

# THE ORTUS

*Celebration*

Volume 3, Issue 2



# THE ORTUS

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## Contents

### **From the Editor's Desk**

Bhavyaa Bihani ..... 4

### **Celebration of Life and Death**

Bhavyaa Bihani ..... 5

### **Valentína**

Niharika Guleria ..... 7

### **The Shakti they Gave Me**

Pari Gupta ..... 8

### **The Voyager Golden Records**

Arhaan Ashraf ..... 9

### **A Reason for Joy**

Akanksha Bhatia ..... 12

### **A Dog's Way Home**

Shaurya Taneja ..... 14



## Contents

### **A Song of Light**

Ananya Vijn ..... 16

### **A Taste of Freedom**

Bhavyaa Bihani ..... 19

### **Do Traditions have a Shelf-life**

Mahika Bellaney & Swaraj ..... 21

### **Dodha Barfi Recipe**

Jaye Kapoor ..... 23

### **Trivia Time**

Esh Gupta ..... 24

### **References**

Various Writers ..... 25



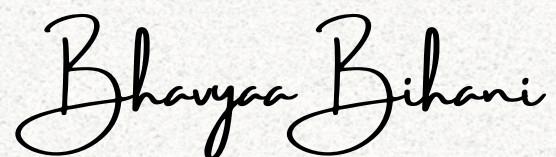
# From the Editor's Desk

Welcome back to the second issue of Volume 3 of the Ortus newsletter! We sincerely hope you have enjoyed reading issue one as much as we enjoyed collaborating and creating it.

The theme for this issue is 'Celebrations', simply because we, humans, do not devote enough time to celebrating the small joys and experiences that life gives us. These experiences may not necessarily be considered positive in the short run. Still, in the long run, each has the ability to teach us something valuable which should be treated as nothing less than any other joyous occasion.

This issue has it all from the reasons behind quintessential celebrations to the ones that aren't as popular as the others. From wholesome poems to compelling reviews, we sincerely hope that this issue helps you all find something in your respective lives that you find worth celebrating and simultaneously spreading positivity.

HAPPY READING!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bhavyaa Bihani". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

(Bhavyaa Bihani)  
Chief Editor



# Celebration of Life and Death

- Featured Article by Bhavyaa Bihani

The question still remains unanswered as to what really happens after one dies; rebirth, reincarnation, eternal peace..... what exactly. Some believe in one single answer while others argue that there is more than one. It is up to the individuals to decide for themselves what they believe in and the reasons they have for believing in something. With so many varying views on the subject, it is sometimes difficult to find the truth and therefore harder for the loved ones to come to terms with the loss. In this confusion, one tends to forget how to celebrate their present. We lose touch with our loved ones when we are busy remembering the past and dwelling on the future; the life they lived and the life they lost. It would be a better use of time if we celebrated the lives of those who have left us and began living with the living in the present.

Celebrating life in death is not always an easy thing to do. It is not easy to come to terms with, but getting through the stages of grief can help us heal and move on with our lives. Death by definition carries an extremely negative connotation which should not be the case; it is the celebration of a life that has been well lived and therefore deserves our recognition and appreciation. Whether we believe or not in an afterlife, we should celebrate the lives of those we love even when it is with a casket on our shoulders as we walk towards the grave site. There is so much a person brings with them when they are born and leave profoundly once they depart.

From a positive perspective, death represents the beginning of another life. As a result, this allows departed souls to reincarnate into distinct forms and beings, which gives them a more varied experience to the extent of the galaxy.





If this myth holds true, it provides them with an opportunity to either pay or be pleased and live in peace resulting from the deeds of their past life.

As beautiful as death is, life in itself is the most alluring state of a person's journey through the universe. It's astonishing how much a man can attain in just a span of a few years. It's also staggering to see how much a person can accomplish in a short life span and share the world with some who get through the longest life without living for even a second. Sharing disparate lives is not a new concept in this world and the journey each one is destined to have should be celebrated thoroughly.

Ideologies such as life and death are extremely subjective in nature and discussing them is equivalent to playing with fire. However, this should not take anything back from the way we celebrate the harsh but inevitable reality of life.





# Valentína

-Poem by Niharika Guleria

A mysterious air like a forgotten flair.  
A lonely flame, hot and tamed, and yet,  
so daring, oh so sparing.  
She walks on toes, never bearing the pain of rows  
and rows of women stand through.  
She paves her path of independent lands, and yet,  
she is so feminine, always  
receiving and rightly giving.  
She, the owner of many hearts, while never letting  
her own be known.  
Her words like slippery grains of sand escaping  
through the slits of fingers hands. Her S's sound like  
she has a lisp and, that's what makes her sound so  
crisp and yet she is- Oh! So deep-  
on what she says. Everyone stares at her eyes, as she  
speaks, not hearing  
what she say but the musical sound of her words.  
She is known by all-  
Valentína, they call her name- but none knowing  
who she truly is, because, who she truly is, is  
unknown.





