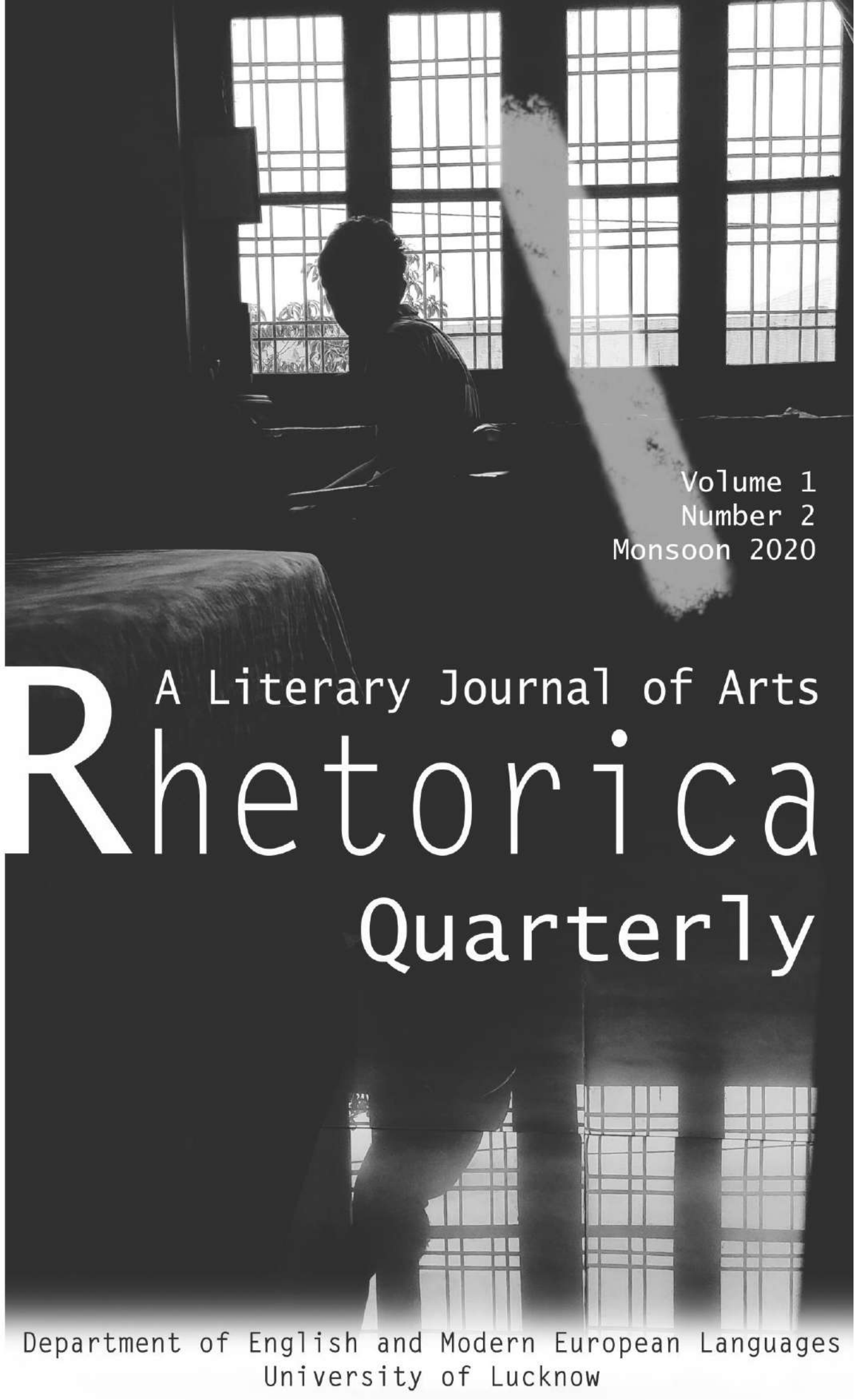


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Volume 1
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Monsoon 2020

A Literary Journal of Arts
Rhetorica
Quarterly

Department of English and Modern European Languages
University of Lucknow

प्रो. आलोक कुमार राय
कुलपति
Prof. Alok Kumar Rai
Vice-Chancellor

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MESSAGE

After the launch of *Rhetorica Quarterly*, a literary journal initiated by the faculty and students of the Department of English and Modern European Languages, I once again extend my warm congratulations and regards to the Rhetorica Literary Society on the launch of its second issue. It gives me immense pleasure that this issue is dedicated to the significant, contemporary theme of 'Pandemic.' The literary enthusiasm demonstrated by our young students despite the current challenging circumstances is commendable.

Our university remains committed to providing such literary platforms to our students that showcase the various dimensions of evolving thoughts and perceptions that emerge within the society. Providing a virtual space and archiving the creative works on our university website is an important manifestation of such a literary journal. The first issue and all the coming issues shall therefore remain a part of the literary archive of our university.

Additionally, the outbreak of a pandemic in 2020 has been a life altering experience in all realms including the modes of education and literary activities. The launch of this magazine thus also remains an important step in creating new ways of promoting virtual collaborations and student oriented steps that enhance our literary values.

The literary journal remains an excellent ground for demonstrating the collective enthusiasm and creative talents of the students. After the launch of this journal during the lockdown, its second issue illustrates the sustained efforts of the Department and I look forward to reading future issues as well. My best wishes and blessings to our young students and the faculty from the Department of English and Modern European Languages.

21 October, 2020



(Prof. Alok Kumar Rai)

॥ विद्यया प्रकाशस्य वर्षशतम् ॥ *A century of leading generations to light through learning*

From the Chair

It gives me immense pleasure to offer you a feast of creative writing by the students of the Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow. We dedicate this issue to Late Prof. C. Vimala Rao – a much loved teacher, a short story writer, a translator and an avid traveller. Dr. Rao won the prestigious Fulbright scholarship thrice. She worked in this Department for more than two decades. She nurtured us with love, warmth and kindness. She passed away on 10th October 2017 at the age of 83. We are releasing our second issue in October 2020.

The second issue of *Rhetorica Quarterly* is a Special Issue on 'Pandemic' literature. The virus has not only changed our lives, but has also filled us with dread, fear and a deep sense of failure. We know life will not be the same again, but we also hope that our creativity will keep the flame burning. If poetry is the breeze that helps you breathe, books fill us with hope and courage to bear human suffering. We need the voice of poetry, the winds of imagination to stir our minds and stories of love and hope to join hands with us in our times of distress and acute loneliness. We also bring non-fiction, book reviews and photography in this issue.

Reader, we deeply appreciate your interest and hope the journal continues to serve as a literary platform for our young minds in the future. The journal welcomes contributions from its ex-students as well. Our next issue will be celebrating 100 years of the University of Lucknow and will also focus on the City of Lucknow.

We hope and pray that the tide of Corona will soon subside and life will get back to singing and dancing, holding hands and meeting friends.

Happy Reading!

Ranu Uniyal
Professor and Head,
Department of English and Modern European Languages,
University of Lucknow.



Dedicated to
Prof. C. Vimala Rao
(1934-2017)



Prof. C. Vimala Rao
(1934-2017)



Life's odd interludes

As I read Raja Rao's writings, I was also to learn about the depth of his life experiences.

By C. Vimala Rao, Apr 6, 2017: 23:39 IST (published in *Deccan Herald*)**

<https://www.deccanherald.com/content/604873/lifes-odd-interludes.html>

Strange coincidences occur in our lives every now and then, making us wonder about the mystery and unfathomableness of existence. We are compelled to accept the possibility of the impossible at such times.

In July 1963, on the eve of my leaving the campus in Philadelphia, I saw a notice in the English Department announcing that Indian English writer Raja Rao would be visiting to meet the faculty and the students. I had not heard of Raja Rao until then. One of his novels, the magnum opus *The Serpent and the Rope*, had been published just a few months before and the publishers were taking him around on a book-promotional tour.

Raja Rao made an exceptionally impressive figure that morning amid the assembled group of Westerners. Dressed in white pants and a long, black, Indian-style coat, his flowing hair combed back from his forehead, eyes prominent with an inward look, he was sparingly built and stunned everyone with his quiet presence. He said just a few words in his soft-spoken voice on how he did not want his name to be printed as the author of the book on the cover. He felt that a creative work should stand on its own without the individual ego of the writer being imposed on it. The publishers, however, would have none of it!

Personally, I was happy to see him that morning as I could break into Kannada after months of speaking in English! Even in those very few first moments of meeting him, I was struck by the uncommon simplicity of his manner.

Later, as I read his writings, I was also to learn about the extraordinary depth of his life experiences. I was then able to understand the importance of Raja Rao as an Indian English novelist. As he had spent most of his creative years in the Western world, his own country was slow — or reluctant — to recognise his achievement. But the publication of *The Serpent...* changed the reader's perception about the novelist.

A few weeks after my return to India, I had to make a trip to the Madras Port Trust to collect my baggage which I had despatched by sea-freight. When some of the packages were being opened for inspection at the Customs' counter, I saw one of the officials looking curiously at the books that formed a major part of the packages. When he learnt on enquiry that my subject was English Literature, he asked me if I knew about the writer Raja Rao.

Taken by surprise at the sudden, uncanny query, I exclaimed, "Yes! I just met him a few weeks ago and also saw the copy of his latest novel, *The Serpent and the Rope!*" The gentleman's quiet rejoinder to this almost knocked me out, "I am his brother!" he said smiling. I stood speechless. What could I say? I thankfully collected my packages and left the Customs office.

Later, when I spoke of this experience to one of my colleagues, she said, "If you had narrated this in a short story, I would not have believed it!" Yes, indeed, life is stranger than fiction. Meanwhile, I have often wondered in what way the gentleman claimed to be Raja Rao's brother? Whether his claim was true or not, the fact that I should have met the two "brothers" under such different circumstances during my meaningfully connected journey has left me mystified to this day.

**The Department of English and Modern European Languages expresses its gratitude to the *Deccan Herald* for publishing this article. This is Prof. C. Vimala Rao's last published piece.



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REGISTRATION FORM FOR ALUMNI

Acknowledgement

Buoyed by the success of the inaugural issue of Rhetorica, we are back with another. Its theme connects with the contemporary time. It is important to pay gratitude to those involved in making this dream come true, for “Gratitude is a divine emotion, it fills the heart of the giver and the receiver with happiness and motivation. It maintains the spirit of all those involved and invokes the blessings of God.”

On behalf of the Rhetorica team, the team of editors would like to thank the Vice Chancellor, University of Lucknow, Professor Alok Kumar Rai for offering us his support. We express our heartiest gratitude to Professor Ranu Uniyal, Head of the Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow who has been there as our greatest inspiration and guide. We thank all the faculty members of the department as it is the knowledge that they imparted, which has helped to increase our understanding, vocabulary and precision. Our sincere gratitude is reserved for all the contributors who are the body and the soul of the journal.

We have the deepest appreciation for the fellow members of Rhetorica team who put in their hard work and dedication to formulate the issue. Without co-ordination of the members and supervision of the heads, the smooth processing of Rhetorica could not have been possible.

Most importantly, I thank all our readers for their time, attention and love - it is what we strive for.

Happy Reading.
Stay Safe and Stay Blessed.

With warm regards,
Akanksha Pandey,
Fiction Co-Editor,
Editorial Board,
Rhetorica Quarterly.



Letter from the Editor

The landmark events and world altering occurrences of the twentieth century were the two World Wars- fought with weapons, the loss of life and property occurring due to the warfare and a general mood of despair and distrust prevailing due to divided loyalties. In the twenty first century, it's far more personal. There are no raging wars on the battlefield, no soldiers defending borders, no political deliberations and absolutely no attempts at peace- this time every individual is his/ her own soldier- cum- leader- cum- protector or annihilator. No arsenal and ammunitions to exterminate others and protect self for the enemy remains invisible, the name is known, the form is clear but its presence remains elusive. The enemy spares none- respects no national borders, honours no age, considers no sex, fears no religion and ravages every region. The only refuge for physical self-preservation is self- isolation but man is a social animal. This is the “terrible beauty”- THE PANDEMIC.

The propriety demands I say, “It gives me immense pleasure” as per norms, but I would rather address my case to the readers by humbly stating that it is my solemn duty to introduce this issue of the journal “Rhetorica Quarterly- A Literary Journal of Arts, Volume 1, Issue 2, Monsoon 2020” on the theme “Pandemic” As the two World Wars produced distinct literary genres of the “war poetry, trench literature and trauma literature” etc., the pandemic too has brought forth “Pandemic Literature” a creative as well as a critical genre. This issue of the journal is an earnest attempt to be a part of the broad output of the pandemic literature being contributed from all over the world.

Living in unprecedented times comes with its share of highs and lows. The pandemic is unprecedented for all the contributors as well as readers of the journal but it is quite precedential for humanity at large. Pandemics have had lasting impacts on our lives and have pretty much paved the ways of our lives today. This paradoxical relationship is upheld in this edition of the journal as we have endeavoured to come up, in this issue, with a theme that sounds grim yet has ample space for hope and rejuvenation. The contributors have almost inadvertently been attuned to this very idea and the entries stand a testimony to that. It is fair that even while facing unprecedented circumstances, we sought and found solace in the most familiar refuge: the written word.

I would like to express my congratulations and sincere gratitude to all the contributors for trusting us with your precious thoughts and diligent creative outputs, which form the content of the journal.

