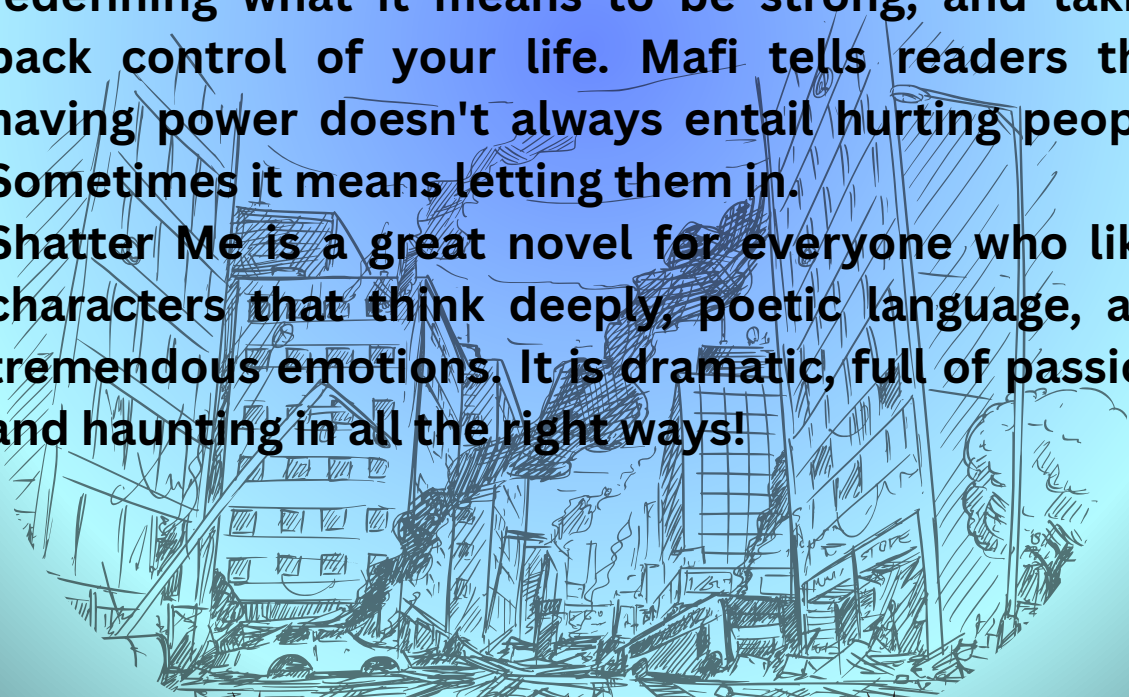
What makes Mafi's writing is full of passion, broken-up sentences, and poetic expression. She crosses out ideas and says things over and over to emphasize how confused and fragile Juliette's mind is.



The relationships in the book make things more difficult and tense. Adam is nice and caring, but Warner is more intriguing and morally ambiguous. Juliette learns more about herself and evolves through these tense relationships filled with doubts and uncertainty. The world-building in this first book isn't as strong as it could be, but the characters and the emotional depth of the plot more than make up for it.

At its core, *Shatter Me* is more than just a dystopian love story. It's about moving on from trauma, redefining what it means to be strong, and taking back control of your life. Mafi tells readers that having power doesn't always entail hurting people. Sometimes it means letting them in.

Shatter Me is a great novel for everyone who likes characters that think deeply, poetic language, and tremendous emotions. It is dramatic, full of passion, and haunting in all the right ways!





10 Minute 38 In This Strange World



Laiba Arif | Graduate | BS English



Elif Shafak's 10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World is a book that sticks with you long after you finish it. It's both beautiful and scary at the same time.

The story starts with the death of Tequila Leila, a sex worker in Istanbul. But this is where it gets scary: her mind doesn't die right away. For ten minutes and thirty-eight seconds, her brain keeps working, bringing up memories of her childhood, the people she loved, the times that broke her, and the times that kept her going.

Through Leila and her circle of marginalized friends, a transgender woman, a Kurdish immigrant, a former convict, and others, Shafak gives voice to those often ignored by society, exploring themes of identity, belonging, and resilience. These aren't just background

characters; they're real people with real lives who are trying to make a place for themselves in a world that wants to erase them.





The plot isn't linear at all. It moves back and forth between the past and the present, just like real memories do. Istanbul, the city itself feels like a living, breathing presence which full of contradictions. It is cruel but full of life, just like the people who live there. Shafak's writing is so beautiful, lyrical, and poetic. It is so gentle, even when it talks about harsh truths. It captures the essence of human emotions in such a breathtaking way.

The structure, those ten minutes and thirty-eight seconds, makes everything seem more important and more urgent. It makes you think about what consciousness really is, how fragile it is, and how much can happen in such a short amount of time.

This book is about the people we forget about, memory and connection, and what it means to really be seen. Shafak has written something that is both a piece of art and a mirror that shows us who we ignore and why.



