

Vasant Valley

December, 2010

T O D A Y

FOUNDER'S DAY

Life is full of endings, but some hit you hard. This year is in many ways, full of lasts. Our last dance on stage, our last year with the batch above, but more than anything else, it is also a penultimate. And yes, it is as scary as it sounds. The theme for Founder's Day this year was the 'navras' or the nine sentiments. Love, Mirth, Compassion, Anger, Courage, Fear, Wonder, Tranquility, and Disgust. Out of all of these, I know I felt Love the most. Love for the people dancing around me, shining under the spotlights, love for how wonderful the experience had been and love for the batch of 2011. The event started with a medley of colours, hues of red, pink, purple, blue, green, and gold streaking across the stage in synchronization, moving to the beats of Bamboo Banga. Jazz, Hip-Hop, Salsa and Contemporary were packed into one fast paced number. This was followed by a dance of love between Radha and Krishna. Every passion moved slowly and melted into one another, entrancing the audience, and by the end, when it had all ended with the emotion of Tranquility, a dance which was graceful and beautiful, the perfect mood was set for the forthcoming proceedings. Our friends walked down the centre steps, to the hauntingly beautiful rendition of our school song, and speaking as someone who has always been close to them, tears were shed, and there was a hush which fell over the audience. The students walked slowly, as if every step took them further from the place that had been their home for 13 years. And with every step they took, I knew I would miss each and every one of them, no matter how well I knew them. Their shenanigans in the bathrooms, their visits to our alcove. For the batch of 2011, it didn't feel like they were a separate entity. All of them were part of us in some way; they were our friends, our confidantes, and most of all, our "respected" seniors. Shoaib Kohli (Headboy) and Sanjana Malhotra (Headgirl) made a moving speech, in which they reminded us of all the things and places in Vasant Valley which we take for granted most of the time. The teachers who bored us, the food which made us grimace, even the Jhula Badi, which is filled with as many memories as there are grains of sand.

Even today, I find myself humming the bars of Bamboo Banga, without realizing. It causes me to stop and smile, remembering how many times we were shouted at for coming late to practice, how much we used to whine before every rehearsal, and especially how much we would laugh at each other's dancing skills. Founder's Day was very colourful, an explosion of sorts, so many memories, dreams and friendships woven together along with the dances. But even though it was a day filled with endings, there were also a number of beginnings to look forward too. Aspirations and promises of a brighter tomorrow fuelled us all into believing that even though our friends were saying goodbye to their sanctuary, their home, their friends and to us, they were also welcoming the world, to take on its struggles, to rejoice at its wonders, and so, the theme this year was very fitting. Emotions that perfectly described how everyone was feeling, sentiments that the future would bring, and also, emotions that connected us to our memories. What a night, Vasant Valley!

Vedika Berry, 11

SCHOOL WATCH

Sanjana Malhotra of **Class 12** represented Vasant Valley School at the **IRIS (Initiative for Research and Innovation in Science) National Fair 2010** in Mumbai from the **18th to the 21st of November**. Her project 'Antimicrobial activity of leaf and root extracts (aqueous) of *Withania somnifera* (Ashwagandha)' was one of the 87 projects selected out of 1300 entries from all over India.

Ramya Ahuja of **Class 11** & **Vandita Khanna** of **Class 10** are amongst 30 students selected from North India by the **Science Olympiad Foundation** to attend a computing camp at the **University of Singapore**.

Blue House won the **Inter House Track & Field Meet** with **420 points**. The winners of the **Athlete of the Year** award were **Ransher S. Manhas, Kathleen Ireland, Jai Varma, Inayat Gill** and **Nirbhay Bakshi**.



