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That Founder's *Wala* Smell

Bipasha writes about that time of the year, when Founder's is around the corner

For as long as I can remember, every time October comes around there is a special radiance all around Chandbagh, as if the campus is also doing its bit to welcome Founder's Day. There is cheerfulness of a contagious sort which pervades everything. Waking up early for PT, one can see the migratory birds criss-crossing the skies radiant with the glow of the rising sun. These are the harbingers of winter.

On my way to first school, the sun is just about warm enough to keep me from shivering, giving everything it touches a lovely golden shimmer. One can see Mr. Katre and his team pacing up and down, putting the finishing touches to the buildings and pathways. Then there are all the *maali bhaiyyas* pottering about- as if trying to get all the flowers to hurry up and bloom. Meanwhile, the hedges are already looking greener and readier to receive the Founder's Day guests. The walls look whiter; the wetness begins to evaporate in perfect synchronization with the receding monsoon clouds.

In the afternoons, the sun is deliciously warm and both the Main Field and Skinners bask in the golden warmth of autumn. A perfect picture of all that is autumn.

Looking up, I see a sky so beautiful - it is almost as if it is inspired by the 'DreamWorks' sky. Or is it the other way around? I wonder...

Late afternoon, the birds practice their exquisite songs (and ornithologists tell me there are no song birds in India!) just as hard as the School Choir and Orchestra, while the gardens look like the annual Raj Bhawan exhibition.

Mid-October. The days are just obligingly long enough, as if to help fit in everyone's hectic schedules! Those amongst the grown-ups with a taste for the finer things in life, start baking in order to keep the October cold at bay. Oh, how I love that! (Though there is a certain someone who has been promising to make me scones for years and I am still waiting!)

At night cold winds blow, murmuring messages imprinted on dry leaves of bamboos and chinars. Even as the skies transform into star-studded seas and the street lights are like photo-shopped images of firefly nests; the campus becomes a little scary. Victorian-era spooky- leaves rustle, cats meow and the fruit bats flit past. I often stroll through campus just after dinner and then race back home to my mother's apple puddings and then jump into my warm bed, with my cat on my feet like a hot water bottle. I fall asleep listening to the owl hoot just outside my window.

Despite the descending mellowness and calm of autumn, there is an excitement in the air that grips us - in the Music School, the Art School, and the Rose Bowl and even in the classrooms. There is a sparkle in everyone's eyes as the cold winds start to blow into them, and cheeks and nose tips become red. Runny noses and sniffing musicians force

PCH to wonder 'where have all the hankies gone?'

When all of this starts to happen, I start to smell that "Founder's-wala smell". Can one really describe a smell? It is the smell of drying soil, cut grass, dry leaves, fresh warm baking, woolens being put out to dry, bleaching powder, apples, paint, wet clay and autumn leaves crackling every time a DOSCO walks over them. As I start to smell it, I try and take it all in- trying to capture it, so that I don't have to wait till next year till I can smell it again. It is only then that I realize that Founder's is on its way and "winter is coming" (thank you, KAR, Sir).

Founder's brings a flurry of people, lights and lots of other smells among which that "Founder's-wala smell" gets lost, and before you know it, Founder's is over and the smell is gone, till next October. So hurry up, go stand on a balcony or on the Main Field and take a deep breath and take in that glorious smell that you'll have to wait for one whole year to smell. Take a little time to stand in the sun and take in that "Founder's-wala smell".

doonspeak

Founder's to me is. . .

a time to party and then work; one after another-

Nachiket Jain

three days to chill out- **Rishabh Chadda**

a break- **Divyant Sapra**

a way of uniting the entire Dosco community-**Naadir**

Singh

the best time in School- **Jai Lanba**

a time to eat, sleep and listen to music- **Daksh Bhatia**

'the' event of School- **Devansh Aggarwal**

boring- **Nihal Singh Dhillon**

a waste of time- **Nitin Sardana**

the smell of fresh paint- **Sookrit Malik**

1. The Doon School Weekly Saturday, October 13

BADMINTON UPDATE

The School Badminton Team participated in the **12th District Badminton Tournament**. In the **Under-15** category Vansh Agarwal reached the **Quarter-Finals**. In the **Under-19** category Vidit Sidana and Kabir Sethi reached the **Quarter-Finals**. Abhishek Parasrampurua won **Gold** in the **Under-19 Boys Doubles**.

