

THE GHOUL DIARIES !

Litscape

By Ellipsis-The English and
Cultural Studies Association, CHRIST (Deemed to be University),
Bannerghatta Road Campus

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FOREWORD



October is here and so are the early winter chills and two things that always manage to make the October nights better are warm cups of coffee and creepy ghost stories. So dust those old horror tales that your grandparents whispered to you at night and fish the old forgotten Indian folklores out. This month, Litscape brings you those little campfire stories with the aftertaste of burnt marshmallows and quiet woods, spooky art pieces and pictures that will give us Goosebumps, knocking on our doors, so make sure to let them in!

- Litscape Heads

Harshita Rai & Nirmita Bhattacharya





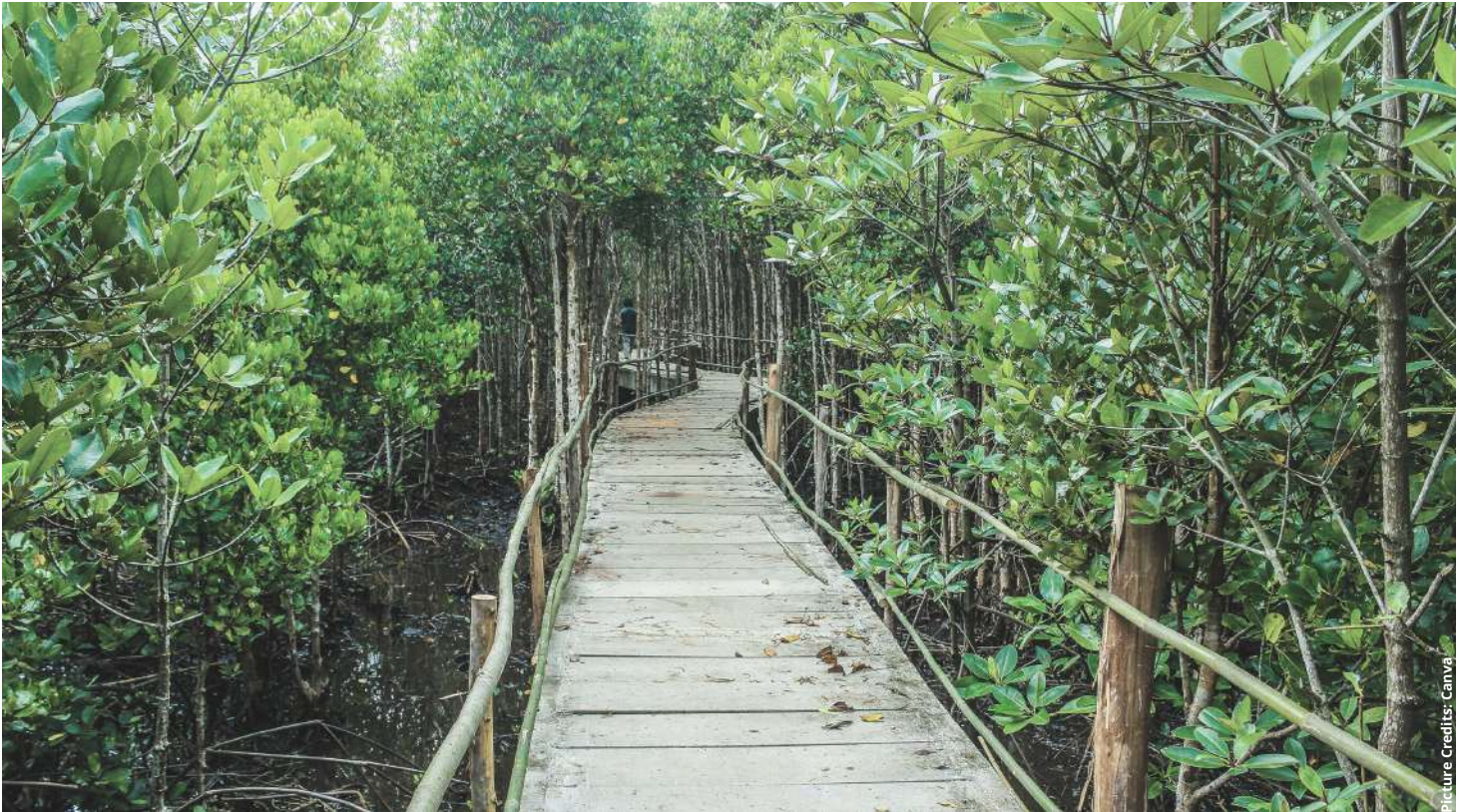
Picture Credits: Canva

Picture Credits: Pinterest

SCRIBBLER



CAREFUL WHO YOU FOLLOW



MEGAN PEREIRA
2020648
3BBAF

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*His small
feet sink
into wet
mud, as he
wonders,
where am I
being led
to?*

It was a moonlit midsummer's night as the church bells clanged to the toll of midnight & the owls hooted, spotting their prey. Homeward, he quietly slipped down the listless streets, when he was suddenly met by an apparition so grotesquely strange, he was both transfixed & horrified. There stood a young lady in a flowing white saree, her skin deathly pale, her lips stained cherry wine & her long hair velvet black. She looked like death's bride. But her eyes. Those scared him the most. For they were white orbs of nothingness that gleamed in the menacing moonlight. She pointed one long skeletal finger at the man & commenced chanting a spell in dialects no mortal had ever lived long enough to learn.

That's how most ghost stories begin, but not this one. For mine finds its origins in a true story, one passed on through generations, like a precious heirloom of gold or a treasured secret of olde. The story begins in a tiny village during the wee hours of the morning when dawn has yet to break & most are in blissful worldly slumber. A boy slowly awakens from his little cot on the verandah, where he sleeps to escape the summer night heat. The cause of his disturbed slumber, a little black cat with eyes of emerald green, pawing at his hair, urging him to awaken.

The cat jumps off the cot & saunters away into the darkness, towards the sugarcane fields that surround the village. The animal looks back at the boy, its eyes glittering, reflecting the pale moonlight like magical fairy lights. It inclines its feline head & beckons.

Follow.

Follow.

The boy is spellbound. His limbs move of their own volition & he begins following the cat into the eerie blackness. His eyes adjust to the semi-darkness as he marks the outline of his beastly escort.

He pauses.

His small feet sink into wet mud, as he wonders, where am I being led to?

He pauses again.

I should turn back, he says to himself. Papa will be worried.

As if sensing the boy's hesitation the animal looks back again. Its hypnotic eyes now glittering in shades of blue, like the waters of a pristine lagoon.

Follow.

Follow.

The boy is bewitched once more. Blindly following the creature to its unearthly destination, when the cat quickenes its pace & breaks into a run.

