

Poems

- Abheek Dutta, Grade V

Peace and War

Peace
Calm, Happy
Silent, Love, Good-will
Free Country, Bound Country
Hostile, Attack, Bombard
Hatred, Upset
War

The Country

It was a proud country,
Where no one went hungry.
Free of crime,
And plenty of time.

Animals were free,
And men drank lots of tea.
None were poor,
And happiness was at every door.

Until one night,
We lost it all in a fight.
We lost our freedom,
And our kingdom.

We lost our will to live,
And our kindness to give.
We mustn't touch our beds,
Or we will lose our heads.

We try to start a campaign,
But only die of pain.
We rebel, we fight, we die, and many others rise,
But the invaders only catch us in disguise.

We try to immigrate,
But they catch us and shove us in a crate.
We smuggle guns,
And they think of it as fun.

They are merciless,
That is why we are helpless.
We pray to many deities,
But are disgraced by the authorities.

They use a magical fire,
And create a flaming pyre.
We mustn't give up,
For their power is corrupt.

Kutcheri Experience In Chennai

- Saikarthik Natarajan, Grade VI

I was sitting in the comfy couch in my grandma's house in Chennai and I was watching Priya Sisters and Ranjani Gayathri in the TV. I always wondered how it would be like if I really went to a live Kutcheri and meet popular mridangists and vocalists, so I asked my mom if we can see as a family live performance by famous carnatic musicians and singers and she said, "Sure".

We got inside the car to get the tickets for the Kutcheri and there was a long queue indeed, especially for Ranjani Gayathri, but I was very interested and really wanted to get the tickets really quickly, so I became cranky, but luckily the tickets didn't run out so we got for all of us.. After we came back home I was in a happy mood for the whole day.

The next day I woke up and brushed my teeth, ate breakfast, took a shower and watched something in the TV and around 6:30pm we went to our first Kutcheri and the singer was Abishek Raguram and the Mridangam player was Ananth Krishnan. I saw them doing Raagam Thanum Pallavi and Thani Avaradhanum. I also saw many people enjoying the music and saying things like Sabash and Bale because the violin, Mridangam and vocalists were singing and playing astronishingly. They were so good that I almost slept..

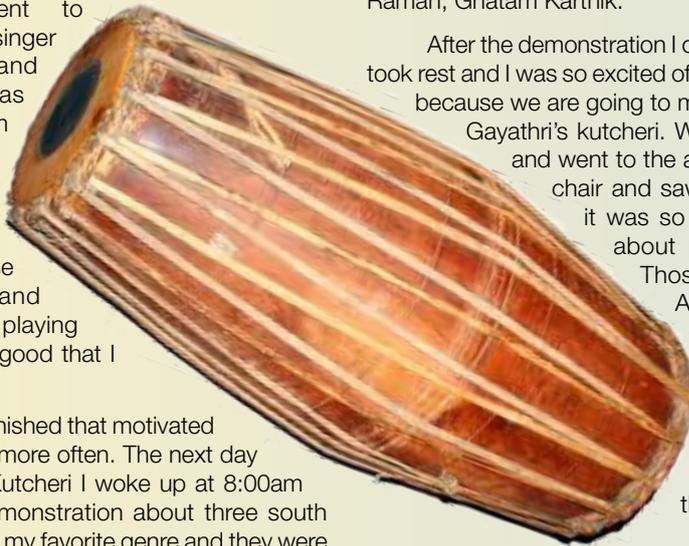
After the performance finished that motivated me to listen to live Kutcheri's more often. The next day after the Abishek Raguram Kutcheri I woke up at 8:00am and today was a lecture demonstration about three south indian percussion instruments my favorite genre and they were

the Mridangam, Ganjira, and the Ghatam. Also it was very good thing for me because I learn Mridangam, so I can learn more about my instrument that I'm learning and also know about other instruments.

We reached there at 11:00am sharp and I listened carefully with my ears wide open about each and every one of the percussion and there specialities. Three things I learnt about each and every one of the percussion and there specialities. Three things I learnt about each instruments is that Mridangam is made of animal skin and Ghatam doesnt have any tuning and Ganjira's face to elaborate it the place where they play it is made out of lizard skin. It was so interesting and I loved it so much, also I had the great opportunity to take photos with great musicians like Ganjira T. Gopalakrishnan, Morsing Raman, Ghatam Karthik.

After the demonstration I came back home ate lunch and took rest and I was so excited of what's coming up this evening because we are going to my favorite singers Ranjani and Gayathri's kutcheri. When it turned evening we left and went to the auditorium and I sat in the soft chair and saw these fantastic singers and it was so nice that I started dreaming about music with my eyes open.

Those two singers were singing Allapanas which are basically introducing the raagam of the song and also I learnt more Raagams, and it was an awsome experience and I really want to see and listen more of carnatic music, so that I can learn a lot and enjoy.