Why Kanye West Should Try Harder

Kanye West

If you don't know that name and you belong to this generation, then you've obviously been living under a rock, or in Somalia. From the famous samples of his Daft Punk song (*Stronger*) to the collaboration with Coldplay frontman Chris Martin (*Homecoming*) and the legendary Taylor Swift 'incident' at the 2009 VMA's, Kanye West is the definition of "rapper". This definition, though, it seemed like he (desperately) wanted to change. He didn't want to be known *just* as the guy who raps about Chicago and Kate Moss, or the guy who was the prime inspiration for "Don't Kanye Me or I will Chris Brown You..." He wanted to be *more*. He wanted to reinvent himself (courtesy of Taylor Swift). So he put on a red tuxedo, a pair of the very en-vogue 'bold nerd glasses' (e.g. LMFAO, P.Diddy, Joe Jonas) and then... he decided to make an art film. Not the Blue Velvet or Mullholand Drive kind of art film. No, not even the Woody Allen kind of movie. In fact, to be honest, I don't know what kind of movie it really was, and frankly, I don't think *he* did either. But, he made *Runaway*; a short, 35 minutes film/musical about his affair with a creature that was a Half-Phoenix, and entwined it with the songs from his latest album "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy." The inspirations were some of the most historically significant art movies, directors and people, like Chanel's Karl Lagerfeld, Stanley Kubrick, Michael Jackson's movie *Thriller* and the painters Picasso and Matisse.

My opinion?

The music was phenomenal. Songs such as *Dark Fantasy*, *Power*, *Runaway* and *All of the Lights* are potential chart-toppers. In fact, film critiques claim that *All of the Lights* will be the *Thriller* (yes, the Michael Jackson one) of our generation. So yes, Kanye's definitely back on the hip-hop radar with these new numbers. The best part of the movie was the scene where *the* most beautiful display of fireworks lights up the sky while *All of the Lights* plays as an ode to the late Michael Jackson, and somehow capturing every bit of the scene and the song, in perfect harmony. The shooting and photography have been mastered, and you see some impeccable shots with excellent cinematography.

But the movie? I'd say you IF you watch it, watch it with no hope, whatsoever, of understanding it. Why? Well firstly, the concept of the half-phoenix was not very convincing. I understand it's an art film and there should be room for abstract ideas, blah blah blah, but I couldn't let my very miniscule 'artsy' side overpower my practical one, when I saw that the phoenix didn't know how to drink from a teacup, but miraculously knew how to speak english flawlessly, with a dainty, fairy like voice and extreme conviction. Secondly, Kanye West? He's a good man, very talented, a lot of 'swagger', but acting skills? Yeah, not so much.

I didn't even feel guilty laughing during the most crucial and emotional minutes of the film, where Kanye delivers a very heart-felt dialogue with the utmost lack of skill. Everything from his facial expressions, to his voice, to his delivery, reeks of "rapper", and lastly, I didn't quite get the message. Okay, fine, maybe lost among the brilliant music and the skimpy clothes worn by the Half-phoenix, there was a message of how 'humans just want to change everything that isn't like them, that's different.' (think Avatar, but with more 'intensity' and better hairstyles), but Kanye failed miserably at executing it. Just when you think that everything will finally become clear... it doesn't. You just know that the movie has ended, the credits are on, and you can go back to watching comparatively understandable movies again. However, somewhere, there is a glimmer of hope, just a tweak of it... the hope that Kanye will never, *never* try this again. And if he does, I suggest you, like his song and *masterpiece* of a movie (honestly) say, "Runaway fast as you can."

Sharanya Thakur & Pia Kochar, 9

Movie Review: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part One

☆☆☆☆ 1/2

'It's like nothing's changed. Not true of course. Everything's changed.'

This quote from the movie Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part One (an adaptation of the novel by J.K. Rowling) describes it in a nutshell – on the surface, the Wizarding World appears much the same; but everything's changed from the beginning to the end of the world-wide phenomenon that is Harry Potter. In a drastic change from the sixth movie; the film is darker, more foreboding – people die, and Harry and his friends are forced to grow up and take the fate of the Wizarding population in their own hands. It is a 146 minute rollercoaster ride of pure brilliance; following Harry, Ron and Hermione as they attempt to evade a Ministry of Magic now under Voldemort's regime while attempting a macabre magical equivalent of a treasure hunt – searching the country for pieces of the Dark Lord's soul; better known as horcruxes.

The movie begins and ends with heart-stopping action sequences that leave you clinging to the end of your seat, wanting more. Despite having read the book (and take it from this fanatic, reading the book will only enhance your experience, not detract from it the way other movie adaptations of novels do) you're on tenterhooks, and even knowing what's going to happen doesn't stop you from chewing your fingernails to bits. One such sequence – and there are major spoilers here for those of you living under a rock and therefore haven't read the book yet – is the one in Godric's Hollow, where Harry and Hermione narrowly escape being killed by Nagini who is residing within the body of Bathilda Bagshot. It is a terrifying moment; you're unable to tear your eyes away from the screen even though every bit of you is screaming at you to look away; and as the snake lunges for the screen, you lunge for the shoulder of the person sitting next to you, screaming at the top of your lungs (thankfully, for me, the person sitting next to me was a friend and not a complete stranger.)

