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Letter From The Editorial Team

Dear Odia Friends and Family, it gives us immense pleasure in presenting another edition of “Aama Aaina”. This edition promises to keep you engaged as in the years past, while building on the artistic and literary talents of our youth members. As editors, we noticed that this magazine is really a smorgasbord of a diverse community. Whilst, we all come from or relate to this special place called Odisha, we all have expressed this connection in our distinct way in this magazine. We, the editors, have tried our best to retain the original intent of every article or piece of work presented in this magazine by limiting our editorial comments to the bare minimum.

As the two Odia words “Aama Aaina” suggest, members of the OSA community have really made this edition their “own” by sharing their thoughts and expressions in many ways: poems, drawings, articles, and photos. Each one of us that reads an article or admires a picture or photograph will undoubtedly “reflect” on their own. When we reflect on our own experiences through the expressed and implied thoughts of the author of an article, we inherently build “connections” which is the very essence of this community. We, the editors, hope that these connections that you build will stand the test of time and you will cherish this edition of “Aama Aaina” now and into the future.

We would like to thank Niladri Roy for creating cover image for the magazine. We would like to thank all contributors and all individuals that encouraged a contributor to write that first, second, or third draft of an article. We also would like to thank the OSA NY-NJ chapter leadership for trusting us with the job of editing this edition of “Aama Aaina”. We hope you enjoy reading as much as we enjoyed publishing as a team!

ଆମେରିକା ନିୟୁ ଜର୍ସର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସମାଜ ପାଇଁ "ଆମ ଆଇନା" ପତ୍ରିକାଟି ଏକ ଦର୍ପଣ ତୁଲ୍ୟ; ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ବର୍ଷ ଏହି ଦର୍ପଣରେ ପ୍ରତିବିମିତ ହେଉଥିବା ସୁନ୍ଦର ଲେଖକ, ଲେଖିକା ଏବଂ ଚିତ୍ରକାରମାନଙ୍କର ଅନୁଭବ ଏବଂ କଳ୍ପନା ପ୍ରସୂତ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଯାହାକି ରଚି ପାରିଛି ଏକ ଅନନ୍ୟ ସମ୍ପର୍କର ଭିତ୍ତି ଭୂମି । ଏହି ବର୍ଷ ପ୍ରଚ୍ଛଦ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ନୀଳାଦ୍ରି ରୟ ପତ୍ରିକାର ପ୍ରଚ୍ଛଦ ପଟରେ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳ ଭାବକୁ ଅତି ସରଳ ଏବଂ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଶୈଳୀରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଅଭିଜ୍ଞ ତୁଳି ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପୁଟାଇ ପାରିଛନ୍ତି ।

ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ମଣିଷ ତା'ର ସାରା ଜୀବନ ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ସୂତାରେ, ବୁଝାମଣାର ଛୁଞ୍ଚିରେ ଅନେକ ସମ୍ପର୍କକୁ ଗୁଢ଼ି ରାଲିଥାଏ । ସମ୍ପର୍କର ମାଳା ଭିତରେ ସେ ନିଜକୁ ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ଅନୁଭବ କରେ । ସେହିପରି ଅନେକ ସମ୍ପର୍କର ମାଳା ରେ "ଆମ ଆଇନା" ପ୍ରବାସୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏକ ସୂତ୍ରରେ ବାନ୍ଧି ରଖିବ, ଏହି କାମନା ସହିତ OSA NY/NJ ସମ୍ପାଦକ ସମୂହ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ ହାତକୁ ଅତି ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଏବଂ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ର ସହିତ ଟେକି ଦେଉଛୁ ୨୦୧୮ ମସିହାର "ଆମ ଆଇନା" ।

Aama Aina Editors –

Manas Ranjan Swain, Ranjita Mishra and Anshuman Panigrahi



Manas Ranjan Swain



Ranjita Mishra



Anshuman Panigrahi

Let's Look to The Sky: The Next 50 Years of Our Journey Starts Here



Dear Fellow Odias - Chaitali and I wish you the very best for Kumar Purnima. Our community is stronger together. We are progressing on all fronts. Our events are receiving maximum participation. We are experimenting new venues to accommodate our attendance. Our volunteers are work very hard and making impossible possible. Their contribution is commendable.

Soon after assuming the role, opportunity presented to host 50th convention. Leaders of our community came together and deliberated meticulously. We submitted a thorough proposal. The proposal was evaluated by a committee comprising of past three conveners. We were interviewed thoroughly by the committee. In the end, OSA Board of Governors voted on the recommendation of the selection committee which gave OSANYNJ chapter the opportunity to host the Golden Jubilee celebration. We feel really proud to host the 50th convention. We received the message to be inclusive, yes, we are living by that. Let's come together and celebrate 50 glorious years of togetherness and build bridges to the future.

We celebrated Utkal Divas for the first time in Consulate General of India, New York in April 2018. Odias from New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts descended to celebrate this occasion. Our children paid respect to Utkala Janani. Riti Mohanty sang Bande Utkala Janani and inspired all who were present in the celebration. Our volunteers orchestrated well-choreographed program like a clock. Consul General Honorable Sandip Chakravorty recognized our ability to run the program on time.

Changing immigration landscape has been a constant source of worry to our community members who live and work here in various work VISAs. While we cannot change the landscape, we can equip our society with timely information. We have invited immigration lawyer Nandini Nair to educate us on immigration trends and to answer questions in our events and via webinar.

Our children are our future. Keeping that in mind, we have continued the mentorship program. This program needs to be conducted more frequently. Challenges faced by our children is enormous. A well-run mentorship program will benefit us all.

SAT is key to the door of higher education. Our community members conducted SAT tests. They offered assessment to the participating children. What a great way to improve college admission!

Every now and then, a community member needs our assistance – financially, physically and morally. Our community has responded to such calls. When a fellow Odia from Canada in New Hampshire faced a life threatening prolonged illness, our community opened up its wallet. Our community arranged repatriation of body in a tragedy. Our community attended court hearing and appealed for leniency to judge in New York City. Our community is our social security. Let us grow our community and the community will stand tall together.

We have created and maintained a website. Our website is serving well to register for events online. Majority of the registrations are taking place online. Now, we are able to solve supply and demand accurately for the first time. I am pleased to inform you all that our chapter is a pioneer in web and digital technology.

Chapter Executive Team is a dream team. I would like to thank them for their service to the community. I would also like to thank Management Committee for its service. Without the editorial team, publishing this souvenir would have been impossible. I would like to thank them as well. Without our sponsors publishing the book would have been economically challenging. I would like to thank them for their support.

Dr. Uma Ballav Mishra is chosen as the Convener for the 50th Convention. This is the Golden Jubilee Convention. This will require us to raise money and register families at least twice that of the largest convention held by our community. We have to think and act “out of the box” to meet the financial challenge and demand on our

volunteers. I call upon all of you to register, request your friends and families to register as well as to look out for sponsorship. We are working very hard to deliver incredible experiences. We will launch all marketing tricks in the book, but there is no marketing more effective than ‘word-of-mouth’. So, we rely on “you” to be our brand ambassador.

We have a lot of work in front of us. We can go as far as we can dream. Let’s look to the sky. Let’s build bridges to the next fifty years while we celebrate 50 glorious years of our togetherness. Let’s integrate the new arrivals and generations born here to make our community vibrant and stronger together.

Sincerely,

Sribatsa Das

President

Odisha Society of Americas

New York/New Jersey Chapter



2018 Mentorship Program

Message from President, Odisha Society

My Dear New York & New Jersey Friends,

Happy Kumar Purnima to you all. Congratulation to the Editors for bringing the Annual Chapter Magazine “Aama Aaina” this year.

There are many interpretations of Kumar Purnima. But for me, this is the evening when moon puts on an elegant show, with variations in contour, color and nuance. This is the evening when each of you become many of the brightest stars complimenting the moon. For New York & New Jersey Chapter, it is a day of invigorating our culture, our heritage and cherishing our togetherness bound by our roots.

The theme of this year’s event is “Samparka” – Relation. A relation comes in many forms but for us here, it is the bonding that we built by being around each other, at good times and bad times. Many of us may have left our true relations far away, but we have developed a strong relationship just being part of the Odia society in this immigrated land. Many of our kids found their inspirations, encouragements and blessings within this community. If we fast forward next fifteen to twenty years or more, you will realize that this relationship will help making the tougher part of life journey much easier.



This day also reflects many of my past memories, as a participant to an organizer. This was the evening where I got introduced to the Odia community. This is the avenue that gave me an opportunity to know many of you closely, who, you may or may not realize, are the core part of my life today. It also reminds me the many tiny faces who are now young men & women, one being my daughter herself. This is the evening when I danced as if no one was watching, spoke like no one was listening and enjoyed like my heaven on the earth. The society is meant a lot, its connection is as fundamental as the need for air, water, and food, it’s a longer than life “Samparka” for me and my family.

To all my little friends who one day will become big stars, please remember, the moon will guide you through the night with her brightness, but she will always dwell in the darkness, but you all

will continue to remain the brightest stars for your parents, friends & above all, for this little Society.

Let’s all swear to this human connection while world becomes a more digital place.

Lalatendu Mohanty

President

Odisha Society of Americas

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.

But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

– Robert Frost

Message from OSA Convener



It is my honor and privilege to officiate as the convener of the OSA 2019. And for the second time in ten years I am left to ponder the reason why the members of OSA NY-NJ chapter chose me. I am an old retired cancer doctor and had very little time in my life to nurture artistic and/or creative hobbies. Now that I am asked to write in the annual publication “Aama Aaina” here is my humble assessment. I came to this country 46 years ago and worked my way to achieve the American Dream. We have always participated in OSA activities and attended many conventions. I never ran for any office and I think that was a good thing.

Our Chapter has gone through the evolutionary process that has made it stronger. This society is the beacon for the Odias in Odisha. It might sound like a hyperbole, but like the Statue of Liberty we have welcomed the Odias coming through the NYC airports. Every newcomer knew someone in this geographical area to allay their homesickness. There was a place to go to have Ganesh Puja, Saraswati Puja and Kumar Purnima. The membership grew by leaps and bounds and every successive generation brought in their hope and enthusiasm. I marvel at the energy and the problem-solving ability of the current leadership. Many of them are our children’s age or a little older. They grew up in a different Odisha than our times. The demographic change has had a different socioeconomic effect in their upbringing. The literacy in Odisha was a bare 17% for Odia male when I went to school. A lot has changed. The new Odia immigrants are brilliant, hardworking, resourceful and at the same time they are brought up by their parents to respect their elders. May be that is why this 70+ year old retiree has been chosen to lead them in the biggest celebration of our community.

I have no doubt, we will have a gala celebration and people will be talking about how much fun they had. They will go back with many more contacts in their smart phone and memories to cherish. We have a big logistics behemoth to tackle and it will happen. All the loose ends will be joined together. Stay focused and stay hopeful. There is no “I” in the team. It should be a fun experience, and no one should feel slighted. In order to realize the dream for a successful 50th convention we have to bring our resources together. Since 2009 I have seen the creativity and the pragmatism of this group and I have no doubt the convention will be a success. Our collective strength will lift us all. We need the financial commitment and more so the time commitment. Bring forward your ideas and join in. This dream will become a wonderful realization depending on our possession to financial resources. For the success of this enormous event, financial assurance will be a necessary condition; whereas, swarm of volunteers will act as a sufficient condition. Each and every Odia living in Tri-state area must adhere to these two conditions in order to be part of the success. We should collectively act on strategies to strengthen our financial backbone with supports from sponsors by registering for the event as early as possible. Not because we want to show off but because we want to get the extended Odia community more involved. We are almost microscopic in our membership as an ethnic group. We should know that as people of color, our strength will always be in our numbers. We have many successful Odias in many walks of life contributing to US economy and their respective communities. Our second generation is well educated and well rounded Americans. We need them to introduce themselves as Odia Americans and form a bond among themselves to lift everyone. Just like any community we will have among our midst some who are not as successful, as healthy or as smart. And it should be always our priority to look out for them.

In conclusion I am very happy to lead a group of leaders because it doesn’t take much effort. You have to look after this technologically challenged person more than ever.

Dr. Uma Ballav Mishra
Convener
Odisha Society of Americas

OSA NY/NJ Chapter Executive Team – 2017-2019



Left to right – **Subhashish Tripathy** (Vice President), **Tanmayee Mohapatra** (Cultural Secretary), **Annie Mohapatra**, (General Secretary), **Kuldip Mohapatra** (Event Coordinator), **Hemant Pradhan** (Treasurer), **Sribatsa Das** (President)

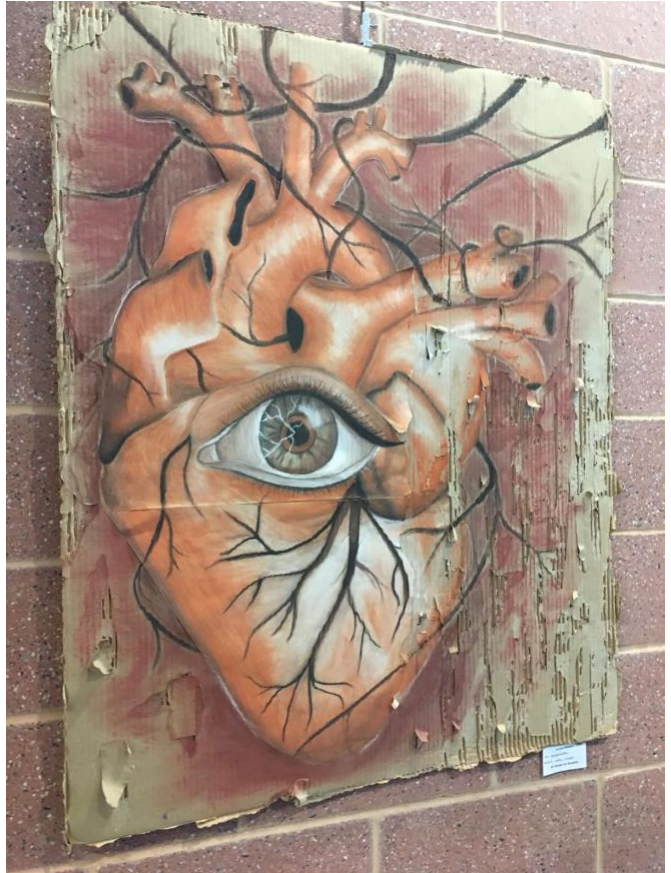
Our Heartfelt Thanks to the Past Executive Team



Left to right – **Sudhendu Das** (General Secretary), **Bijay Mohanty** (Dramatic Secretary), **Ranjita Mishra** (Cultural Secretary), **Chaitali Roy** (Vice President), **Hemant Pradhan** (Treasurer) and **Sridhar Rana** (President)

Sri Ganesha & Heart

Drisha Mishra



Drisha Mishra is a 18 year old student studying at Seton Hall University, majoring in Public Relations. She loves to be with friends and family, travel, eat, paint, volunteer and do makeup. She believes that no matter how far one can fall, they can always get up and push forward no matter the obstacles put against them.

Love does not claim possession but gives freedom. - Rabindranath Tagore



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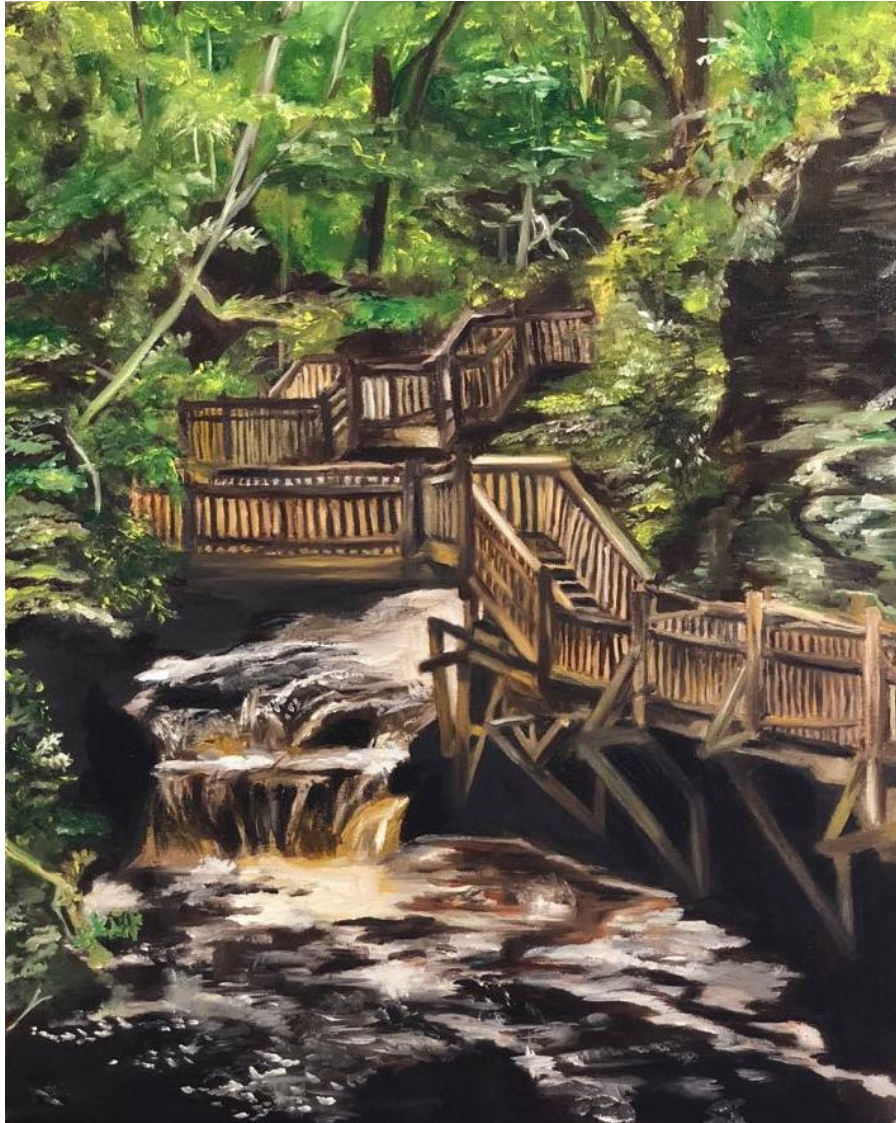
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Bushkill Falls - Niagara of Pennsylvania



Lisa Mishra is currently an Electrical and Computer Engineering undergraduate at Carnegie Mellon University. Her hobbies include painting and drawing, reading, and writing.