Thank you for reading my writing. ■



The Haunted Mansion

- Ashmita Paul, Grade VII

It was summer holidays for Becky. She usually hates summer, because that is the time when the monsoon starts. The cyclones attack their community severely. But this is a story which is unforgettable.

Every year, she used to go to the Crystal Beach on the first day of her summer holiday, but this year, she wanted to change the venue...

"Becky, did you call your friends in time?" her mother inquired.

"Yes mom," answered Becky.

Her friends, Anne and Betsey, were waiting near their house. Her father stopped the car, and they came. They started opening their lunch boxes and showing their food. Becky was smelling the scent of Betsey's mango pudding. As Anne saw it, she pressed her mouth and started giggling.

"We're here!" exclaimed Becky's father.

"Yeah!" the girls shouted with excitement, as they got out of the car.

They started strolling into the dense forest.

"Can we place the mat here?" questioned Anne, pointing to the spot in front of a tall tree.

"Sure," answered Betsey.

Becky's parents unfolded the mat and placed on the exact place where Anne pointed at. They all sat on the mat and started eating their lunches.

"This is a pretty good place for some shade," mumbled Becky, with her mouth full of mashed potatoes.

"Becky, finish chewing your food first, then speak," chuckled her mother.

Suddenly, dark thunderclouds smothered the sun. The temperature outside dropped severely. They all started feeling cold.

"Why is it so cold?" moaned Betsey.

"I know right, its summer. It shouldn't be so cold," groaned Becky.

They all started shivering in a very strong way. They started escaping from the forest, taking all their stuff, but it was too late.

"Goodness me, I forgot my lunchbox!" screamed Becky.

"Becky! Don't go there, it's too dangerous!" warned Anne and Betsey.

Becky didn't listen to them at all. She sprinted through the forest to find her lunch box.

Thunder boomed and lightning flashed.

"Becky!" screamed her parents.

There were gales of wind. It was so strong that it also pulled Anne and Betsey into the forest and pushed Becky's parents away. Inside the forest, Becky found her lunchbox. At the same time, her friends found her, and they clutched their arms together. The wind blew them further into the middle of the forest.

Later, the storm stopped. The girls were lying down in the middle of the forest.

"Oh, where are we?" strained Anne.

"We're still in the forest," groaned Betsey.

"I'm sorry. I'm the one who put everyone in danger," whimpered Becky.

"Don't blame yourself, at least we still have each other," whispered Betsey.

"Yeah, but where are my parents?" questioned Becky.

"I don't know, let's just take a walk inside the forest," suggested Anne.

The girls started walking deep inside the forest. The sky was becoming darker and darker. They came to a part of the forest where the trees were branching to the middle like claws. It gave them a spine-chilling moment.

"This place looks weird," murmured Anne.

Bats flew above their heads to a large mansion.

"I didn't know that there was a mansion in the forest," moaned Becky.

"Let's check it out," suggested Betsey.

"We should probably find our way home," said Anne.

"Oh come on, just a peak," pleaded Becky.

As the girls went closer to the mansion, the door creaked open by itself. They gasped loudly. Inside the mansion, it had many ornate designs on the walls. There was a big chandelier on the ceiling, but the lights were off.

"It's kind of dark in here. I wish the chandelier lights were on," whined Anne.

"Don't worry, I have a glowstick inside my bag," Becky mumbled, as she took the glowstick out of her bag and turned it on.

"Doesn't this place look kind of haunted?" whimpered Betsey.

"Maybe," answered Becky.

As they crept inside the mansion, the glowstick went off, and the chandelier lights were on.



"What just happened?" whispered Betsey.

The girls became frightened and hid behind a bookshelf. Some shadowy creatures came out from a door on the right side.

"Ghosts!" the girls screamed.

The shadowy creatures stood on a shadow of a stage, where one shadowy man was playing an accordion. The notes that were visible were going all around over the place.

"Whoa!" the girls gasped.

Then, some ugly ghosts came in and started shooting the audience and the stage with shadowy guns. The man with the accordion ran to the woods and started howling to the moon. Some ugly ghosts came behind the weeping man and shot him with their guns.

"Oh no," whimpered Becky.

The ugly ghosts placed the man's dead body in a grave, destroyed the stage, and built a mansion.

"Wait, that's the same mansion that we're in," noticed Anne.

Inside the shadowy mansion, it showed the soul of the man wreaking his horrible vengeance. Things are starting to grow very sinister.

In the middle came out a red and golden accordion. Anne and Betsey were tip-toeing to it until,

"Hey guys, there's a rectangular-shaped window," called Becky.

When they reached there, they pressed their nose to the window and saw a grave. Behind them, the ghost of the man flew outside of the mansion, and rushed inside the grave.

"Guys, I kind of understand of how to stop all this horrible haunting," exclaimed Betsey.

"We should go outside and see the grave," suggested Anne.

They ran to the door, opened it, and ran to the grave.

"Timothy Wilson, 1926-1956," Becky read on the label.

"He's the accordionist," gasped Anne.