The Trio mature as characters and as actors in this film too. Ron and Hermione finally, finally, finally work out their feelings for each other, but circumstances and the insidious power of a certain locket ensure their affections remain unvoiced. Rupert Grint (who plays Ron Weasley) outdoes himself in this movie; portraying perfectly the mental anguish, jealousy and misery experienced by his character in the novel. Another actor who plays her role with menacing, chilling perfection is Helena Bonham Carter (who plays Bellatrix Lestrange.) You're repulsed as well as frightened of this sadistic Death Eater who tortures as well as captures her audience for every second that she's on screen.

The movie has a few moments of levity in between all the darkness of course. The scenes with the seven Harry Potters (Daniel Radcliffe plays his seven doppelgangers to perfection; earning more than a few shouts of laughter), and Dobby (whose death causes the entire audience to sob embarrassingly) have some of the best one-liners in the film (*'Dobby never meant to kill; only maim; or seriously injure'* comes to mind). On the whole, however, the movie is sombre, ending with Voldemort getting his hands on the Elder Wand by desecrating Dumbledore's tomb. Brilliantly directed; brilliantly scripted; this movie is a must-see for anyone who hasn't seen it yet (and why haven't you?) You'll find yourself laughing, crying, terrified as well as apprehensive for the entire duration of the film; and you'll come out thinking, "Why wasn't it longer?" Definitely the best movie adaptation of the seven Harry Potters we've seen yet.

Vani Shriya, 11



"I'm really happy...and I didn't expect it because I thought only one person gets it. I hope I get it next year too!"

- **Ransher S. Manhas, 3**

"I was really surprised so when I got it I was really excited. I want it next year."

- **Kathleen K. Ireland, 3**

"It (Athlete of the Year Award) was completely unexpected! Five golds, wow! I still can't get over it!"

- **Jai Verma, 8**

"It felt amazing when I got the best timing I've ever gotten in 100m, but when they announced it wrong, I laughed!"

- **Abhishek Dhawan, 9**

"I don't do any athletic training, but now that I have performed well on Sports Day, I plan to get serious about my training and further improve my skills. I won my first 200m this year after 7 years!"

- **Ishan Sardesai, 10**

"I still can't get over it."

- **Gurbaz Khera, 8**

"It felt really good to beat Gurbaz's (Khera) record because no one else ever has!"

- **Jaisal Singh, 8**



"It's amazing when you're lucky enough to be perfect when Blue's (house) been at its best ever."

- **Bharat Kaushish, 12**

"I'm so overwhelmed, I can't believe we actually won one. Bk (Bharat Kaushish) and I have been planning this moment since forever, and now that it's happened, it's so surreal!"

- **Tara Sen, 12**

"Consistency is the hallmark of a true champion."

- **Rhiday Bhandari, 12**

"It was nothing less than exhilarating."

- **Uma Narang, 12**

"We are told to let our light shine, and if it does, we won't need to tell anybody it does. Lighthouses don't fire cannons to call attention to their shining- they just shine."

- **Avie Kakkar, 11**

"It felt strange competing with your best friend year after year, thank God that's over! But we'll definitely miss it."

- **Mallika Arya, 12**



"After I got disqualified from the 100m race I thought I wouldn't get Athlete of the Year. But I was on top of the world when I finally did!"

- **Nirbhay Bakshi, 10**

"When they announced Green house while saying the name of the best athletes, my heart stopped for a second. When they said my name, I felt like I was on top of the world! Despite so much competition, I'm glad that all my training finally paid off!"

- **Inayat Gill, 8**



"Sports Day is the best day of my year. But I am upset that I missed out on athlete of the year by 2 points."

- **Simrat Khera, 10**

"I was extremely happy when I won 200m. I felt a feeling of pride when I heard the sound of my medals hit against each other."

- **Aditi Banerjee, 10**

"It's a one off experience. I had fever the day before, but walking right in front to the song, making the oath- the adrenaline would break through any barrier of pain. And the medals would just have to be the icing on the cake. It's a humbling experience."