The School Badminton Team participated in the **IPSC Badminton Tournament** held at the **Lawrence School, Sanawar**. In the **Under-17 Team Event** the School, represented by Vansh Agarwal, Aditya Gandhi, Saket Goliyon and Aakarsh Tibrewal reached the **Semi-Finals**. In the **Under-19 Team Event**, the School, represented by Abhishek Parasrampurua, Arjun Khaitan, Vidit Sidana and Kabir Sethi reached the **Semi-Finals**. In the **Individual** category, Ashish Pande reached the **Quarter-Finals**. Abhishek Parasrampurua, Kabir Sethi and Ashish Pande were selected to represent IPSC in the SGFI Nationals. Well done, all!

BLAZER

Yuv Vir Khosla, Khalid Alawneh and Siddharth Sethi have been awarded the **Games Blazer**. Congratulations!

BULL'S EYE

Samarjit Singh participated in the **Uttarakhand State Shooting Championship**, held from September 28 to October 6 and won eight **gold** medals, one **silver** medal and one **bronze** medal. Congratulations!

SWIMMING UPDATE

The School participated in the **XIth Council's Swimming Meet** held at the **Indian Public School**. The team won sixteen **gold** medals and eight **silver** medals in the individual events. The **Junior** team **won** the **Freestyle Relay** and the **Senior** team **won** both the **Freestyle Relay** and the **Medley Relay**. In the **Juniors** category, Nehansh Saxena **won** the award for the **Best Swimmer**, and in the **Seniors** Category, whereas Animesh Jain **won** the award for the **Best Swimmer** as well. Well Done!

DEBATING SUCCESS

The School hosted the **Kamla Jeevan Inter-School Hindi Debates** from October 5 to 7. The School, represented by Sanat Kumar Thakur, Abhinav Kejriwal and Ritesh Shinde, debated against Mayo College Girls' School, Ajmer in the Final Round and **won** the debates. Congratulations!

ARTISTIC!

The following boys have been awarded **Art Colours**: Sayuj Dhandhanania, Prasanna Rajan, Rishavraj Das, Ashutosh Goyal, Amartya T. Bhowmick, Digvijay Gupta, Shivank Singh and Karan Singh, Abhijeet Karwa (re-awarded), Shrestha Verma (re-awarded) Congratulations!

Opinion oll

Are you looking forward to Founder's Day?



(334 members of the School community were polled)

Next Week's Question: Do you think Founder's Day exhibitions should be department specific?



The Week Gone By...

Utkarsh Jha

The School was perennially busy this week preparing for Founder's. Be it the long hours the dramatists put in for the plays (which I would love to see) or the sore throats the musicians complained of due to their choir and orchestra practices, everyone was busy. A special mention must also be made to members of the various publications, who have literally spent sleepless nights at a stretch editing and designing. Let us hope that we can feast on their labour, when the issues come out.

Well, I dare not forget writing about the Kamla Jeevan Debates which were clearly the highlight of this week, lest I receive a strongly worded letter from the Hindi Department, or its masters. The 'Kam Jam' as it is popularly called, despite my vehement protestations about its gaudiness, was definitely an event to watch. Our Hindi Debating Team proved its mettle this week winning the debates. I must also add that despite expectations, "*Chaiyya Chaiyya*" and "*Mere Samne Wali Khidki Main*" (which as per my research were popular songs in the yester years) were not played at the Kam Jam 'Jam' session.

This week also saw the S and Sc Formers, head out of School for their Socials. While a detailed report on the Sc Form Socials runs in this issue, fun facts about the S Form Socials have been relegated to this small paragraph (how unfair!). The S Formers, visiting Unison, had a much better experience this time around. While some Doscocs decided to polish their singing skills, others boasted about their proficiency in the sport of... Ludo. Rumours are also flying (pardon the pun) that certain Doscocs enquired about the sport of Quidditch, much to the bewilderment of many girls.

Much to the joy of many, marching and PT seem to have been cancelled this week. However, I believe, O House has not received this message and can still be seen practicing their strides on Skinners. I humbly request the readers to pass on this news to their friends in Oberoi House, if their friends in Oberoi do not receive a copy of the Weekly.

