



Established in 1936  
*The Doon School*  
**WEEKLY**



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<b>LTTE</b>	<b>REFLECTION</b>	<b>PERCUSSION</b>	<b>HM's HOLI</b>
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## TO THE PROMISED LAND

*K V Arjun Rao on the School's experience at the King's Academy Model United Nations Conference in Jordan*



On February 22, Ashvath Singh, Shashank Peshawaria, Ishaan Nagpal, Yuv Vir Khosla, Sookrit Malik, Siddhant Sachdev, Abhishek Bansal, Ujjwal Dahuja and I left for the King's Academy Model United Nations Conference (KAMUN) in Jordan. The trip to Jordan was not unlike other, slightly more famous, journeys made close to the Promised Land. We barely slept on the way to Delhi, nor to Jordan, the next day. All – except yours truly, who, due to the overbooking of the flight, found himself sitting in Business Class, sipping orange juice out of champagne flutes (I swear it was orange juice!) – travelled coach (shouldn't say "cattle class", right?!).

We landed in a freezing-cold Jordan to find that Shashank's suitcase had not made the flight. (It never did, in case you're wondering. We finally picked it up in Delhi! Shashank had to live off clothes begged from the others until he eventually was able to buy some overpriced ones in Amman). The group arrived at the King's Academy to be greeted by a large, state of the art, co-ed boarding school. Though the school is still in a state of development, it seems pretty set with a huge indoor sports facility, a large arts centre and fancy departmental buildings. We spent the day at King's Academy: some caught up on their sleep, others watched a film, and a few (un)willing and (un)lucky hangers-on were subjected to a telling of the Israel-Palestine problem by me!

Much later in the evening, after being addressed by the Headmaster of King's Academy, we were driven to the Dune's Club where a lavish dinner had been organized. After dinner, a number of ice-breaking games were played and our boys threw themselves into a cake-eating competition (which we lost), a talking game (which we lost) and a bizarre Ms KAMUN competition (which, thankfully, though hilariously, we lost – please contact Ashvath for further details). Exhausted, we then left for the Dead Sea, on the shore of which our hotel was located. I think we were too tired to truly appreciate where we were staying (The Kempinski Ishtar – please google it and allow us the satisfaction of being full of ourselves), but that still didn't stop me from running into all of the boys' rooms to check the minibars – only orange juice and Coke thankfully!

KAMUN began the next morning. The Chief Guest at the opening ceremony was a Jordanian politician who spoke of the history of the region. It was interesting to hear about the politics and religion of the area from someone who actually lived there. There was definitely an attempt to remain neutral and objective (something that Jordan is very conscious of), but the question-answer session that followed gave us a glimpse of some of the true feelings surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict, and this was something that would follow us around the conference. Though there were Americans, Canadians, Australians and Indians present, the majority of the students were from the Arab nations, even some from Palestine, and it seems, unfortunately, that none of them were quite ready for any lasting peace in the region. They all appreciate that force is not the answer, thankfully, even if it is just because they know that the Israeli forces are too strong for even a combined assault. And, by the end of KAMUN, this was the issue that



*(contd. on page 3)*

## COACHING CRICKET

We welcome on campus **Arun Bhardwaj**, a senior cricket coach from the **Sports Authority of India**, who is conducting a coaching clinic from March 2-7.

## CRICKET

The School Cricket Team played against the **Indian Public School** on February 28 and won the match by 13 runs.

The School Junior Cricket Team played against the **Indian Public School** on February 28 and won the match by 53 runs.

Well played!

## DEBATING NEWS

The following are the results of the **Second Round** of the **Senior Inter-House English Debates 2010**:

### Hyderabad vs Tata

**Best Speaker:** Rohan Shriram

**Most Promising Speaker:** Uday Shriram

**Winner:** Tata House

### Oberoi vs Kashmir

**Best Speaker:** Vivek Santayana

**Most Promising Speaker:** Abhinav Mittal

**Winner:** Oberoi House

Well done!

## APPOINTMENTS

Nikhil Narain and Shivam Katyal have been appointed **Boys-in-Charge** of the **RLSS** for the forthcoming year. We wish them a fruitful tenure.