"This is all crystal clear, now we know what to do!" Betsey shouted with excitement.

They went inside the mansion, grabbed the accordion, went outside, and placed it near the grave. They hid behind the tree that is near to it.

"Now we can see the whole thing," Becky whispered happily.

The grave opened slowly, and the soul of Timothy Wilson came out. It became the shape of a man and started playing the accordion in a very happy tune.

"Now this horrible haunting will stop," murmured Anne.

"It's better if we don't disturb him. Just let him play," suggested Becky.

Suddenly, another thunderstorm happened.

"Oh, not again!" groaned Betsey.

The wind blew them outside of the forest.

Later, it stopped.

"Becky!" exclaimed Becky's parents.

"Mom, Dad!" Becky shouted with excitement.

"Where have you been?" asked Becky's father.

"Oh um, long story," the girls answered nervously.

"Okay, hop up in the car," giggled Becky's mother.

The girls went inside the car, still wondering about the haunted mansion.

"This time, the storm stopped so quickly," mumbled Betsey.

"I know right," exclaimed Anne.

After summer holidays, school started. On the first day of school, as the girls were having English class, a woman knocked the door.

"Excuse me, can I have Becky Hale, Anne Rose and Betsey Lillis for a minute?" asked the woman.

"Sure," replied the teacher.

The girls went outside the classroom and closed the door. The woman bent down to talk to them.

"I'm Ellie Wilson," said the woman.

The girls' eyes grew wide for a moment.

"Timothy Wilson was my grandfather. I have spent my entire life to stop the terrible haunting with the Haunted Mansion, but his storms were impossible for me to pass," said the woman, with tears trickling from her eyes.

"So, those thunderstorms were caused by him. He wanted someone to help his soul rest in peace," said Becky with astonishment.

"Exactly. He has chosen you to solve this mystery. I want to thank you girls for letting his soul rest in peace," Ellie sobbed and wiped her eyes with her hands and continued, "If possible, may I have an interview with you in the news?"

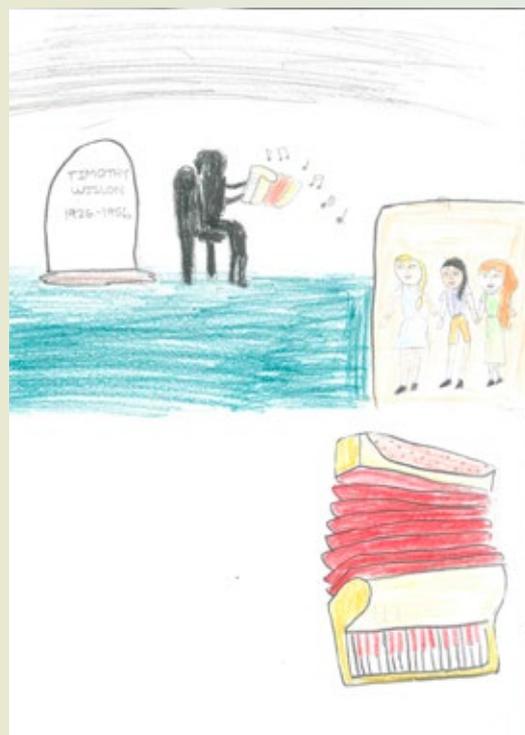
"Let's do this first thing tomorrow morning at 6 am," said Anne.

"Absolutely!" exclaimed Betsey and Ellie.

As they came back, they were admiring their work.

"Oh, this is amazing!" screamed Becky, "I can't believe that we solved a history legend from the past!"

So do I, don't you? ■



Basketball War

- Arnab Karmokar, Grade VII

"Dear lord," I muttered as I glanced at the bulletin board, positioned on the second floor of Northview Junior High.

"What's going on, Junior?" my friend Leo asked, who was going through his newest copy of Slam.

"The basketball teams are up!" I exclaimed. "Whoever wins this match, has the opportunity to participate in the District Championship Tournament."

"Well, then why are you shocked?" Leo asked from beside me. Still, his eyes glued to the magazine.

"We have to go against each other for the match!"

"Wait, what?" Leo was astonished. He dropped Slam and studied the bulletin board, all at the same time. He carefully looked at the sheet of paper, like it is a b-ball game live on TV. "You've got to be kidding me, man! I don't want our names on two different columns!"

"Well, we are both evenly good, perhaps that's why they separated us?" I suggested, trying to cool Leo's temper.

"Yeah, maybe. But I don't want a paper to divide us? What if my team wins and your team fails? How do we sort this out?"

"Wait, hang on," I replied, glancing away from the bulletin board and looked straight at Leo. "How do you know your team is going to win? My team has good players, like Sam, Josh, and Nick."

"Well, my team has Jackson, perhaps the world's best point guard for his age!" Leo bickered back.

"He's just one guy, and plus he isn't any better than Brooklyn!" I said, pointing to the list.

"Oh come on, you seriously don't think Brooklyn is better than Jackson?" He demanded.

