



# PenChant

Reviews on Books, Movies and More...

VOLUME 1 : DECEMBER, 2020

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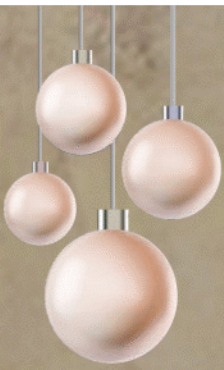
"It has long been an axiom of mine that the little things are infinitely the most important," said Sherlock Holmes, a rather intriguing character. Be it him in the books, or as Benedict Cumberbatch, I have always had a certain fondness for him but this year, I was introduced to his sister Enola, who I connected with more than I ever thought I would and fell in love with! In this issue, we have reviews that make sure our readers take it upon themselves to enter into the enchanting world of mysteries, alongside the Holmes!

Whenever there is a conversation involving literature, my first instinct is to think about Shakespeare, who I have always been in awe of! All his complex yet well-established characters are praise-worthy and exploring the character of Macbeth has only been enriching, to say the least. From songs as soothing as *The Lemonboy* to books as heart-warming as *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, I hope you find the right piece of art for yourself in the diverse collection of this issue.

2020 has been a rather peculiar year, with everything unpredictable and uncertain but well, it finally is that time of the year again! So, from the entire team of PenChant, I wish you the most magically Merry Christmas, and a very Happy New Year! With that, I give you the third issue of PenChant.