Wait.

Wait.

The boy thinks as he runs after the being.

He almost catches up with it when he hears a blood-curdling howl ripping through the stillness of the night. Where the cat once stood, there now is a crippled old man, dressed in a white dhoti. His back is bent & he leans heavily on a twisted walking stick.

"Go home, boy", he whispers in an ancient broken voice & disappears as quickly as he had appeared.

The boy is befuddled by all he has seen & retraces his steps to his cot on the verandah, deciding to investigate the puzzling occurrences the following morning.

In the bright light of day, the boy revisits the field he had been led to. And to his utter dread, he glimpses a gaping open well, not five steps from where he had followed the apparition the previous night. He refuses to consider what might have happened if the old man had not intervened, for he had heard many ghastly tales of villagers being drowned in the same well.

He never slept on the verandah again.

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THE CALL TO DARK



VAISHNAVI REDDY
2030264
3CEP-B

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*The air was
strangely tense,
taut as a
stretched string,
restless as a
drawn breath
waiting to be
released.*

Her grandparents had always loved stories.

Enot be able to stop. The room was dark. Unbearably so. It was quiet, too. Eerily quiet, without the familiar, constant hum of traffic and life filtering in through the window. Instead, her window opened out into the field, and the smell of damp earth and manure came rolling through in incessant waves, a scent so potent she could practically taste it on her tongue. It was then that she heard it, something whispered earnestly, almost desperately.

Her name.

It was her grandmother's voice, calling out. As she teetered on the boundary between dreams and reality, she wondered if her mind was playing tricks on her. Her grandmother slept early and woke early, and wouldn't be awake at this time, when midnight was long gone. So, she waited. If her grandmother needed her, she would call for her again.

She sat up in bed, careful not to cry out and break the silence that shrouded the house. The air was strangely tense, taut as a stretched string, restless as a drawn breath waiting to be released. Then, she heard it again, clearer and more forceful yet, at the same time, soft and coaxing. Her muscles relaxed all at once, as if freed from some invisible pressure. She felt warm, loved, needed. Something made her hesitate for a moment, a deep sense of wrongness settling in her bones. But the warmth was too tantalizing, the urgency in her grandmother's voice too great to be ignored.

So, she responded the second time. "Yes?" She asked, feeling as if something beyond her own brain had ordered her limbs to disentangle themselves from the sheets, to stand, to walk towards the door. "What happened?" "One of the wires came loose outside. I need your help," her grandmother's voice responded, but she could not see her, even as she squinted in the direction she heard the voice. "Your grandfather is sleeping."

"Where are you?" She asked in not more than a murmur. But her grandmother still heard her.

"I'm outside. Come outside, to me." The voice continued, and she did as she was bid, walking mechanically to the door without thinking twice. The wires could mean only one thing—the wires of the fence that bound the fields. If it wasn't fixed tonight, wild animals could enter the fields and destroy the crop. "Come to your grandmother." Her grandmother's voice had slipped almost into a song as she slid out the front door and into the night.

The moon hung high against the night's blue-black canvas, a gleaming, unobstructed crescent that turned the dark almost into day. And, yet, she still could not see her grandmother. A sudden sense of cold settled over her, as if she had been doused in icy water. At that moment, she knew something was very, very wrong. Her gut, her head, her heart all screamed at her in unison to turn away, to run, to go back inside. But she was frozen, paralyzed, immobile. "You answered my call." She heard her grandmother's voice from behind her, sickly sweet and dripping in cruel, gloating glee. When she turned around, it was not her grandmother she saw.

No, this was someone else. Something else. A woman, but not a woman. More a creature, a being. Its face was beautiful, with clear, unmarred skin that gleamed bronze in the moonlight and large, brown doe-like eyes that swam invitingly with joy. But where its mouth should have been was a wound, a gaping hole. A slit ran from cheek to cheek, dripping blood and something that looked dark and sticky as tar. She tried to run, and she tried to scream. She really did. But some strange force had planted her feet to the ground, and her throat refused to let forth any sound.

In her mind, there was only nothingness. The creature opened its mouth to smile, beckoning to her with its eyes. It was a warm inviting smile, one that told her it understood her fear, the terror that made her vision tunnel and her breaths come out in urgent pants. When its mouth opened, it seemed to swallow the creature's entire face. All she saw was blackness. All she could see was the pitch black emptiness of the creature's mouth as it reached for her, the mouth that had spoken in her grandmother's voice, that had coaxed her here so gently, so invitingly.

The mouth was all she saw as the creature's hands wrapped themselves around her throat, choking her, strangling her, wringing the last of her breath from her lips until she fell limp and unmoving into the creature's arms. That mouth would later descend upon her flesh, tear it from her bones and swallow it raw and bloody. The hands, funnily enough, were not the rotting, skeletal appendages from her imagination. They were lovely hands, really, with tapered fingers and steady palms that had masterfully wrapped around her slim neck, taking her breath, her life.

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THE FRIENDSHIP DRIVER



Picture Credits: Canva

DARSHANBIR SINGH NARULA

2033110

3ENGH

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They heard the sound of howling coming from all four sides and felt a strong, cold gust that was atypical for June.

Whilst investigating the death of a local bus driver, Gaurav Kapoor, a famous paranormal investigator of New Delhi along with his best friend and his co-worker, Vallabh, went to Kharanja, a small district in Uttar Pradesh, after people living there complained about seeing a bus in their dreams every night. Being a paranormal investigator, Gaurav had an EMF meter, a radioactive camera, and a strong infrared speaker to catch the slightest of noise made while investigating. They went to the bus depot, where it was said that the bus driver had spent most of his time either chatting with his friends or looking for travelers. Since there was a national bus strike that day, the bus station was empty, making it perfect for conducting an investigation.

They started placing the necessary equipment for the investigation and started exploring the bus stand. As they turned on their flashlight, they saw a distorted image of a person wearing a hat and brown clothes in front of them. Considering their occupation, this situation was quite normal for them so they ignored the figure and continued setting up the equipment.

After the set up was done, they started hearing strange noises of horns and wheels. They found this situation strange because before entering the bus depot, they had verified thrice it was a nationwide strike. They went towards the main gate, looking for a bus, but they were not able to find anything there, except a petrol can with the name “Bharat” written on it. When they went back to the place of investigation, they noticed something dark. Upon close analysis, they saw the word “Bharat” engraved on the floor with red color.

