

# Vasant Valley *TODAY*

## ISSA GRADUATION

After two hours of excruciating anticipation, the whole school was finally seated in the senior school quadrangle, and the Farewell Class Act for the Batch of 2019 began. A tradition that has been an integral part of our school's graduation process for years, we have grown up being a part of that very audience, staring up at the stage with curious eyes, watching our seniors collect awards with wide smiles spread across their faces. Now, as it was finally our turn, the whole process seemed surreal, like a dream.

"God's gift to VVS" "The Thugs of Hindustan." "Will the Real Slim Shady please stand up." As the grade below us read out meticulously worded poems, we sat in our groups of friends, frantically trying to guess the recipient by the poem. We waited impatiently for our turn to go on stage, some of us running over our speeches in our heads, others praying they got an award they wanted. Ultimately, however, this tradition is a celebration. A celebration of 14 years of memories, some fond, others not so much, but memories we cherish, nonetheless. Hearty laughs could be heard throughout the school as we watched hilariously enacted skits, reminding us of some of our most memorable



moments. From lucky number 27, to a fairly scandalous love triangle, we fondly recounted the experiences that our batch is, unfortunately or not, known for. And we couldn't have been happier.

As the final awards were announced, and the students began to disperse, we took to the stage, dancing to the familiar tune of "Oh ho ho ho." We whipped out our phones (Oops!) and took pictures with the group of people we'd never forget. We ran to our classrooms, collecting the ever-so-awaited portfolios. Tears were shed, both happy and sad, as we were handed our nostalgic yearbooks (thanks Ishita!) before going home to suit up for the eventful night ahead.

### SCHOOL WATCH

#### Class 9 Speed Math January, 2019

Winners- Vedant Singh, Shyla Upadhyay and Saarthak Khosla  
Done Well- Samved Ojha and Ruhan Chopra

#### TISF

Arnav Sethi, Rithwick Sethi and Sachin Yuvraj Dinesh Babu of class 12 represented Vasant Valley School at the Thailand International Science Fair (TISF-2019) from 8th to 11th January 2019 at Mahidol Witayanusorn School (MWIT), Thailand. Their project "Apathy towards Fluoride Toxicity-Recipe for Disaster" brought to light the ill effects of fluoride toxicity by drinking water and targeted at designing a cost effective filter made from organic material to remove excess fluoride from water.

#### Impromptu Competition for Class 10

1st- Ayushmaan A. Kher  
2nd- Anshuman Singh  
3rd- Katyayani Jha and Arshya Gaur

We reached back to school at around 8pm, arriving in groups of friends, all buzzing with excitement. Three-piece suits, blazers, and colourful saris replaced the usual monotony of beige, maroon and black. As music drowned out the initial awkwardness, we took to the dance floor and, accompanied by the Batch of 2020, danced the night away. Tired from all the dancing, we gathered together to watch the batch movie- an amalgamation of our most emotional, awkward, and downright hilarious moments. On that reminiscent note, we left school for what felt like the last time, heading home (well, some of us at least), as adrenaline faded to fatigue.

If you've ever taken the time to observe our haphazard bunch of 91



odd people, you may have noticed that we are quite divided. Circles within circles, groups within groups, we have always felt like we lacked the unity that most classes have. However, despite our inherent divisions, we are a family. A family that fights, that hates, but a family we love, nevertheless.

**Sahil Armaan Kumar, 12**

## ISS BAR CONGRESS KI SARKAR

*From the eyes of a congress loyalist.*

We are approaching the general elections soon. The congress party is presenting a rousing rhetoric to make a comeback and turn around the NAMO government to NA—MO; the vernacular colloquial for the absence of the Bharatiya Janta Party.

The Bharatiya Janta Party's regime has brought forth many new reforms and policies, especially in the financial sector, one of them being the introduction of the Goods and Service tax (GST) that left many businesspersons suffering losses leaving them disheartened with this decision. When the taxes increase with no corresponding increase in government services and welfare activities, the government in turn needs to be voted out of power (source: INC website). Apart from GST, another ruling that disrupted the Indian economy was demonetization- an attempt to bring in black money into the formal economy and curtail tax evasion. However, the failure of demonetization caused economic distress amongst the informal economy including labourers, farmers and small traders and blue collar workers. We're all well aware of our sparkling, jet setting 'get away' industrialists.

