



# **CELEBRATIONS**

**An Anthology of Poems & Short Stories  
by the Students of  
Burhani Serendib School**

“The more you praise and celebrate, the more there is in life to celebrate!”

Keeping this in mind, the theme for the English Festival 2017/18, was CELEBRATIONS, rejoicing the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Burhani Serendib School. All students of Form 5, Lower 6 and Upper 6 participated in a Creative writing competition. Every student had to write a poem and a short story on the theme Celebrations. It is noteworthy that the topic was impromptu.

Students were given the topic on the day of the competition itself and all the literary texts were written just in the span of one hour only. The outcome was amazing and every piece is unique in the way the students have expressed their emotions through the vehicle of language. The compilation of their poems and stories in a book was thought necessary... to continue the legacy so that Burhanians will read and cherish the work of their schoolmates and be inspired. The fruition of this endeavour is this book – CELEBRATIONS. I Congratulate each and every student whose writings have been engraved on these pages.

Also Nafisa Zueb & Sakina Huzefa Taherally for having done a good job in compiling the poems and stories and Huzefa Sh Murtaza for doing the graphics.

So let's celebrate what we have accomplished, but raise the bar a little higher each time we succeed!

Mrs Rashida Abdulhussain

Teacher of English Language and Literature

# OUR POEMS

## The Reunion

The sun has risen in its full glory  
The rays of golden drops  
The clouds are floating like cotton  
Birds chirping their beautiful songs

The castle is gleaming from top to bottom  
With its white marbles and lush greenery  
The soldiers, with their armour,  
Lining the entrance to begin the great day.

The people scuttling everywhere,  
In their colourful clothes,  
Singing, chatting and laughing,  
It is a day of happiness and fun.

The flowers have bloomed in full beauty  
Of varying colours and fragrances.  
The place is full of happy vibes  
With light hearts and cheerful faces.

The castle is decorated in vibrant colours,  
The King and the Queen are draped in Majesty,  
Their jewels glittering in full splendour,  
Waiting for this much awaited day.

The maids are ready with their baskets of flowers.  
The carpets have flown smoothly,  
To welcome the great princess  
And celebrate this day of reunion.

BY: *Anonymous*

## **CELEBRATE LIFE**

Close your eyes and  
Hear the thud of your heart,  
You were given this life  
You are Gods' own piece of art.

Breathe in. Breathe out.  
It's the little things that count.  
Your time here is short,  
Make sure you know your worth.

Let the wind mess up your hair,  
Don't let your insecurities damage you beyond repair.  
Celebrate Life.  
Your flaws make you who you are.

Embrace whatever life has to offer.  
The Good.The Bad.The Sweet.The Bitter.  
Celebrate Life.  
You are not the best.  
Darling, you're better.

*BY: Rukkaiya Hussain*

## War Celebrations

Moving about, basking in light  
Around the fire, burning bright  
Dancing like the orange flames  
Children laugh, playing games.

Through that I see.  
I see a woman sitting alone  
Remembering the loved ones she lost,  
I see a child tearing up  
Staring at his crippled leg in thought,  
I see faces, faces imposing smiles.  
I see misted eyes and trembling thoughts.  
Then just one phrase changes the air,  
“War’s over! Let the celebrations begin!”

The woman now stands up in pride  
The child smiles, bellowing out a war cry  
The faces now can’t hide the crinkle in their eyes,  
And the misted eyes cry tears of joy.

Moving about, Basking in light  
Around the fire, burning bright  
Dancing like the orange flames  
The Survivors laugh, playing games.

*BY: Zainab Firoz*

## **Celebrations With Heavy Hearts**

Armed soldiers and heavy bag packs  
Restless fights and injured limbs  
Rapid fires and rotten bodies  
These are the few things you would see in the battle field

Sharp eyes and loud sounds  
Daily scouting below the clouds  
Missiles and rockets which would hit the ground  
Airforce, the birds above

They are trained to swim in difficult conditions  
To give everything they have for their mother land and their children  
Sailing on huge ships filled with passion and pride  
The navy they are, and in seas you will find

Some were family some were friends  
Gave their lives for those whom they never met  
With running tears and heavy hearts  
This is war! My friend don't be a part!  
Lets celebrate for those who remain and fell  
Read this poem,if you may  
And change the way you celebrate  
The independence gained

*BY: Burhanudeen Kutub*

## **Celebrations**

An eccentric burst of colours onto your faces,  
Faces which seem to be too amazed.  
Cherry red, peacock blue, a fiery yellow,  
Throwing around onto laughing figures,  
Colouring their plain white clothes,  
Dancing around and singing with joy.

*BY: Taha Ammar*

### **My Wedding day!**

Finally the day arrives  
When my dad will have tears in his eyes,  
The day for which I've long awaited,  
Will be witnessed in a while.

Today when he looks at me  
I still recreate the first sight of him,  
When a blush naturally follows me,  
Leaving a spark of glee.

I am ready I finally say,  
To my heart which has to pay  
Years from now this day will be celebrated  
Tears will follow remembering every moment.

*BY: Khadija Johar*

### **What is Christmas like?**

It is the merry time of the Year again  
Where the melodious Carrols are sung today  
Forgiveness, acceptance and change can be gained  
Where the ruins of yesterday won't define this day.

The smiles which are plastered on people's faces  
It is like a wall which is just painted  
Running up and down as if in races  
Trying to finish the chores without being fainted.

Then approaches the dark and gloomy night  
When Mr. 'Ho Ho' known as Santa arrives  
Bringing gifts which are just right  
Then taking a U-turn to the next location to drive.

Waking up the next day to see your stocking  
In the hall next to the lurid lighting  
Under the Christmas tree lies your packaging  
'Merry Christmas' it says in big writing.

*BY: Rashida Mufaddal*

## Celebration....

Come everyone let's celebrate,  
It's time to party and celebrate,  
It's a good day and a good time,  
So come on everyone gather around.

It's been a long time since we have celebrated,  
Come on everyone let's celebrate,  
Let's celebrate this moment.

It's been 35 years,  
35 years of happiness,  
35 years of love,  
And 35 years of joy,  
So come on everyone,  
Let's celebrate this happy moment.

Celebration all around us,  
Singing songs at the school's anniversary,  
Let's rejoice in this celebration,  
Together at the end of the day.

When I'm gone, when I'm gone,  
I'm gonna miss my school when I'm gone,  
So it's time, to thank the school,  
For what it has given me,  
And it's time to give back, what I have taken,  
So come on everyone gather around,  
It's time for celebrations,  
So let's celebrate these last moments.

BY: *Radiya Abid*

## **A New Beginning**

Push! Helplessly screeched in pain!  
Couple of eyes, happily cried that day,  
A new life, becoming everyone's main  
To celebrate; history marked it the birth-day.

Back when, taken the first step was brave and bold;  
Gained the happiness of them all,  
Little known, a child made soldier in the cold.  
To celebrate; he had his final call.

Dead soul, soon a hero to be doomed,  
Pure innocent soul; shattered by the knife.  
Last breath! Eyes shut! Witness what loomed,  
To celebrate; called it a good deed life!

New beginning – a dead soul brought;  
In the eyes of all- reality hurled!  
Of all the pages, history wrote,  
He remained a new born to the world!

BY: *Fatema Fakhrudeen*

## **Celebrations**

Choose celebration,  
Let every cell vibrate  
Sing from each ion  
And be your own sun.  
Through any  
Dark day;  
Let love infect  
And ignite you,  
Burst you into flames  
For a day you didn't choose, no, it chose you.

BY: *Arwa Tayabally*

## **Celebrations!!!!**

The joyful occasion  
Of our Moula's birth day  
Let us begin the celebrations  
May they always stay  
For his long and healthy life  
Our hearts forever pray!

The cheers, laughter and music  
All coming together as one,  
As we devour the scrumptious cake  
The chocolaty goodness melting in our  
Mouths; so yum!!

The sparkling of colourful lights  
Making everything shine so bright,  
Flowers of different sorts  
Only with heartfelt love bought,  
Never seen an occasion of this kind  
Which blew people's mind!

BY: *Rukaiya shabbir*

## **Sweet 16**

Fairy lights twinkling from far,  
Music could be heard everywhere,  
People chattering here and there,  
On the sweet sixteen of Clary Fair.

