



MEANINGLESS SORROW

A poem by Jeremy Jahau

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THIS WEEK'S THE WATCHLIST

Featuring
Messiah
Stranger
Imiyasha
1917

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DRAWING THE LINE

-Ngukivi Chishi, School Captain (Batch of ISC 2019-20)

Episode 2

“Everyone dies but it is a privilege to die for the country.” – Father of Colonel Bikumalla Santosh Babu, among those martyred in the border clash at the Galwan Valley.

Monday, the 15th of June 2020. Not even two weeks after officials of both India and China reportedly pledged to de-escalate tensions on the border, the Galwan Valley in Ladakh witnesses the most violent clash between the two armies since 1967. On the very same day, two Indian officials of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad, Pakistan are abducted, tortured, and detained for over ten hours. Coincidence? It would take a great deal of naivety to believe that. In Ladakh, the death toll on the Indian side counts up to 20 and according to latest reports, the Chinese have reported a number around 35. Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs has confirmed that the two Indian High Commission officials were video-graphed and forced to accept a list of fabricated allegations and concocted charges. Their crime, allegedly, was that their vehicle hit a pedestrian and they tried to flee the scene. The severity of the offence and the treatment meted out seem to be a little disproportionate, wouldn't you think? That is, of course, assuming that the claims of our Pakistani friends are true. We do seem to have made this mistake an unhealthy habit. A Chinese Communist Party newspaper, a laughable and rather pathetic misnomer known as the Global Times, has accused India of spearheading this border clash with the assistance of the United States.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has claimed that India is solely responsible for the conflict by initially deploying troops across the LAC. Well Mr. Wang, the facts are- we here are consistently detecting higher numbers of Coronavirus cases every single day. Your folks, on the other hand, have had a flat graph for over four months and quite frankly, seem rather bored what with the entire subcontinent's economy teetering while yours has been recovering for a while. Now, which of the two is likelier to wage war on the other at such a time? I see fingers seem to point at the one with an opportunistic past. Wang further urged the Government of India to conduct a thorough investigation and punish those responsible for the clash. The irony could almost kill.

That is possible, but it is unlikely that seeing the ones of the receiving end of it will please him. The truth is, China cannot afford to further escalate matters that would only garner support for India from the US, Russia and other world powers- themselves not too pleased with the Chinese; something about a global pandemic. It is not too long ago that members of the then opposition, including Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah, were scathingly critical of the Congress government's meek handling of the Armed Forces. Well Mr. Prime Minister, you are in the driver's seat now. The nation looks on, with the hope that the words of the Late Colonel's father will resonate on your mind, as their sacrifices will in our burning hearts.

The Nostalgia Shop

-Marwati Imsong, XI

Unable to find any inspiration for my new book, I went for a walk to cool myself off. You see, I was running on a deadline, and the stress had finally gotten to me. So paying little attention to where I was going, I had unknowingly ventured down an ancient street in old Delhi. As I wandered through the street, I found myself lost. It was then that I saw an old rustic looking shop, on closer inspection, I found it filled with things that could have been as old as the shop itself. I saw old smoke pipes, old paintings, old records, and old flower pots. Anything old you could think of, it was there. Before I entered, I saw that the sign above read Nostalgia Shop. It was a fitting title. As I entered, the first thing I stumbled upon was an old man sitting in the corner, by the bookshelves and the lanterns. He told me he was the owner of this rustic shop, and asked me to sit down and share a cup of tea with him. "Old age gets quite lonely sometimes" he said to me as he poured us tea. As we drank our tea, he told me stories of his. He told me that he had opened this shop with his late wife, confiding that he was only keeping it alive for her and her memory. He told me that all the items in the store were from an era long gone, only etched in memory.

As we finished our tea, the old man went to the back of the store and brought out an old and dusty record player. Blowing off the dust, he picked up an old Sinatra record. All of a sudden, the old dusty shop came to life before my eyes. The old man started dancing, and just for a second, just for a tiny glimpse, I swear I saw a womanly shaped shadow dancing with him.

He told me that it had been a long time since he'd danced, it reminded him of his days of youth when he was a free soul. He had lived the life of a gypsy, and had met the love of his life, his wonderful wife, when he was in Paris. He told me tales of romance, where they would listen to songs all through the night, dancing and drinking without a care in the world. He described it as midnight magic, where the bars brought all classes of people together.

Then he grabbed an old photo album from a lonely cupboard. They held memories of his days in Europe. The old man had lived an extraordinary life filled with places of beauty of beauty, flowers, museums with endless paintings, and parties with neverending laughter. However, there was one particular photograph that caught my eye. It was of a man and a woman in a garden filled with tulips. His eyes were ever completely still as I asked him about the photograph, as though he was reminded of something unforgettable, something

that transcended life itself. He went on to tell the story of the photograph. It was the time he proposed his wife in the garden where they had met when they were young, he had planted every single flower in that garden, her favourite flowers were Tulips. He had asked her to marry him at the stroke of the midnight hour as the crisp winds of Paris blew through the garden and their hair.

