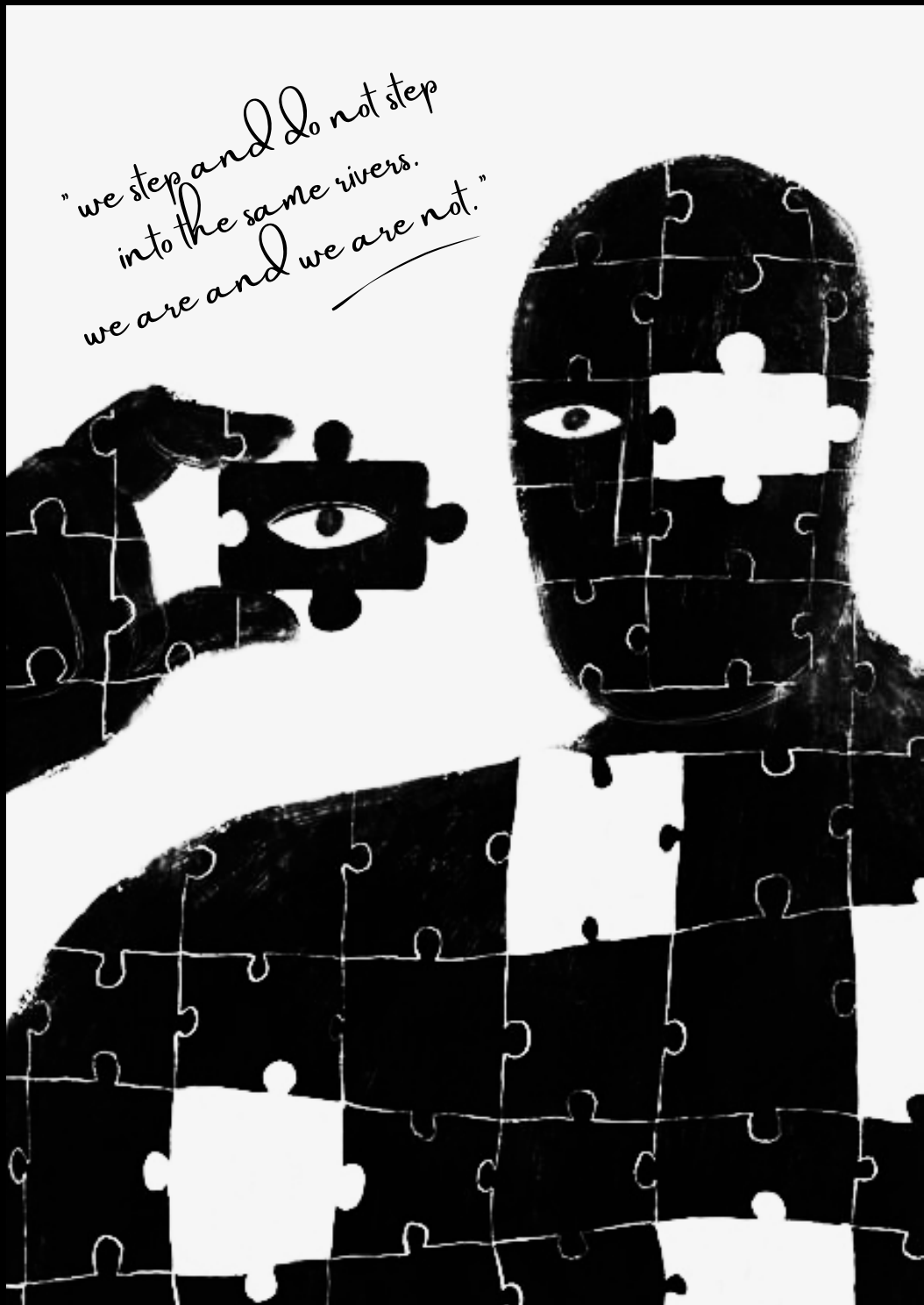


SBS MAG MAY 2023

IDENTITY



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ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Student artists and photographers featured in this issue include Yamini Bharadwaj, Varya Jain, Resham Seth, Raghav Malik, Noyonika Vohra, Gia Arora and Sehar Bhatia.

EDITORIAL

As a young person, there is very little for me to write on the subject of identity that does not verge irredeemably on the pretentious. This makes it very difficult to write the stipulated editorial on this theme, which we may have (in retrospect), a little foolishly chosen. Fortunately, we've had a stroke of luck with the school magazine - in that no one actually reads it - therefore all possible pretentious and (in my opinion - exiguously) provocative notes of this editorial can go on existing in their own closed echo chamber. *(How nice!)*

Ever since I developed one, identity has been a very interesting theme for me to explore (a hint to those who don't find this topic fascinating). As to why - that's because it's always evolving and changing and yet it continues to define that which it seeks to define, thereby rendering it simultaneously constant (an idea captured in the writing on the front cover, 'We step and do not step into the same rivers. We are and we are not.' - put into these words, first, by Heraclitus). I adore these kinds of paradoxes. As Editor, I shall force you to adore them too. And the first step of course, in this casual mission, is to urge you to peruse through this issue.