It was the first time they were facing these types of activities while carrying out a paranormal investigation. Since both Gaurav and Vallabh were determined, they ignored the situation this time as well and continued the exploration. They turned on the camera, followed by the EMF meter, and lastly, they turned on the radio to detect sounds of different frequencies. They started the investigation by asking a basic question. If anyone apart from them was here, it could tell them by making the three lights of the EMF meter glow. As they asked this question, they saw a slight change in the pattern of lights. Instead of the first light, the last light glowed, and eventually they also heard a voice on the radio, saying “leave me alone.” Ignoring the sentence, they started the second question “If you are here, what is your gender and what is your name?” As a reply, the light stopped blinking, and again, they heard a distorted voice saying, “you already saw my name twice today.” Hearing this, they looked towards the petrol can, which had “Indane” written on it, the name of the company instead of the name ‘Bharat’, which was written before.

This made Vallabh anxious and Gaurav saw sweat and tears running down his face. Gaurav, being a courageous person, continued the interrogation and asked the spirit or energy the silliest question of his life. The question went, “will you harm me and Vallabh in any way?” As he asked this question, all the lights on the EMF meter started blinking, with strange sounds of horns and wheels coming from the speaker they had installed. Further, they heard the sound of howling coming from all four sides and felt a strong, cold gust that was atypical for June. Experiencing this, they decided to leave that place as soon as possible. They started packing up the equipment and eventually left the place in a hurry. While driving away from the place, they saw that the fuel meter of their car was showing empty, even though they had filled up the fuel before traveling. While searching on the internet, they spotted a petrol pump 200 meters from their present location. It had an air-conditioned lounge as well so they decided to spend their night at that lounge because their home was about 300 kilometers from there. After driving for five minutes, they reached the petrol pump named “Bharat Petrol Pump.”

They stared at the name of the petrol pump for some time, but eventually, they ignored the name and asked the employee to fill their petrol tank.

While going inside the lounge to spend their night, they were asked to fill an entry register. Vallabh, in shock, had tears in his eyes as he filled the register. Seeing this, Gaurav pushed him and asked about the problem. Replying to this question, Vallabh just showed Gaurav the Entry register, which had only one name written on it, 'Bharat'. Seeing this, Gaurav was also taken aback. They ran towards their car and left the petrol station at that very moment. This was the first time that both of them were experiencing these types of situations while carrying out any paranormal investigation. They decided to go to their hometown directly, rather than stopping anywhere during the night. They drove for 4 hours straight and decided to change positions, with Vallabh in the driving seat and Gaurav in the front passenger seat who took images of the moon and stars because the sky was clear on that night.

While looking at the photos he had clicked, Gaurav saw that they had two moons in them, instead of one. Seeing this, Gaurav started sweating and rubbing his eyes. At that very moment, their car slowed beside a bus, which looked like it was a part of some big accident. Both Gaurav and Vallabh left the car to find the problem. At that point, their car stopped. After a few minutes, while trying the ignition, they came to know that the fuel meter was showing empty, but the range of the car was showing that the car could travel around 200 km more. Though it was strange, they ignored this instance and started looking for a petrol pump nearest to their present location yet again. The petrol pump that they found on google maps was around ten kilometers from their location and it was impossible for them to walk for ten kilometers, without water and food because both of them were exhausted. They tried looking for a taxi but they couldn't find one as they were on a deserted road at 3:45 A.M. While looking for useful things, they saw a filled petrol can lying beside the bus. Seeing this, they started dancing and celebrating, as if they had achieved something big. When they tried to pick up the can, they were on the verge of fainting, because the can had "Bharat" written on it. As the last option of their survival, they went inside the bus that was parked there after the accident.

They analyzed the bus from all four sides and found a brown-colored driver uniform lying inside the trunk of the bus. Ignoring the uniform that they found in the trunk, they continued looking for the clues and things that would help them reach a safe place as soon as possible. They found an ID card lying under a seat while searching. When they looked at the ID card, they found the name written on it as "Bharat". As they read the name aloud, all the red lights of the bus started blinking one by one and eventually, they heard the sound of the engine starting but the engine that had started was not of the bus. Instead, it was their car, which was parked beside the bus. Seeing this, they ran towards the main door of the bus, but only Vallabh was able to get down from the bus because the door closed automatically when Gaurav was getting down from the bus.



Picture Credits: Canva

Vallabh, who was now near the car, saw his chance and fled, leaving Gaurav behind in the bus alone. Gaurav saw his death coming in front of his eyes. He started looking at the ID card that they had found while searching for some clues and resources. As he sat down on the conductor's seat, he saw a figure forming on the driver's seat that looked like the same figure they had encountered while exploring the bus depot. The figure that he saw was now complete and it had the same face as the one in the ID card. Gaurav fainted at that very moment. In his dream, he was able to hear the answers to the questions that he had asked before clearly. With the answers, he also heard the sound of the conductor, saying "100 rupees per ticket, Kharanja to Delhi". Hearing this, Gaurav opened his eyes slowly and saw himself lying in his bedroom. Gaurav thought that the whole experience was part of a dream. He started his daily schedule, and decided to read the newspaper, where he saw the headline "Famous Paranormal Investigator, Gaurav and his best friend, Vallabh found dead near Bharat Petrol Pump."

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THE NIGHT-PASSENGERS



Picture Credits: Google Images

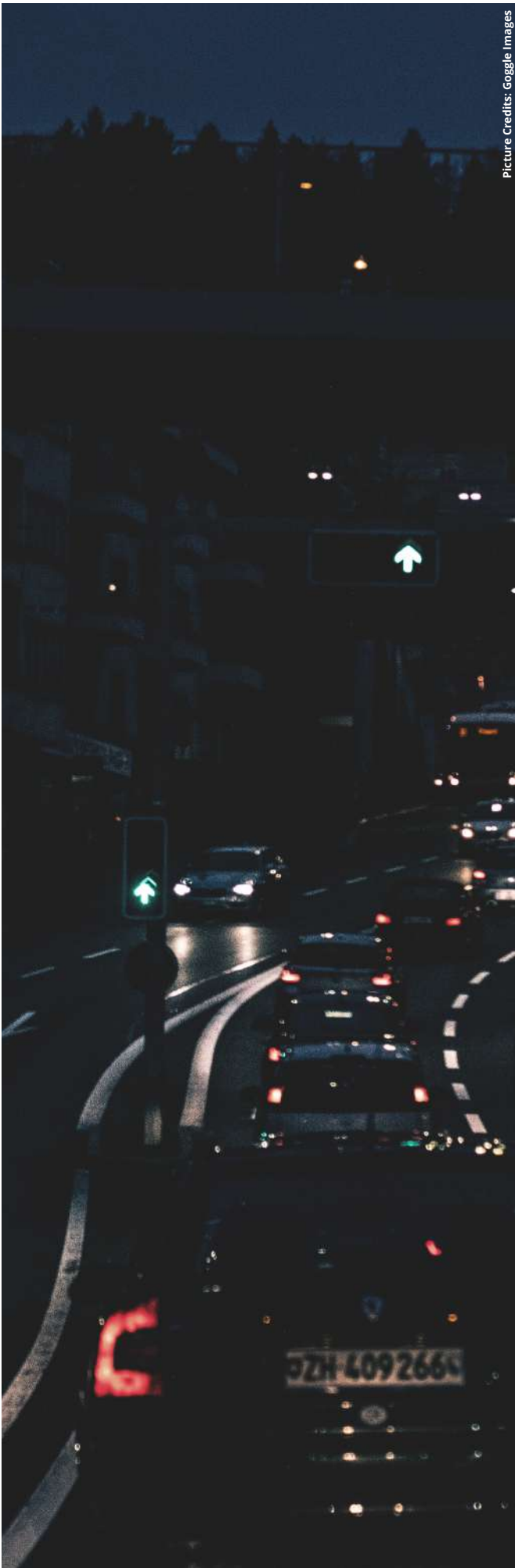
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COMMUNICATION
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*The silence
resounded with
distant laughter.*