Naviya Chamariya  
XI

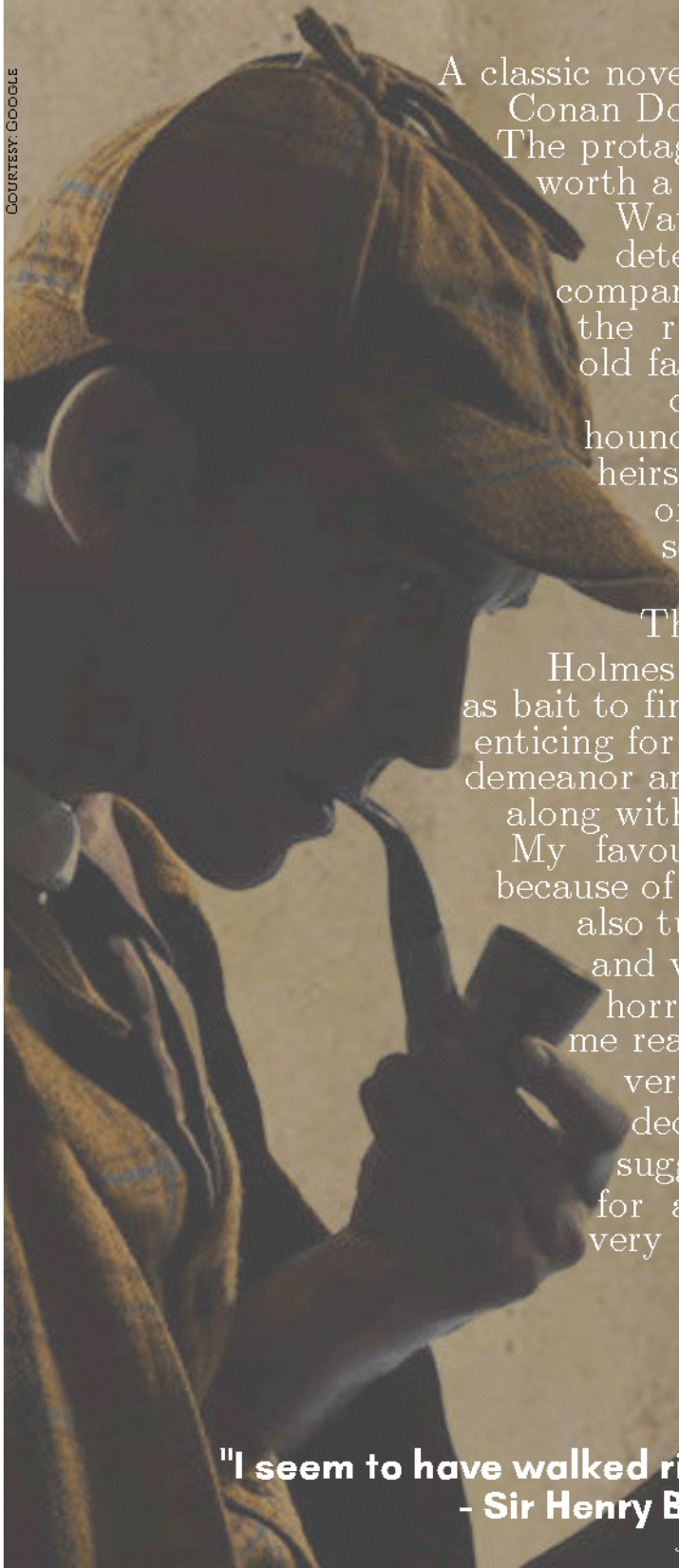




**FOR IT MUST BE READ...**

# THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

COURTESY: GOOGLE

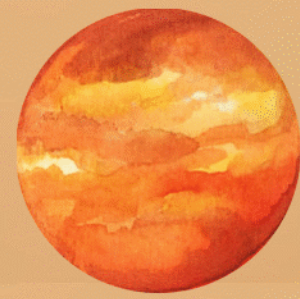


A classic novel, *The Hound of Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is classified as an adventure mystery. The protagonists of this story, who make this book worth a read, are Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson. The story begins with the famous detective Sherlock Holmes and his close companion Dr. Watson as they are given a case in the rural suburbs of England, following an old family legend of a giant supernatural hound called the Hound of Baskervilles. These hounds are believed to prey upon the young heirs of the Baskerville mansion. After the death of one Baskerville, Sherlock and Dr. Watson set out on a dangerous quest to uncover secrets and find the reality of the Hound of Baskervilles. In the dramatic climax, Holmes and Watson use the younger Baskerville as bait to find the real culprits. This book was very enticing for me because Sherlock Holmes' secretive demeanor and razor sharp intellect is very addictive, along with that Dr. Watson's praiseworthy bravery. My favourite character was Sir Henry Baskerville because of his headstrong and angry demeanor, which also turned out to be a source of humor and very helpful in finishing the horrific hound. The story makes me realize that appearances can be very misleading, having layers of deception and fakery. I strongly suggest this book to anyone looking for a thriller novel, ready to embark on a very mysterious yet adventurous journey.

Anikaith Joshi  
 Class VIII 

**"I seem to have walked right into the thick of a dime novel."  
 - Sir Henry Baskerville, Chapter 4**

For It Must Be Read...



## A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

A Thousand Splendid Suns written by the Afghan-American author, Khaled Hosseini was published in 2007 and is a novel which can make the reader burst into tears, move one's heart and make one feel real pain by its powerful emotional narrative. The recommended reader audience is fifteen years and above.

The novel is set in Afghanistan spanning three decades, in the towns of Herat and Kabul during the time of the Soviet occupation of the country, and follows the lives of two women trapped in their marriages in a land which is torn by war. The main theme of the book is oppression of Afghan women, relationship between parent and child; and in a way it is a mother-daughter story. The style is a double narrative. The first narrator and character is Mariam from the time when she was nine, the second narrator is Laila.

The pages will make one feel the pain of losing one's family and the horrors of polygamy in those days. The sad story of the two girls who grow up to be women who are influenced by their cultures provokes frustration, anger and sympathy and one gets a brilliant insight into their lives, their resilience, their fate through strong historical context and rich imagery.

Read this book to know about life of Afghan women with curtailed rights before and during the Taliban control and how the lives of the two characters are entwined with similar misfortunes. Just a quick fact to entice you: On November 5, 2019, the BBC News listed A Thousand Splendid Suns on its list of the 100 most inspiring novels in the very first week following its release, A Thousand Splendid Suns sold over one million copies, becoming a number-one New York Times bestseller for fifteen weeks.

I totally loved reading this novel though it is a real tear-jerker with some gruesome situations. It is, above all, an outstanding and sensitive story of hope and of life, laced with the pain of the heroism that comes with the strife of life, love, friendship, told in a straight explanatory style. Personally, I would rate this novel 10/10.