Frankenstein


Memoona Muntaha | Graduate | BS English

When I first picked up Frankenstein, I expected a scary story about a monster. But what I got instead was something far deeper, a story about loneliness, regret, and what happens when someone wants too much control over life.

Victor Frankenstein creates life out of curiosity and pride, but the moment his creation comes to life, he runs away from it. That's where the real horror starts, not because the creature is evil, but because he's left alone, confused, and desperate for kindness. He isn't portrayed as a monster rather someone who only wanted to belong, but the world refused to accept him.

What's interesting is how the story makes you switch sides. At first, you think Victor is the victim. But slowly, you realize it's the creature who suffers more. He learns about love, friendship, and goodness, but all he gets back is rejection. .





Mary Shelley wrote this when she was just a teenager, yet the questions she raises feel so modern: How far should we go for knowledge? What happens when we create something we can't take care of? And most of all, what does it really mean to be human?

By the end, I didn't see it as a story about science gone wrong. I saw it as a story about how our actions, pride, and carelessness can destroy not just others, but ourselves. Frankenstein isn't a horror story, it's a heartbreak told in the shape of one.

Because of which I think it is a must read, because it isn't only a sci-fi but also a gothic, moral and written by an intelligent writer.



The background is a dark, textured surface with red blood splatters in the top left and bottom right. Yellow crime scene tape with the text "CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS" is draped across the top right. In the center, the title "A Good Girl's Guide to Murder" is written in a white, cursive font. The letter 'o' in "Good" is replaced by a magnifying glass. A blood-stained knife lies diagonally across the title. Below the title, a trail of grey footprints leads from the left towards the center.

A Good Girl's Guide to Murder


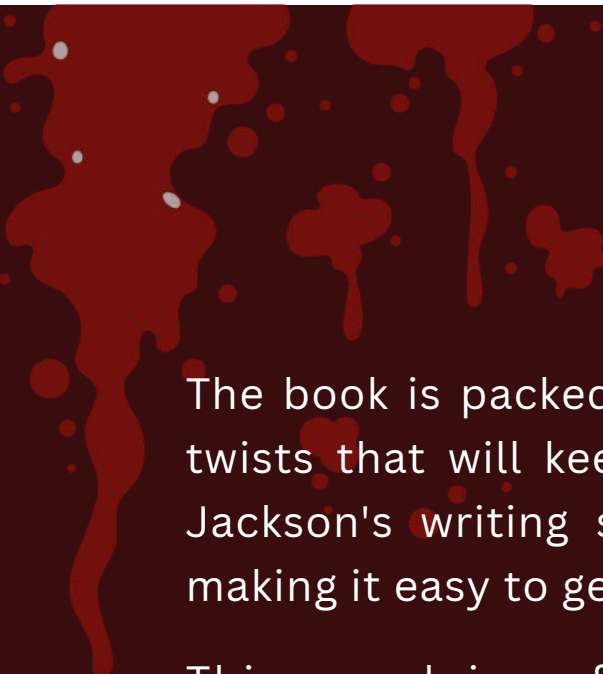
Areeba Muneeb | Graduate | BS English

Originally a trilogy series, "A Good Girl's Guide to Murder" by Holly Jackson is worth the read if you enjoy thrillers, character development, and emotional rollercoasters (not the sad kind). The series also includes a novella, considered the fourth book, that takes place before the original first book and provides more insight into the characters. It's a fun, light read that complements the main series beautifully. This popular series has even been adapted into a Netflix show, adding another layer of excitement for anticipated readers.

"A Good Girl's Guide to Murder" follows Pip and her partner in crime, Ravi. Pip, who's a smart and determined high school student, chooses to investigate a five-year-old murder case for her senior project. Pip's curious nature and strong sense of justice drive her to uncover the truth, even if it puts her in danger.