When the night was deadening all things around
He was the last rickshaw-driver to be found
Making haste he drove faster and faster
The silence resounded with distant laughter.
He held his breath because his heart was pounding
The giggles and guffaws were louder sounding
Three women came suddenly with hands held tight
Stopped him and said they were afraid of the night.
Friends they seemed not having met after ages
Forgetting time revisiting past pages
Lingered at the house of another friend awhile
'Must reach home!' declared they with a knowing smile.

Each of their homes lay on the same way as his
Never thought about anything being amiss
Hurriedly asked them to board his vehicle
Onward went he, as moves our little chronicle.
They sat there with stiff silence and faces grim
They seemed solemn with staring eyes at him



His heart began giving way to shaky thoughts
These women looked out of place for human
lot.

Thus further on he went, his reverie now
disturbed

'Stop!' said one who assumed a state
unperturbed

While handing the fare a coin slipped
downwards

He stooped to pick it and saw her feet turned
backwards.

An icy thrill ran down his spine, so stunned was
he, Numb with shock, couldn't in the eyes of
the woman see. Went forward on the journey,
mute as mute can be

But do you think he could drive with mind at
sea.

'Do you know', began one of the two from back
'Who was she?' , 'No' said he with tones that
sounded slack. He saw them both grin from ear
to ear.

'Do you know who we are for you mayn't fear?'

In a flash shone in his mirror, he saw them
Change their form and colour, like a branching
stem

His heart went cold and his mouth ran dry from
sight

For none heard from him after that terrible
night.

.....

THE FAKE FEAR



SYED MEHROZE YASEEN
2110117
1BCOM

“

I walked away from there, and I saw an unexpected thing on the ground.

There stood an old derelict castle near a mountain in the outskirts of the city. It stood at a great zenith from the ground and was surrounded by four towers. No one had entered it for a very long time as many rumours spread, stating that the castle was haunted. Moss had grown all over the castle. There was a really good lawn about fifty feet away from the castle, which stretched for about a kilometre.

One day, on a cold evening in the month of December, I was playing cricket on the lawn with my friends. I hit the ball with the bat, and the ball went so far away that it went into the castle from one of its windows. Seeing this, all of us stood astonished. All of my friends began to tell me to fetch the ball. I said that it wasn't possible to do so as we knew very well that the castle was haunted and it was not wise for me to go there. Then, all of them began to force me to do so.

I preferred that we all could search for the ball together, but they refused and said that it was my mistake and I must clear it myself. I felt that this was my chance to show everyone my bravery and thought I must go. The castle was covered with walls on all sides and had a gate in the front. So I went in with fear. There was a large stone door which was the entrance to the castle. I pushed the door with my hands, and it flew open. I put my feet inside and realized that I was the first person entering it after a century. The entire room was dishevelled, and the walls were full of spider webs. I searched here and there for the ball when suddenly I stepped on something which made me fall down. I stood up with fright but, when I saw it closely, it was a coronet. There was no doubt that it was made of gold and was once worn by a king. But, now its gold was rusted, and it no longer had the prestige which it had during that time. So I went ahead with the search and passed through the corridor when I felt that there was something that was following me. Whatever was following me now was coming nearer and nearer to me. I turned back at that instant and figured out that it was just a mouse. Then, I saw a door at the far end. I thought that I must search there too. But, the moment I pushed the door, it fell, and there was a fleet of stairs going downwards. When I reached down, I saw something which gave me a great fright. I saw about a dozen skeletons lying there, and I realized that this place was a dungeon where the prisoners had been kept. I ran away from there as quickly as possible. I also realized that there was no chance for the ball to have come there as there was no ventilation in that place.

I went upstairs to continue my search. The moment I entered the next floor, I saw a filigree box and got excited about seeing it as it might have contained precious items like gold or silver. But, when I opened it, I saw that it was filled with all forms of rubbish. I walked away from there, and I saw an unexpected thing on the ground. There were footprints.

The moment I saw this, I felt very afraid. I followed the footprints to see where they led to. The footprints ended at the far end. Right at the point where the footprints ended, there was a wide-open door where I saw something strange. Someone was sitting there. I had felt that it was only my imagination when suddenly, the man got up. I saw that this man's face was chalk-white, he wore a long black cloak with a hood, he had wings, and when he opened his mouth, I saw that he had tiger-like teeth. With all these features, he looked no less than a vampire.

I fled from there at once and ran to the next floor. The man was behind me and hard on my heels. Then I reached an iron door which I tried to open, but it would not open, and the man had caught up to me at that moment. I gave such a loud shout that all my friends came to help me.

All of them got scared on seeing this man, but together we beat him. While we beat him, the false teeth in his mouth fell out, and the wings came off. When I saw his true face, I realized that I had seen his photo on a wall and underneath it was written: "WANTED". We called the police and handed him over.

The policeman said that the man had been absconding for a long time and that we would be rewarded for all that we had done. In fact, the ball was also found at the same time. It was very late when we all decided to head home. Just then, I saw a light coming from one of the windows of the castle. I was amazed on seeing it and realized that it was from the iron door room, which I had not been able to get into. Then suddenly there was a man standing there, and I had seen a picture of him inside the castle. There was no doubt that he was the king but how he was here after so long, I did not know.

I called all my friends and told them, but the moment their heads turned there, nothing was visible, and all of them went away. But, I realized that it might be the ghost of the king who lived there. I fled from there immediately.

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THE CRACKED MIRROR

SHREYA K. SHETTY

2127953

MBA- L



Picture Credits: Goggle Images

No, I don't like pretty girls. Beauty scares me. The life I lived as a Femina beauty pageant winner surely explains my inclination for beauty. The beauty that couldn't manage to get me my love. The beauty Jack didn't fall for. Years after I took my life for him, Jack has still been the only love of my life and after.