With warm regards,
Ansh Sharma,
Fiction Editor,
Editorial Board,
Rhetorica Quarterly.



CONTRIBUTORS

- Fiction and Proof Reading -

Editor

ANSH SHARMA



The name means “a part- a miniscule one”- that is all I hope to be in the Larger Scheme of Things.

Co-Editors

SHIVAM KUNDU



"I swear by humility, seek solace in books, believe in goodwill, and the perennial brooks."

AKANKSHA PANDEY



In love with the beauty of nature, the enchantment of books and music.

- Non-Fiction -

Editor

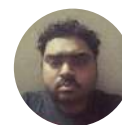
SUSWAGATA CHOWDHURY



She did her master's in English Literature from Kolkata and is currently a JRF at University of Lucknow.

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RAJEEV RATN SAHU



Doing research in American Literature. Published his research on James Joyce in *The Literary Herald*.

KIRTI SRIVASTAVA



Inquisitive and an avid reader. She is also a professional dancer and a diligent learner.

- Poetry -

Editor

AMRITA SHARMA



In love with words and their rhythmic essence, Amrita is a poet in making and a literary enthusiast.

Co-Editor

PONTSO KANE



She is a lady from Lesotho who aspires to be everything in the spoken word artistry.

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Editor

ASHUTOSH AGARWAL



A freelance photographer. Earlier worked with *The Times of India* as content writer.

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Associated with AIIS and working as an intern in Delegacy at the University of Lucknow.

NON FICTION

*"Ironically in today's marketplace
successful non fiction has to be unbelievable, while
successful fiction must be believable."*

- Jerry B. Jenkins -





NEW NORMAL IN ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY AMID PANDEMIC

On the eve of 31st December 2019, people welcomed New Year 2020 with better hopes, greater opportunities and newer resolutions. But the zeal of entering into a New Year lasted only for two months. An unpremeditated outbreak of Pandemic caused by the spread of virus COVID-19 or popularly known as Corona Virus put a stop on the lives of every individual. The outbreak of the contagious Virus with its genesis in China spread like a wildfire causing death, grief and consternation all around the globe. With its initial stepping in India, our government imposed a nationwide lockdown in the mid of March. Due to sudden lockdown guidelines and quarantine, every individual was following a universal routine. With closed markets, zero social gatherings and work from home rules, people were confined

within their homes. The fortunate one with their families and loved ones and the unfortunate ones alone; everyone was quarantined, struggling and fighting against this difficult period.

The title of this article must have stimulated readers with raised eyebrows as the year 2020 which has caused turbulence in the lives of people from every corner of the world cannot have a connotation of optimism. While writing an article on Pandemic 2020, many ideas knocked on my mind. The inception of ideas was to write about the various atrocities and crisis which came parallel with the outbreak of the virus and the imposed lockdown. The outbreak of pandemic caused physical, mental and emotional instability where people lost their jobs or faced pay-cuts, the business became standstill, and the worst was the loss of life

and fear for the loved ones. Everyone was struggling with limited resources to survive from a situation which was reminiscent of some Hollywood movie based on the outbreak of some contagious virus. So, I aim at contributing an article which talks about an important aspect which aided in keeping stable mental health while following a quarantine lifestyle i.e. spending quality time with family, adapting with the evolving entertainment content.

Days passed like weekends, where it was difficult to recall the day of the week. Apart from food and shelter, the internet became a necessity to spend lockdown days. Confined within the houses, people's search for moral support rested within their family members. Pandemic provided an opportunity to spend time with their families which helped in realising the value of human connections. Spending precious time together and aiding each other in household works strengthened the special bond which got blurred due to busy schedule. The economy of the world shattered while our country suffered a huge downfall. In this problematic period, every sector has withered away be it educational institutions, industries, corporate houses, entertainment industry, small- and medium-scale businesses. One industry or platform which flourished like a green bay tree is Over the Top media Service.

The OTT platform which is the online streaming of content for its viewers through an internet connection becomes a new fad after the lockdown of theatres and other entertainment sources.

Spending leisure time with families, everyone found novel attachment in various content streaming through OTT platforms to beat the monotonous days. Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney Hotstar – almost all mainstream production houses introduced their online streaming channels with the reports that revealed a surge in the number of subscriptions of these services during and post lockdown. Another imperative reason for people's inclination towards this newfound addiction is the variety of content it provides. From engaging web series to movies ranging with every genre and culture, OTT platforms played their cards well by making the use of their resources. With the spread of internet and technology, accessibility to such contents became much easier. The lockdown period which began with twenty-one days stretched into months. It extended with repercussions of reduced income and unstable mental health. To fight with anxiety and macabre environment binge-watching (the popular term for watching movies/shows in a stretch) became prevalent. Enjoying web series with episodes playing on loop became the first preference of each family member without

any age or generation disparity. With locked theatres and multiplexes even mainstream cinema opted for the OTT platform for their releases. Online streaming channels became the first preference as it brought a breath of fresh air, where people following quarantine life can enjoy the latest releases in a comfortable environment and are penny-pinching.

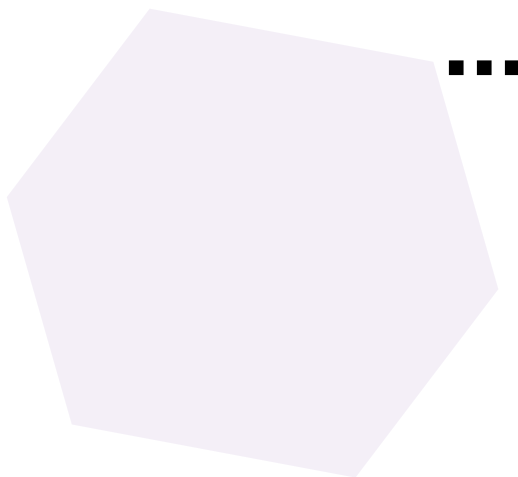
Even after six months of the spread of Pandemic in India, every other morning

brings sorrowful news of demise or natural calamity due to which the Year 2020 has earned a title of the cursed year of the millennial. With no social life, lockdown in weekends, work from home, adapting with new normal, sombre and macabre news coming from all around the world, people found their millennial antidote to the virus in the form of self-care, healthy mental and physical body and watching OTT content to bring some tint of optimism amid distressing milieu.

~ Megha Negi



She is a Research Scholar at the University of Lucknow. Her area of research is the place of women in Indian English Fiction. A writer and a literary enthusiast, she has a passion for literature and life. She loves spending time with books and remains equally immersed in her love for family, fashion and food.





SO EDWARD CULLEN DIED OF THE SPANISH FLU !

With the Covid-19 outbreak reaching India early this year that led to a nationwide lockdown, the average Indian youth has now been familiarised to the meaning and usage of a range of new terminologies. These terms, which had always existed in the English dictionary, had never been so popular before. ‘Pandemic’ may be one example— a word that we all knew but perhaps again googled in this post-COVID19 scenario. This article is based on a completely non-fictional account of one of my conversations with a close friend that particularly appealed to me as worth recounting. This happened somewhere in July 2020 and appears to me as a very generalised yet classic example that reflects our psychology as young researchers and literary enthusiasts who attempt to combat this post-COVID19 anxiety with such conversations!

“You know what, I am being very honest, I had not really heard that much about the Spanish Flu until this Corona virus outbreak. I don’t think I am the only ignorant one here, a lot of people of our age might not have read so much of it before!” These were almost my exact words over a call.

“But I knew of the Spanish Flu! And even you knew of it, but you just can’t recall. How can you not know! Edward Cullen died his human death by the Spanish Flu!”

With the description of the episode from the movie, I could instantly associate Spanish flu to a pandemic that had certainly been a very significant one. However, the reasons for its significance remain different and so is our understanding of the term ‘pandemic’ in the pre-COVID and the post-COVID times.

Edward Cullen, perhaps the most popular fictional character from Stephenie

Meyer's *Twilight* series, remains exceptionally celebrated for popularising the vampire-human romance for the global audience. In the novels and their adapted movies, Edward Anthony Masen, Jr. is a human who had been transformed to a vampire by his adoptive father, Carlisle Cullen in 1918 to prevent him from dying in the Spanish influenza epidemic in Chicago, Illinois. A character that became extremely popular, Edward Cullen, as a romantic name and character, has often been popularly described by the author as a combination of her three favourite leading men- Jane Eyre's Edward Rochester, Fitzwilliam Darcy from *Pride and Prejudice*, and Gilbert Blythe from *Anne of Green Gables*—all literary characters that most of us remain familiar with.

What remains intriguing yet true is the fact that 'pandemic' so far had been a part

of our life only in literature and films. To be witnessing deaths around us due to it is a completely different scenario. The power of literature to make us live distant realities and their transference to real-life alterations has now turned to a newly emerging dichotomy and the year 2020 marks new life experiences for most of us reading this.

The present 'pandemic' has undoubtedly made us question our psychological associations to this word so far. It is not an ignorant or insensitive fact that most of us in our twenties might not remember the Spanish Flu for the deaths it caused, but just as the disease that turned Edward Cullen to a vampire. But the time is changing and so are our notions surrounding it.

~ Amrita Sharma

She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in English from the Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow. Her works have previously been published in *Café Dissensus*, *Everyday*, *Confluence*, *Borderless Journal*, *Women's Web*, *Tell Me Your Story*, *Muse India*, *New Academia*, *GNOSIS*, *Dialogue*, *The Criterion*, *Episteme* and *Ashvamegh*.





CYBERCULTURE AND EMERGING TRENDS IN EDUCATION

In the contemporary era, teaching and learning are no longer confined within the four walls of the classroom. Virtual world and emerging trends in the field of technology have taken a toll over the entire conventional education system. In the postmodern era, we no longer have a conventional way of teaching. The increasing globalization has made a significant contribution to the field of education as well. Students are becoming more techno-savvy and more inclined towards procuring a digital text instead of a printed one. Print media is slowly and gradually being replaced by the digitalized version of the text. There are various reasons for this change but the first one is that the digital text is portable, mobile and easy to access. Education technology and e-learning have helped a lot in maximizing the process of learning. E-tutorials are helping the students to understand the subject with the help of demonstrations.

Increasing digitalization is helping the world to know more about the existing researches and ongoing projects. This further helps the academicians to develop more on the existing accounts. The youth of the contemporary era is exposed to cyberspace from its very inception.

The virtual world is the most powerful agent which governs the life of almost every individual. Our life is as much governed by cyberculture as it is influenced by the culture or tradition that we follow in the societal space. In the contemporary world, cyberspace has shrunk the concrete boundaries of the continents and at the same time, it has increased global connectivity for better trade and e-commerce. Any social issue or problem can be brought into the limelight in a fraction of a second. This has created a platform where people can share their ideas. Due to the ongoing pandemic everyday more and more new platforms are coming up. Apart from its myriad benefits, there are some

demerits too which needs special mention. This platform can also be misused to convey manipulated or fake data which can ruin the honour of reputed individuals. It can spread rumours in no time. Cyberspace is the arena that is shared by almost all individuals where they can get the latest information concerning the changes happening in the economy or other socio-political upheavals. The increasing use of e-learning is also benefiting the underprivileged section of the society. Cyberspace can be used as a platform to express our ideological and political inclinations. This is the best way to reach out to the masses. The social constructions of cyberspace are shaping the disposition of earthly beings. Researchers and academicians constantly intend to explore the relationship of technological developments with human beings and evaluate their impact on

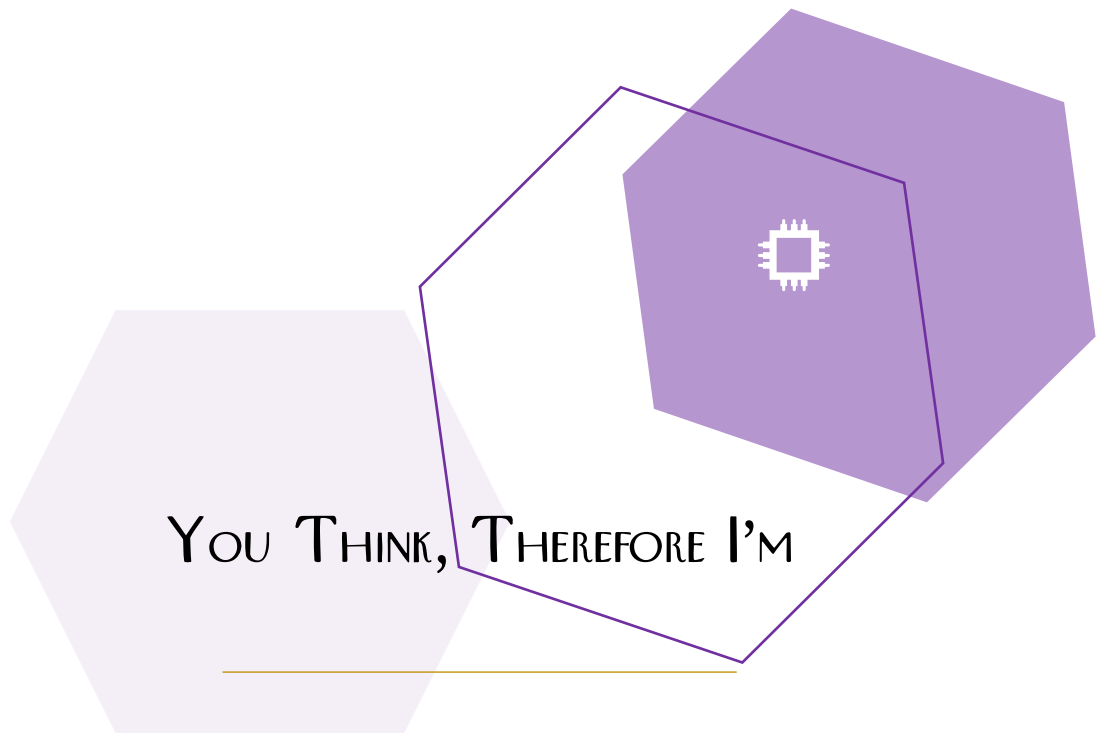
the disposition of people. It also focuses on the socio-political transformations that occur in cyberspace which directly influence the mental attitudes of the masses.

