

Illustration: Karunika Chandrasekar, AIS Gurugram 43, X B

The wish well of Wirla



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In the quaint town of Wirla, an altruistic well stands in the middle of the town square. The Dreamcatcher, as she was fondly called by the locals, had a soft spot for the youth. It is said, that no wish asked with a pure heart and earnest need ever goes unfulfilled by dear old Dreamcatcher. So, all loved their charitable well, all except one. Mira, exhausted from a day of dreaming, collapsed on a bean bag next to her best friend, Sara. "Can you believe the amount of money it takes to study a semester at Crowley University? It's extortion! I could build a spaceship, go to the moon, and start a university there for that much amount," she cried. "Slightly exaggerating, don't you think? Though your idea with the moon isn't bad, considering that's what you'll do after graduating," replied Sara. "Providing education to underprivileged extraterrestrials?" Mira joked, earning only a groan from Sara. Mira Raphael, nearing the end of her schooling, had been brilliant all her life. Her achievements ranged from academics to athletics, earning

her the pride of her town. Yet her true love always lay in the stars above. Inheriting her grandmother's telescope, Mira spent nights studying the sky, landing her straight to the Crowley University of Technology. Alas, her obstacle came in the form of money.

"You know," Sara suggested, "you could give old Dreamcatcher a visit." Mira protested, but Sara persisted. "It always worked when we were kids! Remember when I wished for a dollhouse, and a month later my mother won one in a lucky draw? There's no harm in trying." She grabbed her reluctant friend, and they walked towards the quiet town square.

They reached the well and Mira wrote her wish on a piece of paper, placed it in the metal tray on the well's sill, then closed her eyes and made a wish. All she could do now was wait for a miracle.

The children of Wirla never wondered how their wishes came to life. Their dreams of toys, dresses, or playgrounds were granted, and that was always enough for them. They never noticed the knowing glances among elders or the letters tucked in their grandparents' jackets. Every gift was met with gasps of surprise

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and neighbours' silent giggles as the post 'accidentally' arrived on the wrong porch.

Mira's letter of admission, accompanied by a complete scholarship from anonymous donors, arrived soon, greeted by the overjoyed screams of two teenage girls. That evening, Mira rushed to the town square and stood before the Dreamcatcher. She didn't ask for anything this time. She simply rested her hand on the cool stone rim and whispered her thanks.

Around her, the adults paused in their conversations. Some smiled softly, others exchanged glances heavy with affection and unspoken understanding. The well remained still, offering no sign of magic yet it needed none. For in Wirla, miracles rarely announced themselves. They arrived quietly, wrapped in kindness, carried by those who believed that dreams, when shared, had a way of finding their way home.



Read Play and Win

100

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 What is the name of the well in the town Wirla as mentioned on page 8?

Q.2 Mention any two features of oil based fragrances as mentioned on page 7.

Q.3 The autobiography with the headline 'Red, Yellow, Green' is on page ____.

Q.4 Who is the author of the perspective article on page 6?

Q.5 What is the scientific name of Tasmanian tiger?

Q.6 What is the tagline for the article on page 12?

Q.7 Which famous singer has been interviewed on page 3?

Q.8 What is the name of the futuristic product advertised on page 4?

Q.9 Who is the EIC of Amity International School Gurugram 43?

Name: Class: School:

Results of Read Play & Win-99: **Umamah Rahman**, AIS MV, VIII D; **Vibhav Goyal**, AIS Gur 46, IV H; **Parth Lohia**, AIS PV, IV B

The man with the cart

Shaurya Saxena, AIS Gurugram 43, XII S

I look down on him, the man with the cart
From my pedestal, thoughts stir with a start
How very different my life may have been
Had I not been born to this house I am in

If he were born to the silk and not the sand
Would he then, too, scorn workers' hands?
I look down on him, the man with the cart
How am I the richer, as only he does his part

I look at his hands; tired, calloused, and cut
The pain of his life, though he shows it not
I feel it strike, like raging storms on a hut
While my hands are soft; no dirt, no spot

The wheels turn slow, his back bends sore
And inside my chest beats a hollow core
I want to speak but there's nothing I can say
Perhaps hoping I could wash his pain away

I look down on him, the man with the cart
And I feel his soul, rising within my heart
And the gulf before us, though vast before
Now fills with gentle seas, empathy galore.



Illustration: Ritisha Bansal, AIS Gurugram 43, IX A