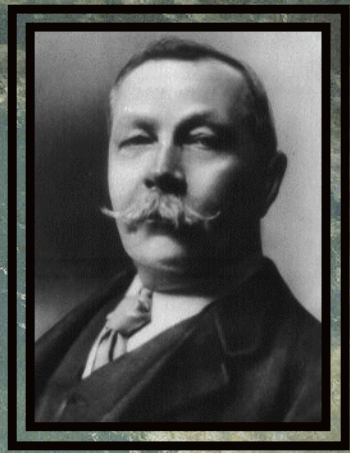
Saifi Raheek

X





## MEET THE AUTHOR



### SIR ARTHUR IGNATIUS CONAN DOYLE (MAY 22, 1858 - JULY 7, 1930)

Even as a boy, Arthur had an aptitude for story telling and often found himself surrounded by younger students amused by his stories. In his first book, *The Surgeon of Gaster Fell*, Arthur dramatically portrayed what he felt when his father had to be taken to the mental asylum just a few years after his graduation after which he decided to pursue medicine. However, a couple of years into the medical journey, Arthur decided to try his pen at writing a short story *The Mystery of Sassasa Valley* which was accepted in an Edinburgh magazine, *Chamber's Journal*.

His work, *A Study in Scarlet* was accepted for publication by Ward Lock & Co. which gave Arthur £25 marking the beginning of his literary career. Sir Arthur is best known for his very celebrated character of Detective Sherlock Holmes influenced by Dr. Joseph Bell who was a master at observation logic, deduction and diagnosis, the qualities that make Sherlock Holmes so intriguing and special. His other works include *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *The Hound of Baskervilles*, *The sign of the Four*, *The Lost World*, *The Valley of Fear*, *His Last Bow* and many more. His style of writing was very flowy, and almost overwhelmed the readers with details and adjectives. He had a total of at least 48 books to his credit, and more than 60 stories featuring his masterpiece of a creation, *Sherlock Holmes*, which has also been adapted into movies and series widely watched and loved.

Arthur Conan Doyle died in Windlesham in his home in Crowborough, Sussex, where a huge crowd of his fans took part in a huge séance in his honour, making him a legacy and assuring the immortality of his works.

Chinmoy Tamuli

"There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact."