Sweaters and handkerchiefs also seem to have found a place in the Doscocs attire, signalling that the winter is close. So, keep warm and carry on!

Under the scanner
INDIA
 Bodoland Clash
*Raniz Bordoloi analyses the Bodo-Muslim conflict and
 comments on the situation in the North East.*

I have always felt that Assam is a dormant volcano. When peace prevails, we see the volcano erupt and wreak havoc. The lava slowly destroys everything in its path. I believe that enough atrocities have haunted my motherland, Assam, be it insurgency, racial discrimination, bomb blasts or even alienation for that matter. Over the past three months we have observed certain unfortunate incidents that have worsened matters. And I fear this might just be the beginning. Nonetheless, let me rest my fears and concentrate on the Bodo ethnic communal clash in lower Assam and for that, I intend to use the public forum to discuss the intricacy of the issue and subsequently voice my opinions on it. The Bodos are a very important link when this issue needs reflection. The Bodos belong to a tribe found mostly in middle and lower districts of Assam. Recently, they have been engaged in clashes with the Assamese Muslim. I believe what happened in the BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Administered Districts) area has only been the manifestation of a very fragile social fabric that Assam has inherited in these areas. To understand the genesis of the problem, it is imperative that I go back to the past.

Assam became a part of British India only in 1826 after the Yandabo Treaty between the Burmese King and the East India Company. The British were looking for avenues of commercial activities in the recently annexed territory of Assam and for that they focused on the tea plantations. Let me add here that the tea plantations were discovered in the wilds of Assam by a British prospector named Alexander Bruce in 1823 before Assam came under the British map. So the British found it convenient to use the tea plantations for their benefit. But where were the labourers? The locals (mostly ethnic groups) were averse to hard work. The traditional land owning system (practiced under the Ahom kingdom also did not have provisions for land being given away for commercial plantations. That is why British brought in the first set of laws in Assam to encourage vacant and suitable land to be utilized for commercial plantations. It opened up avenues for commercial cultivators to procure suitable labourers such as hard working *adivasis* from the Central Provinces (today's Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa) for tea cultivation. The influx of labourers in the subsequent decades altered the demographic composition of the state permanently. The British realized later that the ethnic tribals living in these areas had to be protected from being swamped by the migrants. That is why a 'Line

System' or '*Laxman Rekha*' was created for preventing the Migrants from entering areas of Assam. The Tribal Blocks and Belts were created for protecting the ethnic tribals from losing their existence way back in 1921.

The present day BTAD, which is an amalgamation of Tribal Blocks and Belts, was created in 1993 and given further recognition by the Bodo Accord in 2003. But because of continued migration of non-tribals throughout in the past decades, the BTAD inherited a very fragile social composition which comprised several distinct ethnic groups and communities with almost equal number of populations. As a result the indigenous people are in the grip of a phobia that the migrant populations will swamp them in the future. This is why the crisis started in the first place.

All said and done, I believe that the ethnic clash was at all times, between the Bodos and the resident Muslims, and not the Bangladeshi Muslims, who are tagged 'illegal'. And I find it very improbable to believe that the Assamese society has innocently mistaken the Muslims as illegal infiltrators. It rather seems as a conscious 'mistake' laced with communal undertones. Nonetheless, It is wrong to say that the Bangladeshis are still infiltrating.

Now, let me remind you that the clash was not a first time occurrence. Yes, the riots have been repeated in intervals and there is a high possibility that the conflict might re-emerge. Yet, it is saddening to see that the media has conveniently ignored the issue. The crisis only found a place on the back page of newspapers and was the topic of discussion for a few days. The alienation of the North East has once again, come to the fore. Nonetheless, I urge everyone to realize the gravity of the crisis, keep their fingers crossed and pray. Considering the government's approach to the crisis, it will take a long time for it to be resolved.

* * *

| Poetry |

FATAL LOVE

Sahir Chaudhary

The burnt umber moon looked down upon me
 As I committed a sinful act,
 As I killed my love;

My love,
 The fair one with blue eyes.
 My love,
 The gentle one with flaxen hair.
 My love,
 The beautiful one with rosy lips.
 My love,
 The pure one,

I killed her.
 I killed her because she was about to leave.
 I could not bear the agony of resentment,
 So, I made her.

