


The Curse of Edenshire
An article by Neelabh Kashyap
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THIS WEEK'S
THE
QUARANTINE
BOOKLIST

Featuring:
Pride and Prejudice
Going Solo
On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous
The Book Thief



OUTPOST

Is QUAD the reason for China's good behavior?



-Trinayana Saikia,, XII

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue has four very powerful countries India, Australia, Japan and the United States. It was formed in 2004 after the Indian Ocean tsunami, when these countries joined forces in an informal alliance to collaborate on disaster relief efforts. Ever since it's conception the QUAD has been controversial. Many proponents think the QUAD is a fledgling Alliance with the potential to form an alliance akin to an 'Asian NATO'. With its one-party state, China is seen as a threat to liberal and democratic values that the four countries share. China's foreign minister believes that the QUAD was formed to conspire against them as an 'anti-China' front. They think it is a strategic groupism that will play an important role in world politics and ensure that 'China retains its proper place in the world'. There is no denying that the Quad was constituted to primarily counter China militarily and diplomatically in the South China Sea. The countries do not specifically mention China, but their words and actions suggest a willing and capable coalition seeking to maintain a favourable balance of power, deter Chinese aggression and other negative behaviour, and maintain a rules-based order that they believe a rising China is challenging through its actions. The QUAD has also faced major criticism regarding

their level of engagement and effectiveness. There is a perpetual debate on between those who believe that the Quad is doing too much and those who believe it is doing too little. The truth however is that much of the Quad's plans are still unclear. Beyond the Quad itself, the four constituents have been strengthening their bilateral ties over the last few years. This is where the definitive question comes in "Does India really need the QUAD?" The irony lies in the fact that Modi is attempting to create a more homogeneous society and a more centralised state, putting the country's federal system and pluralistic character in jeopardy, turning India into something akin to China. The truth is that most Indians, including political leaders of all stripes, are more accommodating of China's autocratic governance model than the Western stereotype of India as the world's largest democracy. As a result, supporting almost unwittingly China's ideology, which is completely contrary to the QUADS. It is too soon to say whether the Quad will achieve its unstated goal: stopping an authoritarian China from becoming Asia's undisputed hegemon. It must however first ascertain its goal and not keep it hidden under vague promises.

Illustration: Shrutika Parajuli, XI

Gender Creative Parenting

-Chinmoy Tamuli, XI

There is no concrete term that defines the way a child chooses to be gender creative, it is because being creative is the core reason why this form of parenting is chosen for children who wish to break through the social boundaries put around them according to the sex they are born with. It is the next progressive step into promoting gender equality and freedom to accept and exist beyond the stereotypical gender restrictions. Gender creative parents do not influence a child's tendencies to behave in a more masculine or feminine manner.

In fact, a child and their gender-bending freely allowed to explore without being

Gender creativity is very often between masculine and feminine, are blamed for not recognising

What such a parenting does eliminate for their children,

for girls" or "that's not for taught that everything is

that the child is addressed as pronoun till the time they

figure which gender they extremely empowering in

girls are still discouraged government bodies while

playing with dolls and queer estranged from their families.

Children fare much better in are accepted for who they are and

and others for what they are. The youth carry throughout their lives

families and friends. Gender creative parents society will be encouraging nor will they find

They themselves stand to face ridicule if not contempt for their way of life. The strength and faith that they gift their children however is worth every bit of fighting set prejudices. Society must evolve with time for people

are changing and their own expectations of themselves and the world around is shifting. Very soon it will no longer be about the acceptance of the majority but merely adapting to swiftly changing precedence. Gender creative

parents equip their children with the strength of heart and mind to change and grow with the world they live in.



Illustration: Remeeya Mithi

inclinations are encouraged and they are confined to any one specific gender.

misunderstood as being caught and gender creative patents

societal gender boundaries. however is that they

phrases like "that's not boys.", rather they are

for everybody. The fact "they", a gender neutral

are mature enough to wish to belong to is

today's context, where from running for student

boys are discouraged from or trans youth become

environments where they are taught to accept themselves

negativity that queer and trans can be mitigated by supportive

also understand that not everyone in such ways of bringing up children, acceptable.

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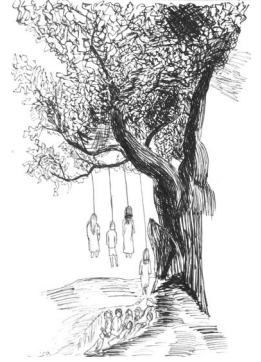
parents equip their children with the strength of heart and mind to change and grow with the world they live in.

