

Progressive Education Society's Modern College
of Arts, Science and Commerce,
Ganeshkhind, Pune



Department of English

aurora

**Literally the Literary: Confessions of
Literaholics**

**An initiative taken for the
students, by the students.**

Vol. I

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this as a chance to thank everyone who has helped in the making of this magazine. We always have the blessings and best wishes of the patron of Progressive Education Society Dr. GR Ekbote and his associates Prof Suresh Todkar and Dr. Prakash Dixit. We would like to thank our respected Principal, Dr. Sanjay Kharat Sir, who has inspired, encouraged, and been incredibly generous, to provide us with a platform that helps us to showcase our talents and opinions. This was an opportunity to start something new. We have been able to come up with this virtual magazine because of his involvement and dedication to this college as well as its students' interests.

Dr. Jyoti Gagangras, our Vice-Principal has also been a very supportive presence. She is very enthusiastic about all the activities and programs that are held in the college. She helped this journal come to life with her support. She was very substantial in giving us liberty in order to release this journal. Her support is greatly appreciated and has been part of the motive that kept us going.

Dr. Shampa Chakravarthy is not only our teacher, but a very optimistic and cheerful person who motivates us to delve into our interests. She pushes us to achieve far more than we thought we could. She believes in the hands-on method of teaching and has always been at our aid. This journal was just an idea, but she put so much faith in it and us. She has been the driving force behind this initiative and we are very thankful for her critique on all of the work.

We would like to thank all the members of the English Department who spared time from their busy schedule and helped us put forth our initiative and introduce the virtual journal. They have supported us in our endeavor, been proud of us for taking initiative and become the motivation we needed to succeed.

Everyone who has contributed, the budding writers and poets who have submitted their work and have been selected to feature in the journal, we thank you for being willing to participate. We would also like to appreciate your courage in overcoming your insecurities and being ready to bare your soul through your words.

*Let's not forget that the little emotions are the great captains of our lives
and we obey them without realizing it.*

-Vincent Van Gogh

Catalogue of Hues

Behind the Scenes

Erudite

Theme Cover

Emotions

//poetry//

"Eminence Of The
Dormant Emotions"

"Sojourn"

"Enigma Of Life"

"Breakthrough"

"Trying To Live My Life"

//articles//

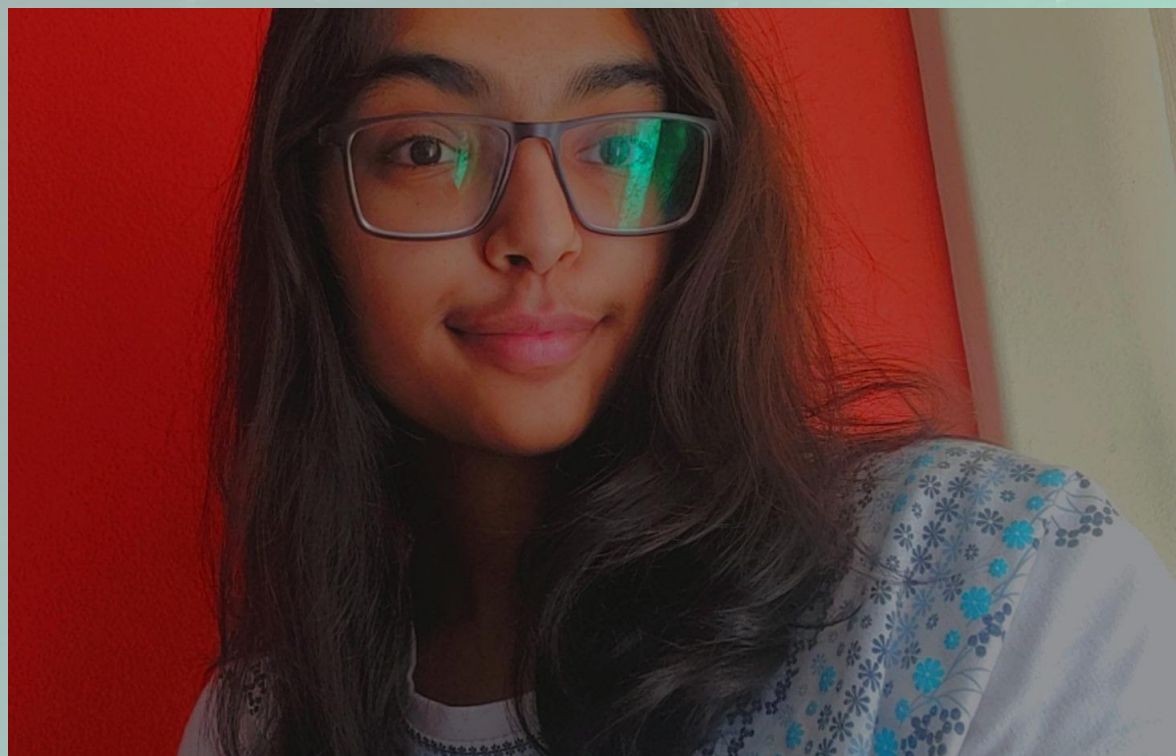
"Emotion: A Rare Yet
Common Virtue"

"Apart Yet Together"

Book Review: "The Fault
In Our Stars"

//crossword//

Behind the Scenes



Hi, I'm Ananya Saraswat. A total Janeite (Jane Austen fan), an enthusiastic ambivert and a self proclaimed weirdo.

P.S. I came up with this Virtual Journal as a platform to showcase the beautiful work of budding authors and poets like myself...

This is Arti Dhotikar here. I'm a pianist. I've worked in entrepreneurship cells for awhile. I'm fond of learning languages. I am fond of drawing. I love to write and participate in creative things and I'm part of design team in literature committee.