# The Shakti They Give Me

- Poem by Pari Gupta

It's all about the shakti they give me,  
The one through which my filtered faith stitches my scars;  
To unlock closed doors, I run around to find the perfect key,  
But get lost like a fading light in the sky enveloped with shooting stars.  
Constantly making deals with the devil,  
Everything around me flips in a flick;  
Waiting to say checkmate in the same game but on a different level,  
I need to prove that the toughest one wins, around I need to stick.  
I want to control the coin of my life,  
But like a rusted penny it slips through my grip;  
Towards the right thing at the right time even I strife,  
But on the way I do fall and trip.  
With my bloodshot eyes I try getting up from the road,  
But my scars and wounds pull me down;  
In the rat race of life my pace does slow,  
Like a shadow I wander this haunted town.  
The monsoon showers taught me the art of falling,  
My grand father's clock taught me to never stop even if  
I have to start crawling,  
The withered vines taught me that nothing in nature  
blooms all year;  
Because even the darkest of the skies will one day be  
crystal clear.  
Needing enough air to make a perfect sunset,  
At the end of the day rivers do flow into oceans and the  
sea;  
Growing, and taking all the chances, promised to never  
regret,  
One day my sapling will branch into a tree.  
It just needs perseverance, patience, time  
My scars simply need to be shown some affection;  
Soon the poem of my life will also start to rhyme,  
And how fast my tree grows depends on how I water  
those imperfections.





# The Voyager Golden Records

- Article by Arhaan Ashraf

Today, Voyager One is 23 billion kilometers away from Earth. It is the most distant man-made object from Earth. It floats in the depths of space, having traveled distances that no human will ever travel, at least in our lifetime. It also carries with it two golden records, which have tried to condense the human experience into a few images, sounds, and songs.

The Voyager Golden Records have always fascinated me, ever since I was a child. The idea that we sent the equivalent of an invitation card to Earth for any distant civilizations to find, always thrilled me. But you may ask, what are these records?

The Voyager Golden Record is a record that was sent out with both Voyager One and Voyager Two. Their contents, according to the Smithsonian's website, are "115 analog-encoded photographs, greetings in 55 languages, a 12-minute montage of sounds on Earth, and 90 minutes of music"

It was completed on August 23rd, 1977. The contents of the record were selected by a committee chaired by Carl Sagan.



The Golden Record aimed to portray what life on Earth was like. The greetings in 55 languages aimed to portray the diversity on Earth. These greetings were in languages like Sumerian, Ancient Greek, Russian, Punjabi, Dutch, German, and Urdu among many others. The last greeting is in English, and the greeting is spoken by Nick Sagan, son of Carl Sagan. Along with the greetings, some of the sounds of the Earth were also included.



The sounds of footsteps. A heartbeat. A train. Wind. The rain. A volcano. Laughter. Many other such sounds were included. It demonstrated how diverse the Earth's soundscape was. It included sounds from nature as well as sounds produced by man-made things, such as tractors and buses.

The images included in Voyager One showed a variety of things. It had images of some planets in the solar system, including our own.

It had images of the Double Helix, diagrams of the male and female, and images of schools, supermarkets, and humans eating and drinking, among others. The images were simple, sometimes even unremarkable. However, they portrayed the human experience. For an alien civilization, they could illustrate how far our technology had gotten by 1977.

It had pictures of X-Rays, astronauts in space, airplanes in flight, and images of the Titan Centaur rocket launching.

But what really fascinates me is the music.

From Mozart to Chuck Berry, these 90 minutes of music portrayed all kinds of emotions. The record contains things like night chants from the Navajo tribe native to America, as well as songs from composers. Originally, The Beatles' song "Here Comes The Sun" was going to be included on the record. However, they couldn't secure the rights, and The Beatles never made it to space.





However, the most touching song on the record, according to many, is by Blind Willie Johnson.

“Dark Was The Night, Cold Was The Ground” is a song that strikes you immediately. The recording quality makes it sound like there’s rain falling in the background. The song has no discernible lyrics, yet it is full of emotion. Out of the various emotions that the songs on the record embody, this one would embody loneliness. After all, what feeling is more human, than the feeling of being alone?

Johnson’s home burned down in 1945, but he continued to live in the remains of his home. He died that same year. His life might have ended under unfortunate circumstances, but his legacy will live on in the most permanent way possible.