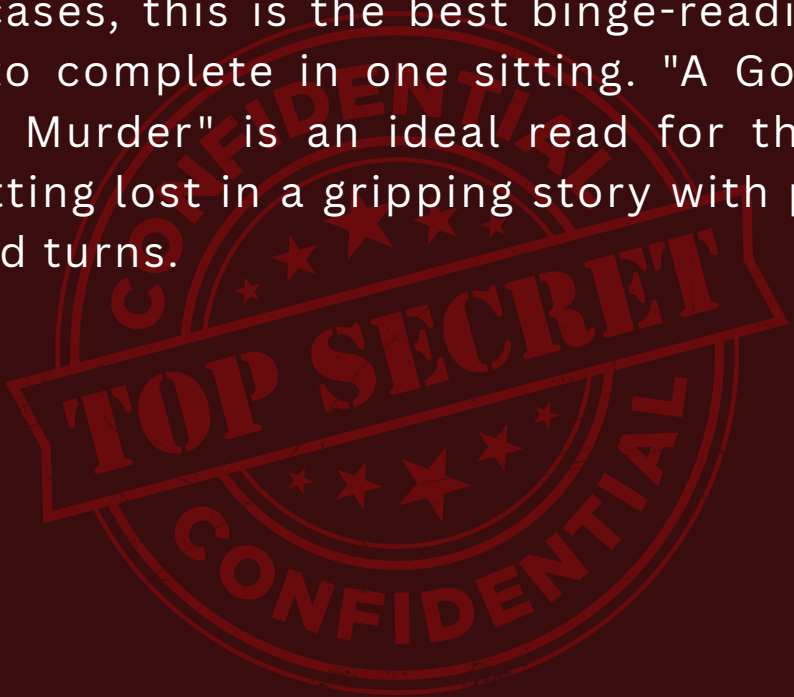


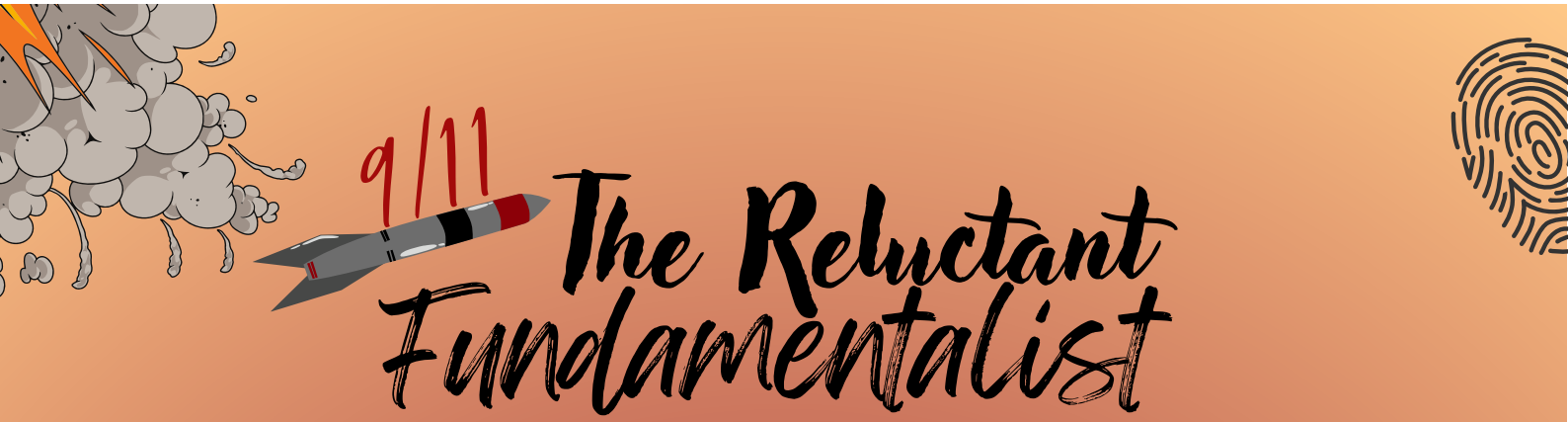
CRIME SCENE CRIME SCENE CRIME SCENE CRIME SCENE CRIME SCENE



The book is packed with mystery and unexpected plot twists that will keep you hooked from start to finish. Jackson's writing style is accessible and compelling, making it easy to get lost in the story.

This novel is a fantastic blend of suspense and intrigue, perfect for anyone who loves a good mystery. If you love mystery, thrill, and solving murder cases, this is the best binge-reading book, perfect to complete in one sitting. "A Good Girl's Guide to Murder" is an ideal read for those who enjoy getting lost in a gripping story with plenty of twists and turns.





The Reluctant Fundamentalist

Asma Amjad | BS English | Graduate

Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is less a novel and more a gripping psychological standoff, delivered entirely as a continuous, intense conversation between a Pakistani man, Changez, and an unnamed American stranger in a Lahore café.

Changez, a Princeton graduate and high-flying financial analyst on Wall Street, recounts his life before and after 9/11. Initially the perfect global citizen, his ambition symbolized by his love for the elusive American woman, Erica, the tragedy in New York shatters his sense of belonging. The growing suspicion he faces in the U.S. forces a bitter choice.





He begins to see the ruthless "fundamentals" of finance he once adored as simply a corporate form of fundamentalism, no better than the rigid ideologies he is accused of holding.

The novel's power lies entirely in its structure a relentless dramatic monologue. Because the American visitor never speaks, the reader is left in perpetual suspense, trying to read the silent man's body language and judge Changez's sincerity. Is this a confession, a warning, or a threat?

Hamid brilliantly uses this structural constraint to mirror the paranoia of the post-9/11 era. Changez's shift is not into violent extremism, but into a form of identity fundamentalism—a loyalty reclaimed for his home and culture. The Reluctant Fundamentalist is

essential reading for its insight into how easily a "global" identity can fracture under the pressure of political fear, leaving us to decide: is the narrator unreliable, or are our own biases leading us to distrust him?

9/11





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