



Storywala

Memories of the lotus

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AIS Gur 43, XII C

Escaping the hustle and bustle of my busy life, I sat under an old neem tree by the pond, admiring the golden flecks of sunlight shimmering on the water. I threw pebbles into it and watched the ripples spread around a cluster of blushing lotus flowers. I was on the verge of beginning a new chapter in my life, and those flowers dancing merrily along the waves reminded me of her.

She appeared in my thoughts, as if she was standing before my eyes. Her long wavy hair, her warm smile, and coffee-hued eyes, that sparkled like topaz. She would've laughed at such praise. Back then, she used to say the mirror was dirty, and not her face. I often complained about our hardships, but she remained hopeful, always expecting better days. While I felt exhausted at the

thought of counting mere coins as 'wealth', there was sunshine on her face every morning as she left for work and returned late at night, calm as a moonlit breeze. She was like spring, bringing in with her bloom after the harshest winter day.

I pulled enough reckless stunts to test everyone's patience. Maybe it was my way of rebelling against the life we lived. I still remember her words, "Arjun, do what your heart desires and work hard for it. Don't be affected by what others have to say. Nothing can stop you from wanting what you wish to become."

Perhaps those words changed me. Or maybe it was the quiet desire to escape the life that suffocated me. With time, however, her hard work began to pay off, and times changed for better. It wasn't perfect, but better. I left for higher studies determined to change the life we had. Our conversations became fewer, but whenever we

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spoke, her voice always sounded cheerful. Her calls became a gentle anchor amidst the whirlwind of my new life. But then one day there were no more calls, and no more conversations.

I will be graduating soon, and I have a prestigious offer letter in hand, but these wins now weigh heavy on me. I imagine my mother, Kamala, hugging me. She wouldn't have asked for anything more than the assurance that I would live happily. It would be proof that the smile she wore for my sake, even on her hardest days, had not been in vain. The sun had now set. The moon and stars shimmered above, and for a moment, it felt as though Maa was back home with me.

WORDS VERSE

My peculiarity

Namya Jain, AIS PV, alumna

As I gaze upon my hands
Where a cut greets my eye
A gasp reaches my throat
And I see the violets fly

I quickly cover my hands
For fear of being found
I know what they'll say
As nightfall comes around

Yet my secret is revealed
And again, I am caught
Locked inside a cage
Supposedly left to rot

Yet when daylight shines
I see many faces peering
I sit still within the cage
My heart, quietly tearing



For a bird nicks me so
Humans gaze wide-eyed
Alas, an anomaly I am
Who no longer can hide

Though perhaps it is not
The violet blood they see
But remnants of their own
In my particular peculiarity. 🇮🇳
(Namya is pursuing BA from Liberal Arts College, Massachusetts)

Read Play and Win 109

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 character did Ryan Gosling play in 'Project Hail Mary'?	Q.2 How many students scored 100 in class XII?	Q.3 What is the tagline of the article on page 6?
Q.4 Which Amity student scored the highest in class XII boards 2026?	Q.5 Which school hosted the Literati Fest 2026 as mentioned on page 11?	Q.6 What does the word 'winning' mean in the short story on page 9?
Q.7 In the panel discussion, experts shared their insights on what cause?	Q.8 The headline of the story on page 8 is _____.	Q.9 Who visits Neptune in the comic strip on page 4?

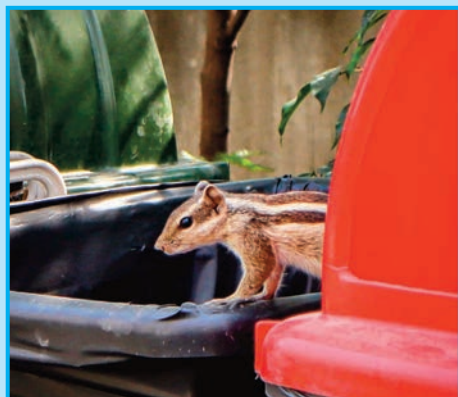
Name:.....Class:.....School:.....

Results of Read Play & Win-108: **Prakrit Malhotra**, AIS Vas 6, IX E; **Divit Gupta**, AIS Noida, IV F; **Parth Lohia**, AIS PV, V B

CAMERA CAPERS

Aarav Verma
AIS Vas 6, X C

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Nature's acrobats



Shell-axing



An introvert's corner