The increasing use of various virtual platforms is helping in casting a new world which is different from the one in which we exist. It is impacting our psycho-social well-being. The increasing use of media and other platforms are metamorphosing us into machines. Our existence in the present times is measured by evaluating our productivity online. Being academicians and researchers we must carve new ways of teaching and learning. Since this is the only possible way through which we can keep our discussion forums open, we cannot deny the fact that in these difficult times of pandemic, the virtual world is the need of the hour.

~ Saumya Srivastava

She is a Ph.D. Scholar at the Department of English and M.E.L., University of Lucknow. A creative writer and an academic researcher, her area of interests include Disability Studies and Indian writing in English.





The famous quote “No man is an island” by John Donne seems to reverberate and to make more sense in this cataclysmic situation. Naturally, we and our existence are connected with one another in myriad ways. Undeniably, one cannot exist in isolation. And, a mere ‘perception that I exist’ does not suffice to prove this existence. We fulfil each other's existence and that is why 'we' (un)knowingly desire to be desired, accepted, liked, appreciated, remembered, acknowledged by 'others' to believe that we 'exist'.

Since the inception of life on earth, it takes two to bring a new life into existence. For instance, a book has no existence without its readers, the process of communication is incomplete if it has the sender but no receiver, a teacher has no purpose without its students, a doctor needs patient, and vice versa. Diseases need a vaccine and without it, it is as lethal as Corona virus. The old saying, it always takes

two to tango, seems obvious. Even a YouTube video or any social media post is nothing without the views and likes of 'others'. In the post-human era, one can think of kicking out humans from their life and hire a robot which could assist them in almost everything. But still, we need assurance, the acknowledgement of the fact that we 'exist'. It is high time for us to reassert a belief in humanism which stands in sharp contrast with the philosophy of solipsism.

This pandemic has destroyed innumerable lives in different ways. It has killed not only the living but the dreams of those who unrelentingly struggle to live. The existential question- to live or not to live, is looming over many lives. People are taking different measures to cope with the trauma fomented by the pandemic. Some are making entertaining videos to channel their distressing emotions towards something positive and to earn money while many have started their own YouTube

channels to independently showcase their unique talent to the world but (un)fortunately, again, we need people to like, share, and subscribe to our showcased talent streaming on various social media platforms. We can also buy paid followers/likes for sometime but would this dependency on technology prevail the entire existence of humans?! Even a commodity is useless without its consumer(s). A king/monarch is nothing without its people, its subordinates. So how can a person prove that s/he exists? It is by affirming that we define each other and are not self-sufficient. Whether we believe it or not, we never had and never will exist alone. Nature too teaches us so! Sun rises to let in the light and sets to let in the night. Even, the existence of God becomes questionable if his creatures forget or deny his existence.

Actually, this pandemic has made us

realize that we should care about fellow humans because we can buy expensive mobiles but not the persons we call. The only positive side of this taxing situation is that it has made us understand that if we want to make our lives easier and better then we should try to ease others' sufferings and pains. It has proved that we belong to each other and fellow humans' wellbeing is as important as ours because 'your' health would potentially determine 'mine'. We need to learn that we create, complete and sustain each other's existence because "you think, therefore I'm" and vice versa!

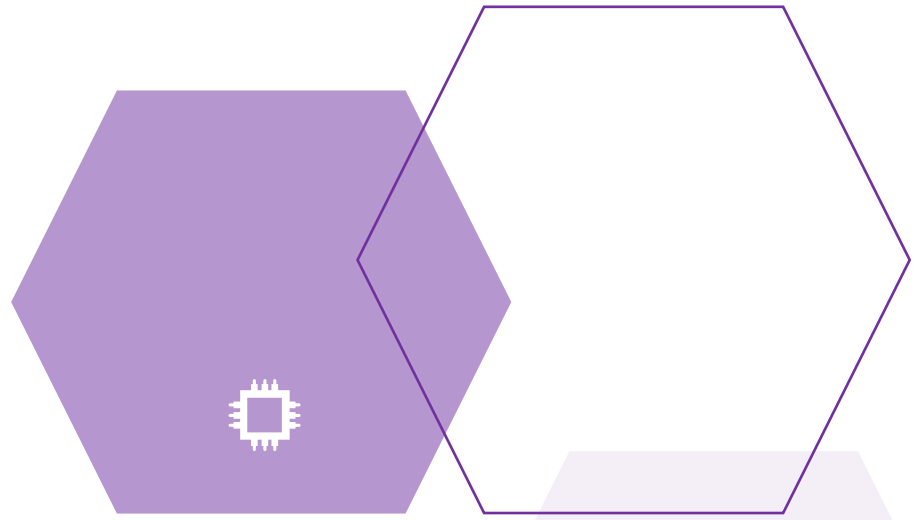
It cannot be denied that such a positive attitude towards life has been appropriated by many during the pandemic in different ways and should remain in practice for healthy and happy survival and in an unexpected way.

~ Mehar Jahan Bushra



Is currently pursuing her Ph.D. (English) from the University of Lucknow. She did her graduation and masters in English Literature from the University of Lucknow. Her area of research includes postmodern fiction and narrative construction of reality. She has a deep interest in the upsurging concepts like history as fiction and memory studies in literature.





HOPE IS ALL WE HAVE

Perseverance will make us achieve everything we want. That's what has been taught to us. That's not true: we will lose at times even after putting our 100%. We will feel dejected and that's fine because so does everyone else.

Remember John Greene wrote: this world is not a wish-granting factory. He is absolutely right. Our plans will fail; it could be because of a pandemic or something else. What we need is to adapt. We need to let go what didn't work for us and try to focus on possibilities instead of being depressed by the failures.

We all have read about the famous personalities who succeeded after failing for numerous times. They are the living proof that not only hard work but determination and endurance are prerequisites for success. We all become successful in our own way. We succeed by getting our dream job, by supporting our

family or at times only by surviving and keep going.

In times like these when everyone is struggling because of the pandemic, we should be thankful for what we have. In this world, some people are less fortunate than us. We have to work from home so we should be thankful that we are not laid off. If students are attending online classes then we should be thankful that even in such times we are getting educated and have all the facilities at the home so that we don't need to leave our house. If we don't have our job or are unable to get the education then we should be thankful that we are alive.

Life is a precious gift. One should value it and make wise use of it- living our life in the best possible way and making something good out of it. Being a social animal, we need to contribute to society. So our action should be such that they will not only lead to personal growth but also will be beneficial for society.

Mahatma Gandhi is one such example; he introspected to improve as a person & consequently; he helped the whole nation to change their perspective & taught a non-violent way of living.

2020 has been a tough year, we lost so many beautiful souls: Known, Unknown, Commoner and Celebrity. May their souls rest in peace! We need to thank God for keeping us alive & going. Even in scriptures committing suicide is a sin. We should always try to survive

instead of giving up. If we follow religion vigilantly, then we will also value life as this is what religion teaches, to value your own & fellow beings' life.

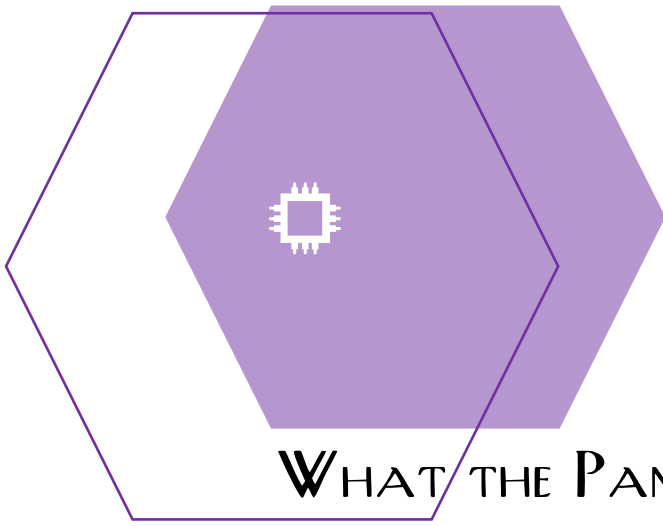
In the end, I reiterate “DON'T GIVE UP HOPE” as it's a beautiful thing which helps us in looking at the pretty side of life. Let's pray together that with the end of 2020, our lots of miseries would also end & with the commencement of 2021 our good time will also start. But it's hope & hope is all we have.

~ Garima Yadav



She is a Research Scholar at the Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow. An aspiring writer and poet, she is currently pursuing her research in the area of gender identity across the literary realm.





WHAT THE PANDEMIC TAUGHT US...

On 24 March when I switched on the television, every news channel was broadcasting the same news: “The Government of India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has ordered a nationwide lockdown for 21 days...,” limiting movement of the entire 1.3 billion population of India as a preventive measure against COVID-19 pandemic in India.

It has been more than six months since the lockdown was imposed. No one could have ever imagined that a time would come when we would be caged in our own homes! The term “pandemic” was also something new for the majority of the population... COVID-19 not only limited our movement for a few months but has brought major changes in our lives.

The arrival of COVID-19 was silent and slow but now it is spreading like a forest fire... from one dry leaf to another...as COVID-19 is spreading from one human being to many others! It has taught us many lessons:

Neither **military power nor wealth can stop a destructive pandemic**; human health and health of the planet go hand in hand. We must now realize that healthy societies cannot sustain in an unhealthy and polluted environment. The “Swachh Bharat” campaign just became a trending hash tag on social media. Despite the alarming reminders of the World Health Organization regarding the rise in pollution and environmental degradation, we did not make any major change in our lifestyle to resolve the issue. We were not ready to keep our surroundings clean and adopt eco-friendly ways of living. It was necessary to burn petrol/diesel and increase the pollution otherwise how can we call ourselves the “smartest species on earth!” Like our mothers, Mother Nature also has a lot of tolerance power but when pushed to the extreme, she strikes back with anger to teach us a lesson.

Another lesson we have learnt is to **value our relationships**, for we humans are social

beings and cannot survive without interacting with our loved ones. Even though we are living in a digital era, there is no substitute for real human contact. The virtual interactions cannot fulfil the communication gap and physical distance ... it is our family that supports us in our good and bad times. Well, a positive impact of COVID-19 on our life is that the ones who complained about lack of time and never-ending work got quality time to spend with their families. It rejuvenated the bond within the families.

The so-called **gendered roles** got exchanged, maybe for a while ... but at least marked the arrival of a liberal society in which men do not shy away from doing household chores. The entry of men in the kitchen made men realize the multidimensional roles played by women... how gracefully they handle both their personal and professional lives without complaining. This should not be only a short-lived change in our society but a habit that needs to be inculcated in the minds of the coming generation as they need to realize that “a woman is not just a womb” but a holistic human being just like a man. She also has feelings, emotions and desires which need to be heard and fulfilled.

Cultural dynamics also got transformed due to the pandemic. The fat Indian wedding functions are now undergoing a diet! Well, this reduced the budget and tension of the families

where the marriage was about to happen. Couples and their families could enjoy the function more as compared to the normal setting where the guests would seek all the attention. This taught us that happiness lies in small things in life. But, the negative impact was on the wedding industry across the world. The global economic crisis due to the Great Lockdown has impacted our lives adversely and it won't be easy to recover from this.

COVID-19 demonstrates to us the **Value of freedom** which we had taken away from animals by putting them inside a zoo and restricting their freedom. Now all of us can very well understand how animals and birds feel when they are locked up inside a cage. Thus the habit of interfering with Nature should change. In most of our endeavours, we are interdependent. In the cut-throat competition, we had forgotten the interdependence: that one individual cannot succeed without the cooperation of others. We cooperate at many levels: local, provincial, national, cultural, economic, social, political, and environmental and the list goes on. This is an alarming signal for the human race that the principle of “Vasudeva Kutumbakam”, that is, “this World is my family” needs to be practised by all of us irrespective of nation, religion, community, gender, race or class we belong to. It is time to realize that we are first and foremost humans, global citizens, and then comes any other

identity. When this ideal is realised only then we will be able to cope with the pandemic and

face the problems of rising unemployment and natural calamities awaiting us in the near future.

~ Pragya Tiwari



She is a freelance writer and is currently working on a series of feminist short stories. She has won prizes in several creative writing competitions. She loves to put her life events and experiences into perspective through writing.





Nobody thought it would be serious, no one took it seriously, and yes we all thought it was just some Chinese diversion but it came to reality. COVID-19 is called; it has taken, destroyed, shattered and put on hold too many lives. It has indeed taught people what life is; life is too short and needs to be embraced each moment. It all started in Wuhan, China in December 2019 but it is now a global pandemic.

It has brought tears, sufferings and pains to people and yes we are scared for our lives. It has taken our freedom, our joy and our existence in the entire world. It has destroyed many lives, it has left so many kids orphaned, men and women widowed, and of course it has shaken all human existence. When will the cure be found? Everyone is asking this question. We are told to take precautions but lives are lost each day.