On death's doorstep, it was hard for me to locate this reckless soul of mine. I couldn't find it on the body that was sleeping. I guess it found its way to this mirror. To the mirror in the dressing room of the Femina beauty pageant contestants. Standing tall and quaint, and at a visible spot, I could make those pretty models have their attention on me. Sure as well, they had to look at me before they went on to the stage to get pictures clicked by my Jack. Jack, my love and the photographer as the world know it.

The world that you all live in is weird, I tell you. It tells you to love, but none warns you about the consequences of failed loves. It tells you to give your heart but never warns you about heartbreaks. They tell you are beautiful, but never warn you about how ugly you can look in front of the more beautiful ones. Then tell me, what else was his reason to leave me? Maybe I was only beautiful to the world but could not make his world beautiful.

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Forget me not because I live in those cracks. I can see through them.

All this soul still craves for is him. For only he can quench this thirst. And until this soul rests in peace, I shall not let any girl get through in his photographs.
Thus, here I am cramped in this mirror; trapped by my ruthless soul.
And those little crack lines on the mirror lets me see your pretty faces. But hold on! None of you who shall see yourself on it shall be spared!

Because all the girls who have seen themselves on me till now have only been thrilled to death. Not one girl has gone up there since my presence in those cracks. And not anyone shall go, ever! Forget me not because I live in those cracks. I can see through them. It's been several years since I have lived there and the sun will be up on the horizon for the fourth time now to witness the Femina pageant this year. Or maybe to view a series of deaths yet again.

No sooner did a girl enter to watch herself than I shall break down to swallow her body leaving the residue of the broken mirror on the floor.

No, you can't let him capture you because he had once and continues to capture my heart.

I was only his amber; I won't let anyone be his shade of gold.

But little did I know that the man whom I loved all my life would be right in front of me today! Maybe all the controversies and the mysteries he heard about me has brought him here. All those who have faced me till today have only seen the face of death. But I guess this time I would be glad to make an exception. After all, he was the love of my life!

Once upon a time, he was my everything. And it's clear to see that time hasn't changed a thing.

There he was, staring at me with those tear-drenched, almond eyes. But no, I'm not falling for it anymore. I watch his expression suddenly turn into astonishment as he can no longer watch his reflection in the mirror. Yes, that was me who finally appeared in front of him. I decided to prolong no more and confess my love for him, that I was always trying to be the wallflower amidst the crowd but could never manage to be one.

I broke myself to the finest pieces for one last time, devouring myself and him in the process. My soul can only rest in peace then, I guess.

And there you go!

Some cracks are too cracked to be cured. They need to be broken completely.

Yes, I'm the ghost of the girl who loves you the most.

I'm the shell of the girl you used to know so well.

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STEPWELL TO THE OTHERSIDE, AGRASEN KI BAOLI



RAJLAKSHMI GHOSH
DASTIDAR
2137147
1 MAMCS A

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*The pull grows
stronger as you go
down the stairs,
with nothing but
the echo of your
own footsteps
trailing behind you*

Agrasen ki Baoli, a 103-step stepwell is a magnificent architectural marvel. Delhi, India's capital, is recognised for a variety of things, including its haunted sites. Legend has it that the black water of the well entices individuals to drown themselves by luring them with its black water.

According to tradition, the pull grows stronger as you go down the stairs, with nothing but the echo of your own footsteps trailing behind you as you walk down. This one is on the wish list of thrill-seekers everywhere.

The Archaeological Survey of India protects the Agrasen ki Baoli, which is steeped in mystery because no one knows who constructed it. This stepwell is 60 metres long and 15 metres broad, making it quite narrow. You might not find any claims about it. Many people believe that the now-empty Agrasen Ki Baoli is inhabited by demonic entities such as ghosts.

A few visitors to the stepwell have reported feeling that they are being watched, despite the fact that no one else is there. If you have ever been in the stepwell and experienced this phenomenon, you'll never forget it. This is true for them no matter where they stand or how hard they try to flee the sense of being overwhelmed by it.

The deepest portions of the well have also been a conundrum where certain people have experienced hearing problems. Disembodied voices are said to be heard when no one else is present. There are some who claim to be on the other end of this spectrum and claim to hear the only unnatural stillness.

Stepwells from the 14th century continue to draw visitors because of their remarkable symmetry and rich history. Many tourists, on the other hand, may not be aware of how feared this majestic well is among the paranormal community.

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IS THE HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT ELEGANTLY GHASTLY?



Picture Credits: Google Images

RAJLAKSHMI GHOSH
DASTIDAR
2137147
1 MAMCS A

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*Despite its
ghostly
connections, the
Roosevelt Hotel
remains a
wonderful piece
of Hollywood
history to see.*

Inaugurated on May 15, 1927, during the Golden Age of Los Angeles architecture, the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel was important in its first year because many Hollywood regulars came by or made it their second home.

The hotel was on its way out by the 1950s. For the following few decades, it was subjected to horrendous renovations until it was bought by Radisson Hotels in 1985. The magnificent lobby was restored, and a three-tiered fountain was added as part of a \$35 million makeover.

Hollywood is partly to blame — and partly to praise — for the city's numerous ghostly icons. Many of the spirits in town are movie icons, including Rudolph Valentino, Carole Lombard, and Marilyn Monroe.

Some of them even haunt several locations. They prefer hotels—after all, they led great lives when they were alive—as do many lesser-known ghosts, strange young kids, furious teens, and quiet adults. Marilyn Monroe still resides at Suite #1200, where she has appeared to guests. Many guests staying in her suite have seen her in mirrors.



Montgomery Clift, an Elizabeth Taylor acquaintance who was nominated for three Academy Awards for three separate films, is still most active in Room 928 and the corridor right beyond.

The Historic Lobby is unlike any other, with its arched doors, stone columns, and elegantly panelled ceilings. The tiled fountain and a stunning antique cast-iron chandelier are at its heart.

Instead of appearing in mirrors, Clift enjoys brushing up against people and has been observed practising his trumpet. Some visitors have claimed that he has kept them from moving while they are laying on the bed. His shadow form can also be seen walking the halls or keeping an eye on the visitors in his chamber.

Aside from celebrities, Hollywood Roosevelt is also the home of a young girl spirit, 5-year-old Caroline, who is always looking for her mother. The Blossom Ballroom is haunted by the ghosts of two male spirits, one of whom attended one of the Oscar ceremonies in the hopes of receiving an award. Other ghosts have been known to lock individuals out of their rooms and make boot-stomping noises, while the other ghost likes playing the piano. People who have mental and physical difficulties in this world that have negative effects are sometimes restless when they die unexpectedly and reach the spirit realm, still desiring a resolution to their problems. So they seek serenity by returning to a location where they experienced success, recreating these experiences in order to try to let go of their other failures in life.