Yamini Bharadwaj
(Editor)





POEMS

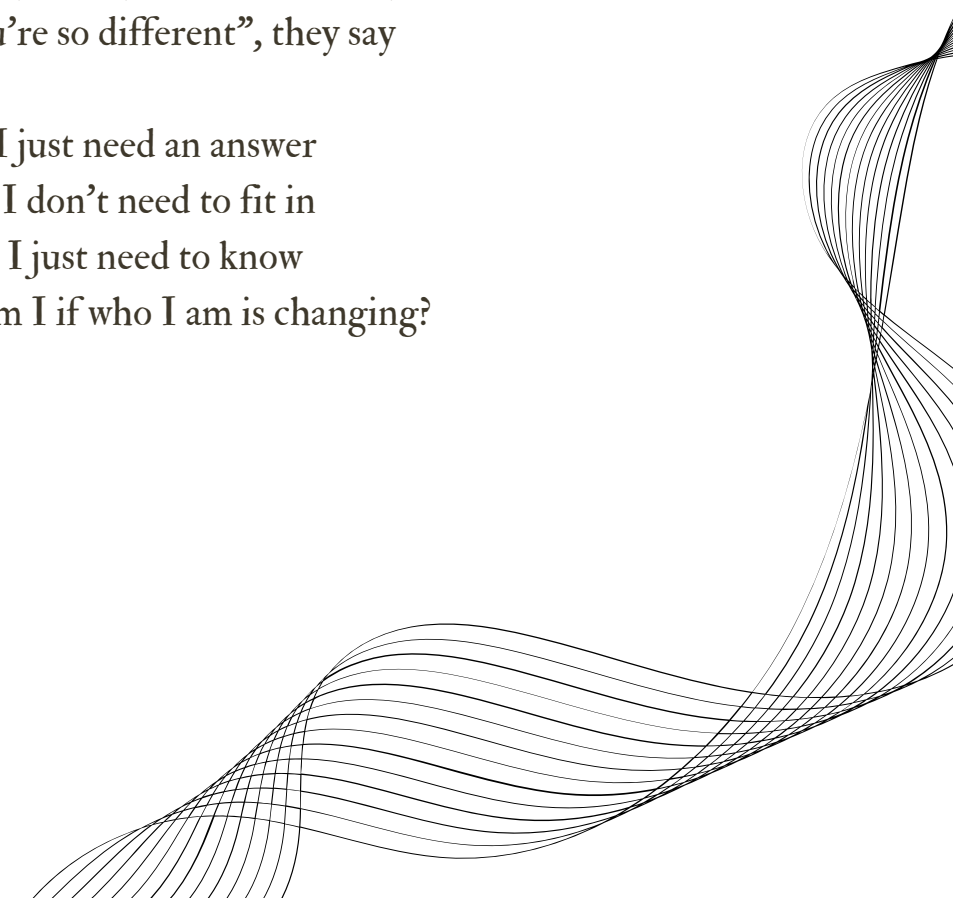
The Identity Search

by Riddhi Tyagi

Who am I if who I am is changing?
What broken puzzle piece am I?
- Because I never seem to fit in
I change everyday
Every night I am different

I search for myself everywhere
Though, anywhere - it does not get me
I'm not like my family nor am I like my friends
"You're so different", they say

I just need an answer
I don't need to fit in
I just need to know
Who am I if who I am is changing?



On Bleeding Hearts and Broken Souls

by Sameeha Sood

Because you have my heart in free-fall,
and yet, how I long for the plunge.

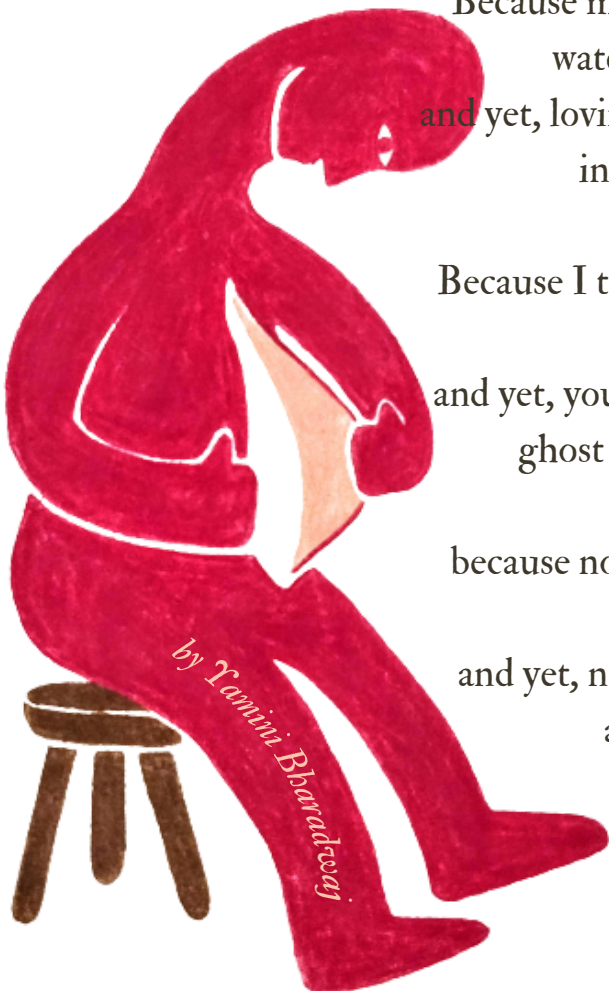
Because I doubt my words could ever
do your beauty justice,
and yet, how I long to paint you in
them, you, my inspiration, my muse.