## DECLAMATION

The following are the results of the **Inter-House Hindi Declamation Contest 2010**:

### Individual Positions:

**1st:** Abhinav Kejriwal

**2nd:** Udbhav Agarwal

**3rd:** Ritesh Shinde

### House Positions:

**1st:** Jaipur

**2nd:** Hyderabad

**3rd:** Tata

**4th:** Oberoi

**5th:** Kashmir

Well done!

## MUN AT JORDAN

Ishaan Nagpal, Ashvath Singh Kunadi, Shashank Peshawaria, Yuv Vir Khosla, Siddhant Sachdev, Sookrit Malik, Ujjwal Dahuja and Abhishek Bansal represented the School at the **King's Academy Model United Nations** at the Dead Sea in Jordan from February 24-28. A report runs in this issue.

## Unquotable Quotes

*Thank you for being with here tonight.*

**Uday Shriram**, "... tonight's gonna be a good night!"

*Light off ko band kar do.*

**PKD** wants total darkness!

*We are going to revolute!*

**SBL**, "You say you want a revolution. . ."

*All batman to the left, all bowlman to the right.*

**Saumil Aggarwal**, middle-man.

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## Letter To The Editor

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Dear Editor,

In chapter seven of Orhan Pamuk's novel, *The Museum of Innocence*, the following passage appears. It describes the narrator's response to Fusun's concerns that she leave his mother's apartment where they have gone to meet:

*"Thank you. I should leave now."*

*"You haven't even drunk your tea. And the rain hasn't stopped." I pulled her over to the balcony door, gently parting the tulle curtain. She looked out the window; in her eyes was the light you only see in children arriving at a new place, or in young people, still open to new influences, still curious about the world because they have not yet been scarred by life."*

In reflecting upon my recent fortnight at The Doon School and the kind hospitality and interest shown to me by the Headmaster, the Masters and all of the students whom I met and taught, the last words of the quotation seemed most relevant.

They crystallize the reasons why and how I have become so attached to your school both in my mind and in my heart.

Your school is a place in which young men and those who teach and care for them are intensely interested in developing their minds, souls and physical capacities to take life 'by the horns' and to make a contribution to society. To spend time in such a community is indeed a great blessing for me. To work with so many of you on your college planning and essays represents a specific task to get done with great potential benefits. I am grateful for the opportunity all of you have offered me with your extension of trust and friendship.

I look forward to returning to the campus and introducing my wife to the pleasures of knowing all of you.

Thank you,

**Harold R. Snedcof**

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## CAREER CALL

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The Careers' Notice Board will feature '**Careers in Biosciences**' this week. All those interested should look it up.

## Opinion oll

**Do you think Holi celebrations in School should be more lively?**

**Yes**  79%

**No**  21%

*(289 members of the community were polled)*

**Next Week's Question:** Do you think SCLs should be more a part of our community?

(contd. from page 1)

every committee was discussing. But more of that in a while.

The beginning of the conference threw most of our boys off-course. The format was rather different, which confused The Doon School team, but they did really bounce back and, now, even appreciate this modified version. As always, the General Assembly was the most chaotic of all the committees and this remained true for the entire conference. It was disappointing to see this large assembly eventually degenerate into nothingness, but I think Siddhant, Ujjwal and Abhishek tried as hard as they could in a forum that arbitrarily changed its procedures and, oddly enough, refused to let the boys present their resolutions just because they were not carrying laptops! They did, however, present a rather large number of amendments and their contribution was appreciated.



The Arab League, a committee that was new to our boys, was by far the most interesting at KAMUN. The issues were predictable as was the debate but it was fascinating to watch young men and women from different parts of the world discuss issues so important to the region that we were all in. Shashank Peshawaria and Ashvath Singh represented us in this committee and Ashvath even received a special mention at the Closing Ceremony.

The most technical committee at KAMUN was the ECOSOC, where Ishaan Nagpal and Yuv Vir Khosla held forth. Of the three resolutions passed, Ishaan introduced, vociferously debated for, and passed one, and Yuv introduced a number of well-received amendments to the others.

Sookrit Malik was the lone Dosco in the Security Council and impressed all with his research. He, too, was given special mention at the Closing Ceremony and it was not just for constantly showing the Chairperson that her facts were all wrong!