- **Aditya Lal, 12**



Photo Credits: Anahitaa Bakshi and Malika Sikand

THE 21ST FOUNDER'S DAY

Three thousand parents, fifteen hundred children, one school and one show. Ladies and gentlemen, the one and only Vasant Valley School Founder's Day. What a spectacular show it was this year as it is every year. It is celebrated with so much enthusiasm and is the grandest occasion of the year. I felt fortunate to be part of this grand spectacle this year. With parents seated in the open air amphitheater under the moonlit sky, the performance began and stage came to life. The spotlights came on the 'Navarasas' were depicted in sequence. The nine emotions compassion, anger, love, disgust, laughter, peace were displayed with great intensity, beautifully choreographed dances, good music and strong expressions. The costumes were lively and colorful and enhanced the grandeur of the setting. I was in 'Roudra' meaning 'anger' and wore red costume. My favourite was the finale which was 'peace' as I loved the purity of the figures in white, dancing gracefully with sweeping movements. The weeks of practice were worth every moment, to culminate in this tremendous production. The resounding applause said it all. And then there was silence and our school song began. The graduating batch walked solemnly down the steps of the aisle as the strains of 'Shresta tamaya karmane' filled the air, I could feel the stillness and also see the tears of emotions on parents' faces. This is much more than a mere ceremony. Our head boy and head girl spoke on behalf of the graduation batch. I could feel the emotion in their voices as they seemed to want to hold on to their school for a little longer and yet were nervous and excited about the changes in their lives which would be a step closer to the big world out there. This Founder's Day was special for me. As the Excellence Awards for other classes were announced I waited in anticipation. When I was called upon I went up on the stage feeling honoured and also humbled. I was conscious of my 'roudra' make-up but ultimately it did not matter. The 21st Vasant Valley Founder's Day was a glorious event and made me feel good about my school and filled me with pride.

Shridhar Hari Singhania V- C

THE SOCCER MATCH

Have you ever played a soccer match? Well, I have and after that match I never went close to any child studying in that School X ! I was playing for our school team. I was a defender and we were playing against School X in the finals. When the game started I tried to tackle the opponent to get the ball but before I knew it, I had fallen on the ground. As I got back on my feet, the School X team was celebrating. I stared at the goal. Our keeper had fallen flat on the ground and the ball was inside the net. It had only been one minute since play started and they were up by a goal. It was the fastest goal I had ever seen. The game continued and the ball was passed to Asith. He had barely run a step when he was tackled and there was another goal against us. Finally it was half-time. The match looked very one-sided. After half-time the ball was again with them. This time I tackled a School X player perfectly. Suddenly he fell down and broke into pieces!! His head had wires coming out of it!! He was a robot! Their entire team were robots. Our team stared at them. Mr.Sandhu, our football coach, fainted in horror. Someone called the police. The entire School X team was arrested for making illegal robots. We were declared the winners and received the trophy. Although we told this story to the entire school, no one seemed to believe us!

Pranav Jain IV- B

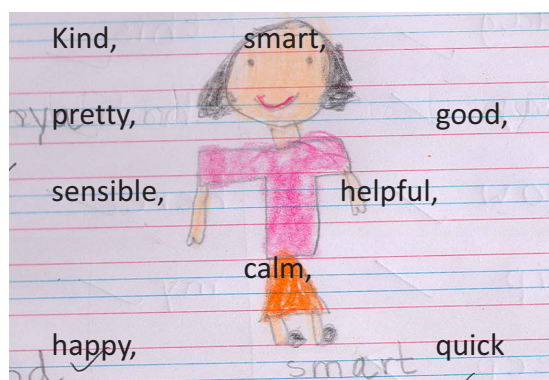
THEY MAKE A DIFFERENCE...