Here comes the birthday girl,  
Showing off her dress with a twirl,  
Her jewelry shone to and fro,  
But not more than her happy eyes.

Thus, was a good day,  
We cheered, we laughed and we danced,  
We celebrated the entire night,  
And made Clary's "Sweet Sixteen" the best night.

BY: *Ruqaiya Murtaza*

## **Time for joy and Time for cheer**

In the name of Christmas  
We all became saints  
Churches were occupied vastly  
With joy evident on everybody's face

The white angels descended  
From the heavens above  
Which made the earth pure  
From hatred to love.

Jingle bells rung all day  
Rung intense feeling of joy  
There came the Santa  
For every child a toy.

Children became greedy  
When the clock ticked 12  
Parents became cringe  
When the expenditure thought hit them.

BY: *Burhanuddin Murtaza*

## THE FINE ART OF MERRYMAKING

We have all been evidently money grubbed in the recent past,  
Not realizing how the world evolves putting us to the very last,  
Outside a capitalistic atmosphere stand infinite opportunities,  
Rationing to the whole of the population making them rudimentary  
necessities.

We shall raise a cuppa tea,  
For once, hopefully eliminating the desire of a yuppie being,  
We shall dwell from the past,  
And honourably rejoice existence along with a toasted blast.

Let us limit the extensive performance force,  
For the fact that it can be one reason which can lead to a societal collision  
course,  
Let's avoid the extensive preference of triumph over negligence,  
And begin to reshape a humble batch of structured diligence.

We together shall replace self pitying with gratitude,  
Downright eliminate the avertable inadequate attitude,  
We shall unite and portray prosperity,  
Memorialize effectively till it is one to call it a sign of long-term positive  
activity.

So Gather along and step up yourselves,  
And Let the world visualize you as a storm,  
Until the time comes,  
That celebration is the NORM.

BY: *Abbas Fakhruddin*

## IT LIES UPON YOUR EYES

Look at the skies, the sunrise, the sunset.

It makes a wonderful opportunity to observe through the mixtures of colours,  
It makes the pupils calm and therefore making your mind relax.

Thus, the cry of slaves asking for freedom makes your self-cry a tear,  
but the release of them creates a remembrance after fighting for years,  
Then at last the minds get calmed and relaxed of overall in happiness.

Fighting for the country for freedom,

Is something not like taking a gem-stone and throwing it into a river,  
It is something that we should celebrate it every year it falls.

That's the push-up that every head should reflect to each other,  
Making a masterpiece of the task would make you accomplished the glorious,  
Outstanding event- that's the day of Independency.

BY: *A.H.M. Ibrahim*

## "February 4th"

Today celebrations is all you will hear,  
The nation will gather here,  
And again the park will be repainted,  
From the smiles of joy pasted.

Seventy years of freedom celebrated,  
With eyes our eyes on the flag fixated,  
All eyes gleam with pride,  
As we sing 'Our Song' side by side.

Today we celebrate our mother land,  
She is like no other island,  
She has seen both war and peace,  
And she has yet a lot more to see.

BY: *Sakina Huzaiifa Taherally*

## **Victory**

When the shows were set  
With the trophy's in hand  
I got ready to set home  
With the car on rent.

When I rang the doorbell  
At least a thousand times  
Then someone opened  
With the glittering on me.

The space filled with balloons  
With all the gifts around  
Making it more brighter  
Including the darkness around.

People with colorful dresses  
With their accessories on  
Making the brighter room  
Shinning at once.

The sofa was waiting for me  
To cut the cake  
Then everyone yelled  
Let the celebration begin!

BY: *Jamila Moiz*

## **Celebrations**

I love it when you just don't care  
I love it when you dance like there's nobody there  
So when it gets hard, don't be afraid  
Because we don't have to care about what they've got to say.

We don't have to be ordinary  
Make your best mistakes.  
Cuz we don't have the time to be sorry  
So hey, be the life of the party!

BY: *Ruqaiya Kutbuddin*

## Take Me Back

A landscape so green  
So vast, remains unseen.  
The sparkling rich water, running from ahigh,  
To the lovely marshes that lie.  
The cricketsing of the birds out of sight,  
To the howling of the lonely wolves of the night.  
The eruptions of the all consuming fiery lava flow,  
To the everlasting metamorphosis of the terrain so slow.

Bustling cities; a concrete jungle.  
To all the mankind that mingle  
Setting all the differences aside,  
Signing up for life- a roller coaster ride.

Take me back to when, nature was treasured.  
And blessings remained unmeasured;  
Where actions and wisdom satisfied,  
And the routine of nature; its consequences passified.  
Take me back to when, eternal celebration glorified!

BY: *Nafisa Zoeb*

**OUR SHORT**  
**STORIES**

## **AT THE END OF EVERY DARK TUNNEL THERE IS ALWAYS A LIGHT.....**

This has been the most tough, mind-breaking year ever. It has been really hard to sit in one place and just do nothing but study, study and STUDY!!! No proper sleep, no proper food, no entertainment- oh mine! - Nothing but study. Anyways, I could not help it because my mocks did not go that smoothly and I had promised my mom that I will try my best to get good grades- so I had to!!

Soon days passed. Days of hardship, running, and studying. The days of my O/Ls. OMG! It's a distant memory now but the things I had to face, the trials I had to overcome are still so clear in my mind. Just after my mocks, I had a severe accident where my forehead got split open vertically. I was rushed to the nearby hospital half unconscious and had to undergo a plastic surgery in the emergency unit. Blood kept pouring all over my face. My nerves in the brain got cut, and my cheek bone was badly damaged. I was told to stay on bed rest for more than 6 months but my first thought was about the exam. How am I supposed to study? How can I travel up and down for classes? I could barely stand firm as my feet felt really weak and due to my neuro-damage I lost consciousness every now and then.

But, I did not give up. Not worrying at all about what will happen to me, I stepped in. So many people advised me to do it next year but I thought to myself that such an obstacle can seriously not prevent me from reaching my target. So, being determined, I started. It was a very tough decision as I could not sit and study because my head started to ache often and I couldn't concentrate for a long time. I just wanted these exams to finish and for me to get rid of these as soon as possible.

Finally, the last day of my exams came. I couldn't believe my own eyes when I saw the calendar. It was a great day. I'm going to celebrate this day once I reach home. I don't know what I'll do but at least I'll just jump up and down, and eat and sleep, sleep, sleep.... I just wanted only that now. Good, proper, long sleep. I sacrificed all of these during these past two months just for this last day. The exam began and it finished. Handing over the paper as soon as I could, I rushed to the outside of the center with my same, funny, like-minded friends and started screaming all at once.....

“.....so now....let's celebrates!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

*BY: Lina Anas*

## IT ALL STARTED WITH A SMILE

“This project is due on the 27<sup>th</sup>. You have 10 days to complete and present it to the class. So here are the pairs: Cameron and Grayson, Shawn and Ethan, Liam and Chris, Lilly and Liza, Nash and Taylor, Blake and Lexi and Dannon and Brianne. I hope you all, “Miss Claire was cut off by the bell. School was over for the day.

Our project was to show our partner’s real self to our class and all my friends were paired with each other whereas I was paired with Dannon .I knew him, he would always smile but we were not close friends. I felt awkward working and spending time with someone I barely knew.

“Hey Bri” a smiling Dannon appeared, “So I was wondering if i could come over to your place and we could start on our project.” It took me a while before I said yes and he smiled and left.

Currently Dannon and I are at my place planning for our project. We decided that a presentation or posters would be too boring and planned on showing video clips of us doing various things.

Till now we had asked each other over 50 questions about our likes, dislikes, hobbies etc. We had small breaks in between where we filmed each other watching movies and playing board games. It was quite fun spending time with Dannon. He was fun, outgoing and very sweet, always having a smile on his face.

Days passed and Dannon and I became close friends. We would always spend time together. We had two more days till our submission date and we had quite a lot of information and video clips about each other.

“What do you dislike the most?” I asked Dannon.

“Sleep” he replied

“Sleep?” I gasped. “How could anyone not like sleep? That’s my favorite thing to do”. Dannon just smiled. The past few days I noticed that Dannon smiled a lot and I Made and mental note to ask him why one day.