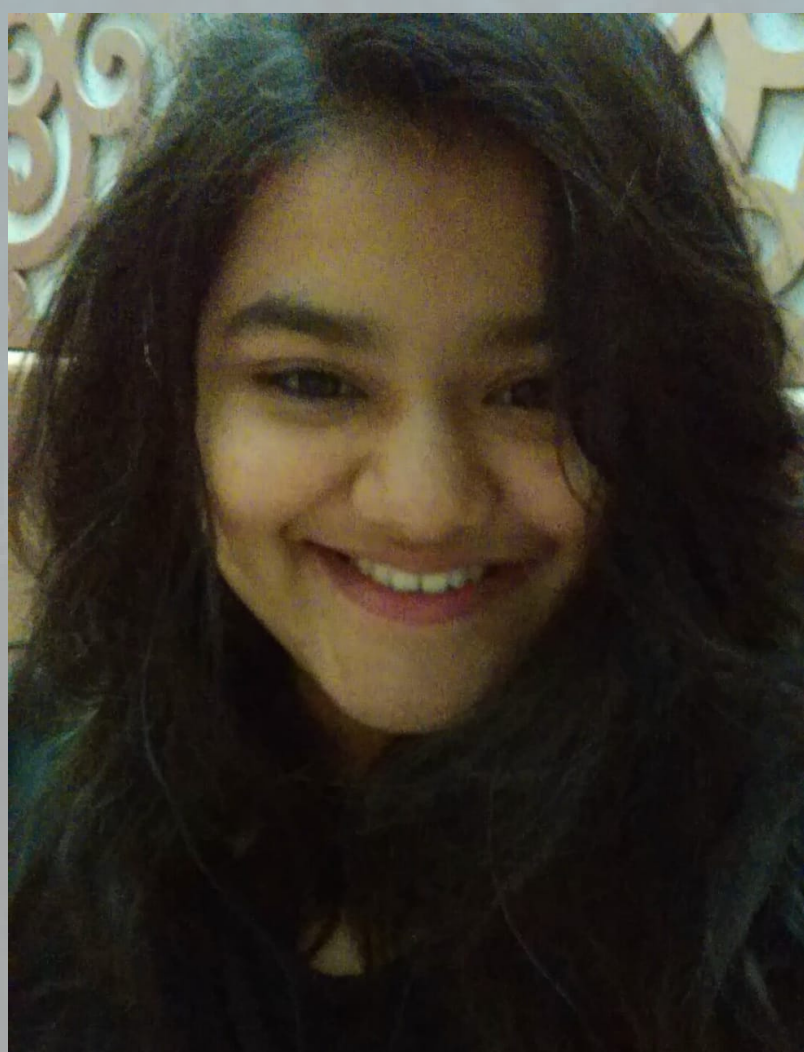


Hey! My name is Isha Paranjpe. I love reading and my favorite genre is psychological fiction—there's nothing that intrigues me more than a body of work that analyses something as complex and intricate as the psychological growth of a human being. I present as an introvert, but don't let that discourage you from saying hi!



Hello, I am Kaurobi Paul. I am weirdly creative when it comes to opportunities. I find joy in enhancing my skills which begins with a journey of "a learner to experienced" and leads to a destination named "wholesome productive human being".

Hello, I am Loukik Satoskar. For me, writing is second to oxygen. My favorite genre is mythological fiction. I am a huge fan and follower of author Amish Tripathi. I love the classical way of narrating philosophies through stories. I hope to publish my book soon.



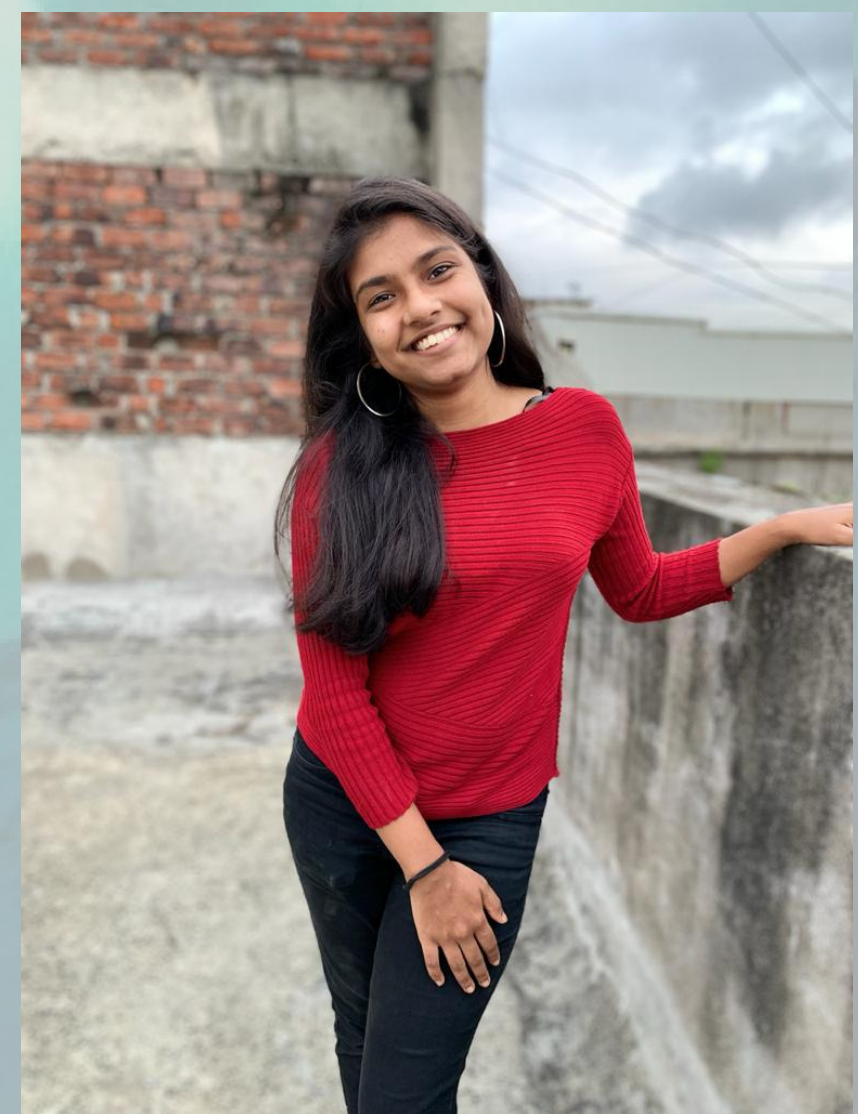
Hi! I am Ritika Anchalia, I'd say I'm a bit of an introvert. They say I am stubborn, sassy and difficult. I say they just can't handle my sweet country charm. A weird combination of Chandler and Joey where I handle difficult situations with sarcasm and well.. I don't like sharing food. I like creative work and trying out new things; which is why I'm a part of the public outreach team!

Hey, I'm Roma Chiplunkar. I like to write essays or poems sometimes when inspiration strikes, love to listen to music a little too much every day and have a tendency to procrastinate a lot.



Hello everyone! My name is Sakshi Nowrangi and I love reading and writing. I'm also a huge fan of random fun facts and you may find me talking about them if I get the chance to. Also, here's a fun fact! Otters have favorite rocks that they store in underarm pockets.