Is it the end time as the Bible declared it in Luke 21:11? The pestilences we are told?

These are questions most Christians ask. This pandemic has taken away life from people. Will our lives be normal? Maybe NO! It has changed everything, people have lost jobs, the education system is suffering and most people across the world are left with uncertainty about their future, about what awaits them.

The origin of the pandemic is itself perplexing. Some say it is just a manmade disease used as a tool to reduce the population of the world or to thwart the economic stability. But how could a human being have such a satanic heart to affect other fellow human beings? It is so devastating; how people can be so heartless if this is true? People are in the state of confusion, trying to figure out what the real truth is.

2020, a year I was happily looking forward to, the year for the completion of my course. Two years away from home is not very easy. I made sacrifices because I was looking for my goal- a great achievement to me. I did not

know things would take a different turn- an ugly turn. I was supposed to be home but it is not possible for me to do so. My life is stranded, no turning back or going forward. We are told to follow the rules during lockdown, to wear a mask every time, to maintain social distancing; these are the most important words in this era. Who would have thought that hugging someone will be prohibited? Freedom of movement will be curbed? This is how our lives have changed within the blink of an eye. These six months during this pandemic seem to be a decade of long-suffering.

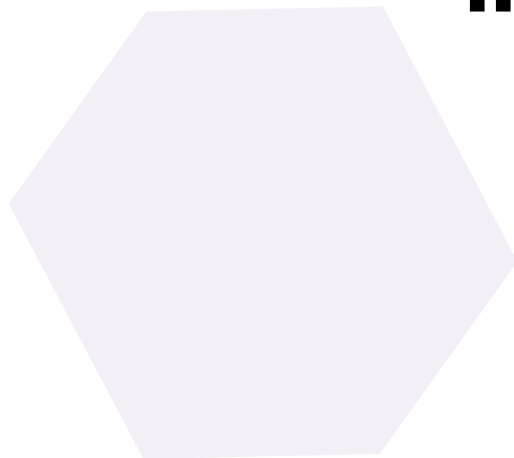
Corona has brought fear; people are

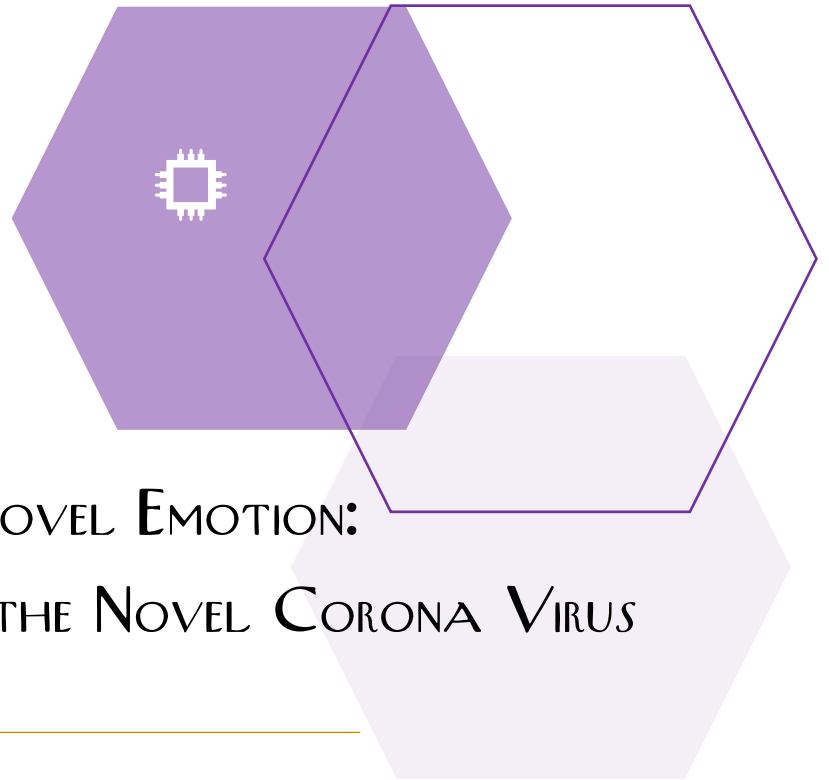
afraid to go out as they do not know who is a carrier of the virus among the people they are to meet at work or elsewhere. People are just stuck in their homes in the name of self-isolation. Not only people are fearful but it has also affected mental health by being forced to stay at homes. There are more cases of women and child abuse recorded on daily basis. Isn't this the best time for people to spend unplanned quality time with their loved ones and cherish each and every moment? We should learn to turn our inconveniences into our advantages. This is how we can combat the disastrous monster threatening the world.

~ Khoboso Makhabane



She is an M.A. English fourth semester student from the University of Lucknow. She is a soft-hearted woman who adapts to any situation she comes across. She is a strong, fearless and powerful African queen who never gives up. She highly believes in the saying “never stop until something happens”.





THE NOVEL EMOTION: THE NOVELTY OF THE NOVEL CORONA VIRUS

Everybody must have laughed or at least heard or watched one of those jokes which tend to mock people with disability. The blind, the deaf, the dumb- all have been the butt of jokes in real and reel life. It became a popular practice in cinema to invoke laughter by making fun of people with disability. We watch, we laugh and we forget- but the scars remain on the minds of those who suffer from a disability.

Now, this ongoing pandemic has brought fear and panic with it resulting in increased awareness concerning physical and mental wellbeing. Everybody has become concerned to prevent themselves from contracting the virus. Suddenly everybody has become an expert on nutrition and every promotional advertisement uses the word “immunity” for selling their product. Every

product claims to boost this “immunity” of ours. Healthcare industry became active and their business has grown since the onset of the disease. Suddenly the government and its officials became earnestly concerned with the health of common people. Hospital wards were extended and new facilities were set up. Everything was done at a war footing.

The question which arises here is: “Why was this not done for common people when COVID-19 wasn’t heard of?” Suddenly every national and international agency became obsessed with the health of common people. Every year two hundred thousand patients are added in the existing number of end-stage renal disease patients which requires dialysis or transplantation as on the only existing treatment available. Cancer takes a toll on the lives of thousands every year. Drinking polluted

water, food adulteration and other such man-made hazards are identified as the leading causes for such fatal diseases. While the officials suddenly became so active and vigilant after the arrival of the virus, the same officials slept a sound sleep earlier. Several countries have been blaming China for the mess and they are most probably right in doing so. Who then is to be blamed for other diseases such as dengue, cancer or liver and kidney dysfunction? The lack of essential sanitation and laxity in implementation of laws have enabled the industrial sector to go on contaminating drinking water and air. The same is true for food adulteration.

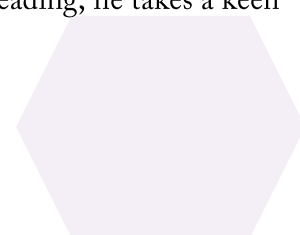
People who now have become so affectionate, at least, according to their social media stories, never even bothered to empathise with the sick and the disabled. It is clear that until one feels threatened for one's life, one does not understand the pain of others. While the use of the term "differently-abled" instead of the word "disabled" is commendable, mere changing of words doesn't seem to affect the prejudice people have against the sick and the

disabled. The unsympathetic and insensitive system does not seem to care for this marginalised population. While the use of facemasks has been made compulsory, a year ago I was not allowed to carry one inside an examination centre. "Why did u come to take the exam when you need a mask to protect yourself?" This was the reply, which the police officer gave when I requested him to allow me a small plain colour handkerchief to cover my nose and mouth. Now without a mask, you cannot enter one. Tables have turned. The youth, which used to be occupied with late-night parties, is now concerned for their and other people's physical and mental wellbeing. The pandemic has brought many negatives with itself but, it has in the process, raised consciousness about the physical and mental wellbeing of our loved ones and ourselves and in extension for others as well. It has made people realise the fear, which the terminally ill have to face with death lingering around them. The newly realised emotion of "empathy" is in vogue now and we hope it remains so forever.

~ Rajeev Ratn Sahu

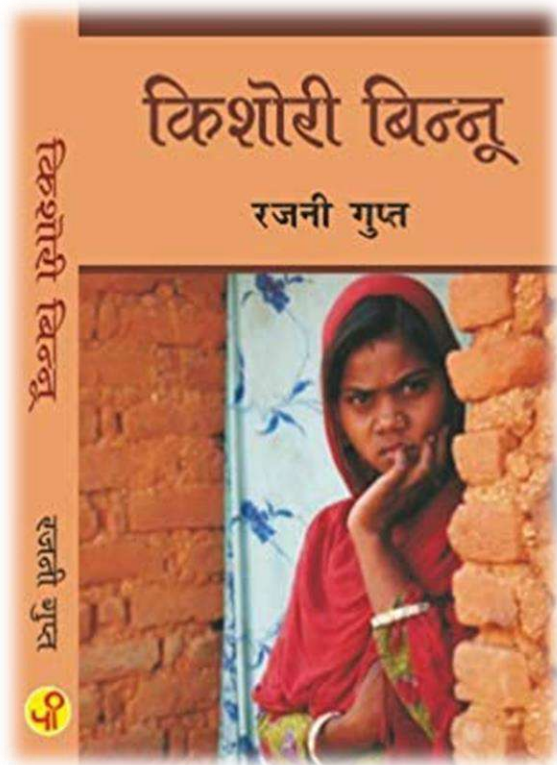


He is a Junior Research Fellow at the Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow. He is currently researching on supernatural literature. In addition to his love for reading, he takes a keen interest in Numismatics and Swimming.



BOOK REVIEW

A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE



Title	: KISHORI BINNU
Author	: Rajani Gupta
Publisher	: Paandulipi Publication Private Limited, 2018
Price	: ₹ 250/-
Pages	: 208

Women are generally perceived as weak and dependent. It's a common notion to identify her as someone's daughter, sister, wife, or mother. There is no doubt that the position of women in our patriarchal society has changed to a great extent in the last few decades. But still, we could not fully grasp the fact that women can survive on their own. Rajani Gupta in her novel Kishori Binnu projects this spirit of resilience, independence, and survival of women in her lead protagonist Kishori. Kishori Binnu encompasses the life of women belonging to three different generations, who have their own conflicts and varying approaches for survival in the changing modern era. Kishori is a term used for girls in their growing age, an age where hope for future flutters in the heart of a girl. Kishori is also the age where a

girl is supposed to be married off as it is the ripe age of marrying a girl in our society.

Rajani Gupta hails from Chirgaon, a town in Jhansi District of Uttar Pradesh. Also the birthplace of prominent modern Hindi poet Maithili Sharan Gupta. In her novel *Kishori Binu*, she tells a story of a woman whose life resonates with every third woman of Bundelkhand. It's a story of a girl named Kishori, who was married off at a young age. Because of being born as a girl she was deprived of education, despite her father being the headmaster of the primary school of the village. She could only witness a few years of blissful marriage when her husband was murdered on an uneventful night. This marks the beginning of a difficult life ahead for Kishori. She is challenged at every step of her life, tragedies become an integral part of her life, and happiness is a fluke to her amidst the harsh reality of life. What stands Kishori apart is her zealous attitude, which makes her keep going and make the best of what she has in her life. Kishori grew up in an environment where girls were meant to be confined to household chores. But when the time comes she donned the role of bread earner for her family despite being not highly qualified and inexperienced in the world of men. The intricate and raw details of Bundelkhand enriches the experience of the readers.

Bundelkhand is the native place of Rajani Gupta and she maximizes this experience by exploring the cultural as well as through linguistic aspects in the novel. She touches upon many social issues such as crime prevalent in the rural sections of Bundelkhand, inter-religion marriage, teenage pregnancy, etc.

Kishori Binu also touches upon many sensitive issues related to women in a subtle way. The neglect of womanhood as reflected in the character of Baisaab – the mother of Kishori Binu. In Baisaab we see the typical stereotyping of women in a patriarchal society. She is a devoted wife and mother. Also, a silent spectator who has to endure the presence of another woman in her husband's life. Despite being a passive character, Baisaab, who generally doesn't get a chance of voicing her opinion throughout the novel, is the only person who acts as an anchor in Kishori's turbulent life. In Baisaab we can see the image of women around us. These are the women who devote their entire life looking after their families without expecting anything in return. Women like Baisaab are resilient against the atrocities faced by them. Their strength lies probably in their silence. Kishori's daughters encapsulate the dilemma of being tied to their traditional roots to exploring their identities in the

changing modern times. The novel also strikes a contrast between the affectionate bond of Kishori and her mother to the turbulent relationship between Kishori and her daughters - Anita, Rita, and Rani. Through Anita, the writer questions the existence of the institution of marriage as - a means of fulfilling social norms, or is it an individual choice? Rita, on the other hand, suffers because of her wrong decisions taken in the innocence of youth, and being a girl she had to face graver consequences and was given no alternate option of redeeming her mistakes. Rani has her own dreams and aspirations. All three of them struggle against the hardships they come across and do their best to establish their identities in the male-centric society.