Because your love is a thousand knives
staked through my still-beating heart,
and yet, how I long for that sweet,
sweet relief.

Because my affection for you is like
water filling my lungs,
and yet, loving you is breathing, innate,
inherent, indelible.

Because I try so hard to push you out
of my mind,
and yet, your presence lingers like the
ghost of your lips on mine,

because nothing kills me more than
you do,
and yet, no matter what I do, I will
always love you.



Sketch by Raghav Malik



Falling, falling/landing on tiptoes/
a colourful frenzy./ Swathes of
swirls/spiralling touch/I can't
breathe.

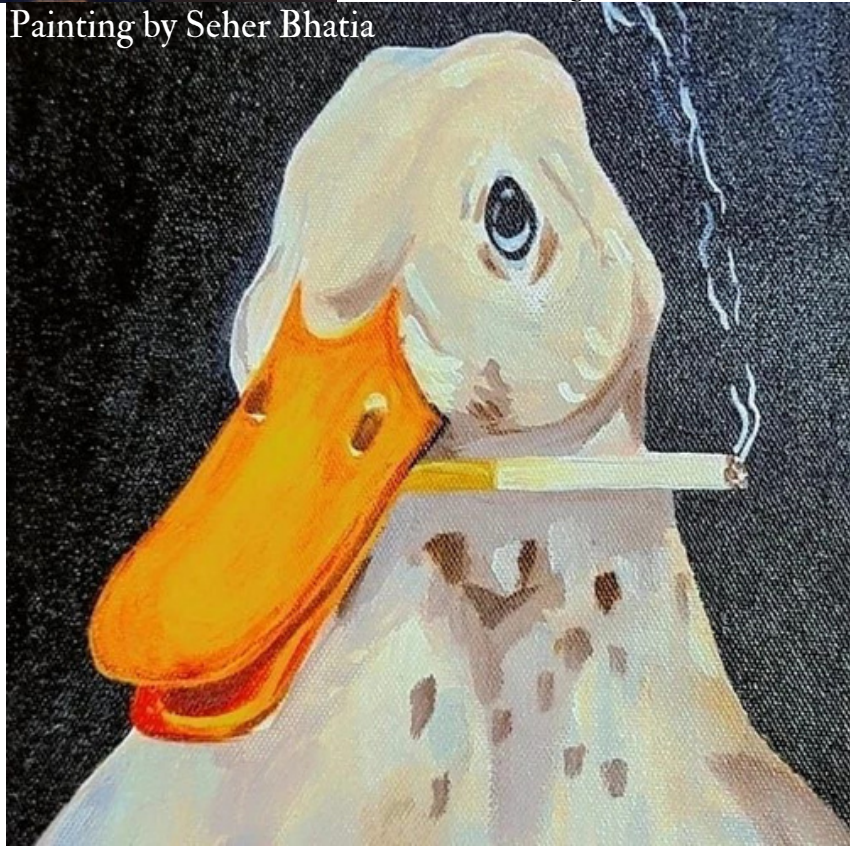
Dancing, dancing/shattering the
sky/a distorted paradise/ empty
joy/ endless delight/ my lungs are
so full.

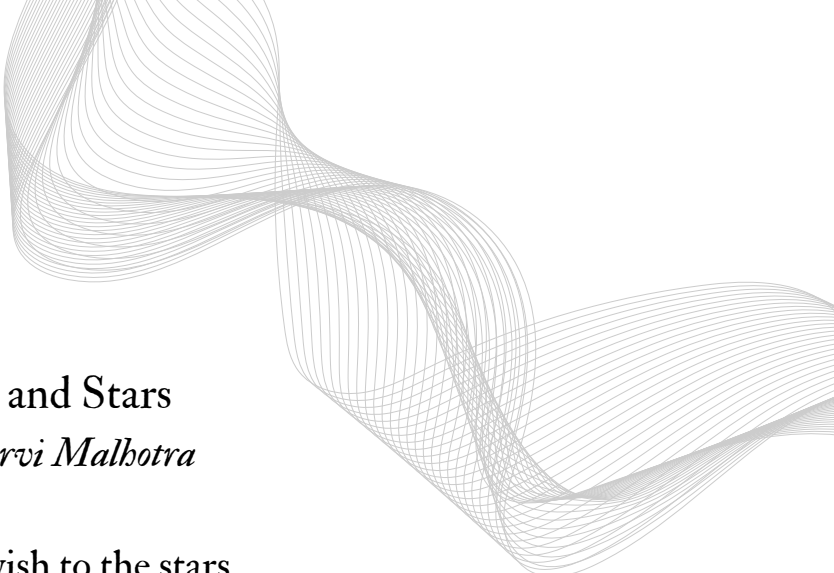
Bright lights, broken glass/ blood
and ice roses/ crackling music,
whirling scars/ veils and smiles and
nettles./ So much, too much, not
enough/ I'll never be this free
again.