The BJP Manifesto for the 2014 General Elections claims that "political stability, progress, and peace in the region are essential for South Asia's growth and development." Yet in the last four years, India's relationship with some of its neighbors has declined. Nepal and Sri Lanka were miffed with India in 2015 and soon later tensions arose between Bangladesh and India regarding the Rohingya refugee crisis. We believe that India's foreign policies have been great and its international positioning has been enhanced strategically but we need to amend our diplomatic ties with other southeastern countries to go on to be a super power.



We also believe that the security of the people during the current regime has left much to be desired. There have been cases of mob-lynching, protests, violence and mini spurs of riots as well. Joblessness and India's farmer crisis have further plummeted their mass appeal.

Launching a national campaign called Beti Bachao - Beti Padhao for saving the girl child and educating her was an optimistic move but in juxtaposition are the rising number of rape cases and the widespread net of sexual harassment at work.

Of course, highlighting the inadequacy of the ruling party isn't sufficient to garner votes for oneself. There needs to be creation of hope in the disillusioned masses and the Congress is leaving no stone unturned in this regard. Their Brahmastra has now been used with Priyanka Gandhi formally joining politics, representing the spirit of her grandmother. The younger brigade and savvy loyalists like Madhavrao Scindia, Sachin Pilot etc. have been galvanized and they are emphasizing on collaborative or coalition governance against a common political foe. The corporate honcho Nandan Nilekani has literally been made the 'adhaar' of the south India campaign. The congress is all guns blazing with their take on the hackability of the EVM machines. On the whole, may the hand of the voter be divinely guided!

Daksayani Chandra, 9

## BJP LAYEGI VIKAS KI LEHER

### HAR GAON, HAR SHEHER

*From the eyes of a BJP loyalist.*



The Bharatiya Janta Party has had a very strong and prominent leader this term. Narendra Modi ji has done a great job in delivering on his promises, something we haven't witnessed a leader do in a long, long time in this country. Bharatiya Janta Party has worked towards pushing the envelope in multiple aspects, succeeding in taking many daring steps which the Congress and other parties

have been too scared to take in the past. They have done what others could not do and so they truly deserve to win this year's polls.

We're all aware of the rulings that ordered demonetization and the Goods and Service Tax. The introduction of GST has led to the transformation of all the 29 states into one market and tax rate. There are more tax revenues for the government and less for the industry. Besides that, there are lower prices for many manufactured products and the economy will receive a big boost. Demonetization has helped in bringing fear and caution amongst the hoarders of black money and also in fighting against corruption. This is a huge step taken towards development as India has been cited as one of the most corrupt countries of the world.

Triple Talaq and the change in Section 377 to decriminalize LGBTQ have both been a great leap in the social sphere. The BJP has even supported Muslim women and has welcomed gays, lesbians and homosexuals as humans as they so rightly deserve and has paved way for them into the mainstream world.

Uri: the Surgical Strike is a brilliant movie that captures the bravery and risks of the BJP government. After the terrorism that took place in the Indian Army Camp, the BJP government took a gigantic step. With the audacious surgical strike, Modi ji sent out a bold message to the Pakistani terrorists that India cannot be messed with and that we take our defence very seriously. Modi's Khelo India scheme has done a great job in training and developing the skills of all the sports players of our country; yet another milestone in their regime.



Another one of BJP's initiatives has led to the creation of over 10 crore toilets across the nation, providing villagers with sanitary facilities that will help them move away from open defecation. After the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and all the other projects that Modi ji has activated, he truly deserves to get another term, in my opinion. Nothing but his definitive leadership and swift and bold decision-making can make a difference to our country. He is bound to win this year. And I am positively sure about it!

