A sweet secret

The Mystical Formula Of Honey's Everlasting Goodness

Naisha Parnandy
AIS Noida, XI I

Ally could barely stand still. Today wasn't just a lazy Sunday afternoon. It was the day that her mother, Emma, had promised to unearth the time capsule she had buried at the age of twelve. "Same age as you are now," Emma said with a smile as they walked out into the garden, spade in hand.

Ever since she was little, Ally had been listening to stories about the time capsule — an old steel box covered in cloth, with 'Emma' written on top in marker-ink. But she was never told what the box contained, which allowed her imagination to run wild. The girl was convinced that something magical was inside the box. Glittering jewels, a magic wand, a wizard's hat, or even enchanted candies that never ran out!

They approached the jasmine tree at the end of their yard where the time capsule was buried. Emma started digging, and Ally joined her, buzzing with excitement as her hands scooped earth away.

Suddenly, they struck some solid structure, and from the midst of the soil, emerged a huge box wrapped in faded cloth. The ink from the marker was almost gone, but Ally knew exactly to whom it belonged. Ally cradled her newfound treasure. "Go on," whispered her mother.

With breath caught in her throat, Ally gently opened the box. Inside lay some creased photographs, a faded concert ticket, two thin magazines, and… a jar filled with a golden liquid.

Ally's eyes twinkled, "A magic potion!" she thought. And just as she was speculating whether it would grant her the ability to fly or not, her eyes fell on the label; she looked at her mother with squinted eyes.

Emma chuckled, "Is this not what you expected?"

"I had imagined magical stones or scrolls, not a jar of expired honey," said Ally in a small voice.

"A jar of honey, yes, but it's not expired, Ally."

"How is that possible? Isn't this jar almost 30 years old?" asked Ally in disbelief.

"Oh, but it is," said Emma. "Honey is truly a sweet, golden marvel. It barely contains any water, making it very difficult for bacteria to thrive. And when the bees make honey, they even flap their wings to evaporate excess water from it."

Ally blinked, "So, you are saying that they make the water go away on purpose?"

"Exactly! And honey is acidic in nature, so the microbes do not stand a chance."

"So, does it stay perfect forever?" wondered Ally.

"Well, it may thicken, or change into a darker shade, but it will still be safe to consume. Did you know that archaeologists found pots of honey in Egyptian tombs? Some were over 3000 years old and still safe for consumption. Isn't that utterly fascinating?"

Ally looked at the jar in awe, "So it's like… time-proof?"

Emma nodded, "It is a sweet treat that just never spoils."

Ally smiled. She carefully held the jar up to the sunlight, watching the golden liquid glow. Perhaps real magic wasn't in wands or crystal balls after all. This was the real magic. The kind that buzzed in hives and shimmered in jars. The kind that waits beneath the earth, sweet forever.

The science of it

The high sugar content in honey uses osmotic action to suck water from anything that would try to grow and spoil it. Its many antimicrobial properties further prevent microbes from growing.

Read Play and Win 86

Reading your favourite GT can fetch you a prize too. Complete all the boxes below. Click a picture and send it to editor@theglobaltimes.in or submit your responses by visiting The Global Times website (http://theglobaltimes.in/readplaywin/). Three lucky winners will win a prize every week!

Q.1 Which city has been mentioned as the 'perfume capital of India' in page 1 story?	Q.2 Name the organisation led by 2024-25 Youth Power jury member Steve Rocha.	Q.3 Who spotted Bok globules for the first time?
Q.4 Name the countries part of G7.	Q.5 Which delicacies one must try in Ladakh?	Q.6 What is the moral of page 8 comic strip?
Q.7 Who wrote the GT mail of this edition?	Q.8 Who is the creator of the comic, 'Chacha Chaudhary'?	Q.9. Which school's Prompt box entries have been published on Pg 10?

Name:.....Class:.....School:.....

Results of Read Play & Win-85: Yash Dhull, AIS Gur 46, VIII J; Aadhya Madiri, AIS Gur 43, V A; Vibhav Goyal, AIS Gur 46, IV H

Bok globules

Galaxy's Dust Bunnies Help Bake Stars

Avika Gupta, AIS PV, XI B

Unlike us, the universe doesn't sweep dust under the rug. Bok Globules or galactic dust bunnies are dark clouds of dense cosmic gas that float around in nebulous regions. First spotted by astronomer Bart Bok, this mystery is more than just a cosmic litter.

The origins

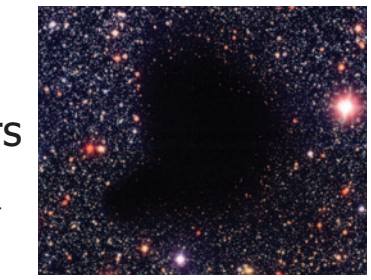
They originate in cold, dense regions of molecular clouds where cosmic gases and dust undergo gravitational contraction. Over time, these clouds isolate from larger molecular clouds due to supernova shockwaves and galactic collisions. Think of them as the universe's bakery, dusty, mysterious and full of rising stars.

The cosmic composition

Composed from outflows of dying stars, these consist of silicates, carbonaceous materials, icy coatings of water, ammonia, and methane. Each grain, only microns wide, attracts atoms with the help of its sticky surface.

Cosmic camouflage

Bok globules block visible light as they hide newborn stars. Astronomers use infrared and radio wavelengths to detect the warm glow of their hidden interiors. Modern instruments like ALMA and the James Webb Space Telescope serve this purpose.



Stellar nurseries

As gravity acts on them, disks of dust form around young stars, providing the raw material for planet formation. Dust grains coalesce into larger bodies, marking the beginning of solar systems.

Cosmic chemistry labs

Acting like a petri dish, surface of dust grains allows atoms like hydrogen, carbon, oxygen, and nitrogen to stick and react, forming complex molecules like formaldehyde, water, amino acids. These might be the universe's first step in the recipe of life!