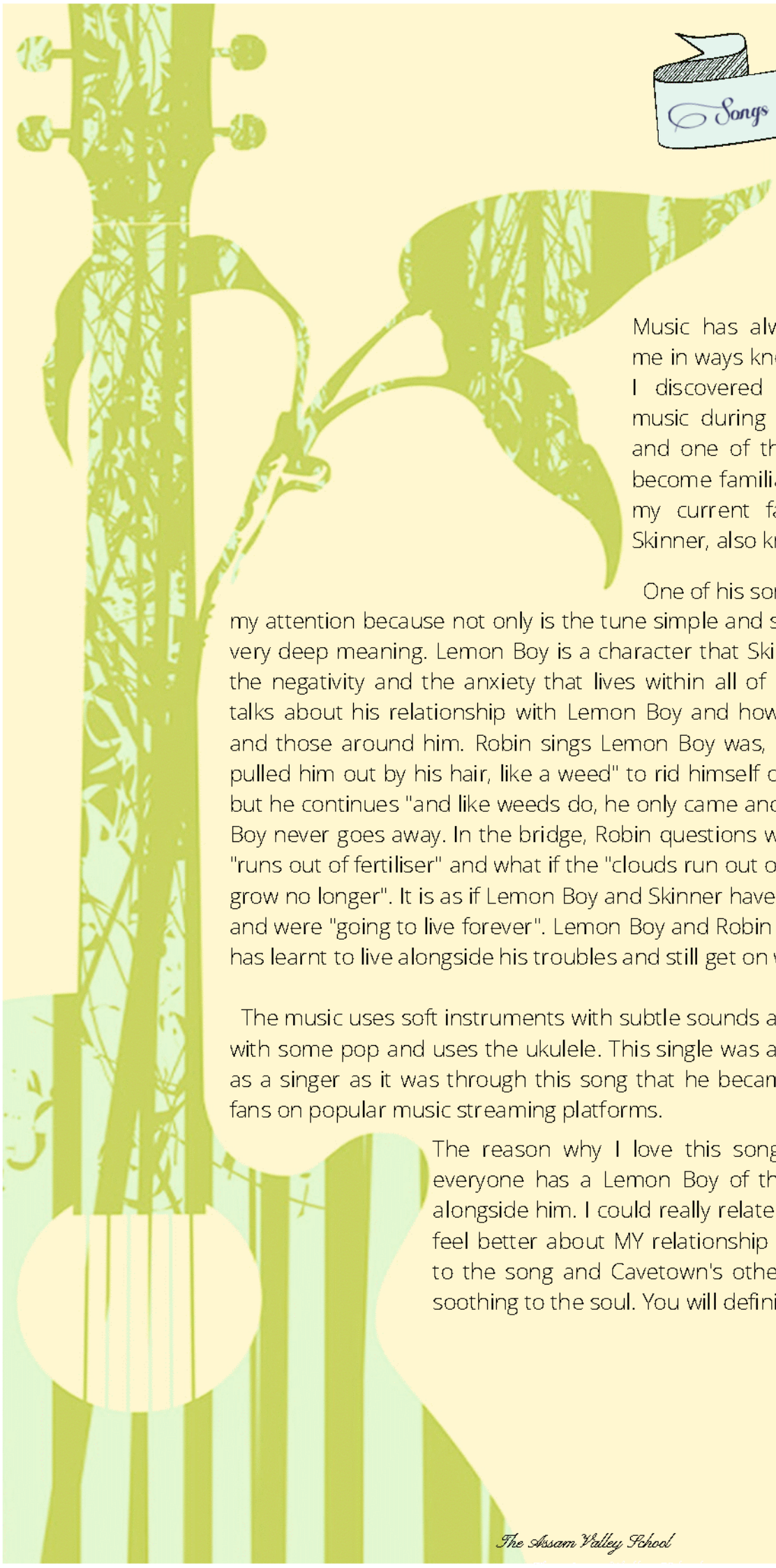
ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

*The Assam Valley School*





*Songs That Were Sung...*



Music has always healed and comforted me in ways known and unknown to myself. I discovered many different genres of music during my time at home this year and one of the many genres that I have become familiar with is Bedroom Pop with my current favourite artist being Robin Skinner, also known as Cavetown.

One of his songs, Lemon Boy, really caught my attention because not only is the tune simple and soothing, but the lyrics have a very deep meaning. Lemon Boy is a character that Skinner developed to represent the negativity and the anxiety that lives within all of us. Through the song, Robin talks about his relationship with Lemon Boy and how the Lemon Boy affects him and those around him. Robin sings Lemon Boy was, "growing in my garden and I pulled him out by his hair, like a weed" to rid himself of his anxiety and depression, but he continues "and like weeds do, he only came and grew back again", so Lemon Boy never goes away. In the bridge, Robin questions what may happen to him if he "runs out of fertiliser" and what if the "clouds run out of rain" and Lemon Boy "won't grow no longer". It is as if Lemon Boy and Skinner have become a part of each other and were "going to live forever". Lemon Boy and Robin are one and the same. Robin has learnt to live alongside his troubles and still get on with life.

The music uses soft instruments with subtle sounds and his style blends indie rock with some pop and uses the ukulele. This single was a major success for Cavetown as a singer as it was through this song that he became famous and got a host of fans on popular music streaming platforms.