Dannon was not at school today. I was currently editing my video presentation as my mom walled in my room handing me a CD saying that Dannon’s dad dropped it by and told that Dannon was not going to be at school tomorrow and that I was supposed to play it for him. I was sad, it was his birthday tomorrow. After staying up for another hour and completing my work I finally fell asleep.

I was beyond nervous not only did I have to present to the whole class I had to present alone.

After everyone had finished with their work it was my turn. I nervously played my clip and watched it with the class.

“Hi I’m Brianne and this is my friend Dannon.....”The video continued of Dannon answering some questions, playing games and smiling throughout like a 2 year old. “.....and a very happy birthday Dannon”

It was time for Dannon's video. I started playing it. Dannon appeared "Hi I'm Dannon and today I am going to show you the real Brianne....." There were some clips of me answering questions playing games and some embarrassing clips of me sleeping. I laughed at how horrible I looked.

Dannon appeared again, he was not in his room "Today as we have to show our real self. I wanted to share something that I've been hiding for a year now." I tensed "I have cancer and only a few more months to live" he said with a sad smile, "and I'm in the hospital right now, I don't even know if I could be back at school again".

Tears started pouring down my eyes; I was shocked, heart-broken. I rushed out of the class and went to the hospital. How could I not have noticed? I thought. I was devastated.

I slowly entered Dannon's room. He was awake. "Hi Bri" Dannon said cheerfully. How could he sound so cheerful after what has happened to him? "Hi" I said softly.

After a few moments I finally asked him what I wanted to ask from so long.

"Dannon, why do you always smile?"

"I have been diagnosed with cancer for the past year I was shocked at first, I didn't know what to do with my life anymore, I would always stay in my room and cry at night but as time passed I realized that by doing this I was hurting everyone who loved me, they were sad and that's when I started smiling it helped them to smile too, everything looked okay."

"I want to live life to the fullest without any regret"

"That day you were wondering why I hated sleeping well that's because I was afraid I would never wake up again"

There was a knock on the door, all my friends entered with a cake.

"Happy Birthday" I blurted out not sure if that was the right thing to say.

"Thank you" Dannon smiled, "let's hope it's not my last."

As all my friends shouted, "SO NOW LET'S CELEBRATE!!"

*BY: BATUL JUZAR*

## **The beginning of our roller coaster ride.**

Passion, hard work, courage, motivation, concentration, commitment and dedication is indeed the best way for success.

It was during the last semester of our academic year when we are supposed to give in our best for our final year of education as the senior most students of our school. My batch was sitting for the final IAL London examination so that we could complete our full education in school.

School was definitely the best experience for all of us, we had our ups and down and our good and bad times. Nevertheless it was an amazing once in a life time journey and one could always cherish and remember.

Along with all other activities, exams remained constant for us. At every end of semester we had compulsory exams with grading that would or would not be taken seriously by us. However when it would come to mock examination our tension would start building gradually as it was our key for our final examination.

Exams were scheduled and days started to go in a blur. Our efforts were rising and our focus was palpable. Group studies and late night studies became a routine as groups were formed among our class according to our subjects.

There were 6 of us in my group; James, Lexi, Micella, Rebecca, Alex and I.

All of us were quite dedicated, punctual and committed towards our group sessions. Until one day when Lexi and Alex were running late. We were oblivious at the beginning because we were too involved in our conversation but after sometime we realized that these two were missing. Our first instinct was to contact them and get a hold of their current situation but unfortunately we were unable to reach them due to the heavy storms and network issues.

An hour passed to two and we were still curious about their whereabouts.

When Rebecca connected Alex's parents and got a response that he had left an hour prior to sunset in his car we got really worried and concerned. It had been almost three hours and our friends were missing during the heaviest storms.

Thousands of thoughts started running in our heads. We did not know what to expect as we were clearly unaware of the outcomes. Little did we know that they had met in a car accident and were being transported to the hospital in an ambulance until we got a call from Alex's parents that the hospital had contacted them to inform them Alex and his friends critical conditions.

Lexi and Alex both were fighting for their lives in the operation theatre as they were seriously injured and were not in a stable mental and physical condition. They were still not in terms of recovering over their injuries.

While we were having a conversation with a man that had helped both our friends reach hospital on time by contacting the emergency unit, we got to know that "Both were in quite a terrible state when their bodies were taken out of the crashed car. It was not only covered with blood, but with mud and

water due to the heavy non-stop showers”. That man also informed that “the car behind them had skid and caused an impulsive of on Alex’s car which lead the car to run into in the nearest street light pole”.

This news were shocking for us as we had really less time to comprehend the disaster that took place in a time span of very few hours. We were at a point of losing our closest friends due to an accident we had never imagined being a part of. It was difficult to grasp the night’s events as we had bid casual goodbyes in the afternoon and by night we were watching them on the hospital beds in pain.

The night flew by and we were in utter despair waiting for doctors to relive their conditions and give us a ray of hope.

Dr Martin addressed us in the morning finalizing that “Lexi who was in the passenger seat has 3 broken ribs and has fractured her right hand whilst Alex who was driving is in coma right now due to sudden impact of force on his head that has lead to internal bleeding in his skull”. Alex health condition hit us like a rock; it was something we had never expected, a possibility that never crossed our minds. We were worried as to how he’ll be able to cope up with our upcoming examinations and be the verdict of our graduation ceremony. Alex was one of the brightest students in our batch and his place as a verdict was fixed. We were scared if he would wake up too late and would be unable to fulfill his dream.

Mock examination took place and Alex was still not awake, we were starting to lose hope as it was very crucial to decide when he’ll wake up. All five of us from our group including Lexi kept regularly visiting Alex as he was our very own closest friend. We used to recall our good old time memories around him for at least an hour whenever we visited him along with constant prayers. Our prayers had definitely been answered when Alex woke up just 3 weeks prior to first examination. We were so glad and excited that we decided to throw a party as our friend was back right on time. We could not contain our level of excitement the moment we saw him awake. Happy tears started flowing from our eyes seeing our friend awake and talking to us after a long time. At that moment we decided that we are going to cherish every moment together as we aren’t certain about our future, especially our life span. Hugging each other we were determined to celebrate hence, we all shouted in unison- “so now, let’s celebrate”.

*BY: Arwa Zoeb*

## It's Convocation Day

"...So now, let's celebrate! "For all the hard work we've put in. For all the nights, everything was worth it. Everything was worth for this special day" said Aria repeatedly as she was giving a speech on The Convocation Day. I've heard this speech a thousand times; I know it word to word. "Ash! Aren't you excited! We are getting graduated! Aria shouted! This girl is going bonkers. But there wasn't a reason to stop her. After all we are getting graduated!

We put all our efforts, all our time for this one event. Just to have the best graduation and the time of our life. The thought of that made us work.

We left for college, everybody else was already there and they had started the decorations. As we went there we got a whole list of jobs which are remaining and the ones which had to be done by tomorrow morning. Aria of course nicely went away to get her speech corrected to Ms. Grundy! I was left there to do the work.

By the end of the day, I was exhausted, on top of that there were people shouting or talking loudly and people running around! It was all a mess. For a split second I thought that Graduation Day is going to be a huge mess as many things had to be done. I had done things which I wouldn't have thought of doing in my life as I hate doing art and crafts! From painting the Convocation banner to tying bows on the scrolls.

Aria and I reached home at two in the morning. We got our clothes ready for tomorrow and fell dead on the bed and in no time did the special day arrive. Both of us got up with an explosion as it was twelve o'clock in the afternoon and we had to be there by twelve thirty. "Only thirty minutes in hand! Oh god! Help us! "Shouted Aria. We got dressed as fast as we could and left for college.

It looked so grand and nice! I couldn't resist thinking how much I'll miss this college, how much I'm going to miss my entire batch! "This is not the time to cry, C'mon," said Aria.

Everything went well! I've never seen my parents so happy in their lives. Mum and dad both stood and applauded when Aria and I went on stage to collect our degrees. It was the best feeling to throw our graduation hats up high! We took an entire batch picture, with tears in all of our eyes, it will be an unforgettable moment! No one will be forgotten! "As we are done with college pressure let's celebrate Aria!"

