

Maya and the Quiet Seed



Naisha Tripathi

AIS VKC Lucknow, VIII B

As the mist and chill enveloped the city of Nainital, it fell under a strange melancholy. The beautiful Naini Lake, usually sparkling with colourful boats and laughter, was still and grey. The tall pine trees, that usually whispered in the wind, stood silent and sad. Even the people, who loved to talk and laugh, spoke in hushed voices, their smiles gone. Only the tourists, taking pictures and talking loudly, didn't seem to notice the sadness of the lake.

Maya, a young girl with eyes like the deep blue lake, felt the intensity of this sudden cloud of gloom. So, she decided to visit her great-grandmother, who lived high up on a hill. "Dadi!" she cried, her voice shaking. "The quiet... it's taking over the city!" Dadi Amara, her face lined with age and wisdom, stared at the silent lake. "Yes, child," she said softly. "The 'Quiet Seed' is growing strong. If allowed to grow, it will gradually consume the city with gloom and darkness."

"But why is it here?" Maya asked,



Illustration: Shubhanshu Singh, AIS VKC Lucknow, XII C

filled with confusion. "It's a sadness that grows when we forget the stories of our past," replied Dadi.

"Is there any way to stop it?" Maya asked, her eyes worried. "It's not a monster that you can fight. You can only defeat it with old forgotten songs and ballads," Dadi answered.

Maya discovered that a long time ago, a singer named Leela lived in Nainital. Her voice was as

beautiful as the lake. She loved a boatman who died in a storm on the lake. Since then, Leela's sadness has filled the lake with a mist, which the locals call 'The Quiet Seed'.

At the same time, it was also growing because the people of Nainital were forgetting their traditions, narrated through old stories. The tourists didn't care much about the traditional stories and locals had already forgotten

them because of their involvement in day to day activities.

"We must remember all the ballads of our town to defeat it," emphasised Dadi.

Determined to help, Maya visited the old library, with dusty books. She spoke to the oldest people in town and walked through the forgotten lanes of Nainital, finding echoes of the past in old buildings and forgotten shrines.

In her quest to defeat the gloom,

"The 'Quiet Seed' is growing strong. If allowed to grow, it will gradually consume the city with gloom and darkness."

she learnt each story by heart. One night, when the moon was full and bright, Maya went to the lake shore and started to sing Leela's sad song. To her surprise, the mist around her began to move and shimmer.

Encouraged, she sang loudly and as her voice filled the air and unfolded the stories of the past, the mist started to lift. The stones shimmered with light and the lake sparkled like a thousand stars. The Quiet Seed, which was thriving under the mist of forgotten memories began to fade away. The trees rustled, and people of Nainital began to sing along.

As the songs echoed, so did the joy, filling Nainital with life again. The locals learnt that the foundation of happiness is in drawing lessons from the past which are beautifully woven in old stories.

Read Play and Win 81

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 popular film and TV actress has been interviewed on page 3?	Q.2 Who is the author of article on page 12?	Q.3 Name the product featured in science advertisement on page 4.
Q.4 Name the highest civilian award conferred in India as mentioned on page 7.	Q.5 As per the article on page 5, the full form of DNA is _____.	Q.6 What is the length of India's first hyperloop test track mentioned on page 9?
Q.7 What is the tagline for article 'Age no bar' on page 6?	Q.8 Which city is mentioned in the short story on page 8?	Q.9 Which organisation preserves temple traditions and biodiversity?

Name: Class: School:

Results of Read Play & Win-80: **Shlok Sharma**, AIS Saket, X B;
Deeyanah Jangra, AIS Vas 1, VIII C; **Nayonika Jain**, AIS MV, X E

Makeup

Tanya Rai, AIS VKC Lucknow, X A

It starts off with chapstick here and there
Then you wear lip gloss - no harm, no care
It adds some colour, a subtle hue
But soon, you find you want more too

You reach for blush, just a little bit
And wear it to school - it starts to stick
Now you can't go anywhere bare
You need that flush; you need that glare

Then highlighter calls, a shimmering trace
Inner corners, nose, lighting your face
Just blush, gloss, and a radiant glow
It's nothing bad, you tell yourself so

You want your lashes bold and long
Mascara, curlers - what could go wrong?
It's just a touch, a simple grace
A tiny change - no harm to embrace

But acne strikes, you start to conceal
A dab here and there - what's the big deal?
Just minor flaws, a soft disguise
Yet soon, the mirror whispers lies

You hate your face, it feels so bare
Foundation, contour - layers of care
And now you're lost beneath the paint
The real you fades, a masked restraint

Looking back, you start to wonder
If you never began, would you still be under?



Pic: Ipshita, AIS VKC Lucknow, X A