Rajani Gupta has well-crafted the novel around the ethnic culture of Bundelkhand. The essence of the Bundelkhandi language enriches the narration and adds more authenticity to the

characters. Although she could have refrained from adding a few minor plots as the stereotyped trope of painting Kishori's in-laws as being mean and outright selfish, with no ounce of affection even towards their grandchildren. Though in Jaipal, Kishori's husband we find an obedient son, loving husband, caring son-in-law, doting father, and a progressive thinker of society, which is a welcome change as opposed to portraying men as cruel and obnoxious. The writer captures the beauty of understanding, mutual respect, and love in the sacred relation of Kishori and Jaipal. Kishori Binu emphasizes the fact that a woman is equally capable of being bread earner or fitting in any role, as she is effective in the role of house maker. The sheer will of survival keeps them moving against all odds in the search for a better future for themselves and their families, which may or may not be met in the end, but their journey of resilience continues.

~ Nikita Yadav



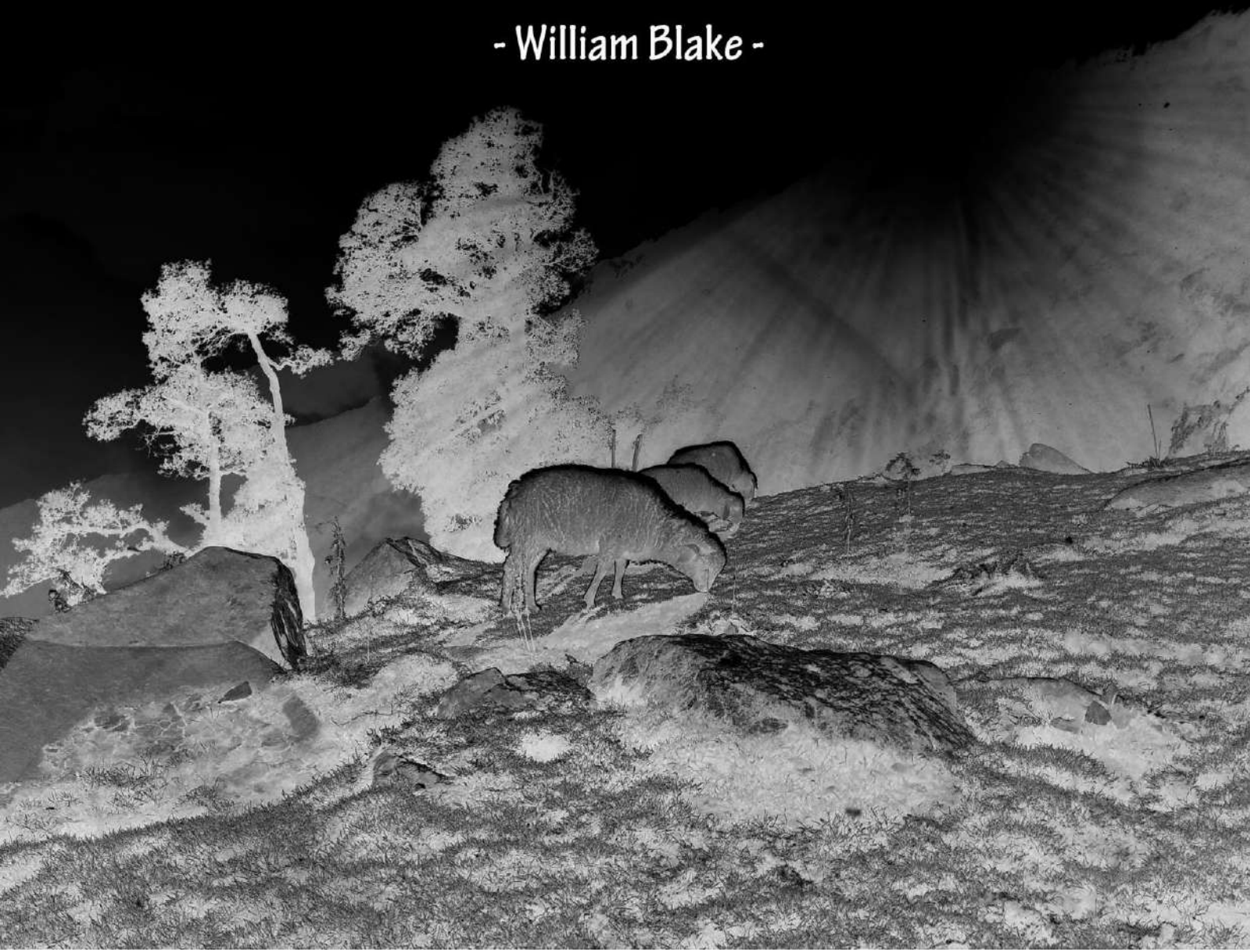
She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in English Literature from the University Of Lucknow. Her area of research includes feminist discourse and psychoanalytical approach towards maternal thinking.



FICTION

*“Do what you will, this world’s a fiction
and is made up of contradiction.”*

- William Blake -





THE STATIONMASTER'S DAUGHTER

They say it came in the dead of the night. Soundlessly, it touched softly, the smallest and the biggest of men, a masked intruder whose kiss lighted the heart and mind on fire and men and women turned into animals.

Outside, the rain kept falling. Pitifully. Little bird he'd called her. With his moist eyes, he stood beside the bed with frozen hands and feet and looked down at the tiny body that had not moved since last night. In that deserted valley of hard frost, the stationmaster had kept the blinds open. Grey and dreary light poured in from the windows and bathed the dust clad books in a deep melancholy. The window was rattling in the wind and the rain and inside, the warmth had caused the windows to develop tears which fell soundlessly. Three crows, their feathers damp and shiny sat perched atop the train tracks as the dark clouds bathed their

blackness. They looked for signs of life. The absence of trains and travellers had cost them much in terms of food. Their eyes were restless and beady as they looked upwards at the sky. Then one flew and sat at the weeping window of the station cottage, the other flew to the platform and the third remained on the tracks and all three listened to the soundless steps of a man exiting the cottage with a large black raincoat, gloved hands and a shiny mask which covered his face.

Inside, the old stationmaster bit down on his hand. The doctor had just refused treatment. He looked at his little girl lying in the bed, her grey little face and dry half closed lips. A gust of wind blew hard and the tall grass in the back garden waved in the wind, forming silken creases not unlike how the forgotten wet bedsheet on the clothesline fluttered.

The neighbour's two daughters had slept in the barn for a fortnight. They had grown increasingly mad, as the disease established inside their hearts, and as the moon changed her phases, their madness seemed to grow. Each night, strange voices were heard from the dead bolted barn. Tortured little souls. Each night the little girl had heard those sounds. Painful sounds which the wind took with herself as each howl mixed with her airy softness beating around every corner of the valley.

The trains had stopped around that time. They have heard that no grain would be brought in from the cities. The stationmaster's salary had been halved. The old man lighted his tobacco and looked over his daughter who was drenched in sweat, her hair lay damp and limp over the pillow. The little head, so delicate and lovely had been drained of much of its life and now its flesh seemed to waste away along with her. The night would be fateful, the doctor had said. No treatment would make it better. The little birds outside and above had listened. The old man looked with hope, his eyes unmoving. The howls of the neighbouring barn had grown weaker, now there was only low whimpering. The man had prayed to all the gods and had decided that his daughter would wake up tomorrow. She would want to eat. But then, there was nothing much at home.

His eyes shone for a moment. Perhaps his resolution was strengthened because of his faith that she would get better. He knew she would. Quietly, he got up, not touching her and placed a heavy sheepskin blanket on her tiny body. She looked so peaceful. He opened the cold door and looked behind one more time and then after closing the door, readied his cart and pulled out the little goat he intended to sell. The hush of the mid night was disturbed by the panicked bleating of the little goat. Distressed at being taken away, her mother woke everyone and for a few minutes, the valley lit up with the bleats of distressed goat mothers and goat fathers. The three crows joined in the music of the goats in the haunted dead valley of desperation.

The rain clouds copper with the hiding moon saw the little cart disappear in the distance on the deserted town road and the train tracks ran along with it, glistening and wet. The man rode away, for him it was only a few hours' worth of wait and then his daughter would want to eat. He roamed the naked streets of the town but the markets were closed shut. He was tired too, not having had anything to eat all day yesterday. With his little goat in hand, he peddled his ware from door to door, yet no house gave any signs of life. The world had come to a halt. People were wary and afraid. Only a few nights ago a riot had broken out and then

many had left the town for their villages. It was close to morning. Defeated, the old man climbed up his cart laboriously and felt that his old hands and feet could not go much longer without food.

The sky was would soon turn cobalt blue with dawn and in its anticipation, the cottage seemed much more welcoming to the old man than before. He climbed down with the little goat in hand again and once again heard the animal sounds of two girls from the neighbouring barn and the goats and chickens walked restless in his own. Perhaps the goat mother had sensed the return. But soon, with deft hands, the old man flayed the little goat and his hands now bloodied gutted her lifeless body and he carefully carved out her flesh. Building a little fire, he roasted the fresh meat and his hands trembled as the skewers got hot. And then everything went silent. The world had lost to hunger and the taste of flesh drowned out every sound. The

body wanted life and with each taste, it gained some. Having feasted upon flesh, the man heard some sounds again and life was restored. 'My daughter!', he thought and rushed to the cottage door and unlocked the gate and stepped inside. His lovely daughter, frail and thin was standing by the window looking out at the crow which peered in curiously. Tears rolled down his cheeks and his trembling body struggled to wipe them with his bloodied sleeves. He leapt to take her in his arms but the unmistakable gnashing of the teeth and the low growl emanating from the tiny chest told him that the night was lost. Her teeth sunk into the gaunt old flesh of the man but he let her consume him. He just let her. Out of pity. Out of love.

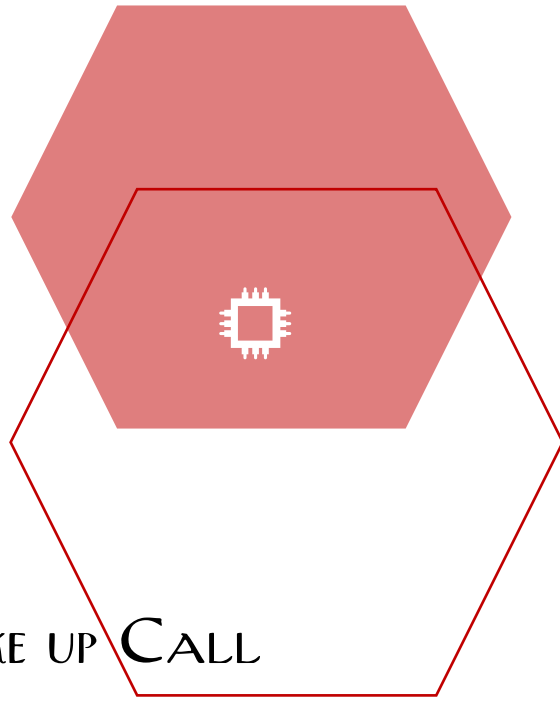
Outside the goats bleated again and the three crows cawed. The neighboring barn came alive with howls again and the valley welcomed its requiem with the warming rise of the sun.

~ Shourya Tamta



I am fond of books and music and violin renditions of classical pieces by Jascha Heifetz. I have a YouTube channel by the name of 'a corner full of books' where I talk of books and recite poetry.





THE WAKE UP CALL

DAYLIGHT. EXT. Moving in the city of Lucknow.

Closing in on a TREE in a PARK.

TWEETY and SWEETY are TWO SPAROWS SITTING on the BRANCH OF THE TREE.

NO HUMANS can be seen as it is time of LOCKDOWN due to OUTBREAK OF CORONAVIRUS.

TWEETY and SWEETY are DANCING on the branches and FLAPPING their WINGS and TWITTERING in JOY.

TWEETY: Sweety from many days humans are inside their homes and because of that the

sky is getting clear, the river water is getting pure and the earth has turned greener than before. This is a good sign and I am really feeling happy.

SWEETY: Yes, I am also happy for that. Mother nature is healing itself. No cars on the streets, industries and factories are shut down and all the activities that were harming the environment are at halt.

TWEETY: Do you know the reason why the humans are not coming out of their house?

SWEETY: Flappy told me yesterday that there is outbreak of pandemic COVID-19 all over the world and to curb the spread of disease humans have locked themselves inside their homes. Millions of people are

dying all over the world due to this deadly disease.

TWEETY: How does Flappy know about this pandemic?

SWEETY: She reads newspaper sitting on a branch of a MANGO TREE at Mr. Sharma's house.

TWEETY: They are really facing tough times.

SWEETY: They are struggling to survive. I hope after this pandemic, they will realize how much harm they did to the environment due to their activities.

TWEETY: Before this lockdown humans were in rush for earning money and never thought about the conservation of resources that the earth was giving them.

SWEETY: They were becoming selfish day by day. They were cutting the trees for their own profit and never an initiative to plant one. This pandemic is teaching them a lifelong lesson.

TWEETY: Many of our friends in the cities and in the jungle died due to cutting of trees and air pollution.

SWEETY: The virus has not come to punish them but to give them a wakeup call.

TWEETY: They never listened to the cry of mother earth. The virus is making them

listen to the cry of mother earth due to forest fires, the melting glaciers and the scream when she could not breathe due to polluted air.

SWEETY: They were sowing the seeds of their own destruction and now they are paying the price.

TWEETY: If they don't understand it now then may be when the virus comes next time it will come even stronger.

SWEETY: I wish it does not happen.

TWEETY: They have to come up with ideas to save our mother earth. It is the only chance for them to change.

They both look up at the sky and saw a FLOCK OF BRIDS flying in the sky.

TWEETY: Look Mom and Dad flying with our flock.