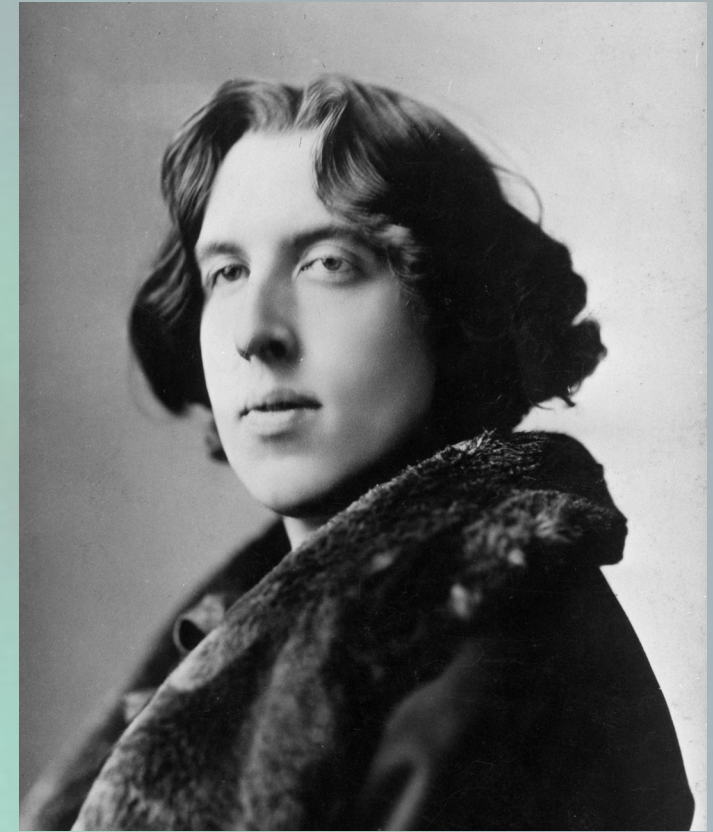
Hello, I am Savani Nibandhe. I love to dance and write when I am super motivated. I am a part of the public outreach team in the literary committee. Kudos to your support for this journal and hoping more support from you all in the future.



Hello, my name is Yugandhara. I love reading, mostly fiction. Percy Jackson is one of my favorite series. I love dancing and singing and I'm a huge K-pop fan! I'm also on the editing committee.

Erudite

- The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays
- The Canterville Ghost
- The Picture of Dorian Gray
- The Ballad of the Reading Goal
- The Happy Prince
- De Profundis



Oscar Wilde
(1854 - 1900)

Oscar Fingal O' Flahertie Wills Wilde, a famous Irish poet, author, playwright and was considered as a popular literary figure in late Victorian England. He was known for his emphatic epigrams and plenitude of aphorisms. He was lectured as a poet and art critic and a leading proponent who followed the principals of aestheticism.

"*THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*", his only novel which panned as immoral by Victorian critics. Although now considered as one of his notable works. Among of his plays, many continue to be widely performed especially "*A WOMAN OF NO IMPORTANCE*" (1893) and "*IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*" (1895).

Unconventional in his writing and life, there came a dramatic downfall. Wilde's affair with a young man led to his arrest charges of "gross indecency" in 1895. After imprisonment of 2 years, He never returned to Ireland or Britain and died in poverty.

"Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault. Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is hope. They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only Beauty. There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all."

"I don't want to be at the mercy of my emotions. I want to use them, to enjoy them, and to dominate them."

-Oscar Wilde



you can!

You are allowed to make a big deal about things that are important to you.



Stop creating competitions that don't exist.



YOU
ARE
BEAUTIFUL

Emotions



*i am mine.
before i am ever anyone else's.*



**NO
BAD
VIBES**



My mental health is way more important than any friendship or relationship.

In this moment, you are everything.



The woman who inspires me is the woman who I'm becoming.



LOVE YOURSELF

Emotions

Emotion is a subjective state of mind. By themselves, emotions are neither good nor bad. They are simply reactions. However, the way we choose to act on them is what makes them positive or negative. Every emotion has its importance. If we didn't feel low, we wouldn't know the high of being happy. Our whole lives revolve around emotions. They influence our thoughts and actions. Emotions are perceived by everyone. They conduct our social skills and help us understand each other.

Does a baby have more emotions or an adult? What makes an individual exhibit his emotions? Is it out of fear or sadness or seeking sympathy or out of sheer happiness? Questions flood our thoughts when we read the word emotions. How many kinds of emotions does one have? Do some people have more emotions or do they hide them because they are scared of being exploited by others when they reveal and pour them out? There's a purpose to our emotions, no doubt. We needn't brush aside what we tend to feel and how we attempt to address it. Without recognition as to the whys and wherefores of a certain emotion, a person is unlikely to fully understand his or her behavior which is a domino effect to a certain action perceived by the person.

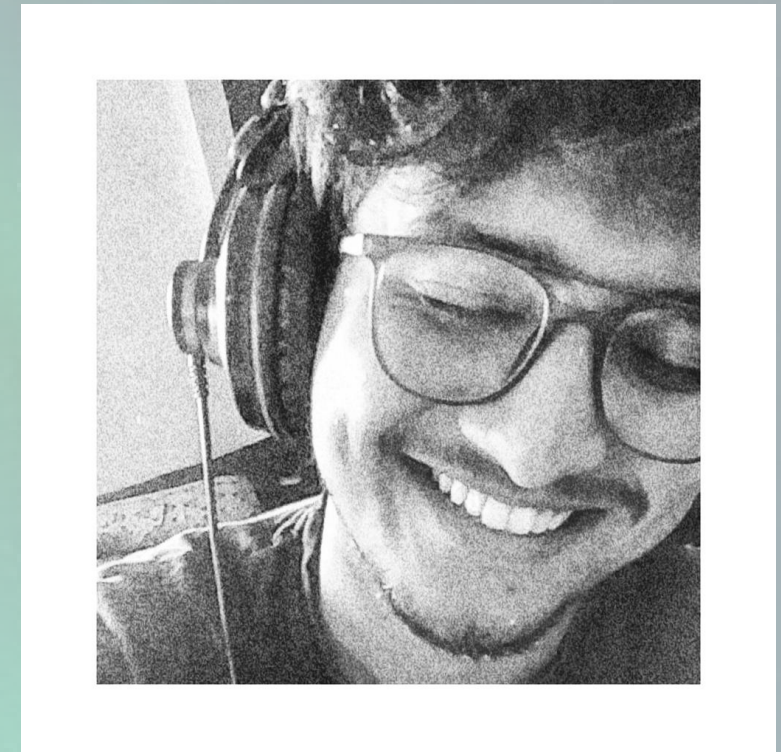
We need to embrace our emotions, in order to move through them. But, there's also a time to refrain from embracing, especially if we tend to hold on to one emotion for seemingly forever.