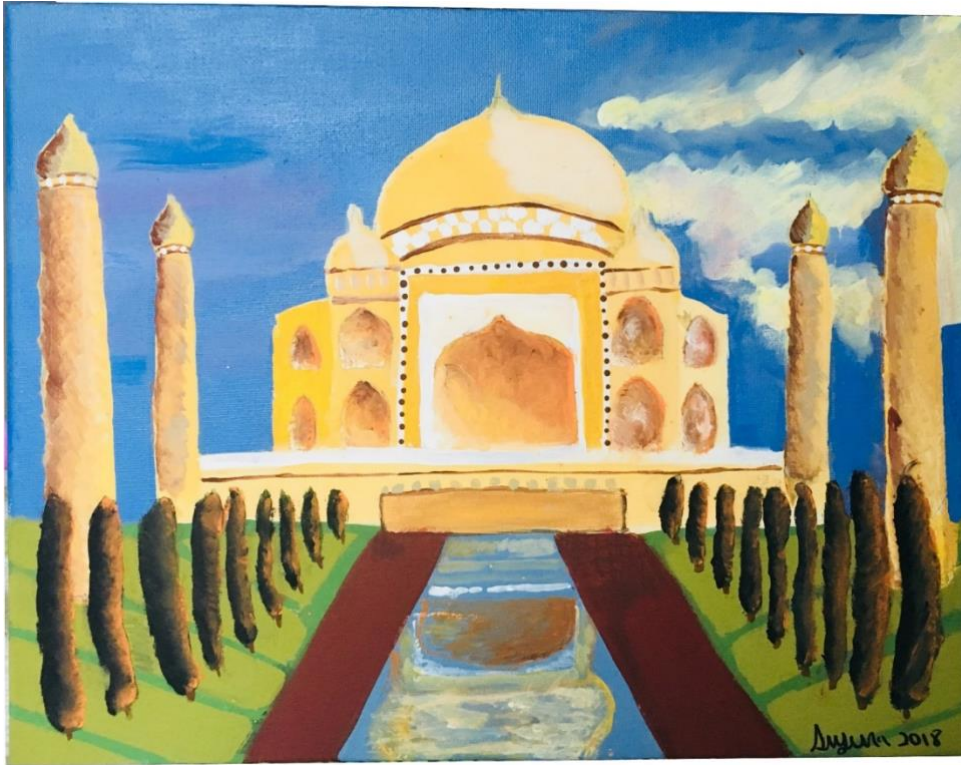


Utkal Dibas Celebration 2018

Kumar Purnima 2017



Taj Mahal



Siyona Satpathy is a seventh grader who is passionate about reading. She loves to draw and paint, and enjoys learning new things.

This is an acrylic painting of the Taj Mahal at sunset.



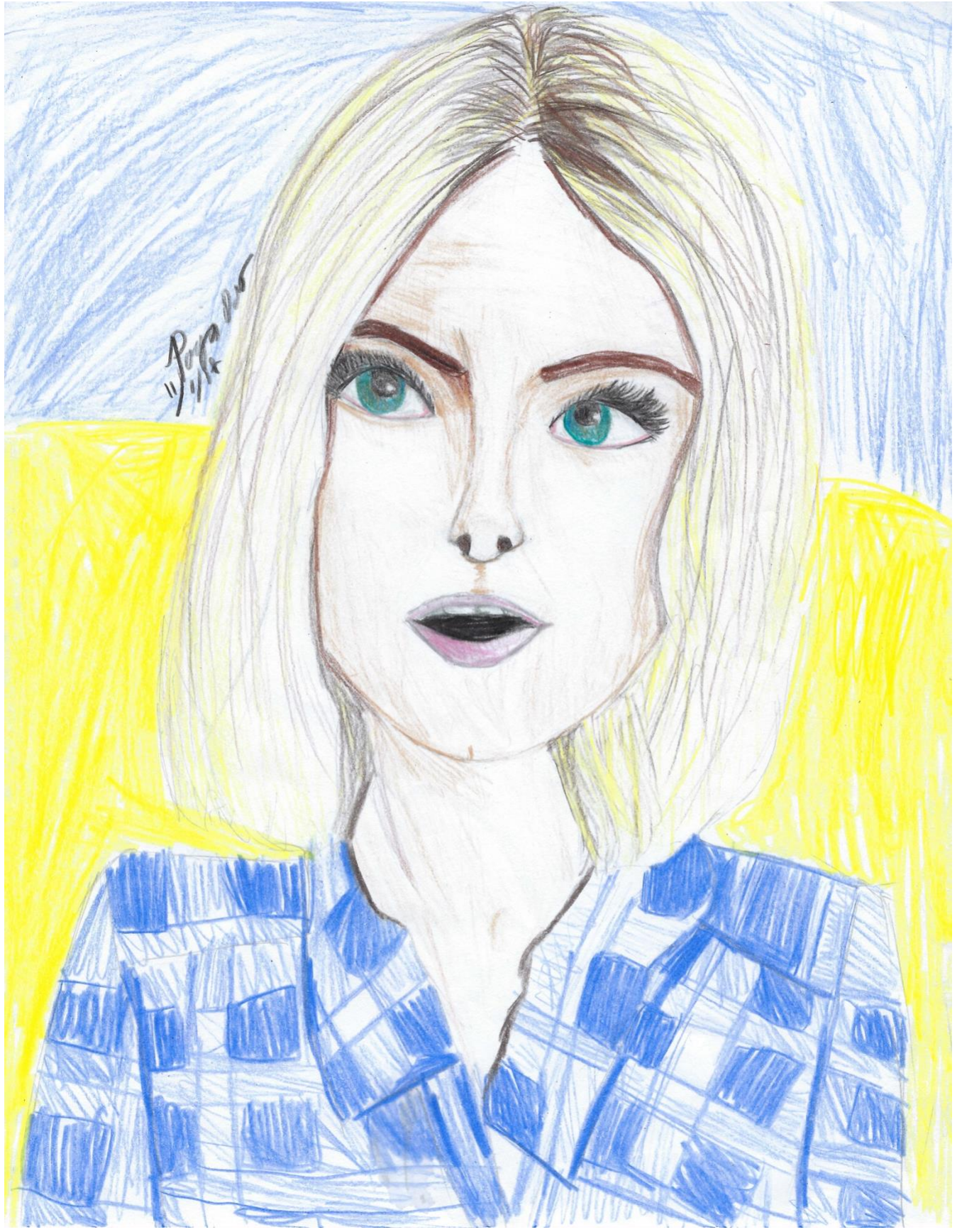
Fund Raising event at Swagath Restaurant.

Kumar Purnima



Pooja Das studies in sixth grade in Randolph Middle School. She loves singing and dancing. She composes music and creates music videos. She is working towards her Black Belt in Taekwondo.

Woman offering flowers and worshipping in a moonlight night during Kumar Prurnima festivities.



The Warmth of Taj Mahal



A watercolor painting representing the Taj Mahal during the sunset. The main objective is the background and the aura that surrounds the Taj Mahal.



Sumedha Biswal is a sophomore at Edgemont Junior/Senior High School, Scarsdale, New York. She had lived in India for ten years before moving to America in 2013. Sumedha enjoys drawing, painting, and dancing. Besides wrestling, she also likes softball and working out in gym.

Plants in the River



River is like a mother that provides the water to her children that are plants so they can bloom and become stronger. Mother Earth has rivers all around the world and gives nutrition to all the beings including plants.



Ariyan Tripathy is a 4th grader at Randolph, NJ and loves painting, drawing, dancing, singing, acting, or anything that allows him to express himself. He goes to Ironia School and is learning Bharat Natyam from Guru.

Bina Menon. Beyond the Arts, he enjoys swimming, eating out and travelling to beaches.



Food bank Volunteering
Backpacking Through Norway

Mitisha Panda



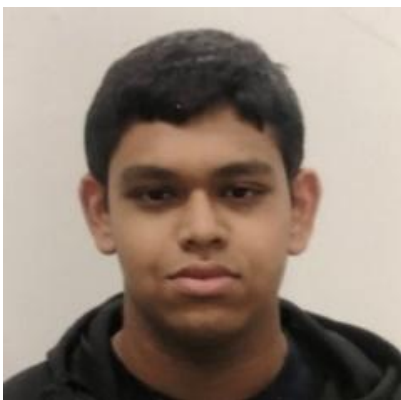
Photo taken by Mitisha Panda in Undredal, a small village in Norway.



Mitisha Panda (Misha) is in 10th grade, at the Somerset County Academy of Health and Medical Sciences. She also work as a lifeguard and swim instructor at the YMCA. She also takes part in her school's cross country and track team year-round. She is the vice president of the Doctors Without Borders club at her school and hopes to become a Pediatric Oncologist one day.

After The Rain

Nishant Mishra



Nishant Mishra is a junior at Princeton High School in Princeton, NJ. His hobbies include writing, reading, and participating in competitive clubs such as Science Olympiad and Science Bowl.

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ଶୁଭଶ୍ରୀ ଦାସ

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ଭାଷା ମୂଳଦୁଆ, ସ୍ଵାଭିମାନୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆର (୨)

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ଘୁରି ଯାଇଥିଲା ମଥା (୩)

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ଖୋଜିଲା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଭୂଇଁ (୪)

ପରାଧୀନ ଦେଶ, ବ୍ରିଟିଶ ଶାସନ
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ହୋଇଥିଲା ବାଟବଣା (୫)

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ଭାଷା ଥାମ ପରିଚୟ
"ଉଠରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ" ଗରଜିଲା ମଧୁ
ଧରି ସ୍ଵାଭିମାନ ଧଜ (୬)

କଳା ଭାବ୍ଯ୍ୟର ମାଟି ଏ ଓଡ଼ିଶା
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ତାଟିଲା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସ୍ଵର (୭)

ଗୌରୀଶଙ୍କର, ରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜ
କୃଷ୍ଣଚନ୍ଦ୍ର, ନୀଳକଣ୍ଠ
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ସ୍ଵତନ୍ତ୍ର ହେଲା ଓଡ଼ିଶା (୧୪)



Suvasri Das is an articulate writer who has written many poems and essays. Her writings are regularly printed in one of the leading Odia Daily - The Samaj. She can be reached at suvasri_das@hotmail.com



Utkal Diwas 2018 Celebration in Indian Consulate NY

A Hidden Tragedy

Yogesh Mohapatra

PROLOGUE:

This story is a follow up to Roald Dahl's "The Landlady". The Landlady, a mysterious woman, who owns a Bed And Breakfast Inn, secretly allows no one in, except men that resemble her son. She brings them in, gives them a cup of tea with cyanide poisoning, and after they die, stuff their bodies so that she can preserve the bodies forever. Her latest victim was a young boy named Billy Weaver, who figured out her secret right before he died but wasn't able to tell anyone.

END OF PROLOGUE

'Billy Weaver,' It had said in the check-in book. The Landlady had just finished stuffing his body, and now he rested upstairs, with Christopher Mulholland and Gregory Temple. The landlady came downstairs, observing and for another young boy. She remembered what had happened to her when she had heard the news. Her son, the pride of her life, is the reason she had been committing this horrific sin. His name had been... oh, she was too old. The name evaded her, remaining elusive. She couldn't remember. What she could remember was the small boy looking at her, how the eyes were filled with hopes, as though anything was possible in this world. She remembered though, in the middle of World War I, how he had eagerly signed up to join the army. She could see the glint in his eyes, the congenial and jovial grin he had, the way he lit up the room when he smiled. Then the day had come. She remembered that night, she was counting the the days when her son was coming back, only 3 days left. The day had been in late September. She looked at his picture. September 21, 1921, He was supposed to come back home after he had been sent to fight the Ottoman Turks, resting in Oppau, Germany. He had near the nitrate manufacturing plant when the planned blasting happened by the enemy soldiers. No one in his battalion survived. The bodies were never found. When the news came to her, she never fully recovered. She found young boys over the years, and instead of letting them go, she kept them, preserving them forever, so then she wouldn't lose someone she loved ever again.

After she grieved again, for the millionth time in 7 years, she saw a man walking down the street, about 28. She noticed that he came down the street, looking awfully lost, perhaps hoping to find some shelter. He turned around and faced her Bed and Breakfast, and when she saw his face, she lost her breath. He was a spitting image of her son, the same jovial eyes, the same style of walking, the same jovial grin in face. She gasped, and immediately ran to the front door, knowing that he would come. She quickly turned on her sign, a sign with a kind of technology which was still not known to ordinary people, a kind of technology that made the person attracted to a specific place. She had made it in her spare time and had used it with Christopher... Mulholland. Suddenly, the door rang, her next victim standing in front of her.

People think that when you welcome someone into somewhere, it is your job to make them feel welcome. Yet, when the landlady invited him in, it would have seen as if he was welcoming her in. He was so cheerful and so open, and he was listening to her very carefully, taking in all her words, thinking thoughtfully about all she was saying. She kept thinking, 'This is the perfect one.' She stared at him with hungry eyes. Soon, he came in and sat. He looked around, smiling, signing in, and waited, viewing the room, especially the picture of her son. Quickly and hastily she prepared the tea by putting the white powder which she thought as cyanide, but it was only sugar. She almost laughed at how easy this one had been. She came back, trying to hide her joy, as her next and most handsome victim was about to be hers. She watched him take his time, drinking a small sip, and she knew that she had sealed his fate. She laughed inwardly how naive he was. Then, he said something that would shock her to her core.

“Thank you, Mother,” he said. The world seemed to have come to a stop, the temperature dropping about 100 degrees. She looked in the check-in book, then back into the picture, and suddenly realized why he looked so much like her son. It was because he was her son.

She reached over the table, picked up his teacup and threw it across the room. The confused boy jumped up in surprise, yelping like a little dog, but the lady herself was on the verge of panic, ignoring the sharp pain of the glass pricking at her delicate feet. She knew that even the little bit he had was going to kill him, and wondered how she messed up so badly. Quickly and frantically, she tried to find out a cure, but couldn’t find one. She searched everywhere, but the cure evaded her. It seemed to have run away when she needed it most. When he asked what was wrong, she told him her story breathlessly, holding back tears and sobs as she said it. Finally, after thinking a moment, he stood up. “You have done something very wrong mother, and committed a horrible sin. But I will not die because of you. I will not die at the hands of my own mother.” He said as he raced up the staircase. ‘He’s probably looking for the cure,’ she thought to herself. Then she heard a gunshot and a muffled cry of pain.

“My son!” She screamed as she ran up the stairs, bawling as she scurried her way up to the third floor. When she got there, her soul slammed into her again, a soul that had been lost for years, apprehending the mistakes she had done over the years and fathoming what she had done today. Her son, Harry, lied on the floor with a pool of blood, a gun in his hand, lying down lifelessly next to the other boys. She finally understood how the parents of the three young men’s must have felt when they had been taken away... by her. She had now lost her son, a son that finally came back after 7 years. She didn’t want to get separated from him again. And she knew she couldn’t do something like this again, taking away another poor innocent young man. The pressure was too much. People gathered outside after hearing the noise trying to burst the door open to but to no prevail. The sirens of the police wailed through the night, alerted to the sound of gunshots. She picked up her son’s gun, her hand resting on the trigger. Tears ran down her face, as she finally repented for her crimes against humanity and the 4 boys, one who was her son. The door finally burst open and the thumping of heavy boots rang throughout the house. Finally, a young police officer reached the top, panting and breathing hard, desperately searching for the crazy women. When he found her, nobody was ever more terrified than him. Thinking that she was going to shoot him, he threw himself away, tumbling down the stairs and taking some officers down with him. She brought the gun to her head, and without thought pulled the trigger, and pain erupted from her head, only for a brief moment, and then she fell next to her son.

And everything went dark.

There are two ways to learn about something in life. One is to learn from other’s mistakes. And the other is to learn from your own mistakes. It indeed is a tragedy, when someone doesn’t have the mental strength to learn from his or her own mistakes.



Yogesh Mohapatra is a 9th grader residing in Mount Olive and attends Mount Olive High School. He enjoys reading, playing sports, writing creative stories, and volunteering in his spare time. He believes that a positive attitude always solves any problem. Yogesh lives with his parents and a younger brother. He loves to do rap with his younger brother.



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A Day at Chilika Lake

Ayan Swain

Last year in December, I went with my family and friends to Chilika Lake. This brackish water lake is the largest lake in Asia.

We booked a wooden boat, it was light blue with a motor fixed on the back. Two people drove the boat, an old man was in the front steering the boat, and a middle-aged man was in the back controlling the motor.

It was a nice day; the sparkling blue water was shining in the lake. And the breeze was cool. Our first stop was a small island, it had a Shiva temple. There was a priest in the temple and we took a lot of photos. After visiting that island we went back on the boat. In the water we saw some dolphins swimming.

Our next stop was another island with a temple called Kalijai temple. There is a story behind this temple. As per legend, there was a girl named Jaai. She was married at a very young age and her father was taking her to her husband's house for the first time. She had to ride in a boat to get there. During the ride, a cyclone capsized the boat and Jaai drowned in a whirlpool. The temple is named after the girl Jaai. People believe she is a part of goddess Kali, and that is how the island got its name.

The temple was a pretty crowded place. We prayed to the goddess and then went on the boat to visit the last island. Before going to the last island, we had a picnic on the boat, we ate puri, curry, salad and sweets. We shared our food with the people driving the boat.

Coming up was the last island, Chadhei Guha. It is an island made out of giant boulders. It was a small island and there was nothing else there except a few birds. After we explored Chadhei Guha, we went back on the boat to go home, we spent 5 hours on the boat!

While we were returning home, we bought a huge bag of shrimp at a village named Balugaan, the village is famous for its seafood. But it smelled like stinky fish. I had a lot of fun at Chilika Lake.



Ayan Swain is a fifth grader at Fieldstone, Montvale. He likes to play soccer, more than that he likes to play Minecraft. He also plays the guitar, keyboard and flute. He is interested in science and maths and plans to be a scientist in chemistry when he grows up (because chemical reactions are cool).