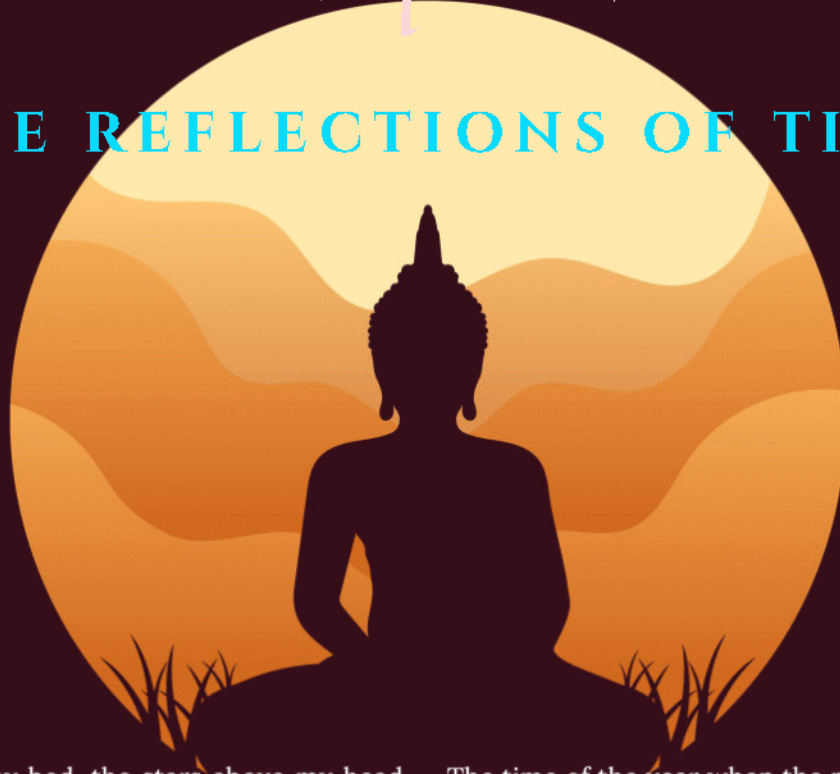
The reason why I love this song is because I learned that everyone has a Lemon Boy of their own and they must live alongside him. I could really relate to the song and it made me feel better about MY relationship with Lemon Boy. Do listen to the song and Cavetown's other singles as well which are soothing to the soul. You will definitely not regret it!

Anushka  
Barua  
XCT



# Perspective

## THE REFLECTIONS OF TIME



I saw a vision. Lying on my bed, the stars above my head, gentle music playing in my ears. Moments of my life passed before me. All people went in a flash. All achievements and failures passed in a zap, but deep down I knew, each moment of our infinite existence, sweet or bitter, ignorant or compassionate, hurting or loving, lived forever in the vast paradox of time and space.

It was the dawn of my reflections. Everything is temporary. Your tears today will be the reason for your smile tomorrow. What you own today was somebody else's yesterday and will be somebody else's tomorrow. Time will pass, and so will your sorrows, your desires, your love and your hatred. You too will pass. The world is fast paced but faster is time. More than 7 billion of us are living in this pale blue dot in the massive universe but still our egos are larger.

We are small and yet smaller if we compare our existence with the massive universe. Then why is it that our ways so myopic in the larger scheme of things? Why do we chase recognition and success? Why do we feel incomplete all along? Throughout my school life, I always chased recognition. A lot of activities I undertook were always about proving others wrong when they doubted my capabilities. I was rejected four times in the try-outs of the inter house dramatics, but the fifth time, I made it to the prestigious founders' school play. Five years ago, my senior told me, your ideas are good, but you cannot draw. Though it is insignificant, today I am the art captain. I was told you cannot play sports, I worked really hard to prove them wrong and somehow made it to the under-17 football team, but life is not all rainbows and sunshine, the tournament stood cancelled and a short time later, I suffered a knee injury which cost me two years of rest and a surgery.

The time of the year when the prefectorial batch is formed. When aspirations for a position are many but the position, only one. When it is not enough to be good and responsible, but when one must show and prove it too. I too had my own thirst for recognition. I aspired to go on stage and deliver a speech for school captainship, but there is a difference between aspiration and the reality. I wrote a speech that was never heard.

We have been cheating ourselves by calling life a journey. In a journey you are always trying to get somewhere, but life is playful, it is like music. In a musical composition, the end of the composition is not the point of the composition. If that were so, the fastest musicians would be the best. People would go to a concert to just to listen to a ending chord because that is the end. When you dance, do you aim to reach a certain destination or a point in the room? Of course not, because the point of the dance is the dance and not the final destination. Why did Richard Feynman not want the Nobel prize? Because the point of his physics was the physics and not the prize. Though I am terrible at mathematics, a few months ago I really experienced the joy of doing math, just because I forgot about the exam the next day.

