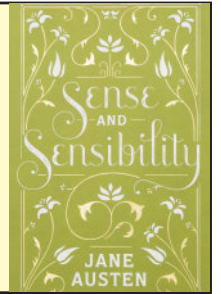


Little Mila

An article by Anukriti Kashyap, X

The Readlist

Featuring:
One Hundred Years Of Solitude
Catch 22
The Firm
Sense and Sensibility



The Sri Lanka Crisis

-Donovan Figg, XII

India now has a debt-riddled neighbor to its north-west as well as to its south-east. Whatever next? For several long months, Sri Lankan citizens have stood in line to buy fuel, food, and medicines. Most things in Sri Lanka are now paid for in cold, hard cash, because the country's ATMs simply don't have any more money to dispense. The island nation of Sri Lanka is facing the same credit crunch on a much larger, and much more overbearing scale than us: the country has no money to buy anything, and has also not applied for foreign aid, despite the immediate need for the same. Sri Lanka's President is Gotabaya Rajapaksa. His brother, Percy Mahinda Rajapaksa, is the Prime Minister and former President. One of Percy Rajapaksa's sons, Namal Rajapaksa, is also the sports minister for Sri Lanka. And everyone was elected democratically - what are the odds? So what's wrong with Sri Lanka? Lots. Heightening inflation, a mountain of external debt, completely depleted foreign currency reserves, a currency that has been devalued by the world bank; Sri Lanka is a classic example of all that can go wrong with the economy of a country. In fact, I'd go so far as to call Sri Lanka the Venezuela of Asia with the amount of problems that it is facing. The entire (democratically appointed) cabinet has resigned, the finance minister is out on his ear, and the wolves are at the President's door, calling for his resignation. A kilogram of rice costs 500 Sri Lankan rupees and the same amount of sugar costs 290 rupees. When converted, this is approximately INR 130 and INR 75. Troops are deployed

at state-run fuel stations to help in distribution. To compound matters, the country now has an average daily rolling power-cut of seven hours in the heat of summer. The administration recently had to cancel the school examinations due to a shortage of ink and paper, with inflation climbing to 16%, and the debt to GDP ratio hitting 130% in late 2021. The main reason for the island nation's plight is the depletion of its forex reserves. The import-dependent country has only USD 1.5 Bn. in reserves, leaving it stranded high, dry, hungry, and thirsty, unable to import even basic necessities. Last week, an unprecedented number of power-cuts and extreme rationing led to a wave of protestors breaking a military-enforced curfew and moving through the streets, demanding the president's resignation. The entire cabinet resigned, but in a move that is straight out of the Dictator's handbook, President Rajapaksa decided to maintain his office, as did his brother Percy. To help its neighbor, India has offered a USD 1 Bn. credit line for food and medicines, and a USD 500 Mn. credit line to buy petroleum products. Refugees from Lanka have begun reaching Tamilian shores, and more are expected to arrive in the coming months. It remains to be seen how the government of Sri Lanka will handle the situation, because simply changing the chief of the Central Bank is unlikely to solve the myriad problems faced by the debt-strapped country.

The good in the bad

-Aakanksha Kumar, X

I look at the stars
when my soul is starved by loneliness
for those glorious twinkling objects
reflect calmness and sobriety
enough to put my lonely heart at ease
But I looked at the stars
from a different angle today
the angle I usually dismissed,
that even stars have a dark side
that practically melts anything within its reach
Like a gas ball of fire,
The rage, the agony, the rave, the suffering
that built a storm within.
Yet after all these years,
the stars never failed to rest my heart at ease
I feel my heart's at ease today
for I realised that even the darkest of things
have something to teach.
For today, the stars have taught me to learn
from the storm that resides within me
and be stars in other people's life
and never ever fail
at putting their heart at ease.

The wisteria hates you

-Tasmin Ahmed, X

The wisteria hates you.
Your opal coloured eyes with shining water tore her
apart,
And strangled her.
She was your wisteria at heart,
But her mind was a dandelion.
You blew her away and she
Landed in a far away land.
The land that hugged her with its open heart.
'Oh do be a dandelion',
She fell in love with herself, for the first time
Of eternity.