*Samano mantrah samiti samani
Samanam manah saba cittamesam
– Rig Veda*

Common be your prayers, common be the end of your assembly, common be your purpose, common be your deliberation.

ମୁଗକାତି

ପୁଷ୍ପଲତା ମିଶ୍ର

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗୋଟିଏ କୃଷି ପ୍ରଧାନ ରାଜ୍ୟ । ଧାନ , ମୁଗ ଓ ବିରି ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଶସ୍ୟ ଜାତୀୟ ଫସଲ । ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀଙ୍କ ଦୈନନ୍ଦିନ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଭାତ, ଡାଲି, ଓ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପନିପରିବାର ତରକାରୀ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତିରେ ବାରମାସରେ ତେର ପର୍ବ, ଏହି ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣି ମାନଙ୍କରେ ଚାଉଳ ବିରି ଆଉ ମୁଗରୁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପିଠାପଣା ତିଆରି ହୁଏ । ମୋ ପିଲାବେଳର ଅନୁଭୂତିରେ ଆଜି ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଘରେ ଆମର ମୁଗକୁ ନେଇ ଯାହା ଖାଦ୍ୟଦ୍ରବ୍ୟ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହେଉଥିଲା ଏବଂ ହେଉଛି ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ମୁଁ ଆଜି କିଛି ଲେଖିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛି ।

ମୁଗ ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଷ୍ଟିସାରା ଜାତୀୟ ଶସ୍ୟ । ଗୋଟା ମୁଗକୁ ଭାଜି ଗୁଣ୍ଡ କରି ସେଥିରୁ ଡାଲି ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରାଯାଏ ଯାହାକୁ ଶିଶୁମାନଙ୍କୁ ଜନ୍ମ ହେବାର ଚାରି ମାସ ପରେ ମୁଗ ଡାଲିପାଣି କରି ଦିଆଯାଏ । ବିଶେଷତଃ, ମୁଗ ଡାଲିର ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଯାହା ମନେପଡେ, ପିଲାଦିନେ ସକାଳୁଆ ସ୍କୁଲ ଗଲାବେଳକୁ ଜଳଖିଆରେ ବେଳେବେଳେ ଆମ ଘରେ ବଡ଼ ଭାତ ତିଆରି ହୁଏ । ଗୋଟିଏ ଛୋଟ ମାଟି ହାଣ୍ଡିରେ ଅଳ୍ପ ଚାଉଳ , କିଛି ମୁଗ ଡାଲି , ଛୋଟ ଆଳୁ ଖଣ୍ଡେ , ଲୁଣ ଓ ଗୁଆ ଘିଅ ପଡ଼ି କାଠ ଚୁଲିରେ ନରମ କରି ଭାତ ତିଆରି ହୁଏ । ଏହା ପୁଷ୍ଟିକର ତଥା ଦୀର୍ଘ ସମୟ ଧରି କ୍ଷୁଧା ନିବାରଣ କରିବାରେ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରେ । ରୋଗୀ ଓ ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥା ରେ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ ବିଶେଷ କରି ମୁଗ ଡାଲି ଖାଇବାକୁ ଦିଆଯାଏ, କାରଣ ଏହା ସହଜରେ ହଜମ ହୋଇଯାଏ । ଚାଉଳରେ ମୁଗ, ଡାଲି, ଅଦା, ନଡ଼ିଆ, ଗୁଆ ଘିଅ, ଓ ହେଙ୍ଗୁ ପକାଇ ଖେଚୁଡ଼ି ହୁଅ ଯାହାକି ମହାପ୍ରଭୁ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କର ଅତି ପ୍ରିୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟ । ଗୋଟା ମୁଗକୁ ଭାଜି ଗୋଟା ମୁଗ ଡାଲି ହୁଏ , ସେଥିରେ ପରିବା ପଡ଼ିଲେ ତରକାରୀ ହୁଏ । ମୁଗକୁ ଗଜା କରି ସେଥିରେ କାକୁଡ଼ି , ଗାଜର ଆଦି ପଡ଼ି ସାଲାଡ଼ ହୁଏ ଯାହା କି ଏକ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଖାଦ୍ୟରେ ଗଣନା କରାଯାଏ ।

ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ପୂଜା, ଦୁର୍ଗାବହନ ପୂଜା , ଦୁର୍ଗା ପୂଜା ଏବଂ କାର୍ତ୍ତିକ ମାସର ରାଜଦାମୋଦର ପୂଜା ରେ ଗଜାମୁଗ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କୁ ପୂଜା କରାଯାଏ । ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷ ସମୟରେ ପିତୃପୁରୁଷଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଚାଉଳ, ମୁଗଡାଲି ଓ କେତେକ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ପନିପରିବା ଉତ୍ସର୍ଗ କରାଯାଏ । ମୁଗରେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ଅସଂଖ୍ୟ ରୁଚି କର ଖାଦ୍ୟ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ଲୁପ୍ତ ପ୍ରାୟ ଏକ ସରଳ ସୁନ୍ଦର ପିଠାର ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ପ୍ରଣାଳୀ ଉଲ୍ଲେଖ କରୁଛି ଯାହାକି ଶାମ୍ବ ଦଶମୀରେ ଆମ ଘରେ ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ଭାବରେ ହେଇଥାଏ ।

ଉପକରଣ / ସାମଗ୍ରୀ :

- ମୁଗ ଡାଲି - ୧ କପ
- କ୍ଷୀର - ୨ କପ
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- ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଲୁଣ

ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ପ୍ରଣାଳୀ :

ପ୍ରଥମେ ମୁଗ ଡାଲିକୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ପାତ୍ରରେ ଚାରି ଘଣ୍ଟା ବତୁରାଇ ଦେବ । ବତୁରା ମୁଗକୁ ଅଳ୍ପ ପାଣି ଦେଇ ଚିକ୍ଣ କରି ବାଟିବ । ଗୋଟିଏ ଚତକଟିରେ ସବୁ କ୍ଷୀର ରେ ଏକ କପ ପାଣି ଦେଇ ଫୁଟାଇବ । କ୍ଷୀର ଫୁଟି ଆସିଲେ ସେଥିରେ ଚିନି ଦେବ ଓ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଲୁଣ ପକାଇବ । କ୍ଷୀର ଭଲ କରି ଫୁଟିଗଲେ, ବାଟିଥିବା ମୁଗକୁ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ଭାଜି ଅଳ୍ପ ଜାଳରେ ଖଳି ହେବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଘାଣ୍ଟିବ । ଘାଣ୍ଟିବା ସମୟରେ ଗୁଜୁରାତି ଗୁଣ୍ଡ ପକାଇବ । ଖଳି ଘାଣ୍ଟିଲା ବେଳକୁ ତଳୁ ଭଲକରି ଘାଣ୍ଟିବ ନଚେତ ଖଳି ପୋଡ଼ିଯିବାର ସମ୍ଭାବନା ଥାଏ । ଅଳ୍ପ ଜାଳରେ ବେଶୀ ସମୟ ଘାଣ୍ଟିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ଚିକିଏ ପାଣି ହାତ ରେ ମାରି ଅଳ୍ପ ଖଳି କୁ ଆଙ୍ଗୁଠି ରେ ଧରିଲେ ଯଦି ଆଙ୍ଗୁଠିରେ ନ ଲାଗେ ତାହେଲେ ଖଳି ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହୋଇଗଲାଣି ବୋଲି ଜାଣିବ । ଗୋଟିଏ ବଡ଼ ଆଳିରେ ଚିକିଏ ତେଲ ଲଗାଇ ଦେବ ନଚେତ ଅଳ୍ପ ମଇଦା ଛିଠି ଦେବ । ତାପରେ ସେ ଗରମ ଖଳିକୁ ଆଳିରେ ଭାଜି ଦେଇ ସମାନ ଭାବରେ ଫେଲେଇ ଦେବ । ପୁରା ଅଣ୍ଡା ହେବ ପାଇଁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେବ । ଅଣ୍ଡା ହେଲାପରେ ଛୁରୀରେ ଠିକିରି ଆକାରରେ କାଟି ତାକୁ ଗରମ ତେଲରେ ଛାଣି ଦେବ । ନ ଛାଣିକି ମଧ୍ୟ ଖାଇ ହେବ ।

ମୁଗାକାଢ଼ି ବହୁତ ନରମ ପିଠା ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଛାଣିବା ପରେ ତାକୁ ଏକ ଆଳିରେ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଥଣ୍ଡା ହେବ ପାଇଁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେବ । ପିଠା ଗରମ ଥିଲା ବେଳେ ତାକୁ ଗରମ ପାତ୍ର ରେ ବନ୍ଦ କରି ରଖିବା ନାହିଁ; ନଚେତ ପିଠା ଜଳନ୍ତି ଆମିଳା ହୋଇଯିବ । ଆଶା ମୁଗକାଢ଼ି ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗିବ ।



Smt Pusalata Mishra is a retired Highschool Principal. Apart from being respected by her students as an excellent science teacher, she is well known as a very good cook within her family and friend circles. Making various odia pithas is her expertise.

Global Warming



Ayan Swain is a fifth grader at Fieldstone, Montvale. He likes to play soccer, more than that he likes to play Minecraft. He also plays the guitar, keyboard and flute. He is interested in science and maths and plans to be a scientist in chemistry when he grows up (because chemical reactions are cool).

Broken Arm

Pratyus Mohapatra

Narrator: (me) talking in some parts, where I recollect what had happened in my childhood.

My first question was why so many people had gathered around me. Then, I looked up and saw that the aids over there at that playground at Littleton Lightning Elementary school were also gathered around me. Then, the two aids that were watching us during recess guided me into the school and straight into the nurse's office. At that time, I had little knowledge of what was going on. When they had explained that I had broken my arm, I thought: But that didn't feel like I broke my arm. I just fell while I was walking talking to my best friend Anthony. But nothing surprised me the most than when they taped my broken left arm to a piece of cardboard as a splint.

*At the time I was at kindergarten, not nearly old enough to know that I wasn't receiving the proper care that I was supposed to be receiving. Instead of getting my arm taped to a piece of cardboard, my old school should have called the proper authorities (911) to notify them that I had just broken my arm. But, anyways back to the story. I just sat there waiting, for what felt like hours until my parents rushed in. I sat there as still as a stone. They slowly, through a giant and not at all effortless process took me to be signed out, stuffed me in the Silver Honda CR-V and drove me away. Fun fact: did you know that duct taping someone's arm to a piece of cardboard doesn't hurt. It's true! But what actually does hurt is when a nurse takes you into a tiny room, sits you down on a tiny chair, takes your tiny arm and rips the duct tape off you taking your skin with it until you yell. (The description above is entirely accurate but it gets more fun towards the ending) What I couldn't wait to see was the person fix my arm.

Too bad, kid. The nurse must have read my thoughts to have that expression. "Sorry," the nurse apologized, "but you will have to wait three days until the doctor comes. In the meantime though," she spoke to my parents, "you can have him [me] eat some pain killers," the nurse finished. I looked up questioningly at my parents at that time because they just replied, "No thanks, we'll find another doctor elsewhere." So, it was that and an entire day passed that we searched and searched. By the time that we did find a doctor it was too late. We had to wait until tomorrow.

And so, the night crawled in in the darkest shade of black, the entire world seemed to be conspiring against me. Not knowing how I was going to get through the night with a broken arm or what tomorrow would be like, if the doctor was there, if it didn't end like today. Through all of the night I fretted over what situation may arise. I wondered, the last of my infinite questions of the night, with the last question being would I be ready, and then thought that no one ever was ready for anything, they could prepare but they wouldn't know what to expect. My mind couldn't put me to sleep, but the stress of harboring questions helped. It was a soothing noise in a rattling night. To sleep I was put, yet the night was not. When day broke darkness, I rose to realize that the Cave of Night with a Million Terrors was not so bad after all.

It was an average morning at Powder Mill, yet the morning was wasted away with driving to a place known as Advocate The Orthopedic Center, where unfortunately we came upon a great waiting area, although, too many people waiting. My Dad registered my name to Dr. Strassberg, who would hopefully fix my arm today. We waited, waited, waited, and finally, after two hours, we entered into a long hallway, when Dr. Strassberg called us in.

We arrived upon a room with a skeleton in a corner, with white brick walls, and a ceiling like those that can be found in schools. I looked around the room for awhile, stared at the skeleton, and then at the posters of skeletons. "Come with me to the x-ray room," Dr. Strassberg instructed.

I followed wondering what an x-ray was and if it would hurt. At the x-ray room, however I found it a much different story. Many doctors were there in the pitch-black room. Dr. Strassberg slipped an apron on me and my arm. I wondered, What do I need an apron for?

As if answering my question, Dr. Strassberg replied to my thoughts, "You need this apron because a powerful invisible light will shine on you, and might sear your skin." With that said and done, we took the x-ray, and I found it

completely painless. In fact, I smiled during the entire process. After the x-ray, however I found Dr. Strassberg leading me back to the through the lengthy white hall to the examination room.

It was finally time to get the cast, and I was excited. Little did I know, that it would be incredibly painful. Dr. Strassberg told me to choose what color I wanted my cast to be. (Obviously, I chose blue, because at that time it was my favorite color.) Then, Dr. Strassberg applied white plaster around my left arm, and then blue plaster. “Hold Pratyus’s legs and arm,” he ordered to my parents and the nurse in the room. I looked up at him questioningly. He then, surprisingly, without warning, squeezed my broken arm with so much force, it made me shriek.

“Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh!” I cried literally. “Maakkke iiiittttt stoooooopppp!” Yet, the squeezing got even harder.

“I’m so sorry!” Dr. Strassberg apologized “But, I can’t stop I have to do this!” He yelled over me.

“Noooo!” I continued “You don’t have to do this!” I exclaimed with tears falling from my eyes. But all of that soon changed when I went straight into a fit of rage. “I’ll call the police on you!”

Dr. Strassberg calmly stated “Okay do it. Do you have a phone?” he looked down at me to answer his rhetorical question.

I hollered to no one in particular while thrashing about, “Call the police! Call 911!” But suddenly it was over, my doctor had repaired my arm without anesthetic repairing my arm bone which was in a ‘v’ to an ‘l’ shape.

What did this event teach you? You might ask. Well this event taught me to be attentive in life. The hard way. After that, everytime I went to Dr. Strassberg (two times after the broken arm) we joked around about what happened with the so-called “call-the-police incident”. My story was surprising, but what’s not surprising is how much money you would save if you pay attention. Pay attention for your entire life and you won’t have to waste 100% of your money on your arm (or other problem) insurance.

Geico commercial ending intended.



Pratyus Mohapatra is a seventh grader. He loves to read mystery books as well as fantasy and books with plenty of adventure. He wrote this selection to show that with every impact comes a greater one, and that change starts with you. The only good that comes from life is expressing yourself as who you truly are. Expressing yourself, leads to others following you, and the world becoming a better place. So, as a note to my fellow readers, I urge you to do the same.

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- ଉତ୍କଳମଣି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ଦାସ

Dreams

Anish Pradhan

Everyone has a dream
Without a dream
There is no life to live

Dreams are still dreams
But only until you actually do it

Life isn't easy
You learn that the hard way
Which is why dreams are never easily fulfilled
If you want dreams to come true
You have to believe

Start with something very simple task
Keep on doing it everyday
Then it will encourage you to do another
Then another

Eventually there will be bad days
That everyone has
But that doesn't mean you stop
You have to keep on going
Whether you got knocked out
or get harassed
You get up
And try again

Don't stop with a limit
Start without a limit



Anish Pradhan is 13 years old and is an 8th grader in Mt. Olive Middle School, NJ. He is a higher black belt, a Star Scout and an Ice Skater. His is passionate about food and travel, a value he shares with his family - his mom Lisa Pradhan and his dad Jeetendra Pradhan. He loves his extended family of Odia brothers and sisters.

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- ସ୍ୱଭାବଜର୍ବି ଗଙ୍ଗାଧର ମୋହେର

Teddy Bear Hamster

Sumedha Lenka

Do you have a teddy bear hamster? If you do then - good, if you don't well, can I tell you about picking out a teddy bear hamster or TBH. TBH stands for Teddy bear hamster. So, I got a male TBH and he is 5 inches long and his name is Binkkel. I gave him cabbage and he ate a little, then he hide it for afterwards. I gave him a piece of carrots and then he ate it. After a little while he started going on the wheel. When I saw him at the store, I got a responsible feeling it came into me and I was really excited to get him. I like playing with him. I see him every day in his wheel it goes round and round which is good for hamsters to exercise. I see him sleep at 8am and he wakes up at 8pm. Soon after waking up he baths with his tongue. He shows a lot of tricks. We are enjoying his activities. Hamsters look fat but are not fat they have a lot of fur. When picking out a hamster don't only get the one who looks pretty read the caption and think which kind of natured you want a playful or lazy TBH!!Oh I almost forgot they DO NOT SMELL.



Now let's move on to what things you need are food, wheel, water aka bottle, hideout /igloo, cage, nesting and chew toys. Now we should talk about what to do with TBH and what not to do.

You should feed your pet vegetables/ fruits, first is veggies there a lot of veggies so I will name some basil, spinach, cabbage, turnips, carrots, cauliflower, bean sprout, bell pepper, bok choy, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, charred, corn, cucumber and green beans.

And now fruits seedless apples, bananas, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, cherries and cantaloupe. Of course there are more. And do not frighten your hamster.

TBH facts!

When you have a TBH you don't touch it for 4 days because you have to let it know that now this is his or her home sweet home

!DO NOT DROP YOUR TBH!!

Do not use any strong sense of smell around your TBH.

I will enjoy living with Binkkel. He is really cute and I hope that you get a teddy bear hamster and be happy with him or her!!



Sumedha Lenka is 9 years old, who loves writing based on real events and nonfiction. Her hobby is dancing. She wants to be a fashion designer when she grows up.

I believe forgiveness is the best form of love in any relationship. It takes a strong person to say they're sorry and an even stronger person to forgive. - *Yolanda Hadid*

Lonely

Isha Mishra

Aditya the brick has been cemented into the wall of a building for as long as he could remember. Outside everyday, watching children play as the garden grew and fell, and then the beautiful transition from day to night when the fireflies came out and blinked their lights hello was a mystical sight, but after a decade or two, Aditya must admit that it did seem to get boring. All he wished is that someone would say hello to him, play with him, do something with him, just like those children did with their friends.