Painting by Raghav Malik

Painting by Seher Bhatia





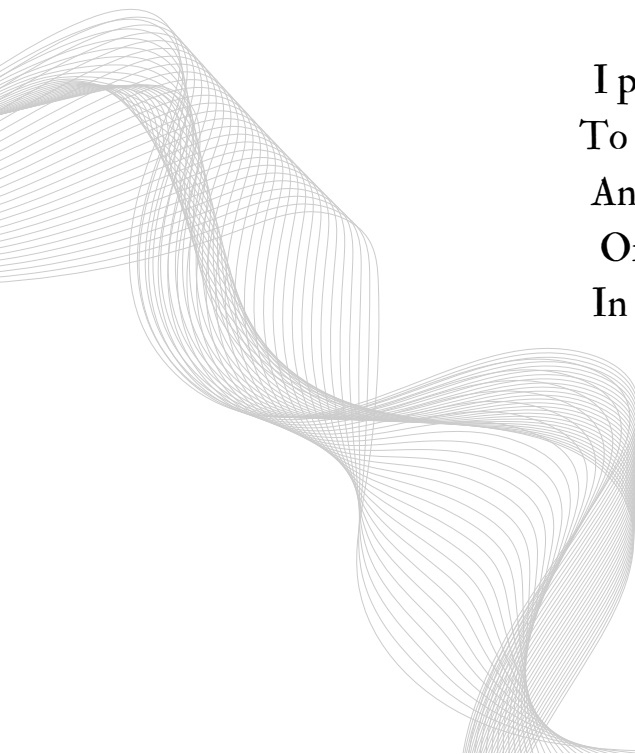
Sand and Stars
By Gaurvi Malhotra

I make a wish to the stars,
To not make me feel so small.

I tell them to set me free.
I tell them to make me feel like I belong.
Like I'm not just a speck in the universe.
Like I'm not a mere grain of sand.
Like I'm a part of something greater,
A vast desert or a comforting beloved beach.

Like I have a purpose,
A quest to fulfil.

Perhaps unite with the great waters,
or morph into golden castles.
To be a cherished memory
or help build empires.



I pray to the falling stars ,
To shine their light on me .
And let my life be magical
Or just let it be ordinary.
In the beauty of normalcy



Musings of a Beautiful Flower

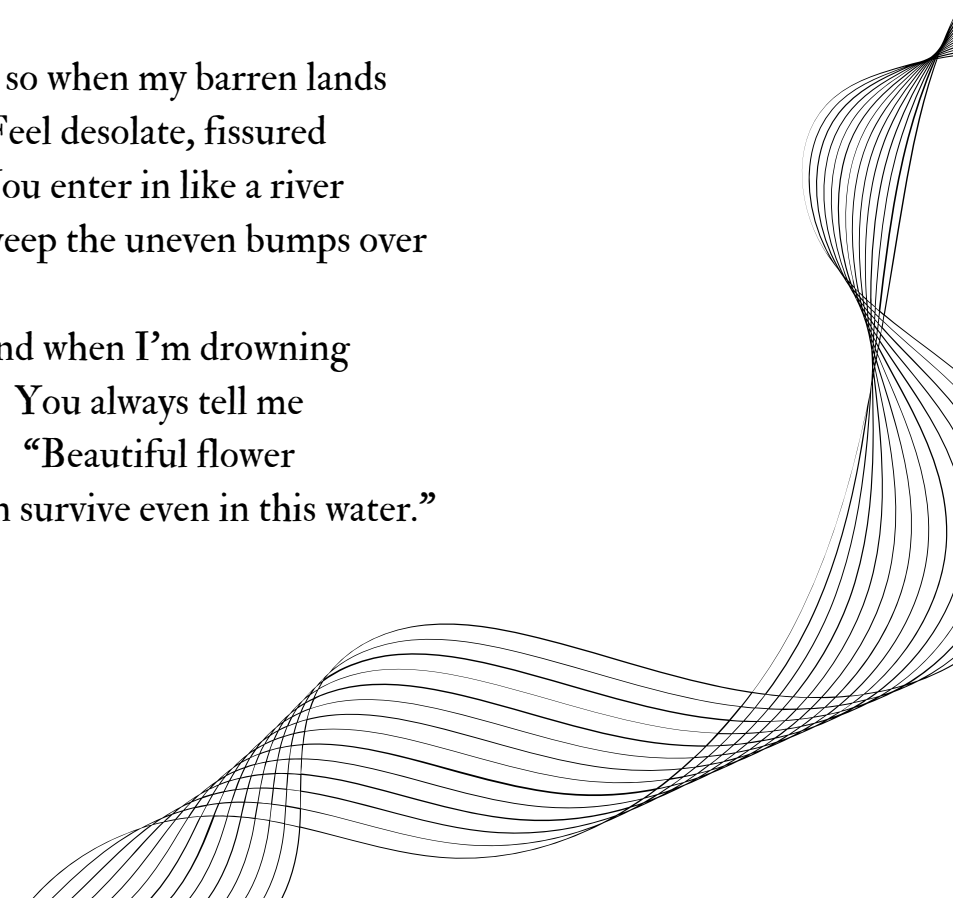
by Aanya Raghunath

When my barren land shows cracks
And my petals are marred
When I'm sinking in tributaries of emotions
Distributaries of fear
Sinking, way too far.
When a wave of trouble drowns me under
And an ocean of insecurity takes me over

When my body turns
Into a shrivelled, crumbled mould
When everything around me seems
Like a thread between living and leaving
Then you pull the thread to your side
And I finally find myself breathing
You say "Beautiful flower, you are too bright to leave this world"

And so when my barren lands
Feel desolate, fissured
You enter in like a river
And sweep the uneven bumps over

And when I'm drowning
You always tell me
"Beautiful flower
You can survive even in this water."