3. *The Doon School Weekly Saturday, October 13*

| Reports |
INTO THE WILD

Anvay Grover

Destination: Lucknow and Varanasi

While the rest of the School was busy preparing for treks and packing their rucksacks, the B-Formers left a day early. We headed to Lucknow and Banaras, both cities rich in history.

The train journey was different as we got to see the scenic beauty of our country as we travelled sleeper class.

Our first stop, Lucknow, the city of Nawabs. We visited the Bara Imambara and the labyrinth. We were found speechless by the intricate and well constructed buildings. The architecture spoke of the great regal era. Other notable places were the Chhota Imambara, the Ambedkar Park (built by Mayawati) and the British Residency. Thereafter, we left Lucknow on a seven hour journey to Varanasi. At the Banaras Club we met a fello Dosco and had a wonderful time. In Varansi, we visited Sarnath; it is here that Buddha preached his first sermon. We visited the Ghats of Varanasi, Ramnagar Fort and the renowned Banaras Hindu University. The historical trip was an exciting experience and a very insightful one.

Raniz Bordoloi



Destination: Nagtibba

Distance Trekked: 29 km

Our group consisted of six students and since these were our first private midterms, we were looking forward to it. We started in the morning and reached quite late in the afternoon. But then we had to continue our remaining journey by a trek to Thatyur. The trek was long and tiring, but the scenery around was breath taking. So, we did not complain! On reaching our destination, we pitched our tents on a field next to a river. After spending the night there, we headed for Devalsari the next morning. It should be mentioned here that we had lost most of our budget money on mules that carried an excessive load (mostly our food)! The trek was demanding, to say the least. By the time we reached our spot, it was late in the afternoon. We chose to stay near the forests to experience something new, and were not disappointed. We stayed there for two days before finally heading to Mussoorie to spend the last day relaxing. Nonetheless, it was undoubtedly my best Midterm due to the fun we had, the thrill of it and new experiences such as our first river bath!

Armaan Imam



Destination: Lansdowne and Kotdwar

Distance Trekked: 22 km

Our group of twenty, escorted by DKM and PRY, headed for the quiet town of Lansdowne. As we alighted the bus, we were immediately taken in by the peace and tranquility of the place. The highlight of Lansdowne was definitely the Tip-in Point; surrounded by clouds, there we all felt like we were in heaven! The food in the main town of Lansdowne was delectable. After two enjoyable nights, we headed towards Kotdwar, where we trekked along the River Ganges. We were told to be aware of wild elephants and bears on the trek. Two nights in Kotdwar, and we were at the end of our Midterm journey. On our return to School, we recalled all the sights and sounds of a memorable Midterm

Chinmaya Sharma

Destination: Tehri

Distance trekked: 20 km

We started off at 9 a.m. in the morning in a small, rickety, bus. We reached the GMVN guest house late in the afternoon, unpacked, and rested. The next day, we headed for a temple called Surkanda Devi, which is the place where the head of Lord Shiva's wife is supposed to have fallen. After a steep trek uphill, we finally managed to reach the temple. After meditating there for some time, we set back for the guest house. On day three, we trekked to a place named Chamba. This was one of the things that I enjoyed the most during my midterms. The best part of this trek was when I encountered a drunkard, who was walking in such a manner that I thought he might pounce on me any moment, so I broke into a run. But the most fascinating thing during my midterms was yet to come. The next day, we went to The Tehri Dam, which enthralled many of us with its sheer size. Unfortunately, we couldn't stay there for too long, thanks to the scorching heat, and headed back to the hotel for the last time. On the last day, we sat in the bus early in the morning, and came back to Dehradun, after a midterm that was memorable and tiring, yet one that enriched our minds.

I'm back, for the last time I presume, and this is going to be memorable. After looking at what happened these Socials, I think a new subject needs to be introduced in School- Socials 101. The urge to be at these Socials was almost entirely absent (but I cannot include all those who like to be called couples in this list, can I?). Well, let's remind them that we're still in school, and sometimes people are meant to be a little immature and carefree; they do not need to be security guards! Other than them, honestly, not everyone seemed excited. Those who wished to find themselves treasures were extremely keen, and a few people come to my mind (and to clarify it once and for all, I am not included in that list!). Thinking of it, I realize that it only leaves a few of us (including me!) who were disinterested. (*Ass. Ed.*: Well, let's say that our Ch. Ed., who in our eyes isn't capable of socializing, had quite a night as well. Let us not comment much, for we prize our place on the Editorial Board, especially when He's leaving!) No wonder people actually liked these Socials.