“Get your head out of the clouds, Aditya, it’s never going to happen.” Aarav, his annoying neighbor above him yawned.

Aditya ignored, though he had that nag that he was right again. Waiting 15 years for this was taking a bit more longer than he expected. A year passed by, and now Aditya felt himself sag. Aarav was right. This wasn’t going to work. He’d just be lonely and hear all of the jibber-jabber of his neighbors and the whole wall for company.

Pari, a girl at the preschool, is always left out of the main crowd. Most people avoid her because she is the poorest person in the town, an orphan, a girl. Most bullies gang up on her, leaving her hopeless for friends, as all of the kids are scared of Anika, Reyansh, and Vinaan. They don’t want to stand up to them. They were the all-powerful dictators of the school.

Sometime in like, three minutes, they were probably going to attack her for attention. Same old, same old. It won’t change. Not ever.

She waddled up the the brick wall, staring at it. Won’t it be nice if it would talk to her, said everything was okay? No, it wouldn’t. But she had to try.

“Hi.” She started, addressing the wall. She felt stupid, but she always did. This was normal.

At home, her mom and dad mad her sleep on the grass everyday for her being a girl. Her older brother, Hassan, slept on the busted mattress found in the dumpster. They wanted another boy. But they got a girl. They got her.

“Help me. Please.” she cried, and that was her mistake. She was heard. Reyansh swaggered up to her, grabbing her arms roughly. A year or two older than her, he was the one that hated her the most, and the leader of the gang. Anika and Vihaan bowed down to him, and he was the most revered out of all. He shook her hard. “Are you scared now? Because you should be!” And promptly shoved her into the wall of bricks.

What he didn’t know is that Pari finally had enough, and she ultimately had a friend to help her.

She nearly fell face-first into the brick, but her foot twisted into one position in the nick of time, propelling her to an angle where her fist slammed into the boy’s face. Reyansh staggered with this new threat, gaping, and Anika and Vihaan ran over to back him up, but soon enough, they were both on the ground.

All of the kids were staring, even Hassan, who usually either tried to diss her or ignore her, never trying to help her.

After that day, no one in the school tried to hurt her, but no one was her friend, except that one very special brick, Aditya.

Moral: Don’t judge people for who they are. Judge people of who they are to be.



Isha Mishra is an eleven-year-old girl that dreams of being an aeronautical engineer, and to join NASA. Right now, she like Robotics and school, which makes her different from most kids. She has always stood up against bullies and encourages others to do so.

Dance

Mallika Panda

Introduction:

Do you know how to dance, or are you a sloppy mess. If you are a sloppy mess then you should start to DANCE! Not only will you get to dance better, but dancing is fun!

What is Dance:

Do you know what is dance? Dance is something where you can relax and just move to the music. You can be yourself. Dance is not only for girls, a lot of boys do dance. Some great dancers are boys.

What type of Dance:

There are sooooo many types of dance! Some types are Jazz, ballet, funk, tap, modern, lyrical, contemporary and there are even more! I would think the two most popular are Jazz and Ballet.

Fun Fact!

Ballet was the first dance invented

Fun Fact!

Ballet is used a lot in of musicals, including Broadway

How to get good at Dance:

At first, it may be hard. But to get good at it you have to practice, practice and practice. You have to practice with and without music, so you get to know the music and the counts. You have to have lots of energy and facial expression. You can go over the moves with yourself in your head. Try to remember the moves so you don't look at other people, because then it becomes a habit.

Is Dance a Sport:

Yes! Dance is definitely a sport. Other people might say it isn't, but it is. Dance is a SPORT!

Conclusion:

Now that you know a lot about dance, are you going to try it? I think you definitely should! A great place to go is Dance Factory! They are great! Try dance out!



Mallika Panda is in the 4th grade at Montgomery Village School. She is very athletic and plays many sports like dance, gymnastics, volleyball and basketball. She does three dance routines – Intensive Jazz, Ballet and Funk. She also participates in “Girls on the Run”. She also plays the french horn.

Where I Found Myself...Home, I Guess?

Nishant Mishra

Home... where do I start? I have lived *everywhere*. For countries besides the United States, I have lived in Hong Kong, India, and Australia. For states *in* the United States, I have lived in California, Texas, Florida, and finally New Jersey. Everyone always tells me, “Wow Nishant, it's so cool that you've made all these places your home,” whenever I bring up my past. Sure, I have called all these places “home” at some point, but where do I *feel* home?

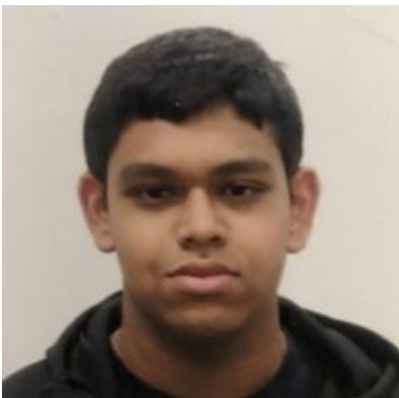
I feel as if the place where I *belong* is in a particular “Barnes and Nobles” in West Palm Beach, Florida, which I first found when I was eight years old, back in 2010. It is an unlikely choice, but this place is the only area that I stayed in for all five years of the time I lived in that state. I had lived in three homes and attended four different schools there... but I always returned to the same Barnes and Noble store. It was *my* place, my *home*, and unlike the house I lived in or the school I went to, I would never have to worry about it changing.

The place itself was a large cavern; it was easily bigger the gymnasium in any of my elementary schools. Everything was organized, with young adults' books in the center, the children's and nonfiction books to the left, and the classic, complex books to the right. I am aware that every bookstore has some type of configuration, but this arrangement was important for one big reason: it gave me a choice. Every day after school on a Friday, I would enter the store, stop in the center, and choose a path to a section. I would look around, and I made my difficult decision like the characters in the amazing books I read, and I simply loved that.

In the beginning, I walked into the kid's section, as I was young at the time and so were my tastes. There I learned that books were not just boring bundles of information but an amazing wealth of anything the author wanted to say. I learned that stories had meaning and that it required a little more thinking than I thought. There were other days when I walked into the young adult's section and read about the magical adventures of the wizard Harry in *Harry Potter* and the war over control in *The Hunger Games*. My time in the young adult's section taught me to love anything to do with adventure.

Everything was great, but another path had begun to call me like the sirens in *The Odyssey*: The classics section. I used to view that section as a rough path in the forest, one that would be a struggle to go through, something that I should avoid, but after I gained my sense of adventure from the young adult's section, I decided on one fateful day to spend my time there, and I was stunned. Here I learned the literary power of *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, and the endless arrays of Shakespeare. I was blown away by the emotions that these works gave me, and this place had what seemed like an endless supply of books that I could ponder over.

I regard this Barnes and Nobles to be my home because I grew up there. From the moment I walked in for the first time, to the time when I left to move away, this place of literature is where I learned who I was. This place is where I belonged, and there will always be a part of me that is still there.



Nishant Mishra is a junior at Princeton High School in Princeton, NJ. His hobbies include writing, reading, and participating in competitive clubs such as Science Olympiad and Science Bowl.

There is no love without forgiveness, and there is no forgiveness without love. - *Bryant H. McGill*

Where I'm From

Sammil Panda

I am from the Garden State
From dunking to serving balls.
I'm from flying through the solar system and defeating god-like enemies
From being a block to scoring goals.
I'm from a place where I'm showered with love
And surrounded by loving people.

I'm from the bottom of my house
Where I spend most of my time
From watching superheroes and supervillains to chilling in the sunshine
I'm from a rural place.
Where everything happens
From a educational building to a shelter
This is where I'm from.



Sammil Panda is a Freshman at Mount Olive High School. He has lived in Mount Olive all his life. He goes to Tae Kwon Do and is a first degree black belt. He just started doing Mount Olive Robotics and is on the Beta team which is a Robotics team consisting of freshmen only. When he is not studying or doing any homework he would play video games because that helps him relax.

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ମଧୁର ବଚନ କହି ସକଳେ ତୋଷିବ ॥

The biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply. – Richard Branson

Mental Illness Treatments

Seejal Padhi

A mental illness is a disorder that affects a person's mood, personality, and behavior. Some examples of mental illnesses are depression, anxiety disorders, and eating disorders. In the early 1900s, people were locked up and treated like prisoners. They never had a choice and had unusual treatments such as electroconvulsive therapy, lobotomy, and insulin-induced comas. People had wrong ideas about how to deal with mental illness due to the little information known about the topic. People never cared to accurately figure out how to treat a mentally sick person. The treatments for the mentally ill, often, hurt a person rather than helped them.

Ugo Cerletti, an Italian neurologist, invented electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). He saw pigs being anesthetized with electroshock and got the idea to use electroshocks with humans. After experimenting with animals and perfecting the technique, they tried it out with humans. There was an improvement in the patients and, also, they had no memories of the treatment. This treatment, if done correctly, is excellent, but often it was not. Many psychiatric hospitals used ECT to control and subdue people. Instead of the procedure being used to help, it was to keep patients in command. Also, patients were given ECT without the proper sedatives or restraints. The use of ECT was widely abused for selfish gain. People did not use them for the intended purposes, and the patients had to pay the price.

Lobotomy is a surgical operation where doctors drill into the patient's skull to access his or her brain. In the United States, the most famous lobotomist was Walter J. Freeman. When lobotomy was first invented, it had numerous steps, was time-consuming, and required a significant amount of skill. Freeman wanted to develop another way of lobotomy that required less time. Because of how easy it was to perform this new type of lobotomy, there was a lobotomy craze. Freeman, himself, performed over 3,000 lobotomies. One step-mother had a lobotomy performed on her twelve-year-old stepson because he was stubborn and would not go to bed on time. Many of the people who got a lobotomy did not have a mental illness.

Insulin Coma Therapy (ICT) came into the United States in the 1930s. ICT is when a patient was given high amounts of insulin and was put into a coma for a period of time. These treatments were painful and were usually given without anesthesia. The mortality rate for this treatment was between one percent to ten percent. Prolonged coma was a constant threat. However, people had this treatment performed in hopes of curing mental illnesses.

There were different types of mental illness treatments in the early 1900s and electro-convulsion therapy, lobotomy, and insulin coma therapy are just a few. At the beginning of the 1900s, not much was known about mental illnesses and how to treat them. People jumped at any treatment that had a possibility of curing the mentally ill. The stigma against mental illness and lack of knowledge caused harm to numerous people, those with a mental illness and those without. These treatments were not always the most helpful. They harmed the patients and had awful side effects.



Seejal Padhi is currently a junior in high school. In addition to her strong academic abilities, she spends a large amount of time in robotics to her interest in STEAM. In her free time, she loves to volunteer for numerous causes and spend time with her family and friends.

Trust is the most important part of a relationship, closely followed by communication. I think that if you have those two things, everything else falls into place - your affection, your emotional connection. - *Vanessa Lachey*

The PB&J sandwich mix up

Prisha Das-Khan

One day, there was a boy named AJ and he hated school. There was also an annoying girl named Andrea and she always calls AJ as Arlo because that is his real name which he hates. AJ's teachers are always so weird. For lunch, his Peanut, Butter & Jelly sandwich was missing. Officer Spence said that all of the sandwiches were stolen this week. While eating lunch with Principal Klutz, Officer Spence found out that Mr. Klutz has 5 PBJ sandwiches. Five PBJ sandwiches had gone missing that week, so Officer Spence told Mr. Klutz "Freeze, Dirt bag. You are under arrest and you are going to jail". Then Officer Spence brought a mobile jail and locked up Mr. Klutz. Then he saw Vice Principal named Mr. Crocker planting suitcases and he also shouted at Mr. Crocker "Freeze, Dirt bag". Officer Spence brought another mobile jail and locked Mr. Crocker up in the jail. Officer Spence kept doing this to all the teachers. For example, Officer Spence saw Mr. Macky throwing trash into the recycling can, so he took another mobile jail and locked up Mr. Macky as well. One day, Officer Spence got all the kids to the gym. The kids saw all the teachers locked in the mobile jails. Then Officer Spence went to the stage and said, "The culprit is one of you". The Police Inspector arrived and understood the situation. The Police Inspector said to Officer Spence "Being a police officer is boring with no case, right? When you were a kid, did your Mommy give you PBJ sandwich?" Officer Spence sadly said "No". Police Inspector continued addressing Officer Spence "So you took all the sandwiches and framed every one of the teachers". "Yes", said Officer Spence. Officer Spence sobbingly said "I am very sorry. It is really boring to have no cases to solve, so Yes, I did it. Please don't arrest me". The Police Inspector did not arrest Officer Spence and they lived happily ever after.

Then AJ went home and on the way his Mom said, "Here's your PB&J sandwich, I forgot to pack it".
Who knew that AJ's mom forgetting to pack a sandwich could cause such madness.



Prisha Das-Khan is 8 years old and studies in 3rd grade. She has a passion for gymnastics, art and swimming – not necessarily in that order. She believes in fairness and treats everybody with respect. She loves reading adventure books.



Kumar Purnima 2017

My Trip to Heidelberg, Germany

Riya Sarangi

This year, during my summer vacations I went to visit my grandparents in India. But we made an unexpected stop in Germany to visit my cousin sisters Diya and Disha. Rohan loved to play with Disha because she is just a baby. My cousins and their parents live close to old town of Heidelberg, Germany so we also decided to visit Heidelberg. Heidelberg is a very old town with huge forests, a broken castle and lot of old buildings and shops.

The part I wanted to talk about today is the Heidelberg funicular train. It is a single-track train which goes from the Heidelberg Old Town up to the Heidelberg Castle (*Schloss de Heidelberg*) and to the top of the hill on a very, very steep track. There are only three stops made by the train – Kornmarkt station in old town, Heidelberg Castle station and then Molkenkur station. At the top of the hill, there is only a single train track and as we come down, it splits into two lanes at the Heidelberg Castle station.

There was no driver inside the Funicular train so I and my cousins were able to sit right at the front of the train, next to the glass window. We rode the funicular to the top of the hill and then rode it down again to the Castle where we had to get off to visit the castle.

I enjoyed visiting the Heidelberg Castle very much. I thought it was unique compared to other castles because it was part palace, part ruins. Even though a large portion of the castle is destroyed, you can still tell how grand it used to be.



Another part of the castle that I really loved was the Great Terrace. From here you can see the rooftops of the Old Town and the Neckar River. That day there was a wedding going on there on the terrace and Rohan kept running around the guests.

After visiting the castle, we took the train down to the Old Town but I wanted to ride the funicular train as many times as I could. I asked my dad if we could go up and back again but the answer was ‘No’. We had a very good dinner in Old Town and then came back home, tired and exhausted. We went to sleep early as we were going to visit Zurich the next day.

Exploring the ruins of Heidelberg Castle and riding the funicular train are one of the best memories of Germany that I have. I would have liked to explore Heidelberg a little more.



Riya Sarangi is 9 years old and lives in Belle Mead with her parents and her cute little brother Rohan. She loves biking, dancing, reading fantasy books about imaginary worlds such as "Chronicles of Narnia" and "Harry Potter" series. Her dream is to visit Taj Mahal someday.

Love does not claim possession, but gives freedom. - Rabindranath Tagore

My New School and my Kindergarten class

Rohan Sarangi

Hello, my name is Rohan and I go to Orchard Hill Elementary School. It is a amazing school and my teacher's name is Mrs. Kotch. I am 5 years old and my birthday was September 10th. There is a yellow school bus that takes me to my school. My bus driver's name is Mrs. Nancy.

I am in Kindergarten and today I am going to be talking about my school gym. My most favorite thing is I like doing with my friends and my gym teacher is Playing Tag.

Right now I only know Vanisha, Jaice, Jose, Aarav, Ben, Darshil, and Alexa, Sana, Riya and we all play tag. Sometimes I run so fast that they cannot catch me. My Gym teacher's name is Mr. Jay and he teaches me a lot of Gym things, for real! like tagging, play softball and also clean up your room after the gym is over, line up and go back to our class room.

After we go back to the classroom, the teacher tells us to take out all our snacks and eat. Mrs. Kotch takes very good care of us. I love reading books and playing in my school. I love my new school – My Orchard Hill Elementary School.



Rohan Sarangi is 5 years old and lives in Belle Mead with his parents and his elder sister Riya. He loves to play with cars, watch PJ Masks and build anything he can imagine with LEGOs. Rohan wants to be a "bone doctor" when he grows up.



SAT Test Prep

Samparka (Relation)

Sangita Bindhani (Meera)

Seema was getting ready in a hurry, as her husband Nikhil asked her to be ready by 5:00 PM telling her that they have to go to meet someone. Seema was bit tired since they came from Delhi this morning and angry with Nikhil too, but couldn't tell that to him, as he was very excited for this. Seema couldn't believe whatever was happening. How could she tell her friends and family that they were here to see a girl for her father-in-law?

Their car stopped in front of a small house, and when they got down from their car she saw a little girl standing outside. She smiled at Seema, but she was not looking as happy as a child should look. Then an old lady came out to welcome them and invite them inside. After talking to the old lady, Seema came to know that the girl they came to see was the only daughter of the old lady. She lost her husband a few years ago, and the girl she saw outside was her daughter. The old lady's daughter's name was Priya.

After talking for a while, the elderly woman, Sudha Aunty, called Priya to the living room where they were sitting.

Seema was feeling uncomfortable. Usually mothers-in-law come to choose their daughters-in-law, but she was here today to choose her mother-in-law.

To her it felt like it was just yesterday when she came to Nikhil's house as a newly-wed bride. Even though she and Nikhil had loved each other for a long time, Nikhil's parents came to see her at her parents' house. Seema remembered how scared she was that day, even more scared than her first job interview.

She was worried about what to wear, how to sit, and how to talk, as she heard from Nikhil that his mother was a bit strict and was looking for a traditional daughter-in-law. But to her surprise, Nikhil's mom was very polite and loving. As long as she was alive, Seema never missed her mother, her mother-in-law loved Seema like her own child. The memory of her mother-in-law made her sad. She had wished she could be there for a long time with her. Unfortunately, after 6 months of her marriage, Seema's mother-in-law was diagnosed with terminal cancer, and in spite of her treatment at a big cancer hospital, she died.