*BY: Ruqaiya Murtaza*

## CELEBRATIONS

The sun rises for the last time this year as the last day of the year approached. I wake up feeling miserable and dreadful as to how this year will end in another few hours. The new change, the new year ahead of me, what will it bring joy or sorrow, achievements or failure, opportunities or closure. Will it be like what I expect it to be? Will there be more responsibilities ahead of me? Will I disappoint people? The year ahead was filled with surprises and I in the name of god hate surprises they are like a mood. They can be either satisfying or the total opposite, which I don't want to talk about there were a thousand thoughts rummaging my mind, like a playlist on shuffle.

I was brought back into reality when my twin sister "yes" I know "twin sister" rushed in my room screaming "omg! Today is the last day. "Yay hurrah" "What is so exciting?" I asked shocked.

'It is everything. The time we can spend with our friends tonight at the party, then the fresh start, as to how you can change things and forget old things, it is like turning a new page to the next chapter'. She said joyfully.

'Firstly you cannot forget about the past, secondly I'm not coming tonight at the party It is just a new day. Now for heaven's sake leave me alone'. I shouted Soon my parents entered the room. To be more precise 'the Khans' themselves.

'Why is there so much noise?' mom said.

'Mom she's the one who is pestering me to celebrate this new year.' I said

'Yes mom we have to celebrate it with our friends. It comes once a year.'

'Wait.....no one is going anywhere. Ruqaiyah and Fathima both of you'll are going to celebrate it with us.' My father said angrily.

'But dad' Ruqaiyah stated.

'No buts I told you what I want and you will have to obey that.' dad said

'Oh wait, I know Fathima hates celebrating New Year so much right? So..... If Fathima goes then only you will be allowed to go Ruqaiyah.' Dad said in a challenging tone

'Okay dad.' We both said in unison.

Soon after that my parents left the room and I being the smart person that I am tried to send Ruqaiyah away from my room. Otherwise she will start pestering me and try to convince me to go to the part. Which by the way she is very good at.

'Ruqaiyah leave my room right now.' I demanded

'Why? What's the hurry?' Ruqaiyah said with the evil smirk on her face.

'I want to change. Please it will only take a few minutes.' I begged

'No' she said quickly

'You need to listen to me okay?'

'But only for a while.' I gave in.

'Okay.... So listen you know right that you can celebrate New Year once a year. So that means we celebrate it grandly. In a way no one does. We need to end all the sad, bad, good, things and start fresh. That is why every year people commemorate this occasion leaving behind all the differences whether it is Muslims or Christians, black or white, rich or poor, old or young, girl or boy we leave everything. We stop the discrimination and celebrate it as one. We don't judge anyone one this day. You can make all the mistakes you can on this particular day. We light crackers and party and stay up the whole night or wait until midnight to really celebrate it with our loved ones. Everyone does is around the world. Then what is wrong with you doing it.' She said

'It is just that I hate seeing the differences. It is like it is a big deal. It is just a day. Okay it is a different day and a different year but it still feels the same. The only major difference is that people don't see you the same way and how this New Year can change your entire outlook or perspective on life. I am petrified that if I don't meet up to people's expectations, what if I make a wrong decision, my whole life will be ruined. It is like a chance, a new one for you to achieve your obstacles which I don't want to. I am scared of what the New Year will bring. It is like if I expect too much I might end up getting disappointed. So why should I keep false hope. I let it out

'The point is that if you think positively everything will go right. It is all about the thinking process. Just remember that if you even make a mistake that is okay. You will learn from them now come on. We are acting like emotionally sick twins. We don't want to do that on this day. So buckle up for this New Year and stop crying.' Ruqaiyah said

'I am so not crying you loser also you can go now with me to this party. I will try my best not to think negatively sister.' I said

'Okay Miss Drama, come on. So now let's celebrate!' Ruqaiyah said

*BY: Rashida Mufaddal*

## “...So Now Let’s Celebrate...”

“Okay! Enough!” I said, “I can’t take it anymore”.

“I just recovered from one tragic incident, and one more occurred”

“Just few days ago I got to know that my best friend’s father passed away, then my boss met with an accident and because of that I couldn’t go to the US for our wedding shopping, and now you have fallen ill. So many problems together, our wedding is in another week, I have so much work pending, I still have to finalize my wedding dress, and have to still distribute our wedding cards and you have fallen sick at the right time WOW!! Now how will I manage everything alone?” I asked Sid.

Now Sid is sick, I’ll have to do everything alone, I don’t have any help, I don’t know how I will manage everything alone, my best friend also cannot help me out, her father just passed away, my boss is still recovering from the accident he met with and all the work load is passed on to me. I just can’t manage everything by myself.

My wedding is my first priority, but if my soon to be husband is only sick how can I do everything alone. The venue, decorations, invitations, food, clothes, jewellery everything is still to be finalized. Tomorrow is my engagement and thank god everything for tomorrow was sorted before itself.

My engagement went smoothly, the other functions also went quite good and now I hope my wedding happens as planned.

A few hours before the wedding I get a call from my decorators that they couldn’t find the flowers I needed for my wedding and I freak out. Then I started calling a few flower shops and a few people who I know have flower gardens, and none of them had those flowers. I was upset and sad and because of that I had not slept the entire night. It was 5:00am and I still had not found the flowers, so I took my car and went to fetch them, I drove very far, where I knew that I would surely find those flowers, and one of those shops had those flowers so I bought them and came back home. I was very tired and sleepy and thought of taking a small nap and I heard a knock on the door, it was my mom. She wanted to speak to me and spend the last few hours with me. We spoke for very long and then my friend came and took me to the saloon to get dresses. When I called the clothes shop where I had giving the order of my wedding clothes they said it’s not ready yet and will be ready soon and I freaked out again, what if the clothes aren’t ready on time? All my friends told me not to worry, everything will be fine.

So I went to the saloon and got started with my hair and makeup and by time I was done with that my friend brought the clothes and jewellery, they were ready on time. I soon wore them and was ready and set to go.

I arrived at the venue and was fully ready to get married to the love of my life, after so many ups and downs and after so much difficulty we are finally

getting married and I am very happy. The wedding ceremonies start and everything goes smoothly and goes as planned and now I am finally married. Sid and I look at each other and give each other a big bright and loving smile, we are finally married. At the end Sid raises a toast and he says “We faced so many difficulties, so many problems and finally we are married, for many more bumpers to come, so here’s to our new life, a new beginning and so now, let’s celebrate!!”

*BY: Radiya Abid*

## So now let's celebrate

I was on the flight, coming back home from Belarus, taking back all the memories, the education, the birthdays and so many other things. It is so heartbreaking and emotional that I have to leave all my friends, my university and most importantly my dorms. But I am also very happy that I am meeting my family after 3 years of studies.

Three years without family was very hectic, especially for me, as I cannot stay a night without them, but I made myself emotionally so strong that all I could see was my goal in front of my eyes, and now that I am "Doctor Sakina" I finally get a chance to have a reunion with my family and my crazy, but beloved, friends. Little did I know that by just thinking about my close ones will give me such happiness! OH! How I wish I could fly like superman as fast as possible to Sri Lanka and give my parents and my annoying siblings a tight hug and sloppy kisses.

My flight seemed very long, it should be, but I was excited, I couldn't wait to see my parents. I was moving back and forth in my seat, in just 10 minutes I walked to the washroom a million times, my toes were wriggling because of nervousness. I was putting my knees to my chest and rocking to and fro. I wonder whether the person next to me was getting irritated and annoyed. The moment the man next to me closed his eyes to sleep, I started fidgeting. He gave me death stares so many times, but I wish he knew why I was behaving this way, it was a six hour flight but I didn't even sleep for a millisecond. All I did was see the photos in my cell phone, filed my nails and listened to their sweet voices which I had recorded before leaving to go to Belarus. I continuously looked towards my watch but the minutes just didn't pass. I was just wondering about the plane, the passengers and the crew thought that I was a psycho so they came in with some aid for me. I know that I am a disaster.

Finally the time has arrived! I had landed to Sri Lanka; I quickly overtook all the people in front and got all my luggage. I was so conscious about myself that I had to go to the washroom to remove my make up and make my hair as I was 100% sure that I was going to cry like a baby. Rather than looking like a monster I thought of meeting my family like a decent, pretty little girl.