The past Saturday night, we left for the 'forbidden kingdom', with mundane expressions, loose clothes and mild colognes. On reaching there, without our School Captain, we found that their School Captain was extremely eager for



our arrival. Well, who wouldn't be? First, they were hosting almost an entire batch of Doscos (most of whom were really excited), and then there was Ricky Bahl's doppelganger waiting on the other side of the prison gate. For the benefit of our readers, let me not describe the night that they had. Here, I must mention the Heartbreak Kid who tried to showcase his so-called swag as soon as he caught a whiff of our counterparts. Unfortunately, the Boy-in-Charge from Kashmir House was unable to showcase his talent as he was preoccupied with all the food on his plate.

As always, the beginning of Socials was awkward. After the lovebirds were paired up, it got a little more awkward. It seemed as if the all of us were being forced to interact with each other, just for the sake of it. Yet, that happened as well. At ease, expectedly, was the Tata House sweeper (from their soccer team) who had a hoard of girls approaching him- neither for a glimpse nor a handshake, but to start a conversation that would that they hoped would last the entire night! Thank god that his ability to speak fluently is still a secret. Good for him, he knew whom he wanted to spend time with- his beloved delegates of Afghanistan, Nepal and Mrs. Body-builder. Unlike the past, his dear friend, one of the two Mr. Yearbooks, seemed quite comfortable with the Karate Kid, this time even without a wingman!

Then there were a few who seemed to get things going. Let me write about them in the order of intensity. First must be our Hindi Ed.'s endeavours. Whether it was the dance floor or the buffet, he seemed to be encircled by a group of girls, who, as he claims, he did not, and does not know. That's hard to believe! Then there was our Mess. Comm. Secretary, who conveniently discarded his title of 'Socials King' in order to be a little more sophisticated. God was it tough for us to stop laughing! The steady development of the Fair Fellow from Hyderabad House with his singer love were still under progress, but it was tough to fathom what was actually going on. What took the centre stage, by far, were Mr. Security Council and the Most Promising Speaker from 'Chucks'; debating. Sadly, in the background we could also see the professor, weeping and reciting Keats' Ode to Fanny to himself, as he did not find anyone to recite it to. Oops!

The night had a little more to it. There were intense Goal.com discussions, when we almost thought the Tata House Prefect would storm off, but surprisingly, he didn't. I am still perplexed to how something like that happened! Unfortunately, he also managed to get himself physically hurt (it wasn't as if he got slapped in front of everyone), by their Games' Captain. As I have heard, the basketball player, also from Tata, seemed to get everything he wanted- less attention and all the fun. But poor him, everything does not stay a secret for too long. The official villager was lost in deep thought about his evening, and then, with stroke of luck realized that his night was not going to be successful. The breaststroke swimmer (of Jaipur House) was left speechless when people came to introduce themselves. Obviously he didn't expect something like that coming his way. Although Little Miss Bossy had attracted the Captain's attention a while back, things seem stagnant as of now. Her previous interest, our missing School Captain's partner in crime, moved on to bargain for 'the Bong's' House Captain badge. For the record, that badge did not look like the eagle! But what actually stole the show that night was the trio of hippies who sat aloof, eating and making small talk amongst themselves. Starkly different was the small leader with a tough exterior, who despite his efforts, was left without any success.

During Socials, conversations generally stop because of two reasons. First is the food, and then the dance. The Real Dramatist and Fat (now thin) Jesus were at their best. Their merry conversations got them places, but once the food was out and the dance floor opened, they portrayed their true colours. I wished there were girls just like them!

Despite heartbreaks and disappointments, Socials, to say the least, was exciting for most. But considering that after a disappointing Socials on Sunday night, and with presumably no more to come, I can safely say that we can finally get down to more important things.

N

Arnaav Bhavanani

Ronald paced up and down the hall. It seemed impossible. The situation just did not fit the nature of the operation. Every single threat had been considered beforehand, and preparations made accordingly. The fact that the operation even existed had been known only to him and the team. There had been no radio contact whatsoever, for it was not needed. Yet, someone had known. Someone had ambushed his team at the Fort, and wiped them out.