The Voyager Records were constructed with the harsh conditions of space in mind. As such, they were built to last. One estimate states that the records will remain at least partially intact for 5 billion years.

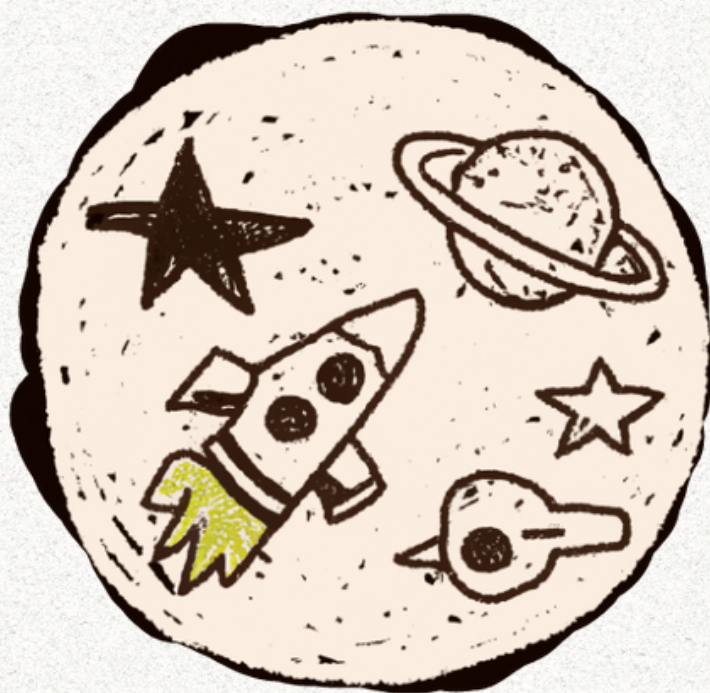
It is possible that the Golden Records will outlive humanity itself, and will continue to float among the stars as a reminder. A reminder that we were here.

A summation of the human experience, all in one record.

It had pictures of X-Rays, astronauts in space, airplanes in flight, and images of the Titan Centaur rocket launching.

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# A Reason for Joy

- Article by Akanksha Bhatia

When I was given the topic of celebration, I thought it was too cliché. Everyone knows what celebration is, but then after thinking about it for some time I realized it has a different meaning for everyone.

Celebration is a moment of happiness. When we think about celebration, we always associate it with festivals or big successes, but its reason could be something smaller. Things that make you feel good and have a positive impact on your life are worth celebrating.

Celebration is present in everyone's lives and cultures and can help to express ourselves through tradition. It is an opportunity to deepen these bonds by bringing people together who see each other rarely. Special events become reunions, allowing family members living far away to see each other in the context of celebrating their loved ones. Through celebrations, we can appreciate our good fortune along with unity and love.

We celebrate to find joy and fill our hearts with excitement. The celebration does not need a reason. While some people only celebrate events like birthdays and anniversaries, others celebrate events of little significance such as labor day or earth day, or even small achievements with full enthusiasm. Some believe that only special moments should be celebrated otherwise celebration would lose its real value. It is a moment of relief from everyday troubles.

It could be a small accomplishment when you finally get something you have always wanted or even new beginnings and endings. Even though the main reason to celebrate is to honour a special moment, spending time and reuniting with our loved ones makes it equally important. This advantage makes all the other problems related to celebration look small. Celebrating occasions with friends, colleagues, neighbours and loved ones not only promotes unity and peace but also helps us forget our worries and troubles.

Sometimes it is difficult to incorporate these grand celebrations into a busy lifestyle. So, celebrations can be small as well; such as; treating yourself with some muffins on getting full marks in your maths exam or watching a movie after cleaning the house the whole day.

While some people find celebrations jubilant, others find it unnecessary and a waste of both time and effort. Even though it is joyous it can be very stressful and overwhelming and makes it lose its original value. It impacts negatively on society and increases antisocial behaviour.





Are festivals even worth celebrating? Till now we have just seen the bright side of celebration but at the time they had many adverse effects as well. A festival is supposed to be a celebration of life but these days it has been a period full of tension and anxiety. For example, during Halloween people buy and distribute huge amounts of candy and kids consume way too much sugar which is not healthy for them. On Diwali, harmful smoke emission due to firecrackers leaves the environment extremely polluted and cause respiratory diseases. People always tend to get busy preparing for these festivals which makes them forget the reason why they are celebrating them in the first place. The grand celebrations for festivals like Diwali and Christmas make them lose their real meaning.