Despite its ghostly connections, the Roosevelt Hotel remains a wonderful piece of Hollywood history to see. Rooms may be reserved online, while the hotel's bar, restaurants, and lobby can be visited just by strolling in.

FITNESS FREAK



SUKRIT BHUKANIA
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*His stories
were enough
to keep me
entertained.*

Rajasthan is home to one of the oldest civilizations in a vast country like India. It has been a home for many prominent figures from ancient history and has one of the most authentic cultures. However, a place with such a rich history is also a testimonial to many untold truths and incidents. The people who ruled the state had dark secrets, the records of which were never written. However, since there were no modes of communicating at that time, we may often write these stories off as rumors. But I have a story which is not a rumor but a reality.

My grandfather was born in a small town of Rajasthan. Being his only grandchild, I got all the love and most of the time he'd pamper me with gifts and toys. He would also often narrate incidents about his childhood and college days. His stories were enough to keep me entertained. As per the tradition then, he was married to my grandmother at the age of 19. However, he did not establish himself in the business activities of his father as he was interested in joining the army. His father supported him.

Grandpa and his college friends, who were aspiring to join the army, would often sit and plan on the same topic. One would say, in an exciting tone with a slight smirk on his face, "Once we make it into the army, we will all be rewarded with medals." The other one would reply to this in a sarcastic tone, saying, "Yes they are waiting to award you, sir!" The conversations would then go on till dawn after which all of them would return to their homes.

My grandfather would often dream about going to the Defense Academy in Jaipur. The thought of going to a city as big as Jaipur would excite him even more. The month of December was just about to end, and soon the year passed by. It was a cold and foggy morning when an idea struck my grandfather's mind. He thought that in order to eliminate the majority of the competition and ace the fitness tests he should start with some exercises which would keep him fit. When he proposed this idea to his friends, they were all very excited and agreed to it saying, "Let's do it from tomorrow itself!"

In order to get the maximum benefits from the exercises they decided to do it in the early morning and then spend the rest of the day preparing for the exams. They all decided to go for a run at 4:30 in morning after which they would go to the park by 5:30 to practice some yoga. A goal which required such meticulous planning and coordination also required the same level of dedication. So, all six of them decided to start the routine from the next day itself.

The first month was perfect. They would stop their run just before the highway and take a couple of minutes to regain the energy to run back. On one side, they saw a tea shop. The owner of the shop would set up his shop early in the morning for the rest of the day. Soon they formed a great bond with the owner.

When the fog set in, the group made another modification to their working. In order to prevent themselves from running into each other during the foggy mornings, they decided to make a sound by clapping their hands which would indicate that someone is just behind them. Everyone was motivated enough to work out every day. But suddenly, one of the members, named Manohar, stopped showing up.

When they enquired about him, they found out that he had joined his father's business and was shifting to Pune to continue with the same. The people of that time had a very good and responsive health system. Soon my grandfather did not require anyone to wake him up. He would wake up naturally at 4:00 in the morning and get ready for the run. Another month passed. It was the end of January. Winter was at its peak and the dense fog made almost everything invisible even in very close proximity. The early morning hour was engulfed with the bone-wrecking silence of midnight.

On one such morning my grandfather woke up and went as usual. He clapped and heard a clapping sound in return, the process continued till he reached near the tea shop. He waited for the owner to come out and his friends to reach there but when none of that happened for 10 minutes, he decided to knock on the owner's door and wake him up to set up his stall. When we woke him, the owner was furious. He said, "You know what time it is?" My grandfather said, "Yes, it's 5:00 in the morning! Did you sleep a little extra today?" The owner with a confused state of mind called him in and showed him a watch, according to which it was midnight.

My grandfather said nothing and left. Where did those clapping sounds come from? Well, grandpa believed it was Manohar who died the same day in a car accident. However, these things are best left to the reader's imagination.

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IT'S HALLOWEEN!



TARUN HIRANI

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*Brace yourself
for horror &
joy,
It's Halloween!
Say hello to
summery
goodbyes.*

It's the hour of hauling spirits

Drifting through the thin veil between life & the
ones in the crypt.

Hear the ominous of Hallow's Eve,
Leading to All Saint's Day in homage and peace.

There's the midnight mass of disguised juvenile,
Marching through the caves of givers & the few
uptights.

Orange smiles & sweet bites all along the way,
Cold nights of this month are haughty than the
day.

Brace yourself for horror & joy,
It's Halloween! Say hello to summery goodbyes.

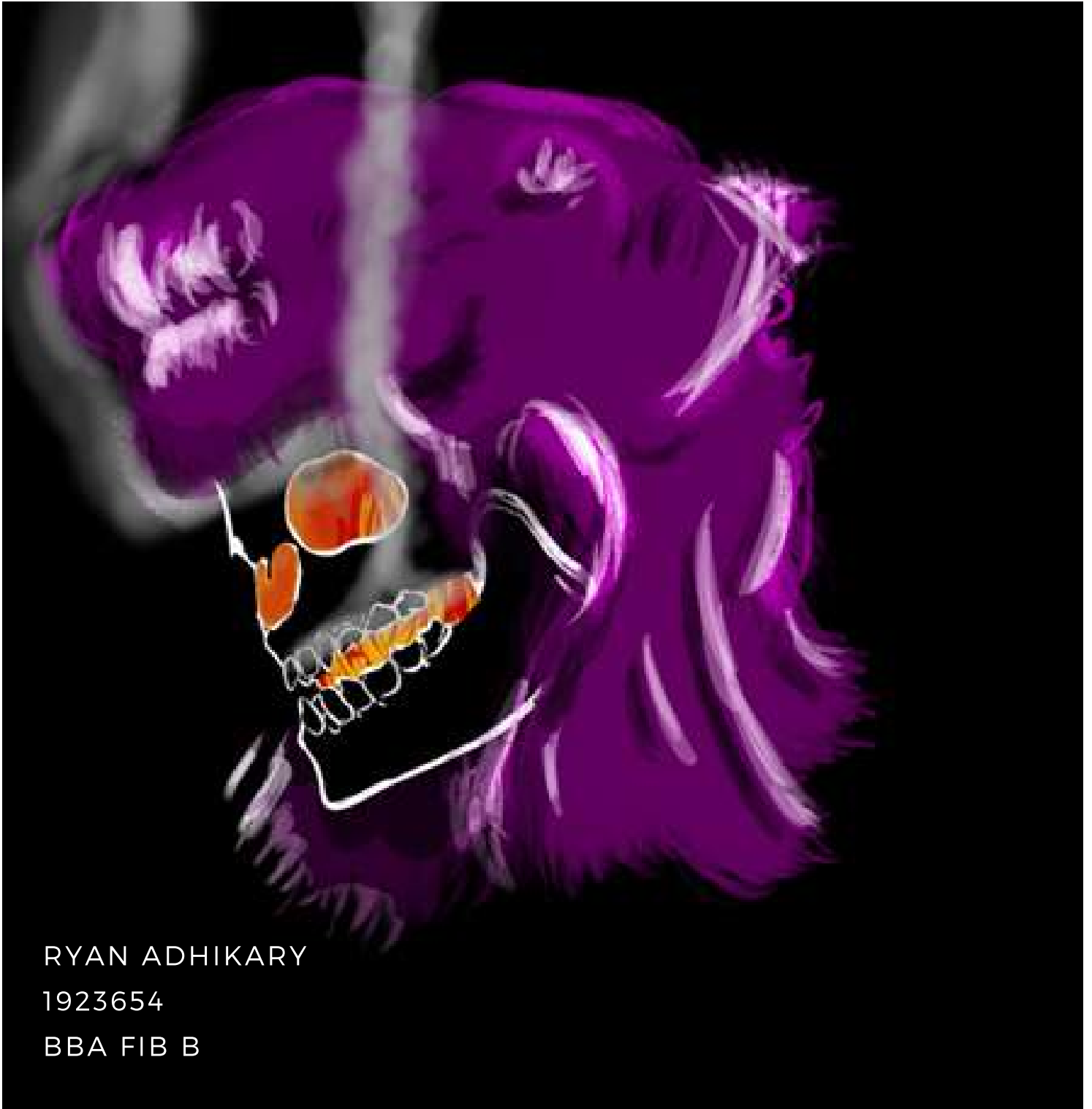
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Picture Credits: Pinterest