It rained all through our time in Jordan and this cost us our much-anticipated trip to Petra. We found ourselves instead with a free day and decided to visit the capital city of Amman. We headed first for Saladin's famous citadel in the eastern part of the city. The site is truly magnificent and the complex is a treat for all who visit it. The oldest section is a Bronze Age cave dwelling, which is right next to two huge Roman columns. The site boasts of at least one Crusader tomb, a Byzantine church in ruins and an Umayyad mosque, surrounded by an old *souk* (market place). It is located on the highest hill, among the seven that Amman is built on, and the view of the city from the citadel complex is breath-taking. The afternoon was topped off by a superb Jordanian meal at a local restaurant, where we sampled delicacies recommended by our excellent taxi drivers who doubled up as guides to the city. Speaking of food, KAMUN had really laid out the best that Jordan has to offer. Apart from the usual fare that one can expect at a resort, *shawarma*, *manakish*, *falafel*, *dolma*, *mansaf* and other delicious Middle Eastern fare occupied our usually-full plates (all except Ujjwal's and Abhishek's, who constantly bemoaned the fact that Jordanians have no affinity for cooked vegetables!).

Every evening at the conference was a dinner, each fancier than the last. The students danced in the rain one night under palm trees and on the beach another, with traditional Jordanian dancers. We all floated on the Dead Sea and yes, all you have heard about it is all true – it is very salty, your eyes will really, really burn if the water gets in and never, ever enter the water if your acne is...well...around (again, please ask Ashvath for details) – and you can read a book while floating on the water (Shashank's copy of *The Kite Runner* was left on the beach by the last person who wanted a photo-op!).

The highlight of the trip was being addressed by His Majesty King Abdullah II at the closing ceremony. This was quite a coup for KAMUN! Not only did they have the Prime Minister of Jordan, Samir Rifai, address us before lunch but they also managed to convince the king to attend the end of the Conference! We had heard a lot about the king – about how he had encouraged the setting up of King's Academy because he wanted young Jordanians to have a modern education, about how he keeps visiting the school and meets with the 200-odd students who are on scholarships sponsored by him; how he is working constantly towards creating a modern Jordan – but it all pales in front of the man himself. He is clearly a modern voice, one who must be lauded. His is the voice from the Middle East that should be listened to and not that of violent men who fly planes into buildings. His Majesty spoke briefly, but what he said left the gathering in awe. He spoke of how the youth of today have a great responsibility towards the world, the world that they will be running in a few years. He encouraged students to stay in touch with each other, to build bridges or rebuild them, to try and ignore the sins of their forefathers' and to work towards creating a future that is bright and full of hope (Sookrit's got it all on tape).

And then, as is with these things, before we knew it, it was all over. It was the 28th and time for us to come back to India. Sitting on the plane (in Business Class again – thank you, Royal Jordanian, for overbooking the flight once again!) I thought about the entire trip. For me, two moments stand out. The first was standing on Mount Nebo from where, it is believed, Moses saw the Promised Land, and where he eventually died. The second was sitting in the Church of St George in Madaba and listening to the chants from a mosque in the distance. Both for me were peaceful, tranquil and hair-raising moments at the same time. This is the 'now' that we live in – a world where children refuse to accept peace because of something someone's great-grandfather did, a world in which you can hear the call of prayer of a different religion in someone else's temple and still feel close to God, a world in which we, in our own small way at KAMUN, tried to look for solutions and not more problems. I was at peace and I slept all the way back home.

| Report |  
**Music-Makers**

*Priya Chaturvedi reviews the vocal recital presented on Saturday, February 26, 2010 in the Music School*

The Music Society began its season of student concerts this term with a Hindustani music vocal recital by Yashwardhan Jain and Vinayak Agrawal. Both artistes have been regular performers on the School music scene, having sung at inter-house competitions and larger productions like the Summer Concert and the Founder's Day concert. No strangers to the stage, therefore, their presence on it communicated confidence and showed their rapport with their audience. This is a skill that every performer must possess to carry off a recital with conviction. Vinayak opened the performance with the *bhajan, Radhe, Radhe* accompanied on the tabla by Devesh Sharma and *manjira* by Dhruv Prasad. The soaring, aspirational nature of the piece was well-suited to Vinayak's vocal timbre and style, which leans towards the folk idiom.