Shyla Updhyay, 9

## 'उरी - द सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक'



देशप्रेम एवं देशसेवा पर आधारित फिल्ममें पसंद करने वाले दर्शकों के लिए इस वर्ष के आरंभ में निर्देशक 'आदित्य धर' द्वारा 'उरी' फिल्म का शानदार प्रदर्शन हुआ। देश की रक्षा के लिए किस तरह रणनीति बनाई जाती है और कैसे सरकार भारत-पाकिस्तान की सीमा की सुरक्षा करती है? इसकी जानकारी के लिए आपको निश्चय ही यह फिल्म देखनी चाहिए। भले ही कुछ लोगों द्वारा इस चलचित्र को 'प्रॉपगैंडा फिल्म' कहा जा रहा है, लेकिन वास्तव में एक ऐतिहासिक घटना को दिलचस्प रूप में पेश करने का सफल प्रयास है। यह आतंकवादियों के खिलाफ भारत का पहला मज़बूत कदम था, और यह फिल्म एक ऐसे ही शक्तिशाली 'नए भारत' की छवि दिखाती है, जहाँ देश के युवाओं को सैनिक बनने का और देश सेवा करने का भरपूर अवसर दिया जाता है।

फिल्म के पहले भाग की कहानी विकी कौशल यानि 'विहान' के इर्दगिर्द रहती है। विहान ने अपनी बीमार माँ की देखभाल की, दफ्तर में अपने पायलट सहयोगी सीरत (कीर्ति कुल्हारी) के साथ एक अच्छी दोस्ती को दर्शाया और अपनी भाँजी से प्यार करने वाले मामा का किरदार निभाया। फिल्म के दूसरे भाग में विहान को बहुत-सी पारिवारिक मुसीबतों का सामना करना पड़ता है, किन्तु इस मुश्किल समय में ही विहान का देशप्रेम उभर कर सामने आता है जो दर्शकों के दिल को छू लेता है। अपनी बहन के पति की हत्या का बदला लेने के लिए विहान अपनी बीमार माँ को छोड़कर, भारत की सीमा पर देश की रक्षा के लिए चल पड़ता है। यह फिल्म गणतंत्र दिवस के आसपास दिखाई गई जिससे देशप्रेम की लहर स्वाभाविक रूप से फैला देती है। हमारे देश के सैनिकों के बलिदान के मूल्य को समझाती है। मेरे विचार में हम सब को यह चलचित्र एक बार तो अवश्य देखनी चाहिए।

वेदिका बागला, ११

## TRUMP ENDS GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The 35-day-long government shutdown that ended on 25 January was not only a huge defeat for US President Donald Trump who failed to get funding for his US-Mexico border wall, it also exposed grave problems in America. The plight of unpaid Federal workers showed the financial vulnerability of the American people. The entire episode also highlighted the weak state of American democracy.



Trump emerged as the biggest loser after he was unable to bully Congressional Democrats into funding his wall and was forced to back down as public anger with the shutdown grew. Trump has now lost the support of his right-wing backers, who wanted the \$5.7 billion wall at any cost. They are even calling him a wimp. At the same time average Americans are turning against him. Public disapproval of Trump's behavior has grown by five percentage points to 58 percent. Trump is looking increasingly isolated and vulnerable as the investigation into his wrongdoings intensifies.

The shutdown showed how Americans live paycheck to paycheck. The 800,000 Federal workers who missed two paychecks struggled to meet rent, mortgage, insurance and car payments, not to mention putting food on the table. They were forced to make ends meet by working as Uber drivers, babysitters and teachers. Others, who work in critical jobs like airport security, were forced to work without pay, preventing them from finding a substitute source of income. Many ended up in lines at charities or food banks.

As Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the popular, newly elected Democrat congresswoman says, the shutdown is not about the border but about "the erosion of American democracy and the subversion of our most basic governmental norms". Politicians are responsible for the citizens and not their personal agendas. In this respect, Donald Trump has failed but so has the American democracy.