SWEETY: Let us go and embrace the freshness of clear sky.

EXIT PARK.

They both join the FLOCK OF BIRDS
FLYING IN THE SKY in which their mom
and dad are there. The FLOCK is making

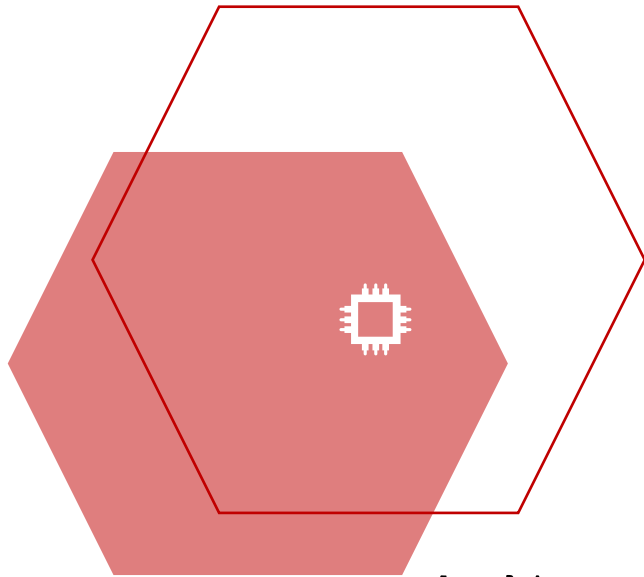
BEAUTIFUL FORMATIONS in THE
BLUE SKY.

~ Richa Modanwal

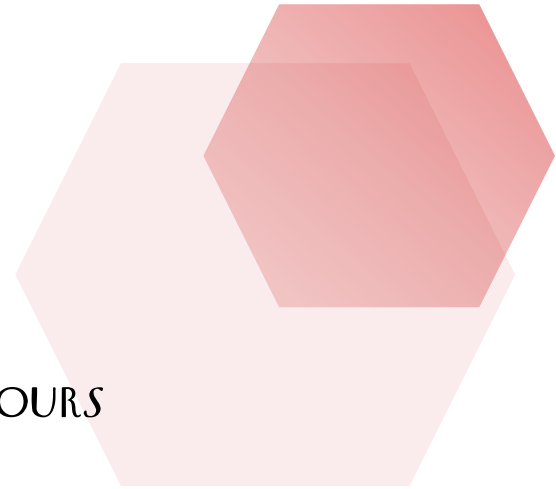


She is a graduate in Bachelor of Arts from University of Lucknow. I am a passionate writer and a voracious reader. I am also curious to know about new things.





IT NEVER RAINS BUT POURS



As she woke up, she fumbled for her watch and took a glance at the time. Realising that it was late, she stumbled out of bed and shuffled towards the window, yanked it open and peeped outside. There, the atmosphere was tense and saturated with sadness, the firmament was as heavy as lead and it took no psychiatrist to figure out that it would soon rain cats and dogs. Instantaneously, she tip-toed towards the bathroom where she took a luke-warm shower. Then she dashed to the kitchen where she gobbled two slices of bread and a half-filled cup of coffee and then hurried down the road where her fiancé was waiting for her.

Lineo had spent half of the previous night in the kitchen preparing mouth-

watering food for her fiancé. It was the day after which phase two of lockdown in Lesotho was lifted, and like everybody else, she could not wait to finally breathe from outside her house. For quite some time she had only been in touch with her man telephonically and at that time she was on the verge of dissection due to the eagerness and longing of being in his arms, as an old age adage rightly says: "Distances make the heart grow fonder."

As she approached, she could not believe her eyes and her face was left with no choice but to wear a wide smile. Getting closer and closer, she perceived the driver's door of a large Ferrari opening and out of it came a dark-skinned man, with his neatly trimmed beard cascading from the front of his ears through to the black N95 mask he

was wearing. He was quite a catch! Instead of him embracing her, he reached out to the door behind the driver's seat and pulled out a pack of blue disposable cotton masks and a small bottle with transparent contents which in no time became clear to her that it was a hand sanitizer.

"Hey stranger, long time!" Thuso exclaimed as he shoved a pack of masks under his arm and sanitized his hands. While he was doing all these, the smile under the mask that cast Lineo under its spell was radiated in his eyes. "Give me your hand." He instructed while he stretched his hand to put a few drops of sanitizer in her hands, which she slowly and thoroughly applied. Thuso then unpacked and pulled out one piece of mask and handed it over to her. "Observing social distancing rules, huh?" She enquired, deeply, looking up to him since he was a few inches taller. Her eyes were moving inquisitively to and from both his eyes, giving him that "how-long-will-you-manage-to-keep-this-distance" look.

No sooner had her eyes finished doing the magic work than he threw the masks back into the car through the window and grabbed her. He passionately embraced her and clearly due to the strong chemistry between the two, Lineo too let no other minute lapse before she found herself buried in his arms. Moments later, they let

go of each other and Thuso escorted her to the passenger door which he opened for her and shut after she got herself comfortable on the heated leather seat. He walked around the car back to the driver's seat where he energetically hopped in and locked the doors as he removed his mask and sighed with relief. Before he could turn on the ignition, he held her hand so tightly that it almost ached and off they drove.

Light droplets of scattered cloudburst had begun pattering when they drew in front of a supermarket. Thuso wanted to buy a few things to pamper his girlfriend after such a long time. "I need to buy something to eat and uh..." He looked into the distance in an effort to think. "We'll also pass by the pub to grab some drinks to last us the entire weekend." He added. "Oh okay, I had prepared a little something which we can enjoy later. I wanted to add a touch of me to remind you of what you have been missing." Lineo answered as she softly stoke his chin beard.

"What do you have, let me see!" Thuso said with great enthusiasm. She handed him a cooler bag which she had earlier put on the dashboard. As he opened it, his sense of smell was greeted by the inviting aroma of spices, and upon uncovering the lunchbox, his eye met good-looking juicy *nyekoe*, (sorghum cooked together with beans). He inhaled with

satisfaction and his stomach responded with a growl. "I last saw this when I was in high school!" He remarked with appreciation. It was indeed uncommon for one to just wake up one day cooking such food, for the mere reason that it is regarded as traditional food, it was only seen and eaten on special occasions like cultural day celebrations in African communities.

When it was announced that there was going to be lockdown some weeks ago, Lineo was one of the people who was wise enough to buy durable food to ensure that she did not run out of food among which she had grains in large quantities. Not only did this come as a shock to the whole world, but it has also brought confusion and uncertainty. In the first phase of lockdown, people had taken this matter so lightly that they did not think it would last much longer, little did they know that the worst was yet to come.

"Okay sweetheart, I'll be back in a sec." Thuso said as he unlocked the door readying himself to leave, but before he could get the door opened, Lineo held him by the arm and asked; "I thought I was going with you to choose what I want?" Thuso reminded her of how long they had been together, and that he knew exactly what she needed. He also added that he could not let her walk in the rain because he loved her so much that it would kill him to

see her sick. He went out and splashed across the wet road towards the shop where he quickly selected items from the shelves. Nonetheless, he took much longer in there because only 30% of the staff had been reinstated to work as one of the measures taken to reduce the spread of the corona virus, so pay points were so limited that it felt like he took forever.

After what seemed like an eternity, he came out with parcels in his both hands and it took no brainer to guess that they were heavy. The downpour was at that moment at its peak but the only option he had was to get back to the car. "It has to be now." He murmured. He ran into the rain until he reached where he had parked. Although he tried his utmost to quickly put things into the car, he was completely drenched as he finally jumped into the car. Lineo was feeling pity for him so much that she felt like lending him her jacket which unfortunately was twice smaller than his actual size. She however helped him to remove his dripping hooded jacket that had then stuck on his body.

From there, their ride seemed like heaven, soft music was played to the lowest of its volume, they were chitty-chatty while holding hands and taking random glances at each other. In a long run, they reached Thuso's apartment which Lineo knew inside out, for she had been there a number

of times. They parked in the garage and took the grocery bags into the house. In a few minutes they spent in the kitchen, they heard some coughs from the bedroom. "Wait, did you leave somebody in here?" Lineo asked disgustedly. Instead of responding to her, Thuso hurriedly moved to the bedroom to check what could possibly be happening, and Lineo followed him.

There, on the bed sat a woman who seemed to be deadly ill. She was breathing with fits and starts. Before Thuso could even sneeze, words chose to automatically escape his lips; "My wife!" This came out in a very disappointed manner. His better half was there as well as the woman whom he had promised heaven and earth. He pompously took a few steps toward his wife

and vehemently asked; "What the hell are you doing here?" At that time, both anger and shame had overwhelmed him. He had not even mentioned it once to Lineo that he had a family, and she therefore saw her future with him.

Lineo was beyond herself with anger for being fooled but nipped her furry in the bud. The woman was ceaselessly coughing into the scarf wrapped around her face. "Is this why you no longer send us money?" She asked. Tears brimmed her eyes as she continued; "I... I was trying so ha...rd to fend for the chi...children." She was gasping, breathing seemed a far-fetched possibility for her. Lineo unconsciously flipped her eyes across the room, from the woman to Thuso as if trying to tell him to do something. But what?

~ Pontso Kane

Pontso Kane is from the Kingdom of Lesotho (the Kingdom in the Sky), pursuing her Master of Arts in English at the University of Lucknow. A Bachelor of Education holder from the National University of Lesotho. She is an aspiring spoken word artist, has staged her poetry performances on different platforms in Lucknow and has presented research papers on international seminars and webinars.



POETRY

“ Always be a poet, even in prose.”

- Charles Baudelaire -



BLEAK TIMES

As the new decade creeps in,
Life comes on a standstill,
For a sudden wave of sorrow,
Shrouds the sheaths of earth.

All are locked up in houses,
Pangs of agony slowly steep in,
Digging its way in the deep
Corners of the unruly Psyche.

The rising death rates flash,
The economy is pouring downwards,
Farmers are hunger stricken to the core,
Is this the era of hopelessness?

For the circle of time keeps
Moving at a sluggish rate,
Elevating the pain to the core
Not getting rid of it any soon.

But people still look up,
Often to a television or to the sky
With a glimmer, a sigh, a Hope,
For a better future yet to unfold.

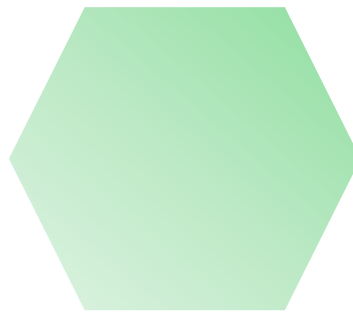
~ Rashi Srivastava



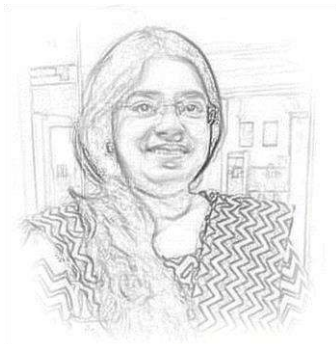
She is a Research Scholar at the University of Lucknow. Her area of research is theological thrillers and popular literature. A lover of cinema and art, she loves to compose poems that draw upon the everyday nuances of life. She is passionate about reading and often engages in creative writing.

I SHALL HEAL, AND SO WILL THE WORLD !

Perhaps, for now I feel darkness everywhere,
I try to breathe but the air here burns
I know it shall change and we too shall meet
Amidst a pandemic that shall end somewhere.
My eyes are closed
But I can see you.
I am fatigued
But I can feel you.
They are not letting you in.
I am falling; the world is falling.
Don't weep Sweetheart!
It's never too late!
I can still feel your breath while I am gasping;
My body flares up catching your warmth.
They would call me delusional.
But I will live! I shall heal!
So will the world!
Dream Sweetheart! Of me.
Until I return to you and make them true.
Oh Sweet oblivion!



~ Suswagata Chowdhury



Has completed her master's degree in English Literature from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata and is currently working as a research fellow in the Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow. Her area of research includes Diaspora Studies, Gender Studies, South Asian Literature.

ART IN ISOLATION

isolation came proclaiming, the sunset came, inviting the autumn. came, and introduced the theory of uncertainty yet again. should I call it a pandemic? or Heisenberg's rebirth then! while on chair-like comfort, idea sat. dust came and off went to the books for shelter, for time and space, the clocks gave up! for now is the state of utter crisis. this anti-christian thesis of situations I read. bibles stopped working. bibles of refuge, of huge mythical hopes. of doctored scope in humanity, dying. breathing the last delusion. sigh is the need of this hour.

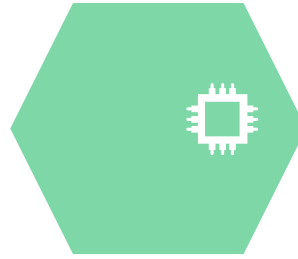
metaphors ceased to be the currency of art, writers tried. poems cried. canvas died. and soon fell prey to the jupiterean crowd of, ah such minuscule happinesses. all lecturing, from the stage, soliloquy of doubts, deliriums, disdains, depressions. all happened, but art. that too, tried — happening. but what mirror saw, was not the naked poem. but an illusion, undressing itself. they look similar. bare illusion or poem
but differences are worth an isolation!