**Kumkum didi
table saaf
karti hain.
Raghav Kajaria
Fdn- B**

**Devendra
bhaiya does
jharoo and
pocha.
Keshav Paul**

AMAZING ADJECTIVES



Ayza Dang describing her friend Tishya Kasliwal I - B

बंदर और विल्लियाँ

एक नदी के पास एक पेड़ था उस पेड़ के नीचे दो विल्लियाँ रहती थीं। एक रिकू और एक पिकू। एक दिन रिकू को एक रोटी मिली। थोड़ी देर के बाद रिकू और पिकू झगड़ने लगे क्योंकि दोनों को रोटी खानी थी और रोटी तो बहुत छोटी थी तो आधा करने का कोई फायदा नहीं रहा। वहाँ से एक बंदर गुज़रा और बंदर विल्लियों को झगड़ते देखा। उस बंदर के पास एक तराजू था। वह बंदर बहुत चालाक था। बंदर विल्लियों के पास गया और बोला अरे! तुम लोग इस छोटी सी रोटी पर लड़ाई क्यों कर रही हो? देखो मेरे पास तराजू है, तुम दोनों अपना हाथ तराजू पर रखो जिस के हाथ का ज़्यादा वज़न है उसका मतलब है कि उसने ज़्यादा खाया है तो उसे रोटी नहीं मिलेगी। रिकू और पिकू ने अपना हाथ तराजू पर रखा पर दोनों का वज़न एक ही था। यह देखकर बंदर बोला कि तुम दोनों का वज़न एक जैसा है मतलब तुम दोनों ने ज़्यादा खा लिया है तो मैं रोटी लेता हूँ। यह कहकर बंदर रोटी लेकर भाग गया। बंदर ने रिकू और पिकू को वेवकूफ बना दिया था।

हरनूर कौर तीन - अ

Lala

A joint effort by I- B

Once there was a castle and a girl called Lala who lived there with her parents. One day a monster came to the castle and attacked her parents. They were taken away by the monster to a faraway place. A fairy came and Lala told the fairy to help her find her parents. The fairy flew up into the sky. From above the clouds she saw Lala's parents who were fast asleep. The fairy used her magic wand and woke them up. The fairy helped them to fly back to the castle. Everyone was happy!



VAMPIRE VS. ROMEO

Romance is an essential part of any entertainment based enterprise; one of the most important parts the establishment of a convincing male lead. William Shakespeare gave us Romeo, Emily Brontë gave us Heathcliff and Margaret Mitchell gave us Rhett Butler. Even today, the scenario remains unchanged. The leading lady remains a doe eyed damsel in distress waiting for her Prince Charming. The story lines are predictable with dismal beginnings and saccharine filled endings. The only characteristic the hero lacks is a heartbeat.

Vampires are undoubtedly the primary choice of most authors today as a subject for exploration. The most influential of them all is Twilight's 'Edward Cullen'. His golden eyes and Adonis like looks have almost all the female characters in the book clamouring for his attention. He is, predictably, the epitome of all that is good, and is shown to abstain from human blood, by feeding only on the blood of animals. Many more vampire stories have followed after the phenomenal success of the Twilight franchise. A television series that has recently started in India, shows the titular character as stuck between choosing one of two vampire brothers as her soulmate.

Many critics are severely opposed to such storylines, as they find this fascination with vampires as quite unnatural and unhealthy, believing that Bram Stoker's Dracula is the only applause worthy and accurate portrayal of these creatures of the night. I, however, feel that the introduction of the vampire as the new Romeo is simply a new trend, something by which our generation will be identified in the future. The pros exist, and so do the cons, because as we all know, Romeo wasn't perfect either, was he?

Vasudha Dixit, 9



CPYLS-2010

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) organized a Program on Youth for Leadership in Science (CPYLS) for 50 selected students. As part of this programme, I, along with 14 other students from various schools in Delhi, was given the opportunity to visit the prestigious National Physical Laboratory on 25th and 26th November.

The two day programme was packed with lab visits, lectures and interactions, to give us an enriching overall experience at the institute. We attended talks on optics, liquid crystals and the limitless possibilities of magnetism, with discussions on the ongoing work at NPL in these areas. Apart from these interactive presentations, the organizers managed to fit visits to 13 different labs around the institute to expose us to the kind of research taking place there. We were shown exactly how force, mass, vacuum, hardness and magnetic standards are maintained for all industries and how the ozone levels in the atmosphere are measured. We even saw the atomic clocks that maintain the time for the entire country with accuracy in pico-seconds, that lose one second every 30,000 years!

The exciting world of superconductors was opened up to us with a live demonstration of the complete repulsion of a magnet by a superconducting material cooled to 77K by liquid nitrogen, a principle used by maglev trains. It was interesting to see the machines that actually make the solar cells we use; photovoltaics being our tools in the creation of an energy-efficient world. Some of the other things we were exposed to were the production of liquid nitrogen and liquid helium, the synthesis of luminescent materials and the physics and engineering of carbon. One of the highlights of the programme for most of us, was seeing an image image of a molecular magnified 30 lakh times using a scanning electron microscope at the Nano-Science Lab.