"Okay, look. Just because Brooklyn is a girl, doesn't mean she isn't as good as boys!" I attacked back. "That's offensive!"

"I just think she isn't as good as Jackson, not because I'm rude to girls!" Leo defended himself.

"You know what? I don't care. I am positive that I will lead my team to victory, and my team and I will go to the District Championship Tournament!" I shouted. "I can't wait to see you be skeptical after the game!"

"Oh, let's see who's going to be jealous, all right," Leo said, as he pushed me into a locker, and walked away.

"So long sucker," I muttered as I headed for the first period of the day.

"How was school?" my elder-brother Trae asked me as soon as I reached home.

"Cut it out Trae, I'm not in the mood," I muttered, and I went upstairs into my bedroom, slammed my door shut, and jumped onto my bed.

"Can I come in?" Trae asked from the other side of my door.

"Fine," I responded. I wasn't sure to spill what happened at school to Trae, but he got so annoying sometimes.

"So what happened today at school?" my brother asked. "Is everything alright? It doesn't seem alright."

I told him all of what happened on the 2nd floor of the school. I told him how we were talking all fine, and then Leo

started to offend me. I told him how he hated girls and was really offensive. I even told him how he pushed me and left.

"I don't know what to do, Trae, I really don't," I said, and that's when I started bawling. I couldn't keep my emotions tight.

"Bro, it's okay. If you want, I can tell your teachers about Leo, and they can keep a close eye on him."

"Look Trae, I don't want to get him in trouble, he's my friend."

"A friend doesn't push people, Junior. I know that school, okay? The teachers knew me for my basketball skills as well. If it's been a difficulty, tell me, okay?"

"How do I fix this? What would you do if you're in my shoes?"

"If I were in your shoes, I would probably work very hard to win the match, to prove your man Leo wrong. He should be real apologetic then."

I had always admired Trae. He had eternally been, my mentor. He was currently a small forward for the Gonzaga Bulldogs in the NCAA League and is recognized to be the next best player. But that's not my reason for why I kept Trae as a mentor. I followed him as a mentor because he was really kind to everyone. That was when I decided that I will try to beat Leo in the match.

The next day, when I went to school, all of the guys were staring at either Leo or me the whole day. Some of the guys at school came over and spoke with me and about what happened yesterday. Apparently, Leo told everyone he could talk to about the argument, and he called it the 'Basketball War.'

"Dude, what do you wanna do?" one of my teammates, Sam, came over to me in the hallway when I was putting all of my stuff away for lunch.

"Yeah, what do you want to do?" another guy on my team, Nick, came over standing on the opposite side of me.

Slowly and slowly, all 12 of my teammates gathered around me and started to ask questions.

"How about this? What if I called y'all over to my house, and we can talk about basketball then? I'm not in the mood right now."

Everyone else went with the plan, and I felt relieved. That's when I saw Leo walking down the hall. He looked so different. Yesterday, Leo was just wearing an Adidas tee with shorts and some old sneakers, but today, he really changed his looks. He was wearing Migos merch, top to bottom. He doesn't even like rap songs, and now he started to wear rap artists' merch?

And what I didn't notice at first was who he was with. All around him were popular guys in my grade, and they were also wearing matching uniforms.

"Leo bribed us with those outfits in exchange for purposefully losing the match," a guy on my team spoke up. I looked at him in confusion. I couldn't believe my ears. Leo was playing bribe with my teammates? This kind of stuff deserved punishment.

"Hello there, loser, how are your feelings? Keeping up with daily news?" Leo came over.

"Just shut it, Leo," I replied. "You started the whole thing, and you're making it worse."

"That's kind of my job now, Junior. How are your parents? They must've been exhausted last night hearing you complain," Leo sneered. All of his 'friends' started to laugh at his 'hilarious' joke.

"Just cut it out, I'm not in the mood,"

"Looks like someone is going to go home crying again," Leo attacked, and again, his 'friends' started cracking up. "See you later, cry baby," Leo said, and he walked away with his friends.

"Don't let him get to you, Junior, we will definitely win," a teammate told me.

"Yeah, no problem. We gon' win this one!" said another.

"Yeah," I said, and I turned around to look at every one. I was motivated. "We are gonna win this match."

Later that day, I gathered all 12 of us on our school basketball court after school.

"Are you ready to prepare for the match?" I asked everyone. They all nodded in unison.

I led them the way to my house. Our house was enormous now, thanks to the money my bro Trae gave our family. We used to live in a small apartment down on Thompson Avenue, but now, that upgraded to a large house with a mini pool and basketball court.

Not only was it right for the family, but it was good for me too. We had a mini-movie hall that could fit about 15 people, the perfect use for watching some basketball videos that might help us in the match with my teammates. So that was what we did first.

We first looked at professional NBA videos and focused on what skills we could use to win. Then we looked for videos with Leo in it, so we could focus on how to get through his techniques. Then we looked at videos with my brother Trae playing basketball with his college team, the Gonzaga Bulldogs.