The way of celebration also says a lot. Some like to celebrate in grand style inviting a huge crowd of people while some prefer to keep it simple and intimate. Spending time with people you care about and doing activities you like is a celebration in itself. It helps to highlight the good and makes life not so monotonous.

With the passage of time, the way of celebration has also changed. In olden times, people spent a lot of money to celebrate but now, even though these customs are still present, they have scaled down. These days a common way of celebration is by giving back to society; people prefer to give donations to NGOs and charities and provide the poor with food and usable clothes. Another way is by planting more and more trees which makes the community feel more rejuvenated.

This is not only social work but also a way to show gratitude to society.

People are switching from grand celebrations to intimate ones since they only want to share their happiness with their close ones. People hardly know their first and second cousins, but still, to impress them with their style of celebration makes the festivity season stressful instead of enjoying it. This culture is now part of the urban lifestyle where people prefer going out for dinner with family as a celebration rather than hosting a big dinner party for people they don't even know properly.

After interviewing some of my friends and getting to know their opinions and perspectives on the celebration, my view has completely changed. I believe that the root of celebration lies in happiness as, at the end of the day, celebrations – big or small, grand or simple, luxurious or low-priced, and extravagant or modest – don't matter as long as they make you happy.





# A Dog's Way Home

- Synonpsis by Shaurya Taneja

"*A Dog's Way Home*" (2019), is a beautiful heart-warming movie inspired by the novel "A Dog's Way Home" (2017) which is a celebration of a relationship between a dog and a human which will surely roll tears out of your eyes!

The plot starts with a brown pup narrating the story, a pup with an ever so innocent face and eyes sparkling like silver, living under a construction site with her family in Denver. Unlike a usual dog family, they didn't reside alone, with them lived a cat family. Everything was going smoothly for the three pups and her mother until animal control arrives, considering the mother dog to be dangerous, they took her and the two pups with them. However, the brown pup was thinking over her feet and went deep inside the corners of the area almost invisibly escaping them, the void of her family was never felt by her as she had another family, the cat family which treated her as their own.



The story progresses with an introduction of two friends who are zealous animal lovers, Lucas Ray (Jonah Hauer King) and Olivia (Alexandra Shipp) who trespass the construction site only to find a cat family inside, they gave the family food and made a daily routine of feeding them, the pup having a previous traumatic experience with humans and was hesitant to meet them. Eventually one day the pup decides that Lucas wasn't like the animal control officers, he was different, so one day while they were leaving the property she ran towards Lucas and Olivia and jumped in Lucas's arm who was mesmerized by her looks. He named the pup Bella and decided to take her home with him to his mother Terri's (Ashley Judd) company.

Terri was worried in the beginning as they weren't allowed to keep pets on their property but eventually came around to keep her. Bella was an optimistic and energetic dog, she always waited for Lucas to come back from the hospital as he was an aspiring medical student and loved to play various games with him, chew his boots, and go to the park in the snow but most importantly waited for that one small slice of cheese which he gave her for being a good dog. Years pass by and Bella is no longer a pup but a full-grown dog whose life is finally on track but she didn't know what was coming for her.



One day the family finds themselves with a notice from the landowner of their house that he was going to visit them, knowing that they are in breach of the no-pet contract. Lucas decided to take Bella to his hospital and kept her in a store room telling her to keep quiet, Bella being an ecstatic dog barked loudly only to be discovered by one of the employees who took her to the war veterans, Lucas being terrified that he is in trouble came in for a surprise, they loved her.

Günter Beckenbauer (Brian Markinson) was a new neighbour of Lucas who was going to build his property in the construction area and in order to do that he was going to demolish the area. Lucas knew that the cat family lived there and got into a verbal discord between him and Günter in order to stop the demolition in which Olivia threatened to involve officials in this matter and delayed the construction.

Gunter called animal control to Lucas's home and classified Bella as dangerous and warned him that actions can be taken if she is seen outside. As the story progressed she is finally caught! Lucas gets her out and gets a warning that if she is found again by the officials they wouldn't be hesitant to get her euthanized. Lucas sends her to Olivia's relatives in New Mexico until they find a new home for them which comes under the area where Bella is legal to keep.

Bella misses Lucas and Terri a lot even though the family took good care of her, That's when she realized that she has to go home herself to Lucas and thus embarks on a TWO YEARS AND FOUR HUNDRED MILES journey with the odds not in her favor to reunite with the humans she loved the most.....

Why does the audience love and cherish this movie?