After her mother-in-law's death, they stayed for few days with her father-in-law, then they returned to Delhi to go back to work, as they were on leave for too many days. After they were back, whenever Nikhil called his father, he felt very bad for him. He was not happy as he used to be, and he was not even taking care of himself properly. Nikhil knew his father was very much dependent on his mother for everything, and now it was so hard for him to do everything by himself. He was also not interested to leave his job and stay with them in Delhi. It had been two years that her mother-in-law had passed away, and they feel so sad for him as he is staying alone. Nikhil thought that someone should be there for his father in his need and take care of him like his wife, and most importantly, someone should be there to talk with him and share his feelings. When he told Seema about his thinking, Seema thought Nikhil was talking about a caretaker. But when Nikhil told her about getting a new wife for her father, even though Seema was a modern girl, she couldn't believe it. She thought Nikhil was joking, as these things were not that common in our Indian society. But Nikhil was serious. He said to Seema, "A wife is always not needed to make a family. A man needs a wife more in his old days than when he is young, as he wants someone by his side to talk to and understand his feelings". Then he said, "We all need a special friend in our life to whom we can share all our thoughts which we cannot tell to our friends or our children".

Even though Seema was not totally convinced, she remained silent, as she knew Nikhil was very worried for his father. It took Nikhil one year to convince his father to get married again.

As he agreed, Nikhil told one of his uncles to find a suitable bride for his father. His uncle told him about Priya, the girl they came to see today.

Seema got shocked after looking at Priya. Was she dreaming, or was she mistakenly assuming Priya to be someone else she knew? Seema hesitated to ask Priya about her past, as she thought it might hurt Priya. They sat silently for some time. Neither Seema nor Nikhil knew what to ask Priya or how to start the conversation.

Then Priya's mother broke the silence, "How is your father doing?" she asked.

When the conversation started, Seema came to know about Priya's past from her mother. Seema thought to herself, "I was correct, I have met Priya before". Priya was her chemistry lecturer's wife.

Once, Seema had gone with her friends to her lecturer's house for some notes. Seema couldn't forget Priya's face. Priya looked like a goddess, with the big red bindi on her forehead, her beautiful large eyes, her smile; everything was mesmerizing.

Even after coming back to their hostel from their lecturer's house, Seema and her friends talked about Priya and her beauty. That's the reason why Seema still remembered that face.

But, even though she had the same eyes and beautiful features, because of her lost smile, she didn't look the same as before. The sparkle in her eyes was gone. The big mesmerizing smile had vanished.

While in conversation, Priya's mom started to cry about her daughter's fate. She explained how hard it was for Priya to live alone without any support. As she was growing old, she would not be there for Priya and her daughter forever. Even though Priya didn't want to remarry, her mother convinced her to do so for her daughter.

Seema held Priya's mother's hand and said, "Everything will be all right, Auntie!". Seema felt an unexplainable connection with them. Sometimes, some relationships are hard to explain, but they are stronger than relations of blood.

It was a hard day for both Seema and Nikhil, and in the car, Seema told Nikhil about Priya.

She was extremely upset about what had happened to Priya. Seema agreed with Nikhil, that "everyone need a special person in their life to support and stand by their side in every situation". Now Seema insisted that Nikhil make Priya their new family member as both her father-in-law and Priya needed each other. Nikhil saw a big smile on Seema's face with a happy tear.



Sangita Bindhani lives in Pennsylvania with her family. She loves to read books and loves photography.

ମିଶୁ ମୋର ଦେହ ଏ ଦେଶ ମାଟିରେ, ଦେଶବାସୀ ଚାଲିଯାନ୍ତୁ ମୋ ପିଠିରେ ।

ଦେଶ ର ସ୍ଵରାଜ୍ୟ ପଥେ ଯେତେ ଗାଡ଼ ପୁରୁ ତହିଁ ପଡ଼ି ମୋର ମାଂସ ହାଡ଼ ॥

- ଉତ୍କଳମଣି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ଦାସ

The Apocalypse

Seejal Padhi

The growls and wails of the infected dead grow louder! Ben needs to get out of the lab immediately. Before the mutated E. coli can attack him again, he quickly gathers all of his belongings. Looking through the window, he sees a clear path to the cafeteria and sprints through the door. The zombies hear the loud noise and start to gather around him. Within arm's reach, they start to circle him. He can see the disgusting green of their skin, their balding heads, and bloodshot eyes. He can smell their repugnant breaths and hear their loud groans. Feeling a burst of determination, Ben grabs a stick off the ground and fights his way to the cafeteria. Repeatedly whacking the zombies, he finds out that it is more efficient to hit a zombie on its head. One good hit on their head can knock them down because their skull is soft.

Banging on the door, Ben prays someone will open it soon. The zombies are getting closer! Ben starts to yell and shout. Luckily, the door bursts open and Ben rushes inside at the last second. A second later, and he would have been zombie food. The zombies continuously slam the door and try to get in. A group of people come up behind Ben, and hurriedly help him secure the door shut. Ben looks around and sees almost everyone sitting dejectedly. The spread of the zombie virus had brought everyone's mood down. Some boys from the track team are trying to rally people and inspire them to fight back using rolled up poster boards as makeshift megaphones. Suddenly, he hears a crash behind him. The window shatters as zombies come in, causing mass panic. Everyone pushes and shoves each other in a hurry to get out. Ben stays behind to make sure that no one is harmed in a rush to get out the door. To the left, he hears a shrill cry for help. Looking over, Levi, his best friend, is cornered by a zombie. He dashes towards Levi and pushes the zombie to the side. While the zombie is dazed, Levi and he escape. He and Levi have been friends ever since they were in first grade. Levi has been the chiller one as compared to Ben. No matter what has happened to Levi, he has always been calm and collected. Levi thinks that everything will get better sooner or later, so why get worked up over something.

There is chaos outside, and Ben feels despair. Everyone is running around, and it is hard to tell who is a human and who is not. In the crowd, he loses Levi. He needs to get to the kindergarten across town to pick up his little sister. Their parents have gone out of the country on a business trip. He decides to head towards the front of the school campus so that he can get to the exit. Pushing and shoving people out of the way, he heads towards the door of the gate that surrounds the school. In front of him, a girl is struggling to fight off a zombie. Everyone is worried about themselves too much to think about helping her. Feeling a surge of anger at the zombie, Ben runs to her and smacks the zombie. His punch is strong and knocks the zombie down. Tripping over something, he looks down and sees a pole. He decides to grab it and use it for protection since he misplaced his previous pole. Half an hour later, he gets out of the school. Looking at his phone, he sees that he has missed calls from his sister's kindergarten. He listens to the voicemail left behind and hears screaming. Feeling anxious, he picks up his pace. Everything will be alright. Repeating the mantra inside his head repeatedly, he heads for the other side of town. Everything had been destroyed. His hometown is being broken into pieces. He curses John Gates. Gates was the one who created the mutations that turned humans into zombies. For a decade, John Gates has been trying to create a liquid that would make people stronger. He made many different potions, trying to find the perfect one with few side effects as possible. Even with his many failed recipes, he never gave up. To test his work, he would kidnap people and use them as lab rats. The police would always try to catch him, but were unsuccessful. There are rumors that he has people from inside the police force who are giving him information. His latest mix of chemicals caused a virus to be born that could turn humans into zombies. The virus spread fast and has already infected most of America. Snapping out of his thoughts, Ben feels a tug on his shirt. Turning around, he sees Levi. He got out of the school and was walking home when he saw him. Levi asks Ben where he is going because his house is in the opposite direction. Ben tells Levi that he is going to pick

up his sister. Levi decides to accompany Ben. Both are extremely worried and hope nothing has happened to the small child.

For the next few hours, Ben and Levi walk in silence hungry, tired, and scared. At around eight o'clock, they reach the kindergarten. As they look around, Ben sees some dead toddlers. He hopes his sister is not one of them. Inside the school, Ben and Levi split up to look for Ben's sister. Walking down a hallway, Ben hears someone calling for help. Racing towards that voice, he finds a tiny figure cowering under a desk. A zombie is coming close to her. Grabbing a pipe off the ground, he raises his hand and hits the zombie on his head. He looks at the tiny figure again and realizes that it is his sister. Feeling a tremendous amount of relief, he grabs his sister and walks out of the room. She is clinging to him in fear. Seeing Levi down the hallway and Ben calls him over. Ben decides to go to Levi's house because it is near the kindergarten. Since it is dark outside, they are careful to make sure that no zombies can sneak up on them.

Finally, they reach Levi's house. Levi takes out his key and opens the door. His parents worriedly come to them when they come in the door. Levi's parents have been out searching for them for hours. Levi explains to them what happened. Levi's parents say that they have been in contact with Ben's parents. Since no planes are landing at the nearby airport, they cannot come home. Also, the whole town was quarantined, so the zombie virus can't spread. There is a way, though, to get to safety. Tomorrow morning, a military helicopter was going to land in the city. Tests would be done to the humans to see if they the zombie virus. If they didn't the helicopter would fly them to safety. Levi's parents tell all the kids to go to sleep since it is already so late. They would keep guard in the house to make sure no one got inside. In a few hours, Ben and Levi would be woken up to keep watch so that the parents could get some rest.

The next morning, everyone rushed to pack up and get to the testing center. The line stretched to around a mile long. Since Ben's sister, Levi and his parents arrived early, they are near the front. After hours of waiting and fighting off zombies, it was Ben's turn to be tested. He, along with his sister, Levi, and Levi's family, tested for no virus. They were all put into a helicopter and had to wait an hour until it took off. Hours later, they were dropped off at an airport. Holding his sister's hand, Ben sees his parents. Pulling his sister along, he rushes to their side. Hugs were given, and stories were exchanged.

TEN YEARS LATER

The zombies have taken over the United States. All the humans were moved to other countries. The zombies are isolated in the U.S. and are guarded by the militia of many countries to make sure they don't go to another nation.



Seejal Padhi is currently a junior in high school. In addition to her strong academic abilities, she spends a large amount of time in robotics to her interest in STEAM. In her free time, she loves to volunteer for numerous causes and spend time with her family and friends.

A Later Start Time for High School

Sheetal Padhi

Teenagers are people that could be your child, nephew, niece or brother and they are hurting because of early start times of high schools. Carolyn Walworth, a seventeen-year-old, is in high school and has a lot of homework to do every day. She falls asleep 12:30 A.M. after finishing her school work and then has to wake up early to attend to school which starts at 8:15 A.M. Then in school, she has to struggle to stay awake and not miss anything. "It's an insane system... The whole essence of learning is lost," Walworth says. She is overwhelmed by the relentless demands of high school and reaches her breaking point at 11 P.M. when she sheds tears for a about ten minutes. This is a repeating cycle that many students undergo during high school due to stress and exhaustion. They do not get the amount of sleep they need.

According to the Merriam-Webster, the medical definition of sleep is the natural periodic suspension of consciousness during which the powers of the body are restored. Sleep is necessary for these high school students so that their body can restore its powers and function to their best every day. Teenagers from ages fourteen to seventeen are recommended to get about eight to ten hours of sleep every night. Sleep Foundation, a non-profit organization, conducted a study that reported that only fifteen percent of teens get the recommended amount of sleep on weekdays. This leaves eighty-five percent of high schoolers that do not get an adequate rest from Monday to Friday. If high school started at a later time, it would be valuable to the whole nation. It would be result in lowering the risk of car accidents and improving one's academic performances. It is substantial that school days start at a later time.

The circadian rhythm is an internal biological clock that is used to regulate the period of time when an individual feels sleepy and awake throughout a day. Individuals can experience circadian dips which makes a person feel tired and drowsy. According to the National Sleep Foundation, circadian dips averagely occurs between 3:00-7:00 am but when teenagers do not get enough sleep, it can extend to 9:00 or 10:00 am. The current start times of high school do not correspond with students' circadian rhythm, which affects their health and does not let them get a sufficient amount of sleep. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that high schools should delay their start times to 8:30 a.m. or later as it is important to align school schedules to the circadian dips. It is strenuous for them to fall asleep before eleven but when in the morning, they have no choice other than to get up and go to school. This can cause medical issues in the future such as insomnia. If high schools commenced at a later time, then this would not be a problem for the students, and it would cultivate towards student's overall development which will result in a better future for them.

Parents have to go to work early in the day. If school started earlier, then they could leave the house with the child, but if school started later, then parents would have to leave their child at home alone while they went to work. Researchers from the Pew Research Center said that ninety-four percent of parents hope that their child learns responsibility. By being home alone in the mornings and getting themselves ready, high schoolers would learn how to be responsible. As for the younger kids, older siblings could help them get ready and then drop them to their bus if it is around the same time as they leave. Alternatively, there are a lot of before and after school programs or day cares, where parents could drop their children off before going to work. In the end, this would cause the high schoolers to be more awake and alert in school and driving to school.

Sleep deprivation causes teenagers to have a higher chance of getting in a car crash. Since these children are tired, they do not focus on the road as much as they would if they were awake. According to statistics released by the Center for Disease Control and National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, the chance of a car crash happening is increased during sixteen to nineteen year olds than any other age groups.

In 2015, about six teenagers between the ages of sixteen and nineteen died daily as a result of motor vehicle injuries. Research from the AAA Foundation of Traffic Safety said that the risk of a car crash is doubles when people sleep one or two hours less than the recommended seven hours of sleep. Most high schoolers do not get the adequate amount of school and this can have severe consequences. With high schools starting later, teenagers will be more alert and awake resulting in a lower chance of them getting in a deadly car crash.

Students do not perform their best at school, when their energy is drained. The government requires children to go to school so they have a bright future. Wouldn't it be better, if students performed their best in school? The

University of Minnesota conducted a study where they observed at 9,000 students over three years and found students that got at least eight hours of sleep has higher test scores and academic performances than someone that slept less than eight hours. Educators try to decrease issues such as tardiness and substance abuse, and by allowing teenagers to get more sleep, they could achieve their goal. In addition, getting more sleep would reduce tardiness, substance abuse and more.

High school does not just mean academics, it also means sports and extracurricular. There is concern that if the school day started later, then there would be no time for after-school activities as school would end later. Sharon High School's principal and athletic director have a plan on how to solve this issue. They said that currently there is a lot of time between when school ends and practices start. If the school started later there would be less time in between the of school and beginning of practices as the students would rush to get there which means that students would idly be there. When it gets dark outside, schools can either practice indoors or invest in bright lights. The staff of Sharon High School said that the impact would most likely be minimum. This is an excellent solution that works and further emphasizes that any concern with later school start times can be resolved.

Several students go on the bus as their parents have work and cannot drive them to school. Some districts drop off high school kids first and then drop the middle schoolers. Academy School District 20 in Colorado, changed their high school to start at a later time and transported high schoolers and middle schoolers on the same bus, which solved their problem. It also had an additional benefit of saving costs for the district. With the transportation issue addressed, high school should start at a later time benefitting the health of the students.

Starting the school at a later time would benefit all high schoolers greatly. It will raise their academic performances, decrease the risk of them getting into a car crash and increase their health. By changing one thing, it will create a domino effect and have a positive outcome on everything else. Everyone deserves the right to have an adequate amount of sleep. Even though starting school late may have some detrimental effects, but still if we can overcome those issues, then it will impact the students to have a prosperous future, which will overall influence the students to work towards better society and better economy as a whole.



Sheetal Padhi is currently a junior in high school. She enjoys being a part of her school's Robotics team and hanging out with friends. She likes to read even though she does not have the chance to read as much as she used to. She can't wait to see where life is going to take her.



‘Following your passion... the one less travelled’

Sumedha Biswal

I never thought I would ever wrestle, in my entire life. In fact, if someone asked me in seventh grade how I felt about contact-sports, I would look at them with a weird look and go back to sticking my head back into a storybook. So, when my friend asked if I wanted to join her and eighteen other guys for eighth grade modified wrestling, I laughed out loud, thinking that she was joking. She wasn't. After an entire two weeks of convincing, I agreed reluctantly. I was extremely nervous before my first ever wrestling practice, and I had every right to be; the guys in the wrestling team had years of practice, and the entire team was a close group of friends. As I stumbled into the small athletic room with mats covering every inch except the ceiling, all eyes focused on me. Since I had barely any social skills, my response to the attention on me was a crooked smile and an uncomfortable wave. As practice started, 13-year old me tried my very best to keep up. It was clear that I was new and had minimal athletic ability to keep up with the guys, but I stuck with it. And sticking with wrestling was one of the greatest decisions I have ever made in my life so far.

On my first match ever, I was sweating like I was under a shower. I liked practicing, but there was no way in this ever-growing earth I was ready and confident enough to go on a wrestling match and beat the guy I was about to wrestle. When my name was called I felt like I was about to throw up, I was so nervous that I tripped before I stepped foot on the mat. I stood back up, putting a false wall of certainty around me, and put my mouth guard in, walking toward the center the circle, ready to face my death. I don't remember what exactly happened during the match, and I know I didn't win, but by God, I had never felt so alive. When the match was finished, and the other guy's hand was pulled up, signaling that he had won, I had the glorious smile plastered on my face. The smile wasn't there because I had lost, but because the way I felt after made me feel like I could conquer the world. I felt unreal, and yet so real in a meager moment. This strong surge of high emotion that I got after that match, was the ignitor that made me loyal to wrestling.

Last year, around the end of October, I joined the Varsity Wrestling team. As the season progressed I matured greatly, and I fell in love with wrestling. Although the varsity was much tougher than the modified team, and I had a laborious time winning, none of these things stopped me from loving wrestling. I became close with my teammates and coach, all of them becoming a family to me. My coaches became people who were able to influence me, and the teammates' never-ending support helped throughout the season. I learned so much from this sport and it taught me values that became a significant part of my life; resilience, work ethic, family principles, team bonding, understanding others, accountability, dignity and so much more. Wrestling made me grow as a person and gave me purpose and pride.

I'll eternally be thankful to people such as my parents, and friends who encouraged my dream of wrestling. My friends who would regularly hear me ardently talk about the sport and remain supportive. My parents who spend so much money, energy and time to facilitate me advance in wrestling; my dad who always gives words of wisdom to help and my mom who deals with my coming home bruised and wounded at 9:00 PM and not pressuring me to quit wrestling.