Just then, my brother came into the room. "How y'all doing? Wanna hear some tips, and play outside in our court?" And due to events, we went out to our basketball court where Trae coached our team collaboration and skills. We all voted for him to be our coach for the team, and since it was his summer break, he automatically said "yes".

Every day after that, we gathered at my house, and Trae coached us for a win. We worked for about 2 hours out and then we went indoors to just get to know each other for about 30 minutes.

"It's gon' be useful for passing about during your match," he said to all of us. "The worst thing you want to do during your match is to miss a pass."

Trae showed us 3 pointers, he showed us alley-oops, and he even showed us how to dunk. Since our school had a regulation backboard, it was hard for us to dunk on the board. And after a few hours we were all able to dunk.

Trae also taught us about formations, and he shaped us into the offensive 'Run & Gun.'

"Everyone, keep calm," Trae told everyone in my team. "They're going to lose, and we are going to win."

Days passed, and soon, the match date came. My team and I went into the court to practice for the last time when I saw Leo and his team wearing the exact same matching uniforms from the previous time and were already passing the ball around.

"Well hello, Leo, fancy meeting you here at this early time," I spoke to Leo as my teammates stood beside me.

"Majority are saying that my team will win, huh," Leo attacked back. "I don't know why. It's maybe because we have

all the best players!"

Leo's like a snake, he slithers until he reached the climax and then BAM! Attacked in the speed of light. He used to be like an elephant; strong, but unarmful.

"Just shut your mouth, loser," one of my teammates came up to him. "There's no way you'll be winning this game."

"Hey guys, enough trash talk, now let's get real serious and follow me!" Trae came out and guided us to our side of the gym. All of the guys on Leo's team looked shocked. They were shocked that we had a professional and they didn't.

"Everyone, gather round!" Trae called us over. "I was able to get you guys some Gonzaga jerseys and Air Jordans for free from my college, and I want y'all to wear it and play the game," he continued as he gave out the jerseys and the shoes off to everyone. "You guys got this. Just remember all your training, and I have a 100 percent guarantee that you will win."

"Both teams, please come out onto the court!" A referee came onto the gym and gathered us all for the game. We all quickly wore the jersey and Jordans and went onto the court. There was a lot of support for Leo's team, whereas there were only a few for us. But, it didn't matter; we were going to take them down.

We started off with Nick, Sam, Josh, Brooklyn, and me. Leo's team started off with Ben, Jackson, James, Rahul, and Leo. The ref decided that Leo's Team start first, and the battle started.

Leo passed it onto Jackson, and he made a 3 pointer. 3-0. I passed the ball into the court, Sam got it, gave it onto Nick, and Nick did an alley-oop. 2-3. The crowd roared. Leo looked astonished as to what we had done.

We went on and on like this, till the score was 16-21. The buzzer went, and that was our 1st quarter. After a 5 minute break, the ref called us in and the 2nd quarter started. That's when I thought to try some new skills. Brooklyn passed me the ball, and I made a fadeaway shot, which brought us up to 18-21. We gave the other team a contested chance, which brought us down to 18-23.

"Keep guarding!" we all heard Trae yell from out of the court. We kept that in mind, and we played. I made 2 more lay-ups after that, and my fellow teammates were guarding the ball very well. This led to 29-30. And just then, the buzzer went. That was our first half.

"Come on in!" Trae yelled, and we ran as fast as we could. We had only 15 minutes until the next 2 quarters started, and we didn't want to waste time here.

"I'mma move you all around. Nick, you've been doing a fantastic job, so you can take a little break. Junior will take Nick's place, and we gon' add Michael to Junior's place." He kept blabbering about team formations, focusing, and other stuff, and I became distracted. I looked over to the other team. It looked like they were having a lot of fun. They were sipping root beer from these cans and were watching a video on Leo's phone. I wanted to win so bad. It seemed like there was nothing between us before.

"All players, please come over to the court; we will be starting the 3rd quarter," the ref announced from his mike, and we all got up to move. I knew what I was going to do. If he was going to show-off and flex-off, I am going to too.

We started with the ball, and I passed the ball into the court. Michael received the ball, passed it onto Brooklyn and she made a contested shot. We were making progress.

Leo's team were having a little trouble with focusing. They kept missing shots, failed to get rebounds, and they couldn't even pass it correctly to each other. That was how the 3rd quarter ended.

That's when we started to use our weapon for the last quarter: The 'Run & Gun.' We shot and shot, even if we missed

we got the rebound. This made us lead the game. The score became 43-33. Leo's team only got 3 points. Leo missed a lay-up, and Brooklyn passed the ball to me. I ran for more than half a court and that was when I saw the clock, 3 more seconds. I decided to do the one thing that would make everyone freak out. I dunked. The buzzer buzzed, and that was it for the game. We won the basketball war.

Leo came over to me and started crying. "I'm very sorry,

Junior, I shouldn't have acted like that."