The last coded message he had received was this: *"You have harmed us, and we will never forget it. Our battle and my personal revenge shall last until time takes its toll. As for now, we've got your miserably inept team, dead. You've failed, and there's more to come. - N"*.

Who was this 'N'? All that Ronald could gather from his deductions was that his Mr. X, or in this case, Mr. N, was fiendishly clever, and covered his tracks better than anyone he had ever known. Mr. N was invisible, non-existent, and impossible to find, even with all the amazing tools at Ronald's disposal. Every time he tried, he turned up with nothing. He had nothing to go on with, and every time he thought he had something, it was actually nothing, a red herring.

This operation was classified, Ronald's team had to break into Fort Knox and recover some supersensitive documents that had been lost for some time, but had been traced to the Fort, thanks to Ronald's amazing 'tools'. His team had followed orders, and the operation had gone smoothly until they reached the vault where the documents were kept. It was there that one of the team members felt a sting on his leg. Checking, the team members found a small, barely noticeable dart stuck in it, and then he passed out. When his body fell, it hit one of the lasers, and the alarm went off. All hell broke loose. The security system activated, and the team scrambled to get out to safety. Then, they vanished. That's it. They just disappeared into thin air, or at least, that was what Ronald's contacts in the Fort claimed they had heard. He knew the truth. He debated with himself as to whether he should find out. Yet, this person had nearly destroyed him. If his superiors had heard that this job had been carried out by him, he would have been killed, or worse. Who knew what would happen to him if he ventured out alone? His team was dead, and this Mr. N obviously knew pretty much everything about him, otherwise he wouldn't have been able to do what he had done till now. So, it was a combination of fear and practicality that kept Ronald in a constant state of paranoia, which escalated to the point that he quit his job, and severed all ties with the undercover world. But some stains just can't be removed, and N was that one stain on an otherwise spotless sheet. Ronald had not found N, and he made no attempt to do so. In short, he got scared into submission. He would not go looking for N, and only after hiding himself to the best of his abilities, did he feel he had some measure of safety.

This way, Ronald lived out the rest of his life. He became a recluse, living in a sparse flat in a dingy neighbourhood so that he wouldn't be noticed. It was at the ripe old age

of 75 that he received the Letter. It was unmarked, save for his name on the envelope, and nobody had seen who had delivered it. He had been expecting this for a long time now; in fact, ever since the Fort Knox disaster. Just to be sure, he checked the bottom of the letter. Sure enough, it was signed 'N'. He began to read, and saw that the letter was, in fact, surprisingly short. It read:

Ronald,

We admit, you hid your tracks pretty well this time, but we found you a year after the Fort Knox incident. You might be thinking, why didn't this come sooner, then? Well, the answer to that will remain a mystery to you. I have finally got the chance to have my revenge, and I will make full use of it.

"For a man dies ... only a few circles in the water prove that he was ever there. And even they quickly disappear. And when they're gone, he's forgotten, without a trace, as if he'd never even existed. And that's all." This is one of my favorite quotes by Wolfgang Borchert, and I believe it apt for the time being.

Boom-5,

N

Boom-5? Wolfgang Borchert? Had this man, who he had feared for so many years, gone mad? Unconsciously checking the time, he thought about it for four minutes. Nothing sprang to mind. What could be the hidden meaning? He thought again. Then suddenly, it hit him. Boom-5 was the old code his agents used to tell others that there was a bomb in place, signified by the word 'Boom'. The '5' signified the time in which it would blow. He had had five minutes, and he had wasted precious time thinking. He checked his watch again. He had ten seconds. He closed his eyes. He couldn't save himself in such a short span of time, not with the frail, old body he possessed. It was too late.

The bomb blew, and in that last second, Ronald smiled, because he knew that no matter how hard he could ever have tried, N would have won. Yet, with that fact came a strange consolation that made Ronald welcome the end, for his long years of fear had finally ended, and he realized that freedom from this life was all he had ever wanted. He smiled because he knew that N had not defeated him; he had just given him all he had wanted.

|Poetry|

BEGUILED

Aakanksha Mohan

He said he adored her,
But visited her only thrice.
He said he was different
But she finally paid the price;
He was no less imbecile.