In conclusion, wrestling is something that I love, and no matter what hardships arise, I will always push through, because I found my passion and I have no intention of letting it go. It was one of the hardest things I have ever done in my life, so pursuing it fervently helped me improve as a better wrestler and more important as an individual overall. Also, I am getting more community oriented and taking juniors under my wing to instill love for this sport. Life is short so we have choices to make as in Robert Frost's poem 'The Road Not taken' and it has been extremely fulfilling that I took the path which I am so passionate about though it is also the one less travelled by my brethren.



Sumedha Biswal is sophomore at Edgemont Junior/Senior High School, Scarsdale .New York. She had lived in India for ten years before moving to America in 2013. Sumedha enjoys drawing, painting and dancing. Besides wrestling, she also likes softball and working out in gym.

Dhruva: The “immortal” Child

Pratyay Mohapatra

Introduction:

You will always have relationships in some forms in your life, and some may be tough relationships, and others will have soft relationships. But a very rare relationship is one with God. In this story, you will learn how Dhruva obtained that relationship.

Once upon a time, there was a great king named Uttanapada. He had two wives, Suneeti and Suruchi. Unfortunately, Uttanapada was partial towards Suruchi. Suneeti and Suruchi had one son each, Dhruva, and Uttama respectively. One day, Uttama asked his mother if he could sit on Uttanapada’s lap, and she said yes. But when Dhruva asked, mother Suruchi refused in a very rude, and blunt tone. She told him he had no right in the kingdom.

Dhruva asked, “Where should I go mother?” Suruchi said, “Go to Narayana to seek to be reborn as my son. Only then will you have the rights to sit on your father’s lap.” Dhruva left the place crying, went to mother Suneeti and asks her if he should go into the forest. Mother Suneeti said, “Yes, pray to the Lord be a worthy son of Father of all fathers that is Narayan.” Dhruva went to the forest to seek out for Narayana. Rishi Narada saw him and walked over to him and tried to convince him about going back to the kingdom and accepting fate. But with firm determination, Dhruva respectfully refused. Sage Narada, pleased by Dhruva’s determination, told Dhruva how he could find God. So then Dhruva set out for the Madhuvan forest near the banks of the holy river Yamuna.

In his first month meditating, Dhruva lived on fruits. In his second month meditating, he gave up fruits and ate grass. In his third month meditating, he gave up grass and only drank water. In his fifth month meditating, he even stopped drinking water and only lived on air. And on the fifth and sixth month meditating, he stopped breathing. Dhruva’s pure focus on God stopped the flow of air in heaven and on Earth. The people of both realms panicked, and knew that only one holy being could save them.

Through all of this, Dhruva was only chanting, “Om Namoh Bhagavate, Vasudevaya.” Finally, after all hell broke loose, the Lord of the lords stood in front of him. He granted Dhruva 36,000 years of ruling in his kingdom. Plus, he gave Dhruva a reserved place in heaven where he would stay forever. Hearing this wonderful news, Uttanapada rejoiced and went out to receive his son. Dhruva came back, and as soon as he was old enough, he was crowned king of his kingdom. And they lived happily ever after. After his death he became the Druva Tara, the Pole star.

Conclusion

When Dhruva was ruling, he saw his family members passed away. But he did not need to grieve because he knew that when someone is connected with god, he/she will have a relationship with everyone in the world.



Pratyay Mohapatra is a 6th grader in the Mount Olive Middle School in Mount Olive, New Jersey. In his spare time, Pratyay likes to play sports like soccer and basketball. Pratyay lives with his parents and an older brother. He loves to do jugalbandies (duet of 2 solo musicians) with his brother in any kind of music.

Bombs and pistols do not make a revolution. The sword of revolution is sharpened on the whetting stone of ideas.
Bhagat Singh

Aama Aaina

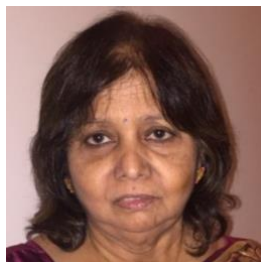
Shantilata Mishra

“Aama Aaina” – Such an apt name for a journal. Being a first-generation immigrant we look at our reflection all the time. Two weeks ago while we had a family gathering, our son wanted us to give him a reason “why he should come to the convention?” He was born almost 10 years after I arrived here with \$8.00 and a \$2800.00/year teaching assistantship. He grew up in a private home and we had two cars and three TV sets. It is not easy for us to explain to him the early years of desperation. We had a basic phone and couldn't call India because it was too expensive and also our families didn't have a phone. For the first four years we couldn't visit India because we lacked the resources. We were apprehensive to make American friends who will stay up and have a great time playing cards and telling jokes. And we were in our twenties.

The story of Odisha Society is the story of people like us who were homesick and yearning for some basic Odia dish and a game of Twenty-Nine. We were happy to hear the language and laugh at some of the same jokes. We learnt how to make Gulab Jamun from Bisquick and Evaporated milk. We learnt to make Chhena Poda from Ricotta Cheese. In essence we made a daisy chain holding each other's hand. In the beginning we could fit into a couple of houses and having convention at a church basement. Soon we moved to school cafeteria and auditorium. We sustained each other through good times and bad. The number of Odia immigration increased in the eighties and increased manifold in the new millennium. In the early years we knew almost every newcomer and now it is impossible to know exactly how many Odia families live in New Jersey. And this is good news. This is a cohesive group that stands with each other and cheer on the next generation.

Now coming back to answering my son's question, I want him to come to the convention because we want him to meet our friends (old and new). We are keenly aware of our immigrant status, our accent and our skin color. We are comfortable with this group of people because we share our birthplace with them. We have common geography and history. Their children have similar hopes and aspirations. Just like we extended our hands to the newcomers, our children can be mentors for the teenagers. Life will always pose challenges. Some of us assimilated well and many didn't. As a community we have to identify them and help them through their difficult times. And as we are aging, we need each other to carry out the final rituals. We want our children to know the community to fall back (in our absence) and have a chuckle talking about us.

In the eighties we had hosted Sanjukta Panigrahi (and her entourage) and we had the good fortune of having Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra (and his entourage) as our guest. We have seen them perform. We have heard Nazia and Sikandar Alam perform in our house. This is what we are. We like to have a good time and at the same time we like to share that time with our loved ones. Yes, we do show off our sarees and jewelry and we often brag about our kids. And some of it is our insecurity that we are still trying to get over. We were not able to spend a lot of time while the children were growing up. The early years of financial hardship motivated us to work long hours and left us less time to attend their emotional needs. Life being a “one-way street” the chance of a redo doesn't exist. Spending more time together now will not make up for the lost time. But the yearning to see our kids celebrating with us will remain.



Shantilata Mishra was born in a small village near Soro and started school in Balasore in 1956. She was the first girl from her family to finish high school and the first from the village to go to college. In 1965 she was the first girl from Odisha to receive National Science Talent Scholarship. She graduated from the State University of New York in Albany, NY. She earned her PhD in Biophysics and completed a fellowship in Medical Physics from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Between raising three kids she worked full time as a Medical Physicist for 32 years. She retired in 2017 and now spends time between her homes in Newburgh, NY and Bonita Springs, FL.

Where I'm From

Pratyus Mohapatra

I'm from my family, whose support still makes me thrive
I'm from Arizona and near at New Jersey
Ventured by car (Stinky as apples long in rot), by plane (cramped as a box too small a size), by ship (most trips unpleasant over hours of wait on the ship or by the dock), by train (not bad, although could use more seats to sit down on, preferably not out of hardened and inflexible blue plastic, please cover your mouth when you cough though because it's nastier than sitting in a stinky old Toyota or Chevrolet.),
I'm from places as near and as far
From bright eye-blinding sunshine at the state of sun
I'm from Delaware to California
I'm from jade trees to tsunami-like crowds
I'm from lizards to a fresh-scented basement atop a mountain of smoke
(Sleeping top bunk was nice)
At Canada sailed my family did on a great sapphire lake
(Too many pesky mosquitoes to see where I was steering the ship.)
I'm from bright sunsets of Arizona plains
I'm from boiling weather with burning car seats
Oddly enough still can't figure how I was flipped upside down on the car seat at age three
(My stuffed dog died when the Toyota was towed away.)
Still I can remember it's bright white fur as bright as an iceberg
I remember asking why we stopped at the airport called EWR only two incredibly boring flights.
(A place at the time I didn't know was home.)
I for the first time saw snow, although I remember that the snow didn't feel like cotton
I'm from these* memories and many more. (I wasn't exactly good at my spelling then.)
I was in grade three at CMS...
(Yes, I struggled once at figuring out how to spell simple words like the one with the asterisk above. Refer to bottom of page please!)
After fourth I skyrocketed and once I was pretty awarded (and astonished)
I learned what true friendship was, and what true kindness could do
Enlightened in many subjects I took it as a regular task of kindness to help others
Sixth grade brought new challenges, as I've never seen before
I got lost to find my way (literally on day three: I don't remember what I must have been thinking, I think I lost the map.)
I'm from these memories and new forming ones embracing them as my heart and mind.



Pratyus Mohapatra is a seventh grader. He loves to read mystery books as well as fantasy and books with plenty of adventure. He wrote this selection to show that with every impact comes a greater one, and that change starts with you. The only good that comes from life is expressing yourself as who you truly are. Expressing yourself, leads to others following you, and the world becoming a better place. So, as a note to my fellow readers, I urge you to do the same.

Yoga Versus Going to the Gym

Gargi Panigrahi

Coming into college, I was introduced with so many different types of habits and hobbies. I was never really a person that worked out or made exercise a priority. However, after dealing with a lot of factors that college brings, including stress and the pressure of making healthy choices, I narrowed down the differences between yoga and going to the gym as a college student and how that helps with my daily routine throughout the year.

As a middle schooler, my aunt was very fond of yoga, so naturally, I learned a lot of different yoga exercises from her. Yoga is an exercise for mental AND physical health. It benefits the mind, the body, and the soul. Doing certain exercises/positions of yoga can also help improve focus and keep a calm and steady state-of-mind. Personally, I use yoga as a stress reliever. Although some positions might be tricky, in my opinion, the easiest and my personal favorite is the sun salutation. The sun salutation is a series of 12 different positions that is mostly done at sunrise or sunset. Since waking up early in the morning is a challenge for me, I like to keep aside at least 15 minutes of my time and dedicate doing 2-3 reps of the sun salutation. Another important aspect to yoga is meditation. This is probably the most popular yoga exercise among most people. Meditation is a state of mind where you are able to keep focus on just your breathing. It is important to be in quiet place and try not to let other thoughts in your mind go rogue. The only way meditation works is if you can ONLY focus on your breathing. I find myself meditating either after a very stressful day or even while I'm stressed. It helps me bring back my focus and go back to completing my task in an efficient way. To add more ambiance, I like to put on my essential oil diffusers (my personal favorites are lavender and eucalyptus).

To be honest, I really didn't start going to the gym until I started college. I noticed that up until going to college, I never really met people who went to the gym that didn't want to lose weight or gain muscle. And because of that, my thoughts about going to the gym were so narrow. Then, I started to realize that going to the gym isn't just about that; it's about feeling healthy and being active so that your brain and body active throughout the day. Everyone has a different purpose of working out. It's a stereotype to think that going to the gym is simply to lose weight. Personally, I'm not a hardcore gym person. I don't do weights or indulge myself in intense workouts. But at least 2-3 times a week, I usually like to run a mile on the treadmill and do some abs workout that I find on Pinterest boards. With gym in my daily routine, I realize that I don't get as tired as I used to be. I feel more energized and ready to get to work. I just feel more active and enthusiastic to carry on the rest of my day. I'll have to admit, it took a lot of time to find motivation and make the time to go the gym, but once set some goals and make it a priority through.

After almost a year of balancing yoga and gym into my daily life in college, I came to the realization that I need both activities in order to go about the rest of my day. Yoga gives me the flexibility and the calmness I need for my mental health and going to the gym physically gives me a healthy and strong body. Although, I don't consider myself a "hardcore" yogist or a gymmer, I like having a little bit of both to balance out my mental and physical health.



Gargi Panigrahi is a junior at Virginia Commonwealth University, majoring in Biology and minoring in Statistics and Chemistry. Her hobbies include bullet journaling, writing and blogging. At university, she is deeply involved in her Pediatric Oncology club. In the future, she wants to be in the Public Health field because she strongly believes in promoting healthy habits and giving others the opportunity around the world to have accessible healthcare.

No One is Ever a Label

Piyush Das

Imagine there is a kid named Terrance who has a Korean ethnicity. Some kids in school unfortunately continue to bully him nearly all the time because he is Korean. They call him small eyes and they ask him when is he going to wash their clothes. This type of bullying for Terrance would go on for months. One day these bullies teamed up with some other kids and they all started to call him names. They told him your race is full of people who wash other people's clothes and they continued to taunt him because of his eyes like before during all of those treacherous months. Terrance then asked them a question which really made them think about their actions. Terrance exclaimed, "I'm not even Korean. That's just a label. We are all made out of the same material cells. Your cells and my cells aren't very different. We are all the same, we are all human beings. So why do you keep calling me these labels? Should all of us just rip off these so called labels?" After Terrance asked them these tough questions those kids stopped bothering him. The main question in mind is "Why do we have labels?"

Really why do we have labels? I remember once watching a Prince Ea video about who we really are. He states, "human beings are just like lightbulbs. They come in all different shapes and sizes, but they all have the same energy. And that energy has no shape, size and color; it is all the same. We are all the same." And labeling is not necessarily have to do with race. Labels come in a variety of forms. People call each other ugly, loser, worthless, useless, stupid, idiot, fat, skinny, and bony. Why do we say these awful words to each other? How can one human being call each other these terrible things if we are really all the same? Think about it doesn't matter who a person is that one is human being just like everyone else. Yes, we all come from different places around the world, but honestly, it's meaningless. We are all living breathing human beings. Rip the labels off. Those labels are not who we are. Politicians fail to realize using their pointless arguments about race. They keep mentioning race, but the word race should be thrown out. The words like loser, ugly and all those ugly labeling words should be removed from the dictionary because everyone has potential to excel in life and nobody is ugly skin deep. People much rather value character verses labels and looks. Keep this in mind that we are equal the same no one is different inside we are all made of the same materials and our personalities is what makes us unique.

What motivated me to write this article?

Hmm... This must be the reaction of someone reading this before getting to this part. It's because of my personal experience. When I was in elementary school people always labeled me. They told me I was a stupid Indian and my RACE was inferior. I always felt that my RACE defined who I was. But, the word race truly is meaningless. And, really it wasn't only race. Throughout elementary school people labeled me as a loser and ugly and they used these labels to continue through bully me and try to make me feel inferior. And I felt like those labels were who I was. When high school started, the bullying continued. It had ended for two year 7th and 8th, but came back in 9th. I began to feel those labels were sticking with me and I began to embrace them. But, my advice is to anyone who has been labeled constantly those labels are fake, rip them off as they do not define who you are.

LABELS ARE JUST LABELS. YOU ARE ANYTHING GREATER THAN A LABEL.



Piyush Das is a sophomore in Randolph High School. Piyush is a first degree black belt. He participates in Speech & Debate Club and Helping Hands Club. He enjoys swimming and playing basketball. When he is not studying, he loves to play Xbox.

My impressions of Jagannath Temple: A conversation with my *Bapo*

Aneesha Panigrahi

Let me be honest here, I have never been to the Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha, India. I had heard a lot about the temple and the three deities from my parents, my grandparents, friends, family, and during the annual Ratha Jatra (chariot festival) at the Gandhi Mandir in Wayne, NJ. I never really thought about the significance of the temple or the three famous deities that reside there. At least, not until my father asked me about the temple during a conversation that I was having with him and my grandfather (Dr. Sarat Chandra Panigrahi). I share my impressions of the temple and the lord through a conversation between me and my grandfather (who I affectionately call “*Bapo*”).

Me: What does Jagannath mean?

Bapo: Jagannath means lord of the universe. Jaga means the universe in Odia. Nath means the lord.

Me: So, lord Jagannath is the god of everything, the source of everything?

Bapo: Yes.

Me: What does Jagannath represent?

Bapo: As the lord of the universe, he is supposed to be present everywhere and he is looking over all the things that are happening in the universe. That’s why he is black in color as he absorbs and observes everything. His eyes are big and loud and he doesn’t have eyebrows or eyelids, so he watches everything day and night. He doesn’t have arms and legs as a deity, because all our arms and legs are just extensions of his own arms and legs. We are all a part of him.

Me: Have you ever been to Jagannath temple in Puri?

Bapo: Yes, many times. We go there more than once a month now that we live in Bhubaneswar.

Me: Wow. Do you remember the first time you went there?

Bapo: Yes. The first time I went there, I was 7 or 8 years old. I visited with my parents.

Me: Wait, daddy told me the same thing. His first visit was with you as a 7 or 8-year-old as well.

Bapo: I believe your daddy visited the temple the first time when he was much younger. Same maybe the case with me. He and I only remember our respective visits after we turned 7!

Me: Can you describe the temple features?

Bapo: It is a tall structure made of stone. It feels like there are three or four temples one inside another and on top of each other. But, really the temple consists of four structures called (a) the Vimana or Bada Deula (sanctum sanctorum) (b) the Jagamohan or Mukhasala (the porch), (c) the Natamandir (the audience hall) and (d) the Bhogamandap (the hall for residuary offerings) built in a row in an axial alignment in east-west direction. The temples face east.

Me: Sounds like pretty interesting geometry of buildings.

Bapo: Yes, it’s a staircase made of buildings.

Me: What stories have you heard about the temple?

Bapo: There are a series of stories about the temple and about how it was built. There are many versions of the legend of Lord Jagannath. Some say that Lord Jagannath was formed out of a former deity Nila Madhava while others believe

that the idol of Lord Jagannath was formed by the mortal remains of Lord Krishna after he died. According to the popular myths, the mortal remains of Lord Krishna took the form of wood and came floating through the sea. A man named Jara Savara took the wooden plank and started worshipping it. When king Indradyumna came to know about it, he planned to carve idols out of the plank. Soon two idol makers appeared before him and took the work on one condition that no one would see the idols until they are completely made. So, the two artists started the work in a closed room. These artists were actually Lord Vishnu and Vishwakarma in disguise. No one was to observe or open the door to the room where they would be working. One day, the queen could not hear any sound from the room where the idol was being made. This continued for a week. Out of curiosity, the queen asked the king to open the door. Once the king opened the door, the idol makers vanished as per the condition and the idols remained incomplete. Thus, the idols of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra do not have any limbs.