Yashwardhan Jain has, often enough, displayed his versatility of style, and his carefully put-together programme for this recital gave ample evidence of his wide-ranging talent. Most impressive was *Raga Jaunpuri*, a complete rendition of this melodious *raga*. To enhance the listening pleasure of his audience, many of whom were new to *Shastriya Sangeet*, he explained how the *raga* unfolds, singing the *aaroh* (ascent) and *avroh* (descent) before beginning a thoughtful *alaap*, in which he explored the nuances of the *raga*. A lyrical *bandish, Payal Ki Jhankaar*, was followed by another *alaap, sthayi*, some scintillating *taans* which had a wide range, reaching the deepest notes of his vocal register, and rounded off with the rapid syllables of a *taraana*. An aptly-chosen invocation to the goddess of music, Saraswati, did full justice to Yashwardhan's resonance and power of expression. The recital ended on a (musically) lighter note, with a Ghulam Ali favourite, the soulful *ghazal, Apni dhun mein rehta* ... The very able accompanists were Music Society Secretary Yashasvat Kapur on the tabla and Adarsh Lanka (for the *bhajan*) playing the *manjira*. The harmonium was played by the School's vocal music teacher, Rita Sinha. This was Yashwardhan's 'farewell' concert as he leaves School in May, but he leaves behind a fine tradition of devotion to his art, and certainly carries with him the makings of a true musician.



| Reflection |  
**Gross Value**

*Rajesh Mazumdar*

Three of us were sitting around a fire on white sand. It was dark and chilly. The river was gurgling in front of us and the sound of its waves gently washing the smooth sand was calming. The twigs were burning with joy, while the thin branches wanted to join in, but the log was stubborn. We earnestly desired it to blaze for more warmth, little realizing that there was greater gross in it. Water and fire, so different in character, were subtly engulfing us. Suddenly, the unruffled serenity was broken by the bark of a desperate muntjac, a specie of deer found in the Himalayas.

We came to with the call of the deer, and my friend asked, "What is it that we know?" "A lot", I replied without much thought. "I know who I am, my work, my issues, relationships, about books, events around me and much more." After listening patiently, he asked again in a deep voice, "What you know is knowledge, isn't it?" We fell silent as we realized the deeper connotations of his inquiries. He meant something else. We venture into the realm of knowledge and accept it, without wondering what it does to us. Was he questioning knowledge?

There was an impulsive hiss and a shower of sparks in the fire, as if it wanted to participate in the conversation. He continued, "Knowledge is the past; it is irrelevant for the present. How can we be aware of the *present* if our thoughts are pestered by the *past*? How can there be clarity in perception if it is sullied by the opinions of others? Knowledge drapes the self and fattens the ego."

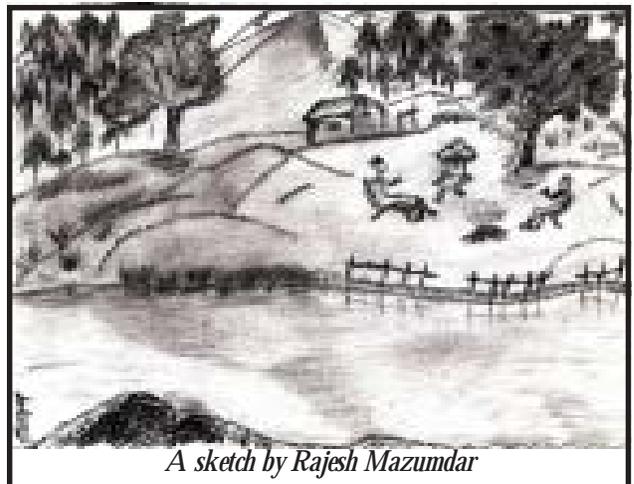
We were humbled. There was a riot of words in our minds and a silent revolt was fomented. The other friend, who was quiet till then, uttered courageously, "Is it not necessary for the world we live in? It makes us learn many lessons of life." I joined him and added aggressively, "And, moreover, we need to know what happened in the past to make our future better. Don't you think so?"

He broke the silence and asked again, "Has our life become more significant and meaningful with knowledge? Have we not become crooked, saddled with knowledge? Is knowledge not an escape from fear of not being important?"

We did not search for answers to these queries. We just tried to reflect on the entire conversation.

"Knowledge takes us far from realism, from true being, and is an impediment. It colours our thoughts by force and creates stacks of images. We rejoice in getting trapped in the web of pseudo-intellectualism and, with it, we hang in the midst of a virtual world." After having had his say, he got up, smiled, and went towards the hut to retire for the night.

There was a sudden breeze and the flames went wild. We saw the twigs and the thin branches evolving into a pure and subtle form, but the log was still adamant. It was full of itself. I saw so much of myself in it.