"It's fine, I feel way better now," I said as I looked at my team. They seemed pretty satisfied.

"Are we friends?" he asked me.

"Yeah, we're friends."

And just like that, Leo surrendered and the basketball war ended. ■

Change is the only Constant

- Akanksha Mukherjee, Grade IX

Life changes with every passing moment.

Day turns into night, summer changes to winter, children turn into adults, and our friends turn into our enemies. These are a few examples, but change could be much more profound than that. We cannot prevent these changes, no matter how hard we try. But what we can do is to accept them. This will make our life much easier. Let me tell you about my personal experience with change, and how I dealt with it.

The summer of 2017 wasn't just any normal summer. Two significant changes occurred in my life. I joined K. International School Tokyo, which was much more academic and difficult to cope with. At the same time, my brother moved to Canada for his college. Since my birth, he was always there by my side, to encourage me and support me. His departure created an emptiness in my heart- a void that couldn't be filled by something else. I never imagined a life without my brother, but did I have a choice? Eventually I learned to be contented with what I still had, which was a Skype chat with him every weekend. Once I came to terms with this reality, his separation became more endurable.

But school, however, was a different proposition. Of course, adjusting to a new school is never easy. It means joining a new environment with new friends, new teachers, and a new curriculum. My new school was far more academically challenging compared to my previous one. Therefore, it took

me a while to get used to the pressure. Another problem was making new friends. I felt isolated and alienated. I was lonely for days at a stretch, longing for my old school friends. But as the second year began, I started to feel more settled. My grades started improving, and the overall situation was more amicable.

I would like to talk about another consequential change that happened this year. I have lived my entire life in one complex, which included my home, my friends, and the classes I attended. That was my whole world. This year, my parents decided to move to a new house. My first reaction was an absolute no. Although the new house had more advantages, and it was only 5 minutes away from the previous one, it wasn't my home. I didn't want to live in it. But gradually, I started to change my mind by focusing on the positive sides of moving to the new house. The house was smaller, but it had a cozy feeling. It fulfilled all our requirements. Now, looking back, I think that moving was the right decision.

Nothing is constant in our life. Things change all the time. We have two choices- either we can embrace it or resist it. Accepting changes can help us develop many personal qualities, we develop resilience and adaptability. Changes sometimes bring new opportunities too. Change is like an adventure; on one hand, it can be exciting, and on the other, risky. It is normal to be scared of changes, but we need to overcome our fear and be open to new possibilities. ■