The most beautiful moments of my life have been on treks, watching the stars and laughing with my friends. Not reaching the summit, because the point of the trek is the trek. We always strive to attain happiness, success and freedom in life but if you hold water from the ocean in your hands, it no longer remains the ocean. So what are we trying to gain or attain? The same is with life, all we can do is just drown in its beautiful music. I hope you find yours, too.

Nelay Dhakal  
XII

# A Point



## DESTINED TO FALL

*In the final analysis, Macbeth remains a pitiable victim in the hands of destiny, completely stripped of any strength and grandeur in character.*

The Macbeth at the beginning of the play, returning victorious from an unwinnable battle, was well rewarded with the Thane-ship, well feared by enemies, well performing and well respected by his people. As a close confidante of King Duncan, so much so that the king visited his house, Macbeth was already in line of being a powerful man, but destiny had other plans for him. I will explain to you how a series of uncontrollable events, totally attributed to destiny, completely out of Macbeth's governance, had a complete change of fortunes for Macbeth and cut him a pitiable figure. He tried to control the prophecies of the three witches – but, surprisingly enough, all of his actions found a convenient backdoor into Macbeth's doom.

The three witches revealed his prophecies to him. The very conception of his fortunes, his ambitions, his ill deeds – began with a 'destined' meet up upon the moor; when Macbeth's inherent good character couldn't kill king Duncan in his sleep, he was provoked and instigated by his wife. Also, Malcolm escaped; Macbeth abhorrently killed his own best friend Banquo, only to realize that the real threat to his lineage, Banquo's son, had escaped. His planned dinner trying to establish his dominance and grandeur was totally derailed by the strange appearance of Banquo's ghost. Nothing but destiny made an otherwise articulate and charming person seem insane, losing all legitimacy! Then after becoming the king and living his dream, Macbeth couldn't prove to be a good king. He was hated by all because in the process of achieving greatness, he was just chasing it.

There is no denying that Macbeth always tried to force the issue, he tried to make things happen, he took action, he would either rush his fortunes, or try to change it completely. He was not docile. But the loopholes in all of Macbeth's plans was the strong uncontrollable force, which was Macbeth's true fate. His destiny was a culmination of events that he tried to control but actually couldn't

Even after trying everything under the sun to retain and regain power, to establish his lineage, alas, there was Macduff, standing in front of him at the battlefield: an unthinkable human not born of a woman, the epitome of Macbeth's poor destiny.

What became of Macbeth? He lost his support system: his wife, to the guilt of his actions. He lost his sleep and peace. He killed and committed crimes. Macbeth: who was a brave warrior, resorted to killing innocent children. Very uncharacteristic! Macbeth: a good leader, doomed a kingdom. All of Macbeth's virtues were slowly depreciated: why?

Macbeth was pitiable, not just because he lost at the end, but because he kept losing important events throughout his life. Macbeth was pitiable because nothing was in his hands. He was destined to fail, each time he tried to toy with his destiny.

Remember the victorious Macbeth at the beginning of the play? Well, he died, a bad king, a characterless human, and a lost soul, on the same battlefield that got him all the glory.



FOR THE GOOD TIMES

# ENOLA Holmes



"Now, where to begin?"  
Sherlock Holmes had a sister?

Did I miss something? Turns out

I did not. Enola Holmes is a mystery film directed by Harry Bradbeer and adapted from the book series *The Enola Holmes Mysteries* by Nancy Springer. The character of Enola Holmes is played by Millie Bobby. This movie was realised on 23 September, 2020.

Brown is Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes' sister, played by Henry Cavill (popularly known as the DC hero, Superman) and Sam Claflin, respectively. The story is about Enola finding her mother who has gone missing on Enola 16th birthday and finding herself amidst the chaotic world around her. She meets Vicount Tewksbury, played by Louis Partridge and other amazing characters along the way.