*A sketch by Rajesh Mazumdar*

| Report |

## DEADLY DRUMMER

*Arpan Agarwal reports on the Percussion Workshop conducted on February 18 and 19*

The workshop by Suchet Malhotra, a Delhi-based percussionist, began with his telling us about the difference between a percussionist and a drummer, the most fundamental being that the former plays with bare hands, and the latter with drumsticks. And speaking of hands, he made us wash ours before we touched the instruments! This was because dirty hands shorten the life of instruments and he couldn't risk spoiling his as they were rare and very expensive. This was a small but a valuable lesson we learned.

Then he showed us the various instruments, telling us the history and origin of each. He started with an Egyptian instrument, the *darbouka*, which is shaped like an hourglass. It was originally called the 'tabla' and was from where the instrument that currently bears that name originated. It is said that when the *tabal* was cut in half, it still produced the sound *tab bhi bola*, and was therefore named the 'tabla'! He showed us many other instruments, which he passed around so we could examine and play them. An interesting instrument was the 'rain-stick' from the Amazon forests. On being twirled, it made the sound of rain pattering gently on leaves because of the mixture of various grains and pulses inside the stick. Other instruments included the 'ocean drum' (which produced the sound of waves when moved gently and with extreme precision in a clockwise manner), the *didjeribone* (an Australian wind instrument made of a bamboo stick hollowed by termites, which makes a very deep sound), the *djembe* (a hand-drum covered with goat-skin and made of mango-wood), the *sansula* (a 'hand piano' that is supposed to be placed on the palm and the metallic plates on it struck, producing sweet, high octave sounds), the spring drum (which produced the sound of thunder when shaken rapidly), *caxixi-paxixi* (closed bamboo cups with grains inside which made a sound similar to the one heard in the song *They Don't Really Care About Us* by Michael Jackson), the very familiar *maracas* (a native instrument of Puerto Rico which is played in pairs and is made of a shell, usually of coconut, filled with seeds or dry beans) and many more. The most innovative instrument was 'overtone' which he had made himself. Actually this was just a washing machine pipe, which on swinging made the sweetest whistling sound I have ever heard.

Then we had a jam session. In this he assigned us an instrument each, on which we were supposed to join him on a given signal as he played the *djembe*. We all enjoyed it thoroughly, and people kept changing instruments with each other. After five minutes, he gave us the signal to end, at which we all stopped. Since our 'end' was rather ragged, we practised it repeatedly. He explained the value of discipline at this stage to the rather over-enthusiastic juniors. Only once we had perfected our 'stop' at his signal, was he satisfied.

It was certainly the most amazing workshop I have been to. Honestly, I had never seen or even heard of any of the instruments he showed us. It was, beyond doubt, a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all young musicians.

| Viewpoint |

## Rain, Rain, Come Again

*Tanuj Kumar*

My heart sank as I woke up this morning. There was no scent of rain. Suddenly, a loud, shrill noise pierced the air and my ears alike. It did not rain last night and, indeed, indeed it was the deafening PT bell, or rather, knell! I climbed out of the bed reluctantly, and headed towards the Main Field. I wish I could rebel against the futility of this early morning exercise. As I trod along the dry grass, I cursed the azure sky. I was put off by the sight of a group of *c'est-la-vie*-goons who plodded along with zombie-like eyes and mouths wide open. They would just go with the wind, and I bet not a single one of them would have joined me in my rebellion. There was nothing that could be done.

We Doscocs long for rain. Not only does it bring us joy, but also a wild variety of excuses to tell our teachers and sports coaches as and when the need arises. Had it rained this morning, I would have slept an extra hour. If the rain had continued, perhaps the first school would have been cancelled. Rain also comes to our rescue when we are getting late for classes. If it pours on our way to class, we slow down in order to make sure that every part of our body is drenched, thereby conjuring up an excuse to go back to our houses and change into dry clothes. If the downpour has already begun and the classes are not cancelled, all of us dive into the nearest puddle and splash each others' clothes and faces to our satisfaction. Then, smug in the knowledge that the teacher would attribute it to our slipping on the gravel, we enter the classroom.

