



The enchanted forest

Shambhavi Sharma, AIS PV, X C

The moon was like a ghostly lamp-light, with its silver beams illuminating the entire forest. She had realised by now that she was lost in the meandering alleys of these deep and dark woods. A little worried by now, she stared at the map she had in her hand and squinted hard, holding the almost-torn paper higher for better vis-

ibility. She was so focused on finding the way that she really hadn't bothered to notice that the stars were brighter than usual, and the trees were swaying when there was no wind. Stranger still, there was an eerie silence, without a single chirp or tweet of a bird, most uncommon in a forest as dense as this.



To the brave-hearted and the adventurous, all this would be just a matter of beauty and excitement. And yet, this forest was no place to be in the dead of night. It was an unsaid understanding amongst the townspeople who lived near it. All the 'stories' one had heard about the forest had been enigmatic, almost terrifying.

Ignoring all the signs of impending danger, she decided to move north and walked across the threshold, entering a completely new territory. She moved at a soundless pace, like wind gliding across the trees. The whispering woods did not seem to bother her, the rustling leaves almost falling in step with her.

She suddenly halted. She could see a smoke signal, with wisps of smoke swirling in a single spiral across the hill. Was someone else also lost? Or, was it a group of people who could help her? She headed towards it in tired melancholy, wondering how long it would be before she found the warmth of her own bed.

It was a woman around her age, maybe older, sitting around a campfire. She sighed in relief when she saw her. "Are you lost too?" she asked, her short hair falling across her face. "Sort of."

She laughed and sat

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at the opposite end. "So, how'd you end up here? Know a way out?" she asked. "No, unfortunately, it's a complicated place and a long story," the older woman replied in soft, hushed tone.

She wondered if the woman had a name, knowing that she would not ask. Names make people seem more human, making it harder for the facades to fall through. Although, she would know in time. She knew she would. "Well, I've got all the time in the world for stories," she smiled, hoping her friendly demeanour would encourage the woman to offer help. The woman replied, glancing at the fire in frustration. "Well, it's not really fun. How I have been stuck in an enchanted forest since the last twelve years is really not fun."

She looked blankly at the woman. She had nothing else to do. "Welcome to the maze," the woman smiled at her, with half-pity and half-relief. In her, the woman had finally found a companion. The forest did look beautiful today. Beauty is often terror, until it may be too late to realise it.



Graphic: Akshita Bhandari, AIS PV, XI B

The greatest warrior

Mannat Suri

AIS Pushp Vihar, X C

In the land of ancient tales and lore
Where warriors fought, legends bore
There lived a spirit fierce and bold
A warrior unparalleled, to behold

With a heart ablaze, soaring on wings
Defying all odds, in battle he sings
A gaze of steel, his spirit untamed
In his wake, even fate looks tamed

On the battlefield, his sword gleams
His dance of power, a poetic theme
With each swing, he painted the skies
A harmony of might, no one despises

Through treacherous nights and days
He faced his fears, on countless frays
His valor, a beacon, guiding the way

Inspiring courage, come what may

In the heart of his foes, fear did brood
As no armor or wall could ever elude
A fate that awaited them on the field
Where the great warrior didn't yield

But his greatness lies not in the blade
Nor in the conquests a warrior made
It lies deep within the spirit's might
Bravery is born in the battles of light

Thus, his strength went beyond strife
Radiating an aura that transcends life
For in his battles, a hero was revealed
A soul of honor, forever unconcealed

The great warrior, a symbol of grace
A mark of strength, in each embrace
His legacy echoes in tales of the old
A proof of the power of valor untold.

Illustration: Parkhi Arora, AIS PV, IX E



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Q.1 Apoorva Bakshi is an _____ producer.

Q.2 Name the kingdom in the story 'The electric fireworks' on page 4.

Q.3 Who is the author of the cover story 'Fooled Foodie'?

Q.4 On which page can you find the educational poster on northern lights?

Q.5 Which school organised the event titled 'Telematches-Aquaspark'?

Q.6 The album 'Alas Ka Pedh' was released on _____.

Q.7 In 1817, the metal _____ was discovered by Johan August Arfvedson.

Q.8 Who is the editor-in-chief of AIS Pushp Vihar?

Q.9 Who is the founder of 'Saisha India Foundation'?

Name: _____ Class: _____ School: _____

Results of Read Play & Win-45: Sarthak Biswas, AIS Saket, IV C; Anwit Sinha, AIS Gur 43, IV B; Advik Tandon, AIS Noida, III J