आज़ाद हम से कह गया

ऋषिका श्रीवास्तव

हाथ में झंडा लिए, स्वदेशी की गुहार की।
लेकिन विदेशी सरकार के लिए यही ललकार थी।
रोकने पर, टोकने पर, डरा नहीं, बढ़ता चला।
पूछने पर नाम उसने कहा कि “मैं आज़ाद हूँ।”

भर जुनूँ, आँखों में खूं।
बाजू में बल, पड़ा निकल।
कुछ दोस्त थे, कुछ खास थे।
कुछ दूर फिर भी पास थे।

सब के मनो में चाह थी।
और उसने भी यह मान ली।
दुश्मन को मार, होंगे स्वतंत्र।
यह उन सभी ने ठान ली।

सरकार बहरी बन गयी।
जुल्म और दमन करती गई।
देश का शोषण किया।
सबके मनो में क्रोध था।

भरी सभा में इसलिए,
आज़ाद ने दिया इक बम गिरा।
डर गई सरकार लेकिन चंद्रशेखर ना डरा।
गोलियों की बौछार से भी चंद्रशेखर ना मरा।

सामना किया डट के,
न मानी हार थी।
दमनकारी सरकार से ना मरूँ,
यही दरकार थी।

ले चला गोली स्वयं पर,
आज़ाद हम से कह गया।
“दुश्मनों की गोलियों का सामना हम करेंगे।
आज़ाद ही रहे हैं, आज़ाद ही रहेंगे!”

Painting by Varya Jain



PROSE

How To Lose the War of Time

by Parissa Sikand

Slowly. Breathe slowly. You have enough time. You see those sunflowers outside? They look at you like you are the sun. Stroke them, inhale their scent - warm, liquid sunshine will flow in your veins. You see the rain? Accept its invitation to dance with it. Let your hair down, let your hair flow like that river flows, without regrets. Give that random stranger a smile, watch them relish in your warmth. And soon, you will belong to those moments of intense feelings, not to the people.

Test of Time

by Parissa Sikand

I cannot stand the test of time, cannot, cannot, cannot. I am tired of feeling too deeply. The crescent moons under my eyes are too heavy for me, my eyes collapse under the weight of them, I am tired of being strong. Everyday I sell my heart to a stranger in exchange for a simple smile. Kindness hurts sometimes. I feel so lonely in a crowd full of people. I am forever haunted by the history of heartbreak tucked in the creases of their eyes. It's hard being the only one who observes how people bleed emotion even in the way they drink coffee, I see the sudden smiles that appear for no reason and the ugliest frowns appearing like a storm, my knees buckle under the weight of strangers' feelings. People are so precious and so it is all worth it in the end, my eyes close, my knees buckle and I'm ready to listen, always, always, always.

It's Everything. All The Things

by Shashwati Singh

“There’s a fire starting in my eyeballs like something was twisted inside them. I don’t know how long it’s been since I have had this epiphany, but it’s been quite fine to let every grown-up ever tell me that I don’t understand. Over and over again. ‘Don’t you understand? When will this get into your brain? Are you that stupid? Do you not understand that you shouldn’t feel bad over small things? When will you realize there are things bigger than you?’ Or, they say ‘You’re too young to know who you love, it’s okay. You don’t understand what you actually want.’

So, I ask myself, if they expect me to not know what’s right for me, why do they expect me to become mature enough to understand? But now I understand that I’ve always understood.”

This was what she told me the day she realized that she did know herself, that she was gutsy, and not just gutsy, she was more than that. She realized she was herself, and that’s all she needed to live, not exist, live. To know that there was a fire in her soul which would tell her that ‘No, you are okay, you need time to heal but that’s fine because everyone gets hurt and they learn. Don’t assume you know nothing just because you’re young.’ She fathomed that ‘it’s okay’ are the most analeptic words she could ever ask for. And that was it. She remembers putting her head on the desk and closing her eyes thinking that would make the tears stop, then she remembers opening those moist eyes and seeing a splash of water on the desk.

Guess you can’t stop some things from happening. I remember her coming out of the restroom with a smile on her face telling me that she heard some people talking about her and saying that they probably didn’t know she was there but when she came out, they stopped talking about her, ‘naturally, that’s what they’d do’, I had thought. She remembers playing the same scenario in her mind as the jouska crept in. She remembers getting on the bus and realizing she had tears in her eyes, but no one noticed, she did though, that was enough for her. She remembers eating, drinking, seeing, thinking, loving, hating, crying, smiling, and everything in between when she hears “Me, Myself, and I” in the corner of her mind. Guess you can’t stop some things from happening.