No less malicious,
His thoughts particularly viscous;
Oh how she wished he didn't exist
And how she tried her best to desist
All his oaths pernicious.

| Short Story |

THE DOG OF DIFFERENCE

Udbhav Aggarwal

The dog was all that there was. When the Govil family had picked it up from the street, rumours were that it had run away from the residence of the District Administrator, the late Mr Dyer. Many claimed that the dog was left free intentionally, to humiliate the Indians. But the Govils had decided to keep it. With the passing years, the dog became a member of the Govil family. The dog gave the Govils a sense of pride and power, being the only Dalmatian the town had ever seen.

The description of the dog is not important. What is important is the story of its death. If thought about it was a simple case of hit and run, but still it remains one of the most gruesome murders in the history of independent India.

The news broke at about midnight. The dog was missing. The Govils were furious, though not for long. It took them a day to find the whereabouts of the dog. As soon as the dog had disappeared, the town was stirred with suspicion and gossip, though most of the town knew where the dog was. They even knew that it would not be long before the Govils realized its whereabouts. The Assad family had stolen it.

The housemaid of the Govils had overheard the Sethnas discussing the location of the dog. When the knowledge was passed on to the Govils, everyone expected a scandalous affair. On the 16th of some month (the name of the month is not important) all the Govils collected outside their house, like a parliament of owls. They had to go and reclaim their power.

They reached the Assads in the night. Shuffling out of the cars, they laid the cards straight. The Assads came out in packs. A dog was heard barking in the background. The youngest daughter of the Govil family shouted the dog's name, "Dog...Dog." The barking and panting grew fierce.

The self-proclaimed leader of the Govils, their grandfather, started the discussion with the self-proclaimed leader of the Assads, their grandfather. The fight had no consequence. The dog was brought outside. Both the families claimed the dog. If only it could decide. They were not fighting for a fair judgement, they were fighting for what they considered was their right; each of them wrong in their own way. The dog unaware of its faith, stood confused in the middle.

Suddenly one of the Assads silenced the disruptive mob. She pointed towards the temple, which was built next to the wall of the house, and the mosque, which was built across the road. The grandfather understood what she meant. He stationed the dog in the middle and stood on one side, in front of the mosque. After seeking affirmation from the Govils he asked them to stand on the other side, linearly opposite to his position, in front of the temple.

The plan was simple. The judgement was left to Him. The dog was left in the middle, free to run to any side, to the Assads or to the Govils. How could the decision be wrong? It would be taken in the name of God. Both the sides were shouting the dog's name, (which as I said was unimportant). There was a line which was drawn from the 'mandir' to the 'masjid' with the Govils and Assads standing on its left and right, respectively. The whistles of the train could be heard in the distance. The job of the train the was same as the job of the dog; both had to reach a destination.

The dog moved. The shouting and panting became louder and louder. With every step that the dog took confusion and anxiety seized charge. Suddenly the dog turned its head from side to side, transfixed its gaze on the train and ran with an unforeseen speed.

As soon as it stepped on the road, a car ran over him. Nothing had changed, the mosque was the same, and the mandir was the same. The dog was all that there was and the dog had been killed.

Letter To The Editor

Cut No More

Dear Weekly,

Thank you for publishing Mr. Vikramaditya Kapur's clarifications regarding his "light hearted and jovial thoughts", and his "setting the record straight". I must commend him for his efforts to keep spirits up in School. Accept my humble apologies for "misinterpretation, misinformation and misdiagnosis". A gentle reminder though, that the written word is peculiarly open to interpretation. The moment the written word is set free in the public domain, the author must let go! He must leave it to his readers, to exercise whatever little judgement they have, to make sense of text, context and subtext. There is nothing more dangerous than thoughtlessness set in print.

I am well aware that swimming and debating are not to be compared. What I was pointlessly gripping about though, was the condescending consolation handed to the debaters (unintentionally, or perhaps, thoughtlessly) followed by the genial pat on the back to the swimmers: 'A lost the cup, B did us really proud'. I'm glad that Mr. Kapur comes clean about the *raison d'etre* of the Week Gone By Column... *'merely a look at everything...need not acknowledge, congratulate or praise everyone for their efforts'* (italics mine). My point *exactly*, dear Sir! If it's merely a look, let it remain that. You might not add casual judgement/commendation/consolation to a *"mere look"*. You might just get more than what you bargain for. A "joke not pointed at anybody" sometimes becomes a loose cannon, with explosive consequences, pardon the poor pun.