As I was coming out, my eyes just spotted my mom, the moment I saw her tears started rolling down my cheeks. She saw me too! I see her telling everyone that I've come. I quickly pushed my trolley and ran as fast as I could to cling onto my mommy. Only god knows how much I've missed her and her food. It was a typical Bollywood movie scene. By the time I hugged all of them I had noticed that my dad had kept all my things in the van.

I reached home; I was pampered with love and food. All I did is sleep and eat for two days. The next day when we all were sitting in the living room, my dad

exclaimed, "It is time to appreciate Sakina's position and hard work, so now let's celebrate." The next day my dad threw me a huge party for my success. Yes, I got the title but I could see how proud my daddy was. I felt like I was I won the biggest game of my life. I'm going to celebrate this day till the day I die!

*BY: Sakina Asgerally*

### So now let's celebrate

This is probably one of the best days of my life. I have got it all; the girl, the house, the friends, the family and all the support that I could have asked for. Here I am at the end of the aisle, waiting for my beloved fiancé Clara, soon to be wife, and the only thing I can think of is, how could I do this to her? How could I, who loves her so very dearly, be the one who ends up ruining her life? How could I even for a second think that I would get my happily ever after when all I was, was a.....

"Stop it Jake", came the stern voice of Mark, my best man.

"What? "I ask, genuinely curious about what he was talking about.

"You are not going to back out of this now, not after all of the things you two have been through." Scolds Mark.

"But you don't understand mate. I just cannot do this to do this to her. It'll ruin her life. She is the only person, only light in my life, a girl so pure....And there is me, the darkness that entered her life like a tsunami, the monster, the spawn of Satan, reincarnated Lucifer himself", I state bleakly.

Enough Jake, don't beat yourself up about the past. Remember the saying: 'let bygones be bygones.' don't let it control your life, live how you want to", says Mark, "of course though, you have to let Clara do the main controlling, but you get my point." Teases Mark.

And unintentionally, a small smile breaks through my face, destroying all the walls that I had created.

"You see mate, even her name can break that steel of a wall that you hide behind. Why don't you just accept the fact that you both are meant to be. Just agree to the fact that she brings out the best in you and you bring out a certain bad girl persona in the good girl at you have fallen in love with. And don't you deny that you don't love it." continues Mark.

Just when I am about to disagree with Mark, the music comes flooding in my ears. And then I see her; dressed in a long white lacy dress with an intricate flowery design at the bottom and a blue belt wrapped around her waist. She glides down the aisle, across the grass with her hand wrapped around Wilson's arm; her father.

While giving me her hand, Wilson whispers, "you better take care of her. She's all that I have left and now she's yours." He says it in a light tone but the underlying warning is not missed.

I simply nod and take Clara's hand in mine and stare at her, not taking my eyes off hers. The moment she looks at me and smiles, all my doubts are gone and I can only look at that angelic face of hers and think, 'In a few minutes she will be all mine.'

I am brought from my reverie when the father asks me to repeat after him, "I Jake Henderson take Clara Wilson to be my wife, to love and to hold, for better or worse, to cherish and enjoy, till death do us part".

Clara is asked to repeat the same thing and then, “Do you Clara Wilson take Jake Henderson to be your lawfully wedded husband?” and when the words “I do” leave Clara’s lips, I don’t waste time in saying “i do” as well.

“Then by the power vested in me, I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss your bride.” And I immediately give her a long, intense and passionate kiss. The claps in the background make us pull apart.

“Let us welcome Mr. and Mrs. Henderson” and with that follow more claps. I take a hold of her hand and walk down the aisle with her to the reception.

“Congratulations my dear husband” the sweet heavenly words leave her mouth and I reply almost instantaneously with a “and congratulations to you too my love”.

In the background I hear Mark shouting something and ending with.... “so now, let’s celebrate the newlywed couple”.

*BY: Rukaiya Shabbir*

## “...So now, let’s celebrates!”

One fine day when I woke up I saw the glittering sun sparkling into my room through the open window beside my bed, I was still lying on my comfortable bed watching the birds flying and chirping with lovingly tunes. Suddenly I heard someone shouting out my name, “Taha! Taha! ” I did not recognize the voice for a moment because I was into the heart of nature. It was mom who was shouting out loud my name, saying, “Its half past noon, any ideas of getting out of bed?!?!”

I, as usual, got out of the bed as slow as a snail. I did the “MORNING” work really slowly due to the playful, tiring and unforgettable night me and my friends had, celebrating the day we finished our final examinations. After having a look at my schedule on the calendar, I see a dark cross on today’s date; I wondered why there was a cross. After looking closely, I was .....shocked!! It was the day the results of the final exams were coming out.

I was very enthusiastic and simultaneously looking like the most terrified person in the house. On my way downstairs to the dining room where the whole family was, I silently walked in as if there was nothing to be aware of.

“Do you really even know what today is?” yelled my mom, making me more nervous. I replied, “Urrmm.. yhhhhh...urrrm, no! No! What is today? ” “It is cleaning day, and I am warning you if you don’t clean your messy room today, I’ll be the harshest person you’ll ever talk in your life.” I felt the deep joy as she didn’t know it was the RESULTS DAY today.

Again, returning to my room after having my brunch (breakfast + lunch) I clean my messy room. While cleaning my room I really get this feeling of nervousness as my mom did NOT know it’s my results day. Later then, I’ll be happy and proud of myself, that is if I do get good grades and that itself will be a miracle.

*BY: Taha Ammar*

## **'So now, Let's celebrate'**

With a sigh, I got up wiping my sweaty hands, convincing myself that the Peak was not far. I began to take huge steps as I remembered my father saying that the "slower you climb the more your legs are going to hurt". So I kept on climbing till I reached the next station.

As I reached the next station, I felt a sense of motivation and my heart started beating faster than the time I was taking to breathe. My eyes were just Searching for a bench to sit on, as soon as my eyes had done its job, I sat and drank plenty of glucose and water as I knew all my energy had drained out. As I began to calm down I started to make my bed with the fact that I had to cover 1500 steps more out of the 5500 steps to conquer the Adam's peak, but my only goal was not only to reach the summit but to reach before sunrise. With that in mind and with all the teachings given by my father I got up and started climbing again, much more motivated and energetic than last time. I told myself that I wont stop in any station but at that point my legs were not controlled by me.

After a while of climbing without any breaks, I could see the peak, it was like 2km away and I told myself "LETS DO IT" and I somehow forced myself to climb that little distance and I finally reached the summit with an amazing proud feeling inside and as my eyes got attracted to the awestruck and breathtaking view, all I said was "A VIEW WORTH THE CLIMB" and everything inside me just shouted "So now lets celebrate" because I had finally made it.

BY: *Khadija Johar*

“..... So now, Lets’ celebrate.”

The fireflies provide us company as we made our way into the thick woods, exploring the mysteries hidden under the lush greens of the trees. To decrypt secrets that crawl within the bushes and to expose the shadows of the dark.

“Urgh! This is next to impossible; we are not going to find anything. Lets leave,” I grunted.

“Exactly, next to impossible, not impossible” Emily smiled. I swear her optimism is on another level. This might sound insane but here we are, trying really really hard to catch a glimpse..... of a vampire. That’s right. A vampire. For some totally crazy reason my best friend Emily and her Girlfriend Allison think that there’s a dead human, with teeth that can extend into fangs and goes all maniac at the smell of human blood, lurks within the shadows of this forest and from all the Netflix that I’ve watched, I’ve gained enough knowledge to know that if anything like this blood-thirsty creature exists- It’s more savage, more brutal and more blood thirsty on a Full Moon. However, Emily made me come here exactly on the day of the Full Moon because according to Emily and all her teenage swagger “YOLO! What’s life without a little adventure?”