Me: This story is more mysterious than any mystery novel I have ever read so far.

Bapo: There is more. It is said that the idols of the Jagannath temple in Puri were established by Lord Brahma. He presided over all the religious rituals conducted before placing the idols in the temple. The deities are made of wood and these wood statues are replaced every 12 years. New statues are installed. There is a story there too. Inside the statue is this thing called Brahma. The Brahma represents the soul. The outer body is replaced but the Brahma stays the same. This is the reincarnation theory in Hinduism. This is what happens when the body disintegrates, but the soul is transformed.

Me: This is like the circle of life!

Bapo: Yes. It is.

Me: Thank you Bapo for sharing your thoughts and stories.

I realized during my conversation that the temple is much more than a place (of worship or tourism). The legend and stories surrounding the temple and Lord Jagannath teach us about life. They teach us about the role of soul and the human life cycle. The stories also teach us about the importance of effort, hope, and belief in life. The temple was built, buried, rediscovered through generations due to the effort of one pioneer and many others. The temple provides hope to those that journey through time to visit it or read about it. I may not have visited the temple or seen the real deity, but my belief is stronger than ever before. I hope you feel the same. Thank you Bapo once again.



Aneesha Panigrahi is 11 years old and is in 6th grade at Randolph Middle School. She loves dancing (Bharatanatyam, Lyrical, Musical Theater), Karate and Music. She is aspiring to be a black-belt who ultimately will find a cure for cancer (or some other malady affecting us!). She is a loving sister to Aarush Panigrahi, daughter of Saswati Mahapatra and Anshuman Panigrahi, and grand-daughter to Indira Panigrahi and Dr. Sarat Chandra Panigrahi.

ଆମେରିକା ରେ ଦଶହରା

ଇନ୍ଦିରା ପାଣିଗ୍ରାହୀ

ଗତ ୧୮ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ବହୁବାର ଆମେରିକା ଆସିଛି ବୁଲିଛି, ଫେରିଯାଇଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ ୨୦୧୮ ର ସ୍ମୃତି ମନରେ ପ୍ରଭାବ ଏପରି ପକାଇଲା ନ ଲେଖି ରହି ପାରୁନି । ବହୁତ ଲୋକ କି ମନରେ ଧାରଣା ପାଶ୍ଚାତ୍ୟ ଦେଶ ରେ ପୂଜା, ପାଠ, ସଂସ୍କାର ଚିକିତ୍ସା କମ୍ ମାତ୍ରାରେ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏଥର ଆମେରିକା ଆସି ଯାହା ଅନୁଭବ କଲି ସେ ସବୁ ଧାରଣା ଭୁଲ୍ ।

ଜୁନ ୧୮ ରେ Newark ରେ ଓହ୍ଲାଇଲା ବେଳେ ଜାଣି ନ ଥିଲି, ଏଥର ମହାଳୟା, ଦଶହରା, ଗଣେଷ ପୂଜା, ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ଏମିତି ଆହୁରି ଅନେକ ପୂଜା ରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ମିଳିବ । କୌଣସି କାରଣ ବଶତଃ ଅଧିକା ୨ ମାସ ରହିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଲା । ମୁଁ ଚିକିତ୍ସା ଧର୍ମ ଭୀରୁ, ତେଣୁ ମନରେ ତର ଆସିବା ସ୍ୱାଭାବିକ । ସବୁ ଠାରୁ ବଡ଼ ହେଲା ପିତୃ ପକ୍ଷ ଶ୍ରାଦ୍ଧ କଥା । ଏଠାରେ ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ ମିଳିବେ କି ନାହିଁ । ଘରକୁ ଆସି ଠିକ୍ ଠିକ୍ ପିଣ୍ଡ ପକେଇବେ କି ନାହିଁ, ଏମିତି ଅନେକ କିଛି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ମନକୁ ଦୋହଲେଇ ଚାଲିଥିଲା । ତେବେ କେବଳ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ କୁ ହିଁ ଭରସା କରି ଭାରୁଥିଲି ପ୍ରଭୁ ତୁମର ଇଚ୍ଛା ।

ପୁଅର ଜଣେ ସାଙ୍ଗ ଜଣେ ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ କୁ ପଠେଇ ଦେଲେ ଶ୍ରାଦ୍ଧ ପୂର୍ବରୁ, ସେ ଫୋନ ରେ କଥା ହୋଇ ସବୁ ଜିନିଷ ଧରି ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ ଶ୍ରାଦ୍ଧ ଦିନ ଏବଂ ସବୁ ନୀତି ନିୟମ ରେ ଏତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ତର୍ପଣ, ଶ୍ରାଦ୍ଧ ଆଦି କରି ଦେଲେ ମନ କୁ ପାଇଗଲା । ଘରେ ସତ୍ୟ ନାରାୟଣ ପୂଜା କରିବାକୁ ବହୁତ ଦିନ ରୁ ଭାରୁ ଥିଲି, ରାତିରେ ହଠାତ୍ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖିଲି ମୁଁ ଶିରିଣୀ ପ୍ରସାଦ ଖାଇଛି, ହଠାତ୍ ନିଦ ଭାଙ୍ଗିଗଲା । ସକାଳୁ ଡରି ଡରି ସ୍ନାନୀକୁ କହିଲି କାଲେ ରାଗିବେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେମିତି କିଛି ହେଲାନି, ସେ ବି ରାଜି ହୋଇ ଗଲେ, ପୁଅ କୁ କହିଲେ । ମୁଁ ଜାଣି ନ ଥିଲି ଏଠାରେ ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ୨ ମାସ ଆଗରୁ book କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିଥାଏ, ତେଣୁ ଘରକୁ ଆସି ପୂଜା କିଏ କରିବ? ଏତେ କମ୍ ସମୟ ରେ? ଯାହା ହେଉ ସେଇ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ କି କୃପାରୁ ଜଣେ ପୁରୋହିତ ନିୟୁତ୍ ପାଖରୁ ଆସିବାକୁ ରାଜି ହୋଇଗଲେ, ଆଉ ଆସିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ । ପୂଜା ମଧ୍ୟ ଏତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାବରେ କାଲେ ମତେ ଲାଗିଲା ନାହିଁ ମୁଁ ଭାରତରେ ଅଛି ନ ଆମେରିକା ରେ । ମୋର ଭୟ ଥିଲା ପୂଜାରେ ଏତେ ତୁଳସୀ କେଉଁଠୁ ଯୋଗାଡ଼ କରିବି କାରଣ ଅଣ୍ଡା ଯୋଗୁଁ ତୁଳସୀ ଗଛ ବଢ଼ି ବି ପାରୁନି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସିଏ ନିଜେ ହଜାରେ ପାଖାପାଖି ତୁଳସୀ ପତ୍ର ଧରି ଆସିଥିଲେ । ନ ଦେଖିଲେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରି ହେବନି । ଆଉ ପୂଜା ମଧ୍ୟ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ମନ ପସନ୍ଦର କରି ଦେଇଗଲେ ।

ମହାଳୟା ପରେ ଆସିଲା ଦଶହରା । ସେଥିରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ମାଆର କୃପାରୁ ଅଷ୍ଟମୀ, ନବମୀ ର ଅଞ୍ଜଳୀ, ସନ୍ଧିପୂଜା, ନବମୀ ର ପ୍ରସାଦ ସବୁ ପାଇଲି । ଜୀବନରେ କେବେ ଆମେରିକାରେ ଗଣେଷ ପୂଜା, ଜନ୍ମାଷ୍ଟମୀ, ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ଆଦି ରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇ ଏତେ ସବୁ ଖୁସି ପାଇବି ବୋଲି ଆଶା ହିଁ କରି ନ ଥିଲି ।

"ଆନନ୍ଦ" ମନ୍ଦିରରେ ସିନ୍ଦୁର ଖେଳ ସମୟରେ ଢୋଲ ର ଶବ୍ଦ ଓ ପରିବେଶ ଏତେ ମଧୁର ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା ଯେ ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲା ସାକ୍ଷାତ୍ ଦୁର୍ଗା ମାଆ ଆବିର୍ଭାବ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । କ୍ଷଣିକ ପାଇଁ ନିଜକୁ ଭୁଲି ଯାଇଥିଲି କହିଲେ ଚଲେ । ସାତ, ସମୁଦ୍ର ତେର ନଈ ପାର ହୋଇ ବିଦେଶ ଭୂମିରେ ମୁଁ ସିନ୍ଦୁର ଖେଳୁଛି କିଛି ବି ଫରକ୍ ଅନୁଭବ କରିନି । ଦେଶରେ ଥିଲାବେଳେ ଯେମିତି ଉପଭୋଗ କରୁଥିଲୁ ଏଠାରେ ବି ସେଇ ଏକା ଅନୁଭୂତି ତେଣୁ ତତ୍ପାତ୍ କେଉଁଠି?

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରେ ଥିଲା ବେଳେ ଯେମିତି ଆମେ ମିଶନ୍ ଯାଉ, ସତସଙ୍ଗ ରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇ ଆନନ୍ଦ ପାଉ, ଏଠାରେ ବି ପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ କୃପାରୁ ଠିକ୍ ଆମ ମିଶନ୍ରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଯାଇ ପାରିଲୁ । ପେନ୍ସିଲଭେନିଆ ରେ ଥିବା ଆର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସମାଜ ଅର୍ଗ ବିଦ୍ୟା ଗୁରୁକୁଳ ରେ ଗୀତା ଜ୍ଞାନ ଯଜ୍ଞ ରେ ସମ୍ମିଳିତ ହେବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ଲାଭ କରିଥିଲୁ । ଗୋଟିଏ କଥା ସ୍ମାମିନୀ କ୍ଷର "ଯେଉଁଠି କୁ ଯାଅ ନା କାହିଁକି, ସବୁ ତ ସେଇ ଏକା ପରି ବୃକ୍ଷ ଲତା, ନଦୀ, ଝରଣା, ଆକାଶ, ସମୁଦ୍ର, ପାହାଡ଼ ଆଦି ଦେଖିବାକୁ ମିଳିବ"

ଆଖି ବୁଜି ଚିନ୍ତା କଲେ ଅନୁଭବ ହୁଏ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ କି ସତ୍ୟ ସବୁଠି ଏକା ଭାବରେ ବିଦ୍ୟମାନ । ସେ ପୂର୍ବ ହେଉ ଅବା ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଜଗତ ହେଉ । ସବୁ ଠାରୁ ବେଶୀ ଭଲ ଲାଗିଥିଲା ମୋ ନାତି ଆରୁଷ, ନାତୁଣୀ ଅନିସା ସହ ଦଶହରା କୁମାର ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣମୀ ପୂଜା କରିବା ର ଆନନ୍ଦ, ଯାହା ଦୀର୍ଘ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ମୁଁ ପାଇଁ ପାରି ନ ଥିଲି । ଏ ସବୁ ଆନନ୍ଦ ପଛ ରେ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଯାହାକୁ ନିମିତ୍ତ କରି ପଠାଇ ଥିଲେ ସେ ହେଲା ମୋ ପୁଅ ଅଂଶୁମାନ ଓ ବୋହୁ ଶାଶୁତୀ, ଫେରିଲା ବେଳେ ଏତିକି କାମନା କରୁଛି "ସର୍ବେ ଭବତୁ ସୁଖିନଃ" । "ସର୍ବେ ସତୁ ନିରାମୟଃ" ।



Mrs Indira Panigrahi describes herself as wife of IIT Kharagpur professor, Dr. Sarat Chandra Panigrahi, and mother of three sons (two sons are also IIT Kharagpur Alumni). She is an economics graduate from Women’s College, Berhampur, she started the first play school at IIT Kharagpur in 1990 and also claims to know all Odia graduates from IIT Kharagpur all the way back to 1970 when Dr. Panigrahi was a young graduate and she was a young bride.



Saraswati Puja 2018

ଭିଗା ମାଟି

ମାନସ ରଞ୍ଜନ ସ୍ୱାଇଁ

ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ଫୋନର ରିସିଭର କ୍ରେଡଲରେ ରଖି ଖଟ ଉପରେ ବସି ପଡ଼ିଲେ । ସାନ ପୁଅ ରମେଶ ଆମେରିକାରୁ ଫୋନ କରିଥିଲା । ଆଜି ବି ବହୁତ ବିରକ୍ତି ହେଲା । ତାର ଏକା ଜିଦି ଦୁର୍ଗା ପୂଜାରେ ଆସିବ, ଆଉ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ ସବୁ ଦିନ ଲାଗି ଆମେରିକା ନେଇ ଯିବ । ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ମନା କଲେ - ଗାଁ ଘର ଛାଡ଼ି କୁଆଡ଼େ ଯିବେନି । ରମେଶ ବି ରାଗିକି କହିଲା ଗାଁ ଘରକୁ ବିକିଦେବ ବୋଲି, "ମୁଁ ବୁଝି ପାରୁନି ତୁ ଏତେ ଅସୁବିଧାରେ ଗାଁରେ କାହିଁକି ଏକୁଟିଆ ରହିବୁ?"

ଏଇ ଯୁକ୍ତି କିଛି ନୁଆ ନୁହେଁ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀଙ୍କ ଲାଗି, ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଚାଲିଯିବା ପରେ, ବଡ଼ ପୁଅ ସୁରେଶ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଏଇ ଯୁକ୍ତି ଦେଖାଇ ବାଧ୍ୟ କରି ବାଙ୍ଗାଲୋର ନେଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା । ବାଙ୍ଗାଲୋରରେ ଜୀବନଟା ପୁରା ଭିନ୍ନ, ସମସ୍ତେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଥିଲାବେଳେ, ତାଙ୍କୁ ଲାଗେ ଯେମିତି ସମୟ ଅଟକି ଯାଇଛି । ସୁରେଶ ଓ ବୋହୁ, ଦୁଇ ଜଣ ଯାକ ଚାକିରୀ କରନ୍ତି, ତାଙ୍କର ଟିକେ ବି ପୁରସ୍କୃତ ନଥାଏ । ବୋହୁ ଭୋର ୬:୩୦ରୁ ଉଠି ଚା ଓ ଜଳଖିଆ ତିଆରି କରେ, ରୋହନ ଓ ସୋହନଙ୍କୁ ସ୍କୁଲ ଲାଗି ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରାଏ । ନିଜେ ଗାଧୋଇ ଖାଇ ବାହାରି ଯାଏ । ସୁରେଶ ୭ଟାରେ ଉଠି ୭:୩୦ରେ ଘରୁ ବାହାରି ଯାଏ । ନାତି ଦୁଇ ଜଣ ୮ଟାରେ ସ୍କୁଲ ବାହାରି ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ତା ପରେ ଘର ଖାଲି । ଦିନ ସାରା ଏକୁଟିଆ ଘରେ ବସି ବସି ସେ ରୁଣ୍ଡି ହେଇ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । କେତେ ବା ଚିତ୍ତି ଦେଖିବେ?

ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ୬ଟାରେ ଗୋଟେ ଚାକରାଣୀ ଘର ସଫା ଆଉ ରୋଷେଇ କରିବାକୁ ଆସେ । ଚାକରାଣୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବୁଝି ପାରେନି କି ସେ ହିନ୍ଦୀ କହି ପାରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଖଣ୍ଡି ହିନ୍ଦୀ ଓ ଠାରରେ ଯାହା କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା । ଚାକରାଣୀ ବି ଜଳଦି ଜଳଦି କାମ ସାରି ଘଣ୍ଟେ ଭିତରେ ଚାଲିଯାଏ । ବୋହୁ ଓ ପିଲାମାନେ ରାତି ୯:୩୦ରେ ଶୋଇ ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ସୁରେଶର କିଛି ଠିକ ଠିକଣା ନ ଥାଏ - କୋଉ ଦିନ ରାତି ୮ରେ ଆସେ ତ ଆଉ କୋଉ ଦିନ ରାତି ବାରଟା ନ ହେଲେ ଗୋଟେ । ଛୁଟିଦିନେ ଘରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଥିଲେ ବି, ନିଜ ନିଜ କାମରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ । କିଏ ଚିତ୍ତି ଦେଖେ ତ କିଏ ଲାପଟପରେ କାନରେ ତାର ଲଗେଇକି ଶୁଣୁଥାଏ । କିଛି ନହେଲେ ମୋବାଇଲ ଫୋନ ଧରି ବାୟା'ଙ୍କ ପରି ଏକ ଲୟରେ କ'ଣ ସବୁ ଦେଖୁଥା'ନ୍ତି ଆଉ ହସୁଥା'ନ୍ତି ।

ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀଙ୍କ ଲାଗି ଆଉ ଗୋଟିଏ ବଡ଼ ଅସୁବିଧା ଥିଲା ବାଙ୍ଗାଲୋରର ଖାଦ୍ୟ - ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ ଭଳିଆ ସେଠାରେ କେହି ଭାତ, ଡାଲମା, ଶାଗ, ସବୁଜା ଖାଆନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ସକାଳୁ ଚିନିଦିଆ ମକାର ଚୁଡ଼ା କ୍ଷୀରରେ ଗୋଳେଇ କି ଖାଆନ୍ତି, ଖରାବେଳ ଲାଗି ବୋହୁ ବାସି ପରଟା ଆଉ ବାସି ତରକାରୀ ନେଇ ଯାଏ, ସେ ବି ସେଇଆ ଖାଆନ୍ତି । ପିଲା ମାନେ ମ୍ୟାଗି କି ପୁରଦିଆ ପାଉଁରୁଟି ସ୍କୁଲକୁ ନିଅନ୍ତି । ସୁରେଶ ବିଚରା ଖରାବେଳେ କ୍ୟାଞ୍ଜିନରେ ଖାଏ । ରାତିରେ ଚାକରାଣୀ କରିଥିବା ପରଟା ଆଉ ଗୋଟେ ତରକାରୀ । ସେ ତରକାରୀ କାହାକୁ ବି ଭଲ ଲାଗେନାହିଁ ବୋଧେ, ପ୍ରାୟ ସମୟ ପାଖ ହୋଟେଲରୁ ତରକାରୀ କି କୁକୁଡ଼ା ମାଂସ ମଗେଇକି ଆଣନ୍ତି ।