I remember this girl from 7th grade, this tall girl with a beautiful aura, this imaginary being I used to console myself with, this fairy that overcame the puzzles of life like no human alive and then I decode the most important puzzle of life, that, that is life. Life is breaking down and letting it all out, it’s figuring out and still staying confused, it’s laughing and weeping, it’s living and dying, it’s everything, and it’s everything. I never know what I want in life. It’s always changing. Life feels like it’s oblivion of everything. It feels like a lacuna in everything. But it feels overwhelming in that emptiness. It’s perfectly stable then.



A blank canvas that
moulds through
circumstance of passing
time,
the way it lights up
when we smile,
wrinkles in frustrating
times,
reddens when we cry,
but glows bright in
happy whiles.
The mirror that
reflects when we
mourn,
the very countenance
of our soul.

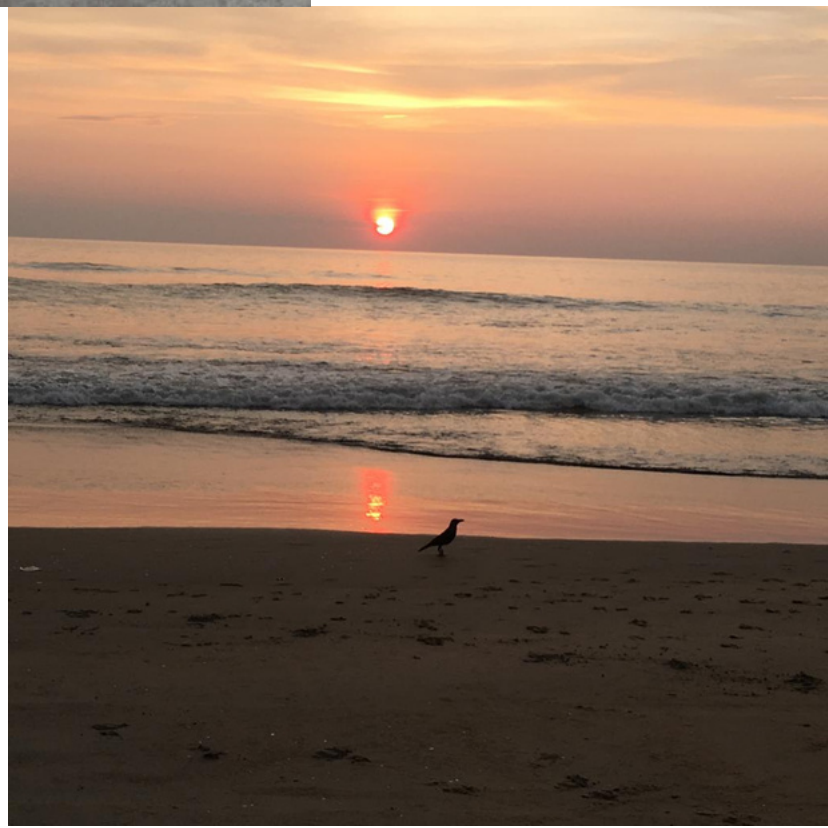
by Aniyora Shukla Tiwari

Photograph by Gia Arora

Painting by Resham Seth



The sun is setting,
And the waves are
alight,
And the tide is
shifting,
And for a
moment,
The silence sings.
by Gia Arora



Dramatic Monologue

by Anoushka Puljal

(inspired by the works of Ocean Vuong)

Bạn có nhận ra tôi không? Do you recognize me?
(scoffs) Of course you don't. We are all just conquests for you aren't we, America? Political bargains that you've trenched your funds in, trenched your propaganda in until it gets hard. And then you run. Run away. Who was left behind? Me. And in all honesty, I didn't even ask for this. It was you who wanted to put down the towering red bear, not me. It was you who had to prove your righteousness to the world. You wanted the glory, and you got it, but I paid for it. Where is the fairness in that? America, the land of the free and the just, just landed me in a situation of entrapment and injustice. Bạn chết tiệt lộn. Oh, you had waved the white flag. How we sighed in relief, thinking for once that perhaps you had a heart. The capital wouldn't fall, you would hold us. How foolish, how foolish... How foolish because we were beaten sore while you escaped with scratches while we

received the gashes of suffering, trauma, and death everlasting. It was called liberation; I perceive it as mutilation... Of course, you had other intentions too, didn't you? (Laughs scornfully) A little birdie told me that you wanted to bestow your imperialistic culture on us, perhaps enlighten us about the white way, save us from whatever pagan culture that we had been enslaved to? Let me tell you something. We do not dream of your white Christmas, we only dream to see the bloom of the milkflower next autumn, given that we survive. We do not dream about the magnificence of America, rather look forward celebrating Tet Nyuyen Dan next year without our imperialistic boot grinding out the flames of our culture. We wish for an existence devoid of stars and stripes, an existence that smells comfortingly of trái thi. We did not want your intervention. And yet, you came uninvited, kicking everything and anything out of your way to prove your purpose. You aren't welcome here anymore.