**Tara Jing Gopinath, 10**

## 'काँफी विद करण कार्यक्रम'

'काँफी विद करण' एक ऐसा कार्यक्रम है जिसमें जाने- पहचाने ऐक्टर व अन्य प्रसिद्ध व्यक्ति आकर बातें करते हैं। करण जौहर बातचीत के दौरान कभी-कभी सीमा पार कर देते हैं और उनके मेहमान कुछ ऐसी बातें कह देते हैं जो राष्ट्रीय टेलीविजन पर नहीं कहनी चाहिए। इस कार्यक्रम पर कभी आमिर खान जैसे लोगो ने आकर महिला सशक्तिकरण आंदोलनों की प्रशंसा की है तो कभी क्रिकेटर हार्दिक पांड्या और के.एल. राहुल ने महिलाओं के बारे में अनुचित बातें कह डाली। इस कार्यक्रम में करण जौहर अपने मेहमान से ऐसे प्रश्न पूछते हैं जिसमें आनेवाला मेहमान अपनी बातचीत के दौरान अपने दिल के सारे रहस्य निकाल देते हैं। मुझे लगता है कि इनकी बातें दिलचस्प हो सकती हैं लेकिन कभी-कभी मर्यादा कि सीमा पार कर देती हैं और अन्य व्यक्तियों की भावनाओं को चोट पहुँचा सकती हैं।

**अनाहिता कुकरेजा, १०**

## Microfiction Mornings:

*The tiniest and most entertaining way to read new literature*

*Freedom is doing what you want, how you want. It is doing the impossible. Freedom, is everything.*  
(Freedom)

**Udai Relan , 6**

*Freedom is being free to do what you like along with the responsibility to choose between what is right and what is wrong.*  
(Freedom)

**Siya Sekhri, 6**

*Losing was a prospect. However, even if she did, she knew she was a winner as the medal of pride hung around her neck.*  
(Pride)

**Sahima M, 7**

*Pride is discipline. Pride is self respect. It is extreme satisfaction that is earned and not gained.*  
(Pride)

**Tarika Saihgal, 7**

*As they hoisted the flag on a new day, they looked up at it and imagined a better place. A place that made them think - "this is the nation I want to be in."*  
(Nation)

**Soumya Garg, 8**

*The one word to live and die for; to win and lose for and most of all, to be proud of.*  
(Nation)

**Myra Prasad, 8**

*A road of broken glass, a storm of fire. A single man, in a situation dire. A broken corpse he sees and it says - courage friend, death is not the worst thou shall face today.*  
(Courage)

**Aryan Agarwal, 9**

*Through the darkness they stood strong. That's what she called courage.*  
(Courage)

**Maryam, 9**

*Blood mixed with tears as the claws of death took hold. The soldier was, even in death, a patriot.*  
(Patriotism)

**Kavyini Garodia, 10**

*He gave up his luxury, life and love. Some called it insanity, he called it patriotism.*  
(Patriotism)

**Katyayani Jha, 10**



### Being the Senior Most Class in Junior School

The feeling of being the senior most class in junior school is simply euphoric. We are now the "Big Daddies"-the most powerful in junior school. This year, we get to do so many more things than last year. We get the opportunity to participate in the play at the Drama Festival and not just perform for the fillers. On Founders Day, we get to sing or dance with the seniors, our very first time on the big stage! I also look forward to play the violin in the orchestra this year, again a first for me. Some of us also get special badges like Head Boy/House Captain/Prefects. For that, one has to show excellence but that's not enough. One also needs to have other traits like responsibility, compassion and leadership skills. Class 5 is definitely going to be fun but it comes with its own set of responsibilities. After all, how we behave and how we are, is what the entire Junior School looks up to. Hence, we must try to be the perfect role models. *Rouvin Upadhyay V - A*

Being the seniormost class in Junior school brings with it a lot of responsibility. Prefects are chosen, Friday Activity announcements are done by class 5 and most importantly we have to be top-notch role models for the younger kids. At the same time there is a lot of excitement in store. We will be part of the Drama Festival play and perform on the center stage during Founder's Day - I am proud to be in Class 5! It feels smashing to be the oldest. On the other hand, this will be our last year in Junior school before we spread our wings and fly away to senior school. Away from the building that I grew up in ... *Veda Kalra V - A*

I like Class 3 because we get to learn new things and we have a new teacher. We get our own stationery because we are in a big class. We work hard. We are learning alphabetical order. I also have different groups for Hindi, Life Science and Maths. We got our diary and we now write our homework in it. *Ichcha*

When I first entered the classroom I felt excited because I have new teachers, new subjects and and new friends. We get our own table mats and bags. I have increased in height as well. We have new books. We will go for School Camps. We have different subject groups and a tutor. *Sehaj Chopra*