"Thoughts and emotions come from the same source. Thoughts are dry expressions of the mind, emotions are juicy. The way you think is the way you feel."

~ Sadhguru

Eminence of the Dormant Emotions

Hey! Welcome to my world
Where everything is not on my hold.
Before there was a thought, there was this place;
The only place with no race.
It was calm and beautiful,
the place turned out to be wondrously peaceful.
Then comes a thought without conscious volition,
thumping with no auxiliary and direct admission.
But, with the coming of a thought,
Came the illusion of free will.
That was the darkest broken seal.
And, with the coming of illusion, came chaos.
My unblemished dimensions overlapped,
forming a limit of dark walls;
disguised as freedom, the concealed pathos.
There was something which started,
The perpetual race, I involuntarily adapted.
I started to realize what is to be hearted and
disheartened.
Following with the real meaning of affliction,
being parted.
Like everyone, it started with the deal.
The artificially precious time, when I started to feel!
And I was born, as a human mind,
On earth where, air is the meal and freedom!



*Hey, lords and ladies fair.
Akhilesh Sanjay Adsul's right here!
Forging with adventurously bedazzling new stuff every year.
Including people with him to give the message of harmony/
happiness everywhere.
It's possible by virtue of the skills he learns and works
ceaselessly with respect and care.
Skills including singing, song-writing, music production,
composition, direction, mixing-mastering engineering, etc.
he dresses with flair.*

"Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words."

- Robert Frost

Sojourn

I am not in the place I used to be.
The sun shines now where the darkness wouldn't
leave.

Happiness is blooming within me,
However, what is this space inside of me?
I didn't think I would miss that life.
That life which brought me pain and strife.
I didn't think I would sometimes still think of you.
Not in the best way, of course, but still the thoughts
ring through.

I am not who I used to be.
The person I knew has changed me.
I think that it's not you I miss.
It's not you who leaves that space within.
It's the lessons I learnt that are inside.
They're constructing and working.
Trying to fill that hole inside.
They bring me contentment.
For I know now, that sadness comes in waves.
But it's the happiness and contentment that fills the
space.



My name is Sakshi. I'm an avid reader and writer. I am a pianist. Delicacies like cakes and cookies are my forte, I mean I love baking. I also have a flair for the artistic!

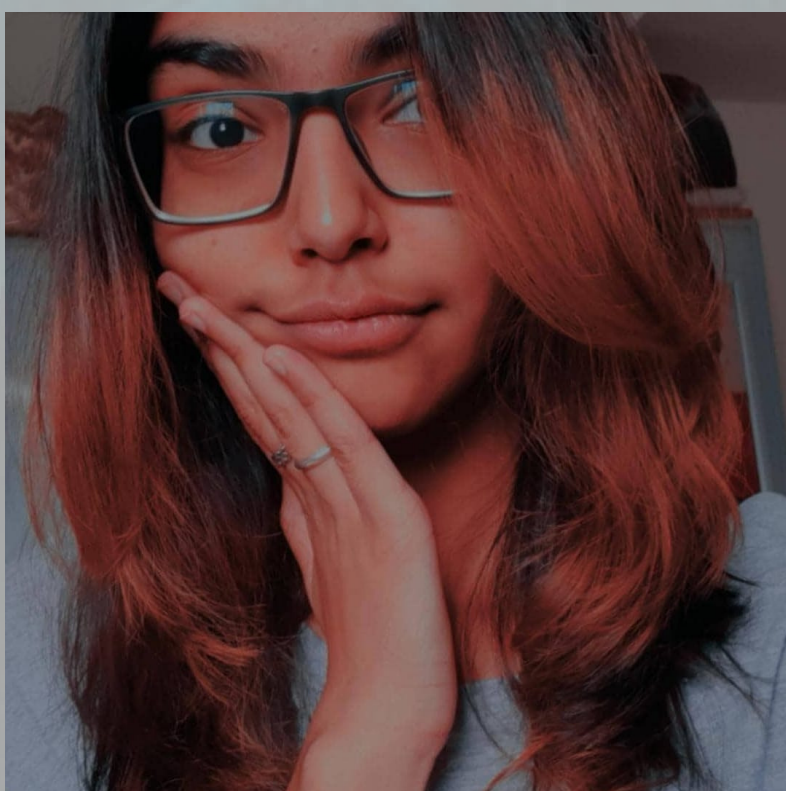
"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched.

They must be felt with the heart."

— Helen Keller

Enigma Of Life

She was an oxymoron,
Her life a tragic comedy,
Her emotions bitter-sweet,
Her thoughts in random order,
Cordial yet solitary,
A cheerful pessimist,
Clearly misunderstood,
She thought she would be trapped here,
In the prison of her own mind,
With her thoughts,
In the hallows of hope,
Shackles of guilt,
Until her very living end,
Amidst all the deafening silence,
Her only choice remained,
To be alone together,
For the larger half of her time,
She sought death as her definite maybe,
But then it struck her,
In that eloquent silence,
The exact estimate,
Or maybe true fiction,
An end to her sad smile,
The impossible solution,
She became,
A cripple who was whole.

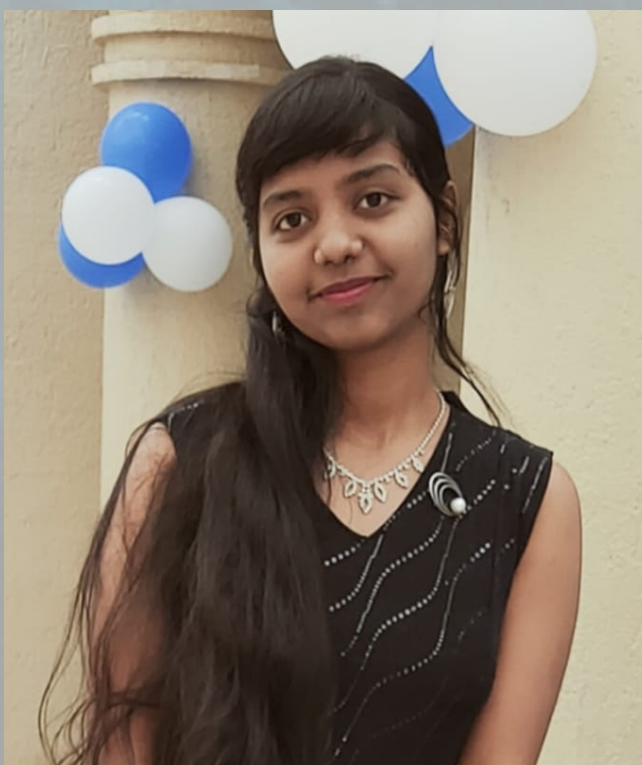


Hi, I'm Ananya. I love traveling. I survive on coffee and live for aesthetics! Although I'm shy I enjoy singing, but I'm not a professional singer. I have my own blog called 'Epistles and Verses'.