Illustration: A. Jitani, P. Kasera, M.Khemani, IX



The Curse of Edenshire

-Neelabh Kashyap, XII



*“Kill the farmer, and kill the soldier; Kill the saint, and kill the sinner;
Kill the peasant who hasn’t paid his taxes, Kill the noble who in his keep, relaxes.
Kill the princess, and kill the knight; Kill the foetus that is yet to see light;
Kill the king, and kill his queens; Kill the orphan, and kill the twins.”*

An ocean of golden lilies seemed to extend into the horizon, swaying lightly to a wind that brought along with it the unmistakable smell of death and famine. The bard stood atop a small hill, clad in garbs akin to the moonless night; and gazed down at the scenery that unfolded before his eyes with indifference, as if he was a higher existence and everything else was beneath him. He held in his hands a lute made of sprucewood, strumming with his bony fingers a set of chords from the Major Pentatonic scale – a bright and ebullient scale to be singing such grave lyrics in. A rucksack was slung over his back, squirming from time to time as if it were alive. His eyes slowly moved away from the stretch of golden lilies and fell on a castle-town eastwards – he had found his next destination.

As he walked through the large stone gates and entered the castle-town of Edenshire, he was welcomed by the sight of death juxtaposed with life. Torches and lamps illuminated the lively streets, under the glow of which, danced the shadows of the townspeople. In the middle of the square stood tall gallows from which dozens of corpses hung on rotting ropes of hemp; directly below was a cesspit filled with corpses that the ropes could hold no more. Beside that was a stake with charred bodies and remains of straw lying around it. The stench was overwhelming.

“Dat,” a man standing beside him, who had noticed the bard staring intently at the burnt piece of wood, spoke up, “is w’ere the witchis were bornt lost noight. Rewmer has it dat it is becose of dem witchis dat the sickniss is spreading.” “And the ones in the gallows?” asked the bard. “Peopol dat caime in toch with dem witchis. Now that awl of dem a’re gone, the sickniss will gow away too.” “I see,” the bard said no more and turned away from the grisly sight, making his way towards a noisy tavern.

*“Kill the merchant, and kill his mule; Kill the jester, and kill the fool;
Kill the alchemist who is brewing his herbs, Kill the witch who has brought this curse.
Kill the lover, and kill the poet; Kill the virgin, and kill the harlot;
Kill the clergy, and kill the laity; Kill the judge, executioner and jury.”*

He was greeted by a merry sight as he stepped into the tavern – gossips flying everywhere, people chugging down flagons of mead with rye bread, seemingly unaffected by the stench of the corpses and the flies hovering just metres away from them. The bard positioned himself in a corner and pricked his ears, listening for rumours, while pretending to tune his lyre.

“Have you heard of the Saviour?” “He is called by many names – The Scion of God, The Harbinger of Wheat and Wine, The Banisher of Illnesses and Diseases. It is said that the land that He has tread upon becomes fertile and arable, the land where He has sat down on bears fruit trees and wine orchards, and the land He has slept in is cured of all curses and maladies.” “I heard that He is making His way westwards?” “Ya reckon He’ll pass by our town?” “Course, He will. Aren’t we suffering from those damn witches’ curse?” “But didn’t we burn them down already? We should be alright – ”

“Interesting,” the bard felt that he had heard enough. “The Banisher of Illnesses and Sickneses, is it?” He chuckled lightly, got up from the corner and walked out of the tavern. He paused for a while near the town gate and glanced around, making sure nobody was looking at him. He then opened his rucksack and let out three black rats before walking out of the castle-town of Edenshire, heading eastwards.

Illustration: Danica Boro, XII



In Remembrance

MBG was a firebrand. Ask her for a suggestion and you would return with a blueprint of an idea along with ample resources and a promise of further help, should you need it. Mrs. Minaksshi Gogoi more popularly known as Baidew by the old and the new, the initiated and the non-initiated, joined AVS in 1995 and was amongst the very first batch of teachers who jointly planted the nahors that stand sentinel on the LOC today. She retired from AVS after a spectacular tenure of 26 years of service. Mrs. Gogoi was always full of stories ones that made you think, laugh, and wonder all at the same time. One would be taken aback to know that MBG who could translate verbatim English to Assamese to Bengali had taught herself the English language at AVS. Baidew did not merely promote Assamese culture she celebrated it in all its form. Adored by her students, she wore her attitude in style and was a trendsetter in everything she did. She lived her life Queen size and when asked to put up an Assamese theatre, she turned the exercise into an annual festival we remember as 'The Assamese Ballet'. She also shouldered the project of naming the avenues, and the main building structures at school from across the North East. Having fought cancer for 8 years, Baidew put the baton down on the 7th of October. Her life and times are best described by her son, alumni Mr. Abhinav Gogoi in the words of Dylan Thomas, " Do not go gentle into that good night, Old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of the light." Baidew now looks at us from above nestled in between the clouds in the startling blue sky of AVS and she whispers, 'I'm watching, okay?'