I was nervous to go to class 3. First thing in the morning we met with everyone. Then we had our breakfast. We also wrote names on our books. Then we got our new stationery. I enjoyed learning alphabetical order and played some online alphabetical order games. We will also learn coding with Scratch Jr. I love class 3. *Anoushka Barua*

On the first day when I came to class 3 I felt happy. In class three we can bring our own mat, spoon, pencil pouch and bag. We learnt alphabetical order in English and Varnmalla in Hindi. We now also have an atlas, dictionary and a diary. Everyone got to put a different cover on their creative writing books for English and Hindi. And for each subject we change our sections, and have new teachers. *Abhinav Mandar*

In class three, it is so much fun. We started carrying bags and learnt new things like alphabetical order, ladder of twelve and a lot more! We get a lot of homework than usual but I can still do it. Our new teacher's name is Ms. Hundal. We even got our own tutors. Now we don't have plastic glasses to drink water, we carry our own water bottles. Class three is so much fun. *Radhika Goenka*

सपने

एक रात मुन्ना सोया,  
सपने में ऐसा खोया।

सपने में देखा,

खिंच गई घर के सामने लक्ष्मण रेखा।

तभी देखा राम, सीता और हनुमान,  
बचा रहे थे जटायु की जान।

फिर दिखी बंदर सेना,

एक बंदर को था पानी लेना

यह थी मुन्ना की रामायण,

लेकिन उसने सिर्फ न देखी डायन।

तभी सूर्य ने घेर लिया,

और चाँद ने मुँह फेर लिया।।

शिरिन सुलताना शी ५ - स

We celebrated our 70th Republic Day on 26th January, 2019. I watched the live telecast of the parade happening at Rajpath in New Delhi. It started with our Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi paying respect to the martyrs at India Gate. After that our President, Mr. Ram Nath Kovind and our Chief guest, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, the President of The Republic of South Africa arrived. This was followed by flag hoisting, 21 gun salute and singing of our National Anthem.

I was excited to see the soldiers march past, the weapons displayed and various tableaux. My favourite was Gujrat's tableau because it showed young Gandhiji's life.



The entire parade and the dances performed by the school children were dedicated to Mahatama Gandhi. I loved the balancing act on the bike by the Dare Devils and the air show at the end of the parade.

*Kushagra Thakur IV - B*

## WORLD TODAY

*the easiest way for you to ace a GK Quiz*

India Retain Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Melbourne and defeat Australia in ODI series 2-1.

Uttar Pradesh powerhouses Akhilesh Yadav and Mayawati, announced their mega alliance “Mahagathbandan”, delivering the first opposition front to take on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the national election due by May.

Lok Sabha passes controversial Citizenship Bill amid protests, seeks to give citizenship to non-Muslims from 3 countries Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Theresa May Survives No-Confidence Vote in British Parliament on January 16<sup>th</sup> giving her another shot at negotiating Brexit plan.

Priyanka Gandhi Takes a Political Plunge. Congress appoints her as UP East general secretary.

**Advaita Sehgal, 9**



Constitutional Amendment Bill essentially negates a binding judgment of the Supreme Court.

The amendment excludes the OBC and the SC/ST communities from the ability to get economic reservation and implies that only those who are economically backward from the general categories would benefit from this quota. The petition also highlighted that the 50% ceiling limit of quota as placed by the Supreme Court is being violated.

Is this but another romanticised political masterstroke? An unconstitutional, politically fuelled move in order to gain support from the upper castes or a slightly misplaced but genuine effort to uplift the economically backward? In the end, perhaps economic criteria should be grounds for reservation, but to what extent?

**Sanah Kapur and Harnoor Singh, 12**

## RESERVATIONS

Recently, a bill for the provision of 10% reservation in Government jobs and education to economically weaker sections of the general category was authorised by President Ram Nath Kovind. The bill has created a series of arguments and discussions that leave us with the confusing question of what the right thing to do is.

The Constitution Act of 2019 amended Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution and introduce a clause that permits the states of India to establish “Special provision for the advancement of any economically weaker sections of citizens” in the form of reservations. On one hand, this helps facilitate education for economically weaker sections of society. It will help uplift citizens who have not had access to higher education and public employment due to their low income and weak financial status. On the other hand, we see light being shed on the flip side of what this reservation means and what it will truly entail when it is implemented. There has been a huge outcry from various sections in society calling for the bill to be struck down.