*"Heavy hearts like heavy clouds in the sky are best relieved by the letting of a little water."
- Cristopher Morley*

Breakthrough

Surfing the waves of adventure on my fun-board
with pleasure,
Warmth of the sun shining down on me,
the wind whistles on, just as happy as I be.
But right then, I slipped out of control and in a
second the water swallowed me whole.
Frustration slapped me on the surface, mocking
me at my flawless show of disgrace.
Anger fought its way into my lungs,
with every gasp pushing me down;
no matter what I struggled to grasp.
Sunk further into anxiety's domain,
watched helplessly at all hope wane.
Dropped further into the lonely depths of dark,
wondering how one mistake threw me
so off the mark.
Then finally hit the bottom;
the strangely pleasant void.
Here it's safe; of all feelings I'm devoid.
Better here than ever, fearing to fall again;
Never face what comes after the fall then.
But I remembered the surface; that was living
This here would just be existing.
Hard as it is, I want to live life to the fullest,
Even when it's not always the best;
And so I willed myself to the surface view,
That was my breakthrough!



My name is Gloriya Rocha. A student of Science with a love for English. I love alternating between getting lost in my own world and throwing myself in with different people and enjoying their company.

*"Not the one speaking the same language, but the ones sharing the same feelings.
Understand each other."*

~Rumi

Trying to Live My Life

Emotions swindling inside,
Trying to find a place to stay.
Heart as cold as ice,
And Soul just as grey.

Every night, I'm but a vulnerable sight.
My pillow goes rigid as,
My head rides thoughts on a spree,
My feelings always disagree.

Overthinking is a routine,
And breathing air is harder.

Every morning my pillow whispers, words of love.
Plagued with fatigue, I give up and hibernate.
Tears are my late-night baths,
And smiles my morning showers.
Some warm and some cold.

Numbness over-shadows Pain,
And so much must lie underneath that thin membrane
of a heart,
Holding out the soul.

I walk miles on papers and ramble about the chaos
inside.

My eyes speak more than my mouth.
But unfortunately, people just cannot decide.

I have given birth to sorrow and that to pain.
And to happiness and love.
Mother of emotions many,
But still a child within.

I like riddling myself in insecurities.
And reading myself in lust.
I spike my anxiety,
But feel my worth.

I take a dip in anger,
And come out emotional.
I thirst the dark, only to look for the light.
Grey is really, where I live and thrive.

Sensitive as a feather,
But I cut myself down like a knife.
Fearsome winner,
And a defeated life.

I lie in regrets,
Screaming for hope.
Surviving until I find life,
Trying to live like I've found death.
Trying to live my life.



My name is Amulya Parab. I absolutely love getting lost in stories and crafting poems! Thinking about abstract concepts and having deep talks intrigues me. I want to grow and flourish by discovering myself and getting to know other fascinating souls and places along the way!

*"I am a human being, with feelings and emotions and scars and flaws, just like anyone else."
— Josh Gordon*

Emotions : A Rare Yet Common Virtue

A famous classical poet said "We hate and we love, can one tell me why?" Emotions are an integral part of our lives and will always be. According to science, 'SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST' is provided by emotions.

Emotions are beyond science, since it always answers the *how's* and not the *why's*. When we talk about emotions, there are two ways to get in-depth about them. That is why emotions do have a great psychological and philosophical impact on us. The knowledge about human understanding and expression seems relatively difficult.

Emotions are the response of external stimuli on a psychological level and the cognitive part of your brain plays a role in what kind of emotion you might have as you react or perceive to a thing. They are a way of expressing what a human feels, through things such as paintings, writings and even the way a person works. Emotions are subjective.

So, to answer the question "Why one feels or acts the way they do?" is because emotions are constantly reciprocated in different manners by one's brain. There is a wide variety of emotions but they are broadly classified as Happiness, Sadness, Anger, Fear and Disgust. These are the 5 basic emotions that we feel. These are humane and basic emotions which later on develop into further complex feelings such as jealousy, pride, regret, guilt and many more depending upon the circumstance.

Emotions will always be the most important aspect of our lives and the reason, why people welcome prosperity. It is because of emotions that we understand and work with one another in harmony. Although it is because of emotions that we experience the ups and downs of life and we misinterpret them or create confusions. Hence, proving that emotions are indeed behind the continuity of the cycle of life on this planet.



Hello! I am Shreeya Panda from SYBA. I am pursuing a major in Psychology. My hobbies include writing, reading books, playing basketball, and listening to music.

"A mind all logic is a knife all blade. It makes the hand bleed that uses it.

Emotions are the handle."

- Rabindranath Tagore

Apart Yet Together

“Listen Aniket, I have to go right now. Can we talk about this later?”, came the grim voice through the phone. Aniket Bhagwat, a young man in his late twenties, sighed through the phone, “It’s not like we have an option.” Before he could get in another word, he heard a beep and the call was disconnected. He sat down with his hands on his head and his thoughts spiraled back to the conversation with his partner, Shivam Choudhary. Aniket and Shivam had met each other through Tinder and had been dating for the past three and a half years. Aniket was the manager of an old age home, whereas Shivam was a surgeon at the Nanavati Hospital in Mumbai. They both had started living together for about a year and a half now, and just when they were thinking about taking things forward, the world was hit with a pandemic: *the novel Coronavirus*. Shivam had to go to the hospital and work for nearly 14-18 hours a day while Aniket decided to stay at the old age home and take care of the residents. They hadn’t met for over three weeks and this had been putting a strain on their relationship. Shivam had no time to spare as he was constantly tending to patients. Although whenever he did, he would call Aniket. Recently, all they did was bicker constantly. One thing led to another and Aniket began to have second thoughts about the relationship. It had been a difficult path for both of them to get accepted by each other’s families as well as society. He remembered the time when section 377 was decriminalized and they both had gone to various pride celebrations with their faces painted in rainbow colors. With this celebration, they had decided to move in and make their relationship official.