Metamorphosis

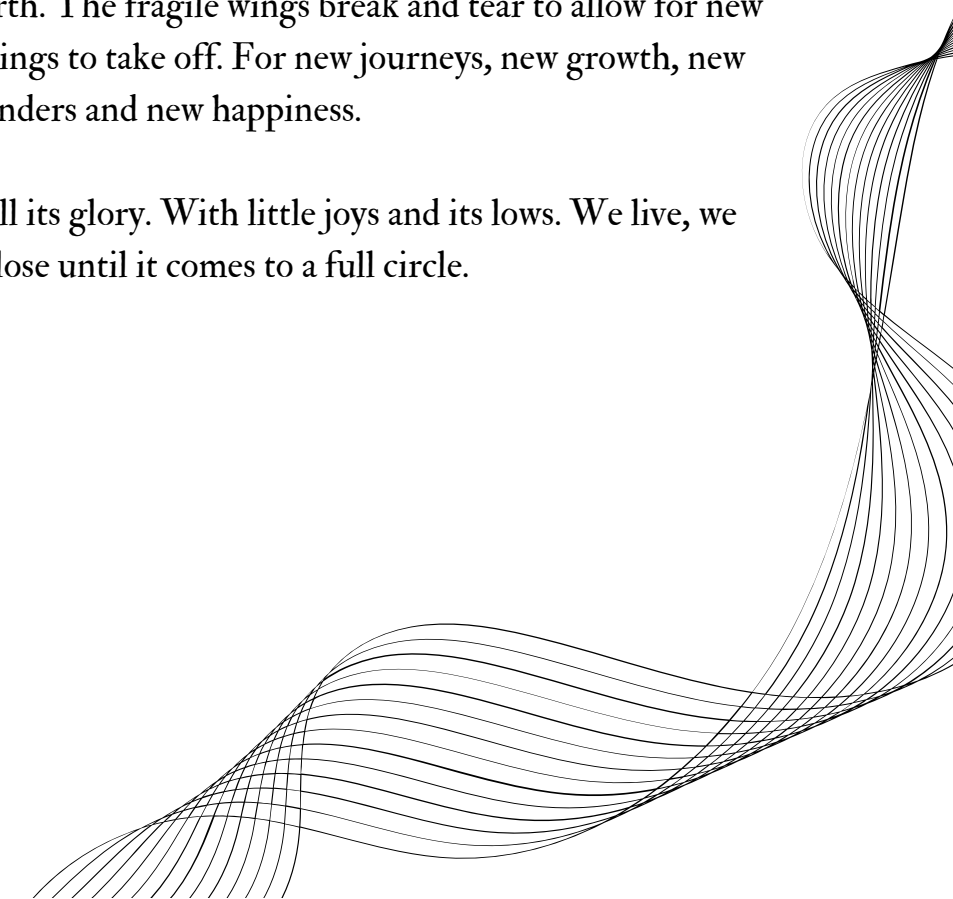
by Gaurvi Malhotra

I admire butterflies. They live in an everlasting state of growth and change. Eternal Metamorphosis. Despite their short life span, they manage to live with unrivaled beauty and grace. They give us joy when they flutter through the greenery.

A naïve little caterpillar begins its short but beautiful voyage, embracing change and building a future for itself. Eventually in the process of transformation it's ready. Healed, growing and equipped for the outside world beyond the walls of a cocoon, beyond the bounds set as a caterpillar.

In a short while I shall soar through fields and patios. See glorious and some ordinary sights. When this state of growth shall come to an end. The butterfly that once was has been swallowed into the earth. The fragile wings break and tear to allow for new flowers to blossom and new wings to take off. For new journeys, new growth, new wonders and new happiness.

Butterflies represent life in all its glory. With little joys and its lows. We live, we laugh, we lose until it comes to a full circle.



ESSAYS

Identity

by Noyonika Vohra

Who am I ? What is my identity ? How am I different from others and what is it that sets me apart ? Who do I wish to be known and remembered as ? Is this really me...? These are questions we all frequently ask ourselves, but don't always have answers to, which is why we look for these answers in other people, when what we should ideally be doing, is asking ourselves.

It's perfectly normal to be confused about who we really are and what we really wish to do in our life, especially during our teenage years. I, for one, have absolutely no idea about what I want to be when I grow up. This is a question I am often asked and mostly struggle to answer. It's either this or that, I can never seem to make up my mind. What I do know, however, is what I don't want to be...

In a world where there's so much pressure to constantly 'fit in', be a certain way, look a certain way; it's difficult to identify our true self. We're often lost in the crowd- trying to keep up with the Joneses and trying to follow trends which we may not even like or relate to.

Moreover, this pressure comes from so many places. There is a peer pressure, parental pressure, social media pressure ... the list is endless. While it's fine to follow something if one enjoys it, there should be no pressure, because when one succumbs to this pressure, is when one ends up losing their individuality. Live your life for yourself and your loved ones, not for others or someone else's approval.

Looking at other people's social media posts more often than not makes us anxious, It makes us feel the fear of missing out. Seeing other people having a good time compels most of us to showcase our lives, in the process of which we forget to live in the moment. Looking at our friends doing so much puts the pressure on us to do things we might feel uncomfortable doing.

I see so many people doing things just because it's the in-thing. People wearing certain clothes cause it's fashionable, listening to a certain artist cause they're trending, watching a certain show cause you're not cool if you haven't watched it. If one doesn't take part in this rat race, you're said to be living under a rock. It's crazy how most of us have started living our lives for the validation of others and not for ourselves.