ଶୁକ୍ରବାର ଦିନ ରାତିରେ, ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ଭାବେ ପିଜ୍ଜା ଗୋଟେ ମଗାଯାଏ । ତିନି କୋଣିଆ ପାଉଁରୁଟି ଉପରେ ପରସ୍ତେ ଚମାଟ ସସ୍ ଲାଗିଥିବ, ତା ଉପରେ ଧଳା ରଙ୍ଗର ଗୋଟେ ପରସ୍ତ, ଓ କିଛି ଛୋଟ ଛୋଟ ଖଣ୍ଡ କଟା ପରିବା - ସେ ଥରେ ଖଣ୍ଡେ ଖାଇଥିଲେ, ତାଙ୍କୁ କେମିତି ଗୋଟେ ଗଣ୍ଡେଇଲା । ତାକୁ ଯେ ନାତି ଦୁଇଟା କେମିତି ଏତେ ଖୁସିରେ ଖାଆନ୍ତି, ସେ ବୁଝି ପାରନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ଥରେ ସୁରେଶକୁ ପଚାରିଥିଲେ, ସେ ଧଳା ପରସ୍ତଟା କ'ଣ ବୋଲି, ସେ ହସିକି କହିଲା, "ମା, ସେଇଟା 'ଚିଜ୍' - କ୍ଷୀରରୁ ତିଆରି" । ଗାଁରେ ୨ଟା ଗାଈ ରଖୁଥିଲେ ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ । ଗାଈଙ୍କ ସବୁ କାମ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ତୁଲାନ୍ତି, ଘରେ ସବୁ ବେଳେ କ୍ଷୀର, ଦହି, ଛେନା, ରାବିଡ଼ି ଓ ଘିଅ ଥାଏ । ସେ ତ କେବେ ଏ ଭଳି 'ଚିଜ୍' ଦେଖିନାହାନ୍ତି । ରୋହନ ଓ ସୋହନ ଦୁଇଜଣ ଯାକ ପାଟିରେ ପିଜ୍ଜାକୁ ଠୁସି, ମୁରୁକି ମୁରୁକି ହସୁଥିଲେ ।

ବାଙ୍ଗାଲୋରରେ କଷ୍ଟେ ମଷ୍ଟେ ୨ ମାସ ରହିଲା ପରେ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ଜିଦି ଧରିଲେ ଗାଁକୁ ଫେରିଯିବେ ବୋଲି । ଆସିଲାବେଳେ ପଡ଼ିଶାଘର ଫକୀରକୁ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ଦେଇ ଆସିଥିଲେ । ଫକୀରର ବାପା ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଦାଦା-ପୁଅ ଭାଇ । ପାଠ ନହେବାରୁ, ଯୁକ୍ତ ଦୁଇ ପରେ

ଗାଁରେ ଗୋଟେ ସିମେଣ୍ଟ ଦୋକାନ ଦେଇଛି । ଟିକେ ଅଳସୁଆ ହେଲେ ବି ଫକୀର ବହୁତ ବିଶ୍ୱସ୍ତ । ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ ଥିଲାବେଳେ ଫକୀର ତାଙ୍କୁ ବହୁତ ମାନେ, ଯାହା କହିଲେ କରେ ।

ଫକୀରଟା ଟିକେ ଅଳସୁଆ, ଠିକ ଭାବେ ପାଣି ଦେଉଥିବ କି ନାହିଁ କେଜାଣି? ବାରିରେ ସବୁ ଗଛ ନଷ୍ଟ ହେଇ ଯିବେଣି । ଘରେ ସବୁ ଧୂଳି ପଶି ଯାଇଥିବ । ସୁରେଶ ଯେତେ ବୁଝେଇଲେ ବି ସେ ମାନିବାକୁ ନାଉଡ଼ । କାନ୍ଦିବା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ କଥା ଗଲା । ସୁରେଶର ତ ଛୁଟି ନଥିଲା, ବାଧହେଇ ବୋହୂ ପ୍ଲେନରେ ଆଣି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ବଡ଼ ଝିଅ ସୁରଭି ଘରେ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେଇଗଲା । ଗୋଟେ ଦିନ ପରେ, କ୍ୱାଇଁ ଅଭୟ ତାଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଗାଁରେ ଛାଡ଼ି ଆସିଲେ ।

ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ କାନ୍ଧ ଘଣ୍ଟାକୁ ଦେଖିଲେ, ୭:୩୦ ହେବ । ଚିତ୍ତୁ ଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଆସିନି । ସକାଳୁ ସକାଳୁ ଦୁଇଟା ଫୁଲ ତୋଳି ଦେଇ ଯାଏ ତାଙ୍କ ପୂଜା ଲାଗି । ଆଜି ଏତେ ଡେରି? ବେଶୀ ଡେରି ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କ ଔଷଧ ଖାଇବା ସମୟ ଗଢ଼ିଯିବ । ଫକୀର ଯେମିତି, ତା ପୁଅ ଚିତ୍ତୁ ବି ସେମିତି, କୌଣସି କଥାକୁ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । 'ଦେଖେ କୁଆଡେ ଗଲା' - ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ବାହାରିଲେ ଚିତ୍ତୁ କୁ ଖୋଜିବା ଲାଗି ।

ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ଦାଣ୍ଡ କବାଟ ଖୋଲି ବାହାରକୁ ବାହାରିଲେ, ଦାଣ୍ଡପିଣ୍ଡାରେ ସିମେଣ୍ଟରେ ଲାଗିଥିବ ଶାଟା ଚାରଣି (ପଚିଶ ପଇସା) ପାଖରେ ହଠାତ ଅଟକି ଗଲେ । ପିଣ୍ଡାଟା ସିମେଣ୍ଟ ହେଲାବେଳେ, ତାଙ୍କ ପାଖରୁ ଅଲିକରି ଶାଟା ଚାରଣି ନେଇଥିଲା ରମେଶ । ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରେ ଓଦା ସିମେଣ୍ଟରେ ସେ ଶାଟା ଖଞ୍ଜି ଦେଇଥିଲା ତିନି ଭାଇ ଭଉଣୀଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତୀକ ହିସାବରେ । ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ ତା ପରଦିନ ଚାରଣି ତିନୋଟି ଦେଖି ଖୁବ ବିରକ୍ତ ହେଲେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେଥିକୁ ଭ୍ରାନ୍ତ୍ୟପ ନଥିଲା ରମେଶର ।

ତିନି ପୁଅ-ଝିଅଙ୍କ ଭିତରୁ, ରମେଶ ଯେ ତାଙ୍କର ସବୁଠୁ ଗେହ୍ଲା, ଏ କଥା କାହାକୁ ଅଛପା ନଥିଲା । ସେ ସବୁବେଳେ ରମେଶର ପକ୍ଷ ନିଅନ୍ତି । ଲୁଚେଇ କି ରମେଶକୁ ଅଧିକା ପକେଟ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ଦିଅନ୍ତି, ତା ମନ ପସନ୍ଦର ଖାଦ୍ୟ ତିଆରି କରନ୍ତି, ଆତ୍ମ କାଟିଲେ ନିଜ ଭାଗରୁ ୨ ଖଣ୍ଡ କାଢ଼ି ତା ଲାଗି ଅଲଗା ରଖନ୍ତି । ସୁରଭି ତାଙ୍କୁ ଚିତାଏ - "ତୋର ତ ଗୋଟିଏ ବୋଲି ପୁଅ!" । ସୁରେଶ ବି ମନେ ମନେ ରାଗେ, କିନ୍ତୁ କିଛି କୁହେନି - ସେ ବି ରମେଶ କୁ ବହୁତ ଭଲ ପାଏ । ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ ବଞ୍ଚିଥିଲା ବେଳେ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ କେତେ ଥର ମନା କରିଛନ୍ତି - "ବୁଝିଲ, ତମେ ଅଧିକା ଗେହ୍ଲା କରି, ତାକୁ ନଷ୍ଟ କରିଦେବ" । ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ କିନ୍ତୁ କିଛି ଶୁଣନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ - 'କୋଳପୋଛା ପୁଅ ମୋର' ।

ସେ ଚାରଣି ଶାଟା ତାଙ୍କୁ ଅତୀତକୁ ଟାଣି ନେଇଥିଲା, ମନ ଭିତରେ ଗୁଞ୍ଜି ହେଇଥିବା ସ୍ମୃତି ଭିତରକୁ । ସମୟର ସୁଅରେ ସବୁ ବଦଳି ଯାଇଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ ଗତ କାଳି ଭଳି ତାଙ୍କର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ମନେଅଛି, ସେ ଯେବେ ବାହାହୋଇ ଏ ଘରକୁ ଆସିଥିଲେ, ଏଇ ପିଣ୍ଡାଟା ମାଟିର ଥିଲା, ତାଳ ଛପର ଘର । ତାଙ୍କ ପରିବାର ବହୁତ ବଡ଼ ଥିଲା - ଶାଶୁ, ଶଶୁର, ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ଦିଅର, ୨ ଜଣ ନଣନ୍ଦ, ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ ଆଉ ସେ ନିଜେ । ୯ ଜଣଙ୍କ ଲାଗି ରୋଷେଇବାସ, ପାରାଲିସିସରେ ପଡ଼ିଥିବା ଶାଶୁଙ୍କ ସେବା ଓ ୨ଟା ଗାଈଙ୍କ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ । ମା ତାଙ୍କର ରାଜି ନ ଥିଲେ ଏ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବରେ - "ଏତେ ବଡ଼ ପରିବାରର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ମୋ ଝିଅ ପାରିବନି" । କିନ୍ତୁ ପଞ୍ଚମ ପାଠୁଆ ଝିଅ ଲାଗି, ପାଖ ଗାଁର ଶିକ୍ଷକ ବର ହାତରୁ ଛାଡ଼ିବା ପାଇଁ, ତାଙ୍କ ବାପା ବି ବିଲକୁଲ୍ ରାଜି ନଥିଲେ । ବାହାଘରର କିଛି ବର୍ଷ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ, ଫୁରସତ ନ ଥିଲା ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ତାଙ୍କ ପରିବାରର ସଦସ୍ୟ ବଦଳିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲେ - ପ୍ରଥମେ ଶାଶୁ ଚାଲିଗଲେ, ତା ପରେ ଶଶୁର । ଗୋଟି, ଗୋଟି ହୋଇ ନଣନ୍ଦ ମାନେ ବାହା ହୋଇଗଲେ, ଓ ଦିଅର ମାନେ ଦୂର ଜାଗାରେ ଚାକିରୀ ପାଇ, ନିଜ ନିଜ ସଂସାର ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ । ଯା ଭିତରେ ଗଳିପଡ଼ି, ପଶି ଆସିଥିଲେ ସୁରଭି, ସୁରେଶ ଓ ରମେଶ । ତାଙ୍କ ଜୀବନରେ ସ୍ଥାୟୀ ହୋଇ ରହିଥିଲେ କେବଳ ଜଣେ - ତାଙ୍କ ପୁତ୍ରପୁତ୍ରୀର ସାଥୀ, ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ ।

ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ସବୁ ସ୍ମୃତି ଏ ଘରେ ବନ୍ଦା ହେଇ ରହିଛି । ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ ଆତ୍ମ ଭଲ ଲାଗେ ବୋଲି, ବାହାଘରର ପର ବର୍ଷ ବାଡ଼ିରେ ୨ଟା ଆତ୍ମ ଗଛ ଲଗେଇ ଥିଲେ ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ । ଦରମା ପଇସାରୁ ସଂଚୟ କରି କରି, ତାଳ ଛପରରୁ ପକ୍ଷା ଘର କରି ଥିଲେ ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁ । ସୁରଭି ଜନ୍ମ ହେବା ପରେ ଗାଧୁଆଘର ଓ ପାଇଖାନା ବନେଇ ଥିଲେ । ବାଡ଼ି ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ଶାଶୁ, ଶଶୁର ଓ ସୁଦର୍ଶନ ବାବୁଙ୍କର ସମାଧି । ରମେଶ କଣ ବୁଝି ପାରିବ ତାଙ୍କ ମନର କଥା?

"ଜେଜେମା, ଜେଜେମା ! ହେଲ ଫୁଲ ନିଅ", ଚିତ୍ତର ଡାକରେ ଅତୀତରୁ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନକୁ ଫେରିଲେ ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ । ଚିତ୍ତ ରୋହନ ଠାରୁ ବର୍ଷେ ସାନ ହେବ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଏକଦମ ଧତଧାଡ଼ିଆ, ତାକୁ ଗୋଟେ ଜାଗାରେ କେବେ ଅୟ ଧରି ଠିଆ ହେବାର ଦେଖି ନାହାନ୍ତି ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ।

"କୋଉଠି ଥିଲୁ କିରେ, ଚଗଲା? କେତେ ଡେରି ହେଲାଣି ଦେଖୁଲୁ?" ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ମିଛରେ ରାଗିକି କହିଲେ । ସେ ସ୍ନେହରେ ଚିତ୍ତକୁ ଚଗଲା ବୋଲି ଡାକନ୍ତି ।

"ବୋଉ କହିଲା 'ରହ, ସଜନା ଛୁଇଁ ଆଉ ବାଜଗଣ ତୋଳିଲେ ଏକା ସଙ୍ଗେ ନେଇକି ଜେଜେମାକୁ ଦେବୁ' ", ଚିତ୍ତ ହାତରେ ଗୋଟେ ବ୍ୟାଗ ।

ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ହାତ ବଢେଇ ଫୁଲ ଚାଙ୍ଗୁଡ଼ିଗା ଚିତ୍ତ ହାତରୁ ନେଲେ, "ବ୍ୟାଗଟା ନେଇ ରୋଷେଇଘରେ ଥୋଇଦେ" ।

"ଜେଜେମା, ବାପା ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି ବନ୍ଧୁରୁ ମାଛ କିଣି । ବୋଉ କହିଛି ଖରାବେଳେ ଡରକାରୀ କରିବନି, ସେ ମାଛ ବେସର ପଠେଇବ" । ସୁଲୋଚନା ଦେବୀ ହସିଦେଇ ଫୁଲ ଧରି ଠାକୁରଘରକୁ ଚାଲିଲେ ।



Manas Ranjan Swain considers himself a free thinker and a skeptic. His two weaknesses are good food and movies. He is mildly allergic to exercise. He runs the site for www.helpnri.org



Hands-on learning... STEAM-ing it out at our STEAM Works Studios...

As parent as they see their cherished children blossom out into their own individual selves wish to see them with Sparks of Creativity. They would like to bolster their wards interest in the areas of Sciences, Maths & in Arts explorations. We would like these young adults STEAM it out through inspiring hands-on experimental learning.

The STEAM Works Studio as a Franchise chain was created by our own first generation Odiya entrepreneur “Shubhendu Das” with the support of a few like-minded friends in New Jersey. Incepted around the environs’ of the Princeton University and supported by many creative young brains from the ex-Princeton-ians, IIT-ians. Presently STEAM Works has grown to sparkling young minds in over 16 location primarily around in NY/NJ with branches around the Americas and globally as well.

Some of the key areas of focus with the STEAM Work proprietary Do-It-Yourself (DIY) enrichment include: Coding for Gesture Control Virtual Reality, Additive 3D printing and Laser-cut designs, Scuba and over-ground R/C Quadcopter engineering, Applied Rocket Sciences, Arduino based IoT Technology developments, Genetics Programming (iGEM), Applied Chemistry, Musical hackathons et. al.

Recently the Princeton Township awarded the STEAM Works Studio as one of the Top Innovators. In the past three years this organization is proud to have sparked scientific temper (appreciation of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics) in the over 30, 000 children across its different centers. It provides, local part-time employment opportunities for enthusiastic young minds. This summer STEAM Works performed hands-on-demos for Middle & High School children from 5 villages in the Jagatsinghpur area of Cuttack with able collaborations with faculties from National Institute of Sciences and Educational Research (NISER) and the Institute of Mathematics in Odisha.

Besides children STEAM Works encourages adults to get together and bring out the curious child within all of us by conducting local meet-ups and hack-a-thons. Franchise opportunities for Odiya entrepreneurs and venture-investors are warmly welcome.

Contact:

info@steamworksstudio.com

www.steamworkstudio.com

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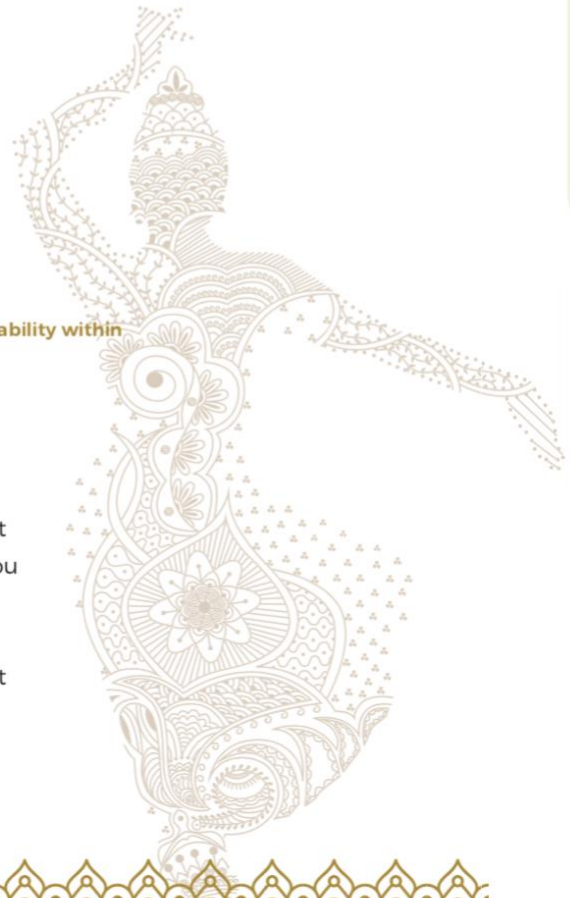
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A graduate of UMDNJ, Dr. Newman received his orthodontic training at Columbia University. He serves as chief orthodontist at the New Jersey Institute for Craniofacial Surgery at Saint Barnabas Medical Center and is part of an interdisciplinary team there that treats highly complex cases, including cleft lip and palate.

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