Initially both their families had been having a hard time accepting it, but after months of coaxing and persuasion, they finally did. Post his MBA, Aniket decided to work at the old age home: a beautiful, old bungalow, established by his father at Andheri East. Regularly, they both used to surprise each other with little visits as they worked about fifteen minutes away from each other. All the inmates of the house were very fond of Shivam, and he also used to do a regular health check-up for them. Aniket reminisced about all these memories and now it seemed like the couple knew that they were felt light-years away. Constant quarrels took place instead of understanding and deep conversations, complaints, and grumbles over the light banter that they used to enjoy; sentences turned into monosyllables. Aniket was in a dilemma. “Is this too quick a decision that I’ve taken? Are Shivam and I not compatible anymore? Has the spark fizzled out? This is all wrong.” thought Aniket. While he was drowning in his troublesome thoughts, an old man hobbled over to him and asked, “Ani beta kay zhala? Why do you look so troubled?” Aniket quickly regained his composure and replied, “Nothing baba, just a little tensed about this whole quarantine situation. Did you have your medicines?”. The old man grinned a toothless smile and replied, “Yes I did. Why don’t you come and join me for a game of carrom?” “Sure, I will. Let me just check on everyone else and get the carrom board okay? Please wait for me in the lounge room.”, said Aniket.

About ten minutes later, Aniket came down with the carrom board. The old man, who he lovingly called baba, was waiting for him patiently. He had come to the old age home in 2012. Very little was known about his family, except the fact that he had come to the home by himself. He chatted with everyone, hummed to the tunes of Jagjit Singh, read classics in Marathi and English and solved the daily Sudoku that came in the Mumbai Mirror. Every morning he would go for a little walk in the backyard of the house and feed the cat that would visit him. His Arthritis didn't allow him to move around much so he would sit in a little cane chair with his walking stick resting by him. Besides him, there were eight other residents, all hailing from different parts of Mumbai. Baba had turned 70 about a month ago. While Aniket set up the carrom board and powdered it, baba noticed that Aniket wasn't his usual chatty self. He seemed distant and aloof. He popped a toffee into his toothless mouth and sucked on it. Aniket says, "Chala baba, let's see how good your shot is" Baba chuckles and says, "Ani, don't challenge me now. I was a first-class player in my times". With this, he grabbed the striker and struck at the hexagonal arrangement of coins with great precision and force. Aniket exclaims, "Wah baba, fine shot!" They played on for a while, joking and talking throughout the game when Aniket's phone beeped. He quickly checked it, but put it away with a dejected look on his face. Baba noticed it and took the striker, "Shivam?". Aniket shook his head. "Ani beta, you seemed very worried this evening. I know it is not the quarantine, at least not entirely. Something else seems to be the reason." Aniket looked up to see baba's widened eyes resting upon his face. Suddenly, the lights went out.

~*~

Swati Mishra was lighting candles and murmuring under her breath, "What is this nonsense? First, we have to be cooped up in our houses and now this?". She glanced at her husband who was also lighting candles. The children: a boy and a girl had come out of their respective rooms because the Wi-Fi wasn't working. "Vaibhav, get some more candles from the kitchen," Swati says. The boy, thirteen, gets up and goes. Her husband exclaims, "Richa! Check if the back door is closed otherwise mosquitoes will come." Richa, eighteen, rolls her eyes and goes out. On her return, she saw her mother on a call. Once she hung up, she said, "Amit, I was just talking to Vaishali and she said that the whole area of Versova along with Andheri and Jogeshwari has undergone a power cut. They're hoping to resolve it in an hour or so." Amit looked up from his phone and nodded. He was a busy software engineer at Infosys, while Swati was a professor at a college. Their busy schedules didn't permit much interaction among them. In addition to that, both their kids were teenagers who needed nothing apart from a mobile phone, laptop, and Wi-Fi. Swati suddenly said, "Come on people, let's all share something interesting." Both Vaibhav and Richa roll their eyes, "Like what?" Amit's eyes were still glued to his phone, his thoughts in a whirlwind. "This work from home is so hectic. I get calls throughout the day. Boss has a sword hanging over my head too."

“Suddenly he became worried and his thoughts shifted elsewhere. “I hope he is okay. It’s been a long time since we’ve even spoken and his health must be deteriorating. ‘He’ was the one who walked out in anger.” Suddenly, Amit’s chain of thought was broken when Swati called out to him. “Amit! Put that phone away!” He rubbed his face and sighed. Swati tried making conversation with her bored family, but none of them seemed to be enjoying or contributing. Richa kept glancing at her phone and Vaibhav kept sighing and looking at the G-shock on his hand. Suddenly Vaibhav pipes up, “I want to go to the turf and play football with my friends.” “I want to hangout at Prutha’s place. It’s been nearly three weeks that I’ve met her. Oh, wait! she just messaged me”, chirped Richa. Amit noticed the drab response to his poor wife’s attempts to make the family bond so he spoke up, “Let’s for one minute, think about what’s going on in the world around us. There are multiple families out there torn apart due to this pandemic. Shouldn’t we be glad that we’re all at home, safe and sound with our loved ones?”

This grabbed the attention of the teenagers. He continues, “I know that we’re all annoyed sitting at home for such a long time. We’d all like to be back at work or school with our friends, but I’m afraid, for a while it won’t be possible. But we have to be thankful for what we have right? There are scores of people out there dying every single day. People without proper sanitation. Laborers having to travel hundreds of kilometers just to get home. Aren't we blessed to not suffer such hardships? So many people are in ICU’s with tubes in their hands, not being able to breathe without artificial help. Why can’t we be glad about what we have rather than complaining about what we don’t? Look at me, working from home. Now that I think about it, I’m glad! I have a comfortable workspace, but the true heroes are the doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, ward boys, janitors, the policemen, people working at grocery stores, delivery guys, watchmen and the several NGOs. They are the ones who are putting their lives at risk and continuing duty. Now, while we have some time off our busy schedules, let's utilize this to spend it with each other. Our “problems” in comparison to those actually suffering are so trivial! What are we even complaining about?” Amit pauses. Swati looks at him, her eyes glistening in the candlelight. Richa’s screen lights up with a notification but she doesn’t even glance at it. Vaibhav’s G-shock beeps with an alarm which he quickly snoozes.

~*~

“Baba, hold my hand, I’ll take you to the couch”, said Aniket, carefully making a beeline to the nearby couch. He helped the old man sit and went off to get some candles. Most of the other inmates were asleep. Aniket made calls to enquire about the generator and then sat down to light the candles. The little stream of light shone on baba’s wrinkled face and reflected off his thick glasses. “Are you going to tell me about what’s troubling you?” he queried with an earnest look in his eyes. Aniket sighed and said, “It's nothing baba. It’s just this whole situation has been putting a strain on my relationship with Shivam. I know that he’s busy but whenever we talk, we end up fighting.