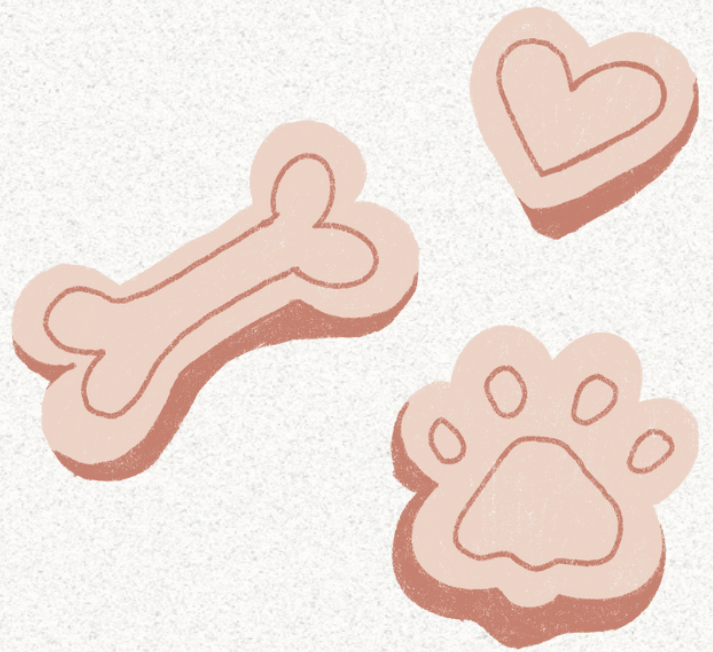
The movie is an emotional rollercoaster with moments that ached your heart to ones that made your heart melt with affection towards Bella. Despite the saddening events the movie still manages to land silly jokes from Bella's perspective. The whole movie was narrated by Bella which showed what she was thinking in all parts of the movie. It managed to collect 80.7 million dollars at the box office worldwide attracting audiences from all around the globe.



Bella's character development was spot on. She was goal-oriented, never gave up despite the circumstances, and most importantly never lost the "childish pup" essence despite being grown up. Ashley Judd and the war veterans at the hospital added those spice of emotions which showed how much they loved Bella. All of this didn't even compare with the chemistry between the lion cub and Bella in the movie which was of course adorable. Despite many positive factors which made this movie worth watching there were some things that could be better. There was the introduction of numerous minor characters like the pack of dogs who could have more roles like one of them could have accompanied Bella on her way home or had somewhat of an impact on Bella, and the scene where Bella was tied to the dead man could have been avoided as it didn't really add much to the movie and is something most viewers would have forgotten about.

In conclusion, it made its mark as one of the greatest dog-related movies even though movies like "Hachi: A Dog's Tale" still take the crown to be the best dog movie. It is recommended to watch with family especially with children to remind them to cherish and celebrate their family and their pets. I cried, you will too.

**I rate the movie a solid 7.5/10.**





# A Song Of Light

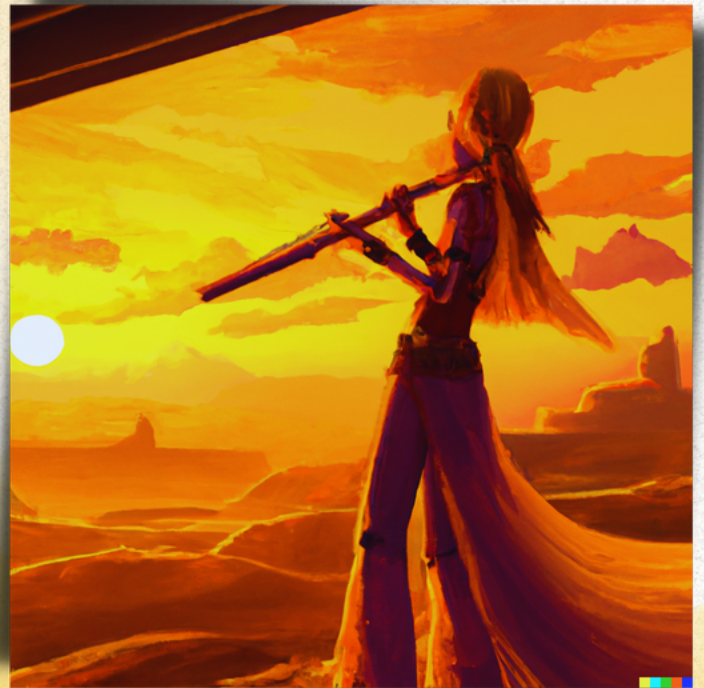
– Story by Ananya Vijn

The birth of light stirred the winds of life and movement. They moved through the landscape sifting, coalescing, and refining matter to create what we know today as our universe. Born from stardust, shaped by the cosmos, and destined by the Great Force, the universe served as the nursery for all that light would breed. This light was good and fair and beautiful.