~ Abhijeet Singh



Is a scholar, and an atheist composing poems almost every day, pursuing Master's in English Literature from the University of Lucknow. Published in *We the Isolationists Series* by renowned writer and chronicler Mayank Austen Soofi aka the delhiwalla, wrote an article as a guest writer for National Association of Student's blog, and has recently been selected for an anthology of poems. Keeps Camus on bedside and Rumi on chest and Plath in head.

CREATION'S ACRIMONY



Loneliness kisses me everyday
While the memories of the past world
linger on my mind
I smile and weep at the same time
I miss the chit-chats, see the stores vacant
The coffee houses where nobody is anymore
smiling over a sip of coffee, no more cheers;
These draconian pandemic times
where we are facing the nature's wrath
I feel so choked and suffocated
Exasperated by the things happening around
me
The fears within devour me
Out of the blue we are out of our mystified
world.
Facing the concomitants of our nasty slant
towards the Creation.

Every single day was like to play havoc with
the Creation, clinched an irreversible loss.
Now, we are impatiently waiting for things
to be homely. Keening over the loss of our
precious ones. Our hearts are heavy

The irresistible urge to see life back in the
pink
But, there is something that has stopped this
'Locked' - is the term or
'Nature's Revenge' -it is?
Longing to embrace the happiness
and see the world burgeoning
If the longing could be given a name,
I'd name it Pandemic.
or is it Her Curse itself the Pandemic?

~ Sushmita Sengupta



She is a 3rd semester student pursuing Master of Arts at the University of Lucknow. She loves to write about realities, pains and struggles of life. She finds pleasure in reading the works of Arundhati Roy, Sylvia Plath and Shashi Deshpande is her love in whom she seeks solace, keeps them in her heart.

CORONA TIME

Ah! We are saying 'Go Corona' for meat.
Once again, our blunder occurs.
How human beings become selfish to such extent?
Are we getting ready to fight with pandemic?

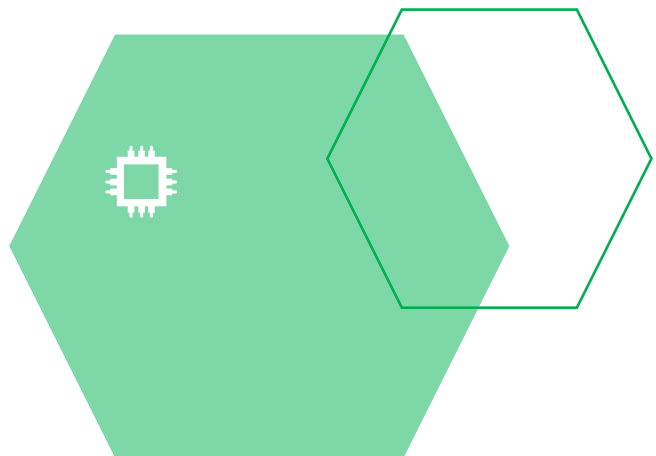
No, this is the matter of profit and loss for meat market.
Oh! Sorry, king may kill me,
Or may declare unpatriotic.
As I dare to revert to the king.

But I can't stop myself,
Because I can't be jingoist.
I will raise my voice for my self-satisfaction.
I can't say 'Go Corona' for the taste of tongue.

~ Vishwa Bhushan



He is a poet and a research scholar from the University of Lucknow. His area of interest is Eco-Criticism and contemporary Indian fiction.



LET'S QUARANTINE

Loving you is easier
Ending it is not; my
True feelings & emotions will be proved
Suffice to survive the ordeal.

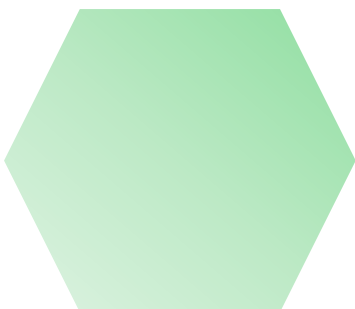
Quite agonizing to live just with memories,
Uncertainties linger about the future
Amid such difficult times what else you can?!
Right to 'forget' you always have or
Away from the world let's go quarantine but
Nothing I impose on you
True love is what I expect from you.
In the time of despair nothing seems bright
Night of hopelessness will
End, if you promise to stay by my side.



~ Mehar Jahan Bushra



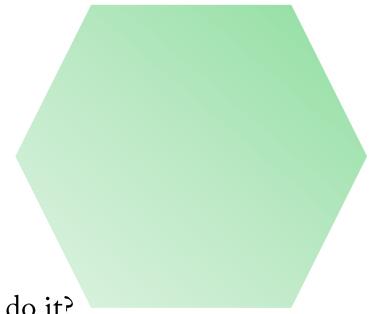
Is currently pursuing her PhD (English) from the University of Lucknow. She did her graduation and masters in English Literature from the University of Lucknow. Her area of research includes postmodern fiction and narrative construction of reality. She has a deep interest in the upsurging concepts like history as fiction and memory studies in literature.



CONTUMELIOUS BANTER

The hawk eyes a string of purple clothing
protestors perhaps, he thinks.
zoom in and there's nothing but
heaps of indigo dipped kids
in cotton crisp shirts
whispering, casually chattering,
ridiculing one another.
he wonders of the repercussions
of this senseless, contumelious banter.
but do they?
who cares about the kid in the
corner trying to vanish into the
white wall plastered with vibrant
charts.
who cares about their words
as they spew across, making
the sound waves tremble at
those hurtful blurts?
the window shudders, unable to
take it. there has to be an end.
the parapet childishly smiles.
more innocent like the young
adults themselves, it knows
nothing.

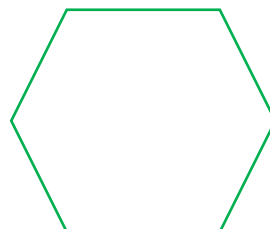
the kid in the corner,
crosses the window frame
on to the other side.
stands bewildered, can he do it?
a girl in the corner, the only
one to completely persuade the
walls to be her ambush, walks,
a hand on his shoulder, turns him
around. throws on a beautiful
brace-lined smile...
(Pause.)
It works. A twinkle here
and there in the boy's eyes.
he was saved, ah! lucky chap.
the hawk sighs. the bell rings.
banter stops, till another school
day. They still don't know.
they still don't care. outside,
the world's nothing but
a sphere of virulent sounds,
burning souls down, millions
at a time. Hate is the greatest
pandemic. how many of you
dare survive? How many care?



~ Mini Sinha



An ardent reader and keen observer of life, slightly melancholic. Reads Plath on a daily basis and aims to have her book of poems published someday.





PLIGHT OF A SON

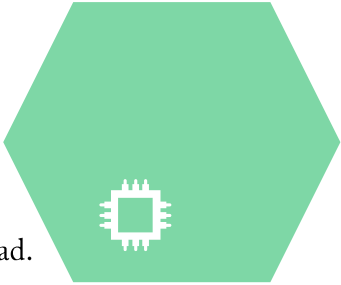
Life was better before the lockdown,
If not good.
But now, it is worse...
Having Dad at home is such a curse.

He is always at home
And stinks like the polecats.
I think it is because of a drink,
Which is elixir for him but for us bane...
Inebriated he gives us pain.

I am usually in my room,
But I hear the cries,
My mother always comes up with different
lies.
She tries to hide the insanity she faces.
But, Ohh mother!
I know it all.

You keep your voice down and seldom do
frown,
You are beautiful, still, mother
But the drawings in red that your body
entails
Tells me of your pain.
You are beaten and bruised, kicked and
abused
I feel blood raging through my veins.

Mum is selfless,
She thinks just for me.
She saves me from thrashes of my Dad,
Dear God what did we do to deserve this,



A father so barbarous and bad.

She hugs me tighter when she cries
I don't understand why.
She says she puts all her hopes on me
I am the only one on whom she can rely.

Father when happy is a different man,
Does not yell and talks with glee,
But it seems to me just like a decree.
My mother smiles the same way around
But I know the truth,
She is not happy but shudders with fear,
She just wants to keep it smooth.

And sometimes I hear different voices,
Seems like Dad's making love.
But I don't know why Mum moans the same
It feels like she is shoved.

Life was better before the pandemic,
If not good.
We feel more diseased now,
Than the Covid-19 could.
I want to send father far away,
I wish I could.

Every son wants to be like their dad,
They place him on a high pedestal,
But I want to be like Mum,
Morally upright and impeccable.
However sometimes I get irritated,
I tell my mother to revolt.

I don't understand why she is so meek and
frightened

Why can't she be bold and volte?

When will this pandemic and lockdown end,

I pray to God all day.

I was better at school,

And father better at the office,

Mum stays at home, come what may.

Today I thought how agonized she must be,

She works all day long,

Lockdown or not her duties are the same

Home is the cage where she belongs.

Lonely and terrified, she has no one to
share,

To share her pain she can never dare.

She teaches me patience and urges me to

pray,

I will save her from all this, one day I will

find a way.

~ Akanksha Pandey

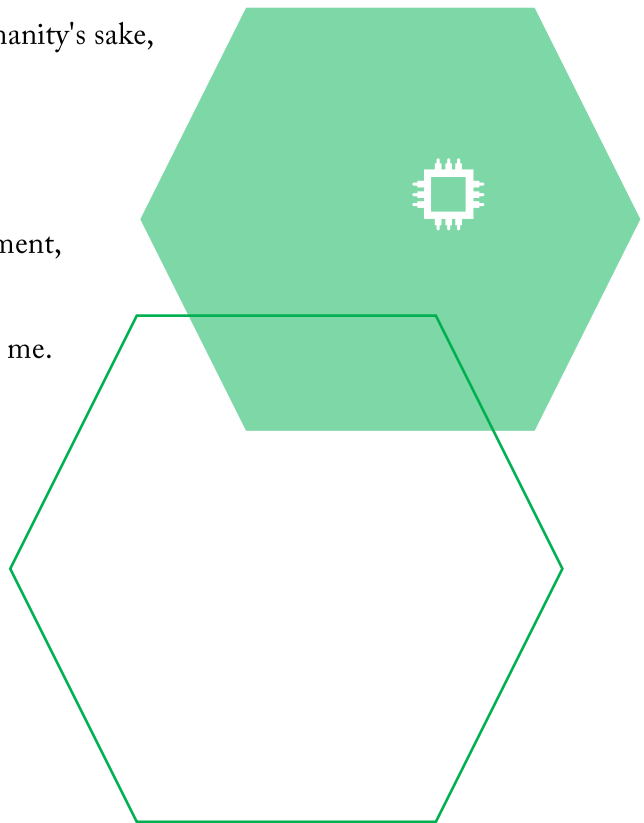


An admirer of Literature, following my dreams and instincts; I am in love with the unfathomable beauty of nature, the enchantment of books and music, while trying to decipher the meaning of life and striving to prepare for unprecedented things thrown to me by God.



THE GLOBAL GUEST

Covid-19 lockdown has darkened my door,
And under its regulations I shall not want.
It makes me lie down in the green pastures
Of endless tossing and turning on my bed,
It immerses me into an enormous pool of freedom,
It preserves my health.
It guides me in the path of righteousness for humanity's sake,
Yes, though I walk under the global umbrella
Of curfews and self quarantines,
I fear being counted among "the cases",
As well as executing a human right to free movement,
For no powerful governance is with me,
And no amount of money nor amenities comfort me.
Covid-19 lockdown prepares a table of utmost
Relaxation before me in the eyes of my foes,
It keeps me right within my four walls,
My contentment runs over.
Certainly, peace and tranquility shall follow
Me all my days only in this pandemic,
And I shall abide by the mandate of
The World Health Organisation forever.
SO BE IT!



~ Pontso Kane

Is from the Kingdom of Lesotho (the Kingdom in the Sky), pursuing her Master of Arts in English at the University of Lucknow. A Bachelor of Education degree holder from the National University of Lesotho. She is an aspiring spoken word artist, has staged her poetry performances on different platforms in Lucknow and has presented research papers on international seminars and webinars.



THE PARADOX OF LIFE

Uncertainty is the only certainty,
Change, the only constant
Absence, the highest form of presence
And through hell goes the pathway to
heavens.

Humor is the only truth,
Seriousness a folly
Hatred, is all that you don't understand
And time? A mirage you surpass..

Mornings are the gift of night,
Silence is the loudest cry
And failure, the greatest teacher in life
Your rise is inversely proportional to your
dive.

Forgetfulness is the greatest blessings of all
Fire? The closest thing to ice
And the point of everything is nothing
The darker the shadow the brighter the
light.

Anger, another name of grief,
Strength is in being weak
Too much sanity is probably insanity
And distance offers you the much needed
clarity.

Cruelty? A distinctive sign of frailty
Life? An endless search for meaning
A new breath, brings you closer to death
Each wound, making you resilient!

~ Aqsa Salimuddin

She is pursuing Masters in English Literature from the University of Lucknow. She has always been passionate about literature, and have been scribbling poems, stories, writing articles about things that are close to her heart and all that she's experienced or observed in her life so far. Literature has impacted her life in countless ways, and has shaped the person she's become.



PANDEMIC: PAIN AND PLIGHT !

Four little shoulders were in hope of meal,
Forced to feel the rotten scene,
To eat the sorrow,
And drink the blow.
They were in pain,
Because their little shoulders had no mature
shoulders' shield;
To keep them secure from hunger and
danger,
So they dived in dark.
Crinkles of face were plaintive,
And the torn clothes traced the heart's heat.
No pier seep them penny.
They murmur,
Oh! Life is not pied,
Life is ubiquitous and seeps only sore.