On a "light-hearted and jovial" note, I absolutely loved the Disclaimer and Instructions that were added to *The Week Gone By* last week. I practically died laughing on the table! Such hilarity is welcome on Saturday mornings, even for grouchy old people like yours truly! Keep it coming, then! We are ready with sacks full of salt!

Your Friend and Critic,
Priyanka Bhattacharyya

7. *The Doon School Weekly* Saturday, October 13

| Reflection |

TEACHER'S DAY

Umung D Verma

This Teachers' Day, we took my mother, Minoo Varma, to Haridwar for her final rites. It was sunny and the sky was blue.

My mother, known on campus as MDV, came to Dehradun from California in 1993, in order to secure my admission here at School. She ended up staying at Chandbagh for four years as a computer teacher.

When MDV joined as a master, she was the only woman of faculty. The fact that she taught a rigorous and cutting-edge subject like computers only added to her stature as a trail-blazer. After more than twenty years in the U.S., she spoke with an American accent, wore western clothes, and generally reveled at upsetting the *status quo*. Yet she never missed ABC's Hindustani music performances or MHP's Hindi plays, and these were the rare occasions when she wore a sari. My mother's time abroad only enhanced her appreciation for these classically Indian pursuits.

So it was only fitting that MDV should have spent her last days here on the estate. For making that possible, we are forever indebted to the HM, DHM and the Dean of Studies. On campus, MDV was lovingly monitored by the Sister and the Dames. Frequent visits from her old friends and my new colleagues brightened our afternoons. In her last week, when she hadn't eaten a bite in almost a month, Ma joked with AAQ that finally, she was almost as thin as he is. My tutees were able to meet MDV during my first tutorial as a Master. And just moments before the end, Mrs. Vaishnav said farewell, and promised to come again. She has been by the house several times since; as has DCB.

In the very late hours after Doctors Hemant and Lanka pronounced their final prognosis, many Masters sat out on my porch, cigarettes and cell-phones glowing in the midnight. PMV methodically planned our outing for the next day. In the morning we were going to Haridwar.

News spread quickly, as it tends to in a small, close-knit community. By morning even more members of staff, their families, and the boys had come by to lend a hand. Food arrived from the CDH. The school-bus pulled up to ferry members of our community to the banks of the Ganga where they would wash the sands and together build a pyre under the supervision of MCJ. The remainder stayed behind so our home would not be empty.

As I smashed the earthen pot of water into the road in front of Martyn House, I caught a glimpse of all the people who had come out on Teachers' Day to say goodbye. I climbed into the ambulance with the body and we slowly headed for the Main Gate. Sitting at my side was our own

KC, who worked in MDV's computer department almost twenty years ago.

On the road to Haridwar, I recalled what the HM had said on my first day as a Master. He reminded us that communities are like a village, and villages thrive or perish depending on whether or not members trust each other, help each other, and are there for one another in times of need. In 1993, my mother brought me into one of the finest communities in existence. Though much has changed, and I have seen the world, I am still so grateful that Chandbagh is the village we came back to at the end.

It is a fool's errand to attempt to express gratitude individually to each member of the community, and so I will not. Each person did so much – everything from arranging class substitutions to calling a pundit. And truth be told, there are simply no words for what it means for PDT to have been there for us. Always.

This Teachers' Day we went on a school outing to Haridwar. It was a beautiful day for a drive.

The WHO?

Who is Roger Daltrey?

- A philanthropist- **Shubham Dhingra**
- A politician- **Yuvan Kumar**
- A sportsman- **Siddharth Sarin**
- A NASCAR driver- **Karan Sethy**
- A Simpsons character- **Yash Malhotra**
- A WWE wrestler- **Pratyush Bharati**
- A comedian- **Aditya Maheshwari**
- A marriage counselor- **Akhil Ranjan**
- A cyclist- **Vrishankaditya Parmar**

He is the founder and the lead singer of the English Rock band 'The Who'

Posco Doodle

Shooting Star

Madhav Dutt



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