Soon a mighty star emerged on the scene in all its splendorous brilliant magnificence. He chose to surround himself with smaller beings of rock and ice. These beings, captivated by the star's brilliance, circled him for all of eternity. He called these beings planets. His name was the Sun.

A planet, seemingly inconspicuous, was blessed with the light's gifts and bore life. Neither the fastest nor the largest, this planet was neither pristine nor bedecked with rings. She was, however, pragmatic. Though she understood the value in appreciating the Sun's gifts, she was alive to the dangers of immersing oneself in the greatness of what appeared to be brilliant and beautiful. It was this sensibility, absence of vanity, and rejection of the grandiose that singled her out in the eyes of the light as the ideal mother of civilization.

Soon she bore the first cells of life and within the blink of an eye, these cells arranged and mutated themselves into the race of Man. Sharp-witted, resourceful, and hopeful, they manipulated the Earth's gifts into an endless cornucopia to feed their ambition. In many ways, they were more closely related to the Sun than to the Earth. They swore allegiance to his power and grandeur rather than to the generosity of the Earth. They chased a light that would eventually reduce their world to ashes.





In the background of these events, grew an unobtrusive vessel of light. She began as a formation of rock, white and pristine. Though a child, she was wise beyond her years. Her size could not contain her ambition, she truly reached for the stars – one star in particular. Much in the way young children aping their parents, she learned to reflect the Sun's light. Though dim in comparison, she was proud of her power. Her name was Moon. Rumors of her sorcery pierced through the fabric of space and reached the notice of the Great Force.

Such a blatant violation of the Divine Order and flagrant disobedience of the Sun's supremacy was not to be looked at with mercy. She had dared to challenge an age-old supremacy established by her supposed betters. The Force rained hell upon the Moon with the ferocity of a sovereign insulted in his court. The scars of her anguish bore deep into her skin but they did not diminish her glory. They enhanced her resolve and she shone brighter than she ever had before. These craters and valleys became a symbol of her quiet resistance.

While roaming the galaxy, the Moon stumbled upon the greatest thing she had ever seen. Bathed in sheer golden light reflected like golden coins off of its pristine blue waters stood the Earth. Radiant with the glow of creation, she stood for everything the Moon had reached for a rightful place in the universe, a purpose, and belonging. The Earth saw in the Moon all that she could never have.

She burned bright with the light of defiance, of rebellion and of an untamed wild. Unburdened with the weight of expectations, she flew freely through the Universe, a master of her own will. In this manner, they each reached for what they thought beyond their destiny and chose the other for their companion. Just as the Earth roamed the path of the Sun, the Moon too followed her in her pilgrimage, revolving around her in the same way.

She found acceptance among the planets and eventually the Sun. She grew especially fond of water and learned how to manipulate its tides and waves. Her sorcery went unpunished this time. Even Man came to worship her for illuminating impervious darkness and called her by many names.

Ballads were written in her honor. They were a celebration of love, creation, and of beauty. They honored her for her power and her untamed glory. She was a celebration of undying spirit and her own limitless potential. But more than that they were a celebration of light, of all that was fair, of all that was good, and all that was beautiful.





# A Taste of Freedom

– Review of 'Purple Hibiscus' by Bhavyaa Bihani

Purple Hibiscus is a heart-wrenching African-American fiction novel written by Chimamanda Ngochi Adichie. This book deals with multi-faceted and deep thoughts that shed light on several societal issues like religious oppression and domestic abuse.

The story revolves around a fifteen-year-old girl named Kambili who lives in an orthodox Igbo household along with her parents and brother. From the view of a bird she leads a very privileged life however once you come closer to her roots, it is evident that her elite lifestyle is drenched with tyrannical authority. Her extended family includes her Aunt Ifeoma, her children, and her paternal grandfather, all of whom she has limited interactions.

For a while, life seems to be monotonous yet unpredictable, until a sudden invasion from military coup forces both Kambili and her brother Jaja to stay at their Aunt's not-so-elite home.

The place seems foreign to them as it rings with laughter, conversations, and happiness, something they'd never been treated to before. This change in environment helps Kambili understand the difference between the sweet taste of freedom and family from the bitterness of maltreatment and subjugation. Now she must, with all her power, transform and break free from the shackles of despotism and celebrate finding her way around this cruel and vicious world.

This is one of the most realistic fictional books I've read recently. Dealing with several sensitive topics with extreme ease seems to be Adichie's forte. Her ability to bring out each character's perspectives by letting the readers enter their psyche shows what a capable writer she is.