I want to be a child again

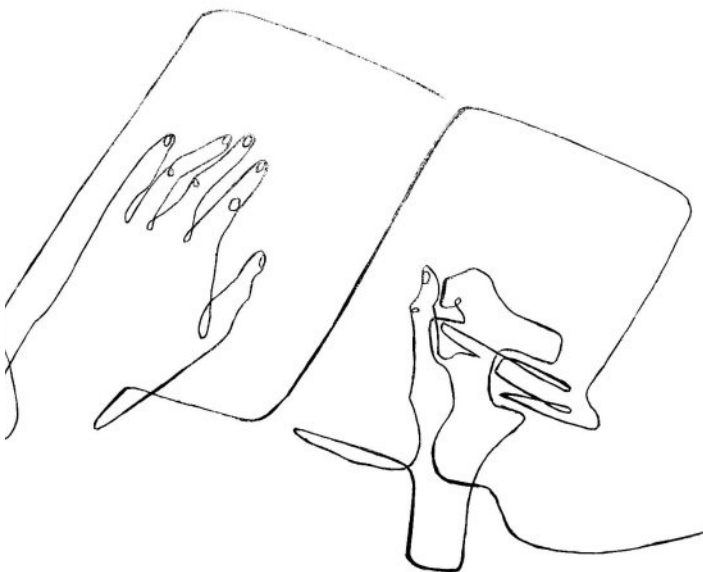
-Lavanya Adhikari, X

I want to be a child again,
Not that I am not one anymore,
It's just not how it used to be.

No more are the chirping of birds exciting,
No more does the wind make me run,
No more do the flirting butterflies make me want to
fly.

I wish I never knew red and green,
To be able to do things out of the blue,
And not be ashamed to do it wrong,
Because I never knew what's right and wrong.
I wish I were innocent again,
So I hadn't a clue that life is short.

I want to be a child again,
To live that moment once again,
To run even faster behind those butterflies,
To try and catch those falling leaves.
Oh! Those times, I wish I knew,
That I can never be a child again.





Little Mila

A FOLKLORE FEATURE

-Anukriti Kashyap, X

In western Siberia was a small village no bigger than a tiny speck on the map. There lived around 400 people- dirt poor, victims of famine, disease, and death. The Tsar, miles away in his palace, seemed indifferent to his subjects.

Among the old, worn-down huts was the worst hut of them all with its walls half torn, barely giving shelter from the harsh cold winter. There lived a woman, her husband and her two children. Her husband turned to alcohol unable to handle constant poverty. His wife, seeing her husband in such a state, began to lose hope. Yet, she blocked out the surrounding calamities and remained a devoted wife and mother. The youngest girl, aged nine, was Mila- selfless and caring. Her appearance was dusky and frail compared to her brother and father who were fed whatever little food their mother could obtain and cook, leaving Mila with little to no food. Mila's father constantly tried to kick her out of the house saying, "We have barely for ourselves, let alone for the dusky rat whom I feel ashamed calling my daughter. Let the winds take her, she is no good!"

One day, the eldest son fell hopelessly sick and everyone in the family lay beside him wailing, while his pale body refused to stop shivering. Villagers around tried to offer help but being poor themselves, all they could now do was stand beside the family as death awaited their son. Mila, seeing her brother's state, ran to the pine forest in desperation. Her mother tried to stop her but could not keep up. The cloak of night arrived and eerie voices crept through the

leafless pine trees.

This was a heralding for Death, who was shocked to see little Mila all alone, her body looking no more than a pale corpse. Death knelt and asked, "What brings you here, little girl?" Mila replied in sobs about her dying brother.

Death shook his head, slashing through the winds, "Nobody can escape death, it is the one common destiny for everything living." Tears rolled down Mila's glass-like face. Death knew not what to do beyond explaining the bitter truth, and decided to take her home.

Once there, Death couldn't help but stare at the boy losing the battle for his life. With a heavy heart- for indeed, Death had a heart too- he turned to Mila, "I can fulfill your wish, but the world mandates a life for a life." Mila's voice was frozen in her throat, not out of fear, but simply, the bitter Siberian cold.