“Look at the moon, will you?” I told the girls captivated by the magnificent beauty that ruled the night sky. They looked at the moon but the white beauty hid behind the curtain of grey clouds, almost as if it were terrified of the sight that the dark world had to offer. “Looks beautiful,” Allison stated with a slight shift in her voice. It was like as if she was huffing really hard. I took a swift turn to look at her. She had her back to me and had fallen to the ground. I moved forward. My every step calculative. I lay my hand on her shoulder, “Allison, are you okay?” I asked. She grabbed my hand a little too tight. “Yes, I’m Alright! Perfect actually. My torch just fell so I was looking for it.” Emily grabbed her hand and shook it off mine. I breathed out a sigh. “Let’s keep moving,” Emily interjected.

I wiped my upper lip with the back of my hand to get rid of the sweat as I spoke, “Girls, looks like we are going to have our tent here,” I said looking at the clearing until I realized that my mouth tasted of something awful, something metallic...like blood. I turned around and found no one. I looked at my hand and found claw marks and everything else came crashing down on me... Allison never had a torch, only Emily did. Blood oozed out of my flesh, dripping down my fingers and staining the dusty ground with red. I started backing away preparing myself for a run and...crunch! I turned around to a dreadful sight. There stood a group of almost fifteen people. Two of whom I used to know. Now, not so sure.

Their eyes were bloodshot, their hands itched to grab me- I could smell the blood lust from a mile away. Predatory eyes searched me eating away my hope of survival. They were hunting and I fell right into their trap, I was the prey.

Sweat trickled down my spine and the hair on my arms rose to attention. My vision blurred to an image of black and the last thing I heard before I drifted into darkness was “So now, Lets’ Celebrate!”

*BY: Rukkaiya Hussain*

## A Close Call

Every nation. Every person. Every living being held their breath. Maybe the inanimate things did too, because when something so big goes wrong, the strong stagnant smell of it remains; constantly reminding you of what you are surrounded by and what is to come.

Every person has his own beliefs and views which differ in varying degrees. But, on the 5th of November of the year 2020, just one thought floated in every individual's mind- "will we make it out of this alive?". It was like a binding force bringing everyone together. Yet, each turned to his or her own means of praying or finding solace- whatever that would put their mind to ease, be it only if for a short span of time. Whatever that would help them hold onto the thin and almost non-existent thread of hope.

Among all this silent foreboding, there was chaos in every country's national building. Officials were on continuous, never-ending line of calls; paperwork flying around; the echo of the consistent tapping of fingers on the keyboard by the hundreds of people that were employed along with those who had volunteered to provide their expertise; local and foreign legal frameworks were scrutinized. All in all, it was a cacophony but nevertheless kept the dooming thoughts at bay. The air conditioner was on high, yet everyone was drenched in perspiration for they were putting more effort than they ever had in their lifetime, desperateness clouding their visions. They were so fuelled that nothing but only death could stop them now. And that is exactly what they were fighting for- life!

There was a nuclear bomb-active now- and set to detonate in about an hour's time. The estimate damage was a clean wipe out of at least half the world's 7 billion population and the after effects that were to come were even more so unimaginable. Our already fragile world wouldn't be able to survive or cope up with this tremendous loss which would leave every single thing in ruins, lead to mass deaths and the want of those alive wishing to die, for it would be a sight too unbearable to witness. Simply, our entire ecosystem would collapse. This was the work of some deranged nuclear physicist, and even more bizarre was the fact that he had set the bomb to detonate at exactly 11:59 p.m. For what reason? That remained unknown, as he had committed suicide immediately after starting the timer and had just informed one body- The White House. It was like he was mocking one of the strongest economies to win this race against time and death- the two things out of the control of mankind.

Initially, everyone was in denial, not wanting to believe that which was occurring right in front of their lives. But alas, the murderous weight of this situation crumpled the wall of denial. Every nation- big and small- decided to work together, hand in hand to locate and defuse the bomb. It was astonishing

that for the first time in decades, the wars in Syria and Iran and the political tensions between the US and the North Korea and all the terrorism, the Palestinian and Israeli conflicts were left far behind to evaporate into thin air. The anticipation of World War III that due to peak levels of global tension had collapsed to pave the way for unity. For now, those very countries in conflict, had overlooked their differences and were working together, closer than ever before. Although some may say that this day was destined to be doomed. No matter how ever hard they tried or closer the nations became, the obstacles didn't diminish as one would expect them to but kept getting bigger and much worse, making it all the more difficult to overcome.

In the final hour, it had all boiled down to how to get rid of the explosive. A few hours after the alert of this bomb's presence among us, the nations had put their forces together and successfully located the whereabouts of it which was in the middle of the Amazon. However, what they were seemingly failing at was the diffusing of the bomb. One thing that everyone could agree on was that the physicist who created this was an absolute genius and after much debate and analysis, a decision was made.

The bomb had to be taken into outer space, outside of the Earth's atmosphere for detonation. There was the no way this could be allowed to happen within our atmosphere. The radioactivity would be too harmful and threatening, its effects would remain for centuries to come and all the progress and evolution of humankind so far would be in vain, and the phrase "starting from scratch" would be a term too light and very heavily understated. However, there was a sliver of hope. Japan had just presented to the League of Nations that had come together an air craft designed to go out to outer space to orbit the moon. It was entirely robotized and required no human assistance to drive it. It was one of the fastest spacecrafts built in today's time. But here too, there was a catch. They were not entirely ready with it. There were numerous tests yet to be done and the minor interior details finalized. However, this was the only option available and they embraced it prayers on each breath and a hope to see a better tomorrow.

It was getting darker. Mark was usually fast asleep by 10.25p.m but tonight was different. His 12 year old self could feel the eeriness in the air, the tickling anticipation. His parents did not put him to bed like they usually did on a week day, instead they let him do whatever he desired to and when he curiously questioned them about what was happening, his mother would start tearing and leave the room only to be followed by his dad. Mark was sitting on the couch and was eating his favourite ice cream which was another rarity. His parents would never allow him to eat ice cream at night, but peculiarly enough his father went out especially to get an entire tub of ice cream just for him. And his parents had joined him minutes ago to watch the television and the latest updates on what they called "The Crisis of the World". Mark did not

understand much, yet he knew something was amiss. The reporters, not as bright and chirpy as usual, were speaking of a rocket taking off for outer space and he assumed that it was probably for an experiment.

Confused, Mark got up to go to his room. On his way by he passed the kitchen and saw the clock strike eleven. He changed his mind and decided that he did not want to sleep so he made his way to the small back door which lead to a small backyard instead. His mother had done a praise worthy job of keeping the grass trimmed and the bushes well shaped and nurtured to disallow it from growing into a mini-forest. He laid down on the grass, for how long he did not realise. But just when Mark was about to drift into a sleep, he was awakened by the sight of a bright explosion in the night sky. It seemed small but he knew it had to be massive for him to be able to see it from such a distance. It looked spectacular he thought, being so mesmerised and captivated with an occurrence he had witnessed never before in his childhood. The initial explosion gave way to several wave-like ripples of luminous colours and just when he was about to turn and call his parents to join him in viewing this phenomena, they came out running with wide grins lighting up their faces the way the explosion lit the sky. He thought to himself that they must have definitely seen this occurrence too for their spirits to be lifted so high in such little time.

A little confused again, Mark opened his mouth to question about what was the reasoning behind all that was transpiring this evening, only to be interrupted by his mother fiercely hugging him with tears of joy running down her face. Although, perplexed and overwhelmed by these emotions, Mark too knew in his heart that something great had transpired and they were all truly blessed. His father joined the hug and pulling back, announced: "Come on! Let's celebrate!"

BY: *Nafisa Zoeb*

## SO NOW LETS CELEBRATE

I was happy, because it was my birthday today. When I entered the office. The peon first came to me and told me that manager is calling you. At that moment it took me a minute to settle down from my terrifying breathe and another half an hour to go to my seat and keep my bags and the laptop and got ready to go to the manager's cabin. When i knocked at the door and entered he was like here the letter.I felt like crying.I had a feeling that he has fired me.That i'm not doing my work well.It is the worst birthday ever i got.I regretted to open that piece of writing.There was another feeling coming at back of my head that it could be in a positive way.If it's not also i have to open it and clear my table to give it to another person.

When i came out of the cabin.I went straight to my cabin threw that piece of writing on my table.Sat down worrying.What shall i do?.I was thinking about giving a party to all my friends for my birthday but its not gonna happen now.