Urge is not obliged,
When hunger becomes prime.
Bread is like bubble and hunger is trouble,
Because Bisleri is not poor's brand.
They lived for a small aim,
To earn bread
To earn breathe.
Sorrow is somber and deep.
But they sipped.
Their little lip stretched for strain not for
smile.
They were the best version of themselves,
But we could not catch on.
They died in doom
And
Send shivers down our spine.

~ Anuradha Singh



A research scholar, she often writes poems about God, Life, Nature, Neutrality, ordinary struggles of life and contemporary issues. She has written many poems and short stories and two of her poems, 'Maa' and 'Neither Venom nor Nectar' is published in an anthology *True Love* and two of her poems 'Croon the Carol!' and 'Be a Sage!' are published in *The Criterion: An International Journal*. She is interested in creative writing and wants to explore aesthetic, society, nature and spirituality through her writing skills.

FOR YOUR NEW NORMAL

After a long day of work
You would run back to the comfort
Of a couch waiting for you at home;
You find your solace there, your peace.
But during this past few months
That work has infiltrated into your home.
It took away your safe retreat
But what can you do?
Your 9 to 5 is now 24/7,
And six cups of coffee everyday
Is messing with your head.
Sleep comes at odd hours or not at all,
Being in your pjs and top knot bun all day
Is taking its toll on your self-esteem.
You scare yourself when you realize,
How you have been sitting in a dark room,
All by yourself, just zoning out completely
Being in a state of constant drowsiness.

The amount of caffeine you consume

Cannot keep you conscious anymore;
And your line of thought keeps straying.
Early morning and you are tired already
All of your energy constantly drained.
What is wrong with you when nothing is
wrong?
You have food and shelter and employment
But life still lacks meaning doesn't it?
The loss of human touch funds your
isolation,
It takes you away from the physical world.
And sets off a phobia of its own,
Where empty roads welcome anxiety.
Masked faces send you into a panic
Drive your insecurities to the edge
Everything triggers what you suppress.
And when you take a pill and lie down,
The thought strikes you again
That strawberry life is never coming back.

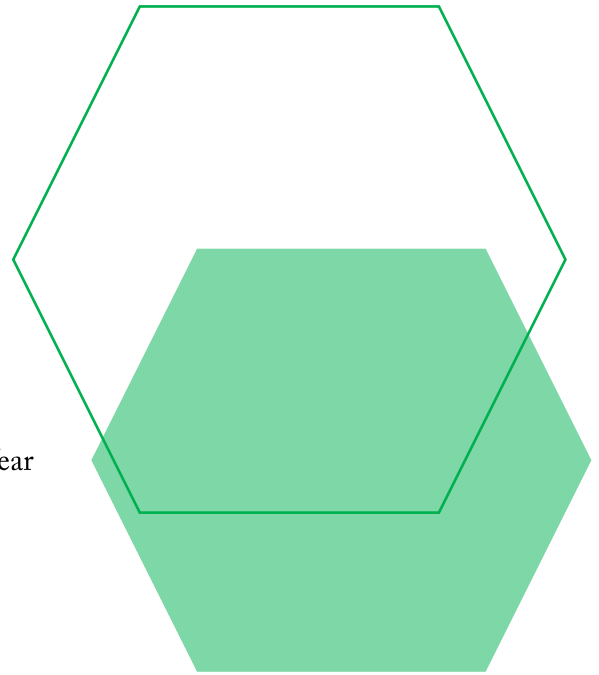
~ Prachi Kholia



Is a student of Lucknow University, currently pursuing her Masters in English. She is obsessed with the stars and the emptiness they reside in, trying to weave stories through her poems. Writing not by choice, but by habit.

PANDEMIC FALLS LIKE RAIN

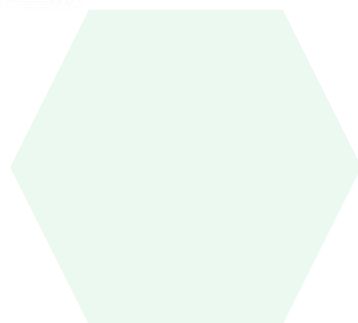
The roads are crowded with the smell of confusion and fear
We live life like tomorrow it may all disappear
This is uncertain but this is life
We leave home with a promise to survive
Who will save us from ourselves?
The streets are empty but my heart swells
On your hand I try to write hope and love
But I can't touch yours and mine are covered with gloves
They say this will pass as well
But there is defeat on our faces so I can't tell
Pandemic falls like rain on flood victims
This is a tough fight but we hope we win.



~ Sushmita Pandey



She is a budding poet and writer currently pursuing her Masters in English from the University of Lucknow. A believer in words.



THE LOCKDOWN

My heart is as deserted
As that of streets
The world has stopped
But the time goes on

It's the time of lockdown
There is no travelling anymore
No late night parties around
No more family gatherings

All of us confined to our homes
Cooking, reading, talking, dreaming
No other way to engross our minds
At this time of Pandemic

Introverts find it a perfect paradise
Locked themselves up in their safe den
No more meeting, no more shrieking
Surrounded by the symphony of recluse

Extroverts find it a trap
Where all plans become obsolete
Cursing it as a weary virus
That adjourned all their dreams

I find it as time for introspection

Take a moment and look around
Why are we so ungrateful to this Earth?
Unconsciously menacing with our lives

Did you gaze at the rising sun?
Or ever heard the birds chirping around,
Did you witness the profound dusk?
And felt the soft breeze around,

Look at the sky and
Measure its endlessness
What does a life mean?
In this immense vastness

It's high time we've been in hamster cage
Pause and Let's take a step back
Let's jam with our heart and mind together
And bygone with the symphony of nature

Am I not justified?
Gone are those days
When there were battlefields
This is another kind of battlefield
An opportunity to save this world
From our own personal fields.

~ Shruti Mishra



She is passionate about writing poetry. She has also done an extensive work in translating poetry. Her poetry has also been published in few online journals and newspapers. She is currently working on publishing her own collection of poems.

PHOTOGRAPHY

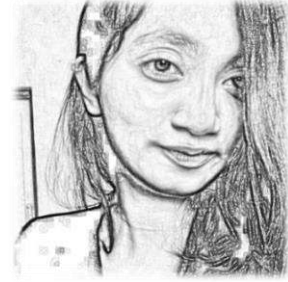
*“In photography there is a reality so subtle
that it becomes more real than reality.”*

- Alfred Stieglitz -



ONLY FRIEND DURING PANDEMIC • Mini Sinha

A minimalist, as the name probably suggests. Trying to seek joy in the little details of everyday life. Slightly social, seeks refuge in books, travelling and animal welfare.



PANDEMIC DISTRESS • Richa Kushwaha

A nerd who loves stargazing and binge watching retro flicks.

MEMORY • Navneet Prakash

He always aspires to bring changes in the society and strongly believes literature is the medium through which untouched and unexplored aspects of the society can be touched upon. Loves playing cricket and spent time with his own people. Everyday wakes up with a simple goal of becoming better version of himself.



P.S. There's no perfect moment to capture, we gotta make our own.

MODEST EVENING • Shefali Tripathi



Believes in getting lost in nature as it gives you a chance to find your own self. I'm also a human being who can meddle in your conversations as we're friends from not less than a decade. My smile is my biggest power, which makes me laugh with new people often. Always takes up the challenge with double the intensity with which it comes.



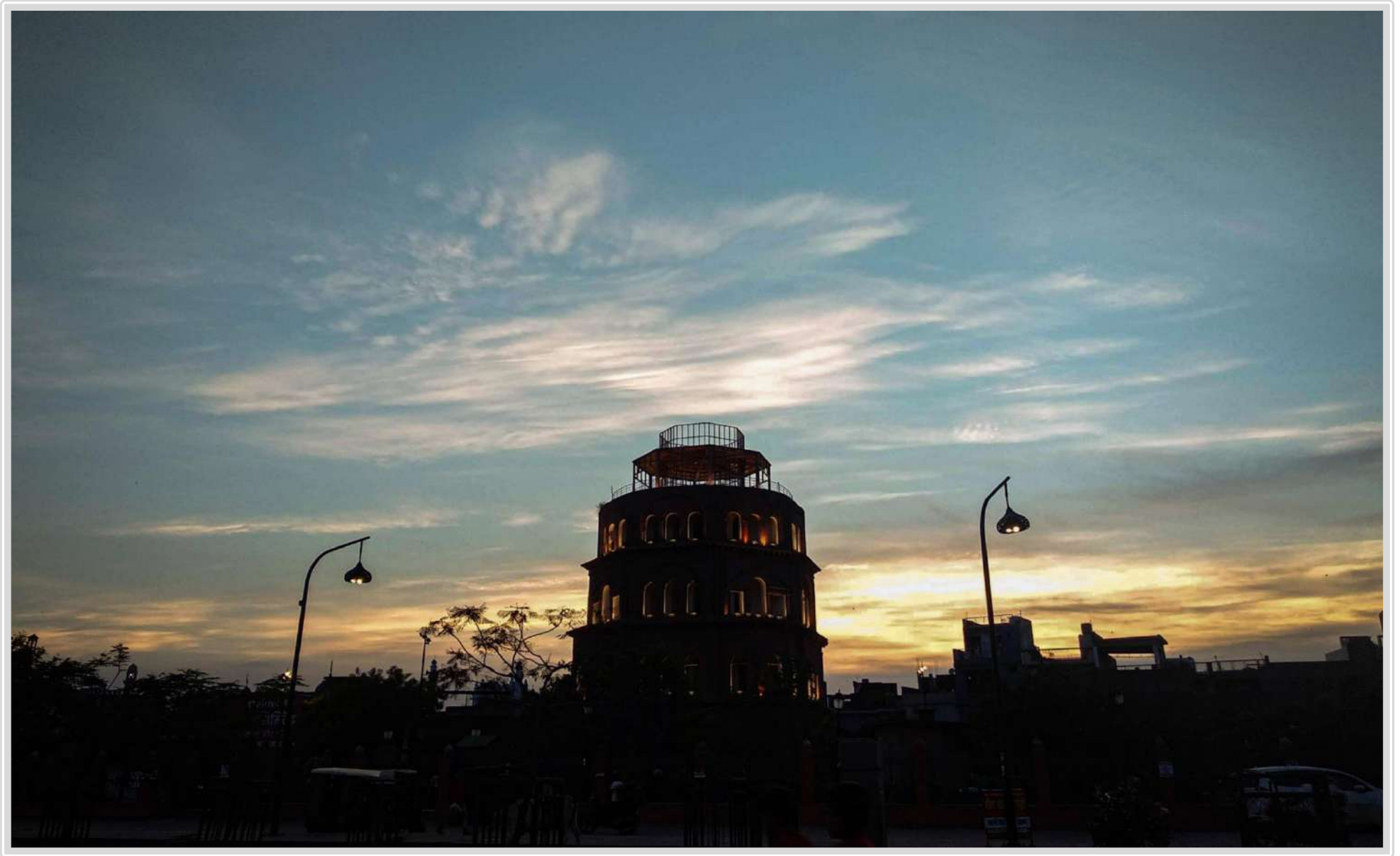
Only Friend during Pandemic



Pandemic Distress (Cover page)



Memory



Modest Evening



REGISTRATION FORM

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND MODERN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW

Full Name : _____

Year of Passing : _____

E-mail ID : _____

Mailing Address : _____

Contact No. : _____

Current Affiliation : _____

Occupation : _____ (Govt./Pvt./NGO)

Signature : _____

The Department extends an invitation to all of its alumni students to become an active part of 'Department of English and Modern European Languages Alumni Association' by sending in the duly filled registration form enclosed with this invitation. We look forward to your active response and enthusiastic participation in this initiative.

Alumni can submit either a hardcopy or a softcopy along with a passport size photograph. It can be mailed to departmentofenglishlu@gmail.com

Youtube Link : <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjJ3fNDYQO-gA5nwBKGNDcA>

Facebook Page Link : www.facebook.com/groups/departmentofenglishandmel.lu/

A brief History:

per aspera ad astra

The Department of English and Modern European Languages was established in 1921, “aiming for blanket extensive knowledge to the researchers, post-graduates and under-graduates.” Headed with hard work and a zeal “to seek, to find and not to yield.” It has its mark till date. The courses are revised and updated every three years.

Over 200 research scholars have received their Doctorate degrees from the Department. The Department endeavours to enrich literary and language studies by teaching and guiding research in areas as British Literature, English Language Teaching, Stylistics and Discourse Analysis, American Literature, Contemporary Literature, New Literatures in English, Literature and Films, Australian Literature, Canadian Literature, Colonial and Post Colonial Literature, Indian Writing in English, Literatures in Translation, Comparative Literature, Drama, Theatre Studies, Translation Studies, Cultural Studies, Gender Studies, Disability Studies and Creative Writing. Innovative courses to enhance student employability. Courses for general users of English have been developed as add-on Courses in collaboration with others.

The Department also offers Advanced Diploma, Diploma and Proficiency courses in Russian, German and French. In the 1960s the study of Linguistics with special reference to English was introduced in the M.A. English Course and the first Language Lab with four booths was set up, including American Literature as its part too.

In 2020, the old English Literary Society of the Department of English and Modern European Languages has been revived and named ‘Rhetorica’ - a literary platform for students to participate in Dramatics, Debates, Creative Writing, and other academic activities. The year 2020, will also be celebrated as the Centennial Year by the University.

Prof. Ranu Uniyal is the current Head of the Department.

