

Illustration: Prakshi Aggarwal, AIS Vas 6, VIII E



Spotify (wrap)ped

An Annual Melodic Report Card

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Hey listeners! The annual personalised summary of your music taste - Spotify Wrapped is out, and the judgment is real. But while you play yours for the 526th time, take a moment to imagine this wrapped playlist as a wrap - not the musical kind, but the ones you eat. What kind would yours be?

Subway wrap

The multiverse of madness wrap (cookies included). Over 365 days, you've managed to collect genres like infinity stones. One moment you're vibing to Coke Studio; the next, you're dissolving into Lo-fi. Your playlist is a roller-coaster, and the algorithm is begging for HR support.

Ghee cheeni wrap

With Kishore Kumar as your top artist, your heart beats to the rhythm of retro Bollywood, where simplicity rules charts. "I was born in the wrong era," has become your

mantra. Last year was comforting, nostalgic, and the musical equivalent of your mom's handmade ghee cheeni paratha. Soothing and full of love.

The taco

If Billboard Hot 100 looks suspiciously identical to your playlist, welcome aboard. You're the life of every party and the designated aux receiver. Your taste screams magic and every jam could start a spontaneous dance-off. You're pop(ping) perfection.

Salad wrap

Soft tunes and self-help podcasts - sounds familiar? This is the 'Becoming that girl/boy' wrap. Your Spotify experience is split between journaling and going for a walk. The salad wrap perfectly shows your choices, both in diet and music. Beets first, beats later.

Well, no matter what the sauce, you can't deny that music wraps us all together, even if we have different tastes. So, see you next year, my wrap buddy!



The theatre of fortune



Stock Market Takes The Stage To Share His Story

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My wrinkles, older than Taj Mahal, shine under the spotlight as I make my grand entry. Crowd goes wild - out of love or greed, I can never tell. "Good evening," I bow, "I am the Stock Market - a playwright and actor of mankind's hopes and fears. For 400 years, I've been staging the battle of bull and bear. Based on the game, you cheer or groan. Today, however, I ask you, dear audience, do you truly know me?" I paused with a throaty cough, the spectators waited with bated breaths. "I was born in Amsterdam in 1602, when Dutch East India Company issued the first-of-its-kind public shares. Ordinary citizens invested on voyages for silk, tea and spices to faraway lands, sharing its profits and perils. I rose from trade, trust and a thirst for opportunity. "My fame took me to London where I donned aristocratic wigs and performed soliloquies. Banished from the Royal Exchange for 'rude manners', I found my own stage at Jonathan's Coffee House. Stockbrokers would bid as long as a lit candle burned, what a rebellious era. But even geniuses weren't immune to

folly. In 1720, Sir Isaac Newton lost a fortune in the South Sea Bubble, admitting he could calculate the motions of the heavenly bodies, but not the madness of men.

"Soon I crossed oceans to America, where I was reborn as New York Stock Exchange, under a buttonwood tree on Wall Street in 1792. Such

was my glory that NYSE went on to become the first building in New York to have air conditioning. I truly branched out when Bombay Stock Exchange - Asia's oldest, perhaps took cue, finding similar origins under a banyan tree in 1850s. Today, BSE has over 5,000 listed companies, among the highest in the world. But unlike the roots of a tree, my life has never been stable. In 1929, the US stock market crashed leading to the Great Depression. Overnight, fortunes were erased. People called me cruel and heartless, but what happened was not entirely my fault. In fact, for 70% of my existence, I have only given positive returns. Anyhow, they couldn't invest without cash, therefore in 1935, they created the Monopoly game instead. Reforms happened

too; the Securities and Exchange Commission were brought to keep me in check.

"Years passed, and I went from paper to pixels with NASDAQ in 1971, the first electronic exchange. The digital age made me a global entity with greater risks: plaguing the world with dot-com crash of 2000 and the housing crisis of 2008. And then came the pandemic that made 2020 the

year of largest point losses and largest gains in history. Although, being global has its perks too, I currently perform in more than 60 countries. The open outcry bids on trading floor are echoes of the past. Today, AI whispers 'buy' or 'sell' in milliseconds. "Enough of history now, all I wish to tell you is that I am more than numbers and graphs. I breathe human emotion. People don't just invest money in me; they invest their faith and hopes - that tomorrow will be richer than today. Sometimes they're prudent; other times, reckless. Greed overcomes them often, but each time, humanity swears to be wiser. So friends, I can either be your greatest companion or your worst ruin. But most importantly, I am a reflection of you. To know me is to know you."

Autobiography