One of my colleagues entered the cabin and asked are you okay?.I told him the whole story.He was like just open the letter and see."It could be a happy news also".I replied.Till now whoever has got a letter from manager speaking in that manner everyone has got fired.Till now! so even i have a feeling that it could be this.Anyhow you have to open the letter.I was like yeah.

When i opened the envelop.I was so scared.I removed the letter a piece of printing fell down.I was not bothered to take that much.When i opened one fold of the letter i saw the word "PROMOTION".

I was so surprised and shocked ate the same time.I could not believe that i got promotion out of everyone.Then i quickly unfolded the letter and read.It said you have got promotion to go to England for your good work and we appreciate it.Your ticket to England is inside the envelop.I was so shocked going to England is like going to heaven such a beautiful place,food,shopping that is so amazing.

When i opened the envelop to search for the ticket it was empty.then i remembered that my ticket has fallen down.When i bent down and was going to take my ticket i saw a gift placed under my table.I took that with my ticket and the gift was from the manager for the promotion and for my birthday too.I was so happy.

I was so happy at that time i again had a thought of throwing a party for the double happiness first because of my birthday and second i got promotion after many years.

I called the decoration people and again confirmed the place. I again contacted the people to invite them and the bakery people.After doing this i ran to the manager's cabin.He was laughing at me.I was so freaked out for around 2 hours.

I invited him and all my office fiends.The party was arranged at a club.It was booked and the party is tonight.

When all my friends and the manager had come.After giving gifts and best wishes for the promotion.A person shouted what are we waiting for."So Now,lets celebrate"

*BY: Jamila Moiz*

## Celebrations

Las Vegas was....eccentric. There was no night or day.

As I step out of the cab into the streets of Nevada, Las Vegas, the flashing lights surrounding me take me off guard. When my eyes finally do adjust to my surroundings, I have the sudden urge to jump around and dance, the catchy music blaring across the streets did not help at all. At that moment I knew that deciding to celebrate graduating high school in Vegas was the best decision ever. As I walk along the streets I subtly try to check my appearance. The red dress I was wearing reached my knees and hugged my curves in all the right places. My dark black hair cascaded down in waves behind my back, my makeup was natural and light, except for the dark red lipstick which coated my lips. You could never go wrong with red...or that's what my 'ex-boyfriend' used to say to me.

As I enter a random bar, the stench of alcohol overwhelms me. Scrunching my nose in distaste I rush out of the bar immediately. Okay, so no random bars.

My eyes scan over the multiple choices I had. I grin in satisfaction as my eyes land on an expensive and classy looking bar. I had 'borrowed' my ex-boyfriend's credit card.

I'm sure he hadn't noticed, yet.

Crossing the road carefully I make my way towards the bar. My grin fades as I see a guard asking for IDs. My ex had made me a fake ID but I had never used it before, and I really didn't want to get caught using a fake ID in Vegas. Walking my way up, trying to look confident, I held out my ID for the guard to examine. My jaw drops open as he just lets out a grunt before opening the bar door for me. I enter shocked and relieved.

'Wow, that was easy!'

Smiling, I make my way towards an unoccupied bar stool. I was here, now...what do people do in bars? I study my surroundings and my cheery mood drops, this was a terrible idea. Everyone was either drinking or engaged in some other unsightly activities. This really wasn't my scene.

"You look lost," a deep husky voice greets me. Startled I let out a small yelp as I turn around to look at the source of the voice. The first thing I noticed were the dark black eyes. Eyes so dark, so tortured and so full of pain. I frowned when I noticed the mischievous glint in them, but my frown was replaced by awe as I took in his other features.

Black hair. Sharp jawline. A business suit.

He looked hot.

"Is it that obvious?" I ask, smiling sheepishly when I saw that he noticed that I was checking him out.

“Alarick Ryder,” he says pulling out a bar stool next to mine.

“Cassandra Brown,” I reply shyly.

Oh, who was I kidding, Las Vegas was a dangerous territory for a nun like me. I had dressed up, but that I had done by following a lame fashion magazine my elder sister had subscribed to, and the makeup was applied after several torturous hours of studying different YouTube videos. I wanted to be different. I had to.

As the bartender approaches me I do just that.

“Get me the most expensive drink you have.”

As the bartender returns with my drink I hand him ‘his’ credit card. I gulp the drink in one go.

“Ex-boyfriend?” he questions as my eyes widen.

He gestures to the name written on the credit card as the bartender hands it back to me. I nod hazily. People always said that I was an open book. They told me that I lived a scandal free life, aka a boring life.

Boring.

That was the reason ‘he’ gave me. I was too boring. I needed to live a little, loosen up. A spark of energy forms inside me, and then I decide to do something about it. Something unexpected. Something I’ll regret for life.

“Are you married?” I ask him. Taken aback his eyes widen as he shakes his head.

“You know, I have a bucket list, I made it when I broke up with my boyfriend...the fifth thing in my bucket list was to marry a stranger in Las Vegas.” I admit truthfully.

“Are you crazy?” he asks tilting his head to the right. It was a genuine question. Cute.

“I was also a bit sleep-deprived,” I confess.

“Cassandra,” he starts, my name rolling off his tongue effortlessly, “I think that’s a terrible idea.”

My smile fades as I hear him say those words, and my eyes tear up. I hear him curse softly and get up. ‘He’s going to leave me alone, just like everyone else,’ I think bitterly.

“Please don’t cry, I don’t know how to handle girls when they’re crying, I’m sorry?” he ends, clearly appalled at the situation.

“So, will you marry me?” I ask him my words slightly slurred as a tear escapes my eyes. I sounded pathetic, but I needed this.

He mumbles something about regretting something before mumbling, almost inaudibly, a small yes. I waste no time. Grabbing his hands I drag him to a chapel I had seen nearby. Even though I wasn’t wearing heels I could barely walk straight. I felt strangely disoriented.

The second we reach the chapel I sign us up for the next marriage. I hear Alarick protest but it just sounded so far away.

I hear our names being called out. Alarick says something and then a feeling of uncertainty falls over me.

I reassure myself saying, 'Concentrate on your plan, take pictures, upload it on social media, prove to everyone that I'm not boring and then forget about the Alarick guy. We were just going to say the vows not signing a marriage certificate.'

Making my way down the aisle I stifle a laugh as I see the priest dressed as Barney the dinosaur. The priest then starts saying something and I zone out until I hear Alarick say a hesitant, "I do."

The priest then turns towards me muttering, "Do you Cassandra brown take Alarick-,"

"Yeah, yeah, I do." I say interrupting the priest. Taking out my phone I log into my instagram account. The priest shoves a paper and pen in my hands. Sighing in annoyance I quickly sign the papers and resume the task I was doing.

"You may now kiss the-,"

Not allowing the priest to finish I lean towards Alarick and kiss him, take a picture of it and upload it in instagram.

"Cassandra the paper-,"

"Yeah, yeah just sign it."

While he does so, I upload the same picture in my Face book account too.

"Cassandra...I don't think that's a good idea," Alarick states as I continue to ignore him, "Cassandra- you need to listen to me. That's a very bad idea. You don't know who I am."

Frowning at the sense of urgency in his voice I look up.

"I don't really care."

"Cassandra I'm a world famous fashion designer."

My eyes widen in surprise and my mouth drops open.

Then I smile.

"That just means that I have a really good taste in men, don't worry, we aren't really married, right?" I ask rhetorically ending with a laugh.

"Um...Cassandra, we are. We just signed the marriage certificate!" He drawls. Suddenly as if someone had splashed water on me I felt a little too sober.

"What? I thought-but-no-Oh god! We need to file for an annulment.

We haven't done anything. This was a mistake! This is entirely your fault, why didn't you stop me!" I ask, glaring at him in anger.

"Because I knew that if I had said no then you would have somehow convinced another man to say yes and that man would have definitely taken advantage of you!" he explains angrily.

"And you wouldn't?" I snarl angrily, "Didn't you do that just now? You could have knocked some sense into me!"

"I obviously couldn't and wouldn't," he answers back curtly.

"Indeed? Why so?" I ask my nose flaring in anger.

"Because I'm gay!" he yells.

"So what? Oh, wait-," I say as realization dawns upon me. "Please tell me that you're a closet gay," I plead as I realize what I had just done.