One of the strong suits of this novel is its splendid and detailed characterization. The characters are successful in highlighting the sentiments that they were initially designed to emote without once making it seem unnecessary or unplanned. As a reader, you love the characters who need to be loved, you empathise with those who require it and you hate those who deserve it. This emphasizes another beauty in the style of writing which is extremely direct and is not regretful in its tone for portraying evil as it is. Furthermore, what makes writing more appealing is how easily the message and content can be interpreted and the author accomplishes this by using eloquent yet straightforward language and diction. Lastly, the craving for the perfect satisfying ending is what drives several readers such as myself to complete a book and it's safe to say that *Purple Hibiscus's* climax is as gratifying as one can get.

Despite this being Adichie's debut novel, there weren't many negatives that I could pin down. However, being 336 pages long, it did take its own time to reach the central plot hence giving the readers very little time to grasp what was happening towards the end. At times, it does feel like the writer is managing too many themes like politics, poverty, and discrimination at the same time without letting the readers breathe and rushing them into absorbing everything at once.

Taking the above points into account, I would rate this novel a solid 4.5 on 5. This type of genre is something that is required to educate people about the ugly side of society that they are actively a part of. Chimamanda Ngochi Adichie has beautifully woven this tale and showcased a caged bud developing into a sanguine and alluring flower through the medium of Kambili and has done it with utmost care.





# Do Traditions have a Shelf-life?

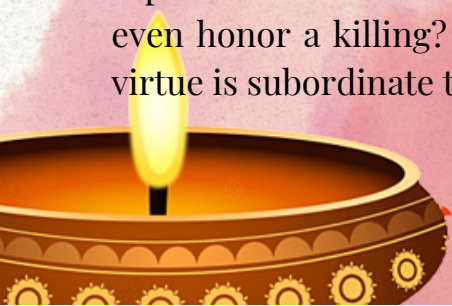
- Article by Mahika Bellaney & Swaraj Tolani

The celebration has always had a profound value in society despite the antiquity to which it hails, because of the feelings of joy and solidarity that it can stimulate in a community. As humans, we find a reason to celebrate anything and everything, be it good or bad. We celebrate birth, death, longevity, and even transience; But unfortunately, the term 'tradition' is used to justify the morally grey actions of certain figures our nation has idolized from time immemorial. So is it really worth it to celebrate such traditions?

Looking closely into tradition, there seems to be one principle matter in question—they are used as an excuse to protect certain cultures' customs, rights, and beliefs. This system of traditional values dismisses the diversity in the makeup of our country. Let us take one of the major mythical 'villains' in Hindu mythology as an example- Raavan. Our country celebrates the death of Raavan through Dussehra, with much glory, shrouded in a veil that is not very well stitched together, of "the victory of good over evil". But from an outsider's perspective, might it not be reprehensible that we commemorate or even honor a killing? Lately, it seems like virtue is subordinate to tradition.

Raavan wasn't a character with integrity by any means, but many thinkers have made rough comments on Ram's character as well. Translations of ancient text may insinuate that one of our lead gods was a chauvinist, proven by, in particular, the Sita Agnipravesam. The moral ambiguity of the fact that he wanted to test his wife's chastity is dishonorable. This is only one of many examples that one may pick up to question the validity of the celebration of some of our traditions.

The reasons behind traditions aren't always immoral, but the way they're celebrated can be questionable, to say the least. Let's take the example of the festival of 'Thaipusam', celebrated in the state of Tamil Nadu with enthusiasm. It venerates Kartikeya (the son of Shiva and Parvati), to be specific the receiving of his lance that helped him destroy a demon and his army. To honour a feat so intense, one can only assume that the celebrations would be just as extravagant. A 48 day fast is observed, on top of which, devotees pierce their bodies with hooks and lances. During the course of this festival, you can find people pulling objects, even heavy machinery like tractors with the hooks piercing their skin, claiming they don't feel pain.





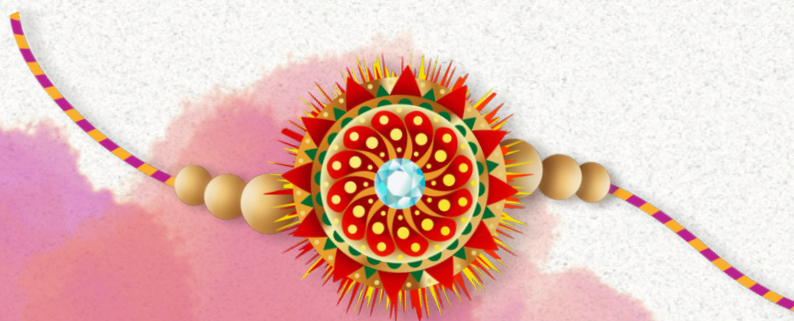
In these acts of devoted reverence, people forget to realise the repercussions of their rigidity.

