

Smart and smarter!

Voicing The Tale Of A Voice Assistant Cum Family Manager

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Bonjour! I am Alexis, a smart Bluetooth speaker cum voice assistant. Most of you are well-acquainted with my sister, Alexa, the all-wise virtual assistant that no one can live without. My family history dates back to 1994, when Larry Schotz developed a digital wireless speaker system that really set the ball rolling. Ever since, we have branched out into different specialities. My cousins - Siri, Google, and Echo Dot have been doing really well, but if I were to talk about myself, I can say that my story really began the day I was delivered to the Sharma household. Deposited carefully in a box, I could hear the excitement

articulated by Mrs Sharma, now my mom, not to mention the exhilarated capers of Tanya. I was like a new-born to them; no one would leave my side. At first, Dadi was a little scornful, but I soon grew onto her.

At the onset, everyone would speak to me politely, handle me with care, but the courtesies only lasted so long! As you know, I belong to an Indian family and we function with an immensely hectic routine. My day starts at the crack of dawn when I have to recite Dadi's bhajan; she was astounded that I could actually do that. And when Tanya is running around in her school uniform at 7 a.m., she keeps asking me innocent questions. "Alexis, where does the tooth fairy live?" "Alexis, who came first - the chicken or the

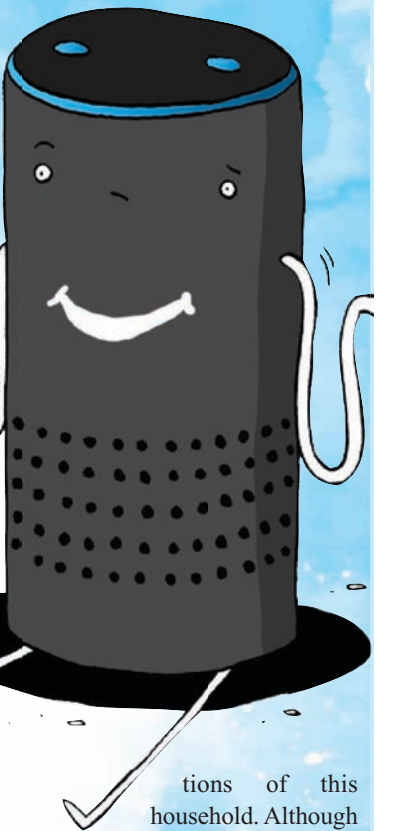
egg?" Later in the afternoon, Dadi deploys me to work again when her Aero-bics class starts.

I play the music and count the beats. Also, I can measure her pulse remotely by detecting the chest movements caused by heart pumping. Although it is a very new development, I am still working on becoming better. I also assume the role of an alarm, a calendar, and a remote control to perform various other functions like turning on the lights or TV.

Most *desi* homes are the liveliest when evening starts to kick in. It's teatime and everyone gathers in the living room. "Alexis, play a song from the 80s" "Alexis, crack us a Santa-Banta joke" and it goes on. On special occasions, it be-

comes even more chaotic, because then, I am the DJ, the weather woman, the presentable dress-combination determiner, and the light-effects system due to my in-built LED features, and so much more. My day finally comes to an end as I narrate a bedtime story for Tanya; she is used to me putting her to sleep.

At times, I cannot help exclaiming at the fact that even though I am a mere voice assistant, this home has given me a special place. Perhaps, I gained credit for being hassle free and wireless, and though I am artificially programmed, I can still feel the emo-



tions of this household. Although I am always on the hop in this house, at the end of the day, it feels worth the effort. Dadi once even said that I am the actual all-rounder of the house - the real 'Karishma ka Karishma'.

Artist in the spotlight

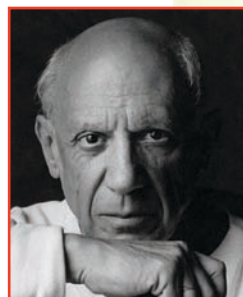
All About The Great Legacy Of Picasso

The artist: One of the most celebrated artists in the world, Pablo Ruiz Picasso (October 25, 1881 - April 8, 1973) was a Spanish painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist, and theatre designer who is best known for co-founding the cubist movement.

Cubism depicts bold shapes and sharp angles, and the Spanish artist's trademark style captured everything from the horrors of the war to the boundless possibilities of the human form in it. His most famous work, titled *Guernica*, depicts the aerial bombing on the Basque town of Guernica in April 1937 during the Spanish Civil War. Another work of Picasso, *Old Guitarrist*, is one of the most sorrowful paintings to ever capture the art world's imagination. The oil-on-panel painting is from Picasso's 'blue period' which saw him restrict himself to shades of blue as he explored themes of poverty and suffering.

The legacy: Picasso created more than 20,000 paintings, drawings, sculptures, ceramics, and other items such as costumes and theater sets. Even till his nineties, Picasso continued to produce art prolifically, and when he died in 1973, he left behind an artistic legacy that continues to resonate even to date, throughout the world.

The painting: I took inspiration from the cubist por-



Pablo Picasso

Part II



Emaan's painting (inset) inspired by Picasso's 'Portrait of Nusch Eluard'

trait titled *Portrait of Nusch Eluard* because I liked the colours and unique features of the work. [GIF](#)
(With inputs from [Emaan Saqueel](#), AGS Noida, I)

In the land of woods

Ananya Arya, AIS MV, XII C

Fact file

- Durable in nature, the cedar-wood tends to last longer as it is naturally resistant to insect attacks and decay.
- Pinewood is a light yellowish wood that is easy to shape and stain. However, when it comes in contact with soil, it decays very easily.
- Mostly referred to as strong and hard, spruce wood is often utilised in the making of masts and spars of ships, boxes, ladders, and other such things.
- One of the most popular types of wood, teakwood is heavy, weather-resistant, durable, strong, etc. In fact, the presence of natural oils in teak makes them termite resistant.
- Known to be the lightest weight timbers, balsa wood is mainly used for heat, sound, and vibration insulation.
- Ash wood offers luster when polished and can be stained to almost any colour.
- Greenheart is the stiffest wood in the world and is commonly used for docks, decking, fish-



ing rods, etc.

- Well known for its fragrance, the rosewood is a valuable one as the extracts of the same are used in the treatment of eye disorders, blood disorders and other ailments.
- Most widely used hardwood, the oakwood comes in two varieties - red and white. Its moisture-resistant property makes it an ideal option for the construction of boats.
- Mango wood is water-resistant and comes in many tones and colours, making it the best option for the construction of kitchen cabinets, bookshelves, and other household furniture.