DRAWINGS



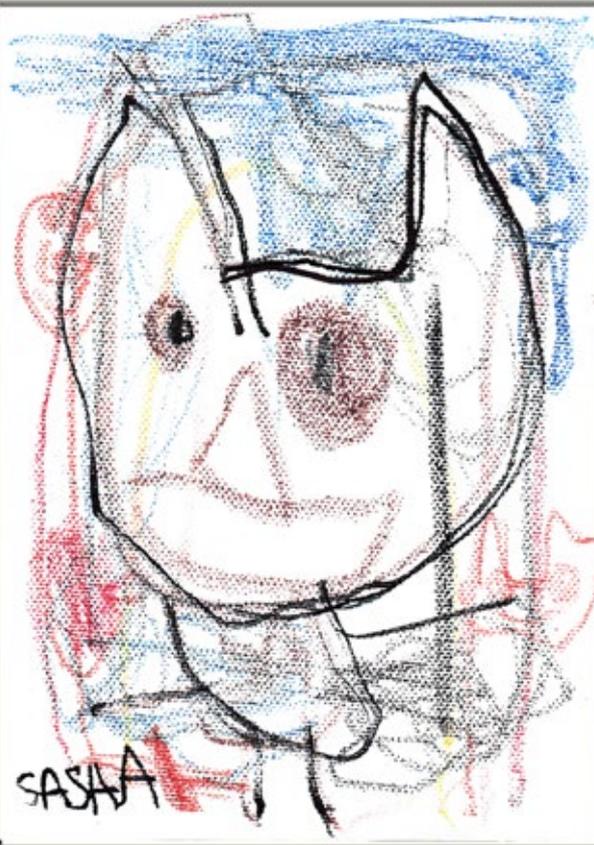
Modern Art
by Aahan



Modern Art - Aahan Mitra 3yrs



Vroom Vroom - Shreyansh Kar 3yrs



Little Mousy Hiding from Kitty Cat - Sasha Kar 4yrs



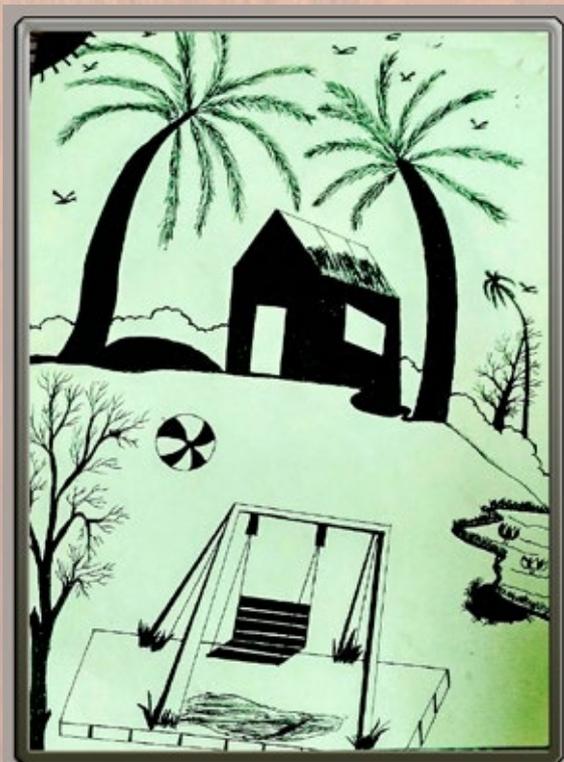
Balancing - Soham Kundu Grade I



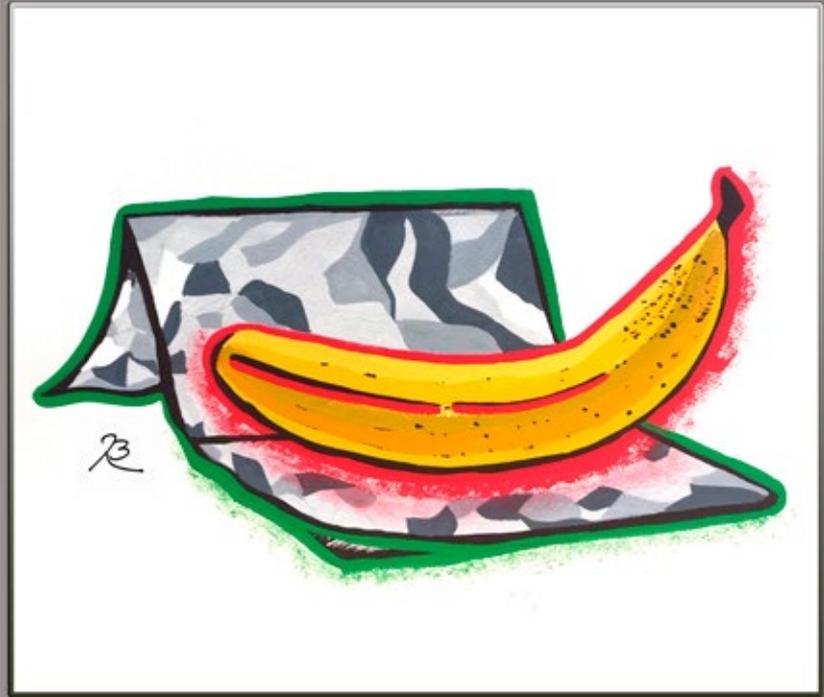
My Flying Car - Aditi Misra Grade II



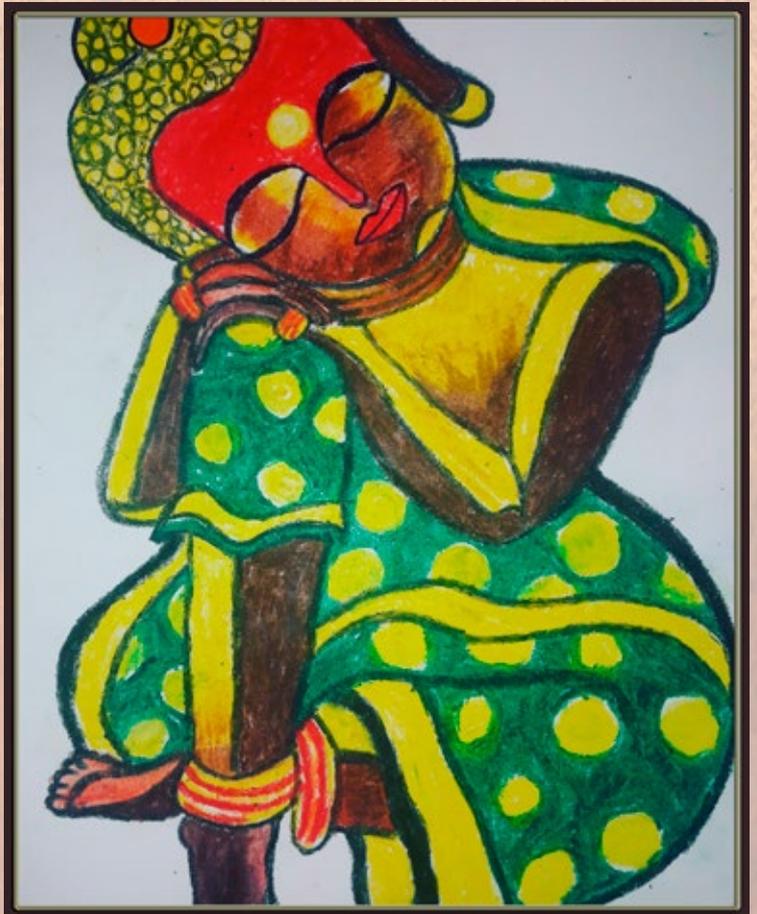