We hadn't talked for nearly four days and today when he called me, we ended up quarrelling. It feels like he isn't the same person anymore. He's incessantly cranky, picking on little faults. Just the other day he had called me but I'd been busy buying some groceries. When I called him back, he was annoyed at me because his shift break was over. This was petty but we had a huge blow out over this. I cannot find my peace and happiness with him anymore. I'm having second thoughts about our relationship, baba." With this, he heaved a sigh of relief. It seemed like a heavy stone had been lifted off his chest. Baba chuckles and replies, "In life Ani, there are going to be numerous ups and downs. But the most important thing during these times is to communicate.

Communication is one of the core elements of any relationship. At one point, it's just your frustration emerging out. He's working overtime whereas you're here amidst a group of oldies. Keep in mind that this time too, will pass. It's actually a very beautiful, ambivalent sentence. When you're having a good time and you think about this sentence, you'll feel sad. When you're feeling the blues, it's motivating. It will be a ray of hope to you, my dear boy; and I tell you again, all fights can be resolved with communication. Of course, I am no one to preach to you about that when I, myself, don't follow that notion." with this, baba became eerily silent. In the dim candlelight, Aniket saw his wrinkled face fall and his eyes lose their spark. He held his hand and asked, "Kay zhaala baba? What happened?" Baba's voice had dropped an octave when he spoke. "Many years ago, I used to live with my son, his wife and my two grandchildren. Oh, how I used to adore them." Aniket noticed a hint of smile on his unhappy face. Baba continues, "I was a man of old values and traditions. My daughter in law used to go to work and I didn't like it. I felt that women must stay at home and look after the children. She used to go to parties late at night and in clothes that I didn't approve of. Yes, I had no right to tell her what to do and what not to, it was just my mentality and opinion. I kept telling my son about my complaints and grievances, but instead, he told me to put aside my old-fashioned thoughts and move on in life. I was deeply hurt and ended up losing my temper. I said a lot of things that I am ashamed of, he said a lot of things which hurt me. At the end of the fight, I gathered my belongings and left the house. I never looked back nor did he call me. It has been nearly 8 years since I left. My time in the home has made me realize a lot of things. I haven't ever spoken to him, my daughter in law or my grandchildren ever since."

With this, the old man put his hands on his face in misery. Aniket was overwhelmed. He did not say a word but simply got up to hug baba. They stayed like that for a long time after which Aniket broke the silence, "Baba, let's make amends tonight. You with your family and me with mine. Call your son up tonight and ask him how he is. There are millions of people dying around the world and we have to be grateful that we still have our loved ones. One never knows what the future beholds." Suddenly the lamp above their heads lit up and the fan started rotating. Baba didn't say anything but he simply nodded and hobbled away to his room. He sat on the bed for a long time after which, he picked up the landline and dialed a number; one that he hadn't in several years. A voice on the other end said "Hello" and baba's heart leaped up in joy.

~*~

3 months later

Swati Mishra was making a scrumptious dinner for the whole family. Amit stood beside her chopping up salad. The children were setting up the tables and a light, lilting music was playing in the background. Swati tells Richa, "Go call baba from inside. Tell him food is ready" Richa bounded to her grandfather's room. She was happy that he was home after being at an old age home for so many years. She had missed her Ajoba a lot. "Ajoba, food is ready!" The old man grinned his toothless smile and looked up from his Sudoku. He grabbed his walking stick and hobbled after Richa towards the dining table where everyone was seated. He smiled at his son Amit who passed him a plate filled with food. Baba thought to himself, "I must call up Ani and say thanks to him". Everyone present at the table was talking, laughing and joking around. Baba looked at them, his eyes glistening. Oh! how much he had missed this! The children too, now that the quarantine was over, made sure that they spent enough time with their family. Amit made sure that he put his phone away during the time he was home. Suddenly there was a knock on the door and Vaibhav got up to open it. "Mom it's Ani and Shivam bhaiya." Amit tells baba, "They are our neighbors, baba.

I'll introduce you to them." When they walked in, Ani's eyes fell on baba. He was shocked! His neighbor was Baba's son?! After all this time? What a small world!" he thought. Shivam handed Amit an invitation card and said "Aniket and I are engaged. We would like to invite you all to be at the wedding in December." Amit exclaims, "Wow! Congratulations to you both! That is great! We'll be there for sure." He then brings forth his father and introduces him to them, "Aniket, Shivam this is my baba. Baba, these are our neighbors. Shivam is a surgeon at Nanavati Hospital and Aniket owns an old age home." Aniket shakes Baba's hand and when their eyes meet, they wordlessly thank each other. "Congratulations to you both, I wish you a very long and happy married life." They both smile and touch baba's feet as a sign of respect. They make small talk and then bid goodbye. When they stepped out, Shivam asked Aniket, "Wasn't that baba?" Aniket nodded a yes. "Why didn't you say anything then?" asked Shivam. "I did say it, Shivam. Just not with words". He looked in through the window and felt elated to see baba sitting with his family and enjoying. Indeed, quarantine had a lot of adverse effects, but it also mended a lot of relationships.

The best relationship is not the one that is shared solely during good times. Rather, it's the one that has the power to last through rough times.



My name is Madhavi Menon and I am an aspiring psychologist who also loves to read and write. A lover of indie music, I am also a big fan of Sudha Murthy. Writing this short story was one of the productive things that happened during this lockdown.

"My feelings are too loud for words and too shy for the world."

- Dejan Stojanovic

Book Review: *The Fault in Our Stars*

“Okay? Okay.”