All in all, the programme was an incredible experience that left us wishing it lasted longer. We took back with us a whole new outlook to the world of science, a bunch of friends sharing the same interests, and enough food for thought to last us a very long time.

Ramya Ahuja, 11

21 वाँ स्थापना दिवस

स्थापना दिवस वह दिन है जब हमारा स्कूल स्थापित हुआ था। हमारे स्कूल का स्थापना दिवस 18 नवंबर को मनाया जाता है। इस साल हमने अपना 21 वाँ स्थापना दिवस मनाया। हर साल अलग विषय होते हैं और उनकी प्रस्तुति भी अलग होती है।



है। कभी हम गाना गाते हैं और कभी नृत्य करते हैं। इस साल का विषय "नवरस" या "नौ रस" था। यह नवरस श्रृंगार, हास्य, रौद्र, करुणा वीभत्स, वीर, भय, अद्रभुत और शांत हैं। इन नवरसों के आधार पर हमने नृत्य किया। हर साल की तरह इस साल भी दो प्रस्तुतियाँ हुईं एक ग्रैंड पैरेंट्स के लिए और एक सबके माता पिता के लिए। हमारा कार्यक्रम सेंटर स्टेप्स पर होता है। हमने स्थापना के कार्यक्रम को प्रस्तुत करने में आनंद भी बहुत लिया। कार्यक्रम के बाद कक्षा 12 के विद्यार्थी भी विद्यालय गीत के साथ मंच पर आए और सभी को उनकी यादगार कक्षा 12 की फोटो मिली। इसके पश्चात विद्यालय के विशिष्ट छात्रों को अवार्ड भी मिला। यह दिन सभी के लिए एक बहुत यादगार दिन रहता है। अगले वर्ष के स्थापना दिवस की प्रतीक्षा...

तराना गुप्ता

कुछ उत्तर जाने नहीं जाते

आता है एक मोड़ जीवन में
आती है एक ऐसी उम्र यौवन में
जब मस्तिस्क भर जाता है
कुछ ऐसे प्रश्नों से
दूर हैं हम जिनके उत्तरों से।।
दिमाग से निकाले नहीं निकलते
किस से वॉट?

मगर दोहरा नहीं पाते
क्योंकि उत्तर भी ऐसे हैं
जो समझाए नहीं जाते...
मगर मुश्किल यह थी
कि जिस प्रकार घर आए
मेहमान लौटाए नहीं जाते
वैसे ही ये प्रश्न भुलाए नहीं जाते।
तो क्यों न दिल खोलकर
कर लूँ स्वागत इनका

मन तो करता है कि अपने सपनों से
आसमानों की ऊँचाइयों को छू लूँ
स्वर्ग तक उनके चर्चे हों
हर सीमा को लॉघ लूँ।
मगर डरती हूँ
घर से बाहर कदम बढ़ाए नहीं जाते...
हर बार कोशिश करती हूँ
फिर भी चादर से बाहर पाँव
फैलाए नहीं जाते।

आस्था गर्ग कक्षा-9

STORMS IN A TEACUP

Breakfast was at 9 today.
He said I was, and that I will be.
But I am not:
The chronic present is lost to me;
Memories are mortal too, and dreams,
Dreams are what will never be.
And yet I find myself dreaming.
Every coffee stain smells of memories
Long buried in the graveyard of my past.
And now their ghosts do come forefront,
And haunt my waning days while
they last...
I never made it.

Shriya A. Velloor, 11

HORRORSCOPES

Aquarius: As the month progresses, your brain regresses. You find yourself indulging in childish activities, from sucking on your thumb to eating sand from the Jhula badi. On the bright side, this is just a phase and you will soon be back to your irksome self and the world will once again try its best to avoid you.

Pisces: There's something fishy going on, and no, I'm not saying that because of your sunsign. If you have been suspecting a conspiracy against you, you are probably correct in your assumption. Watch your back, and your stomach too- do not eat any trans-fats, as you will fall ill, and probably get fat in the process too.

Aries: Life seems to be as dreary and dismal as the Delhi weather, and nothing seems to be going your way. Fear not, your mother is here for you and she'll be more than happy to sort out your life's woes. Do not pick up money from the ground, it is not yours and it will not prove to be lucky.