I go to public places and see everyone dressed the same way, with the same makeup and hair, talking the same way, eating the same food. This is because most people today don't have the courage to be themselves. Their life and their decisions aren't determined by them but by what people think of them. Thus, one must learn to identify their inner voice and do things that make them happy... not because they feel pressured to. One must learn to identify what is them and what is not.

At the end of the day, trends and people will come and go, but what'll stay and carry you through the rest of your life is yourself, your individuality, what you bring to the table and the legacy you leave behind...



The Significance of Language with Respect to Identity

by Myra Aggarwal

Whether we try to assess the deep-rooted influence of identity on international political issues or examine how our personalities affect our everyday decisions, it's undeniable what a significant role identity plays in our lives. Forced displacement, immigration, internal and external issues between countries, all have identity embedded into their core. The refugee and immigration crisis in the US, heightened due to xenophobia, also directly stems from indifference between cultural identities. One of the most prominent aspects of what defines an identity is language and one's mother tongue. Language not only fosters kinship and unity between the people of a nation but also serves as a mark of their socio-linguistic identities and sense of self-identification. There exists an extricable connection between language and identity which can be realised through various examples. Identity and language is a more relevant contributory factor to many modern-day problems, now more than ever, whether we talk about political tensions between India-Pakistan or Israel-Palestine.

The Sri Lankan civil war, which lasted over 25 years and caused widespread damage and deterioration to Sri Lanka's economy, perfectly demonstrates how linguistic chauvinism by a group can lead to the enslavement of another and divide societies into rivals. Due to the policy of standardization that the Sinhalese-dominated government imposed against Sri Lankan Tamils (which led to the continuous discrimination and violent persecution of them), the LTTE was forced to rebel and fight to create a separate Tamil Eelam. Carol Ann Duffy's "Originally" emphasizes on how challenges of emigration and losing touch with one's cultural accent can lead to a sense of loss of identity. In this poem, a small Scottish child, confused and frightened by her family's move to England, slowly loses her sense of cultural identity. Another example reinforces the same is that of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 during which the Prussian leadership that had previously attacked and captured provinces of France under Bismarck decreed that French would no longer be taught in the schools. The Prussians believed that it would be easier for them to formally enfold the annexed regions of France into the German empire if they replaced the local francophone culture with German culture, severing all ties the French had with their local language and identities. In the face of institutionally mandated cultural erasure that was being followed by Germany, the French did not relinquish their national pride and continued speaking French to retain their sense of their local identities.



Revolutionary Trends in Politics and Morality: A Transformative Era

by Ridhima Pant

”Change is the only constant in life,” a well-known adage that is particularly true in the realm of politics and morality within society. The evolution of politics is a complex process shaped by cultural, historical, and social factors. Revolutionary trends in politics and morality have occurred throughout history, challenging traditional paradigms and the status quo. The modern era has brought substantial changes that have led to the emergence of new ideas and ways of thinking, leaving lasting impressions. One major philosophical debate is the dichotomy between political moralism and political realism, which prioritizes morality over politics or acknowledges the legitimacy of a distinctive autonomous thought in politics.

The abolitionist movement of the 19th century is one of the earliest and most notable revolutionary trends in politics and morality. Slavery was an entrenched part of American society, but a growing number of individuals and groups recognized its inherent depravity. Abolitionists organized protests, petitions, and political campaigns to end slavery, challenging the social, economic, and political structures that supported it. Their efforts helped to create a more just and equitable society, where all individuals were free and equal under the law.

The fight for civil rights is one of the most significant revolutionary trends in politics and morality within society. Marginalized communities, including people of color, women, and the LGBTQ+ community, have experienced systemic discrimination and oppression throughout history. However, these communities have risen up in resistance, demanding equal rights, justice, and dignity. The civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s sought to end racial segregation and discrimination against Black people. Through peaceful protests, civil disobedience, and advocacy, this movement brought about landmark changes in laws and policies, promoting racial equality.

The study of revolutionary trends within politics and morality provides insight into how societies grow over time. Recognizing these patterns enables us not only to better understand our past but also to address current challenges effectively. Future research could investigate how these trends manifest themselves in different societies and what factors contribute to their success or failure.

Painting by Novonika Vohra



Fat Shaming

by Sumer Singh

Our identity is the way we define ourselves and refers to our sense of who we are as individuals and as members of social groups. It also refers to our sense of how others may perceive us and label us.

In today's times, how one looks and appears are of paramount importance. How thin or fat one is, has become critical for social acceptance.

Fat Shaming is a practice of humiliating someone who may be overweight by making critical comments about their size. "Look at him he's so fat". This topic is often ignored and people continue to make rude comments without realizing the impact it could have on the other person. People think it's just an innocent comment or a joke, whereas these comments could trigger or worsen symptoms of anxiety and depression. It can make people feel lonely and isolated. A lot of times they are unable to reach out for help as they feel the person who they are reaching out to may fat shame them. This kind of criticism also leads to judging oneself harshly and feeling insecure about one's body.

A few ways in which the people who become the targets of fat shaming could be helped are, by encouraging them to talk about it with someone who they feel they can trust or reach out to.

We must remember that, 'All sizes are beautiful'.



END OF MAGAZINE

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