As a result, on Friday, the Supreme Court sought the government’s response to a petition challenging the 10% quota. The plea argued that the quota violates the basic features of the Constitution and contradicts several judgments of the Court that exist to protect our fundamental rights.



The petition was filed by the organisation ‘Youth For Equality’ and it was contended that the Court previously, in a judgment in the Indira Sawhney case, had settled that ‘economic backwardness’ cannot be the sole basis for reservation. It was argued that this

## Unwavering Faith

Yann Martel, who is best known for his award-winning novel titled ‘Life of Pi’, visited Vasant Valley School to talk to students about himself as an author and about the process that went into creating what was a number one Bestseller in 50 countries. His novel was also adapted to the screen, which further spread the journey of Pi across oceans. By the time Mr Martel left, the school was buzzing with excitement, for he had sparked a creative key that ignited every literarily inclined child within the premises.

Mr Martel spoke of penning a plot that strikes a chord with its readers; one that provokes thought and dialogue. More importantly, one that makes people believe the impossible. Keeping these goals in mind, he offered his readers two endings: one with animals and one without. Throughout the novel, he tests his audience. He keeps writing, slowly and dedicatedly, to see how far he can weave his tale and stretch our rubber-band imagination without it snapping back to square one.

The author additionally elaborated on his fascination with India, wherein his book begins. He said, “India is all of life, in one place, at one time. It’s problematic, but also kind of thrilling”. And truthfully enough, our country is vibrant with religion, and thus faith, which plays a central role in the novel. Pi falls in love with Christianity, Hinduism and Islam, exploring them all, and it is India’s diversity that facilitates his exposure to such a wide variety of religions.

When asked about his creative process, Mr Martel told us that he takes one day at a time. He sits down at his desk, writes a couple of paragraphs and calls it a day. This steady work ethic produced a masterpiece in 2 years, because he was putting pieces of a jigsaw, made in his mind, together. Mr Martel categorically placed different events into envelopes and then incorporated them into his writing where appropriate, saying that novel-writing is about “Breaking mountains into smaller boulders”.



Mr. Martel provided great insight regarding the value of symbolism. He chose animals as Pi’s lifeboat companions, because they represent something greater. If Pi were on a boat with a French cook, he is no more than exactly that. A reader is, however, more likely to philosophically indulge when you place a man-eating Bengal tiger on a tiny boat in the middle of the ocean. I read Mr. Martel’s book for the first time when I was 11 years old and was absolutely wonderstruck by the magic of it all. My childish ability to imagine led me to wholeheartedly believe his story – the real story. Six years later, I still do.

**Anoushka Clays, 12**

## JUST YOUR REGULAR OLD FAMILY FEUD

The golden dunes rolled on, fading in to the horizon, all absolutely identical. A man stood in the middle of the desert, unperturbed by the scalding heat. He looked young, with piercing gold eyes, and was dressed in an undulating golden robe- each individual thread meticulously woven together, like the web of a spider. Hung round his neck, attached to a metallic thread, was an hourglass made from a blood red ruby. Black sand appeared to be shifting through it, caught in a recurring loop for all of eternity. His name was Ronon, and he was the god of time.



He held his hourglass up and, with the snap of his fingers, the speed of the sand increased momentarily before returning to its usual, lazy trickle. The sand on the ground moved and suddenly, as if by magic, another young man stood there. Dressed in robes of black and red, he held a grey rod with an ebony blade protruding from the tip, black as the midnight sky.

“Child” intoned Ronon in a rich voice. “Yes” replied the god of death, Mordus. “You knew I was coming, you didn’t need to change the time continuum.” “Quiet. I can do as I so please. The gods of Handor have chosen a recipient for this year. However, I have decided not to let them have their way any longer. The candidate is a doctor in the city of New York, and we will eliminate her immediately. Take Avik and exterminate her. Leave no evidence behind, and make sure no one sees you. This year, we will choose our own recipient.” “Understood” Mordus replied, a vaguely pleased look on his face, and disappeared.