Moo Moo Cow - Advika Ghosh Grade II



Rios Drawing - Rupak Pal Grade V



Bhowken Banana - Kenta Bhowmik (Sumit) HS-II



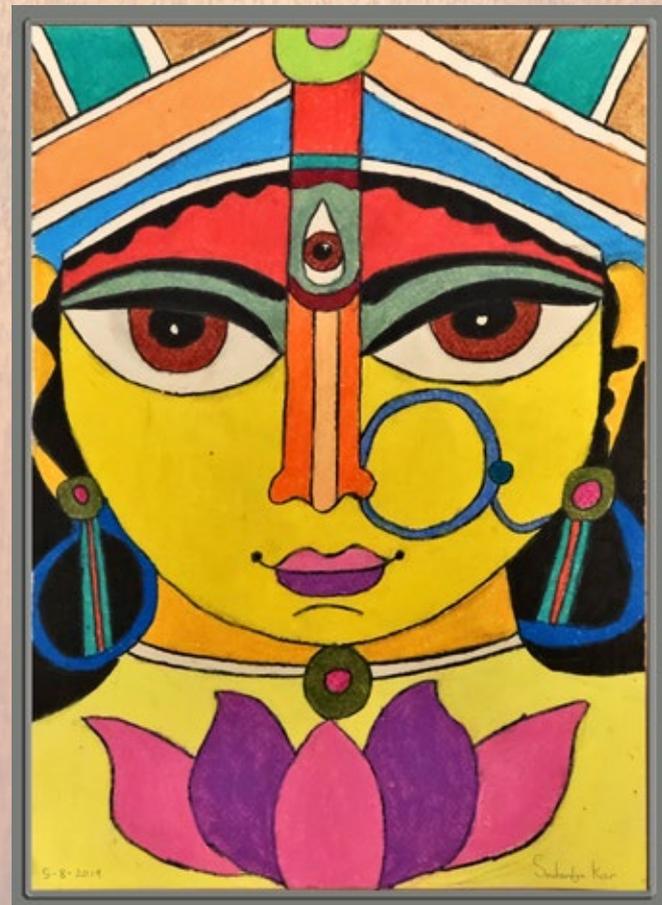
Buddha Painting - Ayana Roy Nandi Grade V



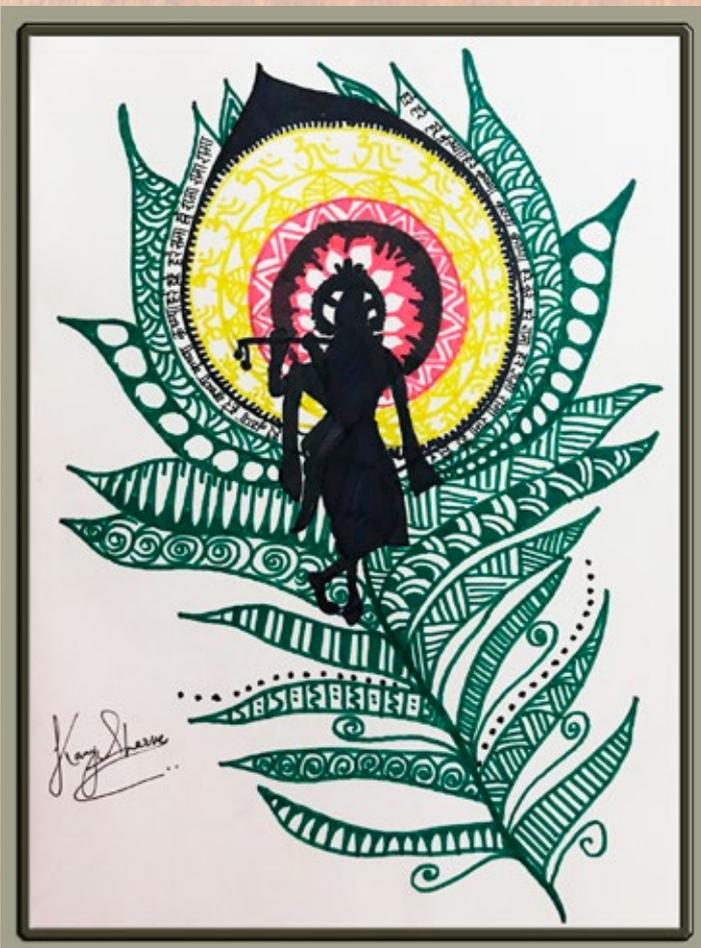
Flying Bird - Alok Misra Grade III



Sarva Mantra Swaroop Vate - Aaryan Sharma Grade X



Agomoni - Souhardya Kar 11yrs



Hari Bol - Kavya Sharma Grade XII