Taurus: Does it feel like someone is following you? Relax, and don't feel so important. Truth is, right now no one could be bothered by your existence except for your pet goldfish. And that also, only until you've fed it. In love, you are very very lucky as a charming stranger will make you blush, and possibly marry you.

Gemini: Beware of someone who offers you a free car ride AND candy. They are more dangerous than you think. Don't try to get any work done this month either; you'll just make a terrible mess out of things. Thoughts about the impending visits by relatives will plague you all this lunar cycle.

Cancer: Break out the formals because you have many social events this entire month! While your wardrobe might not be up to date, your wit and charm will make up for it, somewhat. Now might also be a good time to do some apple polishing. Every teacher loves an apple on her desk. Figuratively, of course.

Leo: People are being extra rude to you, and you need to be rude right back. Being your incredibly nice self won't help in all situations. Well, hardly any situations. When it comes to love, make sure you wear an interesting shade of green. It will attract some Irish, who will consider you their pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Virgo: You feel very creative this month, but let me stop you right there. You don't have a creative bone in your body, and to save yourself from the disappointment, I suggest you don't walk around claiming you're the next Monet. However, if you try a new sport, you won't fall and bruise your... dignity.

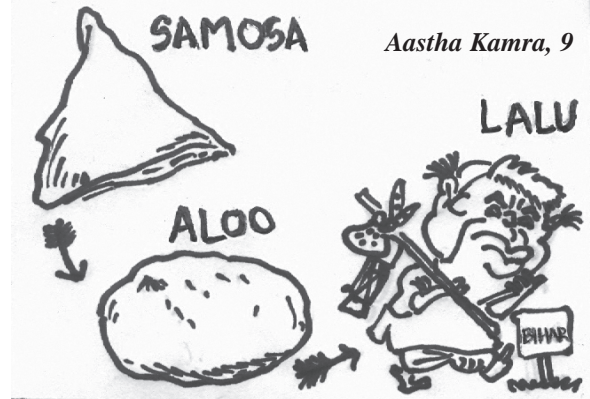
Libra: As Delhi gets colder, so do you. It's not your fault, you just can't help being so heartless. But if you meet an old man with a yellow walking stick, help him cross the street. He will appreciate you when no one else will. On the love front, well, nothing is happening.

Scorpio: Let's face it, you're boring everyone, so maybe you should take a breather and listen for a change. What you will hear is going to pique your curiosity further and you will spread what you hear like wild fire. I suggest you keep this information to yourself. No one likes an angry mob with pitchforks at their door.

Sagittarius: Inside your head is a far more interesting world than reality might be, but Thestrals only exist in Harry Potter and the only thing magical about your life is how fast you go to sleep in a class. Stay awake, exams are coming up and parents don't appreciate an embarrassing report card.

Capricorn: Try watching Winnie The Pooh, there is a lot of great advice in there, and everybody knows you need all the advice you can get, no matter how childish. You will have dreams in which you meet an Englishman who can play the tambourine. This is a sign; you must go for a holiday. Anyway, isn't your birthday coming up?

-As prophesized by Vedika Berry



FREE HUGS

Hugs are the universal medicine.

A hug can mean many things – love, acceptance, relief, appreciation, pride, blessing, consolation, safety, support, encouragement, and comfort. It fits in many situations – a victory, a failure, a farewell, a reunion. A hug can say “I love you” or “I’m here for you”, it can say “Hello”, and it can even say “Goodbye”.

Juan Mann left London to come home to Sydney after his world turned upside down. All he had left was “a bag full of clothes and a world full of troubles.” He watched, alone, while families and lovers hugged and reunited at the Arrivals Terminal at the Airport. He is the man who founded the Free Hugs Campaign.

The Free Hugs Campaign is a social movement that involves people who offer hugs to strangers in public places. The hugs are ‘random acts of kindness’, performed to make others feel better. The campaign’s fundamental philosophy is that everyone needs a hug. It can brighten up your day, remind you that everyone is not lost in the fast-paced blitz of modern life, and, most importantly, that someone cares about you.

The campaign has spread to over 18 countries, the Facebook group has *eighty thousand* members, and their YouTube video has been viewed over *sixty million* times. The campaign’s stunning popularity has shown that *so many people in so many different countries* identify with the cause.



Today, when actual human contact is becoming less and less, people, especially teenagers, need hugs more than ever, and ‘{ }’ (the emoticon for a hug) just won’t do it.

Hug someone today.

Amira Singh, 10

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