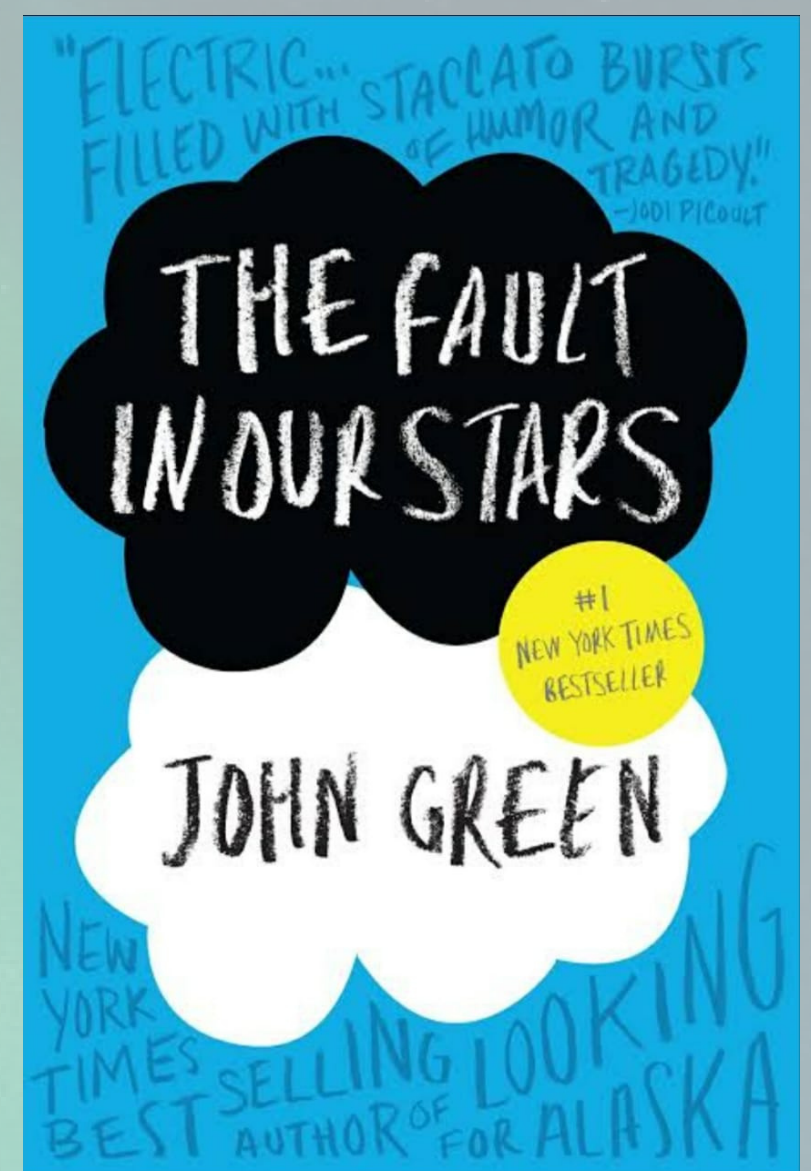
'The Fault in Our Stars', a New York bestseller by John Green is a 'Young Adult' novel of 'realistic fiction'. John Michael Green, a notable author and vlogger was inspired by one of the dialogues in Shakespeare's play, "*Julius Caesar*". The result of this inspiration led to his sixth novel titled "The Fault in Our Stars".

The story is narrated by Hazel Grace Lancaster, a sixteen-year-old girl diagnosed with cancer. She is talked into joining a support group. Hazel, despite being the tumor-shrinking medical miracle patient, has never been anything but terminal. She meets the gorgeous plot twist, named Augustus Waters, a seventeen-year-old, ex-basketball player, amputee and subsequently falls in love with him. Set in the present modern-day world, this tantalizing tale leads us through the journey of two troubled, absurd, sarcastic teenagers through life and love.

After meeting at the Cancer Support Group, they talk and Augustus pulls out a cigarette and puts it in between his lips; being a cancer patient, she disgustedly bursts about how he already has cancer and he wants to pay money for more, "*Not being able to breathe sucks,*" she yells. Augustus calmly explains the metaphor, which is, "*You put the thing that kills you right between your teeth but you don't give it the power to kill you.*"

Hazel is a smart and cynical girl, who thinks about death a lot for someone who is such a strong fighter and was a success. She wonders a lot about little things, probably in an attempt to gain a sense of normalcy in her abnormal cancerous life. She is distant, despite all the love that is shown by the people around her, because she fears that 'when' she dies they will hurt even more and completely break down.

Augustus 'Gus' Waters is a firm, head-strong, confident, 'metaphorical' teenager who had to let go of his passion for basketball, having had his leg amputated. These experiences have taught him a lot and almost made him immune to the fact that anything can happen, anytime. It has made him wise beyond his age and he always know the right thing to say.



The sweet and simple writing inked with the finesse of intricate vocabulary makes the reader think and feel the words. Absurd, dark humour spread throughout the book brings comic relief, yet drags you to its depths. The chemistry between 'Hazel Grace' and 'Gus' is uniquely brilliant, as they complement and understand one another, despite the short period of their relationship.

I found that some characters or instances were unnecessarily included, as it is not a mystery novel, hence stretching the book for three hundred and thirteen pages. Nonetheless, John Green's style of writing is of a descriptive, yet sometimes cryptic, metaphorical and analytical manner. The book was published in January, 2012 and a feature film of the book was released in June of 2014. Both the book and film adaptation received strong critical and commercial success. An Indian adaptation of the same, "Dil Bechara" was recently screened, which is an equally beautiful film.

Though the book is beautifully poignant and has managed to bring out the emotions perfectly, the film has reached high expectations as well. The movie has been relieved of the former mentioned unnecessary content, making it a more compact rendition which has a positive effect, making for an engaging narrative novel but a fascinating film.

In conclusion I feel that this book is touching, insightful, emotionally heart-warming. A realistic novel, worth reading. It would be a great addition to your collection: big or small, rustic or modern; any kind of bookshelf. Laugh, cry, think with this funny, poignant and irreverently humoured piece of touching fiction.



My name is Roma Chiplunkar. My friends think I'm bubbly. I enjoy being glued to Netflix, reading is just one of the other thing's I love doing, and I'm obsessed with iced tea.

"There are chords in the hearts of the most, reckless, which cannot be touched without emotion."

- Edgar Allen Poe

**CROSS
WORDS**



ACROSS

- 1) It's a strong feeling deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others
- 3) It's a feeling of worry because of uncertainty
- 5) It is having a strong feeling of showing annoyance
- 7) It's a compassionate act performed towards forgiveness
- 9) It's being seriously gloomy or moody
- 11) It's showing a lack of courage or feeling frightened
- 13) A persistent feeling of bitterness resulting from a past insult or injury
- 15) It's a feeling of consciousness that causes guilt

DOWN

- 2) It's a feeling of surprise which gives you thrills
- 4) It's a feeling that gets you on cloud nine
- 6) It's a feeling caused by darkness 70% of the time and 30% by having strict parents
- 8) It's the feeling you show for the death or loss of someone or something
- 10) It's a phase almost every teenager goes through
- 12) It's a strong sense of disapproval that offends you
- 14) It's a deep regret or guilt for a wrong committed
- 16) It's a flag, a feeling, and an abstract noun

"A person will be just happy as they makeup their minds to be"
- Abraham Lincoln