Illustration: Eloziini Senachena

The Balancing Game



The Assam Valley School, Business Conclave

-Yashodhara Mahanta, XI

The Commerce Department of the Assam Valley School hosted its first Business Conclave on the 28th of September 2021 which showcased young minds putting up their ideas for a business model. It had six teams where two were individually presented. The Conclave had invited two esteemed entrepreneurs, Mr. Ayush Goenka and Mr. Shivam Agarwal. Mr. Goenka is the founder of 'Soxytoes', a homegrown direct to consumer brand specializing in quirky and unique socks. Mr. Shivam Agarwal is the CEO of 'House of Knots', a luxury designer and handmade carpet brand. The Headmaster graced the Conclave with his presence, motivating the young minds and eagerly looking forward to their ideas. After the Headmaster declared the Conclave open, the six teams presented their ideas for a business venture, all of which were unique in sync with need for the times. The winner was Team E with a whopping 186 points. Their idea for a 'Tyre waste system in cyclone prone areas' won the title of 'Best Business Model' in the competition. The efforts of Team A and Team F which included individual presentation by Soham and Madhurjya, of classes 7 and 8 respectively found special mention. The Conclave was organized by Hiyaneijemmy Das and Yashodhara Mahanta with the guidance and support of the Master-in-Charge Devesh Prajapati.

Inter-House Web Page Designing Competition (September 29, 2021)

Results at a glance:

1st - Jinari/ Manas
2nd - Subansiri/ Namdang
3rd - Bhoroli/ Lohit

AVS became a collaborator in the International Pedagogical Project "Reconnecting with your Culture (RWYC)" promoted by the EdA International Research Centre Esempi di Architettura and UNESCO University and Heritage. The project pursues the "Quality education" objectives of the UN 2030 agenda and promotes interdisciplinary and invites all disciplines to question the value of culture. A video on the above has been shared with the global School Community today on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti.

Sports

Jumping Jack Challenge for Lower School (September 25, 2021)

The Sports Department organized a "Jumping Jack Challenge" on September 25, 2021 on the virtual platform. A total of 55 students took part in the challenge.

Results at a glance:

Category 1: Girls' - Class 5 & 6

1st: Twesha Agarwal
2nd: Adrika Dey

Category 1: Boys' - Classes 5 & 6

1st: Arnab Agarwal
2nd: Ronit Bora
3rd: Benjamin MacDonald

Category 2: Girls' - Classes 7 & 8

1st: Sneha Ngangom
2nd: Monsum Chutia
3rd: Urvashi Bora

Category 2: Boys' - Classes 7 & 8

1st: Adhyan Pareek
2nd: Dhruv Prithani & Hrishant Deb

THE OUTPOST

Politics brews between murder and mayhem this time in Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh as a mob of so-called farmers brutally beat four people to death forcing the Supreme Court to intervene. Priyanka Gandhi grabs a broom as well as headlines making pundits claim it to be her 'Belchi' moment. China violates Taiwan's airspace for the 700th time making a possible war with the island country loom closer. The recent archeological discovery in Tamil Nadu makes the civilizational history of the Dravidian state older by 300 years giving yet another dimension to the Indian narrative and its rich heritage.



Illustration: Elonzini Senachenaw

Ripple #169

-Kekhriesino Meyase, XI

Everytime I look back, he's
getting closer,
The man in the mask is
edging nearer.
I run with all my might but I
stumble and fall,
The man in the mask was
my husband all along.

The Quarantine Readlist

Need help finding a gem amidst a sea of monotony? Grab a cup of coffee or tea and dive into the world of these enthralling stories, here is a list of some of our suggestions:

Pride and Prejudice- Written by Jane Austen, this novel tells the story of Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet, as the two very different characters figure their way through their differences and feelings.

Going Solo- Written in an easy-to-read, funny, and entertaining style, Roald Dahl talks about his life as a worker in Africa, a pilot in WW2, and how he became the famous writer he is today.

On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous- Written by Ocean Vuong, this book is a letter from a son, to a mother who cannot read. The novel explores race, class, masculinity, and being an immigrant in the US.

The Book Thief- A book by Markus Zusak, it follows young orphan Liesel in Nazi Germany. Later, her family hides a Jew which changes the course of her life.

Keep It Reel!

Fond memories



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