A prime example of festivals embodying controversy is Karwa Chauth. An epitome of misogyny, it reached the height of its controversy on the internet just last year, with its notoriously materialistic subtleties and patriarchal nature reflected in several memes, posts, and articles. The festival celebrates the relationship between husband and wife. However, the traditions it follows portray the festival as a worship of one's husband and not one that celebrates shared love. The wife is made to fast the entire day so that when the husband comes home from work, he can feed her the first bite and sip of water in her day. This restriction is not put on the husband and he is free to eat throughout the day during the festival. In a much older and simpler society where men worked and women stayed at home and took on a more nurturing role in the household, the husband not having to fast makes sense. However, with time society has evolved and changed its value systems thereby making the traditions of Karwa Chauth outdated and misogynistic as per today's standards.

This is similar to another festival known as "Raksha Bandhan." This festival also celebrates a relationship but one of a brother and sister. The main tradition involves the sister tying a thread around her brother's wrist. The thread acts as a symbol of a promise the brother makes to his sister to always protect her.

Meanwhile, the brother gives a gift to his sister. This tradition builds on the idea that women cannot protect themselves and that men do not need protection, which binds both parties by societal roles.

This is not to say that our traditions should be disregarded, rather they should evolve with the times. These instances suggest that conflict need not be an unnecessary byproduct of practicing traditions. On the contrary, they should coalesce those involved. Traditions are a double-edged sword, it is your choice if you want to dip it in the poison of ignorance or the nectar of cognizance. The idea of traditions evolving is not a novelty by any means. Take the example of "Diwali." The festival of lights never implemented the usage of firecrackers in its initial days, naturally, they didn't exist. In recent times, the government imposed a ban on firecrackers during the festival in multiple states across the country. This proves that traditions can and should evolve with societal progression and align with the value systems set in place.





# Dodha Barfi

-Recipe by Jaye Kapoor

## Ingredients (Per 10 Serving):

- 200 grams Ghee Mawa
- 100 grams Jaggery
- 1/2 Cup Water
- 1/2 Tablespoon Cardamom Powder
- 2 Tablespoon Milk Powder

## Step-by-Step Instructions For making the Marvellous Dodha Barfi:

- 1) Take a pan, put it on flame, and add 100 grams of Jaggery and 1/2 cup Water. Stir it from time - to - time till they both mix and make syrup.
- 2) After the syrup is created, keep the pan aside and turn off the flame.
- 3) Now, take another pan and put it on a flame and add 200 gms of Ghee Mawa to it and roast it for a time.
- 4) After it is roasted slightly, add 1/2 tsp of Cardamom Powder and mix it well and evenly.
- 5) After mixing these ingredients, add the Syrup we made at the start of the procedure, and mix well.
- 6) After adding and mixing the syrup, now we add and mix 2 tbsp of Milk powder in it as well.
- 7) Leave the mixture for a while until the boil comes in.
- 8) Now we take a tray, and grease it with ghee so it doesn't stick to the tray.
- 9) Pour the mixture inside the tray and spread well
- 10) Now, Jazz up the mixture with some freshly cut dry fruits so that an extraordinary taste comes in place.
- 11) Let it be there and leave it for at least 1.5 hrs.
- 12) After the time limit, Cut it into your desired shape.
- 13) Now the marvelous Dodha Barfi is ready to be served.





# Trivia Time



**1. Santa Claus is associated with Christmas. Which one is NOT his real name?**

- A. Saint Nicholas
- B. Kris Kingle
- C. SinterKlaas
- D. Saint Patrick

**2. It is one of the greatest French holidays!**

- A. Bastille Day
- B. D-Day
- C. Napoleon's Day
- D. Labor Day



**3. In the past, children would go asking for this treat on Halloween...**

- A. Lollipops
- B. Chocolate Chip Cookies
- C. Soul cakes
- D. Apple Pies



**4. In this festival, people run with the bulls through the city streets.**

- A. La Tomatina, Buñol, Spain
- B. Cinco de Mayo, Mexico
- C. San Fermín, Pamplona, Spain
- D. Fiesta de Santa Cecilia, Mexico City, Mexico



**5. What are these people celebrating in the image above?**

- A. El Dia de Los Muertos
- B. Carnival
- C. Halloween
- D. Mardi Gras



**6. Why are these people all dressed up in costumes?**

- A. For a play
- B. To celebrate carnival in Venice.
- C. It's an opera.
- D. They are crazy people.



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