



SIBLING STRUGGLES

Saanvi Vaish, XI C & Raghav Pardasani, XI B, AIS PV

Welcome to the world of siblings - a rollercoaster you never bought a ticket for but still are forced to ride. Whilst it might seem fun to an outsider, only the ones on it know the horrors of its ups and downs.

Adopting strategies

"Do you know you are adopted?"

"Yeah, our parents didn't want to commit the same mistake again!"

The younger ones master the art of savage retorts after years of teasing that would have once affected them gravely. On closer inspection, the younger ones find slight variations in their adoption places like 'in a trashcan', 'from an adoption home' or the personal favourite 'mandir ki seedhiyaan'. To say that the adoption remark has now become customary in every sibling pair ever known would be a total understatement.

Favourite child™

This debate, that started in 4th Century BC, is still to reach a consensus. As the elder sibling argues that the younger one has been pampered to the extent of becoming a spoiled brat, the younger ones claim that their elders are more loved and favoured due to their firstborn title. In this hunt, the parents, even after their relentless claims of innocence, end up accused of favouritism and sentenced to long hours of silent treatment and snide remarks.

Blame game

A broken vase or a damaged electronic? Cue the drama. The scene unfolds in stages. Firstly, hide or destroy the evidence. Secondly, if caught, keep up the pretence of innocence. If that fails, commence the infamous blame game. After rounds of pointing fingers and wagging tongues, disregarding the real culprit, the parents somehow always manage to pun-



Pic: Dakshesh Bharal, XI E | Models: Bianca Katyal, II B & Aryavardhan Chauhan, III A; AIS PV

Who Will Win The War: The Elder Sibling Or The Younger One?

ish the ones who didn't commit the crime.

Asserting the boss

The elder sibling asserts their 'birth rights' by ordering around the younger ones for their chores and then voice out the sheer injustice for their 'bossy' label. However, the younger one is conveniently labelled as disrespectful the moment they try to assert that they are no longer their sibling's personal house

elf. Talk about double standards!

Identity crisis

The need of a better educational system is highlighted every time people judge one sibling by the acts of others, believing behaviour to be genetic. Watch the younger one be expected to score the exact same marks as the elder one and no one can believe that the elder one isn't as worldly and street-

smart as the younger one. Hello, did everyone forget we are siblings, not clones?

Being the living embodiment of "I can neither live with you nor without you", siblings might pretend to not care about each other but deep down they know that they will always have their back, because who else will they borrow money from or ask for help when they need to sneak out of the house?

Of marbles and gilded monuments no more?

The Sorry Tale Of Our Heritage And Neglect

Illustrations: Rimsha Lal, XI F & Dhimant Badan, XI G, AIS PV



Deeksha Puri, AIS PV, XII F

The sands of time have often washed against me reminders to embrace the nostalgia that resides within my walls. Time and again, I nearly refused to accept my age, for every day millions would flock just to see and click photographs with me. I stood as a symbol of beauty for both the generations to come and for the ones before them.

I was the crown (the Taj, if you will) of this adored land. I still am, so what if I shine with soot instead of white marble? I'm losing my sheen; I'm yellow

now and at times, I suffocate under the blanket of pollution, though it would be false to say I've lost all. I've even gained some - my own air purifier (spraying 15 lakh cubic metre air in eight hours within a 300 metre radius).

Despite the deadly Air Quality Index of 293 and an excessive amount of Particulate Matter 10 (PM-10), I'm managing, but for how long, I don't know. All this while, pity Shah Jahan, for what he constructed as a symbol of eternal love is limping towards a slow, steady death. Ironic that a funerary monument awaits its own funeral.

However, I'm still better off. It had been a while since I heard from many of my stone clad brethren, 24 of them to be exact, who had been termed as 'untraceable' by the Archaeological Survey of India.

I couldn't come to terms with this information when I first heard it and it later turned out that the number could have increased to 96, according to the Comptroller Auditor General.

I can't even imagine the pain the great Red Fort must be going through - once a symbol of power, now stands powerless.

I've had my fair share of issues with the government. Sometimes, they have disappointed me; sometimes irked me beyond bounds. But this time, they broke my heart. They were giving away my red sandstone sibling, the

The devastation of it all! How my temper flared at the Ministry of Culture. But then, one of my brethren told me that they receive only 1% of the annual budget to conserve the heritage of the entire country. Looks like it's not their fault either.

Red Fort, for adoption to someone called Dalmia Bharat. All I could imagine was the advertisement plastered on its already weak walls. I can't even imagine the pain the great Red Fort must go through - once a symbol of power, now stands powerless. Now, I know some of you would say that the government is doing its bit, that there is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act. Apparently, it is supposed to prevent construction within a

thing so brutal could be inflicted on some of the bravest pieces of stone I'd come across, from the forts to temples and churches regarded as pinnacles of humanity.

The weeping state of the burning Shuri Castle at Okinawa in Japan, burnt in the menacing grip of dancing flames, irreplaceably disfigured and lost, similar to the ashes that once engulfed the life of French Catholicism, Notre Dame. All of us were the reflections of architects seeking to enshrine a piece of themselves, but what happens when we lay like rubble?

As my heart aches for my contemporaries, laying on the ground as no one bothered and let them bleed, I continue to plead. I know my pleas seem unimportant, orthodox even, yet all I have to say is, cherish them and save them while they're still alive.

100 m of archaeological sites. But what good is it, seeing many of my friends bulldozed every other day.

Through my earthly connections, I had heard stories of plunder. Never in a million years could I fathom that some-