After they got married, they settled in Delhi where they lived a peaceful life. They did not have children as his wife was incapable of giving birth, but they would spend their time helping children in the slums. His wife was a teacher who loved children, so she would often go to teach the children in the slums, even in her last years when she was diagnosed with cancer. After his wife had passed away, the shop was all the old man had left. Staring at my empty cup, I had a strange feeling come over me, as if I had lived a life I had never lived, a life that felt so familiar yet so far away. I thanked him for the tea, and left the Nostalgia Shop.

The coming nights I could not sleep. Every waking thought I had was of the shop and the old man's stories, even in my dreams the garden of tulips would appear. Unable to bear any longer, I went searching for the shop again. However, when I reached the destination, I did not find an antique shop named the Nostalgia Shop, instead the only thing left was a tiny flower shop. Bewildered, I went inside and asked the owner about the Nostalgia Shop.

"Oh, that old place. It was shut down and dismantled maybe twenty three years ago? After the old man died, there wasn't anyone left to claim it. Poor chap, must have meant alot to him".

I said nothing, and turned to leave. As I slowly walked out of the store, I saw a bouquet of fresh tulips and smiled. I thought about what the old man said, about how he wanted to be buried next to his wife in the cemetery of the slum beneath the giant Gulmohar tree. I bought the flowers, and took off. I had somewhere I needed to be. After hours of searching, I found two grave next to each other beneath the Gulmohar Tree. Both graves were of similar build and make, with the same engravings that read "A life well lived, with my love, I would do it all over again". I smiled as tears rolled down my cheeks, "Rest well, rest well" I whispered as I placed the tulips on the gravestone and left the cemetery. Perhaps it was all just a dream, a figment of my imagination, a daydream fantasy. Nevertheless, the Nostalgia Shop would forever be in my heart.

Meaningless Sorrow

-Jeremy L. Jahau, Editor-in-Chief

The crimson skyline offsets my monochrome view
I see the colours but choose not to
For I feel broken, lost and a disgrace
I am alone but know others are in this place

Is this the end of my turn as a life seeker?
I've hit rock bottom but kept digging deeper
The light gets dimmer as I began to realise
How do I escape the darkness I idealise?

Yet, when I hear your pleas or feel your pain
I'll help you through it come fire or rain
But when you see I've fallen and try to help me out
I'll say, "Leave me be for down is my only route."

You ask, "Is it not alarming? Are you not afraid?"
Oh yes, it is my dear but it's the tools of the trade
For the trade of sorrow casts your worldly fears aside
And all that your left with are the monsters deep inside.

Funny, how our creations lead to our demise,
A gun, a missile, the futility of all our tries,
But I'm not searching for help, none of us do that, see?
For we understand sorrow, so I'll help you though I
can't help me.

From time to time, I'll look up, once more towards the
skies
I'll see the colours of the world shifting through your
eyes

I'll take your word of its beauty, engrave it in my mind
And forget the past that led me here, a world that was
unkind



And in the end, I'll be digging deeper, hoping you stuck
around

Further away from a grim reality whilst you're my only
sound

By chance you choose to leave, I'll always choose to
remember

Your voice, my hope, my calling, my life's last burning
ember

*Your words can spark fires so speak wisely,
Whether to warm the soul or burn it*

Illustration: Takhe Tamo Reela

Title Artwork: Jeremy L. Jahau

DARK THOUGHTS

-Letminlun Haokip, Deputy Editor

Sombre minds think of sombre things, as summer's
moon hangs elegantly in the sky, dangling on a string,
made up of the rarest of materials; hope and faith,
something sombre boys cannot hope to fathom. It is
something they have not felt since their mom left or
their dad took to the drink. Mother was gone in the

flesh, but Father's soul was decaying like a dying plant,
with flowers once white and pure now dripping alcohol
instead of nectar. Sombre boys often feel pain, it is often
a reality that pain and sadness are their only realities.
Perhaps somewhere in the vast multiverse, there is a
boy that is happier than they are, so sombre boys often

fantasise about paradise, and often forget to live until they die. Airport runways often shimmer like lakes, in the middle of July, an illusion cast on the brain by the unrelenting summer heat. This is a random thought, but one that sombre boys often think of, for no apparent reason apart from the simple fact that it fascinates them. They are stuck in a perpetual cycle of listlessness, a record player stuck on repeat, like the false sense of security raindrops dripping down rooftops provide. But nevertheless, they rest on the branches of mango trees;

the wind blowing through their hair as creatures lurk in the darkness of the night, their shallow breathing masked by the monotonous buzz of the cicada. They dampen the mood of the moon, stealing mysticism away from right under the stars, like dead ladybugs and dead four-leaf clovers. If only sombre boys were not such sombre minds that only thought of sombre things, they would realise that the demons they often run away from were just illusions cast by summer's unrelenting heat, like airport runways in the middle of July.