Rain often gives way to music. Let me explain how. Sometimes, we all are confined in the CDH because of the rain. And then, if you sit back and listen, you will hear a symphony of the rain on the ground (the bass), the rattle in the air (the maracas), the clatter of the cutlery (the xylophone), rain on the roof top (the rhythm) and, of course, the Doscocs and their noisy mastication (the vocals and the beat of their munching). We compose a marvellous melody unconsciously. What more can we ask for?

Probably, the time when I crave for rain the most is sports time. For people like me, it is hard to gauge distances, let alone cover them in quick sprints. Sports in our school is often considered a religious activity. Today, I saved myself from the scorching sun by not going for games. I know that my action was sacrilegious, but I succumbed to my lethargy.

A rainless day is tedious. Tonight, when I go to bed, I will pray for the rain to come again.

# A Riot of Colours

*Peter McLaughlin recounts his first experience of the festival of colours*

As an amateur artist, I have been fascinated by colour since I made my first hesitant daubings as a young boy. Picasso was the great genius of form but I have always been temperamentally more in tune with that supreme colourist, Matisse. Many years ago, a friend of mine said to me: 'If you go to India you will love it because of your art. The first thing you will notice is the colour. It hits you right in the eye.' How right she was – literally and figuratively! For me, even the poorest village is redeemed by streaks of rich or vibrant colour, sometimes only in the villagers' dress, but somehow always there nonetheless. Not surprisingly then, Holi has for a long time had a magical fascination for me and I was not disappointed with my first direct experience of it at The Doon School.

In the past I had seen news programmes, documentaries and advertisements that depicted Holi celebrations and I was very much attracted to the joyous, good-natured anarchy of the festival, an almost literal 'riot of colour'. Michael Wood's wonderful documentary series on India's history has a classic scene in which he is daubed from head to foot in pigments by a great swirling mass of multi-hued humanity. I had always envied him the exuberance of his experience until I had the opportunity to enjoy it myself.

The underlying principles of Holi also appeal to my egalitarian instincts. The festival breaks down all social barriers and hierarchies; for a day or two everyone is equal, no matter their wealth or station. By the end of an hour or two of ritual colour-smearing, everyone looks the same and the principle of universal brother- and sisterhood is reaffirmed. I know that not everyone on the estate approves of Holi or likes it, but it is only one day a year and the message of Holi is worth reflecting on and living out, even if it has been 'modernised' and partly 'dumbed down' in some places and in some respects. There is a great deal of ancient wisdom in containing social anarchy within a religious structure and a special festival; otherwise it spills out at any time and any place and contaminates the social order in a poisonous and uncontrolled manner.

As Mrs McLaughlin and I were being smeared with colour outside the Rose Bowl, I also thought that this was the perfect festival for The Doon School. We insist on the absolute equality of all our students irrespective of caste, religion, colour, race, gender or social status; this is deeply embedded in the mythology of The Doon School. During Holi, all those differences that can divide us are thrust into the background and people give in to an uncomplicated colourful rebellion against convention, albeit temporary. If we are all the same under the skin, at Holi

we are all the same on the surface of the skin: multi-coloured and almost impossible to differentiate! No-one escapes ritual daubing in a multiplicity of colours and everyone is free to join in frenzied dances to the wild rhythm of the drums, no matter their age or position in the school. And then there is the exchange of greetings, the elders distributing sweets when boys visit the masters' houses, and all the other shared pleasures of the day.

A number of things stood out for me in this, my first experience of this marvellous festival: the good-natured mingling of all ages and the way in which teachers and students greeted each other so genuinely and spontaneously; Mr Bathla's debonaire, designer-Holi look (while most of us ended up with the appearance of brightly-painted ruffians and hooligans, his colours looked as if they had been carefully applied by skilled Bollywood make-up artists); the high-octane dancing of the senior boys; Mr Nair leaping forward to rouse the faculty to dance; the sharp rattle and manic rhythm of the drums; the colour-streaked choir looking a little different than they normally do at Assembly; boys who forgot to close their mouths with green or orange teeth; Dr Joshi conducting the dancing with a twinkle in his eye; the big, round eyes of the littlest children watching the rainbow turmoil around them; and, finally, that night, a fat, yellow full moon smiling down from a cloudless sky and bathing the estate in a mellow, harmonious light. As I looked up at the heavens, I could think of no place I would rather have been for my first experience of Holi than this enchanted place.

## J L B U M E

*The following are the jumbled names of five instruments that Suchet Malhotra had displayed in his workshop*

EIBEDRDOINJ

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