

Strumming against the odds

The Journey Of A Four-Stringed Instrument

Raunak Gupta & Siya Makhija
AIS Vasundhara 6, Alumni

The time had come for the string family reunion. The hall was bustling when a small figure standing at the door caught everyone's eye. It was the Ukulele, attending the reunion for the first time. The Guitar commented, "Hey, mini me. Fancy seeing you here." Accustomed to being looked down upon, Ukulele had finally decided to take matters into its own strings.

"Erm, hello everyone. I'm Ukulele, but you can call me Uke. You may think that I'm nothing but a smaller, 'short-stringed' version of the Guitar," Uke, though nervous under the glares from his family, stood strong. "But I would like to have the chance to introduce myself. First of all, I want to tell you that even though I live in Hawaii, my ancestry is Portuguese. I hail from the mighty Lute family, which travelled through Europe and then came to Hawaii as the *Machete de Braga*."

"If you were known as the 'Machete' how come you are called 'Ukulele' now?" asked the Harp. Uke replied, "There are many theories as

to how my name originated. Some say it was kept after Purvis, an official in King Kalakaua's court who played me. Others believe that the last monarch of Hawaii, Queen Lili'uokalani, translated it to mean 'the gift that came here'. But, most people agree that it is because my name translates to 'jumping flea', a phrase that described the motion of a ukulele-player's hands."

Glad to hear its descendant, the Lute offered encouragement, "Do tell them how you gained popularity." Uke was pleased to be noticed by its elder. "Well, I have to thank my Hawaiian roots, for it was inclusion in royal gatherings that led to my popularity. Kings would often ask for me at royal performances. Moreover, I was first introduced to mainland America at the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915, where many ukulele-players featured Hawaiian music and created a 'ukulelean' boom in America for the next decade or two. After interest in me waned, it was revived during World War II when Hawaii was a strategic outpost for the US. The soldiers stationed there took ukuleles back home as souvenirs."

The Guitar, now growing envious of

Uke's newly gained attention, taunted, "But I don't remember hearing about you before the 90s." Uke knew better than to engage with such unkindness, "By the mid-1950s my

popularity had ebbed again, but for a much longer period. Even though I was played by famous musicians such as The Beatles, general interest did not return until 1993, when

Israel Kamakawi'ole's version of 'Over the Rainbow' was released. As the song gained popularity, my fame was restored and later sustained through social media."

Seeing everyone sitting and following with curious eyes, Uke concluded, "I might not be as old as the Lyre, or have as many strings as the Guitar, but I have explored my fair share of diverse music genres. My four nylon strings are easier to push down, making me popular among beginners. My low cost made me a go-to choice, even during the Great Depression. I have finally found the courage to be proud of myself. And if I piqued your interest through my words, then please make sure to go and listen to 'I'm Yours' by Jason Mraz, one of the most popular songs featuring me. It ruled over the Billboard Hot 100 chart for 76 weeks." The hall filled with applause as Uke smiled at everyone with newfound confidence and a respectable place in the string family. **GT**

(Raunak is currently pursuing Bachelor of Design (Interior) from MSAP, Manipal.

Siya is pursuing Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Psychology at Dr B R Ambedkar University, Delhi.)



Types of texters

Inside The Chaotic Digital Zoo Of Our Wildest Text Habits

Yoshita Chug, XII C & Arisha Agarwal, XII A, AIS Vas 1

Texting began as a way to send brief alerts. Now, whether sharing gossip that 'OMG, can't wait!' or oversharing, we are always typing on our phones, or *tuk-tuk-ing* as our mothers would say. It's a simple act, done by everyone, all the time. So, how weird can texting get? Well, you are about to find out.

Typo terrors

You: What time are we meeting?
Them: 7 PM. Domt forgot the snacks. There are some people whose messages are an absolute nightmare to

read. Is there really a human on the other end? Or are you being baited by an extraterrestrial? To understand their texts, you need to become a digital cryptographer, decoding hidden messages before replying. It's the 21st century, use autocorrect already!

Grammar gurus

Person 1: See you 2morrow than
Them: It's 'tomorrow'! Use words, not Algebra. And for the last time, 'then' and 'than' are different words! Grammar-gurus are always hot under the collar. When a sentence doesn't begin with a capital letter, one risks enraging a demon. They correct every minute grammatical error, almost

as if they are secretly grading texts.

Short, shorter, shortest!

You: Raj and Max got into a fight!
Them: Idk n idc.
You: Rumours say it involved you.
Them: Srsly? U finna tell me fr
You: I will tell you tomorrow.
Them: alr, gn, ttyl.

These abbreviation connoisseurs are a unique species. What are you saving all that time for? Imagine if they talked like this in real life. Even Google Translate would burst into flames due to these riddles.

Text-bombers

Them: My cat fell

Them: Asleep
Them: On my
Them: Lap!

These people don't text normally. They bombard you with messages, one after another, turning a sentence into a jigsaw puzzle. These texters are like the human versions of relentless pop-up ads, enough to make anyone yearn for the pre-texting era.

And so, the texting-zoo continues to thrive, where grammar-gurus reign supreme, abbreviation-ninjas sneak attack, and ghosters leave you forever wondering. May your auto-correct be strong, your patience stronger, and your sanity intact, somehow.