In the middle of an apartment block two men appeared, unnoticed. Mordus was dressed in a sharp looking suit while Avik, the god of fire, wore Ralph Lauren shirt and trousers. “Come on” Mordus said and they moved to the stairs, climbing to the first floor. “That’s the one” Avik pointed out and knocked on the door. The door opened with a hesitant creak. Standing behind the huge oak frame was a woman. She seemed to be in her late twenties, with flaming red hair and soulful black eyes.

“Yes” she asked politely. “Hello,” said Mordus. “Sorry ‘bout this, but you have to die.” On that note his frightening blade appeared. It flashed with a deep purple light as he swung it in a deadly arc, only to be stopped by a blazing white light an inch away from the shell-shocked woman’s neck. “Hello Mordus, Avik” said a familiar voice. Behind the woman stood a man dressed in a suit similar to Mordus’, and a woman in a flowing green dress.

“Lena, Kenan” said Avik, nodding to the goddess of life and the god of light. “Sad how we always end up fighting” said Mordus. “Yes, you really should come over some day for dinner. Mother really wants you to, she misses you.” “Yes, well, you know how father gets. Anyways, let’s get to the point. We need to kill her, you need her as your prophet. Brazen words are spoken as we each take bold fighting stances, blah blah blah, half of New York is destroyed. Let’s just skip to that part, can’t we? I actually have a date with Afran to get to, and if I’m late, he’ll kill me.”

“Oh, good for you, I’m glad you’ve started dating again.” said Kenan. He then moved the petrified recipient and sent out a roaring blast of light. “Thank you!” Mordus replied, as he planted his weapon in the ground. A purple dome spread outwards, preventing light from touching him, while it destroyed the rest of the corridor. Meanwhile, Avik flew up and from his hands a tornado of flame erupted in the direction of Lema. She propelled herself out of the window, barely dodging the flames. Avik flew after her and into the street.

“Shall we join them?” said Kenan. Mordus replied by smoothening his suit and throwing Kenan into the street, following him with his black blade drawn. Flashes of white and purple light could be seen as they interchanged blows, the street around them reducing to rubble.

Lena released the green-blue energy of life into Avik, who defended himself with a wall of fire. Mordus let out a long-range projectile, missing Kenan, but sucking up the souls of shocked passers-by. Lena jumped into the air and restored their lives, saying “No cheating, Mordus. Human casualties are against the rules. You know that”

Behind them, staring through the gaping hole in her bedroom wall, the recipient stood frightened, watching the horrors unleash below, her eyes turned to pure white. “Ugh, I guess you guys win this time.” Said Mordus. “Don’t think we’ll let you have your way next time” The fighting ceased, and as all was just returning to normal, a deep voice boomed. “Mordus, I swear to god. Oh, wait, that’s not right. Mordus, I swear to me, if you weren’t death already, I would introduce you to him.” Ronon’s golden eyes shone across the evening sky. “Well, let’s have Lethe deal with the humans. By the way, Afran called, he had to postpone. Sorry, Mordus. So, Lena, about that dinner. Think your mother would be fine with me stopping by for a bit?”

“Not at all dad, I’m sure she’d love that!” Lena said. “Well, I got stood up. Guess I’ll come too. Moms cooking is the best.” Mordus said, and with that, all 5 of them disappeared. A faint thud was barely audible as the recipient slid to the ground, mumbling to herself. “What have I gotten myself into.”

### Run, Rock & Roll!

Readers, did you ever imagine that something as strenuous as running a marathon could be fun? Or more so, imagine Pitbull or Flo-rida being your cheerleaders. Well, I am here to tell you that The Rock n’ Roll Marathon Series have made this possible! They are a foundation that have been trying to encourage people to run and lead healthier lifestyles while also having fun for the past 31 years.

While running seems to be the main aim of the organisation, it is also a fact of great pride that they have raised 310 million dollars for participating charities. The number of people participating in this event is more than the participation in any other running series in the United States. Many participants who participate in multiple cities each year also gain the privilege of qualifying for Heavy Medal Awards, Limited Edition Medals and a coveted spot in their very own Hall of Fame.

While it is yet to be launched in India, we can only pull up our socks and merely try to run, if not to be placed in the Hall of Fame, but to see gigs of our favourite singers and see them cheer us on!

Arshya Gaur, 10

Siddhant Nagrath, 9

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