Swift winds blew and wolves howled, and just as Death had arrived, Death departed; this time with little Mila. The villagers and her family seemed to have been struck by Death too, and stood as still as stone. Her father shed a single tear, shocked, paralysed by regret. With dawn and the first beam of sunlight, the son gained consciousness; his body gleaming in the sunlight filtering through the tattered walls. The family hugged him and cried tears of happiness. How bittersweet it all felt. Ever since then, those who believed in Life as they did Death, whispered a prayer at dawn to Mila, the girl whose love helped her face Death.

bihu celebrations around campus

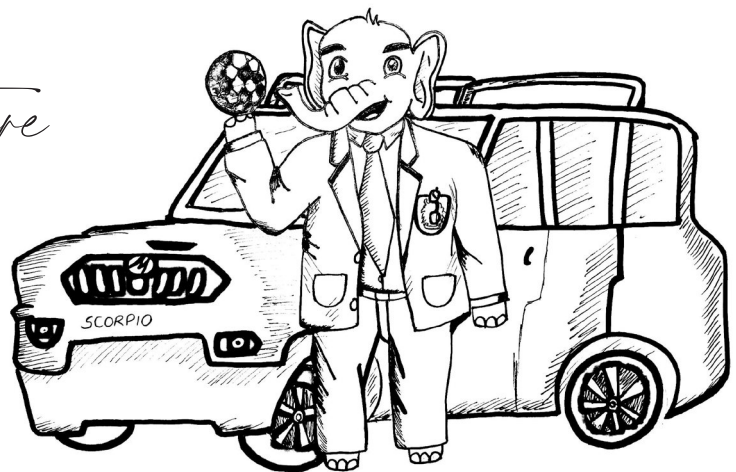


Photo Credits: Ms Ishita Malhotra, Mr Tapash Das & Raghav Agarwal

Campus Caricature

Scorpio Files

-Migam Angu, XII



in memoriam

A quiet person, with a beatific smile and a heart that was generous to all who knew him, Arunangshu Chowdhury joined The Assam Valley School in 2005. Over the 17 years at AVS, Mr. Chowdhury grew as a professional to becoming Manager, Purchase and Stores. The school community saw him settle here with his young wife and become proud parents. A man of few words, his den at the administrative block was the go-to-place for all last moment must haves. His store was the source of endless costumes and pieces that came together to becoming beautiful sets. The two years of the pandemic saw Mr. Chowdhury step out of his quiet corner and play a pivotal role working round the clock to ensure that the school community was well- provided for despite the lock down. His ability to rustle up treats at the drop of a hat was legendary. Despite being a shy person, Mr. Chowdhury would be the first person to meet and greet new comers to AVS. He made friends easily and kept them for life. Mr. Chowdhury left us for his heavenly abode on the 20th of April, 2022. His association with AVS remains a collection of memories and friendships, one that will forever be remembered with deep fondness and he will remain etched in our hearts as ‘Arunangshu da’.



The only problem Arunangshu had, was his inability to say 'No' to anyone. His positivity, his smiling face, his helping nature will always be remembered. We had been working together in the Accounts and Stores family since 1st April 2005 and today we have lost one of our family members. Dear Arun, I simply don't know what to write about you. My words are insufficient to explain all that you are. You are a great soul. Please keep smiling wherever you are.

Love you ever,
Parag Goswami.

THE OUTPOST

After the French Presidential debate, it becomes apparent that Le Pen is yet to trump the magnetic Macron. Rocket replies ensue in Israel while responsibility remains obscure. British PM Boris Johnson tours India in a bid to improve bilateral relations while Westminster feasts on “Partygate” back home. Ousted Imran Khan is replaced by Shehbaz Sharif, brother of former PM Nawaz Sharif. Fiery protests, fistfights between politicians and angry citizens form the backdrop of this precarious change of guard. The question of religion colours the bulldozer encroachment turned political slugfest incident in Jahangirpuri even as the Supreme Court assesses the affair.



Illustration: Selene Epao, IX & Gaurisha Saitia, IX

Ripple #184

-Varsha Rajkumari, XII

*There was something
Amidst the intricate veils of
disguise.
Small and tiny,
almost invisible to the eye.
It was the fire I held within
They called it my pride,
I called it freedom.*

The Readlist

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE: The themes of love, lust, revolution, the morbid certainty of death, war, and more make this book by Gabriel Marquez, a rich Chronicle of the tragic comedy of human life.

CATCH 22: A satire on the situations of people in world war 2, this historic novel by Joseph Heller is often cited as being one of the great historical works of the 20th century,

THE FIRM: A book by John Grisham, it revolves around a young lawyer who uncovers an international conspiracy that will get him killed, unless he does something, quick.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY: Written by Jane Austen, it follows the three Dashwood sisters as they must move with their widowed mother from the estate on which they grew up, Norland Park, and all the trials and tribulations of a woman's life in Elizabethan England.

Keep It Reel!

Enigmas

-Shrey Modi, XII



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