STARS OF THE WEEK

Gayatri Sapru of class 12 and Ojas Krish of class 10, contributed and were featured in the book "Inside the Millennial Mind". We wish them the best of luck in their future endeavours.



THE OUTPOST

India mourns the death of 20 soldiers who were martyred in a clash with Chinese troops in the disputed Galwan Valley at Ladak. This crisis now sees an active LAC and LOC over border issues. China's move to surround India with hostility seems evident with the Nepal map-crisis. The anger against China grows amongst the people as does the cry to boycott Chinese goods even as the Central government falls on the trust quotient. Eight terrorists were killed in Pulwama and Shopian in simultaneous encounters. MHA has slashed testing rates and fixed prices for private hospitals in a welcome move.

Illustration: Elozini Senachena



OPINION PAGE

“Should stress be used as a crutch to explain suicide?”

ANUSHKA BARUA - I think the word 'stress' is used extremely casually by us today whenever we face even a small bout of anxiety, which we can handle by just having some self control. Stress is actually a serious condition which requires people to be on medication to control it as it renders people incapable of doing their work since they are under so much pressure. If one cannot eventually work their way around it, it leads to depression and yes to suicide as well.

DECHEN SANGEY - No, stress should not be used as a crutch to explain suicide. Of course, stress can be considered one factor which leads to suicide but again, suicide is not the solution to your problems. Honestly, there is no crutch to justify someone taking his or her own life. People just tend to create an illusion and make an individual harm himself. One shouldn't fall for it because once you're past it, you become stronger. But obviously now those who try and create such a hideous situation for someone else out of jealousy or any ill feelings should be convicted and considered passive murderers.

AYAN GOGOI - I don't think it should be used as a crutch to explain suicide because stress can be neutralized with a bit of happiness and communication and if it takes over and suicidal thoughts starts to appear, we must overcome it because there is always a way.

TAKHE TAMO REELA - It's 2020 and depression, stress and anxiety are flaunted on social media, albeit majority of people's problems do not reflect those psychological issues. I agree that a major contributor to suicide is thought to be stress. However, stressful events are more likely to act as 'triggers' in already vulnerable people.

TIARA MARIE WARJRI - Stress can be used as a crutch to explain suicide because chronic stress changes our perspective on almost all matters. Stress clouds our judgment and mindset and can burden a person into feeling isolated, leading them to make compulsive poor decisions and jumping into conclusions, most likely giving up on life itself, which moulds a suicidal mind.

TAMANNA AHMED - Stress is a multifaceted factor. Sure, prolonged stress can lead to burnout syndrome and exhaustion, leading to a feeling of hopelessness. However, stress solely cannot be a reason for such tendencies. Ineffective means of dealing with stress leads to mental health issues, which clubbed with other factors, such as strong emotions and environmental factors, makes the person vulnerable to suicidal tendencies. As hazardous as stress can be in our daily lives, the complete absence of eustress or positive stress can also be a lack of motivation to keep living on.

TASMIN AHMED - My answer is no. It is because everyone is under pressure, whether it is big or small, but not everyone dies. They don't deserve to. There is no other organism that can explain change of feelings better than human beings. So, I believe that if a person is stressed right now, he or she can try to relax and come out of the mess. The choice is always in their hands.

Ripple #132

-Jeremy Jahau, Editor-in-Chief

Land of The Free

or so it's called.

Ruled by a white hand

Upon red soil

moistened by the

water from the

children of the Nile

The Quarantine Watchlist

Feeling sick and tired of the same four walls at home? Well grab your popcorn and immerse yourself in the world of media, here is a list of some of our suggestions:

MESSIAH: The real messenger of God, or the god of con artists? Journey along as this so called saviour is viewed with a layer of doubt by the CIA.

STRANGER: Crime? check. Contrasting lead characters? check. Mysteries that implicate the police department in dirty water? check. Join Hwang Simok and Han Yeo-jin as they join the dots to uncover a truth they may not want to know.

INUYASHA: One of the oldest animes that boasts of universal appeal, Inuyasha provides a masterful balancing act of comedic and action packed moments. Rightfully earning itself its legendary status.

1917: What can we say about this movie that has not already been said. The visuals alone are reason enough to watch this movie but with the gripping story of the horrors and misery of war it also entails, this movie should definitely be on your list.

Keep It Reel!

BLOOM

-Aarnav Dutta, VIII

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