ARTISANS

Ablaze - I am my light



RYAN ADHIKARY

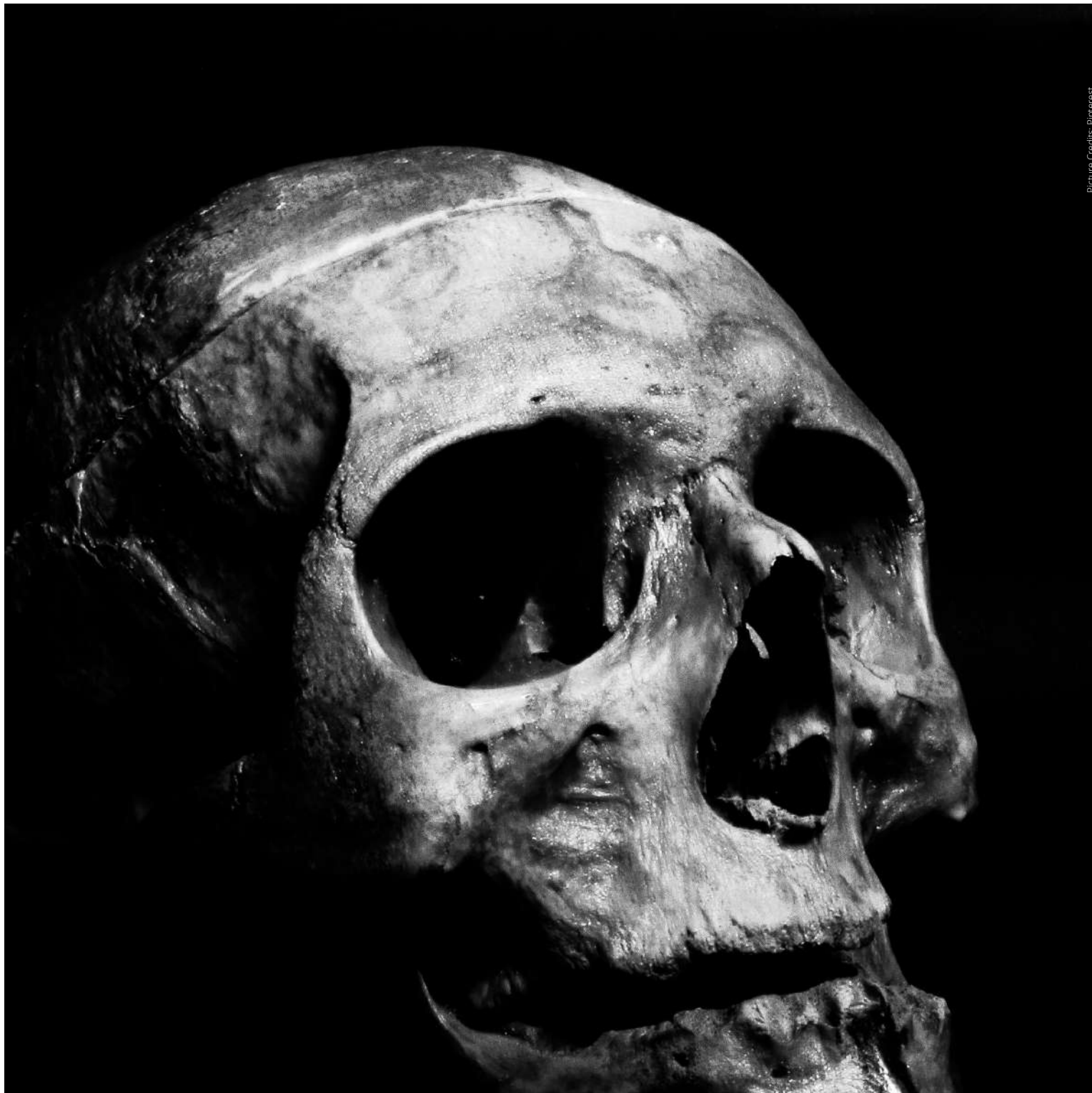
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BBA FIB B