"No, I'm not, all my fans know about it and support me, and don't worry about the annulment...since I'm gay the process is going to be pretty easy," He replies calming down as my entire world shatters.

I am so stupid.

I open my instagram account to delete my post only to see that my post was trending now...that also with tags that I never would've wanted to be associated with me. I groan in embarrassment at the comments.

"What do we do now?" I ask him, since I was the stupid one here.

I let out another groan as he says, "It's Vegas, right? So now, let's celebrate!"

*BY: Zainab Firoz*

## 'So now let's Celebrate'

This day cannot get any worse, my very important day and I had to wake up late! I don't understand why my annoying alarm didn't ring. I stare at the sausages I was tossing and sighed. Clara, my daughter will be mad! She is a PURE vegetarian and always causes a tantrum when I cook meat, but today everybody had to manage. I cannot get late today! Not today!

Andrew came running into the kitchen "Clarisse! Josh has swallowed something and is choking on it!"

I stare at my husband when he gives me the news and the when I finally decipher it, I start running towards my son's bedroom.

There I see Clara patting Josh on the back quite harshly. "Clara that might hurt him!" I screech.

While Andrew pulls Clara away I help Josh. A Lego piece! That's what he was choking on!

I glare at my four year old son while he stares back at me innocently. I sigh. You cannot be mad at kids; I just wish he gets over his obsession with Lego.

After all this drama you would think my quota of it was over, but well you cannot have life your way... breakfast was a disaster! Clara had been going on about killing chickens for your food while you get healthy veggies and threatened us not to eat the sausages. Then when I had made sandwiches Josh didn't eat because of his 'veggie phobia'. Why did all of this have to happen today! I was so late on my important day which I have been waiting for months now!

When I dropped my kids to school, Josh's teacher stopped me to tell me about my son's 'special' problem. He was just standing up for himself when that Ben tried to take his lunch. Mrs. Madison made such a big deal out of it! Which made me even late?

When I reached office I was thirty minutes late. Mr. Anderson, my boss was waiting for me (Uh oh!). "Mrs. Prior you realize that this meeting might be your chance to become the executive editor. I better hope you take this seriously. Do not make me regret choosing you!" with that he stomped off even before I could apologize!

The meeting went terribly! I messed up my files and stammered while speaking the simplest of words. Things cannot get any worse.

When one of the directors was speaking my phone rang. I glanced apologetically at him and hurried out of the conference hall. It was Andrew, this had better be urgent!

"Hello... this is very bad timing..." I started

"Josh has gotten into an accident, please get home fast!" Andrew's voice cut me off.

I don't think I heard or saw anything when I ran out of the office, towards my car and home.

John had fractured both his arms and wouldn't stop crying. When I saw him i couldn't stop myself from crying either!

I had failed both in being a mother and being a professional. I thought myself as worthless and if I got one chance I only wished I could re-live today.

That's when an annoyingly familiar noise rang!

"Trrrrringggg Trrrrringggg". I jostled awake! It was my alarm! I was dreaming?

All of that? I looked at the date to confirm my thought. I stood up with a start! I am about to start my very important day! And I will not fail! I looked at my alarm; I felt that I could kiss it! There is at least one thing in this life I can always rely on!

My day went better than i had planned. Mr. Anderson was impressed, Josh was safe (I made sure of that from 3 phone calls to the school) and I was the new executive editor! I never thought that I would celebrate the day which had resulted in a disaster (in my dreams). Well life has its own way of teaching you lessons and but I guess you steer your own path.

"Congratulations to our very own Mrs. Prior," I heard my boss say, "So now let's Celebrate!"

*BY: Sakina Huzaiifa Taherally*

## Pain and Gain

“No, no, NOOO!!!” said Mrs. Nafisa as Khadija Slowly slipped down the steps, too tired to fight the heavy winds of Adam’s Peak. “ I can’t hold on to the railing any longer, the winds are too strong!” exclaims Khadija, “You’ll have to move on without me. Leave me, I am just dead weight at this point.”

“We’ll never leave you!” cries Huzefa, “I’ll die here with you if that’s what it is going to take!” but the breeze was growing stronger and stronger the more we started to climb.

Lights began to flicker and the path up the mountain started to fade in to complete darkness. “Come on Khadija, we’ll pull you up!” says Mustafa, “Everyone! Grab on to her and PULL!!!”.The group of children and their teacher drag Khadija up the steps with unbelievable force!

“Rukkaiya!” yells Huzefa, “Can you please for God’s sake pull a little harder?!”. “I’m pulling as hard as I can Huzefa!” snaps Rukkaiya, “You do your job and I’ll do mine, OKAY?!”

The five of them finally start ascending the mountain at a steady pace again. As they approach the summit they feel their knees weaken, their arms are heavier, hope drains from their souls, and having to haul Khadija with them doesn’t make it easier.

“Who thought climbing at night was a good idea?” complained Khadija. Mrs. Nafisa, as tired as she is, replied, “I’m sorry I wanted everyone to see the beautiful sunrise, next time we will just go to a farm and sit quietly in a barn!”

“I would prefer a barn over this nonsense.” cries Rukkaiya, “It is 2018, why can’t they build an escalator or something?”

“They could, but who’s going to pay for it? Your father?!” replies Huzefa, smirking as he says it.

“Okay enough!” shrieks Mrs. Nafisa, “If I hear anyone else complain I will lock them in the used washroom and leave them there till we return again in three hours, AND I MEAN IT!”. The children fell silent. “Sorry miss.” Apologizes Mustafa as usual.

The group of dimwits, and their fully educated and logical teacher, finally reach the summit and practically faint right at the top. Everyone look down the path and gaze upon the beast which they have climbed.

“Miss... what do we do now?” asked Rukkaiya. “We have climbed a lot, and have also suffered a lot, but beside all that we still did it! So now, let’s celebrate!”

*BY: Mustafa Shakir*

## A Manchester Dream

I could only ever dream of walking into the Old Trafford Stadium in Manchester but here I am; standing in front of this large stadium filled with thousands of people supporting either of the two teams, Manchester United or Everton. I am a Red (Manchester United supporter) so it fills my heart with pure joy when I walk into the stadium to see so many red jerseys. My friends and I take our seats as the players start coming out of their changing rooms and onto the field.

All the players take their positions on the turf and the cheering gets louder and louder every minute. The atmosphere is unbelievable. It is a typical winter evening with chilly winds blowing. However the tension of the result of the game and its anticipation makes it thrilling! I was still finding it difficult to believe that all my favourite players whom I watch on TV every Sunday are performing live in front of me! They were on the field for some serious business. All the players and the supporters of Manchester United were desperate for this win.

Pogba, the midfielder of Man Utd, tackled the ball away from the opponent and passed it to the front and Lukaku, the striker of team Man Utd, bagged a goal for the team! The entire stadium was echoing with cheers and chants! We're so happy that Man Utd scored their first goal in such little time and we were now leading by 1 goal. The game continued and there were thrilling moments where both teams almost scored goals but fortunately for Man Utd, the score remained the same until half-time.

After a short break, both the teams walked back onto the field for the second half of the game. The crowd got back to their seats and settled down. Once all the players were in their respective positions, the whistle blew and the game resumed. The boys passed the ball around in attempts to score a goal but no team was able to do so until the sixtieth minute. In the 60th minute, Rooney of Everton scored their first goal of the night and equaled to Man Utd. It was a tie now, but there had to be only one winner of this match, so my friends and I were in an urgent want for another goal by Man Utd.

The game continued after the celebrations of the Everton supporters and the match was almost coming to an end. There wasn't much time left for the final whistle. When there were only 5 more minutes left, a player from Everton made a foul and Man Utd got a penalty kick. We were optimistic and so thankful for the chance. Manchester United's leading goal scorer Jesse Lingard took this opportunity to score and lead the team to victory! Jesse kicked the ball, it passed the goal keeper and found the net! "GOAL!" we all shouted together on the top of our lungs and cheered and hugged each other! We were ecstatic by the goal and the win! The victory of this match made MANCHESTER UNITED the CHAMPIONS of the league! So I

shouted , "it was an amazing game and we won so guys it is now time to celebrate!!!".

*BY: Ruqaiya Kutbuddin*