Enola Holmes takes you on a delightful journey. As a sprightly 16-year-old in 19th century England, Enola turns convention on its head in the way she dresses and conducts herself. She manages to outsmart her legendary brother Sherlock but without in any way diminishing her brother's reputation. The fact that the famous Sherlock Holmes got outsmarted by his sister have driven thrills in the movie! The tint of comedy and action is perfectly balanced with the surprises and mysteries throughout the film and will keep you on the edge of your seats. This movie teaches you the value of privacy, friendship and that one has two paths; the path of their own or the path others chose for you, and it clearly teaches you to own your life and take your own path where everything eventually falls in place. This is one of the best movies I have seen.

What I love about this movie is the extraordinary character of Enola Holmes. She is smart, witty, talented and determined. She is independent, fights for what she thinks is right, is never afraid to voice her opinions and faces all challenges head on. She sticks to her values taught by her mother and is brave to face the unknown world. If you are a mystery, comedy and adventure movie fan, this movie is for you. You won't be disappointed, it's worth it. Enola Holmes is currently on track to reach 76 million members during its first four weeks of release on Netflix. You're not late, go watch it! And remember, "Our future is up to us!"

Raseen Shah

XI





# ECLECTIC

## LET YOUR KINDNESS SHINE

- Be Nice
- Say Thank You
- Be a Friend
- Smile
- Say Please
- Help Others
- Share
- Listen

think happy thoughts

draw a picture

get a drink

do yoga

put my head down

read a book

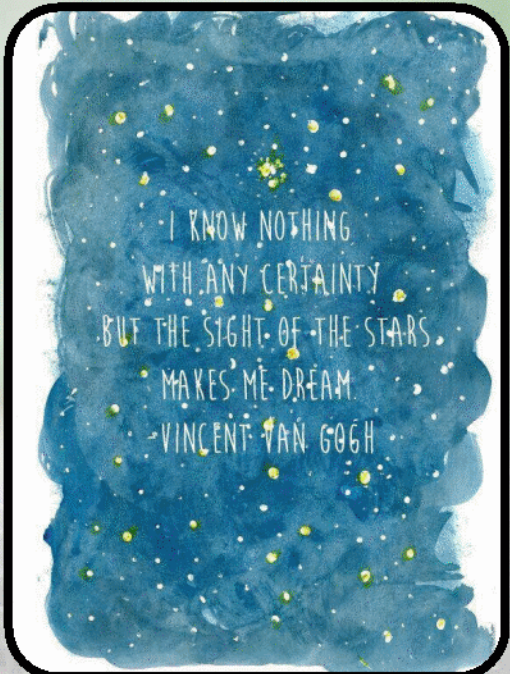
count to 10

use my words

walk away

hug a stuffed animal

### If I'm upset I can





WE WISH YOU A  
MERRY  
CHRISTMAS  
&  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Eggnog is a popular Christmas tradition with a history all of its own. The common holiday beverage — traditionally made with raw eggs, milk, cream, sugar, and some kind of alcohol — first began as a wintertime drink for the British aristocracy. The wealthy in particular drank it, since they could afford the ingredients and were able to add expensive liquors to it to keep the eggnog from spoiling. In the 18th century, eggnog became a drink everyone could enjoy. The tradition of leaving milk and cookies for Santa (and carrots for his reindeer) really skyrocketed as an American tradition in the 1930s, amidst the Great Depression. Parents wanted to teach their children — even during such trying times — the importance of giving back and being thankful, so they set out milk and cookies to show their gratitude. In Victorian times, it was very fashionable to go carol singing with small handbells to play the tune of the carol. Sometimes there would only be the bells and no singing! Handbell ringing is still popular today. Perhaps the most famous bells at Christmas now are the ones in the song 'Jingle Bells'. However, the song was first called "One Horse Open Sleigh" and was originally published, in the USA, in September 1857 as a Thanksgiving song and NOT a Christmas one! But it soon became associated with Christmas because of the 'snowy' lyrics and many choirs were singing it at Christmas in the 1860s and 1870s. It was first recorded in 1889. Often only the first verse (and chorus) are now sung.



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