Creepy, Kooky, and a little Spooky Hocus Pocus here's Halloween to focus



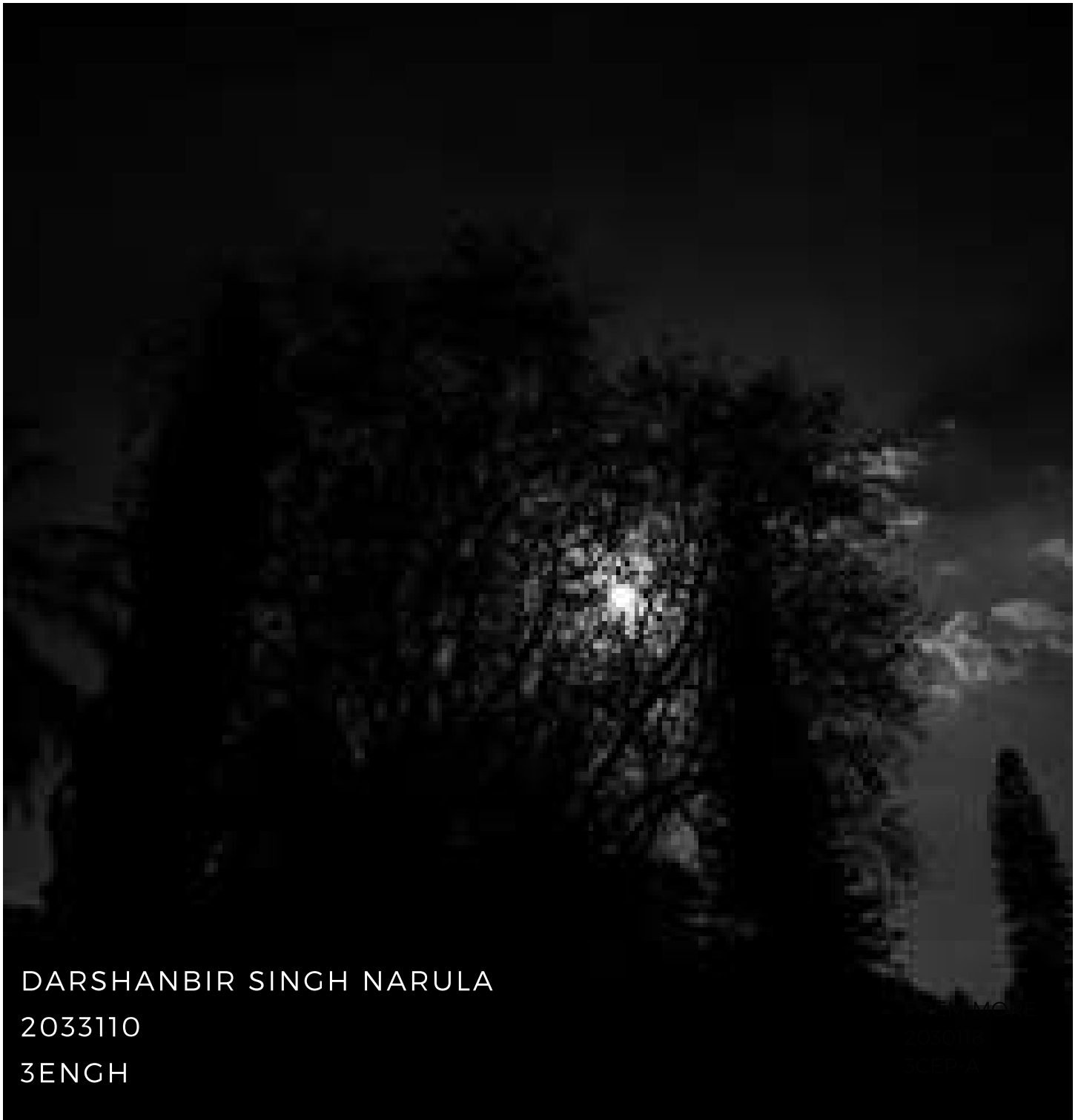
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Picture Credits: Pinterest

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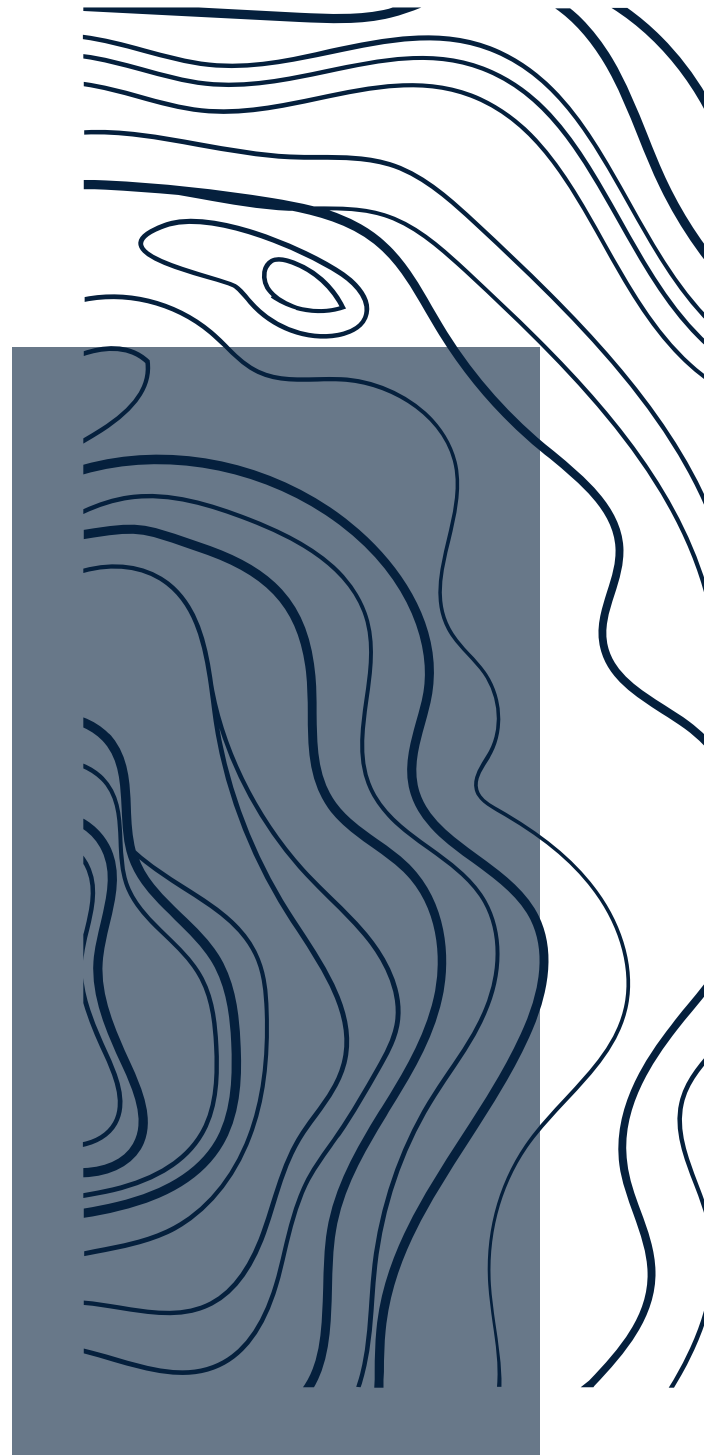
A lonely and dark night lit by the moon



DARSHANBIR SINGH NARULA
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